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Enhancing Access to Information and Public Participation in Environmental Decision-making in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro

1st Progress Report



WORKING FOR THE DANUBE AND ITS PEOPLE

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PREFACE

This Report is prepared for component 3.4 of Objective 3 of the Danube Regional Project (phase 2).

The overall focus under Objective 3 is to enhance awareness raising in civil society and reinforce the participation of NGOs and other interested parties in water management and pollution reduction (nutrients and toxic substances) with particular attention to trans boundary cooperation and river basin management in the context of the Water Framework Directive.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Component 3.4, in particular, focuses on supporting emerging processes of improved public participation in environmental decision making, with emphasis on better access to environmental information and public participation in decision making on hot spot prevention and cleanup. The project will assist and advise in building capacity in government officials who are the “front lines” of access to information and responsible for implementing public participation through targeted training and technical assistance activities carefully tailored to the needs and circumstances of each country. National and local NGOs and the public involved in the Danube and water-related issues, the main stakeholders and partners of the officials involved in public participation, when engaged actively in this capacity building, will in turn support full and effective public involvement in planning in the context of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and prevention and cleanup of Danube hot spots, an effect that should last long after the Danube Regional Project (DRP) has been completed.

Over the period of past 10 months, the Consortium of the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), Resources for the Future (RFF) and New York University School of Law (NYU) has completed the Inception Phase and not only started the Implementation Phase but has completed some of the milestones and deliverables, and reached substantial results.

This report has three parts. The first part describes the activities over the past six months in details since January 2005, since the Implementation phase started. It does not deal with those activities which have been already covered in the Inception report submitted in December 2004. The aim of Part I is to provide the project donors and those responsible for both the larger DRP and Component 3.4 with an overview of the most important steps taken, findings and decisions made, results achieved in the past six months of the project.

The second part of the report is dedicated to the activities that will be undertaken in the next six months and the different work products or deliverables that are prepared for these activities or will result from them. Part II starts with a short description of these activities. Then it also provides an overview of the detailed work plan which indicates the different activities, those which have been already completed and those ahead, as well as the proposed changes in their timing.

Part III includes a financial report and a request for budget reallocation by the Consortium after consideration of the proposed country activities to be carried out by the project countries.

1. ACTIVITIES OVER THE PAST 6 MONTHS

1.1. Needs Assessment for all countries

The Inception Report to the DRP explains in detail the purpose of the needs assessments and the process for finding and commissioning experts to write them. Since the date of the inception report, the process described there has been completed.

The purpose of this section is briefly to provide additional information about the preparation of the needs assessments, their presentations and use at country meetings, and later at the regional meeting, the feedback we received, how they have been finalized, and then to provide a small summary of each of the individual needs assessments in the context of commonalities found among the needs assessments in the April regional meeting. Finally, this section explains how the results of the needs assessments are being disseminated, both nationally and within the wider Danube River Basin.

Needs assessments were created for each of the countries involved in the project. The needs assessments were reviewed extensively, commented and later edited by the Consortium. When the research and editing phase was completed, the needs assessments were provided for discussion to participants in each of the country meetings.

At each country meeting, the consultants who wrote the needs assessment presented their findings. Thereafter, the participants discussed whether these findings and the proposed priority needs were correct, complete or if they needed to be revised. Additional thoughts were solicited, and the meetings were used to establish country-specific priorities for further work addressing the identified barriers during the course of Component 3.4.

At the April 25-26, 2005 Regional Workshop in Szentendre, representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, and Serbia and Montenegro reported on the conclusions reached at their individual country meetings and any subsequent consideration of pertinent issues identified for work in the Component 3.4 activities. The conclusions were based on the country-specific Needs Assessments and discussions about the Needs Assessments that were conducted at country meetings. Other members from the same country delegation were invited to add their own thoughts. The subject was then opened up for general discussion and to compare experience from all the participating countries, and for an examination of commonalities. All of this was done in order to set the workplan for the remaining activities of Component 3.4, to identify and prepare what issues would be addressed in the study tours, and to feed into preparations for the implementation of country activities and demonstration projects.

Rather than repeat information from the specific needs assessments, which were extensive and covered a great deal of ground, this report will focus on the commonalities expressed between the five Needs Assessments, as they were discussed in the Szentendre meeting. It became clear there that, although the individual countries are in very different states of development of both law and practices, they face a number of similar challenges. The reports to the regional meeting were captured, as well, in a matrix in the course of the meeting. The matrix is copied below, and explained in writing.

Every participating country reported that government officials were, at best, inconsistent in the ways they responded to information requests and often rejected information requests, even when the relevant law supported the request. Each participating country also reported that ordinary citizens and individuals were often ignorant about their rights to information, but that even when

they had some knowledge of their rights, they lacked knowledge about how to make appropriate requests for information and what to do if their requests were denied.

Officials responded poorly for a variety of reasons including their own lack of knowledge about the relevant laws and limited experience and/or resources in how to implement them. To remedy this, the countries expressed need for various kinds of training and capacity building and for assistance in the development of desk books, manuals and aids that can provide practical support to government officials as they respond to information requests and individuals, as well as handbooks for citizens and NGOs as they seek information.

The purpose of the training they propose is to build awareness and new skills so that all personnel and officials understand and can carry out their public participation/information access responsibilities. The purpose of creating materials for government officials is to have easily accessible guidance documents that set out the rules and procedures to be followed when a request for information is received, including sample response letters. Additional guidance could provide ideas about the active provision of information.

The purpose of the handbooks for citizens is to provide, in the clearest possible language, understandable to the "man on the street," what are their rights with respect to information, how to ask for it in a clear understandable way, and how to protest and if necessary appeal failures or refusals to provide the information. In some instances, countries identified the need for training on these matters for citizens and/or NGOs, as well.

Four countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Serbia and Montenegro) identified particular needs related to the dearth of specialized offices or governmental units and/or specialized officials for disseminating information who understand and can carry out their responsibilities. Without internal procedures, requests get lost because no record is kept of applications or their outcome. The same countries also expressed concern about reporting of environmental matters and related public awareness, recognizing the power of the print and electronic media. The country participants expressed concern about the quality of reporting about complex environmental technical and scientific issues, such that public awareness of such issues was limited at best. They identified knowledge and understanding gaps that could be corrected to improve the relations and information flow between officials and media reporting on the environment.

The recommendation for addressing this gap was identified as assistance in developing tools and procedures for transparency and dissemination aids, and for various aspects of interacting with media and developing media support, and understanding for environmental issues.

Two countries (Croatia and Romania) identified a compelling need to establish procedures that would assist their governments in collecting and managing information they hold. Information within the responsibility of relevant ministries and offices is not well managed and countries often lack dockets and other organizing devices to assemble relevant information and have it available, should requests be made. These kinds of procedures would include establishing systems of records and other shared filing and retrieval systems that allow governments to know what information they have and where it is. A second purpose of such systems is to provide some means for segregating and protecting confidential and national security information and, correspondingly, for making available the information that is not confidential or secret and that should be shared with the public. Some examples of the particular issues that concern these countries include the fact that because countries lack centralized records and/or lists of the kinds of records that are available, information that should be disseminated, is not. Some countries also identified the need for links between national, regional and local level offices, each of which hold water-related information that should be made accessible to the public but lack either a central data base system or links between existing databases. Each identified the need to train personnel in these systems,

as well as to set them up. At least one country identified the need to provide greater amounts of information proactively in electronic form. Several of the government officials who participated in the U.S. study tour had responsibility for data collection and integrated data systems.

Three countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, and Serbia and Montenegro) identified inadequacies in their laws, and the related need for support in drafting laws or procedures that would help them comply with the various relevant requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive, the Aarhus Convention and EU Directives that implement the Aarhus Convention. Two of the three countries that identified this need were countries that have only recently started the process of developing and harmonizing their laws to be consistent with EU standards; their current laws are deficient in terms of meeting European standards. Some of the deficiencies included inadequate sub-laws and regulations such that significant commitments are left unimplemented. In some instances, relevant laws lack critical definitions that would clarify what the purpose and intent of the law is.

Three countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, and Serbia and Montenegro) identified the need to establish clear rules about how to define confidential business information, national security information and other information that should be protected from public view for reasons of public policy, and to establish procedures for making determinations of confidentiality and protecting information that has been deemed to be confidential. All expressed concern about the broad and imprecise definition or criteria for confidentiality for industrial and trade secrets, and in one case about broad permissions given to operators to keep confidential certain commercial and industrial information, essentially without review. Serbia expressed particular concern about how Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) laws and their related information apply to national defense matters, and plans and programs in the event of disasters.

Three countries identified special needs concerning particular issues facing them at the current time.

- > Bosnia/Herzegovina identified the need for technical support for Aarhus Convention implementation. Although much of Component 3.4 project involves implementation of certain requirements of the Aarhus Convention regarding water management issues, we have listed this aspect of Bosnia's Needs Assessment separately, as REC has identified other related projects in the region that might be able to provide fundamental training in the requirements and provisions of the Aarhus Convention. Most of the other countries have already received or receive basic assistance of this type as well.
- > Romania identified specific needs related to developing and carrying out the consultation components for drawing up the River Basin Management Plans called for by the Water Framework Directive (WFD). Romania has 11 River Basin Committees responsible for management on a river basin level. The country has a proposal for a guideline on "Public Participation in River Basin Management for the implementation of Water Framework Directive". There has been no additional action after this proposal was drafted and essential requirements for the consultation process prescribed by the WFD are still missing.
- > Serbia identified the need for workshops to learn how to implement and inform public authorities and officials, and the public, about new laws it has enacted (Law on EIA, Law on Strategic EIA, Law on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control and Law on free access to information of public significance) These newly developed laws are meant to implement different EU directives and they impose significant responsibilities in the field of access to information and public participation. However, government officials and the public have very little knowledge or understanding of these new laws. Another problem that makes working with these new laws difficult is that they exist alongside a body of old laws, which have no or different requirements for access to information and

public participation. Also, the body of new laws appears to be inconsistent itself. There are no rules or guidelines on how to work with these inconsistencies. The Serbian Needs Assessment also indicated that the country needs assistance in drafting provisions on public participation and access to information that are in conformity with WFD standards, for its new Water Law.

Matrix showing the overlap of country-specific needs identified in the needs assessments and subsequent discussions within and among participating countries:

NEEDS	Law support	Training/Capacity Building	Government & citizen's manuals, desk books and other types of aids	Transparency / Dissemination / Aids	Media (support and consultation)	Confidentiality of certain business and other information	Procedures etc. to manage INFO
BIH*	X	X	X	X	X		
Bulgaria		X	X	X	X	X	
Croatia		X	X	X	X	X	X
Romania **	X	X	X				X
Serbia***	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

* technical support for AC implementation (BIH)

** additional River Basin Committees (Romania)

*** workshops to provide information on new laws (public involvement in drafting/finalizing Water Law); also mentioned some special problems involving EIA and military installations (Serbia)

Subsequent to the April Regional Workshop, the Consortium did a further review of all the Needs Assessments and, where necessary, a further edit. The purpose of the additional review was to prepare the Needs Assessments to be placed on the project web site and on the web sites of the relevant REC Country Offices, to be sure of broad dissemination (and use) of the valuable information collected and analyzed in each of the Needs Assessments. The postings will be accompanied by a disclaimer, to assure that no person inappropriately relies on the legal analysis contained in the Needs Assessment. Along with the full Needs Assessment, short summaries were prepared in English and in local languages based on an outline provided by the Consortium. These summaries have also been put on the REC Country Offices' web sites.

1.2. ICPDR Assessment Reports finalized

In February 2005 the Consortium finalized two reports evaluating ICPDR rules and practices, one focusing on access to information at ICPDR and the other on public participation in ICPDR decision making and activities.

The report on access to information reviewed existing practices at ICPDR with regard to actively giving access to information and with regard to giving information on request. Gaps and best

practices were identified. The report contained suggestions on how to improve access to information held by ICPDR. In the Steering Committee meeting in April, ICPDR expressed satisfaction with the report and indicated it would consider the different suggestions for implementation.

The report on public participation at ICPDR (including both ICPDR's observer process and its stakeholder forum initiative) proposed a series of options for improving public participation in ICPDR decision making and activities, including options for enhancing the ICPDR observer process and for further developing the stakeholder forum concept. These options were based on review of ICPDR's current rules and procedures for public participation, as well as on research on the public participation rules and policies of other comparable institutions. ICPDR indicated in the Steering Committee Meeting in April that the options presented in the report were useful and that the report has been used to inform the current process of changing ICPDR's observer process and in further developing the new ICPDR stakeholder forum. A first stakeholder conference has just been held in June 2005. One of the partners in the Consortium, REC was present in the meeting and contributed to the discussion.

The Consortium needs feedback from ICPDR on what assistance it would like the Consortium to provide to support ICPDR's implementation of changes to improve public access to information and public participation at ICPDR. Based on this feedback, the Consortium will be able to design activities consistent with the timeframe of Component 3.4.

1.3. National Workshops

At the end of February and beginning of April, 5 National Workshops were held to discuss the findings of the Needs Assessment Reports, identify key barriers on public access to information and public participation and propose country activities to attempt to remove them. Also the demonstration project reports were discussed and options were proposed for pilot projects.

The workshops were held in the following order:

- > Sofia, Bulgaria, February 24-25, 2005
- > Sarajevo, BiH, February 29-March 1, 2005
- > Stubicke Toplice, March 17-18, 2005
- > Sinaia, Romania, March 31-April 1, 2005
- > Palic Lake, Serbia and Montenegro, April 4-5, 2005

The two-day workshops gathered approximately 25-50 experts from key ministries, agencies and NGOs working or planning to work in the field of WFD implementation as well as representatives of the DRP, REC, RFF or NYU. The workshops had similar agenda which included a first session presenting and discussing the conclusions of the Needs Assessment reports prepared by country consultants, the major barriers and the priority issues proposed to be addressed in the project component activities. During the second session the demonstration project report was presented and discussed. During the third session an activity plan was developed for the project activities and outputs based on the priority problems using the outcomes of the results of the previous day working groups on priority needs on legal, institutional and practical aspects. The discussion sessions included plenary as well as interactive small working group sessions for all three topics.

The participants were informed about the development of indicators for the different DRP project components by Dutch consultants to measure progress and success in achieving the outcomes of the project. The Dutch consultants participated in the Sofia workshop but the goals and expectations regarding the project activities were discussed in all countries in small working groups

to be used for further development of indicators regarding the assessment of outcomes of national level activities.

The minutes of the national workshops have been finalized. They have been circulated among the national and operational team members and are being made available at the websites of the REC Country Offices

See section on proposed country activities and table of proposed demonstration project.

1.4. Regional Workshop

On April 25-26, 2005 a Regional Workshop was organized at the REC Conference Center in Szentendre, Hungary. The main objectives of the meeting were:

- > to address the common barriers and problems that were raised in the Needs Assessments and during the national workshops, and to define future joint activities of the project to address them;
- > to review the progress of the project to date and shape the future activities, and
- > to give the participants from the project countries the possibility to share their experience among each other and to learn from the experience at the EU level and in other countries, and build capacities.

The 45 participants in the workshop included the key members of the country's operational teams, NGOs, country consultants, experts from REC Headquarters and Country Offices as well as the representative of the DRP. The meeting was opened by Marta Szigeti Bonifert, the ED of the REC and Kari Aina Eik, from DRP. The Dutch consultants, Jan Piers van Leeuwen and Jan Dogterom, were also present and presented the indicators to be proposed to be developed to measure progress of project implementation.

After a short update on the status of the project implementation by the Project Manager, the meeting continued with an overview of the current status of public access to water related information in each participating country. Each country team presented the findings of the Needs Assessment Reports, the main barriers identified and the proposed national activities to attempt to overcome them.

The workshop then focused on capacity building and exchange of experience on three priority issues common to all countries, which are proposed to be addressed in the project including:

- > developing user-friendly procedure for public access to water related information;
- > developing legal framework and criteria for commercial and industrial secret, and
- > developing tools for assisting the officials to provide information and the public to access information.

Following presentations by experts from Hungary, Estonia and the US, experiences were shared by the project countries. Good practices identified in these presentations were used to further develop the country activities. The participants worked in country teams and further specified their activity plan according to the needs identified earlier.

As a result of the workshop, the participants got acquainted with the commonalities and differences in access to information and public participation issues to be addressed in their countries, and with different models from EU countries and the US for the three common issues and they made progress in developing their own country activity plan. It was agreed that specific and complete

country activity plans will be prepared by the end of June based on discussions by the Operational Teams and comments from the REC, RFF and NYU.

The minutes of Regional Workshop, agenda and list of participants are available at the REC project web site.

1.5. Selection of Country Activities

The selection of country activities was an iterative and gradual process. First, the national consultants identified problems / obstacles in the Needs Assessment reports and suggested a few as first priorities. These priorities were discussed and completed in National Workshops and further refined in the Regional Workshop. Based on these proposals, the Consortium provided feedback to the country teams on which of the country activities would fit the goals of DRP component 3.4 and which are feasible to carry out within the timeframe of the project.

Three to four activities have been identified for each country and they have been developed by the Operational Team into a more detailed country activity plan. This plan has been finalized in a dialogue with the REC, RFF and NYU together with proper budget allocation. The country activities plan will be fully finalized by July 15 and their implementation can start immediately, or at latest from September 1, after the summer holidays.

The country activities plans can be summarized as follows:

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- > Contribution to development of bylaw(s), procedures with regard to Water Law once officially adopted.
 - o assess the needs for bylaws connected to the draft Water Law in light of needs for further elaboration of procedures, rights and duties concerning public access to information and public participation;
 - o select priority bylaws in close cooperation with National operational team;
 - o draft selected bylaw or procedure;
 - o organize half day meeting/consultations to collect comments on drafts bylaws/procedure.
- > Contribution to the development of a Water Data Base
 - o assess which institutions collect and disseminate what water related information, (the CARDS project report on monitoring and the LIFE project on development of information system in accordance with EEA requirements should be starting point);
 - o discuss assessment with working group of relevant officials and NGOs;
 - o prepare list/inventory of institutions and information;
 - o prepare leaflet for the public on how and where, what information can be accessed and make the inventory and leaflet publicly available in published and electronic form;
 - o develop recommendations for relevant ministries and agencies on how public access to the database can be improved.
- > Development of guidelines/manual for authorities on how to disseminate active/passive water information and how to involve the public in water related decision making
 - o design of table of content by operational team and representatives of relevant authorities and NGOs;

- o preparation of first draft taking into account international experiences and good practices;
- o discussion of 1st draft in meeting with Operational team and representatives of relevant authorities and NGOs;
- o finalization after comments, publishing and disseminating.
- > NGOs contributing to the improvement of access to water related information
 - o Organize workshop in order to assess the minimal needs of community with regard to information related to drinking and bathing water (DEF);
 - o Based on the findings, give input to the guidelines/manual for the authorities addressing active/passive info access and dissemination and clarifications on the issue of confidentiality;
 - o Produce an information brochure/leaflet for NGOs/ public in order to assist them to find the water related information sources, and increase their capacity to interpret the data provided by authorities.

Bulgaria

- > Assessment and improvement of the rules and regulations regarding the confidentiality of environmental information for authorities
 - o assessment of the current situation in Bulgaria and comparison with EU practices;
 - o development of options for improvement and/or change (draft law, amendment of the law or guidance material);
 - o set up working group of officials and NGOs to discuss and develop the proposals, interact with businesses;
 - o capacity building for officials through presenting and discussing practices in EU Member States and what could be used in Bulgaria;
 - o develop guidance material on how to address the issue of confidentiality.
- > Training and capacity building for authorities
 - o identification of good practices and failures to implement the existing procedures for active/passive access to information with a special focus on water related environmental information;
 - o development of a proposal on good practices and suggestions for overcoming the failures to implement the existing legislation;
 - o pilot implementation of the identified good practices and the approaches for overcoming the failures to implement the existing legislation in selected administrations (e.g. in the Danube river Basin Directorate);
 - o training of officials to implement the identified techniques/good practices
- > Improvement of active dissemination of information on environment and water through web page of responsible authorities
 - o identification of needs for improvement;
 - o implementation of changes for improvement;
 - o elaboration of a web site for the Danube RDB;
 - o Assessment of changes by asking the interested stakeholders;
 - o Development of material on frequently asked questions and put on web page;
 - o put on web site information how access is possible/where/what info can be accessed (on sources of information).

- > Development of a brochure for civil society to advise the larger public on how/where to access environmental / water related information.

Croatia

- > Development of internal protocol with regard to access to water related information that will assist the authorities holding water related information
 - o Preparation of a paper that will address the current status of how information requests are handled by authorities, use best practices collected from international examples (EU);
 - o Using the available information, the WG will discuss a proposal paper for methodology that will be the content of the Protocol. Based on this an expert will prepare a draft Protocol;
 - o Collecting feed-back on the draft Protocol during the National Meeting
- > Developing a practical guide/brochure on public access to water related information for use by the NGOs and general public
 - o practical assistance on how/where/whom to approach when info is needed how to address relevant institutions in a more efficient way;
 - o public campaign promoting use of brochures in the context of enhancing public participation and access to water related information;
- > Conducting a training program for relevant public officials for improving practices in providing environmental information with a specific emphasis on water issues
 - o development of training structure for national/regional/local level authorities on relevant procedures, using best practices;
 - o holding trainings based on the structure developed;
 - o evaluating how the training improved the every day practice.

Romania

- > Improvement of the functioning of River Basin Committees (RBCs)
 - o assess ways and methods of communication/ information exchange among RBCs and members and how the information produced to various documents reach the communities (public);
 - o assess and analyze how the feedback from the public on the delivered information gets back to RBC and how this is being used;
 - o design models to follow in order to improve stakeholder representation and involvement of public into water management issues in communities;
 - o share conclusions, experience and best practices at national level with RBCs.
- > Contribution to development of water information webpage that would assist the Ministry of Environment and Waters and other central government authorities to reach the public through delivering user friendly information
- > Improving and sharing best practices while handling requests related to water information through development of manual for authorities
 - o design of the content by a WG that will later give input to the 1st draft;
 - o discuss the 2nd draft and contribute to the finalization of the manual, including with NGOs perspective during the National meeting;
 - o capacity building exercise for authorities that are beneficiaries of the product on how to use the material.

- > Development of brochure for wider public and NGOs on where/what/how the information on water related issues can be accessed, integrating to the web page activities and the manual for authorities.

Serbia and Montenegro

- > Capacity building for authorities and NGOs to improve understanding and application of new legislation and international obligations in practice regarding public access to information, public participation in decision making on water related matters
 - o Development of a Manual for government officials in local language;
 - o Defining structure/outline of manuals by working group of relevant officials and NGOs;
 - o Consultations with international experts (REC, NYU, RFF);
 - o Consultations on the draft Manual with relevant officials and NGOs parties to collect comments and finalize Manual after comments;
 - o Publish and disseminate Manual to relevant institutions (in combination with capacity building workshops).
- > Improve public access to information
 - Development of a brochure for NGOs and the general public in easily understandable language to facilitate public access to water related information (where to find what information, which ministries, agencies hold the information, how to access the information, etc.).
 - o Discuss outline of the brochure with selected group of NGOs;
 - o Prepare first draft of brochure;
 - o Discuss draft brochure in meeting with selected group of NGOs and finalize based on comments;
 - o Publish and disseminate the brochure (in combination with capacity building workshops).
 - > Twinning program/study tour to learn from other countries' experience regarding the practical implementation of public access to information and public participation requirements of EU WFD
 - > Improvement of public involvement in law drafting process (Draft Water Law)
 - o organize roundtable discussion with all stakeholders/experts/NGOs/authorities on draft Water Law;
 - o analyze the draft, collect input on the draft law;
 - o send the input collected to the authorities drafting the law.

The activity plans when in final form will be put on the web site of REC COs.

1.6. Demonstration projects

The demonstration projects have been selected in an iterative process:

- > National consultants prepared a demonstration project report for each country, using the EMIS database, outlining the most serious hotspots. The selection criteria included:
 - o there should be a serious hotspot, included in the EMIS Database,

- o there should be a relevant public access to information or public participation problem,
- o the capacity of the NGO who will implement the project and of the local authority who will be a cooperative partner.
- > These reports were discussed in national workshops where participants, based on their experience, provided further information on these selection criteria.
- > The national workshop participants identified 2-3 top priority hotspots based on the selection criteria.
- > The Operational Teams of the countries and the REC Headquarters and Country Offices worked further with the identified sites and invited proposals from NGOs working on water issues in those hotspots.
- > The list of proposed demonstration sites was presented, discussed and approved in the 1st Steering Committee Meeting on April 27, 2005
- > In two countries the identified sites had to either be further investigated (Croatia) or chosen from two options (Romania). In these cases, Operational Teams were involved in advising on which proposal should be supported as a demonstration project.
- > The consortium developed three models to help the design of the demonstration projects: a model with advanced industrial pollution, a model where River Basin Committees could be involved and a model where the public access to information mechanisms at still at a starting point.
- > REC Headquarters developed a format for the description of an activity plan and budget, and in dialogue with the interested NGOs, with the help of the Country Offices, the full proposals have been developed
- > During the pilot projects technical assistance will be provided by the Consortium (the proposals include requests for such assistance), and the REC Headquarters and Country Offices will monitor and support the project implementation.
- > The contracts will be signed after all activities and the budget have been finalized and agreed.
- > The implementation of the demonstration projects will start September 1, 2005.

A table of demonstration projects is included in the Annex T.

1.7. Steering Committee Meeting

The 1st Steering Committee Meeting took place on April 27, 2005 at the REC Conference Center, Szentendre, Hungary, following the Regional Workshop. All project countries were represented in the meeting, either by the ICPDR Head of Delegation or his/her representatives. Representatives of DEF, ICPDR, DRP and the implementing Consortium were also present.

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- > Review and discuss the progress of the project component;
- > Decide on the sites of pilot demonstration projects;
- > Inform about the progress on developing indicators and log frame for evaluating project progress;
- > Provide support and strategic direction for the implementation of the project component.

After introductory remarks by Ivan Zavadsky, DRP Project Manager and Marta Szigeti Bonifert, Executive Director of REC, the implementing Consortium gave an overview of the project component activities in the inception phase and in the implementation phase of the project.

The country representatives were asked to share their experience on what they found problematic or useful during the first 8 months of the project component. All participants found useful the project activities, the needs assessment reports and the workshops and the identification of the demonstration project sites, process. Only the Croatian representative stated that it was difficult to understand what the demonstration projects should be about. Ivan Zavadsky and Phillip Weller also welcomed the project results and proposed that an overall summary, a synthesis report, should be prepared summarizing the common problems in the region and the proposed activities to respond these challenges. Such an analysis would also help ICPDR in further developing public involvement in the Danube Basin.

The consortium presented the methodology for selection of pilot demonstration sites. The priority sites were identified by participating countries based on Hot spot reports prepared by national consultants, discussed in National Workshops where options were identified and proposed for pilot sites. The country representatives presented the recommended sites for final approval. The Steering Committee approved the proposals including the further development and decision on alternative sites in Romania and in Croatia. (See list of proposed demonstration projects in Annex)

Among upcoming activities the draft programme of the US study tour between June 11 and 24 and the status of selection of study tour participants were presented by the consortium. Ivan Zavadsky and Philip Weller underlined the critical importance that governments should delegate officials to be involved in the project, who are directly involved in access to information and public participation regarding water or the WFD. The Consortium was requested to consult with DRP and ICPDR regarding the program and the participants for the study tour to the Netherlands which will take place in October and will be focused more on public participation in WFD implementation.

The Steering Committee discussed the workplan for the second half of 2005, including the finalization of Needs Assessment Reports, country activity plans, the final selection of demonstration projects, the progress report, the information about the component to be prepared for the REC web site, and further communication activities including the preparation of a leaflet for the International Waters Conference in Brazil and a special edition of REC's magazine 'Green Horizon' for Danube Day. The Committee also discussed the availability of the budget information, synergies with other components, the development of indicators for component 3.4.

Feed back was provided about the two draft reports prepared by the implementing Consortium on "ICPDR Information access, report and suggestions" and "Options for further developing public participation, including observership and stakeholder participation, at ICPDR". Both draft reports were helpful to identify where changes could be made at ICPDR and what possible alternative approaches could look like.

The Steering Committee meeting was closed with the following conclusions:

- > The next Steering Committee will be held in early 2006 (January or February).
- > The Consortium will assure that participants to the US and EU study tours meet the criteria specified in the meeting and that they will disseminate and use the experience after their return.
- > ICPDR will be consulted during the planning of the study tour to the Netherlands.
- > The Consortium will proceed with the approval of the pilot demonstration projects sites, as discussed.
- > Overall information on the budget should be distributed with the minutes of the Steering Committee meeting.

- > Steering Committee members should be consulted on budget allocation regarding country activities, and the detailed country plans and allocated budget should be included in the July Progress Report.
- > Synergies with the other DRP components should be maintained as proposed.

The Steering Committee discussed and approved the progress of the project component 3.4. The draft minutes of the meeting were sent to the participants for comments

1.8. Project Partners meeting

Following the April Regional Workshop and Steering Committee Meeting, the project partners met for a day in Szentendre to discuss their work to date and to plan for the upcoming phases of Component 3.4.

The most critical agenda items were:

- > Review of the results of Regional Workshop, Steering Committee Meeting and Component 3.4 activities to date.
- > Planning for the U.S. study tour and related details (including the effort to expedite and obtain visas for the study tour participants which included writing invitation letters to each participant, writing letters to relevant embassies that would be issuing the visas, and writing a letter for ICPDR signature to relevant ministries seeking their cooperation); A considerable amount of time was spent on this topic, in view of the immediacy of the then-upcoming study tour.
- > Implementation of the demonstration projects. As a result of these discussions, the project partners prepared three model "cases" illustrating what a demonstration project might involve. These included a model with advanced industrial pollution, a model where River Basin Committees could be involved and a model where the public access to information mechanisms are still at a starting point. The three cases reflected the wide range of development and capacity within the five countries in the project, and were designed to provide guidance to NGOs as they formulate written proposals of what they want to accomplish in the course of the demonstration projects.
- > Further development of country activities. We discussed the activities proposed by the participating countries and further steps needed to refine and elaborate these activities and to make them "do-able" within the timeframe of Component 3.4..
- > Targeted technical assistance. We discussed the forms that technical assistance could take over the course of Component 3.4, depending on the final design of the country level activities.

1.9. United States Study Tour

Fifteen representatives from the five Danube countries (two government officials and one NGO representative for each country) involved in component 3.4 and Orsolya Szálasi, from the Regional Environmental Center came to Washington, D.C. and New York City, arriving June 11 and departing June 24 2005 (logistics required that three participants depart New York on June 25, 2005). This section will discuss the substantive and procedural parts of the study tour, and a preliminary analysis of what was gained.

Purpose of study tour

The study tour provided government officials and NGOs from the five Danube countries with concepts, ideas, tools and practical information that they can use in their efforts to develop

effective procedures for access to water-related information and to stimulate increased public participation in the context of Danube environmental issues, the Water Framework Directive and the Aarhus Convention. Along with the study tour to the Netherlands, which will take place in October 2005, the U.S. study tour is a major learning and training tool of the project and the means to identify models and ideas to be adapted for use in each of project countries.

The aim of the Consortium organizers was to provide a highly structured exposure to mature systems of information access and environmental public participation, with strong emphasis on how these tools work in the context of water bodies including those shared by different jurisdictions. The Consortium fully understood that in many cases, the tools that are examined and discussed in any study tour to the U.S. or Western Europe are the product of 35 or more years of effort and experience and reflect a great deal of experience in a mature system of government and legal experience. Thus, significant efforts were made to assure the relevance of the study tour experience to countries that are at the early stages of instituting Aarhus Convention and WFD related participation and consultation procedures, and to provide each of the project participants with information and ideas that they can consider in the context of their own needs and institutions.

Study tour design

The project consortium identified a series of issues for examination in the study tour, including:

- > the specific information access laws under which government works in the United States and what practical measures government has taken to implement those laws, with emphasis whenever possible on water-related information;
- > organizing data bases so they can be made publicly accessible and are usable by a wide range of potential users;
- > how the government manages requests for information including tracking systems, practical response tools and the special problems surrounding denials, including issues of chain of command;
- > physical arrangements (such as dockets, public reading rooms and locked on-site EPA facilities) for collecting and organizing documents obtained and generated by the U.S. government including how sensitive and confidential business information is protected;
- > physical arrangements for making information available, whether or not it is the subject of a specific information request from the public;
- > moving from paper to electronic access, opportunities and problems;
- > management of information issues related to shared water bodies from the perspectives of all stakeholders including both government and NGOs;
- > the environmental press, what are their interests and approaches to their profession, how can government and NGOs get the media to pay more attention to water quality issues and to report it more accurately;
- > how NGOs seek information; what they do when they are denied information; how they use the information they obtain in litigation, public campaigns, and other activities; and
- > relationships between NGOs, government and other stakeholders.

RFF and NYU identified a number of individuals and organizations located in Washington and New York who could best exemplify and articulately discuss efforts to manage these issues (referred to in this report as study tour presenters). Preliminary interviews were conducted with most of the potential presenters. We were lucky to get extraordinary cooperation from the headquarters, Annapolis and New York regional staffs of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, from state and city environmental protection bodies and other relevant government offices, and from

stakeholder groups including some of the leading NGOs located in Washington, Annapolis and New York City.

The role of the Consortium in specific meetings:

Personnel from RFF, REC and NYU escorted the study tour participants to every meeting, and participated actively to assure maximum understanding and communication. RFF and NYU acted as “cultural interpreters” to bridge the gap between the knowledge and experience of the study tour participants and the presenters and facilitate communication.

Study tour results

Considerable effort was expended to assure that each session was not a “lecture,” but offered opportunities for adequate interaction and maximum comprehension. Each presenter agreed that questions or comments could be made throughout the presentations, and not held to afterwards. As a result, the meetings were marked by frequent questions and a lively exchange of views.

It was recognized in advance that different study tour participants would have more intense interest in different sessions, and this was clearly reflected in the responses to particular sessions. The Consortium did request that specific needs be expressed in advance of the study tour, so as to accommodate those with specific needs with for example one-on-one meetings on specific issues with US government or NGO representatives. One individual request was received and the issue at stake was covered by the visit the participants had to Annapolis and Chesapeake Bay . A number of the study tour participants themselves recognized that they had disparate interests, and that particular individual sessions might be of more interest to one or another of them.

Based on discussions and evaluations from the study tour participants, the Consortium can safely say that participants gained significant information in the following areas:

- > Participant learned how the U.S. developed national reporting on environmental data and how the public can access environmentally related data, with particular emphasis on the institutions involved.
- > Participants examined in some detail several efforts in the U.S. involving the clean up and protection of shared water bodies, including the Hudson River and the Chesapeake Bay, processes that have distinct parallels with the Danube process.
- > Participants learned how trust and specific issue-related coalitions between stakeholders such as industry, government, NGOs, and the general public implementing the information, are built between various and disparate bodies and institutions in the U.S. that are concerned about shared water bodies and concluded that there has to be a good connection and relationship between the various stakeholders and also that it is important to take action on the information that they obtain.
- > Participants learned how EPA conducts its records management, a necessary building block in any access to information regime, and understood how much depends on implementing and following the law
- > Participants learned the point of view of NGOs that watchdog and monitor how the U.S. government does or does not allow public access to information. Their perspectives gave a more rounded version of the problems of implementation of the FOIA and provided useful insights that were used in subsequent meetings with government.
- > Participants learned how EPA manages the considerable amount of confidential business and other sensitive information that it obtains to balance the need for protection against the imperative of public access.

- > Participants learned how government and NGOs communicate complex environmental and water quality messages to the public, how to deal with different stakeholders, and how NGOs build very specific coalitions around particular issues in order to increase their own power to demand better management of those issues.
- > Participants obtained several perspectives on the environmental press and its role in protecting sensitive water bodies, both from independent environmental journalists, environmental journalists who work within environmental NGOs, and from the various people in governmental agencies that interact with the media.

Reactions from the study tour participants:

The Consortium received very positive feedback from the study tour participants. Participants stated that they learned much about a number of issues, including providing/requesting information on environmental matters, general collaboration between officials and NGO in important problems, best and not so good practices, and the importance of teamwork.

Reactions from the presenters

Reactions from the presenters were very positive. Many presenters offered their assistance following the study tour if participants had further questions or needed further information or assistance. One of the presenters, a representative of Hudson Riverkeeper, proposed that an organization like Riverkeeper could be created for the Danube. After the Study Tour, a number of the NGO participants expressed great enthusiasm for this plan, and ideas are being discussed to follow up on it.

What would we have done with more time and resources?

The study tour participants responded quite favorably to the field trip to Annapolis and to the concrete information they obtained there and indicated in their evaluations that such practical examples from the field were greatly appreciated. This suggests that a future study tour might have more field trips, for example to visit industries that discharge to water bodies such as waste water treatment plants; to attend a public hearing conducted by EPA or a state environmental regulatory body; to watch how a workgroup interacts; or to directly see the work of NGOs. These types of visits are more difficult to schedule in advance, as the study tour must somehow be coordinated with the time of the events, which are not always so easy to predict.

Hotels and other study tour arrangements

The Study tour participants expressed great satisfaction with the physical arrangements of the study tour including the hotels and venues for the various meetings.

See US Study Tour Schedule and List of Participants enclosed in Annex R and S.

1.10. Follow up by Participants on Study Tour

As outcome of an active communication held after both the Washington and the New York part of the study involving the project partners and the country team members the participants from each country team will prepare an integrated Study Tour Report.

The document will be produced on country by country basis and will include the integrated highlights on behalf of the team members and how best the experiences gained will impact the

selected country activities. These reports are under preparation and are expected to be ready by September.

So far the identified positive impacts and contribution to the project outcomes and outputs have included:

1. contribution to the development of guidance materials
2. assistance to the different ministry working groups and processes dealing with the development of an inventory of water related data
3. clarification and input to the development of procedures/guidelines in relation to the issue of confidentiality of water related information
4. advocating for the relevance and positive impact of the cooperation of different stakeholders, namely cooperation with NGOs (this refers to a few countries where the cooperation is not yet very intensive or deep)
5. keeping the group of study tour participants in touch and using them as regional tool for communication, using their contribution to national activities

Also as follow up, as part of an official process, the ministry and agency participants will have to prepare an official report that will be disseminated in their institutions and shared with other relevant water authorities, as well as direct impact in form of experience sharing during project activities and expert input in developing specific products.

The DEF members will actively disseminate the knowledge gained using in future events, will use diverse communication opportunities to share the lessons learned, including the assistance that will be given to the demonstration project implementation.

1.11. Logframe and Indicators

The Consortium has been in close contact with Rayka Hauser and with J. Dogterom and J.P.E. van Leeuwen of NHL to reach agreement on how NHL will provide support in the development of indicators, with the specific aim of assuring that their involvement will be most effectively used to support the Consortium in fulfilling its tasks, as well as the Consortium and DRP in developing a clear tool for monitoring of the progress and achievements of Component 3.4.

The following plan of action was followed. The Consortium provided the experts from NHL with all written materials available on the project, so that they could get a good idea of what exactly would be undertaken by the Consortium and the local stakeholders. A conference call was used to provide additional information and clarification. The experts attended a national workshop in Bulgaria on 24 and 25 February 2005 to see first hand how the Consortium works on the project and to inform the national participants about the development of indicators. The Consortium made a presentation on indicators to participants at the other national workshops, in Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Romania. The Dutch experts were also present at the Regional workshop in Szentendre, Hungary on 25 and 26 April 2005, where they made a presentation on the use of indicators to all participants. These activities together assured that the experts from NHL had a full and concrete understanding of the access to information and public participation goals that the Consortium is aiming for in each country, as well as the activities planned to achieve these goals. The presentations by the Dutch experts similarly assured that participants understand the indicator concept and the value of having indicators as a way of measuring project progress. Based on these materials, meetings and discussions, the experts from NHL provided a draft Logframe, which was sent to the Consortium for comments. After extensive comments a structurally revised draft was

presented which is currently being discussed by the Consortium and which will be finalized in by the end of July 2005.

1.12. Communication on project component activities

During the implementation period the Consortium continued to use the procedures that have been agreed for regular and coordinated communications on the results of the project component activities with DRP.

Ongoing and planned communications activities include:

- > news and updates of project websites of REC HQ and all REC Country Offices involved in the project;
- > article in REC's Green Horizon Magazine on the project activities and some of the findings of the country reports in the special issue dedicated to Danube Day;
- > input for DRP leaflet to be distributed in the International Waters Conference, Brazil
- > dissemination of summaries of outcomes of the National Workshops including country activity plans;
- > dissemination of findings of the Needs Assessment reports in English and its summaries in English and local languages via email list and REC Country Office web pages

1.13. Lessons learned in the first 9 months of the project

The following is a list of lessons learned by the Consortium partner. The lessons are not listed in a particular order.

1. The countries involved in Component 3.4 are at very different stages of development and capacity for successfully achieving and implementing reforms in the field of access to information and public participation
2. It is important that activities are developed and carried out in each country in a participatory way proposed and worked out by the country partners, that they are feasible and will leave a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, so that future work can build on it and be similarly successful.
3. Participants from different countries have found the opportunity to share and learn from each others' country's experience valuable. The countries involved should make it a habit to share information amongst each other. Although they are at different stages of development, they are all moving in a similar direction and they can use each others lessons learned, which may save them time and the effort.
4. The US Study tour taught us that what the government officials and NGO representatives involved need most, are examples from actual practice: how do things work on a daily basis, what problems do people run into when working on issues of access to information and public participation, what works well. The assistance activities of the Consortium should also be of a practical nature.
5. Involving a range of people who are responsible for different aspects of providing public access to information and public participation (NGOs, national level water officials, national environmental officials, local and regional officials involved in environmental protection and water protection, database specialists) in Component 3.4 is very important. Each has a different perspective on the barriers and opportunities for improvement of access to information and public participation; together these different perspectives help flesh out the dimensions of the obstacles

to access to information and public participation and will help in formulating more effective approaches to overcoming the barriers. In addition, it is very important that these different sectors talk to each other and cooperate. No one sector can solve these problems alone.

6. Working collaboratively on project activities can help build bridges between NGOs and government officials; this process has started through joint activities such as the country-level meetings in each participating country, and the U.S. Study Tour and Regional Plenary. This is a process, and it takes time and getting to know one another. Many of the government officials had never worked with NGOs before, and are coming to understand that NGOs can actually help them accomplish their goals and do their job more effectively (Some officials on the U.S. study tour said this quite directly).
7. Looking at examples of good practices in other EU countries or the US, as was done in the capacity building workshop at the Regional Plenary Meeting and through the U.S. Study Tour, can be very helpful in stimulating participants' thinking about how to overcome the barriers to access to information and increase public participation, and can help generate potential approaches and solutions that can be developed further in participants' home countries. It is not a matter of simply importing someone else's solution wholesale, but of seeing analogies and identifying promising approaches that could be adapted and tailored to the needs back home.
8. Participants' enthusiasm for the project and optimism about its results sometimes leads them to set unrealistically ambitious goals; the project team and DRP need to help them set realistic goals that can be accomplished within the timeframe of the project.
9. The iterative process of identifying the priority needs, developing ideas on how to remove obstacles through country activities, and planning and implementing those in practice, is itself a capacity building process during which the country teams not only learn by doing but also establish valuable networks among officials which can be used to sustain similar activities in the future.
10. Demonstration projects will be most helpful and useful if they are tied thematically and practically to the access to information and public participation issues that have been identified as priorities at the country level. Many of the demonstration project ideas were quite vague the start of discussions, and it was important that the project team work closely with participants to help them refine those ideas into workable projects that will be both useful locally and also provide helpful examples to inform work on the national priority issues.

2. ACTIVITIES TO COME IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS

2.1. Activities planned for the next 6 months

A number of activities are scheduled to take place in the second half of 2005.

In January and February 2005, the Consortium presented two **reports to ICPDR**: one on access to ICPDR information and the other on public participation in ICPDR decision making and activities. ICPDR expressed satisfaction with the contents of the reports. At the request of ICPDR the Consortium will provide assistance to ICPDR in implementing recommendations made and options provided in the reports during the second half of 2005.

A **demonstration project** has been chosen for each of the participating countries. These will start in September 2005. The Consortium will hire local experts, based on detailed terms of reference, to work with the Consortium and with the relevant local stakeholders on these projects. Detailed implementation plans are being created for each project. Where needed, the Consortium will provide technical assistance for each project, will monitor and support the implementation and will organize capacity building activities for local stakeholders.

A **list of activities** has been developed for each country that will assist these countries in enhancing access to environmental and water related information and public participation. These lists have been discussed extensively during the national and regional meetings that took place between February and April 2005. The Consortium will provide technical assistance for each of these activities (e.g. assistance in drafting of legal or policy texts, sharing experience on good practice models in the EU and US, comment on the draft guidance materials, etc.), if needed, will create input for specific work products, and will use the regional capacity building workshops to support participants' efforts with respect to these activities, beginning in the second half of 2005.

In the first half of 2005 a draft **Logframe** and indicators has been prepared by two consultants from the Noordelijke Hogeschool Leeuwarden (NHL). The draft was discussed in great detail by the Consortium, representatives of DRP and the two consultants. A final version of the Logframe is scheduled to be ready by the end of July 2005.

In late October 2005 a **Study Tour to the Netherlands** will be organized (early November 2005 is reserved as a fall back option). The Netherlands Study Tour will have an in-depth focus on the specific mechanisms for public access to information and public participation being put into practice in the Netherlands under the EU Water Framework Directive in conjunction with other EU directives on public participation and access to information and the Aarhus Convention. The participants in this Study Tour will be those involved in practice in the implementation of the WFD. The Consortium will closely consult with DRP and ICPDR on the agenda and the participants selected for this Study Tour. See proposed draft program in the section 2.2.

In November 2005, the second **Regional Plenary Meeting** and a **meeting of the project partners** (possibly with attendance by representatives of ICPDR and/or DRP) will take place. The purpose of the Regional Plenary Meeting will be to share the results of the two study tours especially how the experience to date (and early results, if any) has been used in the country activities, to conduct capacity building workshops on key issues of common interest to participants identified during the country activities in the five countries, and to help the Consortium define the countries' technical assistance needs for the remainder of the Component. The Consortium will prepare documents and presentations for these meetings and will be involved in further follow-up activities resulting from these meetings.

In order to reach the widest possible audience for the activities undertaken, the outcomes and work products produced in the project, a **dissemination plan** will be developed by the Consortium partners in the second half of 2005.

2.2. Study Tour to the Netherlands

Draft Program

October 2005-November 2005

Day 1-The Hague-Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Water

Mapping the structure that is involved in the coordination and implementation of the EU WFD at international, national and sub-national levels

Which institution does What? How? When? coordinates, communicates with other ministries and subordinate levels

Instruments and mechanisms used at central government level for information, communication and involvement of stakeholders

Current status of EU WFD implementation: Main achievements and problems

Connection to implementation of other A to I and PP specific legislative, procedural tools within NL (implementation of other EU directives and Aarhus Convention in practice at national level)

Meeting and discussion with national level stakeholders, NGOs involved in WFD issues: How do stakeholders organize themselves to get involved? (WWF, FoE, Natur Milieu and Stichtig, etc)

Day 2 and 3 The Hague? Other location?

Visits to regional and local level authorities that have responsibilities for EU WFD implementation, RIZA, Water boards

Roles and competencies

Info dissemination with regard to EU WFD, water management planning (who does what?)

Methods/tools for information dissemination: what information is provided by whom and what way. How are confidentiality issues handled? How the agencies are organized to deal with access and provision of information?

Stakeholder identification, selection, communication and information process and methods.

Public involvement with regard to EU WFD, commenting of water management plans: good practice examples (active involvement, information, consultation) What are the forms and methods applied? Experiences with stakeholder forums, public discussions, meetings, hearings, etc.

Working with stakeholders: taking into account their comments in decision making and communication of their input, about the decision

Meeting and discussion with representatives of stakeholders including NGOs working on WFD issues; How are they involved, how do they provide input?

Day 4 and 5 Location ?

Authentic case study, site visit to country side

EU WFD implementation in the Scheldt River Basin, International River Basin Management- Belgium, France, The Netherlands

Pilot case within EU where EU Guidance on Public Involvement has been tested: lessons learned

International and trans boundary aspects of the case

The Netherlands national level implementation of the case, with involvement of provinces, water boards, municipalities

Communication, information and public participation (active involvement, information and consultation)

-experiences

-best practices

-lessons learned

Meeting and discussion with representatives of stakeholders including NGOs working on WFD issues

Evaluation and follow up actions

2.3. Work plan

This work plan lists activities envisioned for the inception and the implementation phase of the project. Activities completed so far have been marked with **. For this 6-month report, changes (compared with the work plan as provided in the Inception Report) have only been made to dates in the next 6 months (July – December 2005). These changes are highlighted.

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
SELECTION AND HIRING OF NATIONAL CONSULTANTS:		
Feedback on draft TOR	DRP	23 November 2004 **
Finalised TOR	Consultant	30 November 2004 **
Collection of CVs and proposal on selected experts to DRP	Consultant	5-10 December 2004 **
Approval of nominated experts	DRP/ICPDR	A week after submission **
Contracting of experts	Consultant	Upon approval **
ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL TEAMS:		
Serbia and Montenegro national workshop	Consultant	12 October 2004 **
Bosnia and Herzegovina national workshop	Consultant	14 October 2004 **
Croatia national workshop	Consultant	22 October 2004 **
Romania national workshop	Consultant	16 November 2004 **
Bulgaria national workshop	Consultant	26 November 2004 **
Letters to key institutions with workshop minutes and requests for nominations	Consultant	1-22 December 2004 **
Nominations of members for national and operational teams	Stakeholder organizations	31 December 2004-January 31 2005 **
NATIONAL NEEDS ASSESMENTS:		
Feedback on draft NA outline	DRP	23 November 2004 **
Submission of draft questionnaire	Consultant	5 December 2004 **
Feedback on draft questionnaire	DRP	15 December 2004 **
Finalized NA outline	Consultant	5 December 2004 **
Finalized outline	Consultant	10 December 2004 **
Guidance for local experts	Consultant	December 2004 **
Draft NA reports, BG, SiM	Consultant	31 January 2005 **
Draft NA reports, HR, RO and BiH	Consultant	15 February 2005 **
Translation, distribution, national consultations	Consultant	February, mid- to end of March 2005 **
Final Needs Assessment Reports	Consultant	31 March 2005 – 1 st week of June 2005 **
INCEPTION REPORT:		
Draft Report	Consultant	17 December 2004 **
Feedback from DRP	DRP	January 7, 2005 **
Final Report	Consultant	End of second week of January 2005 **

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
ICPDR ASSESSMENT:		
Draft review and analysis of models for Observers and PP	Consultant	31 December 2004 **
Feedback from ICPDR on draft	ICPDR	January 13, 2005 **
Draft observer questionnaire	Consultant	1 December 2004 **
Feedback from ICPDR on draft observer questionnaire	ICPDR	17 December 2004 **
Final draft paper on PP models with recommendations to the ICPDR	Consultant (NYU)	27 February 2005 **
Draft ICPDR assessment of access to information mechanisms	Consultant (RFF)	31 December 2004 **
Final ICPDR assessment of access to information mechanisms	Consultant	20 February 2005 **
Final design of reform measures for ICPDR	Consultant	If and when requested by ICPDR
Assistance to ICPDR in implementing recommendations on access to information and observer/PP models	Consultant/ICPDR	If and when requested by ICPDR
FINALIZATION OF LOGFRAME AND INDICATORS:		
Comments on TOR for TA	Consultant	26 November 2004 **
Feedback from DRP	DRP	10 December 2004 **
Start of cooperation with TA	Consultant, DRP	January 2005 **
Methodology for indicator development and other TA planned	Consultant, NHL	15 January 2005 **
Draft logframe with outcomes and outputs	Consultant, NHL	24 May 2005 **
Completed logframe and indicators	Consultant	20 July 2005
LOCAL DEMONSTRATION SITES:		
Selection criteria and a concrete proposal for selection, planning and implementation process	Consultant	Inception Report **
Feedback on selection criteria and processes	DRP	15 January 2005 **
Review of potential hot spots and project ideas	Consultant	29 February 2005 **
Discussion at national workshops	Consultant	February and April 2005 **
Submission of proposals to 3.4 SC	Consultant	April 2005 **
Selection of local sites and demonstration projects	3.4 SC	April-June 2005 **
Draft TORs for local experts	Consultant	July 2005
Feedback on TORs	DRP	July 2005
Contract local experts	Consultant	July 2005 (Upon approval)
Implementation Plans for demonstration projects	Consultant	September 2005
Start of demonstration projects	Consultant	September 2005
Capacity building workshops at local sites	Consultant	September 2005-April 2006 (on an ongoing basis)
Technical Assistance to demonstration projects	Consultant	September 2005-April 2006 (on an ongoing basis)
End of demonstration projects	Consultant	June 2006
Final report on lessons learned from demonstration projects	Consultant	August/September 2006
MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS:		
Plan/prepare for first set National Workshops	Consultant	January-February 2005 **
National workshops—first set	Consultant	February-April 2005 **

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Plan/prepare for second set National Workshops	Consultant	December 2005-January 2006 **
National workshop—second set	Consultant	January-February 2006
Plan/prepare for First Plenary Meetings	Consultant	March-April 2005 **
Regional Plenary Meetings--First	Consultant	25-26 April 2005 **
Plan/Prepare for Second Plenary Meetings	Consultant	September-October 2005
Regional Plenary Meeting -- Second	Consultant	November 2005 (December 2005 will be the fall back option)
Plan/Prepare for Final Plenary Meeting	Consultant	August -October 2006
Regional Plenary Meeting—Final	Consultant	October 2006
3.4 Steering Committee Meeting—first	Consultant/DRP	27 April 2005 **
3.4 Steering Committee Meeting—second	Consultant/DRP	January-February 2006
3.4 Steering Committee Meeting—Final	Consultant/DRP	October 2006
Kick-off Meeting of Project Partners/DRP	Consultant/DRP	November 2004 **
Meeting of Project Partners	Consultant	28 April 2005 **
Meeting of Project Partners/ICPDR/DRP, if needed	Consultant/DRP/IC PDR	November 2005
Meeting of Project Partners/ICPDR/DRP, as needed	Consultant/DRP/IC PDR	October 2006
STUDY TOURS:		
Selection of participants for U.S. and EU Study Tours	Consultant/Nationa l Teams	15 February 2005 **
DRP feedback on participants	DRP	28 February 2005 **
Final agenda for U.S. Study Tour	Consultant	15 June 2005 **
U.S. Study Tour	Consultant	11-24 June 2005 **
Draft agenda for EU Study Tour	Consultant	July 2005
DRP/ICPDR Comments on agenda	DRP	July 2005
Final agenda for EU Study Tour	Consultant	September 2005
EU Study Tour	Consultant	October 2005 (fallback date: beginning of November 2005)
U.S. Study Tour lessons learned reports	Country teams	July 2005
EU Study Tour lessons learned report	Consultant	December 2005
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE / CAPACITY BUILDING:		
Technical assistance to national teams as needed	Consultant	June 2005-September 2006 on an ongoing basis
Report on design of national capacity building activities	Consultant	September-October 2005
Practical Work Products (e.g., Best Practices Materials) researched/drafted/translated	Consultant	To be determined, based on needs identified in national workshops and regional plenary meetings
Practical work products completed	Consultant	October 2006
NATIONAL MEASURES / PRODUCTS:		
Identification of measures/products	National teams/Consultants	February-March 2005, in national workshops **
Preliminary design of measures/products	National teams/Consultants	30 June 2005 **
Draft national reform proposals and/or other draft measures/products	National teams/Consultants	January-February 2006
Final national reform proposals and/or other	National	September 2006

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
final measures/products	teams/Consultants	
DISSEMINATION:		
Draft dissemination plan	Consultant	November 2005
Final dissemination plan	Consultant	December 2005
Dissemination of project products	Consultant	December 2006
WEBSITE:		
Project website established	Consultant	November 2004 **
Posting of project products/articles and periodic updates	Consultant	November 2004-February 2007 on an ongoing basis
FINAL REPORT / LESSONS LEARNED:		
Draft Final Report	Consultant	October 2006
Final Report	Consultant	December 2006
REPORTING:		
First 6-month report	Consultant	15 July 2005
Second (Annual) 6-month Report	Consultant	December 2005
Third 6-month report	Consultant	July 2006
Fourth (Annual) 6-month report	Consultant	December 2006
External mid-term evaluation	Indep. Contractor	December 2005
ARTICLES:		
Draft articles	Consultant	March 2006
Finalize/begin to place articles for publication	Consultant	April -October 2006

3. FINANCIAL REPORT

3.1. Explanatory note on financial issues related to the implementation of the component 3.4

The Consortium has used the financial resources as planned in the original budget. (See attached Financial Report in Excel format under 3.3 for the period of September 2004-May 2005.)

Regarding the budget allocated to REC within the Consortium, after the selection of country activities proposed by the countries, for the next phases it has become clear that due to the nature of these activities, we will need diverse resources for human and direct costs and that there will be need to reallocate funds among budget lines. There seems to be need for less finances for national expert work (consultancy) and more needs to be allocated for covering direct expenses mostly meeting costs (workshops, trainings, development of capacity building materials) within the countries. (See section on Selection of country activities)

The exact figures cannot be given at this point. Our estimation is that it could be even 40-50% of the leftover under the National Consultants budget line that we would need to be reallocated to direct costs. In the near future, when the country activity plans will be finally approved, the Consortium will submit a specific reallocation proposal if needed which will contain the specific figures regarding the amounts and the budget lines.

ANNEXES

- Q. List of project deliverables so far
- R. US Study tour schedule
- S. List of US study tour participants
- T. Pilot demonstration projects table

ANNEX Q LIST OF PROJECT DELIVERABLES SO FAR

Milestones/Deliverables	Time frame: January – June 2005
Inception report	January 2005
National implementation teams established	January 2005
National experts/consultants contracted	January 2005
Selection criteria for demonstration project sites	January 2005
ICPDR Assessment Report on Access to Information	February 2005
ICPDR Assessment Report on Public Participation	February 2005
Five national workshops and workshop materials	February-April 2005
Needs Assessment Reports	February-April 2005 (draft) June 2005 (Final)
Summaries of Needs Assessment Reports	June 2005
Regional Plenary meeting, meeting materials and presentations	April 2005
Steering Committee Meeting, meeting materials and presentations	April 2005
National priorities/gaps identified	April 2005
Activities/ measures to address priorities/gaps identified	April-May 2005
Design of national activities	June –July 2005
Selection of demonstration project sites	February-April 2005
Demonstration project sites proposals	April 2005
US Study Tour and study tour materials	June 2005

ANNEX R US STUDY TOUR SCHEDULE

Study Tour week in Washington, D.C.

Monday June 13	Tuesday June 14	Wednesday June 15	Thursday June 16	Friday June 17
9 – 10:30 AM RFF Organize for week; distribute per diems and other housekeeping items; depart for U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	9- 10:30. Housekeeping items at RFF (including civics lessons to understand U.S. forms of government), and depart for U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	9:30 - 12 <i>Rick Blum</i> OMB Watch and OpenTheGovern ment.org	9 meet at RFF. Review questions, concerns, context from meetings	8 AM - leave for Annapolis
11:00- 11:30: Welcome and introductions at EPA w/ <i>Deborah Williams</i> (Office of Environmental Information – OEI) and staff (Escorts: <i>Lillian Penny & Van Tran-Lam</i> (OEI))	11:30-12:30: Public Access via the web: issues and problems including maintenance. Pre-and post-9/11 issues. <i>Odelia Funke</i> , (OTOP) and <i>Emma McNamara</i> (OEI)		10:00 – 12:15 <i>Scott Amey</i> General Counsel, Project on Government Accountability (POGO)	9:30 EPA Annapolis Offices. <i>Rebecca Hanmer</i> , Director, Chesapeake Bay Office; <i>Michael Burke</i> , Associate Director; <i>Nita Sylvester</i> (web responsibilities), <i>Chris Conner</i> (outreach and communication), <i>Mike Land</i>
11:30-1 PM: Overview of records management at EPA and website tour – <i>Tammy Boulware</i> , <i>Office of Environmental Information (OEI)</i> ; <i>Scott Stirneman</i> , ASRC	12:30-1:30: Lunch - self pay near EPA	Lunch: catered at RFF	Lunch: catered at RFF	1 PM Catered lunch at Chesapeake Bay Foundation
1-2: Lunch-- self pay near EPA	1:40 – 2:30: Public Access via dockets (walk through; visit the docket rooms; see physical layout) <i>Robert Johnston</i> , <i>Patrick Grimm</i> (OEI); <i>Peter Wendolkowski</i> , ASRC	Afternoon: Divide into country teams and outline and begin writing country team reports	1:30 –NGOs and the environmental press <i>Janet Hodur</i>	2-3:30 PM Chesapeake Bay Foundation <i>Jay Sherman</i>
2:00-3:00: Managing access to Confidential Business and other Sensitive Information. <i>Tony Cheatham</i> , Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics; 3:00 – 3:45: CBI Center walk-through (<i>Tony Cheatham</i>)	2:30 – 3:15: Moving from Paper Dockets to Electronic Access. <i>Robert Johnston</i> , <i>Patrick Grimm</i> (OEI); <i>Peter Wendolkowski</i> , ASRC		3 – 4:30: Health based inventories on the web. <i>Gale A. Dutcher</i> , Head, Office of Outreach and Special Populations Division of Specialized Information Services, National Library of Medicine	4-5 PM Walk in the Annapolis Old Town
4-5:30 PM: Public Access via the Freedom of Information Act and processing of requests. <i>Larry Gottesman</i> (OEI) & <i>Byron Brown</i> (Office of General Counsel)	3:15-5 PM: Public access to Information on Compliance and Enforcement (including chain of command issues and reporting to Congress. <i>Joe Acton</i> , Office of Enforcement & Compliance Assurance. 5-5:15: closing remarks, <i>Deborah Williams</i>			
Dinner: self pay	Dinner: self pay	Dinner: self pay	7 PM Dinner at Ruth Bell's home	Dinner: self pay

Agenda
Danube River Delegation
June 13 – 14, 2005

Purpose: To enlighten, educate and share “lessons learned” with representative from the Danube River countries so that they may benefit from EPA’s experiences with providing public access to environmental information.

DAY 1

Escorts: *Lillian Penny & Van Tran-Lam (OEI)*

Monday, June 13

Location: EPA East, Room 4349

11:00 am – 11:30 am	Welcome and Introductions
11:30 am – 12:45 pm	Records Management Overview & Website Tour <i>Tammy Boulware, Office of Environmental Information (OEI); Scott Stirneman, ASRC</i>
12:45 – 2:00 pm	LUNCH
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Managing Access to Confidential Business and Sensitive Information, <i>Tony Cheatham, Office of Pollution Prevention & Toxics</i>
3:00 – 3:45 pm	Protecting Access to Sensitive Information (CBI Center Walk-thru, <i>Tony Cheatham</i>)
4:00 – 5:30 pm	Public Access via the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) <i>Larry Gottesman, OEI; Byron Brown, Office of General Counsel</i>

Adjourn Day 1

DAY 2

Tuesday, June 14

Room: EPA West, Room 6124

11:00 am – 12:30 pm	Public Access via the Web <i>Emma McNamara, OEI; Odelia Funke, OTOP</i>
12:30 – 1:30 pm	LUNCH
1:40 – 2:30 pm	Public Access via Dockets (Walk-thru) <i>Robert Johnston, Patrick Grimm (OEI); Peter Wendolkowski, ASRC</i>
2:30 – 3:15 pm	Moving from Paper Dockets to Electronic Access <i>Robert Johnston, Patrick Grimm (OEI); Peter Wendolkowski, ASRC</i>
3:15 – 5:00 pm	Public Access to Information on Compliance and Enforcement Process , <i>Joe Acton, Office of Enforcement & Compliance Assurance</i>
5:00 – 5:15 pm	Closing Remarks

Study Tour week in New York

	location	time	Organization, activity	persons
Monday 20	EPA Region II	10.00 – 11.00	EPA	Bonnie Bellow, Director of Public Affairs
		11.00 – 11.45	EPA	Peter Brandt, Chief of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs Branch
		11.45 – 12.15	EPA	Wanda Calderon, Regional FOIA Officer
		12.15 – 13.30	Lunch	
		13.30 – 14.30	EPA	David Kluesner, Community Involvement Coordinator for the Hudson River Superfund Site
		14.30 – 14.45	Tea break	
		14.45 – 15.45	EPA	David Kluesner, Community Involvement Coordinator for the Hudson River Superfund Site
		Afternoon – evening	Go to WTC site, Dinner at South Street Seaport	
Tuesday 21	NYU Law School	09.30 – 11.00	Natural Resources Defense Council	Brad Sewell, Senior Attorney And Allison Chase, Scientist
		11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break	
		11.30 – 13.00	Environmental Defense	Jim Tripp, General Counsel, New York office
		13.00 – 14.30	Lunch	
		14.30 – 15.30	Environmental Law and Justice Project	Joel Kupferman, attorney
		15.30 – 16.00	Tea break	
		16.00 – 17.30	New York City Department of Environmental Protection	Charles Sturcken, Director of Public Affairs and Judah Prero, FOIA Officer, Counsel's Office
Wednesday 22	NYU Law School	09.30 – 11.00	New York State Attorney General's Office	Peter Lehner, head of the Environmental Protection Bureau
		11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break	
		11.30 – 13.30	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation	Joe Dimura, head of the bureau of compliance of the NYState water programme
		13.30 – 14.30	Lunch	
		14.30 – 16.00		Dan Fagin, free lance journalist, associate professor of journalism, associate director of graduate-level Science and Environmental Reporting Program
		16.00 – 16.30	Tea break	
		16.30 – 17.30	NYU Law School	Mirela Roznovschi, Reference Librarian for international and foreign law
Thursday 23	NYU Law School	09.30 – 11.00	Riverkeeper	Basil Seggos, Chief Investigator
		11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break	
		11.30 – 12.30	NYU Law School	Richard Stewart, John E. Sexton Professor of Law, Director Center on Environmental and Land Use Law
		12.30 – 13.15	Lunch	
		13.15 – 14.00	Get to Circle Line	
		14.30 – 17.30	Circle Line	
		17.30 – 18.30	Walk 42 nd street to Times Square and take 1 or 9 metro	
		18.30 –	Dinner at Stewarts'	
Friday 24	NYU Law School	08.45 – 9.30	Short plenary meeting	Discuss overall lessons learned from study tour
		09.30 – 10.45	Country delegation discussions on	what they will do, based on study tour, as measures in their country
		10.45 – 11.15	Coffee break	
		11.15 – 12.30	Plenary session	country delegations reporting back summing up by project team
		12.30 – 13.30	Lunch	
		Afternoon and evening	Departure	

ANNEX S LIST OF US STUDY TOUR PARTICIPANTS

US Study Tour 11-24th June 2005

Bosnia and Herzegovina	<p>Ms. Dilista Hrkas Public Relation Public Enterprise "Vodno Podrucje Slivova Rijeke Save" Grbavicka 4/3, 71000 Sarajevo Bosnia and Herzegovina</p>	<p>Tel : +387 33 209 903 Mobile: +387 61 722629 Fax : +387 33 209 993 E-mail: dilista@voda.ba</p>
	<p>Ms. Violeta Jankovic Advisor for Environment Protection Bosna River Basin Authority Republic Directorate for Water Vojvode Misica 22, 74000 Doboj Bosnia and Herzegovina</p>	<p>Tel : +387 53 200 570 Fax : +387 53 200 572 Mobile: +387 65 879 386 E-mail: ivioleta@teol.net</p>
	<p>Mr. Nenad Bužanin Executive Director Ecological – Promotion Association Eco Zone – Šipovo Vidovdanska 21, 70270 Šipovo Bosnia and Herzegovina</p>	<p>Tel : +387 65 920 827 Mobile: + 387 65 920-827 Fax : +387 50 371 181 E-mail: eko-zona@teol.net</p>
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romania	<p>Ms. Ana Drapa Ministry of Environment and Water Management Bulevardul Libertatii Nr. 12, Bucharest Romania</p>	<p>Tel: +40 21 335 2591 Mobile: +40 743 49 43 99 Fax: +40 21 410 2032 E-mail: adrapa@mappm.ro</p>
	<p>Ms. Carmen Camelia Maria Calatan Senior Counsellor Directorate for Environmental Policies Implementation National Environmental Protection Agency 151 Aleea Lacul Morii Sector 6, 060841 Bucharest Romania</p>	<p>Tel: +40 21 493 4237 Mobile:+ 40 722 844 520 Fax: +40 21 493 4237 E-mail: cami_calatan@yahoo.com</p>
	<p>Ms. Mirela Leonte Vice-President ECO Counselling Centre Galati (ECCG) Basarabiei Street No. 2, 800 201 Galati Romania</p>	<p>Tel: +40 236 499 957 Mobile: +40- 0788 428 068 and +40- 0740 045 645 Fax: +40 236 312 331 E-mail: eco@cceg.ro mleonte@cceg.ro</p>
Serbia and Montenegro	<p>Ms. Jovanka Ignjatovic Head of Department Strategic Development of Environmental Media Ministry for Science and Environmental Protection Directorate for the Environmental Protection 91, Drivana Ribara 11070 Belgrade Serbia and Montenegro</p>	<p>Tel : +381 11 215 8759 ext. 150 Mobile:+381 63 373 696 Fax : +381 11 215 8793 E-mail: jovanka.ignjatovic@ekoserb.sr.gov.yu vanai@EUnet.yu</p>
	<p>Ms. Biljana Jovanovic Ilic Change Agent and HR Manager Department for European Integration Ministry for Science and Environmental Protection Directorate for Environmental Protection Omladinskih brigade 1, 11000 Belgrade Serbia and Montenegro</p>	<p>Tel: +381 11 313 1355 Mobile:+381 64 349 8227 Fax: +381 11 313 1394 E-mail: biljana@mail.ru</p>
	<p>Ms. Mirjana Bartula Secretary General Danube Environmental Forum Serbia and Montenegro Andricev venac 2, 11000 Belgrade Serbia and Montenegro</p>	<p>Tel: +381 11 323 1374 Mobile: +381 63 88 01 572 Fax: +381 11 323 1374 E-mail: defyu@eunet.yu</p>
REC	<p>Ms. Orsolya Szálasi Project Manager Public Participation Programme The Regional Environmental Center For Central and Eastern Europe Ady Endre ut 9-11, 2000 Szentendre Hungary</p>	<p>Tel: +36 26 504 000 ext. 212 Fax: +36 26 311 294 E-mail: oszalasi@rec.org</p>

ANNEX T PILOT DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS TABLE

Country / Location of the site / Implementing NGO	Type of pollution/ Problems	Objectives	Planned main activity lines	Institutions to be involved
Bosnia - Herzegovina				
Tuzla Canton, Lukovac River Bosna Lead NGO "Eko Zeleni Lukovac" and "EKO pokret" Tuzla	-Industrial pollution from Coke factory and Chemical industry -Lack of municipal waste water treatment on Spreča and Turija river	- To increase the access to information with regard the existing pollution by assessing the status of the rivers and the availability of information -To involve the stakeholders, industry, municipality, and civil society in developing a plan that will address the priority problems and propose solutions to improve the public access to water-related information -To strengthen the capacities of authorities and various stakeholders to improve the information dissemination in relation to local water problems	-Assess the water information sources and produce a publicly available work document -Define the priority issues and propose locally feasible plan that stakeholders can commit to put in practice -Develop information and communication mechanism to reach stakeholders and general public in order to maintain commitment and improve capacities	-Municipal authority - Companies -University -Other relevant water/envir onmental/ health authorities -Other NGOs
Bulgaria				
Troyan-Lovech Osam river basin Lead NGO "Ecomission21 century" Lovech	-Industrial pollution from chemical industry/nutrient s-IPPC permitting procedure -Municipal waste water treatment plant/in construction in Troyan	--To improve the mechanisms of public access to information by the authorities -To identify the problems and barriers and with involvement of stakeholders and to propose solutions, -To develop and implement a plan for overcoming the barriers -To strengthen the cooperation of the civil society and local authorities in order to develop good practice in water related participation	-Establishment of a working group with the affected stakeholders in order to assess the information available and to facilitate the participation in the permitting procedure -Work out and implement proposals for removal of the existing barriers on water related information -Increase the institutional capacities of local authorities by capacity building	-Municipal authorities -Waste water treatment plant -Other relevant water/envir onmental/ health authorities - Other NGOs
Croatia				
Osijek-Baranja county Drava river Lead NGO Ecological Association Green Osijek	-Industry with activity in fuel production, poor waste treatment facility -Municipal waste water plant	- To cooperate with local and regional administration to take initiatives to control better the level of pollution of Drava river -Initiate information dissemination and public consultation on the planning and construction of waste water purification system -To improve information dissemination mechanisms with regard to regular water related information through capacity building of authorities	-To initiate a working groups of the stakeholders that would address and discuss the water problems -To propose an integrated plan for public involvement in planning and construction f the WWT -To develop mechanisms for improving communication and information dissemination - To establish a Water Forum and initiate the development of an integrated river basin management plan	-Municipal authorities -Regional authorities -Public utility -Other NGOs

Country / Location of the site / Implementing NGO	Type of pollution/ Problems	Objectives	Planned main activity lines	Institutions to be involved
Romania				
Tg.Mures, Mures river basin Lead NGO "Focus Eco Center"	-Industrial pollution from Nitrate/Chemical plant -Municipal pollution, waste water treatment plant	-To improve the functioning of the River Basin Committee (RBC) as main body that is responsible for the river basin management and its communication, information, and steering body -To define clearer and more participatory procedures on how the civil society can delegate its members to RBC -To test and based on the result to improve the public consultation in the development of water management plans in one small community	-Stakeholder identification -Assessment of the working documents, information produced by and within the RBC -Prepare good practice examples for identifying and cooperation with delegated civil society representatives -Preparing recommendation for best practices and share it with other RBCs while testing the public involvement	-Local municipality -Member authorities of the RBC -Water Directorate - Companies -Other NGOs
Serbia and Montenegro				
Bor, Timok River Lead NGO "Young Researchers of Bor"	-Industrial pollution due to mining and metallurgy industrial activities -Lack of municipal waste water treatment plant	- To identify and involve relevant stakeholders in the analysis and problem solving -To improve the level of awareness with regard to environmental issues of the area with special focus on the waste water issues -To strengthen information dissemination and cooperation with the relevant local authorities and the media -To improve the work of the local authority by developing regular information and communication mechanisms for the water related issues (industrial pressure data, water quality information, etc,)	-Assessment of available data about water quality state, list of data sources and other information resources, review of provisions, programs and plans -Make available and accessible the water related information -Prepare information materials, brochure for informing the public -Capacity building for the authorities providing information -Initiate the process of a local water management plan	-Municipal authorities -Regional authorities - Companies -Other NGOs