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Annex 8:

**Country Specific Reports
(30 January 2012 – 29 October 2016)
for
Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia,
Moldova and Ukraine**



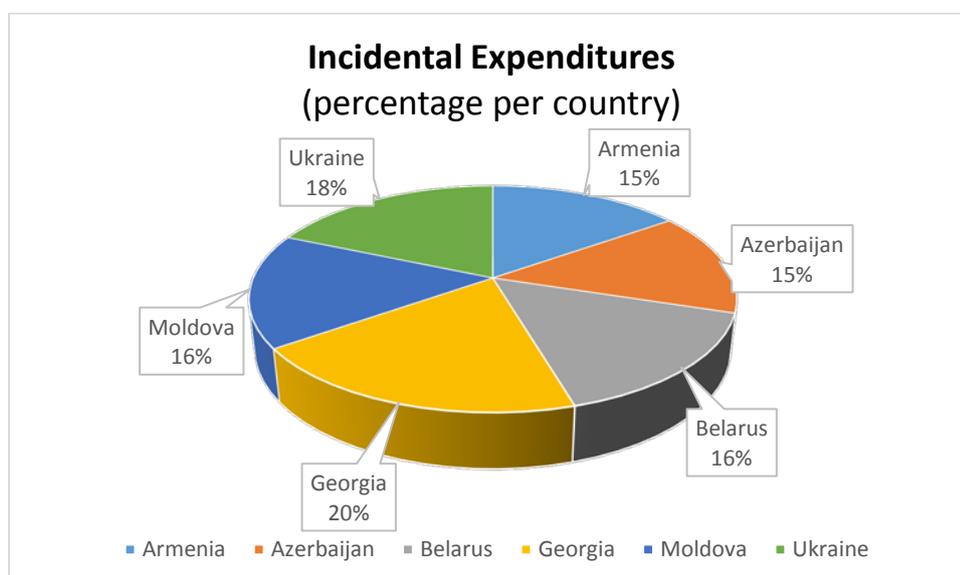
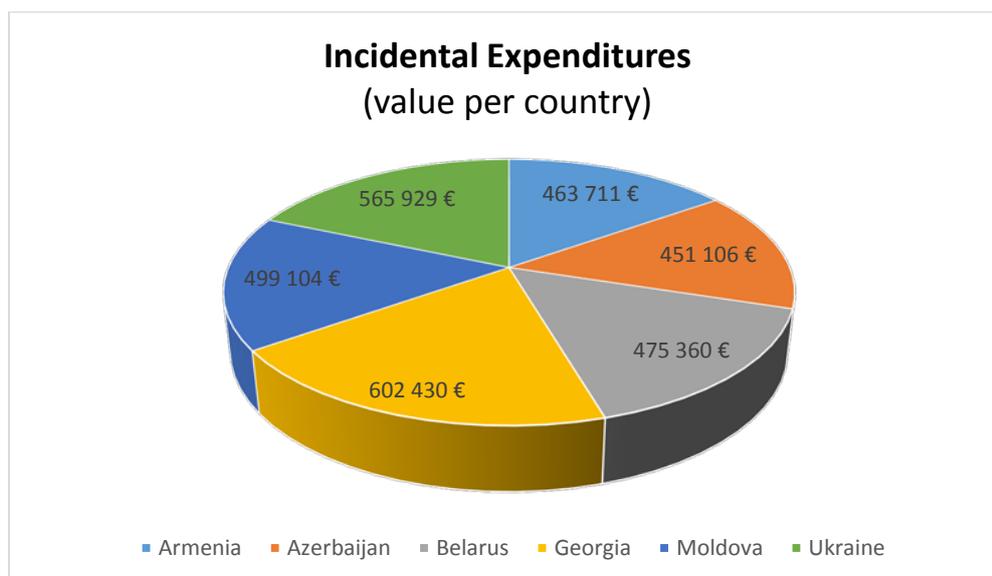
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Incidental Expenditures usage per country (30 January 2012 – 29 October 2016)

Armenia	463 711 €
Azerbaijan	451 106 €
Belarus	475 360 €
Georgia	602 430 €
Moldova	499 104 €
Ukraine	565 929 €

3 057 639 €



Armenia

Summary of the main activities

The main tangible results in Armenia, achieved within the EPIRB project, can be summarized as follows:

- Support in introduction of WFD compliant monitoring and assessment system for surface and groundwater bodies;
- Development of preliminary system for ecological status classification;
- Support to analytical quality control assurance;
- Joint field surveys for surface and groundwater bodies;
- Development of WFD-compliant river basin management plan;
- Implementation of selected pilot projects from the program of measures of the RBMP;
- Provision of intensive theoretical and practical training on the approaches and principles of the EU WFD.

In 2015, with the support of EPIRB project, **WFD compliant monitoring program for surface water bodies of Akhuryan RBD** was developed and presented to the beneficiary institutions. The proposed monitoring programme was designed to meet the stated requirements of the WFD and related CIS Guidance Documents, including the three types of monitoring programmes: surveillance, operational and investigative. In the process of monitoring programme development, the data and information from the JFSs and national monitoring programmes conducted in the Akhuryan RBD were used. Furthermore, the Typology Report, the Pressure-Impact Analysis and Risk Assessment Reports, prepared as part of development of RBMP for Akhuryan RBD, were used as basic documents in selecting the sampling locations for the Operational Monitoring.

The proposed **WFD compliant groundwater monitoring for Akhuryan RBD of Armenia** was developed in 2014, as part of the guidelines for groundwater monitoring in the pilot river basins of the Caucasus countries. The guideline included description of the WFD and Groundwater Directive requirements for groundwater monitoring programs, and proposals for pilot basin specific monitoring programmes, which take into account existing groundwater monitoring systems and economic-social realities in Armenia. Taking into consideration the proposal of the EPIRB project, on October 16, 2014 the Government of Armenia Protocol Session Resolution No 43 was adopted, which among other things extended the groundwater monitoring network in Akhuryan RBD of Armenia from 9 to 27 wells and springs since January 1, 2015.

Also, summarizing the results of the proposed basin-level monitoring programmes, in 2015, draft **Monitoring Strategy for Armenia** was prepared, to help the country to move towards the introduction of WFD-compliant monitoring and assessment of water bodies at national level. The idea was to guide Armenia in the long road towards introduction of WFD-compliant monitoring and assessment, also after the lifetime of EPIRB project. The draft Monitoring Strategy can serve various purposes, ranging from being used as a mere checklist while further developing monitoring programmes, through supporting national planning, including seeking for external assistance.

As part of providing assistance in the development of WFD-compliant tools for assessing data obtained from the monitoring activities, in July 2015 **preliminary system for ecological status classification was developed for Debed River Basin of Armenia**, which is the first such system in the country. The objective of the proposed ecological classification system is to assign rivers (natural water bodies) into 5 classes of ecological status: high, good, moderate, poor and bad. The ecological status classification scheme for the Debed River basin classifies river water bodies based on: (i) macroinvertebrate status as a biological element, (ii) physico-chemical status and (iii) hydromorphological elements. To establish reference conditions, values and class boundary data from surveys in the Debed River basin, conducted

in 2012-2014 were used. Also, where possible, the estimated reference values and class boundaries are compared with those reported from other EU Member countries. The proposed classifications system, which was one of the most important and technically challenging parts of WFD implementation, will help the authorities in Armenia to identify where the quality of the environment is good, where it may need improvement, and what may need to be improved, pursuant to the requirements of the WFD. The proposed system can also be used, over the years, to plan improvements, show trends and to monitor success.

Support to analytical quality control assurance included detailed assessment of the needs regarding laboratory infrastructure, equipment and training. Based on the assessment, corresponding recommendations were prepared on improving the analytical control assurance of the laboratory of the Environmental Impact Monitoring Centre, and in parallel regional and national level trainings were delivered on analytical quality control assurance.

To fill in data gaps and provide on-site training, **surface and groundwater field surveys** were organized in the period 2013-2016. Data from the field surveys was used to support development of different components of RBMP for Akhuryan RBD, including pressure-impact analysis, identification of water bodies at risk and design of program of measures.

Joint field surveys for surface water bodies of Akhuryan RBD were conducted in the period of 2013-2016. In total 29 sampling sites were included in the program of joint field surveys, many of which were not part of the existing monitoring network of the Environmental Impact Monitoring Centre or the Service of the Hydrometeorology and Active Influence on Atmospheric Phenomena. Thus, one of the main objectives of the JFSs was to fill in the data gaps in Akhuryan RBD. In addition to that, JFSs aimed to check some of the judgments on pressures and impacts, demonstrate the approaches and principles of WFD-compliant monitoring and assessment, as well as provide on-the-ground training for the local staff of monitoring organizations.

In the period of 2013-2016 also 8 rounds of JFSs were conducted in 16 sampling sites of Debed River Basin of Armenia. These were the same sites where EU Kura Phase II and Phase III projects worked in 2011-2012. The idea was to continue the field surveys, in order to have long enough data, particularly on macroinvertebrates, so that preliminary system for ecological status classification could be developed for Armenia.

In total 12 local experts from the Environmental Impact Monitoring Centre and the Service of the Hydrometeorology and Active Influence on Atmospheric Phenomena participated in the joint field surveys of surface water bodies, conducted in Akhuryan RBD and Debed River Basin of Armenia. Apart from data gap fillings, the participation in the field surveys was a useful training exercise for the local experts in integrated and WFD-compliant monitoring and assessment of surface water bodies, which they can now replicate in other river basins of the country.

Four rounds of groundwater field surveys were conducted in Akhuryan RBD of Armenia in the period of 2013-2016. EPIRB project key expert on hydrogeology guided the field surveys, with active participation of the specialists of the Hydrogeological Monitoring Centre. Field surveys also included on-site practical training for local specialists on the use of electronic water level and temperature meters, including pre-programming, reading the records and data processing. The field survey of 2013 included collection of 20 groundwater samples, including 18 groundwater samples from water bodies that were not monitored by the Hydrogeological Monitoring Centre. In June 2014, the groundwater field survey focused on 15 locations, where high arsenic concentrations were observed during the previous field survey. The main purposes of the third field survey, organized in April 2015, was to check the arsenic concentrations in other supply wells around Armavir and Ashotsk, where the results of arsenic for 2013-2014 JFS showed exceedance of EU drinking norms from 2-25 times. Thus, the third

field survey aimed at mapping of arsenic spreading areas in sedimentary-volcanic groundwater bodies not only around Armavir town and Ashot'sk village, but also in other parts of the aquifers. Finally, in May 2016, groundwater field survey was organized to check the newly refurbished 10 monitoring installations (triangular or rectangular weirs and water capture devices, constructed within the pilot project) and collecting groundwater samples from those new monitoring points. In total, 6 local experts participated in the groundwater field surveys, including in the on-site trainings.

Development of the draft **RBMP for Akhuryan RBD of Armenia** was the main outcome under the Result 2 of the EPIRB project. The plan was developed in the period of 2012-2016, taking into consideration the approaches and methodologies of the EU WFD, as well as requirements of the water legislation in Armenia. The plan was developed with very active participation of the competent authority – Akhuryan Basin Management Organization of the Water Resources Management Agency, which will be in charge of its implementation, once the plan is formally adopted. Whenever faced with data gaps, joint field surveys were organized throughout the process of development of the plan, to fill in those gaps and check expert judgments. In total 7 public hearing meetings were organized in each key step of development of the plan, as a result of which over 170 participants provided over 50 written comments and remarks on the draft plan. All respective ministries and local self-governance authorities in the target communities were also involved in the process. As a result, since March 2016, the Water Resources Management Agency has initiated a procedure of official adoption of the plan, and it is expected that the RBMP for Akhuryan RBD of Armenia will be adopted by the Government of Armenia by the end of 2016.

Details on selection and implementation of **pilot projects in Akhuryan RBD** of Armenia are presented in section 2.6 of this Final Report.

Implementation of the above-mentioned activities was accompanied with delivery of **intensive theoretical and practical training** on various aspects of the EU WFD. The training topics included, but were not limited to the following: river basin management planning, quality assurance and control, laboratory accreditation, surface and groundwater monitoring, hydrobiological monitoring, classification of ecological status, assessment of hydromorphological quality elements, GIS and databases, and typologies and identification of water bodies. About 45 experts from the Water Resources Management Agency and its Basin Management Organizations, Environmental Impact Monitoring Centre, Hydrogeological Monitoring Centre and the Service of the Hydrometeorology and Active Influence on Atmospheric Phenomena participated in the trainings.

Lessons Learnt and Next Steps

The following summarizes some of the lessons learnt from the EPIRB project and proposed next steps for Armenia:

- Trainings have proved to be very efficient mechanisms for increasing the knowledge and competency among the local staff on practical application of the EU WFD approaches. Further training and capacity building is one of the priority needs. However, there is a need to design a mechanism, to make sure that the trained staff does not leave the beneficiary organizations at least for a certain period of time and shares the knowledge obtained with other staff of the beneficiary organization. Such need is justified with the fact that about 20 local experts out of 45 trained within the EPIRB project, have already quit their jobs, mostly seeking for better opportunities;
- There is a need to continue the support in introduction of the WFD-compliant monitoring program and extend the program, in addition to benthic invertebrate fauna, to include also phytoplankton, phytobenthos, macrophytes and fish fauna;

- The process of introduction of WFD compliant monitoring and assessment system shall go beyond the pilot basin level, and support shall be provided to formally introduce water quality assessment system at national level, based on biological, hydromorphological and physico-chemical quality elements, which will provide sound basis for the integrated assessment of water quality status and establishing of realistic water quality objectives;
- To keep the positive momentum gained, it is proposed to support Armenia in implementation of the RBMP for Akhuryan RBD, which is expected to be formally adopted by the Government by the end of 2016;
- The laboratory of the Environmental Impact Monitoring Centre needs significant support in international accreditation. However, while this is one of the priorities of the Ministry of Nature Protection, the existing building conditions will not allow obtaining such accreditation and, as urgent priority, new premises for the laboratory should be allocated;
- Development of WFD-compliant river basin management plans shall be continued, adding also the transboundary perspective. Taking into consideration the political realities, as well as the fact that for 3 out of 6 RBDs of Armenia RBMPs are already developed, the most viable option for the next pilot basin seems the Northern RBD, the greatest part of which (Debed sub-basin) is transboundary with Georgia;
- Selection of Northern RBD as pilot basin might also help in further testing, refining and fine-tuning of the preliminary system for ecological status classification, since the proposed system is only the first steps in the challenging exercise, additional information from Debed River Basin will be very helpful in such efforts;
- To improve the ownership and commitment by the beneficiaries, the economic analysis should be more widely used. For example, the monitoring agencies will have more chance of success in securing increased budget for their activities, if the economic benefits of improved monitoring and resultant improved decision-making are demonstrated. Similarly, clear demonstration of the economic benefits of implementing RBMPs greatly increases the chances of formal adoption and funding of the plans.

Azerbaijan

Summary of the main activities

Review of national monitoring systems and tools for assessing data obtained from monitoring activities in Azerbaijan has been conducted by the project. As result of the project team mission to Azerbaijan on 29-31 May, 2012 under the Activity 1.1 was prepared a brief review of the existing monitoring systems and tools for assessing data. It was found however that the monitoring capacity in Azerbaijan (and in the Central Kura pilot area in particular), mostly meets the national standards in terms of number and frequency of observation points, both for chemical and hydromorphological, as well as hydrogeological (groundwater) monitoring. Hydro-biological monitoring capacity was limited at some pilot areas (Alazani/Ganikh) as part of a demonstration project. Besides, there were still some gaps in data collection process, in addition of outdated and not calibrated hydrological equipment for flow velocity measurements. As possible alternative to fill the data gaps and acquire consistent data for reliable analysis was suggested and conducted special field surveys.

Under activity 1.2, support on the implementation of countries' obligations under the UNECE Water and Danube River Protection Water Conventions has been undertaken to beneficiaries.

In Azerbaijan was identified below possible support toward the UNECE Water Convention:

- support to AZ representatives in the implementation of the UNECE Water Convention in areas, such as (i) participation in trans-boundary projects on river basin management and other related areas (e.g. formulation of related project proposals), (ii) technical input and advice on reporting under the UNECE Water Convention, and (iii) specific technical input and advice on efforts to contribute to the EU Water Initiative in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EUWI EECCA);
- support on the implementation of the UNECE Water Convention and the management of trans-boundary watercourses shared by Georgia and Azerbaijan;
- support on the upcoming reporting exercise on the Protocol on Water and Health (due end-April 2013);
- support in aligning national policies with IWRM principles;
- tailor-made support on monitoring programmes to enable full assessment of water status and to develop the River Basin Management Plans.

During NCC meetings have been discussed activities of MENR of Azerbaijan and Sanitary Epidemiology Center of MOH on preparing the national report on implementation the requirements of the Protocol on water and health of UNECE Water Convention.

The project has been in communication with the UNECE Secretariat regarding coordination of UNDP/UNECE GEF transboundary waters projects on the river Kura, which is about to commence. Development of international RBMP is envisaged under both projects however not compliant with the WFD. Further discussions will be required in order to establish a joint project implementation.

To develop WFD-compliant monitoring programmes, including hydro-biological and hydromorphological elements and groundwater different work was carried in Azerbaijan.

Survey work continued, establishing reference sites in the Central Kura pilot basin, a requisite of the WFD. Survey results for 2014 and 2016, GW and SW, have been subjected to technical audit by the project team and are presented with commentary in annual reports.

WFD-compliant monitoring programmes designed for the Central Kura pilot basin.

Regional training was delivered on WFD coastal monitoring by a team of Bulgarian experts and led by the NKE Bill Parr in Batumi Georgia on 14-16th June 2016. The training was a mixture of practical and theoretical sessions and was attended by experts from Azerbaijan.

The National Monitoring Strategy for Azerbaijan towards the introduction of the EU WFD compliant monitoring and assessment of surface water bodies has been developed by the project. The document

contain a detailed description of the WFD technical requirements and current status and needs for its implementation in the countries. The strategy have been reviewed by the MENR relevant divisions and in proposed interventions have been included in the pilot RBMPs.

In relation to Activity 1.4, Assist in the development of WFD-compliant tools for assessing data obtained from monitoring activities (ecological, chemical, hydro-morphological classifications) the Ecological Status Classification System for upper Ganikh (Alazan) river catchment was delivered after country consultation. Data from the Central Kura BD RBMP pilot area has been loaded onto WISE compatible GIS database.

Within the activity 1.5, support the analytical quality control and quality assurance procedures by the EPIRB project provided, including successful training to the national laboratory on QA/QS procedure. The national strategy show the need for substantial investment in laboratory and field equipment in Azerbaijan.

Field surveys to cover the gaps and assist development of ecological/biological status classification systems a four round GW and SW surveys has been designed and undertaken in the Central Kura pilot basin (last one was conducted in April 2016) to fill data gaps and support the ESCS development. Survey design manuals for a joint field survey for Central Kura basin prepared by the project was used during the survey. A single methodology was used for the survey and results from the survey was incorporated into the revised ESCS proposals delivered in September 2016.

WISE compatible web-based GIS/Database system was established on an 'open source' server environment. Initial setup and testing of the system was performed on the virtual 'cloud' system. Currently the system is physically located on the following cloud based virtual server infrastructure: <https://leaseweb.com/>. The web services are available at: [HYPERLINK "http://185.17.144.169/"http://185.17.144.169/](http://185.17.144.169/). At the moment hosting of the cloud base system is pre-paid for one year, but the project envisages further discussion of the system ownership and possible transfer with the follow on water project.

Under **Activity 2.1** River Basin Management Plan for Central Kura BD developed. During the development of River Basin Management Plan for the Central Kura BD the below tasks have been implemented:

- Classification of water bodies based on available biological and chemical data;
- Identification of pressures and impacts and water bodies at risk. Identification of significant pressures and the related possible risks of each water body to fail the WFD environmental objectives, aligned to the EC IMPRESS WFD guidance document (Article 5, Annex II);
- Setting of environmental objectives (WFD Article 4);
- Design of surveillance and operational monitoring programme and network (Article 8, Annex V) included as an Annex to the RBMP;
- Identification of gaps in data availability and design of investigative monitoring programmes and network;
- Assessment of water status (surface water and groundwater) using available biological, chemical and quantitative data;
- Revision of water body status based on outcomes of investigatory monitoring (JFS);
- Initial economic analysis consistent with the WFD guidelines (WFD Article 5, Annex III);
- Development of national and basin-wide confined Programme of Measures (WFD Article 11, Annex VI); and
- Preparation of a River Basin Management Plan in accordance with the WFD and national regulations (WFD Article 13, Annex VII)
- Discussion of Draft RBMP with stakeholders and public and when finalizing of document. taking their comments into account

The overall delineation of surface water bodies, the typology of the newly delineated, water bodies was carried and in the classification of the water bodies was used the results of water quality monitoring conducted by the EPIRB project.

Central Kura Basin District RBMP is aimed at achieving the environmental objectives for waters. According to WFD all water bodies are required to have at least good ecological status. In this regards to achieve good status has been developed PoM for water bodies at risk and other water bodies.

Progress in reparation of Central Kura Basin District Draft RBMP was according to below time schedule:

- ⊙ Preparation of Draft Central Kura BD RBMP, March 2015
- ⊙ Discussion of the draft RBMP for Draft Central Kura BD RBMP at the Public Consultation meeting in Ganja (April 23, 2015)
- ⊙ Discussion of Draft RBMP with main beneficiary to see if it is in compliance with national legislation (July-August 2015)

In the stage of continuation of previous phases of the basin management planning process main activities have been based on the tasks already accomplished under Activity 2.1 River Basin Analyses 2.2 Water body identification and typology, 2.3 Analysis of baseline situation (Pressures and Impact and At Risk assessments) 2.5 Development of national and base-wide Programme of Measures (PoM) 2,7 Public involvement and awareness raising activities. Under the previous assignment the results of these activities have been incorporated into a draft River Basin Management Plan for the selected pilot that has been subject to public consultation with the basin and national stakeholders. The new assignment was built on these results to prepare a final draft River Basin Management Plan consistent with the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive and national legislation.

Working with the project beneficiary, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Republic of Azerbaijan and the EPIRB project team, was delivered a draft final RBMP for approval at the basin and national levels.

The inclusion of ancillary topics in the RBMP have discussed with the beneficiary at the beginning of the assignment. It should be noted that in preparing the RBMP, in addition to meetings the requirements of the WFD the RBMP complies with existing and pending national legislation and regulations relating to RBMPs. Where there is disagreement the national legislation shall take precedent.

During the process of revision of RBMP for CK basin district followings have been considered:

- ⊙ Addressing of comments of stakeholders and beneficiaries (May-September 2015)
- ⊙ Revision of content of draft RBMP according to discussions including addressing of such sectors as (i) climate change and water adaptation; (ii) flood management in more details in developed PoM and proposing some pilots on application of Flood Directive UWWTD and combing of IWRM and WFD RBMP in pilot area
- ⊙ Surface and groundwater field surveys, including surveys to cover data gaps (Groundwater: May 2015, Surface water: June-July 2015)
- ⊙ Including into Central Kura BD RBMP the results of the pilot projects
- ⊙ Adoption of RBMP (December 2015)

Revised Table of content included below new items in relevant chapters and sub chapters:

- ⊙ 3.4.3. Climate change and its impact to water resources
- ⊙ Add subchapter on water adaptation for different sceneries
- ⊙ 7.4 List of identified Basic and Supplementary measures for Central Kura Basin District
- ⊙ Add measure on application of EU Flood Directive in CK BD
- ⊙ Add measure on Development of water allocation program in pilot river basins combing IWRM and WFD RBMP
- ⊙ CHAPTER 9. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION

- ⊙ CHAPTER 10. COMPETENT AUTHORITIES
- ⊙ CHAPTER 11. Contact points
- ⊙ CHAPTER 12. EPIRB SUPPORTED PILOT PROJECTS
- ⊙ ANNEXES (Add results of pilot projects)

The inclusion of ancillary topics in the RBMP have discussed with the beneficiary at the beginning of the assignment. It should be noted that in preparing the RBMP, in addition to meetings the requirements of the WFD the RBMP complies with existing and pending national legislation and regulations relating to RBMPs.

During the development of the RBMP the following public information and consultation measures were taken:

- *Information was circulated on the draft and final Communication Strategy and Plan on the website of the project;*
- *Stakeholder consultation meeting was held on the significant water management issues document ("Pressures and Impact Analysis"), document published for comments in May 2014 at: (www.blacksea-riverbasins.net);*
- *Project newsletter "In the Flow" (6) and brochure on Significant Water Management Issues in Central Kura Basin District have been published and distributed among stakeholders as well as placed on the EPIRB project website (www.blacksea-riverbasins.net);*
- *The draft Central Kura Basin District RBMP entered the public consultation phase from April 24 2015 until August 31 2015, including a public consultation meeting and possibilities for submitting comments.*

The opportunity to participate in the consultations was promoted by: direct notification mass-emails; relevant NGO networks; news items on the EPIRB project website (www.blacksea-riverbasins.net); the regularly published project newsletter "In the Flow", and targeted media announcements (e.g. www.ganjanews.az, local newspaper etc.).

The stakeholder consultation meeting on the significant water management issues was held in Baku on 2 September 2014. It targeted water practitioners, different key stakeholders from different sectors etc. It had the main aim to present the necessary background information and the preliminary overview of the important water management issues for the river basin, as well as to collect stakeholders' feedbacks concerning the identification of the most important water management issues. The summary of the discussions can be accessed on the EPIRB project website at: (www.blacksea-riverbasins.net).

The public consultation meeting "Shaping the future of the Central Kura Basin District" was held in Ganja city on 23 April 2015. It had the main objectives to present the draft RBMP and the planned Programme of Measures, and to discuss and receive feedback, comments and proposals on the draft RBMP, including the planned measures. The meeting gathered 35 participants, representing a broad range of stakeholders such as: relevant state water management organizations, joint stock companies, representatives of water users, municipalities and NGOs. The one day event gave short introduction to the draft RBMP, as well as provided opportunity for feedback and comments through interactive discussion organized within two working groups. The group discussions were guided by independent facilitators, and the outcomes of the discussions were shared in the plenary session by selected rapporteur. The minutes of the meeting can be accessed on the EPIRB project website at: (www.blacksea-riverbasins.net).

After the public consultation meeting article was published in local Newspaper in Ganja and summary of discussions of the meeting has been broadcasted by Kapaz TV of Ganja city. Short film was produced about the meeting and distributed in DVD format among stakeholders as well as among students in Baku State University.

Besides the public consultation meeting, opportunity to submit written comments to the draft RBMP was open until 31 August 2015. A total of 5 written comments were received.

All the comments requesting changes to the draft RBMP received during the consultation meeting(s), as well as in written form have been collected and processed by the consultants developing the RBMP in close cooperation with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan Republic. In order to ensure transparency a summary report has been prepared which gives an overview on the original comments received and the responses and actions taken, whether it resulted in changes in the draft RBMP etc. The summary report can be found at: (www.blacksea-riverbasins.net)

Recommendations to be followed up as part of dialogue with each country

According to Azerbaijan EU cooperation plan national water legislation is expected to be harmonized to the EU directives. In this regards it is expected that WFD relevant monitoring, status classification system and RBMP development will need to be applied in Azerbaijan. In this regards it should be noted that developed by EPIRB project monitoring strategy and program should be adopted at national level in all river basins.

The QA/QS procedures in laboratory of MENR needs to be strengthened and a critical self-assessment by the laboratory managers is required before further project support takes place.

The Ecological Status Classification System for Upper Ganikh (Alazan) catchment has been finalised but it is acknowledged that this is only a first step of what will be a long process. Country needs to strengthen biological monitoring capacity. The various technical guidelines produced by the project need to be applied by Azerbaijan.

Developed by support of EPIRB project mechanisms on application of EU WFD and UWWTD also need to be adopted at basin and national levels. In this regards it is important:

1. To identify and institutional responsibilities for the application of IWRM principles at the national level and the application of WFD and UWWTD and recommendations for institutional reform.
2. To adopt the developed mechanism for application of the Basin Approach as an approach to implement an article 18 indicated in Water Code of Azerbaijan Republic according to principles of EU WFD
3. Adoption of a Decree of Government or relevant authority on creation and operation of Basin Management Organizations, according to prepared Basin Management Organization charters (objectives, functions, status and composition).
4. Application of EU Urban Waste-Water Treatment Directive in Azerbaijan by use of recommendations of developed by support of EPIRB project mechanism for its application.

Lessons Learnt and Next Steps

Currently Azerbaijan is planning to harmonize the national water legislation with the EU directives. Water Code of Azerbaijan Republic considers integrated ecosystem approach as part of the water management policy, however no legislative act exists that describes mechanism for application of the basin management principles.

Taking this into account by support EPIRB project proposal for harmonization of the legal framework for water resources management in Azerbaijan to EU WFD, UWWTD and Flood Directive has been prepared and presented to relevant beneficiary organizations.

One of important future steps will be adoption of above documents.

In addition by EPIRB project a series of guidance have been prepared in the area of water monitoring and status classification and trainings with involving the local beneficiaries was provided to create a sustainable platform for feather implementation WFD in Azerbaijan.

In future it is important to develop RBMP in all basin districts of Azerbaijan. It is also necessary to develop RBMP for transboundary river basins. Good example from this can be development of transboundary RBMP and IWRM plans for Kura river basin jointly with Georgia for part of Kura river basin till Mingechavir water reservoir. This is important to manage water resources of Kura and Ganikh (Alazan) rivers entering into reservoir on integrated way to have efficiency water management for irrigation and other water uses below reservoir by mean of big canals.

The participating laboratories need further support to meet the ISO accreditation standards and improve capacity in analysis of priority substances. The QA/QS procedures in the national laboratories are weak and a critical self-assessment by the laboratory managers is required before further project support takes place.

Belarus

Summary of the main activities

Support the implementation of countries' obligations under the Danube and Water Conventions. EPIRB project starts the development River Basin Management Plans as it requires the WFD. Prepared RBMP of Upper Dnieper in Belarus can be first step in the development international RBMP of Dnieper, including territory of Belarus, Ukraine and Russia according to the principles of Water Convention.

EPIRB project supported activities of Ministry of natural resources and environmental protection and Ministry of health on preparing the national report on implementation the requirements of the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes UNECE.

Develop WFD-compliant monitoring programmes, including hydro-biological and hydromorphological elements and groundwater.

The article 6 "Ecological status of the surface water bodies" of the new Water Code of the Republic of Belarus determines, that". Hydrobiological, hydrochemical and hydromorphological features determines in the framework of the National environmental monitoring system (NEMS) in the Republic of Belarus". In this connection the preparing by EPIRB project the Monitoring Strategy for Belarus with focus on Upper Dnieper river basin will be using for development and improvement national water monitoring system.

Assist in the development of WFD-compliant tools for assessing data obtained from monitoring activities (ecological, chemical, hydro-morphological classifications).

The new Water Code of the Republic of Belarus (article 6, paragraph 3) determines, that "The ecological status of water bodies is classified as high, good, satisfactory, poor and bad". Belarus has a national methodological documents which determines the rules for assessment of ecological status of the surface water bodies. The development of the Ecological Status Classification System (ESCS) in the frame of EPIRB activity gives opportunity for improvement of the national procedures of the ecological classification.

Support the analytical quality control and quality assurance procedures.

The EPIRB project provided successful activities to the national beneficiaries' laboratories on QA/QS procedures. Prepared guidance for monitoring of the priority substances has a significant role for Belarus. Based on recommendation of guidance the Ministry of natural resources and environmental

protection of the Republic of Belarus started since 2016 year to fund the research into the problem of finding priority substances in the aquatic environment.

Developing the River Basin Management Plans.

RBMP of Upper Dnieper was prepared according to the requirements of WFD and includes the following parts: description of the river basin; identification, typology and delineation of surface and groundwater water bodies; analysis of significant pressures and anthropogenic impacts on the status of surface and ground water, assessment of risk the failing to achieve good status for water bodies; the basin monitoring programs; environmental objectives; the programme of basic and supplementary measures; results of the field surveys; results of public consultations and the list of competent bodies. RBMP of Upper Dnieper was adopted by Ministry natural resources and environmental protection and Dnieper basin council.

New Water Code declares that RBMP must be developed for 5 river basins: Upper Dnieper, Pripyat, Western Bug, Neman, and Western Dvina. The future project can support to develop the RBMP for other river basins, priority basin is a Pripyat basin.

Recommendations to be followed up as part of dialogue with each country

According to the new Water Code Belarus needs to prepare the RBMP for all 5 river basins. Next steps are needed for achieving this aim:

To develop the new basin monitoring systems for surface water and groundwater according to the requirements of WFD;

To develop and legalise the criteria for the assessment of the ground water;

To develop and approve the methodology of the economic analysis of the river basin;

To develop and approve the provision on River Basin Management Plan and methodology of its development;

Develop the methodology of the elaboration Programme of measures according to Article 11 of the WFD;

Develop and legalise methodology assessment of the ecological potential for artificial and heavy modified surface water bodies.

Lessons Learnt and Next Steps

The EPIRB project gives a successful technical assistance model in the water sector compliance with WFD. A lot of methodology guidance and trainings with involving the local beneficiaries helped to create a sustainable platform for feather implementation WFD in country. The practical exercises on all phases of development RBMP of Upper Dnieper were improving capacity building of the national experts and institutes.

The participating laboratories need further support in supplies the modern laboratory equipment, training the laboratory staff in analysis of priority substances.

Water strategy of the Republic of Belarus till 2020 year defines the harmonization of water legislation of Belarus with water legislation of EU. In this connection a lot of EU guidance in the field of water management and monitoring are needed to be implemented into national water legislation.

All 5 river basins of Belarus are transboundary watercourses. According to WFD and Water Convention the main objectives are: development of the international RBMP (with neighboring countries), creation national and international basin councils.

Georgia

Summary of the main activities

The country specific activities and the achievements in Georgia are basically aligned with those accomplished throughout of the project and are summarised below in accordance of the project tasks:

WFD-compliant monitoring programmes designed

- Surface Water Monitoring Programme was developed for the pilot basin in Georgia. The Monitoring Programme is designed as a guidance to assist the beneficiaries for implementation of the first six-year monitoring cycle of the Chorokhi-Ajaristskali RBMP;
- Groundwater Monitoring Programme and Guidelines for Assessing the Groundwater Status in the Chorokhi-Ajaristskali pilot basin was developed by the project Key GW Expert;
- Draft National Monitoring Strategy towards EU WFD compliant monitoring of surface water bodies in Georgia was developed by the project team. The document contains a detailed description of WFD requirements, as well as current status and needs for implementation of the Water Framework Directive in Georgia

Number of WFD compliant monitoring training courses was designed for the project countries and appropriate staff of beneficiary institutions was trained. Among them the following training courses have conducted in Georgia:

- Three-day hands-on training course for the Caucasus countries in hydro-biological sampling, including sampling methodology, techniques and laboratory analysis of macro-invertebrate fauna and macrophytes was held in **June 2015** in Tbilisi. The training included theoretical workshop, as well as field sampling that took place on the Bazaleti Lake and the Aragvi River.
- Three-day training course on the WFD compliant assessment of Hydromorphological Quality Elements was held in **July 2014** in Telavi for the three Caucasus countries. The course included classroom presentations and exercises and field works on the methodology and techniques of hydromorphological assessment, as well as testing of morphological classification of river and lake water bodies.
- Two-day training course on Delineation and Typology of Surface Water Bodies using GIS techniques was conducted for all EPIRB countries in **December 2014** in Tbilisi. The course introduced WFD principles of identification of surface water bodies, delineation, and typological classification, as well as the skills of using GIS for proper delineation of SWBs.
- Three-day Marine Biological training course in sampling and identification of macro-invertebrates and macrophytes (seaweeds and sea-grasses) in coastal waters for all EPIRB countries was held in **June 2016** in Batumi. The monitoring training consisted of two days field work (sampling, data collection, preliminary processing and taxonomic identification), laboratory-based processing (sorting, identification, etc.) and one day classroom presentations of the WFD/MSFD implementation strategy and methodology.
- Number of Quality Assurance/Quality Control on site laboratory workshops to improve laboratory analytical skills were held throughout the project

Joint field surveys to cover the data gaps assess status of surface and groundwater bodies

With the methodological and technical support of the project staff and Key Experts, four rounds of Joint Field Surveys for surface waters and three rounds for groundwater assessment were conducted in the Chorokhi-Ajaristkali pilot basin during spring-summer period of 2013-2016.

- Surface Water JFSs resulted in sampling physico-chemical and biological Quality Elements and assessing hydromorphological conditions at about 30 sampling locations in the pilot basin, final

goal of which was assessing ecological status of reference sites and ‘risk assessment’ of other surface water bodies, identified during the water body delineation process. In addition 3 testing sites were screened for extent of the ‘Priority Substances and Other Certain Pollutants’ in the water and sediments at the Black Sea coast proximity, around the largest urban settlement of the pilot area – city of Batumi.

- Groundwater Joint Field Surveys collected and tested groundwater samples from about 15 locations, both from GW wells and springs, in terms of assessing chemical status of GWBs. The collected samples were analysed in the laboratory of beneficiary institutions, as well as in the laboratories of other countries (Poland, Lithuania, etc.) for quality control.
- Surface Water JFS were also conducted in other pilot areas – transboundary basins of Alazani-Ganikh (GE/AZ) and Khrami-Debed (GE/AM). In total there have been conducted eight rounds of JFSs in these basins, covering seasonal variations of SWB status assessment at spring and autumn times during 2013-2016. During this time physico-chemical and hydro-biological samples have been collected and hydro-morphological assessments conducted at 16 locations of the both sub-basins in Georgia to identify reference conditions and ecological status of surface water bodies in these basins. Results of these surveys are reflected in the draft ESCS (Ecological Status Classification System) Design Report for upland watercourses of the Caucasus Eco-region that includes the Alazani and the Khrami-Debed Rivers as well, developed by the EPIRB senior monitoring experts.
- Coastal Monitoring Survey (CMS) of the adjacent to the Chorokhi-Ajaristkali Basin Coastal zone, was conducted in August 2016 for benthic invertebrates and macrophytes at six (x6) locations of the Ajara coastline. Results of the survey are reflected in the Coastal Monitoring Assessment, which is annexed to the Chorokhi-Ajaristkali RBMP.

River Basin Management Planning - RBMP

The main outcome of the EPIRB project in Georgia, along with the other important results, is a first ever WFD compliant River Basin Management Plan that the country has obliged to develop according to the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, signed in 2014. The Draft RBMP of the Chorokhi-Ajaristkali Basin, which is identified as one of the Basin Districts of Georgia, according to the new Water Law to be approved by the parliament, is a result of intensive study, conducted by the project beneficiaries, basin stakeholders, local consultants and the EPIRB team during the last three years. During this period, the whole RBMP development cycle was practiced in the pilot river basin and thus it is important step to replicate such approach in other river basins in Georgia. Some of the activities, indicated below, were done first time in the country:

- Pressure and impact analysis;
- Typology of surface water bodies based on the EU WFD;
- Selection of reference condition locations;
- Monitoring programmes (both surface and ground water);
- Development of Programme of Measures;
- Prioritization and costing of these Measures.

The Draft Chorokhi-Ajaristkali RBMP was developed as a process of cooperation between the project and the key beneficiary institutions. The draft RBMP was discussed with the basin stakeholders at Public Consultation meeting held in **June 2014**, **March 2015** and **August 2016** with active participation of key project beneficiaries, other national stakeholders, government institutions, local self-governance, NGOs, academia, TV and media. The PC meetings generated number of comments and suggestions that were taken into account and reflected in the final RBMP.

Lessons Learnt and Next Steps

Proposed Next Steps by the Key Beneficiary (MENRP)

- Experience and results from the pilot river basin should be transfer into the form to be applied for the whole Georgia (specific hydrological and climate conditions);
- Assistance of the experts from the EU Member States in the development of the legislation is crucial point to transpose and implement the EU Water Policy in Georgia;
- NEA staff shall be trained in the EU Member State institutions with similar conditions as in Georgia;
- Facilities and methodologies for the NEA laboratory (responsible for the national monitoring programme in Georgia) should be upgraded by new and modern equipment for monitoring of some specific pollutants - *Priority Substances and Other Certain Pollutants*.

Moldova

Summary of the main activities

The project started in 2012 and was in line with the national policy in water sector of Moldova. The new draft Law on Environmental Protection has been prepared which envisages the establishment of the National Environmental Agency. It is planned that this agency will be responsible for analysis of all water quality monitoring data which will be used for decision-making and follow up actions. However, the gap between the existing institutional structure in water sector which involves: Hydro-Meteorological Service (the only agency responsible for regular monitoring of water quality), Water Agency (responsible for policy making in water sector), Agency of Geology and Natural Resources with hydro-geological expedition (responsible for ground water monitoring), Ecological Inspectorate (mainly in charge of water use/quantity) and to some extent the Ministry of Health (which also performs water quality monitoring using their laboratories and funds available from international donors), and the system envisaged by WFD is still too big.

River Basins Management Authority has been established under the Water Agency but its functions are mainly focused on water permits and so far, it is too early to state that there are any concrete plans from the Government side to change its scope of responsibilities.

Moldova just started to move forward implementing some main provisions of WFD, as new Water Law nr. 272 was adopted by Parliament of RM on 23.12.2011, but entered in force on 26 of October 2013. Water Law is partly harmonised with WFD, Directives 91/271/CEE for treatment of urban waters, Directive nr.91/676/CEE on nitrates, 2006/7/CEE on bathing waters, Directive 2007/60/CE on floods, Directive 2008/105/CE on environment quality standards for waters.

Important to mention that in 2014 EU and Republic of Moldova signed Association Agreement which will aim at preserving, protecting, improving, and rehabilitating the quality of the environment, protecting human health, sustainable utilization of natural resources and promoting measures at international level to deal with regional or global environmental problems, including in the areas of:

- environmental governance and horizontal issues, including Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment, education and training, environmental liability, combating environmental crime, transboundary cooperation, access to environmental information, decision-making processes and effective administrative and judicial review procedures; water quality and resource management, including flood risk management, water scarcity and droughts.

At 1 of July 2016 Association Agreement between EU-RM fully entered in force. Under this AA country should develop RBMPs in accordance with WFD and other EU Directives. EPIRB project supported this activity and contribute for developing WFD compliant RBMP for Danube-Prut and Black Sea river district in accordance with national Water Law.

Also, according to art.110 The Parties shall increase the cross-border cooperation aiming at restoring the navigation on Prut River which will lead to flood prevention in the basin of the river, improving the water quality and agricultural irrigation, intensifying economic activities, promoting tourism and cultural activities and contributing to capacity building.

Recommendations to be followed up as part of dialogue with each country

At the present time, final draft of RBMPs for Prut RB and Danube Delta and Black Sea sub basins are passed to Ministry of Environment. In addition, Danube Delta and Black Sea sub basins Analysis drafted by Institute of Ecology and Geography was drafted and passed to all stakeholders.

At the end of 2016 MoE plans to present to the Government final draft of RBMP for the Danube-Prut and Black Sea District, I cycle (2017-2023), which will be approved by Governmental Decision.

Involvement of Romania in development of RBMP for Prut River Basin is also critical and the EUWI plus project needs to facilitate this involvement in a view of further integrated planning process covering three countries in line with latest developments in Moldova - commitment to the EU association.

Drafts of monitoring programmes for SW and GW partly compliant with WFD and national legislation are prepared in common with Stakeholders State Hydrometeorological Service and Agency for Geology and Mineral Resources and Hydrogeology Expeditions from Moldova. SHS should also developed national regulation for hydromorphology monitoring of SWB, which was drafted by EPIRB experts. The development of ecological assessment and classification systems is one of the most important and technically challenging parts of WFD implementation, and consequently for the EPIRB project. The last version was prepared in 2016 and early results for the Prut RB were included.

Lessons Learns and Next Steps

Increasing capacities of water management and monitoring institutions under MoE remains key problem. Trainings and “training of trainers” are asked by stakeholders to be organised in following up EU projects.

Implementing RBMPs for I cycle (2017-2023) for both river districts (Dniester and Danube-Prut and Black Sea) is important challenges for MoE and State Water Agency “Apele Moldovei” in the nearest future. Communication between Basin Water Management Authorities and River Basin Committees and sub basin councils in the regions is also important activity for implementing RBMPs and PoMs.

Ukraine

Summary of the main activities

Support the implementation of countries' obligations under the Danube and Water Conventions.

EPIRB project starts the activities on preparing the draft of joint Prut River Basin Management Plan as it requires the WFD. The draft report of Comparative of three RBMPs for Moldova, Romania and Ukraine is the first step that will need to continue at the nearest time.

Using the Danube GIS platform in reporting to ICPDR for the Danube RBMP and bringing together the component River Prut Plans has proved to be a great success, with both Moldova and Ukraine acknowledging its usefulness. All project data will be uploaded on to Ukraine specific WISE databases. There will also continue discussions with the European Environment Agency to use the SEIS 2 server for the holding of the project databases on a later stage.

EPIRB project supported activities of MENR of Ukraine on preparing the national report on implementation the requirements of the Protocol on water and health of UNECE Water Convention. This activity must be continuing.

Develop WFD-compliant monitoring programmes, including hydro-biological and hydromorphological elements and groundwater.

Considering that there were 9 main hydrographic areas (river basins) determined in Ukraine, the further approach on WFD implementation activities should favour the adhering of the responsibilities taken by Ukraine in terms of harmonisation of its water legislation with the European legislation in the part of creating proper monitoring systems. Ukraine priorities first of all include the works in laboratory capacity building for environmental monitoring purposes. The preparing by EPIRB project the Monitoring Strategy for Ukraine with focus on Upper Dnieper and Prut river basin will be using for reforming of State water monitoring system.

Monitoring of coastal and transitional waters in Ukraine using EPIRB project coastal zone monitoring guideline will need to meet both the requirements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the WFD.

Assist in the development of WFD-compliant tools for assessing data obtained from monitoring activities (ecological, chemical, hydro-morphological classifications).

The development of the Ecological Status Classification System (ESCS) is a long-term task, which has begun under the EPIRB project with the development of a regional ESCS for Upper Dnieper and Prut river catchments. The next stage will be the development of comparable ESCSs for the lower river catchments and lakes, to include other biological quality elements such as fish, macrophytes, phytobenthos and phytoplankton.

WISE compatible web-based GIS/Database system was established on an 'open source' server environment. Initial setup and testing of the system was performed on the virtual 'cloud' system. Currently the system is physically located on the following cloud based virtual server infrastructure: <https://leaseweb.com/>. The web services are available at: [HYPERLINK "http://185.17.144.169/"http://185.17.144.169/](http://185.17.144.169/). At the moment hosting of the cloud base system is pre-paid for one year, but the project envisages further discussion of the system ownership and possible transfer with the follow on water project.

Support the analytical quality control and quality assurance procedures.

The EPIRB project provided successful activities to the national beneficiaries' laboratories on QA/QS procedures. Participants of Upper Dnieper RBMP public consultation proposed to include activity on implementation of ISO International Standards for pollutants identification and monitoring in water as measure of PoM.

Developing the River Basin Management Plans.

There were two RBMPs for Upper Dnieper and Prut river basins prepare according the requirements of WFD and includes the following sections: description of the river basin; identification, typology and delineation of surface and groundwater WBs; a summary of significant pressures and possible anthropogenic impacts on the status of surface and groundwater, assessment of risk of failing to achieve good status by these WBs; the monitoring programs; environmental objectives; the program of measures; cost assessment and prioritisation of the measures proposed; results of public consultations and the list of competent bodies. The consultation meetings, organised in close cooperation with the key beneficiaries, gathered on average 50 participants in each basin and represented the opening of the consultation process on the draft RBMPs.

The main challenges of RBMPs development included the following ones: lack of reliable and necessary data on quantity and quality of water resources due to the fact that the existing monitoring system in Ukraine is not WFD-compliant.

It is expected that beside the renewed Water Code of Ukraine the order of the Government of Ukraine the Governmental Order on "Procedure of elaboration, review and approval of River Basin Management Plans" will be adopted. In case if RBMPs will be adopted by the Order of Cabinet of the Ministers of Ukraine (CMU) there are the following final steps will be done by can be done:

The Ministry of environment (MENR) according to the existed provisions for CMU's Order approval:

- Draft RBMP will be discussed internally within the ministry with participation of relevant departments and agencies of the MENR, including State Agency of Water Resources;
- Draft RBMP will be disseminated for consideration and comments at national level with participation of relevant ministries, including Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Financing, Ministry of Regional Development, Building and Housing Services, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of fuel and energy, Ministry of agropolicy, Ministry of public health and relevant state agencies;
- MENRP will present the finalised Draft RBMP to the Government / CMU for approval;
- River basin management plan will be approved by the CMU Decree/Order.

The MENR can advocate the RBMPs at Regional level and promote the incorporation of the measures of Program of measures of the RBMP to the Regional Programs of socioeconomic development, which have to be revised and adopted as Regional Development Strategies and Programs at Regional (Oblast) level for the period till 2020. MENR has to cooperate with Kyiv and Chernigiv Regional State Administrations to incorporate the measures of PoMs of Upper Dnieper RBMP in the relevant part on nature protection of Regional Programs on socio- economic development till 2020. For Prut PoM has to cooperate with Ivano-Frankivsk and Chernivtsi Regional State Authorities.

The future project can support such activities in Ukraine and will become the driver of reforming of water management system.

Recommendations to be followed up as part of dialogue with each country

According the Plan of approximation national water legislation to the EU WFD ordered by Cabinet of Ministry of Ukraine, Ukraine must next years:

Approve the mandate of the Basin departments of water management with responsibilities defined by the Directive.

To ensure proper implementation of river basin management principle:

- by recognition in law the zoning of the territory of Ukraine based on basin principle;
- by identifying the units of hydrographical regionalisation of the Ukraine territory.
- Implement the new monitoring systems for surface water and groundwater according the requirements of WFD;
- Develop and legalise the criteria for the river basin status assessment;
- Develop and approve the provision on River Basin Management Plan and methodology of its development;
- Develop the methodology of the Programme of measures development according to Article 11 of the Directive;
- Develop River Basin Management Plans (in compliance with requirements of Article 14 of WFD on public participation and information, consultations).

Beside above mentioned tasks the MENR of Ukraine needs in support of revising of Plan of implementation of requirements of Protocol about Water and Health under UNECE Water convention

Lessons Learnt and Next Steps

At the start of EPIRB project the legal framework for water resources management in Ukraine did not reflect river basin management principles such as those enshrined in the WFD. Considerable efforts have been made in recent years to introduce reforms, often with the assistance of EU-funded projects, but these efforts have remained on paper. The EU Water Governance project has contributed significantly to the reform efforts, but the timeframe for project implementation – two years including inception - has probably been too short to allow their translation into concrete action. Hence, the draft legislation produced was never channelled through a formal approval process after project completion.

Nevertheless, the Government's recognition of the soundness of the EU approach is underpinned by numerous policy statements made in the previous years. These indicate that Ukraine still intended to adopt a river basin management approach in line with European standards. Given its duration and its capacity-building orientation, the EPIRB Project provided a good opportunity for the country to follow up on the outputs produced through the Water Governance Project. In particular, it was include the elaboration of the draft subsidiary legislation on IWRM and basin principles in the river basin planning, based on the evolution of the pilot planning exercises.

The EPIRB project has proved a successful technical assistance model in the water sector and provided inputs for the implementation or approximation of the WFD. A lot of methodology guidance and trainings with involving the local beneficiaries helped to create a sustainable platform for feather implementation WFD in Ukraine. The practical exercises on all stages of creation of RBMPs were improving capacity building of the beneficiaries' organisations.

It has become clear from the comparison exercise of the River Prut RBMPs of Romania and Ukraine and Moldova that the differences are substantial and fundamental and the composite RBMP would not be attainable without great effort. It is therefore to be proposed that instead an 'umbrella plan' be developed under the guidance of a newly established Working Group under the auspices of the ICPDR and supported by EUWI+. In the meantime the existing Prut RBMPs can be adopted in Ukraine and Moldova without radical change. The development of the 'umbrella plan' could serve as a model for other transboundary plans in the region.

The coastal WFD pilot plan has been a useful exercise but needs to be expanded upon as part of the EUWI+ project. The monitoring capacity in Georgia has been shown to be limited and needs support and a second pilot in the Ukraine is recommended.

The participating laboratories need further support to meet the ISO accreditation standards and improve capacity in analysis of priority substances. The QA/QS procedures in the national laboratories are weak and a critical self-assessment by the laboratory managers is required before further project support takes place.

The Ecological Status Classification System for pilot river basins has been finalised but it is acknowledged that this is only a first step of what will be a long process. Ukraine needs to strengthen their biological monitoring capacity. The various technical guidelines produced by the project need to be applied by the countries and not left to gather dust.

Tentative final drafts Upper Dnieper RBMP and Prut RBMP are available to adopt in accordance with the national planning procedures. Ukraine needs some time for finalisation the secondary legislation about RBMP processes taking into account the national specific approval procedures.

According to the Basic Timetable to be followed by Ukraine to meet the WFD requirements, until 2023, Art. 9(2) WFD (Recovery of costs for water services), Art. 13 WFD (River basin management plans), as well as Art. 14 WFD (Public information and consultation) are to be implemented. In such situation when we have to wait till 2023 for implementation of RBMP the adaptation of the prepared RBMPs can be done by using two options for adoption of the Upper Dnieper and Prut RBMPs: 1) to use the existed national procedure for approval of the Order of Cabinet of Ministers' of Ukraine or 2) to adopt the PofM of the RBMPs within the relevant Regional Socio-Economical Programs of measures or Regional Development Strategies till 2020.