Promotion of transparency and public participation in the two international water management commissions – view of Croatia

Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development
Republic of Croatia
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Geneva, 28-29 June 2023
Public Participation in international forums under Aarhus Convention, EU and national law on water management

- Article 3(7) of the Aarhus Convention requires that “Each Party shall promote the application of the principles of this Convention in international environmental decision-making processes and within the framework of international organizations in matters relating to the environment.”

- EU Water Framework Directive (WFD), places public participation at the center stage of water management as part of its integrated approach to water management.

- Article 14 - Public information and consultation „Member States shall encourage the active involvement of all interested parties in the implementation of this Directive, in particular in the production, review and updating of the river basin management plans.”

- WFD calls for public participation in order to ensure protection and a sustainable use of the European river basins

- Croatian legislation includes all this requirements…
Danube River Basin
International commission for the protection of Danube river – ICPDR

EU Member States (9)
Non-EU Member States (5)
all ratified Aarhus convention
ICPDR – Danube River Commission:
• Danube River Basin Management Plan and Danube Flood Risk Management Plan 2022-2027

Public Participation Expert Group
• deals with ICPDR activities concerning public information and consultation, outreach and awareness raising, as well as environmental education
• supports ICPDR activities related to communication and participation issues, including public consultation measures for the Danube River Basin Management and Flood Risk Management Plans, publications and outreach initiatives such as Danube Day, environmental education, promotion of Joint Danube Survey...

Parties to the FASRB: Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia, Slovenia

Specific goals:
- To establish an international regime of navigation
- To establish sustainable water management
- To prevent/limit hazards (floods, droughts, ice and accidents) and reduce/eliminate their negative consequences

Implementation coordinated by the ISRBC – Sava Commission (2005)
ISRBC - Sava River Commission:

- Sava River Basin Management Plan and Flood Risk Management plan + Summary of the public participation
- Flood Forecasting and Warning System for the Sava River Basin
Sava River Youth Parliament

• **The main objectives of the Parliament**
  - to raise awareness of the importance of *education* on water issues, of education for making decision at local and transboundary level, and of culture of dialogue between water users
  - to **build connections** between generations to solve common problems and challenges in the future, developing a balance between rights and responsibilities for water resources

• **Members**
  - students of secondary schools from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia

• **Selection of participants**
  - on the basis of the results of competitions on various subjects (e.g. photo, video)

• **The main messages from the Parliament** are presented on different occasions like the Meeting of the Parties, sessions of the ISRBC and thematic workshops

[https://sava-youthparliament.com/](https://sava-youthparliament.com/)
Celebration of river days in June

1 June 2023 - Celebration of Sava Day!
„Let’s work with nature“ Competition

29 June 2023 - international Danube Day!
“Keep the Danube Blue,” inspired by the 4th Joint Danube Survey (JDS4), one of the world’s most comprehensive surface water monitoring efforts
The key activities of the project are 2 study visits. The first study visit was to Ghent, Belgium in September 2022. And the second study visit took place this April in Zagreb, Croatia. Both times there were 20 participants from all 7 participating countries.

Croatian Water Education Program and cooperation with ICPDR and ISRBC
Croatian Water Education Program

EDUCATIONAL PICTURE BOOKS

Picture books on water management issues – Hrvoje Turtle

1. LIFE ALONG THE RIVER – FLOODS
2. WATER – The source of life – WATER PROTECTION
3. WATER AND HUMAN – WATER USE
4. HRVOJE'S NEW STORY: FROM WASTE WATER TO CLEAN WATER!
5. ... And more to come
PRESENTATIONS OF PICTURE BOOKS
free - at the invitation of teachers and educators

Surveying teachers and educators

Child's Play: questions and answers with doll Hrvoje

OTHER PROJECTS

Children’s workshops and exhibitions

Education – mobile laboratory

„Our beautiful Sava”
Public access
http://www.icpdr.org/main/
https://www.savacommission.org/

• publish a range of documents, from magazines Danube Watch and Sava NewsFlash, to maps, yearbooks, annual reports and other technical papers. Most documents are open for the public, there is special section of the website to make easier for stakeholders and the interested public to get access to them, and most of them can be obtained in print. Web-pages have been constantly improved.
Thank you for your attention!