



BEYOND SCARCITY

WATER SCARCITY AND DROUGHT RISK MANAGEMENT IN THE DANUBE REGION

WORKSHOP
SEPTEMBER 20-21, 2021

Context and objective

Water scarcity and droughts are amongst the most tangible – and devastating – consequences of the climate crisis. They increasingly affect communities across the planet, causing tolls on societies, the economy and environmental impacts. Europe and the Danube Region are no exception. In the last decades, a series of widespread droughts have affected significant parts of Europe. The droughts in 2003 have affected over 100 million people, a third of the EU territory, and cost approximately € 8.7 billion in damage to the European economy. They were followed by events that have affected portions of Northern, Southern, and Western Europe in 2007, 2011, and 2012.

Also, significant parts of the Danube River Basin were affected by droughts. In recent years such as 2003, 2007, 2012 and 2015, droughts caused negative impacts on various water-dependent economic sectors, the welfare of people, vegetation and on the aquatic environment. In 2017, a significant drought developed across the entire Danube Region and persisted in its northern parts throughout 2018 and 2019. This is one of the latest of a series of events which occurred, and these recent trends highlight the significance of the issue in European regions, including the Danube, specifically in the context of climate change. It is crucial that societies adapt, and that governments and water-dependent sectors accelerate prioritizing and scaling up their response mechanisms to water scarcity and droughts in the coming decade.

Managing drought needs to be conceptualized in the light of climate change, considering that drought is a slow onset disaster, which may cause even more severe damage than rapid events such as floods. As there is no specific EU legislation especially dedicated to water scarcity and drought, the existing policies and sectorial instruments in different water-related fields need to be used and integrated since they are partially or at least marginally related to drought and can support drought management policies.

In order to support Danube countries in their water management efforts, the **Danube Water Program**, a partnership program between the World Bank and the International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD), has extended its scope of activities, addressing issues related to “Water Security,” including water services delivery, water resources management and water-related risk mitigation in the context of socio-economic development, climate change, and work on the implementation of the water-related EU Acquis Communautaire.

Established in 1998, the **Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern Europe** (GWP CEE) works to support the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the sustainable development and management of their water resources. Since 2013, the Integrated Drought Management Programme in CEE (IDMP CEE) aims at enhancing drought resilience in the Central and Eastern Europe. It helps build up capacities of target groups for a proactive integrated drought management approach by improving drought monitoring and unification of drought impacts and risk assessments. IDMP CEE fosters dialogues between the scientific and policy-making communities for integrating water security and drought resilience into national development planning and decision-making processes.

Furthermore, in the frame of the **EU Strategy for the Danube Region** on Environmental Risks (Priority Area 5) together with GWP CEE, in 2020 a policy review “Revision of the EU policy instruments related to drought and water scarcity mitigation” has been published. The review was undertaken based on five criteria, including monitoring, incentives to water efficiency and circular economy, knowledge and research, measures to improve drought management and to develop drought management plans and financial instruments.

The **objective of the workshop** is to raise awareness about the relevance, past and potential future impacts of water scarcity and droughts in the Danube region, and to provide a forum for a technical exchange on good practice approaches and options to address the issue in order to make the region more resilient against such extreme events. The objective is also to allow for taking stock on challenges and potential support needs for future action.

Target Audience

The event is targeting a variety of water sector professionals interested in the topic, including national level policy makers and regulators, environmental agencies, representatives from national water and municipal associations, international organizations and river basin organizations, academia, private sector, NGOs and representatives from bilateral donors and international financing agencies.

Registration

Please register yourself to participate in the workshop using the [Registration link](#)! As soon as you have registered for participating you will receive a link via email to join the event.

The workshop will be brought to you by the Zoom webinar tool. We recommend downloading the Zoom App (for PC and mobile devices) [here](#).

I. SESSIONS OVERVIEW

Monday, 20 September	
13:30	Start of Day 1 - Welcome and introduction
13:30	Session 1: Setting the scene Welcome by organizers and keynote speeches on approaches for water scarcity and drought risk management
14:30	Session 2: Relevance of water scarcity and droughts in the Danube region Presentations on scientific findings and latest developments at national and regional level
15:45	<i>Break</i>
16:00	Session 3: Impacts and response activities from water-related sectors Interactive working group discussions
17:15	<i>End of Day 1</i>

Tuesday, 21 September	
13:30	Start of Day 2
13:30	Session 4: Feedback from working groups Feedback session with key outcomes from discussions Session 3
14:30	Session 5: Pathways, policy and regulatory approaches to improve resilience against water scarcity and droughts Showcasing examples of good practices and ongoing response activities
15:45	<i>Break</i>
16:00	Session 6: Wrap-up and closing Key take-away messages from the event
16:30	<i>End of Day 2</i>

II. MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH

1. Setting the Scene

Date: Monday, September 20th
Time: 13:30 to 14:30
Location: Zoom link provided via registration
Chair: Raimund Mair, World Bank

Context and objective

Climate change is driving water scarcity and variability at a global scale. Droughts are no longer isolated to “dry” territories but have become a growing issue in regions previously considered “water rich.” Preparedness and long-term adaptation plans are needed for drought risk management. The session will allow to set the scene and introduce the topic of water scarcity and drought risk management at the global level. Speakers from different international institutions will inform about global and regional perspectives, relevance and practical activities to address the issue.

Session structure

Time		Content	Speaker
13:30	10'	Welcome and introduction to the event	Raimund Mair, on behalf of the World Bank and GWP CEE
13:40	15'	Global perspectives and innovative governance approaches for drought risk management	Nathan Engle, World Bank
13:55	15'	Drought under Climate Change and the Need for Integrated Risk Management	World Meteorological Organization, IDMP Coordination Unit
14:10	20'	Q&A and discussion	Moderated by Raimund Mair, World Bank
14:30	End of Session 1		

2. Relevance of water scarcity and droughts in the Danube region

Date: Monday, September 20th
Time: 14:30 – 15:45
Location: Zoom link provided via registration
Chair: Konstantin Ivanov, GWP CEE

Context and objective

In recent years, significant parts of the Danube River Basin (DRB) have been affected by drought, which had a negative impact on various water-dependent economic sectors, welfare of people, vegetation and on the aquatic environment. In 2017, significant drought developed across the entire DRB and persisted in its northern parts throughout 2018 and 2019. These recent trends highlight the significance of the issue in European regions, including the Danube, specifically in the context of climate change. The session will allow to shed light on the relevance of water scarcity and drought in the Danube region. Speakers will inform about latest scientific findings, including the impacts of past and current events, provide an outlook on expected future developments regarding potential exposure and impacts on different water-related sectors, and to inform about latest developments and response activities at national and regional level.

Session structure

Time		Content	Speaker
14:30	5'	Introduction	Konstantin Ivanov, GWP CEE
14:35	10'	Integrated Drought Management Program in CEE – perspectives and activities	Sabina Bokal, GWP CEE
14:45	10'	Managing drought in South-east Europe	Andreja Sušnik, DMCSEE - Drought Management Centre for Southeastern Europe (TBC)
14:55	10'	National Action Plan to address the effects of drought and water scarcity in Slovakia	Danka Thalmeinerová, Ministry of Environment, Slovakia
15:05	10'	A Water Balance for the Danube River Basin	Mr. Balázs Horváth, Hungary, and Mr. Miodrag Milovanovic, Serbia, in the frame of the ICPDR
15:15	30'	Q&A and discussion	Moderated by Konstantin Ivanov, GWP CEE
15:45	End of Session 2		

3. Impacts and response approaches of water-related sectors

Date: Monday, September 20th
Time: 16:00 – 17:15
Location: Zoom link provided via registration
Chair: Individual working group chairs

Context and objective

The objective of the Working Group is to share experiences and draw attention to the impacts of water scarcity and drought on key water-related sectors and related response options. The session will be set up in an interactive format, allowing for parallel moderated discussions of participants. The results of the Working Group will be presented at Session 4 on day 2.

III. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST

4. Feedback from Working Groups

Date: Tuesday, September 21st
Time: 13:30 to 14:30
Location: Zoom link provided via registration
Chair: Konstantin Ivanov, GWP CEE

Context and objective

The session will allow for short presentations and discussion with all participants on the key outcomes from discussions from Session 3.

Session structure

Time		Content	Speaker
13:30	5'	Introduction	Konstantin Ivanov, GWP CEE
13:35	30'	Presentations on key outcomes from working groups	Working Group reporters
14:05	25'	Q&A and discussion	Moderated by Konstantin Ivanov, GWP CEE
14:30	End of Session 3		

5. Pathways, policy and regulatory approaches to improve resilience against water scarcity and droughts

Date: Tuesday, September 21st
Time: 14:30 to 15:45
Location: Zoom link provided via registration
Chair: Raimund Mair, World Bank

Context and objective

Despite extensive damages in the last decades and an expected increase due to climate change, in many places, drought continues to be managed as a crisis situation, by implementing emergency procedures and urgent measures. However, this approach usually fails to achieve sustainable solutions. A proactive approach on the other hand counts on drought prevention, mitigation, vulnerability reduction, planning and preparedness. Therefore, the focus needs to shift from recovery to protection, from crisis management to risk management. Policy and regulation are vital to drought risk management and can be seen in a variety of forms from National Action Plans to River Basin Management Plans. This session aims to highlight some successes and lessons learned from the Danube region regarding policy and regulation for water scarcity and droughts.

Session structure

Time		Content	Speaker
14:30	5'	Introduction	Raimund Mair, World Bank
14:35	10'	Water assessment in a water rich country – New “Wasserschatz” study	Ernst Überreiter, Austrian Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism
14:45	10'	Water resources and drought risk management in the Czech Republic	Jana Tejkalová, Ministry of the Environment, Czech Republic
14:55	10'	Hungarian drought in-situ monitoring system	Mr. Balázs Horváth, General Directorate of Water Management, Hungary
15:05	40'	Q&A and discussion	Moderated by Raimund Mair, World Bank
15:45	End of Session 5		

6. Wrap up and Closing

Date: Tuesday, September 21st
Time: 16:00 to 16:30
Location: Zoom link provided via registration
Chair: Sabina Bokal, GWP CEE

Context and objective

This session will allow to summarize the key take home messages, draw conclusions, reflect on the lessons learned and identify potential future actions.

Session structure

Time		Content	Speaker
16:00	5'	Introduction	Sabina Bokal, GWP CEE
16:05	10'	Summary, conclusions, lessons learned and potential future actions	Natalia Limones Rodriguez, World Bank
16:15	10'	Q&A and discussion	Moderated by Sabina Bokal, GWP CEE
16:25	5'	Closing words by event organizers	Konstantin Ivanov on behalf of GWP CEE and the World Bank
16:30	End of the event		