

**International Roundtable**  
on  
**“Stakeholder / Public Participation for the  
Integrated Management of Shared Water Resources –  
The Case of Mesta/Nestos River Basin”**

Princess Hotel, Sofia, Bulgaria, 15-16 April 2008

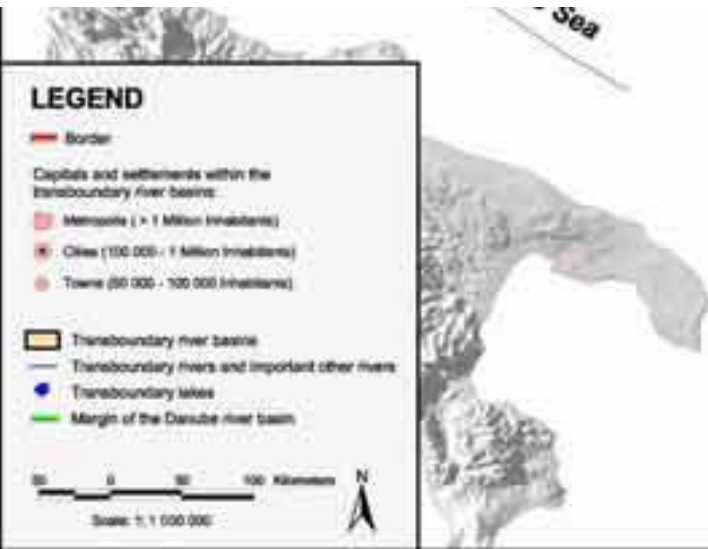
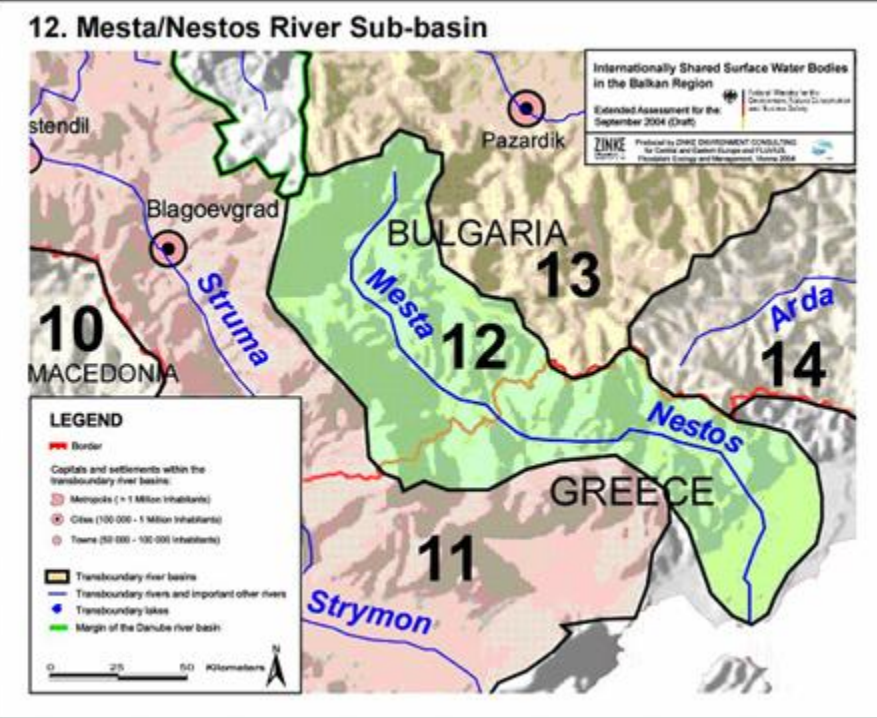
**“Stakeholders Survey –  
Mesta/Nestos River Basin”**

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Organized by the  
**Global Water Partnership Mediterranean  
Global Water Partnership Bulgaria**

Within the framework of  
**Petersberg Process Phase II / Athens Declaration Process**  
and  
**GEF IW:LEARN, Activity D2**



## Outputs of the Project “*Enhancement of Integrated Management of the Mesta /Nestos River Basin*”

- *Assessment* of the managerial actions undertaken in the River Basin and the challenges currently faced in the context of the EU WFD implementation.
- Elaboration of a *stakeholders’ survey* covering the entire transboundary river basin.
- Organization of *two local preparatory consultation meetings*, one for the Bulgarian side and one for the Greek side of the Basin, with the participation of the main stakeholders, aiming to voice interests and extract experiences in preparation of the International Roundtable.
  - Godze Delchev, Bulgaria, 28 February 2008 and
  - Kavala, Greece, 20 March 2008.
- Organization of an ‘*International Roundtable on Stakeholder / Public Participation for the Integrated Management of Shared Water Resources*’, in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Survey prepared by:

- GWP-Med (Greek part of the Basin – Editing of the Survey)
- GWP-Bulgaria (Bulgarian part of the Basin)

**The conclusions to be presented are based solely on the answers given by the stakeholders interviewed or replying to the questionnaire**

**The conclusions presented here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institutions involved in the preparation of the Survey.**

Aim: Identify key stakeholders and provide information that would assist in their involvement in a process towards the enhancement of stakeholder participation in the management of the Basin

**Stakeholders Survey's findings** regarding:

- the level of awareness about water resources management (*WRM*) issues;
- the opinions of the stakeholders from the Bulgarian and the Greek part of the Mesta/Nestos river basin (*Basin*) concerning:
  - *WRM* related issues in the Basin;
  - participation in the Integrated Water Resources Management (*IWRM*).
- vision about *IWRM* in the Basin.

Total of 41 Stakeholders interviewed (semi-structured interviews with the use of questionnaire) or filled questionnaires

### **Bulgarian Stakeholders (22)**

6 Departments of Regional and prefecture authorities / State enterprises  
3 Municipalities  
1 Professional Association  
7 Research Institutes / Academia  
1 Private firm/Consultancy  
1 NGO  
1 Newspaper  
1 High-school  
1 Citizen

### **Greek Stakeholders (19)**

5 Directorates of Regional and prefecture authorities with competences on WRM  
3 Municipalities  
3 Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Prefecture level)  
1 Professional Association  
2 Protected areas Management Authorities  
3 Agricultural Cooperatives  
1 Fisheries Association  
1 NGO

## List of Bulgarian Stakeholders a representative of which has answered the questionnaire

1	West Aegean Basin Directorate at Ministry of Environment and Water, Blagoevgrad
2	Municipality of Satovcha village
3	Irrigation System Branch Gotze Delchev
4	Regional Forestry Board in Blagoevgrad, State Agency of Forests
5	State forestry enterprise "Garmen", Garmen village
6	Institute of Geography at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia
7	Institute of Economics at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia
8	Association "Ecotechnology experts",
9	National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology, branch in Kustendil town
10	Dipl. Eng. Ivan Radoikov, former director of forests enterprise in Gotze Delchev town
11	Scientific-Technical Union of Water Affairs in Bulgaria, Sofia
12	Institute of Water Problems at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia
13	Sofia University "Kliment Ohridsky"
14	Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation, Sofia
15	Tabac investigation station, Gotze Delchev town
16	Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water at Ministry of Environment and Water, Blagoevgrad
17	SOGREAH, France – Bulgarian branch
18	Regional Inspectorate for Health Protection, Blagoevgrad, at Ministry of Health
19	Municipality of Gotze Delchev
20	Bansko Municipality, Bansko town
21	Crossborder newspaper "Hronika" within Mesta/Nestos Euroregion (in both Greek and Bulgarian), published in Gotse Delchev
22	Students group of 11 class at Natural mathematic school, Gotse Delchev

## List of Greek Stakeholders a representative of which was interviewed

1	Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace / Directorate of Water Resources Management
2	Prefectural Administration of Drama, Kavala, Xanthi
3	Prefecture of Xanthi / Land Amelioration Department
4	Prefecture of Kavala / Land Amelioration Department
5	Prefecture of Drama / Land Amelioration Department
6	Municipality of Paranesti
7	Municipality of Chrisoupoli
8	Municipality of Keramoti
9	Association of Marble enterprises of Macedonia and Thrace
10	Kavala Chamber
11	Drama Chamber
12	Geotechnical Chamber – East Macedonia Branch
13	Agricultural Cooperative Union of Kavala
14	Agricultural Cooperative Union of Xanthi
15	Agricultural and fisheries cooperative of Keramoti lagoons
16	Management Authority of the Eastern Macedonia and Thrace National Park (Nestos – Ismarida – Vistonida Delta)
17	Management Authority of the Rodopi mountain range
18	Fisheries Research Institute of the National Agricultural Research Foundation
19	Drama Ecological Movement

# Structure of the questionnaire and the Survey

- Main Issues regarding WRM
- Problems and challenges regarding water resources
  - Quality of water resources
  - Quantity/availability of water resources
- Management of water resources.
  - Knowledge about the institutions and legal framework for WRM at National and Regional level
  - General understanding of aspects of water resources management at river basin level - IWRM.
- Stakeholders involvement in the management of the river basin
  - Involvement in the preparation of a River Basin Management Plan
- Stakeholders participation at transboundary level
- Cooperation for the management at transboundary level
- Vision for the basin in terms of development

## Main issues regarding WRM

the sequence of the presentation herewith, does not correlate with the importance given by the representatives of the stakeholders (*interviewees*):

- Diffuse pollution from agricultural activities;
- Pollution related to solid wastes and insufficiently treated wastewater – *“exporting” pollution downstream to the Greek part;*
- Reduction of water temperature, disturbance of the natural variation of the flow of the river, reduction of the volume of the sediments released downstream, due to the dams and the operation of the hydropower generation plant (Greek part of the Basin);
- Possible pollution of the delta area.

## Effects due to the aforementioned issues

- Decline of the sport fishing due to the fear of pollution of the river waters (upper part of the Greek part of the basin);
- Decline of fish stock and loss of biodiversity both at the river itself and at the adjacent lagoons and coastal areas as a result of pollution, drop of temperature and other pressures - Wider effects on the environment and ecosystems;
- Decline of –the low scale- animal husbandry in the upper parts of the Greek part of the Basin;
- Salinization of groundwater near the coast;
- Possible negative effects on the development potential of alternative tourist activities in the area.

## Problems and challenges regarding water resources

### - State of water resources in terms of Quality

Bulgarian part of the Basin:  
“average” with the respective trend being negative during the last years.

Greek part of the Basin: opinions were diverse following the upstream/downstream position of the interviewees.

- Stakeholders positioned in the upper part of the Greek part of the Basin: “average” to “low” and believing that the latter has deteriorated in the past few years.

- Stakeholders positioned downstream: “high” believing that remains unchanged.

- Stakeholders positioned further downstream: “average”.

## Problems and challenges regarding water resources

### - State of water resources in terms of Quantity/availability

#### Bulgarian part of the Basin: “average”

climate variability and the partially obsolete irrigation and water supply network in the Bulgarian part of the Basin may, to a degree, be an explanation

#### Greek part of the Basin: “High”

consider the quantity of available water as enough to cover their own needs as well as the needs of all the uses as granted, not taking into account the possibility of reduced water flow

Flood and drought incidents: seem to be more severe (according to the interviewees) in the Bulgarian side of the Basin

Construction of the dams and the functioning of the hydropower generation plants in the Greek part of the Basin:  
Diverse opinions (from highly positive to highly negative - difficulty to assess its role to the sustainable management of water resources and consequently to the sustainable development of the area).

# Management of water resources (1)

- Communication gap among and between the science/research community (formal) and the stakeholders (authorities with competences over water resources are among them)

Establishment of more frequent and effective communication among stakeholders may contribute substantially in avoiding or solving eventual conflicts among competing uses while promoting the more efficient WRM.

Experience from within Europe as well as from other parts of the world shows that advanced communication between the scientific communities usually leads to the building of trust, catalyzing the enhancement of cooperation between riparian countries.

- Bad management practices related to non compliance with the legislation are mainly linked with
  - agricultural activities
  - incidents of illegal disposal of untreated waste water

## Management of water resources (2)

### Conflicts/antagonism for water among different uses/stakeholders

#### Bulgarian part of the Basin:

- among tourism and other sectors;
- among agriculture (water for irrigation) and other sectors (drinking water supply, industry, and production of energy).

*More evident during the summer or drought periods*

#### Greek part of the Basin:

Between hydropower generation and environment /ecosystems.

That doesn't necessarily that is restricted to these

WRM issues and relevant impacts, could be addressed through:

- Improved planning and management both at the national and regional level.
- Majority of the interviewees believe that improved cooperation between the two countries could provide a solution on these issues.

## Management of water resources (3)

### - Knowledge about the institutions and legal framework for WRM at National and Regional level

Key issues related both to the institutional (at the national and regional level) and the legal framework for WRM:

- Confusion,
  - Incorrect or limited information and
  - In many cases, lack of knowledge
- Among stakeholders

Majority of the interviewees: weren't aware that there are on-going efforts for the preparation of a River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) in both parts of the Basin and that these efforts are conducted in the framework of EU funded projects and the implementation of the EU WFD.

*Information provision/increase of awareness was suggested as the measure mostly needed for the implementation of the legal framework for WRM.*

## Management of water resources (4)

- General understanding of aspects of water resources management at river basin level - IWRM

The notion of the need to manage water resources in an integrated way in a sustainable development context is rather well understood

# Stakeholders involvement in the management of the river basin

Key stakeholders in WRM according to the interviewees  
(presented in sequence of importance for the interviewees)

## Bulgarian part of the Basin:

- Ministries,
- Local authorities (Regional),
- Forestry and agricultural sectors,
- Tourism

## Greek part of the Basin

- Agricultural sector,
- Energy production sector,
- Regional,
- Local authorities

## Stakeholders:

are not sufficiently involved (Bulgarian part of the Basin)  
or practically not involved (in the Greek part of the Basin)  
in the preparation of the RBMPs

**Active Involvement** (including Shared Decision Making),  
was suggested (**moving beyond information/awareness and consultation**)  
as the preferable form of participation.

- 
- in WRM in general
  - in the preparation of RBMP in particular

## Cooperation for the management at transboundary level

It is thought that enhanced cooperation between the two countries on WRM in the Basin is feasible and would assist to address existing WRM issues and related impacts.

- It would also greatly affect in a positive way the environment, quality of life and economic activities in both parts of the Basin.

It is believed (moderately by the Bulgarian interviewees and strongly by the Greek interviewees), that the two countries should move to an enhanced scheme of cooperative management in the future, provided that the two governments would agree on such a scheme.

## Stakeholders participation at transboundary level



- There is an on *ad hoc* basis cooperation between different stakeholders from the two sides of the Basin regarding WRM.
- The stakeholders from each side of the Basin found it difficult to indicate others from the other side of the Basin that could share the same interests with (regarding WRM).
- The interviewees strongly supported the idea of Coordination of the stakeholders from the two sides of the Basin as means for enhancing stakeholders participation in, as well as enhancing the management of the basin.
- The creation of a Forum in which the stakeholders from both sides of the border could bring in their perspectives and will allow communication and coordination on a regular basis is endorsed by the majority of the interviewees.

## Vision for the basin in terms of development

Future development in the region should be based upon:

→ Tourism and agricultural activities (the two most preferable options).

Comparative advantages of the region regarding its future development

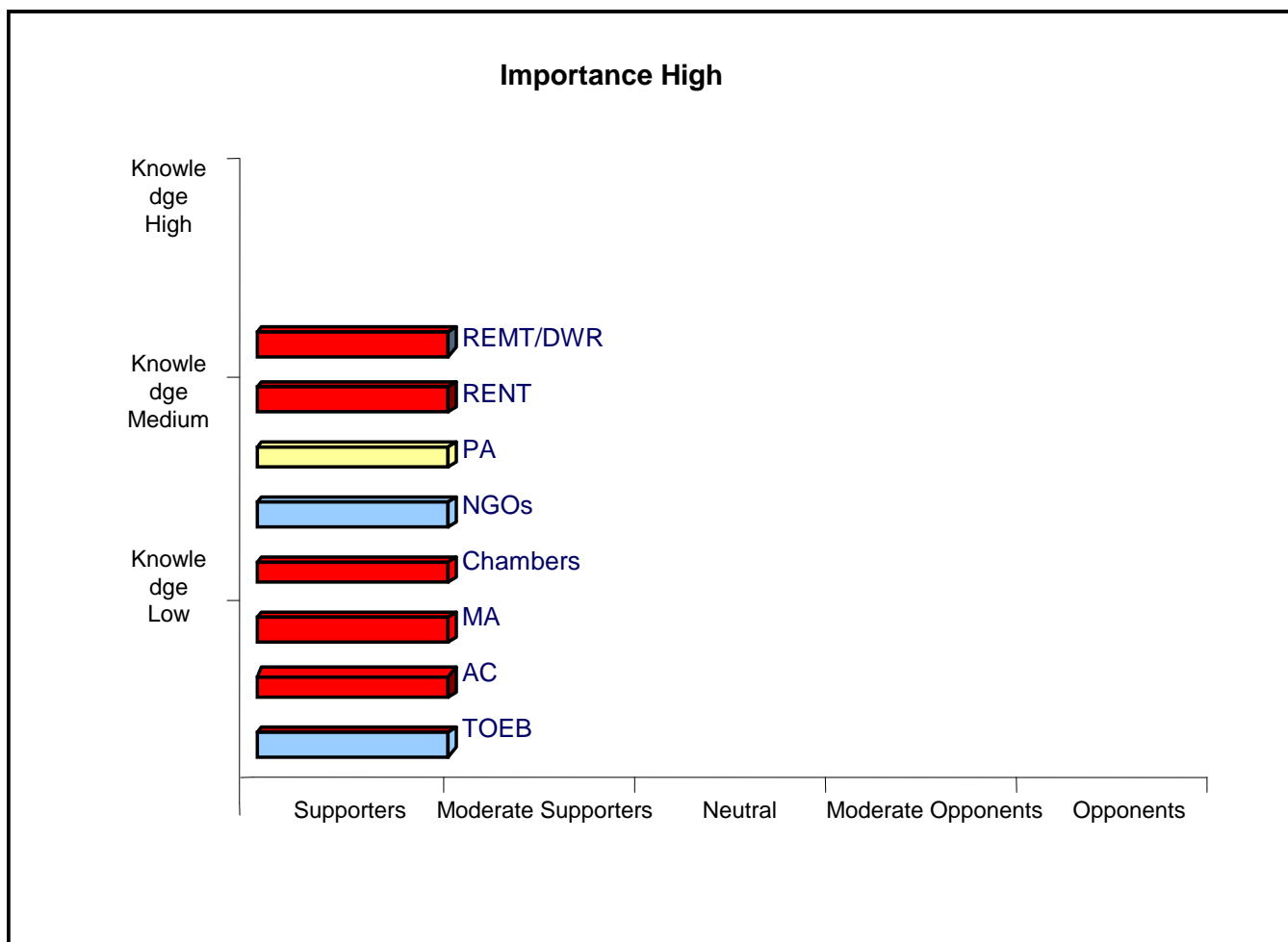
- Environment, number and diversity of ecosystems and
- Natural beauty of the landscape,
- Fertility of the land,
- Pleasant climate,
- Hydro-energy potential,
- Geographical position - cultural proximity of the neighbouring areas.

## Steps in the preparation of the Stakeholders Involvement Strategy

1. Analysis without the “participation” of the Stakeholders
2. Consultation meetings with the Stakeholders to complement/verify/review the Analysis
3. Preparation of the Involvement Strategy

# Preparatory Analysis – Greek Stakeholders

## Coordination among Stakeholders in the Basin (example)



Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, Directorate of Water Resources Management:	REMT/DWR
Regional Administration (Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace):	RENT
Prefecture administrations:	PA
Non Governmental Organizations:	NGOs
Chambers and enterprises associations:	Chambers
Municipal administrations:	MA
Agricultural Cooperatives:	AC
Local organizations of land amelioration (TOEB):	TOEB

## Steps in the preparation of the Stakeholders Involvement Strategy

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**Thank you !**



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