



International Conference on the Implementation of the WFD  
Sibiu (Romania), 01-04 October 2008



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Of Basin  
Organizations

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## Preparation of a note from INBO to the European Water Directors :

« *WFD contributions to water management  
in transboundary river basins* »



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# Objectives



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- ◆ INBO is member of the **Strategic Coordination Group (SCG)** of the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS)
- ◆ INBO could have a more impt role within the CIS, acting as **the « voice » of the Basin Organizations**
- ◆ It appeared important to give a contribution on **transboundary issues** in WFD implementation



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# Timetable



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- ◆ **1-3 October : presentation & discussion of the draft**
- ◆ **30 October : deadline for comments**
- ◆ **Beginning November : sent to European Commission and Water Directors, available on website [riob.org](http://riob.org)**
- ◆ **25 November : presented to the Water Directors**



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# Content



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- ◆ Part 1 – **WFD inputs** in a transboundary context : progress report
- ◆ Part 2 – **Constraints and needs** identified by basin organizations
- ◆ **Conclusions** : main changes allowed by WFD, main recommendations





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# WFD inputs

## River basin management and international commissions



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- ◆ « Administrative arrangements »
- ◆ **Coordination role** of international commissions
- ◆ Facilitation when a long tradition of bilateral cooperation
- ◆ **Integration of WFD principles** in existing agreements
- ◆ **Enlargement** of international commissions, considering the whole river basin
- ◆ **WFD : an overall framework** for multilateral coordination
- ◆ Some examples : Danube, Scheldt, Romania/Hungary & basin Körös/Crisuri, Spain/Portugal (Albufeira Convention)



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# WFD inputs

A common objective: good water status



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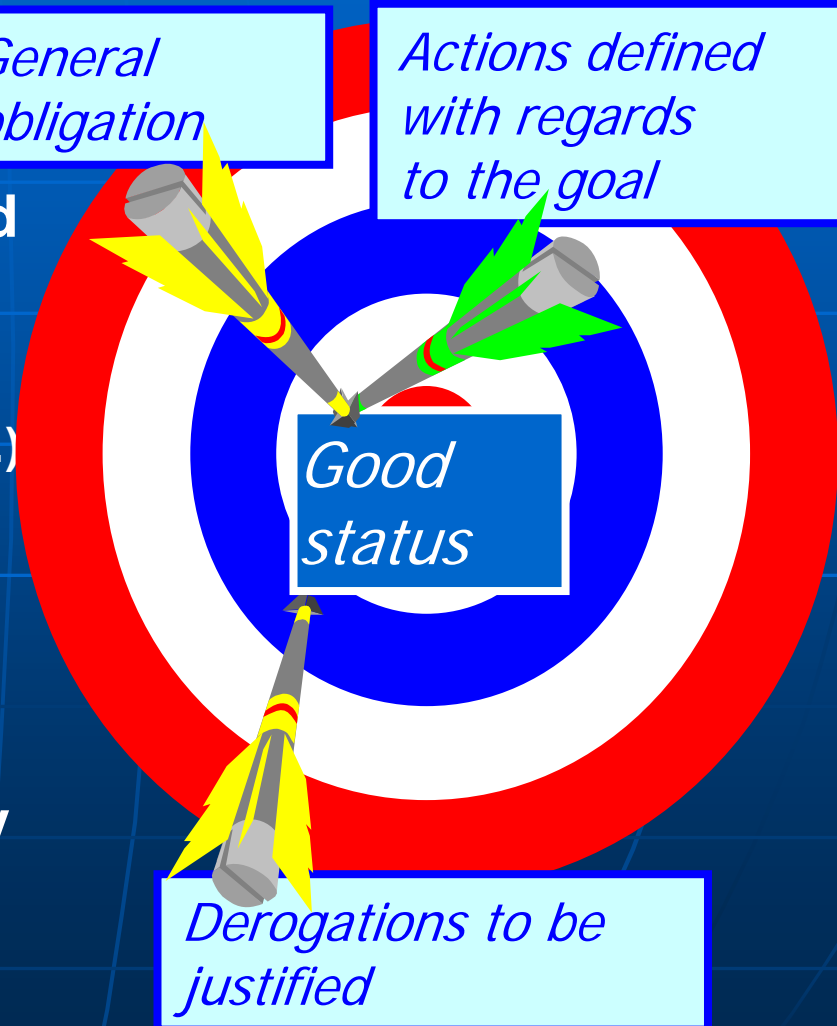
- ◆ A **common reference** for setting objectives and assessing the water status : comparability, reliable starting base, to build and implement common strategy
- ◆ But important points **still to be harmonised** (parameters, frequency ...)
- ◆ From physico-chemical water quality to a more integrative ecosystem management (+ hydromorphology and biology)
- ◆ Example : programme adopted by ICPR for the Rhine, July 2008

*General obligation*

*Actions defined with regards to the goal*

*Good status*

*Derogations to be justified*





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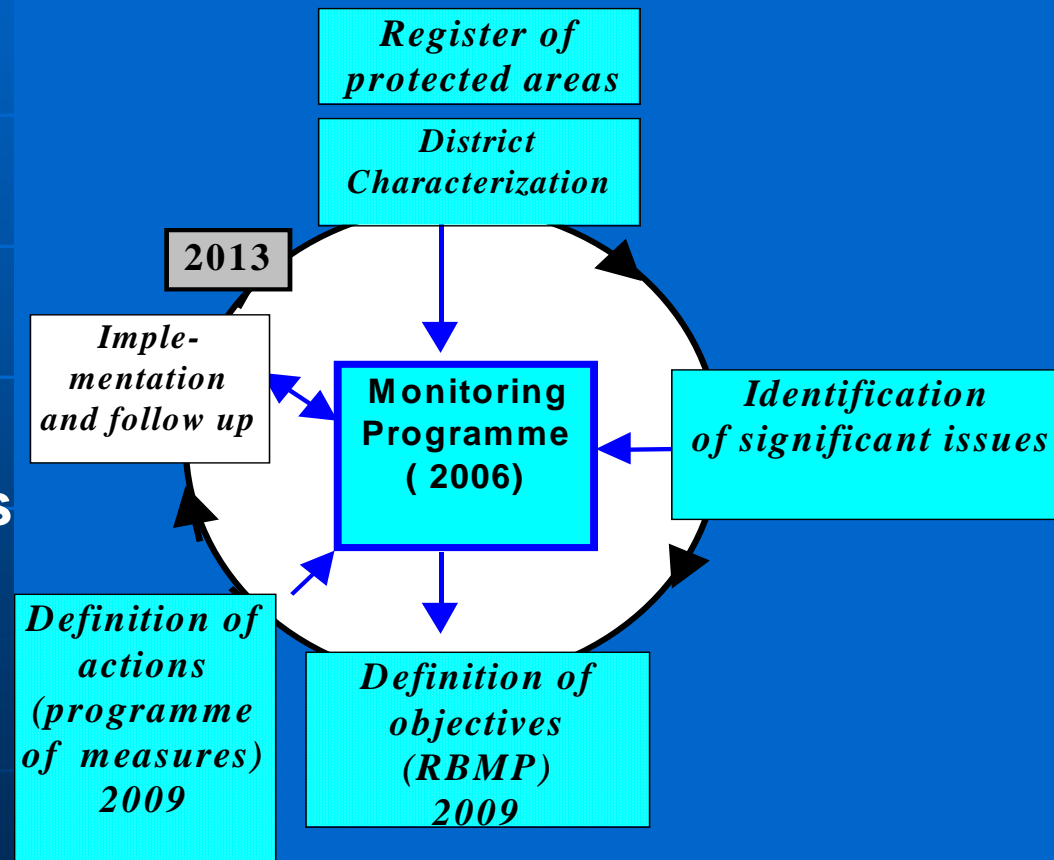
# WFD inputs

## A common planning process



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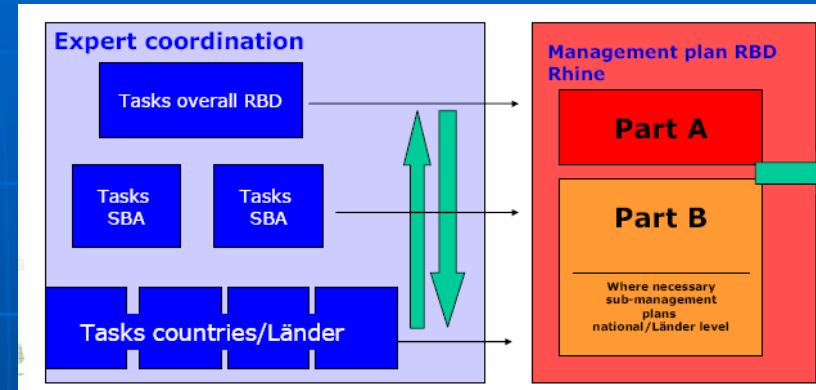
- ◆ **Same steps** and deadlines
- ◆ Cyclic process
- ◆ Each planning step formalised in a **roof report**
- ◆ Specific organisation of international commissions: WFD coordination committees « mirror groups » / CIS
- ◆ Examples : Meuse, Rhine, Scheldt...







- ◆ Only one or coordinated plan
- ◆ In practice : **coordinated plan**
- ◆ Common section (part A)
- ◆ National parts (part B)
- ◆ « Acquis » of the characterisation
- ◆ Large RBD (Danube, Rhine): cooperation at sub-basin scale
- ◆ Distribution part A / part B different from a district to an other = differences in the **level of coordination**
- ◆ Lack of data and uncertainties concerning **methods** (disproportionate cost, cost-effectiveness, exemptions...)
- ◆ Example of the Scheldt : joint catalogue of measures with their costs and assessments methods





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# WFD inputs



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- ◆ **Monitoring** : comparability improved through intercalibration, progress made in the definition of networks at transboundary scale, need to continue & define homogeneous monitoring networks
- ◆ **Reporting** : WISE is an important step towards a harmonised water system but specific needs for IRBD, common strategy for data pooling designed in some IRBD
- ◆ **Public participation** : a common strategy for public participation in some cases, rarely a real joint approach, importance to not only coordinate the timetable but also the content (common issues)



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# WFD inputs

## A driving force for new EU Member States and non UE countries



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- ◆ **New EU Member States** : a lot of work has been done (examples : Romania within the Danube IRBD, Mesta/Nestos Basin shared by Greece/Bulgaria)
- ◆ **Riparian non-EU countries** : extension of WFD approach to neighbouring countries
- ◆ **Outside EU** : a reference frame, dissemination of WFD principles in Latin America, Africa and Central Asia (example: Irtysh river basin – Russia/Kazakhstan)
- ◆ A growing interest of non-EU countries concerning WFD principles



# Constraints and needs



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- ◆ **Huge workload** : harmonisation of approaches is time consuming, need to increase means & human resources
- ◆ Need for **capacity building** : specific professional training
- ◆ Improve **decision-making** in international commissions
- ◆ Harmonisation of **methods** : develop common indicators
- ◆ Coordination of **information systems**
- ◆ Need for strengthening **coordination of measures** and increasing the ambition of content of roof reports
- ◆ Urgency to develop joint managt of **transboundary aquifers**
- ◆ **Floods and droughts** : articulation Floods Directive / WFD, need to increase coordination, exchange of information, upstream/downstream common cause, baseline scenarios to take account of **climate change**
- ◆ Reinforce cooperation programmes with **non-EU countries**



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# Conclusions

**For the first time in the world, 27 countries adopted the same basin oriented approach !**



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- ◆ Principal added value : **reference frame** with common objectives, contributing to overcome cultural differences
- ◆ Complementarity between UNECE Convention / WFD
- ◆ Confirmation of the role of international commissions
- ◆ Harmonisation of practices between riparian States
- ◆ Tool for **European integration**
- ◆ Coordination at multilateral level, complementary with bilateral agreements
- ◆ Improves upstream/downstream relations : countries share the same **joint responsibility** for the management of the RB
- ◆ Guidance documents : a common base



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# Perspectives



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- ◆ **Still huge work** to improve the coherence of methods and actions : to provide increased resources for WFD
- ◆ Better take account of **quantitative aspects**
- ◆ WFD implementation in transboundary basins : a relevant **indicator** to evaluate the work done for WFD impl. in Europe
- ◆ Example of regional initiative which **can inspire other areas** in the world
- ◆ Factor for disseminating the principles of **good governance**
- ◆ WFD : not universal but approach & principles are **transferable**



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**Please send your comments  
before 30th October**

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Which **added value of international commissions** to the Parties ?

CIS process & **specific needs** of transboundary basins ?

How to **improve coordination** ?

What about **transboundary aquifers** ?

**Your feedback and recommendations** ?

Added value and content of **roof reports = orientations** documents ?

Reinforce **means & role of international commissions** ?

**Examples ? Other issues ?**

Articulation of **WFD / Bilateral treaties** ?

Interest of WFD principles for **non EU countries** ?  
Appropriation & progress made ?