

## **Role and experience of civic organizations in awareness raising and uniting stakeholders in integrated transboundary river basin management**

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### **Conditions where NGOs act**

- Different states usually treat transboundary watercourses differently, especially when have economic interest related to river
- Different level of economic development and democracy
- International tools (Helsinki Water Convention, Water Framework Directive etc.) usually help to develop common policies
- Promotion of common legal mechanisms is a key issue in promotion of IRBM so it should be a primary target for civil society



## Key elements for public involvement efficiency

- Basin approach (clear understanding of its importance)
- Multi-stakeholder approach based on understanding that success could be reached only in case of involvement of all interesting persons
- Recognition that bureaucracy has its specific interests, usually contradicting public interests, and taking that fact into account
- Civil society should have an ensured place in decision making process



## Negative factors influencing civil society involvement

- Contradictions inside civil society
- Formation of GoNGOs by the government
- Corruption in government and funding agencies (weak transparency of decision making process, canalization of funds)
- Creation by government of formal civil structures and manipulation by NGO leaders
- Limitation of access to information
- Weak transparency of civic organizations
- Usual non-willingness to create wide coalitions



## Ways to raise NGOs efficiency

- To use scientific approach and scientific expertise – it helps to be respected
- To use modern approach and best practices (MEAS, WFD, and supporting documents) as arguments
- To create transboundary NGO coalitions, preferably as legal entities
- To support involvement of all stakeholders of river basin to decision discussion and making
- To formulate proposals of decisions and to deliver them to decision makers and wide public
- Creation and sharing of best practices



## Efficient actions for river basins

- To initiate transboundary river basin agreements
- To involve all stakeholders into basin diagnostic issues (river basin conferences)
- To popularize the IRBM approach
- To share knowledge among decision makers and youth
- To publish new knowledge and new methodologies



## New Dniester River basin treaty

- Promoted by NGOs
- Signed in Rome in 2012
- The most modern and integral in Europe
- Covers all river-related issues excepting navigation
- Provides establishing of River Commission
- Commission includes not only governments, but scientists and NGOs
- Main challenge – still not ratified by Ukraine



## Role of NGO community in confidence building in frozen conflicts

- Environment is one of not numerous spheres which is attractive to start confidence building
- NGOs could be the first messengers of peace
- Environmental issues could be a subject of cooperation, involving different structures from both conflicting sides



## Practical actions

- Environmental youth summers schools
- River kayak expeditions
- Public and decision makers awareness
- River basin conferences
- NGO-initiated consultations
- Drafting of bi-lateral legislation like river basin agreements
- Discussion of River basin management plan draft
- Scientific conferences
- Sub-basin management plans (uniting all stakeholders) and practical actions to improve the ecological situation etc.





Environmental education – youth  
summer schools and kayak expeditions



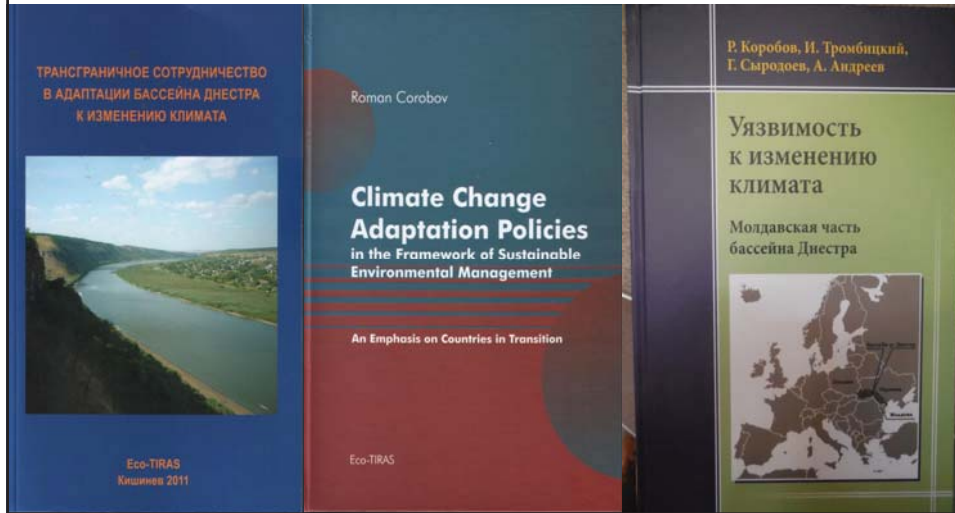
**Expedition along the river: MD+TR  
(students, univ. lecturers, MD + TR)**







## Last books of Eco-TIRAS on Dniester Climate Change Adaptation



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