



## CASE STUDY

# Transboundary: Stakeholder Analysis in the Sava River Basin

Mapping of primary/secondary/tertiary stakeholders at the transboundary level in countries surrounding the Sava River Basin i.e., Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia to facilitate participation and draw support towards implementation of Sava River Basin Management Plan (SBRMP) and the Framework Agreement for the Sava River Basin (FASRB). The analysis is based on Influence-Interest and Influence-Awareness relation of stakeholders with regards to SBRMP and FASRB.

## Background

The Sava is the Danube's largest tributary of the Danube in terms of discharge and the second largest in terms of catchment area. The Sava is shared by Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro. Due to its large size and its significance to surrounding countries, The International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC) was founded in 2005 in order to implement FASRB. Moreover, it is working to facilitate opportunities for economic development by attracting foreign investors and contributing to the enhancement of relations and co-operation between the parties of the agreement.

The objectives of the ISRBC with regard to public participation are stated in the Strategy on Implementation of the FASRB and Action Plan for the Period 2011-2015 adopted by the Parties the FASRB on the 3rd Meeting of the Parties (June, 1, 2011 at Brdo, Slovenia), and are as follows:

- Facilitate the stakeholder involvement,
- Create the conditions to increase transparency of the decision-making process,
- Facilitate raising of awareness among stakeholders about the issues concerning the river basin management, hence their mobilization to participate in activities and structures at the Sava River Basin level,
- Facilitate the establishment of effective structures and mechanisms for stakeholder involvement, and
- Assist in mobilizing the public and the key stakeholders to be involved in carrying out and achieving goals of the FASRB.

The primary target group of these activities, which are already being implemented within the EC grant to the ISRBC for preparation and implementation of the first Sava RBM Plan, are key stakeholders, i.e. the main water users, within the Sava River Basin.

However, the unavailability of adequate information regarding stakeholders at transboundary level within the Sava region, which is crucial for ISRBC in formulating the public participation activities in accordance with objectives of the Strategy Implementation and Action Plan of FASRB, is a hindrance that requires mitigation.

For developing a strategy for efficient involvement of stakeholders in monitoring of SRBMP implementation and planning processes, and further towards fulfilment of FASRB objectives, information is required which can only be generated through a stakeholder analysis.

Furthermore, the analysis will help in elaborating the need of Sava Water Partnership (SWP) – a body dedicated towards facilitating the structured stakeholders' participation in support of the SBRMP and FASRB implementation.

## **Actions taken**

The Stakeholders' Analysis has been prepared by GWP-Med in cooperation with the secretariat of ISRBC. A team of four (04) Country Experts – one for each party to the FASRB – has worked on preparation of stakeholder lists, conducted interviews, and provided expert opinion for the analysis.

The actions taken for the analysis are elaborated briefly below:

Preparation of documents to guide the work of country experts in a harmonized way for the preliminary analysis which would result in identification of stakeholders, identification of interviewees, collection of specific information regarding stakeholders, and set aims and objectives of the questionnaire and the interviews.

Country experts identified stakeholders at transboundary level and compiled lists on basis of the link of actors to Significant Water Management Issues (SWMI) which were already identified during drafting of the SBRMP. The actors considered were those affecting, been affected by, working with, or having the competence over the management of issues related to SWMIs.

Structured interviews were conducted to tap into specific knowledge and experiences of selected stakeholders using the previously developed questionnaire. A letter, translated in all Sava languages, containing information on the stakeholder analysis and context was used as an invite. The country experts shortlisted the stakeholders for interview after deriving a criterion through expert judgement. The number of interviews conducted were restricted due to financial constraints, with a total of 61 stakeholders being interviewed. The interviews were transcribed and processed by the country experts for deriving preliminary conclusions and the results were used for country analysis overviews and developing summaries indicating stakeholder influence and interest.

First workshop on stakeholder analysis was conducted on 28-29 June 2011 in Sarajevo with the purpose to investigate stakeholders' characteristics and interests. Fifteen stakeholders from each country were invited on basis of level of knowledge regarding SWMIs, inclusiveness and representativeness. A variety of tools were used e.g., flash brainstorming, influence-interest grids, and rankings with groups of participants then presenting their outcomes to the entire workshop.

After the workshop, GWP-Med team analysed the information and further linked the stakeholders to the SRBMP to produce a draft primary/secondary/tertiary stakeholders' analysis which was then used as input for the second workshop.

The second workshop was on the SBRMP on 9-10 November 2011 in Belgrade with purpose of getting feedback on initial findings and finalizing the analysis. The same tools were

applied as in the first workshop. After the participants had developed an influence-interest grid and rankings, the interest axis was replaced with the awareness axis and the participants were directed to evaluate the stakeholders again.

## **Outcomes**

The GWP-Med team refined and finalized the Influence-Interest and Influence-Awareness grids for the stakeholder analysis. Utilizing all the collected information, the GWP-Med team proceeded in drafting the Sava River Basin Stakeholders' Analysis. Through the Analysis they summarized knowledge, opinions, perceptions and positions of a range of stakeholders. This allowed identification of stakeholders to be involved at a transboundary level, including their level and means of participation. Main factors that may hinder the participation, preparation and implementation of the Sava RMB plan were indicated to be economic costs and access to information. Effective actions to address the constraints were also identified through the process.

## **Lessons Learned**

Revisiting and Adjusting the Stakeholder Lists – The Sava countries have an ever-changing reality in terms of institutions, organizations, and businesses that play a role in river basin management. Thus, lists require readjustment after set intervals to accommodate this change.

Country Experts Identify the Most Significant Stakeholders – The lists prepared by these experts contain the most significant stakeholders at international level for each category.

Cover Underrepresentation of Sectors in order to Upgrade Lists – To upgrade content of the stakeholder lists, underrepresented sectors need to be covered. However, the amount of effort required for each country varies.

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