SUMMARY
RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

Third CABRI-Volga Expert Group Meeting
Cherepovets, Russia
15-17 November 2006
I. Water pollution in the Volga Basin

1. Develop realistic water quality standards based on environmental principles
   Action 1.1: Review the standards to make them realistic to comply with
   Action 1.2: Adopt a long-term strategy with ultimate goal to achieve standards, with step-by-step targets to be met in short- and mid-term perspective

2. Reduce water pollution
   Action 2.1: Initiate a constructive dialogue and partnerships with industries and introduce incentives for good environmental practices, including avoiding pollution at source, clean production processes, environmental benign systems, ISO principles
   Action 2.2: Adopt and communicate to stakeholders gradual strategies envisaging the balance between tightening the demands (taxes, emission limit values) and economic, social and ecological needs

3. Build urban waste water treatment plants and facilities to handle the atmospheric run-off
   Action 3.1: Municipalities need to collect a cost-effective contribution from households and build, finance and maintain treatment facilities
   Action 3.2: Establish control mechanisms over finance allocations in administrations to assure that revenues incurred are fully allocated to treatment facilities

4. Reform the licensing and taxation system to promote environmental performance and to stimulate investments into good environmental practices
   Action 4.1: Wider application of economic and incentive mechanisms
   Action 4.2: Increase taxes for industries and provide subsidies or tax preferences to applying pollution reduction technologies
   Action 4.3: Introduce awards for outstanding environmental performance, e.g. progressive tax system, benefits through introduction of clean technologies
   Action 4.4: Introduce “blue labels” for facilities which contribute to water savings and water pollution reductions

5. Address the pollution from non-point sources
   Action 5.1: Design and introduction of good practices in agriculture
   Action 5.2: Abandon and control over agricultural practices resulting in increase of diffuse polluted water run-off
III. Ecological problems

6. Take into consideration in decision-making the need for preservation of habitats and normal ecosystems’ functioning

Action 6.1: Apply ecosystem protection as integral part of management goals in a course of the RF Water Code implementation

Action 6.2: Develop a management strategy incorporating river ecological amelioration, including a) restoration of natural river channel processes, b) change spatial planning with control and limiting the floodplain development, c) correlation between natural processes in floodplains and flood protection measures, d) impact assessment of river environmental flow on biodiversity (hydropower facilities and sturgeon spawning)

Action 6.3: Introduce mechanisms ensuring contribution and advice of scientific organizations in ecology to decision-making and water management bodies (possibly through a scientific coordination body)

IV. Ineffective basin management

7. Introduce effective institutional system for river basin management

Action 7.1: Ensure representation of various stakeholders in river basin organizations/councils

8. Enhance strategic planning and programming

Action 8.1: Preparation of the river basin management plans (RBMP) with particular time-frames and cycles as it is within the EU WFD (6 year period)

Action 8.2: Make the RBMP an integral part of the RF Water Code implementation process

9. Improve system of information and data dissemination for management decision-making

Action 9.1: Enhance information sharing and dissemination of user-friendly information to all stakeholders

Action 9.2: Wider application of forecasting methods in decision-making

10. Build human capacity in water management (through education programmes)

Action 10.1: Special training courses and training centers

Action 10.2: Develop regular education and life long learning

11. Ameliorate and develop institutional frameworks for effective financing the river basin management

Action 11.1: Improve and develop effective system of funding for river basin management

Action 11.2: Support innovation funds for water protection

Action 11.3: Introduce special funds for infrastructure protection against flooding

Action 11.4: Enforce mobilization of finance mobilization from application of polluter pay principle
12. Develop a pilot project to demonstrate the perspectives and challenges of innovative water management
Action 12.1: Develop and implement a project in the Volga sub-basin to test in practice new mechanisms of river basin management

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**Expert Group 2**
“Human Security and Vulnerability”

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I. Safety of dams and other hydro-facilities

1. Inventory all hydro-facilities so that the risk they pose (as they can become a hazard) be known and understood by both the authorities and the general public.
Action 1.1: Evaluate existing inter/national methodologies for integrated assessment of hydro facilities to estimate the risk associated with their condition
Action 1.2: Enhance and implement methodology within the existing legal framework
Action 1.3: Produce and disseminate the annual RF report on the state of hydro facilities’ safety for public use (taking into account existing rules for data access)

2. Reduce the risk posed by the hydro-facilities through rehabilitation and continuous monitoring. Start with the most hazardous facilities.
Action 2.1: Rank the facilities by their degree of hazard
Action 2.2: Rehabilitate the most hazardous facilities to inter/national standards
Action 2.3: Undertake regular risk inspections and maintain all hydro facilities

3. Develop and maintain innovative, sustainable financing mechanisms.¹
Action 3.1: Explore innovative, sustainable financing mechanisms², e.g. “polluter pay principle”, green taxation, green funds, etc.
Action 3.2: Develop further a legal base for sustainable finance mechanisms
Action 3.3: Implement and enforce the sustainable finance mechanisms

¹ This suggestion is also valid for the second problem identified by the experts and is therefore cross-cutting
² Such as those used in the EU/ECE/South East European countries, e.g. “green budgetary reform initiatives”
II. Poor drinking water quality, including microbiological contamination

4. Improve the drinking water distribution system through renovation of pipes and other infrastructure to deliver safe drinking water to consumers.
   Action 4.1: Identify and rank “hotspots” within the distribution network
   Action 4.2: Publish and share the assessment results through a public forum
   Action 4.3: Prioritise and renovate (e.g. the replacement of the faulty pipes) the distribution network

5. Improve continuous monitoring and regular public reporting on drinking water quality distributed via the networks and on groundwater sources in rural areas
   Action 5.1: Review the existing monitoring network, enhance coverage of network through purchase of new (mobile) stations
   Action 5.2: Regular public reports on the results of monitoring assessments versus national water quality standards in real-time, online on the Internet and via other media, in clear, user-friendly and understandable way

6. Attain surface/ground water quality standards so as to ensure a reliable source of drinking water.
   Action 6.1: Compile an inventory and rank poor quality drinking water sources (surface and ground) and the related risks
   Action 6.2: Rehabilitate existing and/or establish new public wastewater treatment systems (technological facilities) according to the ranking
   Action 6.3: Rehabilitate existing and/or establish new water purification facilities according to the ranking
   Action 6.4: Preserve and/or restore natural water purification systems (e.g. reeds, wetlands) according to the ranking

III. Poor flood risk assessments

7. Apply integrated risk assessment methods that include social, economic and environmental dimensions for flood prone areas.
   Action 7.1: Inventory of available methodologies for flood risk assessment and select3 the most appropriate for the Volga Basin (which allow for a multi-disciplinary approach combining social and economic assessments with technology solutions, including GIS)
   Action 7.2: Enhance the capacity of existing centres and if necessary find new centres to apply the risk assessment methodology at local/municipal levels and apply participatory approaches in the Volga Basin
   Action 7.3: Ensure public awareness relating to results and recommendations of the integrated risk assessment via a report in various formats, via media and public fora
   Action 7.4: Ensure the overall (economic, physical, social) preparedness of relevant institutions and public for flood risks through application of

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3 See, the results of the CABRI EGM in Kazan, 2006 for the shortlist of available methodologies
assessment results (for example, ensure ‘economic’ preparedness via developing a legislative basis for the purchase and functioning of insurance policies within flood-prone areas).

Action 7.5: Ensure the regular application of the selected risk assessment methods as well as public sharing and debate of the results.

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**Expert Group 3**

”Natural Resources and their Sustainable Use”

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**I. Inefficient use of water resources**

1. **Enhance water allocation to various water-users**
   Action 1.1: Elaborate the scheme for integrated use of water resources, including the list of priority water-users.

2. **Improve operation regimes of hydropower plants and reservoirs as water level in reservoirs does not reach the optimum levels**
   Action 2.1: Restore facilities for drainage and water control.
   Action 2.2: Approve new norms and regimes for operation of hydropower facilities on the basis of new mathematical and physical models.
   Action 2.3: Undertake the decision on Cheboksary hydro-lock and the dam near N. Novgorod.

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**II. Insufficient information regarding the water quantity**

3. **Improve monitoring, data processing and its dissemination to stakeholders**
   Action 3.1: Increase the number of observation cites.
   Action 3.2: Compile, process and disseminate more information about all rivers.
   Action 3.3: Ensure public access to information, including via internet.
   Action 3.4: Enhance coordination between different institutions responsible for data collection.
   Action 3.5: Develop new rules to unify the system of data collection and analysis.
   Action 3.6: Maintain broader dissemination of data free of charge.

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**III. Degradation of natural resources**

4. **Prevent degradation and loss of biodiversity in the Volga Basin**
   Action 4.1: Consider ecology as an integral part of the housing and health-care priority national projects.
   Action 4.2: Enhance the system of national parks and nature reserves to stop the decrease in biodiversity.
   Action 4.3: Create more protected areas and nature reserves and enhance their functioning.
   Action 4.4: Develop the net of protected areas and enhance coordination between them.
Action 4.5: Ameliorate funding opportunities and enforce punishment for violations
Action 4.6: Improve the system of environmental assessment at the regional level, including for example the fish passages

5. Enhance treatment of surface run-off in small towns
Action 5.1: Introduce projects of surface water run-off treatment as a part of plans for urban development

IV. The new RF Water Code implementation

6. Support the process of the RF Water Code implementation
Action 6.1: Develop normative acts regulating the division of competences between the federal and regional authorities in allocation of funding deriving from fees for water-use
Action 6.2: Inventory and listing of water bodies and responsible organs
Action 6.3: Develop normative acts defining new regimes for water protection zones
Action 6.4: Ensure broader competences and enhanced rights for the new Basin Councils
Action 6.5: Define interactions between Basin Councils and territorial organs
Action 6.6: Enhance the image of people working for the environment; enhance professional education and training in water protection and conservation; increase salaries in the field
Action 6.7: Start ecological education in “kindergarten” and schools; environmental education should be the integral part of cultural education
Action 6.8: Increase the state budget allocated for environment and for water related risk reduction
## Expert Group 4

“Connecting Goods and People”

### I. Lack of an integrative transport strategy

1. **Build an integrative transport strategy**
   
   **Action 1.1:** Initiate a moderated transport strategy development process for the Volga Basin with a strategy timeframe of the year 2020
   
   **Action 1.2:** Develop regional and local transport strategies
   
   **Action 1.3:** Initiate intermediate working groups for coordination of regional and municipal plans
   
   **Action 1.4:** Enable contributions from applied research (academia, consultancies) to enrich the fact finding process

### II. Missing linkages between transport modes

2. **Link different transport modes according to regional needs and development strategies (focus on freight transport)**
   
   **Action 2.1:** Create intermodal freight ports at key trade nodes
   
   **Action 2.2:** Demonstrate the economic feasibility and profitability of creating freight ports
   
   **Action 2.3:** Develop local business partnerships

### III. Poor waterway and infrastructure conditions

3. **Gradually improve the existing infrastructure and overcome bottlenecks**
   
   **Action 3.1:** Continue the policy of the federal targeted programmes and independently monitor their implementation impacts
   
   **Action 3.2:** Develop a “Volga Investment Forum” as a meeting platform for international and local investors
   
   **Action 3.3:** Promote private-public partnerships and long-term contracts between private and public sectors
   
   **Action 3.4:** Initiate a feasibility study concerning the requirements of international vessels on the international Volga waterway
Expert Group 5
"Institutional Cooperation and Coordination"

I. Loopholes in institutional frameworks and insufficient coordination between water management institutions

1. Enhance institutional capacities in water governance - through elimination of uncertainties in division of responsibilities between government institutions and overcoming poor coordination between them in the basin

   Action 1.1: Establish clear procedures for coordination between institutions and administrative bodies responsible for water use and water protection at various levels

   Action 1.2: Set up a coordination body for agencies responsible for water-use, water-protection and water-related natural hazards risk reduction

   Action 1.3: Ensure broader involvement of science-and-technology community in sharing 'good' water management knowledge and R&D results in the Volga

2. Apply vertical subsidiarity principles to strengthen cross-scales coordination among government authorities responsible for water use and water protection (national/regional/local)

   Action 2.1: Enforce new schemes defining vertical division of authority and responsibilities at government level introduced by the new Water Code

   Action 2.2: Ensure broader dissemination of competences away from the federal level to regional and local authorities (while the federal government sets the framework conditions and standards, the regional and local government executes within this framework the water management in the Volga)

   Action 2.3: Develop and enforce new schemes for finance allocations between levels of authority for water management that are in compliance with the new Water Code; introduce mechanisms for mobilizing the regional and local resources for water conservation in the Volga


   Action 3.1: Develop a strategy containing short- and mid-term schemes and goals for implementation of the Water Code, i.e. similar to the WFD implementation process

   Action 3.2: Introduce strict verification and control mechanisms over its implementation

   Action 3.3: Coordinate with existing water related legislation to ensure compatibility with other national laws, i.e. the environmental law, the law on the earth interior, on emergencies, on hydro-technical facilities, on land-use, etc.

   Action 3.4: Develop regional and local regulations in water use and water protection in the Volga in compliance with the new national rules
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4. Support for formation of the new system of Basin Councils (BC)
   Action 4.1: Develop transparent and effective regime and rules for BCs: clearly define their competences and functions
   Action 4.2: Develop regimes setting up clear division of competences and effective mechanisms of interaction with existing regional water basin administrations in the Volga
   Action 4.3: Introduce procedures ensuring real representation and participation of stakeholders representing various groups of water-users, NGOs, scientific community, public in the BCs; encourage representation from SMEs or their associations, and municipalities
   Action 4.4: Coordinate the information dissemination and sharing; involvement in transfer to stakeholders of user-friendly data about the environmental and natural hazards situation, as well as about measures in problem-solving (“river basin annual reports”)

II. Weak partnerships between various stakeholders and low local public involvement in water-related decision-making and action in the Volga

5. Support and diversification of river basin partnerships in good water management
   Action 5.1: Organisation of local participatory action for the Volga rehabilitation with involvement of various stakeholders; adoption of a ‘common goal approach’ of environmental clean-up among the public, business, NGOs
   Action 5.2: Build and maintain a dialogue and consultations within the triangle: government (at all levels) - public - business community
   Action 5.3: Support for voluntary regional and local associations involved in water conservation in the Volga regions

6. Enhance public participation in decision-making and action
   Action 6.1: Establish a well-defined and adequately funded short- and mid-term programme for enhancing local public participation in the Volga River conservation and rehabilitation
   Action 6.2: Introduce the “parents education through their children” approach for raising ecological awareness
   Action 6.3: Support Volga local and regional cooperation and networking of environmental NGOs, including regular interregional meetings of environmental NGOs and electronic dissemination of information (possibly hosted on CABRI website)

III. Insufficient coordination between economic, social and environmental priorities in basin water management

7. Support for wider application of sustainable development principles, reflecting growing integration between economic-social-environmental priorities in water management
   Action 7.1: Introduce the realistic short-term and mid-term sustainable development strategies and practice-grounded water conservation programmes for the Volga Basin
Action 7.2: Develop and introduce the ecological and economic cadasters in integrated water use in the Volga Basin
Action 7.3: Introduce regulations and standards for water pollution damage assessment as a result of economic activities
Action 7.4: Publish a series of Guidebooks and Manuals on water pollution control and conservation in branches of industry, transport, agriculture and households

8. Increase government support for business involvement in water conservation, monitoring and information dissemination
Action 8.1: Introduce indirect subsidies for application of best environmental technologies, e.g. technology innovation funds
Action 8.2: Establish regional development funds in the Volga to support SMEs, their access to new environmental benign technologies and involvement in R&D projects, information exchange and data sharing
Action 8.3: Develop voluntary business partnerships and agreements for water protection and conservation; stimulate investments into better water quality and water related risk reduction in the Volga
Action 8.4: Promote business involvement in environmental education programmes
Action 8.5: Introduce mechanisms for industrial zones management, including water protection and conservation and taking into account existing EU practices

9. Develop voluntary ecological certification and eco-labeling at various levels
Action 9.1: Incentives and support for ecological certification and promotion of eco-labeling
Action 9.2: Public campaigns among consumers in support of green labeling