



SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

**Third CABRI-Volga Expert Group Meeting
Cherepovets, Russia
15-17 November 2006**



Expert Group 1

”River and Environmental Rehabilitation”

I. Water pollution in the Volga Basin

1. Develop realistic water quality standards based on environmental principles

- Action 1.1: Review the standards to make them realistic to comply with
Action 1.2: Adopt a long-term strategy with ultimate goal to achieve standards, with step-by-step targets to be met in short- and mid- term perspective

2. Reduce water pollution

- Action 2.1: Initiate a constructive dialogue and partnerships with industries and introduce incentives for good environmental practices, including avoiding pollution at source, clean production processes, environmental benign systems, ISO principles
Action 2.2: Adopt and communicate to stakeholders gradual strategies envisaging the balance between tightening the demands (taxes, emission limit values) and economic, social and ecological needs

3. Build urban waste water treatment plants and facilities to handle the atmospheric run-off

- Action 3.1: Municipalities need to collect a cost-effective contribution from households and build, finance and maintain treatment facilities
Action 3.2: Establish control mechanisms over finance allocations in administrations to assure that revenues incurred are fully allocated to treatment facilities

4. Reform the licensing and taxation system to promote environmental performance and to stimulate investments into good environmental practices

- Action 4.1: Wider application of economic and incentive mechanisms
Action 4.2: Increase taxes for industries and provide subsidies or tax preferences to applying pollution reduction technologies
Action 4.3: Introduce awards for outstanding environmental performance, e.g. progressive tax system, benefits through introduction of clean technologies
Action 4.4: Introduce “blue labels” for facilities which contribute to water savings and water pollution reductions

5. Address the pollution from non-point sources

- Action 5.1: Design and introduction of good practices in agriculture
Action 5.2: Abandon and control over agricultural practices resulting in increase of diffuse polluted water run-off



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III. Ecological problems

6. Take into consideration in decision-making the need for preservation of habitats and normal ecosystems' functioning

- Action 6.1: Apply ecosystem protection as integral part of management goals in a course of the RF Water Code implementation
- Action 6.2: Develop a management strategy incorporating river ecological amelioration, including a) restoration of natural river channel processes, b) change spatial planning with control and limiting the floodplain development, c) correlation between natural processes in floodplains and flood protection measures, d) impact assessment of river environmental flow on biodiversity (hydropower facilities and sturgeon spawning)
- Action 6.3: Introduce mechanisms ensuring contribution and advice of scientific organizations in ecology to decision-making and water management bodies (possibly through a scientific coordination body)

IV. Ineffective basin management

7. Introduce effective institutional system for river basin management

- Action 7.1: Ensure representation of various stakeholders in river basin organizations/councils

8. Enhance strategic planning and programming

- Action 8.1: Preparation of the river basin management plans (RBMP) with particular time-frames and cycles as it is within the EU WFD (6 year period)
- Action 8.2: Make the RBMP an integral part of the RF Water Code implementation process

9. Improve system of information and data dissemination for management decision-making

- Action 9.1: Enhance information sharing and dissemination of user-friendly information to all stakeholders
- Action 9.2: Wider application of forecasting methods in decision-making

10. Build human capacity in water management (through education programmes)

- Action 10.1: Special training courses and training centers
- Action 10.2: Develop regular education and life long learning

11. Ameliorate and develop institutional frameworks for effective financing the river basin management

- Action 11.1: Improve and develop effective system of funding for river basin management
- Action 11.2: Support innovation funds for water protection
- Action 11.3: Introduce special funds for infrastructure protection against flooding
- Action 11.4: Enforce mobilization of finance mobilization from application of polluter pay principle



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12. Develop a pilot project to demonstrate the perspectives and challenges of innovative water management

Action 12.1: Develop and implement a project in the Volga sub-basin to test in practice new mechanisms of river basin management

Expert Group 2

“Human Security and Vulnerability”

I. Safety of dams and other hydro-facilities

1. Inventory all hydro-facilities so that the risk they pose (as they can become a hazard) be known and understood by both the authorities and the general public.

Action 1.1: Evaluate existing inter/national methodologies for integrated assessment of hydro facilities to estimate the risk associated with their condition

Action 1.2: Enhance and implement methodology within the existing legal framework

Action 1.3: Produce and disseminate the annual RF report on the state of hydro facilities' safety for public use (taking into account existing rules for data access)

2. Reduce the risk posed by the hydro-facilities through rehabilitation and continuous monitoring. Start with the most hazardous facilities.

Action 2.1: Rank the facilities by their degree of hazard

Action 2.2: Rehabilitate the most hazardous facilities to inter/national standards

Action 2.3: Undertake regular risk inspections and maintain all hydro facilities

3. Develop and maintain innovative, sustainable financing mechanisms.¹

Action 3.1: Explore innovative, sustainable financing mechanisms², e.g. “polluter pay principle”, green taxation, green funds, etc.

Action 3.2: Develop further a legal base for sustainable finance mechanisms

Action 3.3: Implement and enforce the sustainable finance mechanisms

¹ This suggestion is also valid for the second problem identified by the experts and is therefore cross-cutting

² Such as those used in the EU/ECE/South East European countries, e.g. “green budgetary reform initiatives”



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II. Poor drinking water quality, including microbiological contamination

4. Improve the drinking water distribution system through renovation of pipes and other infrastructure to deliver safe drinking water to consumers.

- Action 4.1: Identify and rank “hotspots” within the distribution network
- Action 4.2: Publish and share the assessment results through a public forum
- Action 4.3: Prioritise and renovate (e.g. the replacement of the faulty pipes) the distribution network

5. Improve continuous monitoring and regular public reporting on drinking water quality distributed via the networks and on groundwater sources in rural areas

- Action 5.1: Review the existing monitoring network, enhance coverage of network through purchase of new (mobile) stations
- Action 5.2: Regular public reports on the results of monitoring assessments versus national water quality standards in real-time, online on the Internet and via other media, in clear, user-friendly and understandable way

6. Attain surface/ground water quality standards so as to ensure a reliable source of drinking water.

- Action 6.1: Compile an inventory and rank poor quality drinking water sources (surface and ground) and the related risks
- Action 6.2: Rehabilitate existing and/or establish new public wastewater treatment systems (technological facilities) according to the ranking
- Action 6.3: Rehabilitate existing and/or establish new water purification facilities according to the ranking
- Action 6.4: Preserve and/or restore natural water purification systems (e.g. reeds, wetlands) according to the ranking

III. Poor flood risk assessments

7. Apply integrated risk assessment methods that include social, economic and environmental dimensions for flood prone areas.

- Action 7.1: Inventory of available methodologies for flood risk assessment and select³ the most appropriate for the Volga Basin (which allow for a multi-disciplinary approach combining social and economic assessments with technology solutions, including GIS)
- Action 7.2: Enhance the capacity of existing centres and if necessary find new centres to apply the risk assessment methodology at local/municipal levels and apply participatory approaches in the Volga Basin
- Action 7.3: Ensure public awareness relating to results and recommendations of the integrated risk assessment via a report in various formats, via media and public fora
- Action 7.4: Ensure the overall (economic, physical, social) preparedness of relevant institutions and public for flood risks through application of

³ See, the results of the CABRI EGM in Kazan, 2006 for the shortlist of available methodologies



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assessment results (for example, ensure 'economic' preparedness via developing a legislative basis for the purchase and functioning of insurance policies within flood-prone areas)

Action 7.5: Ensure the regular application of the selected risk assessment methods as well as public sharing and debate of the results

Expert Group 3

"Natural Resources and their Sustainable Use"

I. Inefficient use of water resources

1. Enhance water allocation to various water-users

Action 1.1: Elaborate the scheme for integrated use of water resources, including the list of priority water-users

2. Improve operation regimes of hydropower plants and reservoirs as water level in reservoirs does not reach the optimum levels

Action 2.1: Restore facilities for drainage and water control

Action 2.2: Approve new norms and regimes for operation of hydropower facilities on the basis of new mathematical and physical models

Action 2.3: Undertake the decision on Cheboksary hydro-lock and the dam near N. Novgorod

II. Insufficient information regarding the water quantity

3. Improve monitoring, data processing and its dissemination to stakeholders

Action 3.1: Increase the number of observation sites

Action 3.2: Compile, process and disseminate more information about all rivers

Action 3.3: Ensure public access to information, including via internet

Action 3.4: Enhance coordination between different institutions responsible for data collection

Action 3.5: Develop new rules to unify the system of data collection and analysis

Action 3.6: Maintain broader dissemination of data free of charge

III. Degradation of natural resources

4. Prevent degradation and loss of biodiversity in the Volga Basin

Action 4.1: Consider ecology as an integral part of the housing and health-care priority national projects

Action 4.2: Enhance the system of national parks and nature reserves to stop the decrease in biodiversity

Action 4.3: Create more protected areas and nature reserves and enhance their functioning

Action 4.4: Develop the net of protected areas and enhance coordination between them



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Action 4.5: Ameliorate funding opportunities and enforce punishment for violations

Action 4.6: Improve the system of environmental assessment at the regional level, including for example the fish passages

5. Enhance treatment of surface run-off in small towns

Action 5.1: Introduce projects of surface water run-off treatment as a part of plans for urban development

IV. The new RF Water Code implementation

6. Support the process of the RF Water Code implementation

Action 6.1: Develop normative acts regulating the division of competences between the federal and regional authorities in allocation of funding deriving from fees for water-use

Action 6.2: Inventory and listing of water bodies and responsible organs

Action 6.3: Develop normative acts defining new regimes for water protection zones

Action 6.4: Ensure broader competences and enhanced rights for the new Basin Councils

Action 6.5: Define interactions between Basin Councils and territorial organs

Action 6.6: Enhance the image of people working for the environment; enhance professional education and training in water protection and conservation; increase salaries in the field

Action 6.7: Start ecological education in “kindergarten” and schools; environmental education should be the integral part of cultural education

Action 6.8: Increase the state budget allocated for environment and for water related risk reduction



Expert Group 4

“Connecting Goods and People”

I. Lack of an integrative transport strategy

1. Build an integrative transport strategy

- Action 1.1: Initiate a moderated transport strategy development process for the Volga Basin with a strategy timeframe of the year 2020
- Action 1.2: Develop regional and local transport strategies
- Action 1.3: Initiate intermediate working groups for coordination of regional and municipal plans
- Action 1.4: Enable contributions from applied research (academia, consultancies) to enrich the fact finding process

II. Missing linkages between transport modes

2. Link different transport modes according to regional needs and development strategies (focus on freight transport)

- Action 2.1: Create intermodal freight ports at key trade nodes
- Action 2.2: Demonstrate the economic feasibility and profitability of creating freight ports
- Action 2.3: Develop local business partnerships

III. Poor waterway and infrastructure conditions

3. Gradually improve the existing infrastructure and overcome bottlenecks

- Action 3.1: Continue the policy of the federal targeted programmes and independently monitor their implementation impacts
- Action 3.2: Develop a “Volga Investment Forum” as a meeting platform for international and local investors
- Action 3.3: Promote private-public partnerships and long-term contracts between private and public sectors
- Action 3.4: Initiate a feasibility study concerning the requirements of international vessels on the international Volga waterway



Expert Group 5

”Institutional Cooperation and Coordination”

I. Loopholes in institutional frameworks and insufficient coordination between water management institutions

1. Enhance institutional capacities in water governance - through elimination of uncertainties in division of responsibilities between government institutions and overcoming poor coordination between them in the basin

- Action 1.1: Establish clear procedures for coordination between institutions and administrative bodies responsible for water use and water protection at various levels
- Action 1.2: Set up a coordination body for agencies responsible for water-use, water-protection and water-related natural hazards risk reduction
- Action 1.3: Ensure broader involvement of science-and-technology community in sharing ‘good’ water management knowledge and R&D results in the Volga

2. Apply vertical subsidiarity principles to strengthen cross-scales coordination among government authorities responsible for water use and water protection (national/regional/local)

- Action 2.1: Enforce new schemes defining vertical division of authority and responsibilities at government level introduced by the new Water Code
- Action 2.2: Ensure broader dissemination of competences away from the federal level to regional and local authorities (while the federal government sets the framework conditions and standards, the regional and local government executes within this framework the water management in the Volga)
- Action 2.3: Develop and enforce new schemes for finance allocations between levels of authority for water management that are in compliance with the new Water Code; introduce mechanisms for mobilizing the regional and local resources for water conservation in the Volga

3. Step-by-step implementation of the new RF Water Code, 2006

- Action 3.1: Develop a strategy containing short- and mid- term schemes and goals for implementation of the Water Code, i.e. similar to the WFD implementation process
- Action 3.2: Introduce strict verification and control mechanisms over its implementation
- Action 3.3: Coordinate with existing water related legislation to ensure compatibility with other national laws, i.e. the environmental law, the law on the earth interior, on emergencies, on hydro-technical facilities, on land-use, etc.
- Action 3.4: Develop regional and local regulations in water use and water protection in the Volga in compliance with the new national rules



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4. Support for formation of the new system of Basin Councils (BC)

- Action 4.1: Develop transparent and effective regime and rules for BCs: clearly define their competences and functions
- Action 4.2: Develop regimes setting up clear division of competences and effective mechanisms of interaction with existing regional water basin administrations in the Volga
- Action 4.3: Introduce procedures ensuring real representation and participation of stakeholders representing various groups of water-users, NGOs, scientific community, public in the BCs; encourage representation from SMEs or their associations, and municipalities
- Action 4.4: Coordinate the information dissemination and sharing; involvement in transfer to stakeholders of user-friendly data about the environmental and natural hazards situation, as well as about measures in problem-solving (“river basin annual reports”)

II. Weak partnerships between various stakeholders and low local public involvement in water-related decision-making and action in the Volga

5. Support and diversification of river basin partnerships in good water management

- Action 5.1: Organisation of local participatory action for the Volga rehabilitation with involvement of various stakeholders; adoption of a ‘common goal approach’ of environmental clean-up among the public, business, NGOs
- Action 5.2: Build and maintain a dialogue and consultations within the triangle: government (at all levels) - public - business community
- Action 5.3: Support for voluntary regional and local associations involved in water conservation in the Volga regions

6. Enhance public participation in decision-making and action

- Action 6.1: Establish a well-defined and adequately funded short- and mid-term programme for enhancing local public participation in the Volga River conservation and rehabilitation
- Action 6.2: Introduce the “parents education through their children” approach for raising ecological awareness
- Action 6.3: Support Volga local and regional cooperation and networking of environmental NGOs, including regular interregional meetings of environmental NGOs and electronic dissemination of information (possibly hosted on CABRI website)

III. Insufficient coordination between economic, social and environmental priorities in basin water management

7. Support for wider application of sustainable development principles, reflecting growing integration between economic-social-environmental priorities in water management

- Action 7.1: Introduce the realistic short-term and mid-term sustainable development strategies and practice-grounded water conservation programmes for the Volga Basin



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- Action 7.2: Develop and introduce the ecological and economic cadasters in integrated water use in the Volga Basin
- Action 7.3: Introduce regulations and standards for water pollution damage assessment as a result of economic activities
- Action 7.4: Publish a series of Guidebooks and Manuals on water pollution control and conservation in branches of industry, transport, agriculture and households

8. Increase government support for business involvement in water conservation, monitoring and information dissemination

- Action 8.1: Introduce indirect subsidies for application of best environmental technologies, e.g. technology innovation funds
- Action 8.2: Establish regional development funds in the Volga to support SMEs, their access to new environmental benign technologies and involvement in R&D projects, information exchange and data sharing
- Action 8.3: Develop voluntary business partnerships and agreements for water protection and conservation; stimulate investments into better water quality and water related risk reduction in the Volga
- Action 8.4: Promote business involvement in environmental education programmes
- Action 8.5: Introduce mechanisms for industrial zones management, including water protection and conservation and taking into account existing EU practices

9. Develop voluntary ecological certification and eco-labeling at various levels

- Action 9.1: Incentives and support for ecological certification and promotion of eco-labeling
- Action 9.2: Public campaigns among consumers in support of green labeling