

## **DECLARATION ON CO-OPERATION CONCERNING THE TISZA/TISA RIVER BASIN**

*adopted by the Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning of Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic and Ukraine, at the 13th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), in Ljubljana, on 16 September 2003*

*We, the Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning of Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic and Ukraine, meeting in Ljubljana on 16 September 2003 at the 13th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), thank the Council of Europe for the work done in order to achieve the Initiative on sustainable spatial development of the Tisza/Tisa river basin with the goal of implementing the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent (GPSSDEC-CEMAT).*

*We,*

- express our intention to implement the Initiative as a “CEMAT innovative Region” of transfrontier character;*
- ask the Council of Europe, the European Union and other international organisations to support the work for the implementation of the Initiative;*
- agree to consider and to decide on the continuation of the work for the preparation of an agreement in the light of the results of the implementation of the Initiative.*

## **INITIATIVE ON THE SUSTAINABLE SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TISZA/TISA RIVER BASIN**

*signed by the Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning of Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic and Ukraine, at the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for regional planning (CEMAT), in Ljubljana, on 16 September 2003*

*The Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning of Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic and Ukraine, hereafter referred to as the “Parties”,*

*Recalling the decisions of the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers of 7 March 2001 concerning the “possible contribution of the Council of Europe in cases of environmental disaster in rivers such as the Tisza/Tisa and*

Szamos/Somes”, inviting the states concerned to continue efforts on this issue with a view to “promoting effective regional co-operation in the environmental field, including the possible elaboration of an agreement between the states concerned, under the auspices of the Council of Europe” (744th meeting);

*Aware* of the need to work together towards a sustainable spatial development of the Tisza/Tisa river basin allowing full consideration to be given to the natural, cultural and landscape heritage of the area concerned, at the same time improving the quality of life of the local inhabitants;

*Wishing* to implement the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent (GPSSDEC-CEMAT), adopted by the 12th European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), held in Hanover (Germany) on 8th September 2000 (Resolution No.1), and in accordance with Recommendation Rec (2002) 1 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member states, adopted on 30 January 2002, and notably its relevant provisions relating to flood plains and alluvial valleys, to the landscape and to transfrontier co-operation;

*Referring* to the Vilnius Declaration of 3 May 2002 on regional co-operation and the consolidation of democratic stability in greater Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;

*Recognising* that potential conflicts between the different functions of a territory can be anticipated and reduced through integrated spatial development strategy;

*Having* regard to the legal instruments existing at the international level in the field of sustainable spatial development, in particular, the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar, 2 February 1971), the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, 19 September 1979), the European Outline Convention on Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities (Madrid, 21 May 1980), the Torremolinos European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter (Recommendation No. R (84) 2 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter), the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada, 3 October 1985), the Convention on Measures to Combat Pollution on the Tisza River and its Tributaries (Szeged, 28 May 1986), the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo, 25 February 1991), the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised) (Valetta, 16 January 1992), the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Helsinki, 17 March 1992), the Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro, 5 June 1992), the Convention on Co-operation for the Protection and Sustainable Use of the Danube River (Sofia, 29 June 1994), the

European Landscape Convention (Florence, 20 October 2000), the Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (23 October 2000), the Council of Europe's European Charter on Water Resources (Recommendation Rec (2001)14 of the Committee of Ministers), the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Kiev, 23 May 2003);

*Intending* to promote the Tisza/Tisa river basin as a “CEMAT innovative region” of transfrontier character;

*Taking* into account the work already done concerning the regional area of the Tisza/Tisa river basin,

Have expressed their wish to closely co-operate as follows:

### **Article 1 – Area covered by the Initiative**

The Initiative concerns the geographical area of the hydrographic basin of the river Tisza/Tisa, as it will be defined according to the provisions of the appendix to the Initiative.

### **Article 2 – Objectives**

1. The Parties to jointly initiate and carry out a process of implementation of the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent and notably the ten following general principles:

- promoting territorial cohesion through a more balanced socio-economic development of regions and improved competitiveness;
- encouraging development generated by urban functions and improving the relationships between town and countryside;
- promoting more balanced accessibility;
- developing access to information and knowledge;
- reducing environmental damage;
- enhancing and protecting natural resources and the natural heritage;
- enhancing the cultural heritage as a factor of development;
- developing the energy resources while maintaining safety;
- encouraging high quality sustainable tourism;
- limiting the impact of natural disasters through preventive action.

2. The Parties agree to take particularly into consideration the provisions of the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent concerning the specific territory of flood plains and alluvial valleys. In this respect, they share the vision of an integrated and transfrontier spatial

development and aim at developing and implementing a strategy to reach that goal. They particularly take into account:

- the protection of landscapes and fragile ecosystems, the management of the water system in connection with spatial planning, the conservation of rivers and lakes, the limitation of intensive consumption of land by the expansion of urban areas and intensive agriculture, and flood prevention;
- the promotion of territorial cohesion (balanced spatial management, urban functions, relationship between towns and countryside, conditions of accessibility and access to information and knowledge), the enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage, the promotion of qualitative and sustainable tourism, the development of energy resources while maintaining safety;
- the determination of the most effective financial instruments for the support of programmes and projects for the sustainable development of the Tisza/Tisa river basin, particularly with the participation of international organisations and funds.

3. The Parties recognise the function of spatial planning in horizontal and intersectoral co-operation. They also recognise the role of local and regional authorities as well as of civil society, in particular non-governmental organisations, in promoting sustainable spatial development, and they will favour their involvement in the implementation of the Initiative.

4. The Parties agree to take into consideration, as part of their co-operation, the numerous projects and ongoing activities in the area of the Tisza/Tisa river basin, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and parallelisms.

### **Article 3 – Tisza/Tisa Joint Commission**

1. The Parties agree to promote the objectives of the Initiative by setting up a Joint Commission, aiming to ensure effective co-operation in the Tisza/Tisa river basin.

2. The main task of this Joint Commission is to examine the modalities of implementing the Initiative and to make recommendations to the Parties on measures to be taken.

3. Each Party shall appoint a delegation of two members, who could be assisted by experts.

4. Representatives of the following states, international organisations and entities shall have observer status within the commission:

- Bulgaria;

- Council of Europe;
- European Union;
- World Bank (WB);
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD);
- European Investment Bank (EIB);
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);
- United Nations Environment Programme (Unep);
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco);
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF);
- Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC);
- Southeast European Co-operative Initiative (Seci).

5. The Joint Commission can work in co-operation with other relevant organisations or entities.

6. The Joint Commission will draw up its own rules of procedure, in accordance with the provisions of the present document, with the support of the Council of Europe.

#### **Article 4 – Tisza/Tisa work and action programme**

The Parties agree that the Joint Commission:

- should establish a work and action programme as an integral part of the Initiative, according to the provisions appearing in the appendix;
- should update this programme on the basis of a regular review (approximately every two years) of the results of this co-operation and in accordance with the evolution of the general context.

#### **Article 5 – Final clauses**

1. Any difference in interpretation or implementation of this Initiative shall be resolved by means of discussion between the Ministries.

2 Each Party shall disseminate the Initiative among its relevant authorities and administrations within its country.

This Initiative is prepared in French and English, both texts being authentic, in a single copy, which shall be deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe.

Signed in Ljubljana, 16 September 2003, in a single copy, in French and English, both texts being equally authentic.

**For Hungary**

Mr Péter SZALÓ, Vice President of the National Office for Regional Development of the Prime Minister's Office of Hungary

**For Slovak Republic**

Mr Ján HURNÝ, Deputy Minister of Construction and Regional Development of Slovak Republic

**For Romania**

Ms Ileana TUREANU, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism

**For Serbia and Montenegro**

Mr Dragoslav SUMARAC, Minister of Urban Planning and Construction of Republic of Serbia

**For Ukraine**

M. Sergiy ROMANYUK, Deputy Minister of Economy and European

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Minister of Economy and European

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*Appendix to the Initiative*

**TISZA/TISA WORK AND ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INITIATIVE**

A work and action programme is established in accordance with the Initiative in order to support the common strategy of sustainable spatial development of the hydrographic basin of the river Tisza/Tisa.

**First phase 2003-2005**

The first phase of co-operation in the hydrographic basin of the river Tisza/Tisa, based on the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent, will allow for broad analysis of the existing situation and foreseeable evolution. This analysis will, in particular, attempt to highlight the strategic areas for which operational co-operation appears a priority and should serve as a basis for a common development strategy and for the drawing up of spatial plans.

The first phase will comprise an analytical approach around the following topics:

- a cartographic definition of the hydrographic basin of the river Tisza/Tisa, to be used as a background for various co-operation activities;
- the inventory, analysis and evaluation of the structures and practice of intergovernmental/interregional co-operation within the Tisza/Tisa river basin (existing agreements and their implementation);
- the inventory and evaluation of available studies and sources of information, either concerning the entire river basin, or significant parts of it (particularly studies by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (Unep), the European Union (EU), the Southeast European Co-operative Initiative (Seci), the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in co-operation with Wetlands International);
- an analysis of the existing situation and foreseeable changes concerning:
  - the water system, fragile ecosystems, levels and causes of pollution and environmental problems, floods and other natural disasters;
  - territorial cohesion issues (urban patterns, rural zones, accessibility, relevant transfrontier problems);
  - urban evolution, problems of demography and employment;
  - habitat characteristics;
  - agriculture and forestry;
  - tourism and leisure time;
  - systems of transportation and technical equipment;
  - energy in relation to safety and the environment;
  - the natural heritage (apart from the water system), the cultural and landscape heritage, and the increased value of these as elements of identity and in the development of widespread tourism.

Each of these thematic approaches, which will in no way be of an exhaustive nature, should aim to highlight:

- areas of existing and foreseeable problems that are particularly serious, where co-operation could contribute to an effective solution;
- under-utilised potential, where co-ordinated measures could generate significant synergies;
- successful solutions that have already been shown to work and which could be

used as models;

– the eventual need for further legal instruments to complement those already in existence.

### **Second phase 2005-2008**

The second phase will be dedicated to the implementation of a joint strategy of sustainable spatial development of the Tisza/Tisa river basin based on the accepted concept of sustainable development formulated in Recommendation Rec(2002)1 of the Committee of Ministers on the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent.

The Parties will particularly endeavour to adopt an action programme concerning natural, rural and urban zones of the Tisza/Tisa river basin.

With a view to harmonising actions, the following elements should be taken into account:

- the protection, management and planning of the landscape;
- the conservation of the natural heritage (fauna, flora and habitats);
- the preservation of ecological and physical equilibrium, in the light of pollution problems;
- the protection and improvement of the architectural, archaeological and rural heritage, and the establishment of cultural routes;
- the effects on the environment of economic activities such as industry, agriculture, tourism and those concerning transport systems and the production and distribution of energy;
- the territorial cohesion of the Tisza/Tisa river basin based on balanced rural and urban economic development and general infrastructure;
- the protection, preservation and equitable use of water resources.

The Parties will undertake the necessary action to raise public awareness concerning environmental problems in the context of sustainable development processes.

### **Further phases**

Further phases will be defined on the basis of the results obtained.