



CABRI-Volga

Cooperation Along a Big River:
Institutional coordination among stakeholders for
environmental risk management in the Volga basin

Expert Group Meeting
Nizhny Novgorod, Russia
28-29 September 2005

Briefing Note

Expert Group 3 "Natural Resources and Their Sustainable Use"

Objectives of the CABRI-Volga Project Phase "State-of-the-Art and Good Practices"

- To provide the state-of-the-art in environmental risk management in large river basins
- To explore the status of coordination between institutions and multiple stakeholders, including civil society, business and water services providers, decision-makers, scientists
- To identify good and bad practices and lessons learned in coordination and cooperation between stakeholders

1. Introduction

The first CABRI-Volga Expert Group Meeting in Nizhny Novgorod falls into the project's initial phase during which the state-of-the-art and good practices are being identified and analysed. Within Expert Group 3 (EG3), CABRI-Volga aims to explore state-of-the-art and good practices in management of natural resources and their sustainable use in large river basins with a special emphasis on sustainable water use, land cover change and biodiversity protection.

During this Meeting the EG3 intends to explore state-of-the-art and good practices in the following areas:

- 1) overview of project results and case studies that can serve as **good practice examples** in large river basin management in Russia and the EU countries with focus on natural resources and their sustainable use,
- 2) identification of **failures** in strategies and programmes, problems of implementation and lessons learned in large river basin management,
- 3) overview of the **state of the art** in Europe and Russia in natural resources management in large river basins,
- 4) comparisons of the state of the art and identification of **gaps** for innovation,
- 5) exploration of the **status of coordination** between institutions, stakeholders, decision-makers and scientists and definition of the **lack of cooperation** and its implications for sustainable use of natural resources.

2. EG3 Discussion Topics

Some of the topics and questions posed before the experts at the EG3 meeting are:

2.1. Analysis and comparison of existing institutional frameworks for coordination in the EU and Russia in large river basins with a focus on sustainable water use, sustainable land cover change and protection of biodiversity.

- What is the role of the EU Water Framework Directive and other legislation?
- What is the impact of the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development?
- What are the major trends in development of the institutional regimes for natural resources sustainable development in Russia?
- What innovations are brought in by the new RF Water Code?
- What are the major implementation problems in the EU and in Russia?
- What are the expert assessments of good and bad practices in implementation?
- Which guiding principles are essential for a sustainable use of natural resources in large river basins?

2.2. Development of stable partnerships and overcoming conflicts of interests between multiple stakeholders in the use of natural resources of the Volga basin is among important discussion topics within EG3. Expert assessments are sought to identify possible instruments and tools such as, for example, a flood management system or a decision support system (DSS) for the Volga Basin. Ecological river management and land use concepts could serve for conflict resolution between the technical/commercial utilization and ecology of the Volga.

- What are expert assessments of the progress or lack of coordination and cooperation between multiple stakeholders?
- How to improve coordination between various groups and their activities?
- What are major lessons about success and failures in interdisciplinary projects to overcome conflicts of interests?
- What tools can be used for this purpose?
- How to increase participation and partnerships of different stakeholders?

2.3. Current **reforms in property rights** on natural resources in Russia will have significant implications for institutional designs in administrative coordination of management and control functions over their sustainable use. This topic is vested with a variety of conflicts between the government, business and society. EG3 explores the multidimensional aspects of the problem and major directions in its evolution.

- What are experts overview and illustration of the current reforms in property rights on natural resources?
- What are the main items of new property rights regime established by the RF Water Code?
- What are impacts of changes in the property rights on problem solving and potential conflict resolution between multiple water-users?
- What are impacts of privatization reforms on activities of water services providers?
- What are the major social and economic implications?
- What are the major consequences of the land-use reform for sustainable development of the Volga Basin?
- What are the possibilities and constraints for integration in large river basin management concepts (case studies)?

2.4. EG3 explores how to effectively coordinate activities between multiple stakeholders and what rules and protective policy mechanism have to be built in existing institutional frameworks to prevent extra pressures on natural resources in the Volga Basin as a result of recent increase in the annual rates of **economic growth**. What mechanisms can be

suggested by the experts to accommodate priorities of economic growth with environmental concerns within sustainable use of natural resources in large river basins.

- What are the expert assessments of links between pragmatic approaches to economic growth and rational use of natural resources?
- What are the main problems – technical (transport and energy use) versus ecology?
- What are the problems of impounded rivers?
- What are major experiences and solutions in the European countries?

3. 3. Good Practices Examples

3.1. Joint Research Project on Volga/Rhine

3.2. IKONE

3.3. Project: “Development of a Decision Support System (DSS) for the Elbe River Basin”

3.4. Integrated Rhine Programme

3.5. Good practices in natural resources sustainable development in the Volga Basin

Please feel free to suggest additional questions for the EG3 session. If possible, send them to nestmann@iwk.uka.de and koenig@iwk.uka.de before 21 September. Thank you!