

# The CABRI Volga project (2004 – 2007)

CABRI-Volga is an international coordination action to facilitate cooperation and to coordinate research in environmental risk management in large river basins in the EU, Russia & the New Independent States (NIS). The project focus is on the Volga basin which comprises 40% of the population of Russia, 45% of the country's industry and 50% of its agriculture.



## The situation

- The Volga basin is threatened by significant ecologic, social and economic risks;
- Low respect and funding of scientific establishment;
- Low priority for environment among citizens;
- Inter-governmental and institutional levels are faced with challenges on cross-sectoral collaboration;



Map of the Volga

## Key project objectives

- Fostering institutional cooperation and networking within the basin and with EU counterparts;
- Increasing research on risks and develop approaches for assessing risk;
- Channelling results back into EU/international processes;
- Leaving a legacy within the region enabling institutional cooperation on risk management, policy development and opportunities to participate in political processes for citizens.

The objectives of the project correspond to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) approved by the UN in 2000 to be met by the year 2015, specially to those related to an interdependent relation between the health of the river and achieving the MDGs in the areas of environmental sustainability and peoples' health.

## The partnership

- 17 public and private sector partners from Russia and several EU member states, including universities, private research institutes, resource and training centers, industry, NGOs, and international organisations dealing with a variety of aspects in environmental risk management

### Partners in Russia:

- Environmental Policy Research and Consulting Center (Moscow)
- Caspian Marine Scientific and Research Centre (Astrakhan)
- Ecological Projects Consulting Institute (Moscow)
- Nizhny Novgorod State University of Architecture and Civil Engineering (Nizhny Novgorod)
- the Independent noncommercial organization the Research Innovation Project Institute "Cadastre" (Jaroslavl)
- Saratov State Socio-Economic University (Saratov)
- UNESCO Moscow Office
- Ammophos (Cherepovets)

### Partners from the Europe and the EU

- Rupprecht Consult Forschung- und Beratung GmbH – *Project Coordinator*
- Institute for Water Resource Management, Hydrological and Rural Engineering of the University of Karlsruhe
- United Nations University - Institute for Environment and Human Security (all Germany)
- Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece)
- Centro di Cultura Scientifica "Alessandro Volta" (Italy)
- International Ocean Institute (Malta)
- Compagnie Nationale du Rhône (France)
- The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (Hungary)
- Wageningen University (the Netherlands)

The Committee on Ecology of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation has expressed its strong interest in the CABRI-Volga project.

## Budget

The overall budget of € 1,2 million is mainly provided by the European Commission under the International Cooperation (INCO) Programme. The UN University and UNESCO provide own match funding.



## Approach

To date three expert fora were held organised by the project consortium in different Russian CABRI-Volga cities such as Nizhny Novgorod, Kazan and Cherepovets. During these meetings over 70 experts from the European Union, Russia, America and Asia have identified the following problems and challenges and formulated recommendations to solve them:

- Water quality, incl. drinking water, sanitation and public health, biodiversity and natural habitats;
- Risk management and overall vulnerability of the Volga basin;
- Use of water resources in a sustainable manner;
- Economic development and sustainable transport in the Volga basin;
- Institutional cooperation and stakeholder participation.

The recommendations contain a call for improved cooperation and coordination at all levels to address the problems in the integrated manner, and for promotion of integrated management and sustainable development of the Volga basin



Industrial use of the river, Nizhny Novgorod

## Key documents delivered to date

- “Environmental Risk Management in the Volga Basin: Overview of Present Situation and Challenges in Russia and the EU”
- “Environmental Risk Management in Large River Basins: Overview of current practices in the EU and Russia”

Both reports were prepared by Nizhny Novgorod State University of Architecture and Civil Engineering and International Ocean Institute in close collaboration with all CABRI-Volga partners.

- Two comprehensive newsletter on project activities
- Expert Group meeting reports and several case studies

## CABRI-Volga – Policy Roundtable

### Russia’s Water Code and the EU’s Water Framework Directive – A dialog of research and practise

**Date: 27 February 2007 / Moscow**

Russian State Duma / Hotel Metropol (near Duma)

The Roundtable aims to:

- Develop further both scientific and practical contributions to the EU-Russia dialogue (environment, social development and transport);
- Discuss options for the implementation of recommendations which are based on findings developed through three river basin experts fora;
- Identify perspectives for future international cooperation.

The Policy Roundtable will comply with the project’s proven twinning principle (Russian and EU counterparts). Representatives of the following organisations and institutions are requested:

- The Russian Parliament (The State Duma)
- The EU Parliament
- The Russian Ministry for Emergency Situations (EMERCOM)
- The German Committee for Disaster Reduction
- The Russian Ministry of Natural Resources
- The European Commission and the EU Delegation to Russia
- The Green Cross International
- The Hydrometeorological Centre of Russia
- The German, Slovenian and Portuguese Embassies Russia (current EU Troika)
- United Nations University - Institute for Environment and Human Security (Bonn/Ger)
- The World Bank and several other environment, industry and transport related partners



Natural space along the river