



Jointly adapting to climate change in transboundary basins under the Water Convention

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Why transboundary cooperation is very important in adaptation to climate change?

- To increase effectiveness of adaptation measures;
- To prevent negative impacts of unilateral adaptation measures in riparian countries;
- To enable more effective and efficient adaptation through:
 - Wider knowledge base
 - Larger planning space: take measures in the basin where they have optimum effect
 - Possibility to share costs and benefits

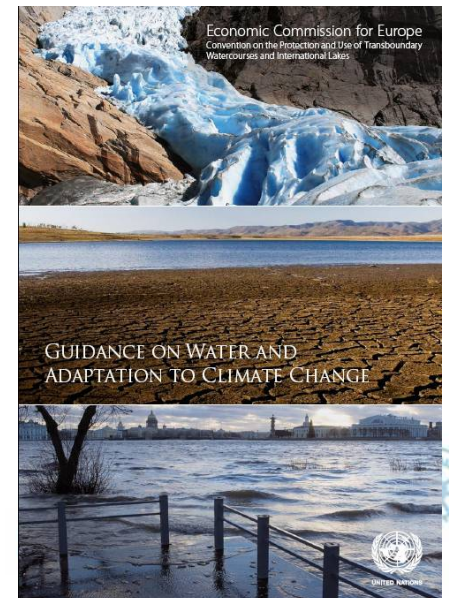




UNECE Water Convention

→ principle of reasonable and equitable use; Precautionary principles; Obligation to exchange information and take measures to prevent, control and reduce transboundary impact

- Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change (2009)
- General roadmap towards adaptation of water management to climate change
 - Assess impacts of climate change
 - Develop policy, strategic and operational responses
 - Transboundary and health focus





Global network of basins working on water and climate

- Promote cooperation on adaptation
- Focus mainly on developing a joint adaptation strategy & measures
- Specific focus defined by countries; some focus on water scarcity, others on floods

Platform for exchanging experiences

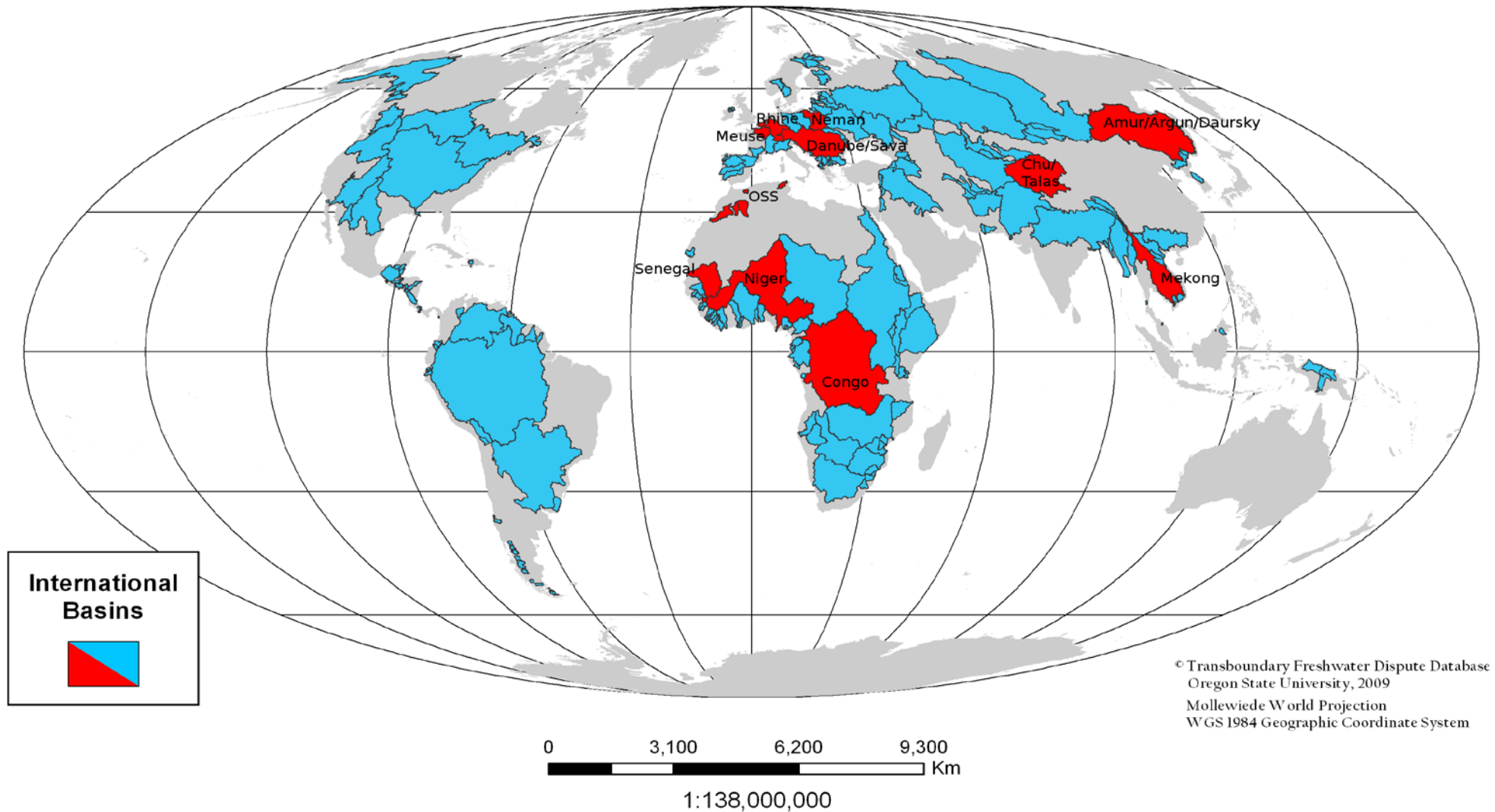
- Regular workshops and meetings of pilot projects members.
- Internet platform

Collection of good practices and lessons learnt



Basins in the global network of basins working on climate change

International River Basins





Objectives of the global network of basins

- Promote cooperation on adaptation in (transboundary) basins,
- Assist countries in implementing the Water Convention;
- Support countries and especially those in transition in developing adaptation strategies and measures;
- Create positive examples showing benefits of and mechanisms for transboundary cooperation in adaptation;
- Support dialogue and cooperation on the design of an adaptation strategy in the transboundary context;
- Implement and test the Guidance
- Compare different methodologies and approaches
- Promote a shared vision between the participating basins.





Example

Dniester pilot project

Aims of the project

1. Reduce risks from climate change by improving adaptive capacity of recipient countries in shared ecosystems where forecasted impacts of climate change have security implications
2. Support dialogue and cooperation on the needed steps to design and implement an adaptation strategy in the transboundary context and thereby prevent controversy on the use of water resources.
3. Support regional stability in the Dniester basin through the facilitation of transboundary cooperation on adaptation to the consequences of climate change on water resources.



Implemented by UNECE and OSCE under ENVSEC



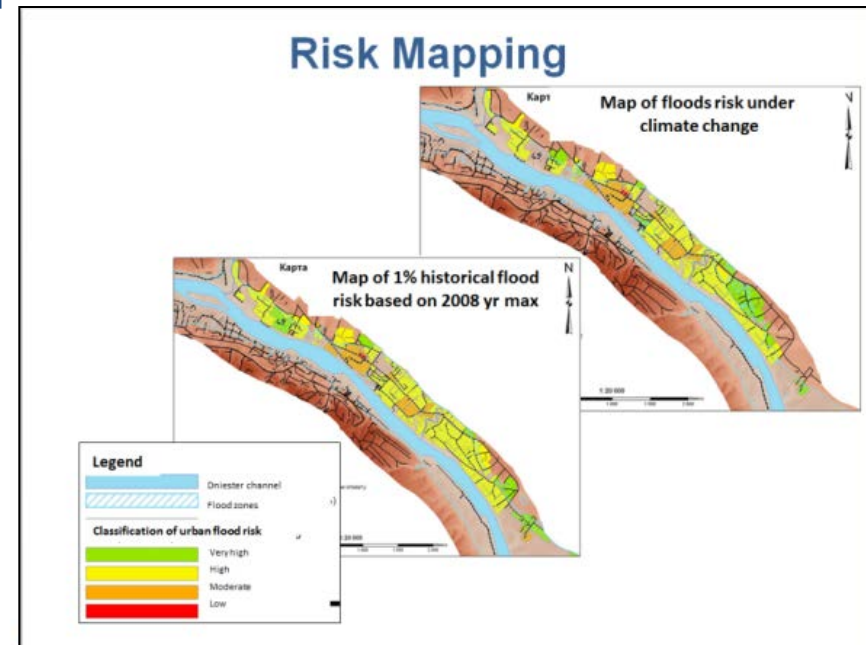


Example Dniester project activities



Activities

- Develop a strategic framework for basin adaptation
- Discuss and promote the draft strategic framework during iterative consultative process and workshops
- Develop an implementation plan and resource mobilization strategy
- Select a few priority measures and implement them
- Share the Dniester strategic adaptation framework and lessons learnt with others





Example

Dniester pilot project

Lessons learned:

- Importance of thorough baseline study to identify completed or ongoing projects and relevant partners to be involved
- Crucial to coordinate between different governance levels (from local to transboundary level)
- Special attention is needed for connecting research with policy making (e.g creation of the working group on the Dniester)
- A joint group needed for joint assessment of problems, priorities, solutions, of developing joint scenarios, modeling and vulnerability assessment: many practical problems will arise





First lessons learnt of the platform



1. In most basins, some climate change impact assessments had already been done nationally, but using different methodologies: importance of joint scenarios, modelling and vulnerability assessment, but extent of harmonization depends on resources and time available
2. Importance of thorough baseline study to identify completed or ongoing projects and relevant partners to be involved
3. Importance of link between political and experts' level, e.g. through creation of a working group and regular meetings
4. Institutional and cultural differences can be overcome through focusing on common interests, expert cooperation etc.
5. Importance of concrete activities and involving population
6. Importance and difficulty to link to national level, need for coordination and mainstreaming





Conclusions: importance of transboundary perspective



Climate change adaptation can be a driver for transboundary cooperation

Joint bodies need mandate to address adaptation and can also strengthen work of national authorities

Importance of joint assessment of problems, priorities, solutions

Need for a joint group for assessment, harmonization of methodologies, communication, stakeholder involvement

Paris COP 21!





Thank you!

Water and Climate Change website:

www.unece.org/env/water/water_climate_activ.html

www2.unece.org/ehlm/platform/display/ClimateChange/Welcome

For more information, please contact:

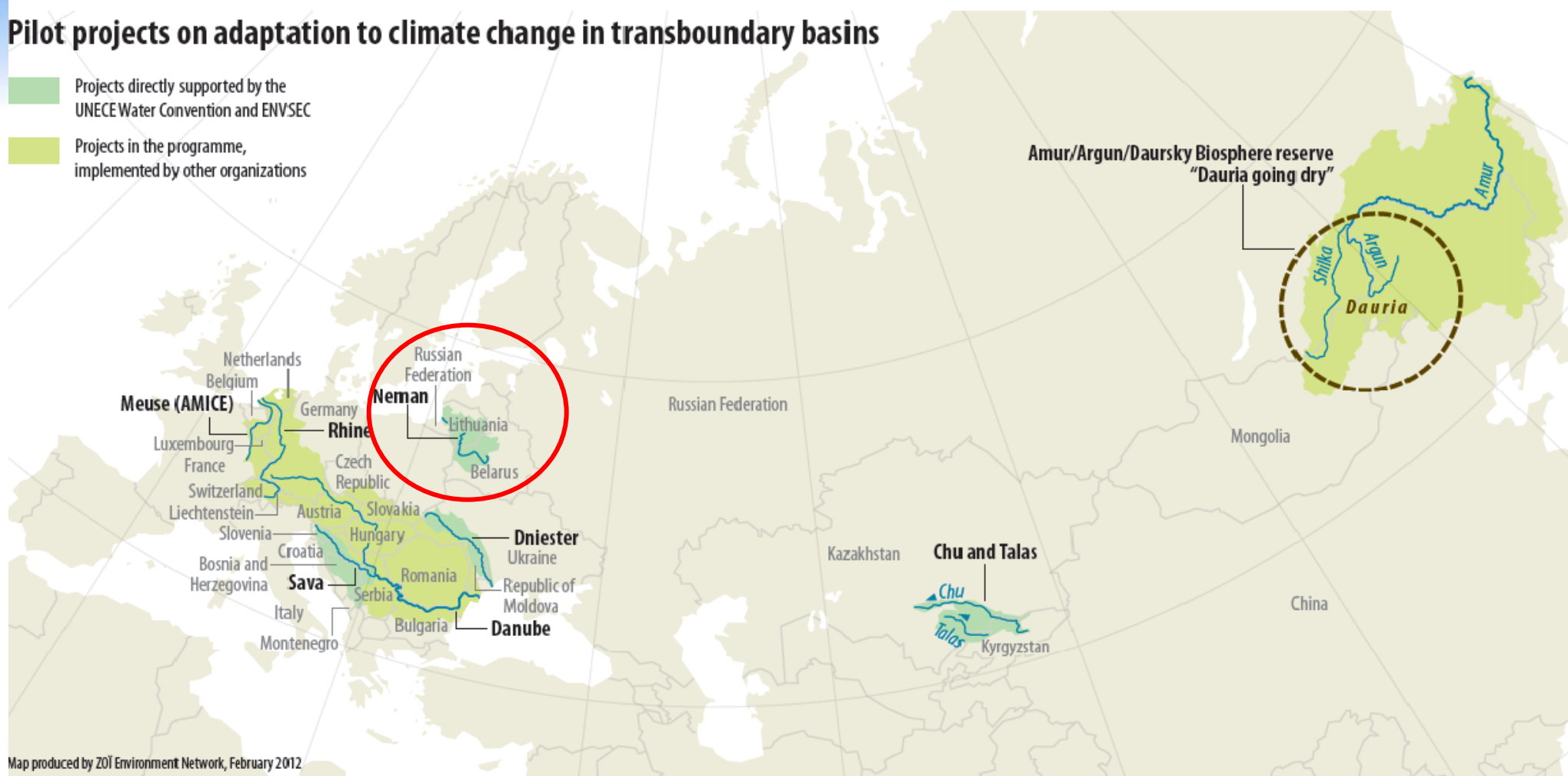
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Example: Neman pilot project

Pilot projects on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins

- Projects directly supported by the UNECE Water Convention and ENVSEC
- Projects in the programme, implemented by other organizations





Neman river basin

Country

Catchment area, %

Lithuania	47.7
Belarus	46.4
Russian Federation	3.2
Poland	2.6
Latvia	0.1





Objective: Improve integrated river basin management and transboundary cooperation in times of a changing climate in the Neman river basin

Step 1: climate projections

Step 2: Run off projections

Step 3: Possible changes of water quality

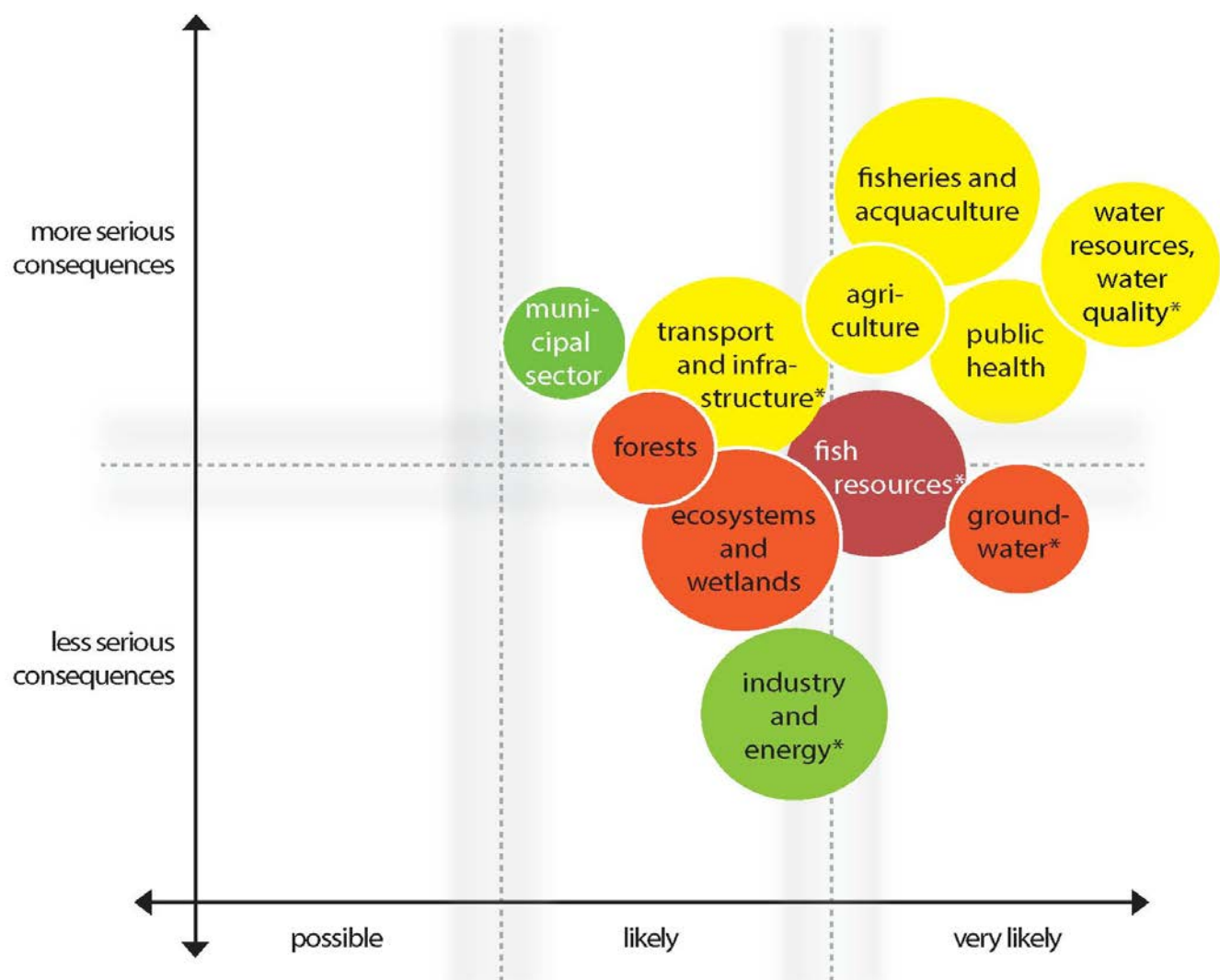
→ determined that the impact of climate change will be more important for runoff in the Neman River Basin than forecasted impact of water use changes

Step 4: Multi-stakeholders workshop





Possible impacts of climate change in the Neman river basin



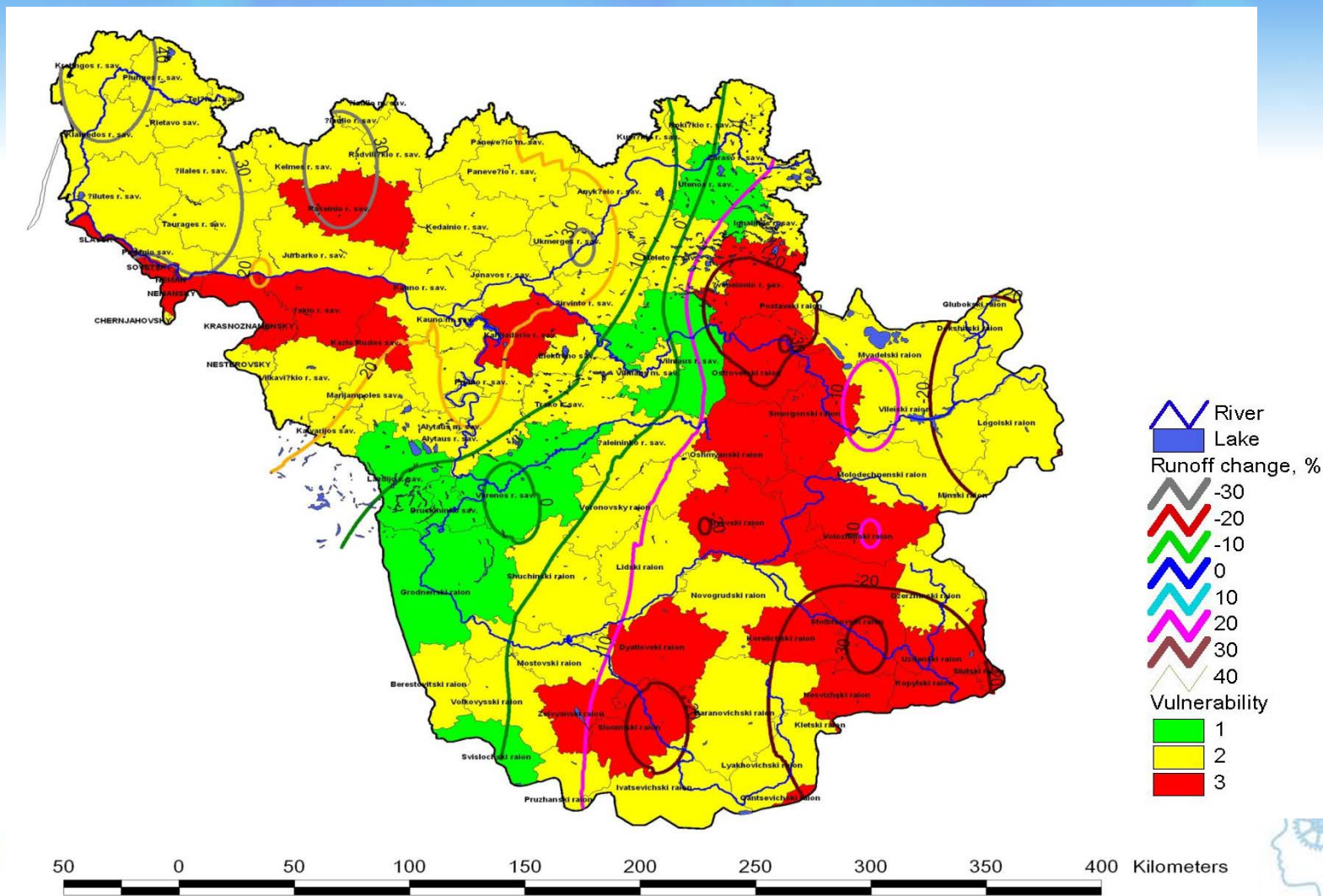
Current adaptation potential:

- high
- medium
- low

*(coordinated) basin-level actions are needed



Vulnerability analysis





Outcomes of the project and lessons learnt

- **STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE NEMAN RIVER BASIN ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE**
- Communicate results appropriately to policy-makers
- Find a compromise, consider interests from all riparians
- Formal transboundary agreement or national documents about water management under changing climate conditions are crucial.
- Important role of local communities (public information and participation)
- Reduce differences of opinion and help find common solutions via effective communication

