



*C Convention on Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes
Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment*

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Working paper:

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATURAL
RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA AND
MONTENEGRO**

Honorable Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to greet you all on behalf of the Ministry for the Protection of Natural Resources and Environment and Minister Dr. Andjelka Mihajlov.

Serbia and Montenegro have the annual water flow of around 1,500 m³ per inhabitant, which lists it among the areas with water deficiency in Europe. The flow of water supply is seasonal, uncoordinated. Annual average precipitations in Serbia and Montenegro amount to 734mm, but there are great variations. Annual precipitations in Serbia vary from 550-660mm in Vojvodina, to 800-1200 in mountain regions. All valleys in Serbia, including upper water course of Podunavlje, have precipitations below 800mm per year, Montenegro has extensive precipitations of around 2000mm per year, and locally up to 5500mm per year and maximum of 8500mm per year. Renewable water resources in the country are limited, since around 84% of available water resources does not originate from Serbia and Montenegro. Annual ground water reserves amount to 244 m³ per inhabitant. Majority of rivers in Serbia and Montenegro belong to Podunavlje and Black Sea catchment. Some rivers in Montenegro confluence into Lake Skadar and Adriatic Sea. Generally speaking, mountain south-west, east and south of Serbia have greater water potential than the northern and central parts.

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Water quality monitoring in the Republic of Serbia was established in 1965. Monitoring of condition of water quality changes was conducted on 40 profiles, in 4 seasonal series, by examination of 12 basic and 34 expanded indicators, including general, organoleptic, physical-chemical, microbiological and saprobiological indicators. This monitoring program was maintained until 1967, when the examinations during 1968/69 were expanded to 7 series of annual examinations, on 41 river profiles, with 26 indicators.

In the beginning of the 1970s, the water quality monitoring program was expanded to 77 profiles, on 8 series of annual examinations with 28 indicators, also expanded on examination of phenol substances and total beta radioactivity.

In the end of 1970s, began the examinations of residual pesticides and heavy metals in river waters on the entire territory of the Republic of Serbia, also including the canal network in Vojvodina and small water courses on Kosovo and Metohija.

During the 1980s, the intensive development of program activities followed, additional staff and for the first time the insurance of laboratory and accompanying capacities of water quality monitoring.

1990s are in the sign of general crisis of economy and public sector, among other things, due to economic sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia by the International community. Due to lack of funds, fuel, equipment and spare parts, entrusted assignments cannot be accomplished, out of which emanates the unreliability of results, data and analyses.

Timely inclusion into activities and projects within the Convention on protection and sustainable use of water in the Danube catchment is not realized. Cooperation with International community is limitedly established in August 1999 within BTF (Balkan Task Force).

With reintegration of country in International community in autumn 2000 it is realized that the condition of equipment for conducting specific tasks of water quality monitoring very critical. That was especially the case with laboratory sophisticated devices and machines for chemical water analyses in situ, and also devices for standardized collection of water samples, suspended substances, sediments and biota.

During 2002 the program tasks of water quality monitoring were planned on 158 profiles in the Republic. Objectively, the examinations could not be conducted on the territory of Kosovo and Metohija, so the planned tasks could not be conducted on 13 watercourses and 23 river profiles. Also, monitoring program processed 28 accumulations and 35 profiles of first-rank springs and 117 ground water stations. Frequency of examinations on surface waters ranges from 1-12 annual observations, which include organoleptic water qualities, physical-chemical indicators, hazardous substances, biological and microbiological indicators. Ten stations have on their disposal daily reports for 17 main parameters.

On watercourses cut by state border and water courses on which frequent water changes are expected, the 24-time examination per year is recommended. Ground water quality monitoring is conducted once a year.

Permanent system of observation and early accident pollution reports are usually conducted in border zones, zones of potable water taking and zones with high degree of risk (industrial zones, great landfills of hazardous substances etc.).

Our country ratified the Convention on Protection and Sustainable Use of Danube in 2003 and with this automatically accepted the obligations which emanate from it, among them the commitment of establishing the PIAS center and acting according to rules defined in AEWS International operative instruction of ICPDR which is unique on the entire territory of river Danube catchment.

Strategy of water quality monitoring in the Republic of Serbia implies a series of previous activities and measures which must be conducted in order to enable the implementation of desired designations and harmonization of monitoring programs with neighboring countries, countries in river Danube catchment, and according to the program of approaching EU.

PRIORITIES AND GOALS WITHIN THE CONVENTION

The aim of our country is ratification of Convention on Use and Protection of Trans-boundary Water Courses and International Lakes, since in the Republic of Serbia there are several trans-boundary rivers (Danube, Tisa, Sava, Drina...). It is necessary to improve the cooperation with neighboring countries (joint monitoring and assessment, examination and development, exchange of information, liability...) in the aim of prevention, mitigation and reduction of hazardous substances' spilling into water environment, trans-boundary waters and their sustainable use and development.

Our priority is compliance with EU norms, application of EU Framework Directive on Waters in national legislation, and in that context, institutional and capacity strengthening is the accompanying process.

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