

ROUND TABLE RESOLUTION

Application of the principles of the Water Framework Directive in Transboundary Waters

Within the framework of the VIII International Environmental Forum “Baltic Sea Day”

CHAIRMEN: *Grigory Slabikov- Head of Neva-Ladoga Water Basin Administration,
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Participants: 35

The aim of this round-table was to discuss which key principles of the EU WFD could be applied by the neighboring states without breaking national laws, what kind of joint documents could be elaborated for transboundary waters, and which measures are to be taken for stimulating joint actions in the field of transboundary water management in the Baltic Sea Basin.

The roundtable was attended by 35 experts from 7 countries: Russia, Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Moldova, Finland and Poland. Represented organizations:

- HELCOM Secretariat
- Baltic Sea States Sub-region Cooperation
- Ministry of the Environment of Estonia
- Ministry of the Environment of Latvia
- Ministry of the Environment of Finland
- Neva-Ladoga Water Basin Administration, Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation
- North-West Department of the Federal Supervisory Natural Resources Management Service
- Finnish Environment Institute
- Central Scientific-Research Institute of Complex Use of Water Resources, Belarus
- Institute of Meteorology and Water Management, Poland
- Russian State Hydrometeorological University
- Russian Research urbanization institute
- Technical University of LODZ
- Eco-TIRAS International Environmental Association of River Keepers
- Center for Transboundary Cooperation –St.Petersburg
- Design Institute “Lenvodprojekt”
- OAO “TGK-1”
- and other.

Participants of this round-table, representing different groups of stakeholders (such as international and supra-national organizations, Ministries, regional authorities engaged in water management, research institutions and public organizations), were asked to present their experience of WFD implementation, to reflect their positions towards the possibility of joint actions and possible document for TW management on the external EU borders, and to propose ideas concerning demonstration and pilot projects in this field.

After all presentations and discussion the following resolution was adopted by the roundtable.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the need for joint actions in the Baltic Sea Basin to be defined by the coming HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT growing demands for cooperation on the external EU borders as inspired by the EU Neighborhood Policy and relevant national policies;

CONSIDERING Integrated Water Resources Management as a modern concept in water management which is requiring wider cooperation on the water basin level among different stakeholders;

REFERRING to the UN statement that “water has no borders” and understanding great concerns regarding cooperation and joint activities in transboundary water basins as being governed by different states and laws;

INVESTIGATING relevant experience on transboundary water management in the Baltic Sea Basin and on the external EU borders as being presented and discussed by the roundtable participants;

Participants of the round table would like to **RECOMMEND**:

1. To recognize the need in joint actions of the states in transboundary water basins in the Baltic Sea region aimed at water protection and improvement of water quality under the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan as far as riverine pollution originating in HELCOM countries is ending up in the Baltic Sea itself;
2. To point out in the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan that key provisions of the Water Framework Directive of the European Union could be used for transboundary water basins as being reflecting modern water management approaches and supporting harmonization of joint activities under the common ideology and approaches;
3. To create the Consultative Board or the Working group aimed to agree on the possibilities to implement the key/selected provisions of the EU WFD on the external borders of the European Union for transboundary waters and to define the extend to which main objectives of the EU WFD will be met in the non-EU states in the case of transboundary waters requiring joint efforts and coordination of activities;
4. To elaborate a special document or tools, under this EU Directive, for harmonizing joint efforts and measures in the sphere of water protection by using common approaches towards water management. Such framework should be based on provisions under existing frameworks such as the EU WFD, UNECE Convention on Transboundary Waters, HELCOM and national requirements of bordering states;
5. To include the following provisions into such document/tools:
 - river basin as planning and management unit,
 - assignation of international River Basin Districts (RBD) and cross-border / transnational cooperation,
 - water quality objectives in legislation,
 - targets under the HELCOM BSAP
 - joint monitoring measures (based on existing PLC guidelines, see paragraph 8),
 - economic analysis/economic instruments,
 - preparation of the Programme of measures and Management plans for RBD,
 - public participationas being discussed by the participants of the roundtable and found being relevant for the joint actions and efforts in transboundary water basins;
6. To introduce the guidance on methodology for the joint implementation of this document/tools;
7. To conduct the overview of existing methods/tools used in the Baltic Sea Region in water management sector for better understanding of available approaches and more efficient use of them;
8. To point out that harmonized pollution compilations (PLC) and assessment are important tool in water management; for such assessment existing and jointly agreed methods should be used such as HELCOM PLC5 Guidelines;

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9. To point out that in order to strengthen transboundary water cooperation it is necessary to use more efficiently already existing bilateral and multilateral agreements and policy documents such as HELCOM, CBSS, Northern Dimension and others;
10. To point out the financial support from the EU is needed in order to stimulate the EU WFD, HELCOM BSAP and other initiatives implementation outside of the EU member states.
11. To support negotiation processes on the corresponding legal base as a key prerequisite to the successful cooperation on many transboundary water basins (as Zapadnaya Dvina/Daugava, Neman/Nemunas and others);
12. To consider a twinning mechanism for transboundary water basins aimed at experience exchange and cooperation leading to more effective water management;
13. To welcome the decision of Baltic Sea Day organizers to arrange this roundtable on the EU WFD and Transboundary Waters and to continue such initiative for the coming years for monitoring of the progress and regular discussion .