

2. Adaptation to Climate Change in the Dniester River Basin

1. Short description of the project/ activities

The project "Climate Change and Security in the Dniester River Basin" is an integral part of the larger scale project "Climate Change and Security in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus". The Strategic Framework for Climate Change Adaptation in the Dniester Basin was developed and launched at a high-level event by the deputy ministers of environment of the Republic of Moldova and of Ukraine. An implementation plan and resource mobilization plan are being developed in wide consultation with the basin stakeholders to ensure mainstreaming adaptation to climate change into the national and local policy. A number of adaptation measures have been implemented in the basin.

2. Which climate change impacts are you already experiencing or expecting, such as floods, droughts, impacts on water quality etc.?

Flooding in the Dniester River basin which happened in 2008 and 2010 caused big damage and do present the consequence of climate change. According to long period observations such flooding could happen once in 10-15 years. Additionally to this during last decades the periodicity of dry years (with unfavorable conditions for agriculture) has increased: every three years from a four year cycle do harm the agriculture. The number of low water years has also increased.

3. Which concrete results did you achieve in 2014-2015 with regards to climate change adaptation?

As one of the main outputs, a Strategic Framework for Adaptation to Climate Change in the Dniester River Basin was developed in 2014-2015, which is one of the first transboundary adaptation strategies in the world. The document provides a glimpse into expected climate change impacts on the water flow (less quantity and worse quality is expected), human activities (soil fertility might decrease, new pests might appear), nature (less space for species and decrease of the ecosystems productivity) and population (health issues might need much more attention) as well as identifies adaptation measures which are useful from a basin perspective. Priority measures range from those reducing damage from floods, water scarcity and degradation of water quality, to support to ecosystem resilience. The proposed "menu" of measures includes information, organization and investment measures which could be implemented jointly at the basin level, coordinated by the countries or individually (in different basin areas). The Strategy was endorsed by the Ministries of Environment of the two countries and launched by the two deputy ministers of environment at a high-level event in Kiev in April 2015 which also gave a new impetus to the Dniester treaty ratification process.

A Plan for Implementation of the Strategy is currently being finalized to ensure its mainstreaming into national policies and plans as well as financing and implementation of measures. At the same time, a number of adaptation measures have already been finalized or initiated. For example:

- calculation of the current and probable (under climate change impact) water management balance has been performed for the entire basin,
- scientists analyzed the potential for creation of an artificial spawning ground in the Lower Dniester at a Ramsar site "Talmaza wetlands" in Moldova,
- a preliminary model for water reservoir management, considering climate change, has been developed by the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation,
- a feasibility study for restoration of water exchange between the Dniester and floodplain meadows under the road Mayaki-Palanca in a transboundary Dniester delta has been performed;
- some 7000 trees have been planted by youth and conservation organisations in the Lower Dniester, the most southern and the most vulnerable to the climate change part of the basin, and 6 ha of Turunchuk island were planted with forest at a Ramsar site "Lower Dniester" in Transdnistria (Moldova),
- a summer expedition along the Dniester was organized for 60 representatives of Moldovan and Ukrainian youth, NGOs and journalists,
- annually 400 kids and students in 2013-2015 from both banks for the river took part in the art contest "Colours of the Dniester", having demonstrated their photographs, drawings, verses, etc.

4. Which major challenges did you face in this work? How did you overcome them?

The main problems were about the information and data exchange. They were discussed and a solution was proposed. These problems were discussed during training, seminars, work group meetings and day-to-day communication.

Poor financing of the national programmes and, as a consequence, low implementation rate of such programmes is a big challenge in implementing the planned activities.

5. Which lessons learned would you like to share with other basins?

- Consultation process with the stakeholders from the district levels in both countries is quite complicated;
- The dialog between different sectors (for example energy and ecology) should be strengthened;
- Climate change adaptation measures are not of the high priority for both countries due to fact that there are more urgent and a huge amount of day-to-day activities.
- There are no persons responsible for realization of climate change adaptation measures on the operational level.
- It is necessary to foster cooperation on political and expert levels;
- In many cases, it is easier to operate on the local level achieving good results without national level involvement, which sometimes brings in bureaucracy;
- It is very important to realize concrete activities on the local level with the involvement of population;
- Local producers are aimed at receiving an immediate profit and do not have the strategic approach;
- Rural population is not aware about the problems linked with the climate change.

6. How do you finance your climate change activities within the basin? How do you plan to finance implementation of measures?

The Plan for Implementation of the Strategy and the funds mobilization strategy which are currently being finalized provide an overview of the various funding opportunities at international to local level to practically undertake the adaptation measures.

7. How did you link transboundary climate change adaptation to adaptation activities at other levels, such as the national level?

The Republic of Moldova has approved the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy though there is not enough information about the transboundary basins in this document. Adaptation to climate change has been included into the INDC by the Republic of Moldova.

8. How did you link transboundary climate change adaptation to adaptation activities of sectors such as adaptation in energy, in agriculture, in transportation or urbanisation?

All climate adaptation measures should reflect the interests of all interested sectors-stakeholders, but the priority should be given for the environmental issues. Organization of the national discussion forums for climate change adaptation.

9. Future planned activities

Further implementation of of climate change adaptation measures, finalization of the implementation plan and the fund mobilization strategy and their mainstreaming into national policy.

10. Contact details

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