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## **Annex 5: Action Fiche for ENPI East Regional Action Plan 2010 Part I<sup>1</sup>**

### **1. IDENTIFICATION**

Title/Number	Protection of freshwater and marine environments in the wider Black Sea region, ENPI/2010/021-924		
Total cost	EUR 13 million (EU contribution 100%) <u>Component A:</u> Environmental protection of international river basins – EUR 8.5 million <u>Component B:</u> Environmental protection of the Black Sea – EUR 4.5 million		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Project approach – Direct centralised management		
DAC-code	14040 41020 41030	Sector	River development Biosphere protection (includes marine pollution control) Bio-diversity

### **2. RATIONALE**

#### **2.1. Sector context**

##### *2.1.1. Policy context*

The proposed actions are in line with the policies and programming documents of relevant multilateral agreements/initiatives, the partner countries, and of the EU, namely:

– The Black Sea Synergy was launched by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European Union and of the wider Black Sea area (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Ukraine, Turkey) in February 2008 in Kiev. It aims at the development of cooperation within the Black Sea region and also between the region as a whole and the European Union. The Synergy should contribute to better coordinating specific programmes in the area of environment and water quality. A Black Sea Partnership on environment is expected to be launched in spring 2010.

– The ENPI East Regional Programme (Strategy Paper, 2007-2013) underlines water management as one of the priorities. The ENPI East Regional Indicative Programme 2007-2010 further details the EU assistance including Integrated Water Resources

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<sup>1</sup> The ENPI East region consists of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine. If the Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA) allows it and if it provides financial support, the project might be extended in future to other countries which are not Partners in the framework of the ENP, namely Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

Management, cross-border River Basin Management, and cooperation concerning regional seas, in particular the Black Sea.

– The Eastern Partnership was launched during the Prague summit in May 2009 with the goal to accelerate political association and further economic integration between the European Union and interested partner countries. "Environment and Climate Change" is one of the panels under platform 2 on "Economic Integration and Convergence with EU policies". Priorities include water management, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, convergence towards EU environment law, strengthened implementation of multilateral environment agreements, as well as collection, monitoring, and assessment of environment information.

– The Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution (Bucharest Convention or Black Sea Convention) was signed in 1992 by Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine. The last Conference of the Parties adopted the Land-Based Sources and Activities Protocol and the 2009 Strategic Action Plan. The latter adheres to Integrated River Basin Management and Integrated Coastal Zone Management. Furthermore, the creation of new and/or expansion of existing protected areas, the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management principles, and the development/improvement of the monitoring network are considered to be management targets of high priority. The EU is not a Party to the Bucharest Convention. In 2009, the Parties agreed to examine an amendment to the Convention which would allow the EU to become a member.

– The EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive adopted in June 2008 aims to protect more effectively the marine environment across Europe by achieving or maintaining good environmental status of the EU's marine waters by 2020 and preserving the resource base upon which marine-related economic and social activities depend.

– The UNECE<sup>2</sup> Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) was signed in Helsinki in 1992. It aims at strengthening national measures for the protection and ecologically sound management of transboundary surface waters and groundwaters. It obliges Parties to prevent, control and reduce water pollution from point and non-point sources. Azerbaijan, Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine are signatories to the Convention.

– The EU Water Framework Directive adopted in 2000 aims at achieving good qualitative and quantitative status of all surface water bodies including transitional and coastal waters by 2015. The directive is based on the concept of managing rivers at basin level.

### 2.1.2. *Problems the project is intended to address*

The political priorities as described above were confirmed by a recent identification report prepared by external experts who visited all ENPI East countries except the

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<sup>2</sup> UNECE – United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Russian Federation.<sup>3</sup> Water quantity shortages are a major problem in Armenia and Azerbaijan while Ukraine and Republic of Moldova suffered from a severe flood event in 2008. This situation will probably aggravate due to climate change. Regarding water quality, available data suggest an improvement during recent years due to de-industrialisation, but some large rivers and many smaller watercourses as well as the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea remain polluted. Surface water is widely used for drinking purposes in the region and has direct impact on public health.<sup>4,5</sup>

Regional problems in the water sector are related to shared rivers and seas which are interlinked because the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea are the final recipients of the pollution loads of many major international river basins of the region (Danube, Dniester, Dnieper, Don, Çoruh, and Kura-Aras). In recent years, significant progress has been made in cooperation as well as approaching the principles of Integrated Water Resources Management and the EU Water Framework Directive. However, current actions in pollution reduction and water resource management should be reinforced to remedy the problems, some of which are specific to the respective river basin. This includes necessary improvements with respect to the availability of water quantity and quality data and to their increased use for policy-making. The quality of the data should also be improved by introducing quality management systems, which are usually not in place.

The Black Sea is one of the most vulnerable regional seas in the world given its limited exchange of water with the open oceans and the large area of continental Europe from which it receives the drainage. The four priority trans-boundary problems of the Black Sea are: eutrophication/nutrient enrichment, changes in marine living resources, chemical pollution (including oil), and biodiversity/habitat changes including alien species introduction.<sup>6</sup>

The four priority problems as well as the underlying root causes like industrial activities, agriculture, domestic wastewater, sea transport (oil spills, ballast water), and coastal zone degradation (urbanisation, tourism) are strongly interlinked and addressing improvements in management of one problem will have positive side effects on others. One of the causes of all four environmental problems is that of poorly regulated coastal development. Although there is quite some national environmental legislation in place, law enforcement and implementation of management plans has been less stringent. The EU has recognised the importance of Integrated Coastal Zone Management.<sup>7</sup> Another major issue is that there is no agreement on fisheries management measures, including total allowable catches and quotas between the six riparian countries of the Black Sea apart from the *acquis communautaire* applicable to Bulgaria and Romania. Sustainable fisheries management furthermore requires more and larger designated protected areas and a strengthened implementation of the existing law. As with freshwaters, lack of comparable data presents a major obstacle.

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<sup>3</sup> Parsons Brinckerhoff Ltd.: Evaluation of Environment projects under TACIS Regional Action Programmes and Identification of Environment projects for ENPI East 2010-2013, September/October 2009.

<sup>4</sup> European Environment Agency: Europe's environment – the fourth assessment. Copenhagen, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> UNECE: Our Waters: Joining Hands across Borders - First Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters. Geneva, 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Black Sea Commission: State of the Environment of the Black Sea (2001 – 2006/7). Istanbul, 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Recommendation 2002/413/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2002 concerning the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Europe.

## 2.2. Lessons learnt

A recent evaluation of past EU funded regional environment projects highlighted visible impacts in all partner countries, especially with regard to institutional development and development of NGOs and consultancies.<sup>3</sup> Weaknesses include the lack of a clear final programme objective, project implementation in (sub)regions with limited common interests or needs, too short inception periods, limited involvement of partner countries in project preparation, too much focus on legislation and policy documents compared to implementation, low involvement of local experts, and mutual misunderstandings in terms of assistance strategy and needs. Partner countries are sensitive to unequal levels of activities. The geographical scope of EU funding schemes sometimes does not correspond to the targeted region requiring additional coordination. The combined efforts of several donors have raised awareness on the importance of proper water management, although there was some overlapping and duplication of activities. Integrated Water Resources Management is now well accepted in the partner countries, but the requirements need to be simplified to be practical.

Lessons learnt from the recently finalised project on Environmental Collaboration for the Black Sea include to establish project offices in each country, to set up a small team of international experts (preferentially speaking Russian and other languages of the partner countries) accompanied by a big team of local experts, to select the latter in agreement with the partner countries, to increase the project duration, and to provide for enough flexibility in the contracts to react to changing priorities and needs of the partner countries. The momentum of the project should be kept and pilot projects on protected areas and Integrated Coastal Zone Management should be replicated.

Lessons learnt from the on-going Water Governance and past EU-funded River Basin projects include not to set overambitious objectives, to explicitly build on the results of previous projects, to maintain the momentum by implementing successive projects in short intervals, to increase the project duration, to involve a training institution from the partner country that will retain the capacity to provide training to others after the end of the project, to improve the capacities of the staff of the partner countries and not to carry out tasks on his behalf, to devote more resources and time to prepare terms of references, and to make project funding conditional on commitments from the partner countries.

In addition, a recent evaluation of past procurement projects for laboratory equipment revealed major weaknesses in the procurement strategy.<sup>8</sup> In some partner countries, similar tasks are attributed to different laboratories resulting in inefficient use of scarce resources. Quite often, staff do not have the necessary qualifications to operate the highly sophisticated equipment, and not enough training was provided. Furthermore, financial resources for consumables and maintenance of expensive equipment are sometimes not available. Quality of the monitoring data is moreover questionable because quality control procedures are largely absent.

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<sup>8</sup> Bob Brett and Steve Warren: The procurement of supplies in TACIS projects. Mott MacDonald, draft report, July 2009.

## 2.3. Complementary actions

Coordination and synergies will be ensured with other on-going initiatives:

### 2.3.1. Rivers

– For the Danube, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) provides a strong institutional background driven by EU policies which adopted the first Danube River Basin Management Plan in December 2009. The Dniester River Basin Council was established by the end of 2008. Plenipotentiaries serve as joint bodies for the Dnieper, the Pripjat, and the Seversky Donets river basins. There is currently no agreement or joint body covering the whole Kura-Aras river basin, only bilateral agreements and commissions.

– The regional EU project on trans-boundary river management phase II for the Kura river (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) runs from 2008 until the end of 2011 (budget €4 million). River Basin Management Plans for five pilot basins are being developed. Furthermore laboratory equipment and training to improve the quality of monitoring data was provided. The proposed project will assist with the implementation of the management plans and include the wish of the partner countries for projects on biological and groundwater monitoring.

– The regional EU project on Water Governance in Western EECCA countries (Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia) (2008-2010, 24 months, €2.3 million) elaborated a system of surface water quality standards based on a former OECD project in the Republic of Moldova. The proposed project aims at putting this system into practice by reinforcing the monitoring capacities.

– United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) together with the Global Environment Fund (GEF) is funding a project entitled "Implementation of the Dnipro Action Program for the Reduction of Persistent Toxics Pollution" in Belarus and Ukraine (total budget USD6.1 million , 2008-2011). It aims addressing the priority issue of industrial chemical pollution emanating from smaller urban industries discharging wastewater through Vodokanals.

– Another UNDP-GEF project in the South Caucasus entitled "Reducing Transboundary Degradation in the Kura-Aras Basin" (USD1.7 million, duration three years) is expected to start soon. The project is supposed to achieve its objectives by fostering regional cooperation, increasing capacity to address water problems, demonstrating improvements, initiating policy and legal reforms, prioritizing investments and developing sustainable management and financial arrangements.

– The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) set-up by UNEP, UNDP, OSCE, UNECE, and the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), in association with the NATO is implementing several water projects. The Dniester III project started in 2009 for two years with co-funding from the Swedish and Finnish governments. The principal tasks of the project are to promote the adoption of the new Dniester River Basin Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, to facilitate cooperation between sanitary-epidemiological services, to support activities on biodiversity conservation with focus on fisheries, to facilitate information exchange at the national and basin-wide levels, and to raise public awareness and media coverage of the Dniester river basin environmental

issues. A project on sustainable management of shared water resources in the upper Pripyat basin (sub-basin of Dnieper) promotes the development, harmonisation and bilateral implementation of water allocation procedures between Belarus and Ukraine for the Beloozerskaya water-feed system of the Dnieper-Buh Canal in an environmentally safe, economically viable, and mutually acceptable manner. In Georgia and Azerbaijan, an on-going project aims at developing an agreement on the management of transboundary watercourses and to assess the capacity of Georgia for ratification and implementation of the UNECE Water Convention.

### 2.3.2. *Black Sea*

– The Black Sea Commission has since long been in place and comprises an institutional structure with a Permanent Secretariat, Advisory Groups, and Activity Centres. The revised Strategic Action Plan was adopted in 2009, but its implementation is hampered by the Commission's limited own funds.

– On the other hand, the Black Sea Commission is currently implementing a regional project on Environmental Monitoring of the Black Sea Basin: Monitoring and Information Systems for Reducing Oil Pollution (MONINFO) funded by the EU. The first phase (2009-2010, €1.25 million, EU contribution €1.0 million) aims at strengthening institutional cooperation and at preparing a concept for a common monitoring and information platform while the second phase (2010-2011, €1.11 million, EU contribution €1.0 million) intends to enhance capacities to manage information, to improve the safety of oil transfer, and to increase the efficiency in the response to accidents and common interventions.

– The regional EU project on Environmental Cooperation for the Black Sea (2007-2009, €2.2 million) provided several draft legal and management documents and implemented pilot projects on protected areas in Ukraine and Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Georgia. The proposed project will build upon these results.

– Pollution prevention from ships in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea is tackled within a regional EU project on maritime safety (2009-2011, 24 months, €3.5 million) in the frame of the TRACECA programme (Transport Corridor Europe – Caucasus – Asia).

– The EU funded project "Introduction of Stock Assessment to the Fisheries Management System of Turkey (€2.2 million, 12 months, 2010-2011) aims to establish the necessary support systems for ecosystem based fisheries resource management in Turkey.

– Scientific advice and other services for the implementation of the common fisheries policy in the Mediterranean and Black Sea will be provided under a European Commission framework contract, starting in 2010 and running for a period of up to four years. The maximum annual budget for the Black Sea component amounts to €0.5 million."

– Annual calls for proposals by the Joint Operational Programme "Black Sea 2007-2013" in the frame of the ENPI Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) Sea Basin programme are launched from 2009-2012, with priority 2 dedicated to environment protection. The total budget is €27.1 million with €9.8 million for priority 2

environment stemming from ENPI, IPA, and participating countries' funds. Eligible regions were assigned in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine.

– Research projects funded from the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> EU Framework Programme include "Southern European Seas: Assessing and Modelling Ecosystem changes" (SESAME), "Building Capacity for a Black Sea Catchment Observation and Assessment System supporting Sustainable Development" (EnviroGRIDS), "People for Ecosystem Based Governance in Assessing Sustainable Development of Ocean and Coast" (PEGASO), "UP-GRADE Black Sea Scientific Network" (UP-GRADE BS-SCENE), "Knowledge-based sustainable management for Europe's seas" (KNOWSEAS), "In situ monitoring of oxygen depletion in hypoxic ecosystems of coastal and open seas, and land-locked water bodies" (HYPOX), "European Coastal Sea Operational Observing and Forecasting System" (ECOOP), and "Ocean Monitoring and Forecasting" (MyOcean project).

– UNDP-GEF led the Black Sea Ecosystem Recovery Project (BSERP) from 1993-2008. BSERP worked to reform agricultural policies, improve industrial and municipal wastewater treatment, rehabilitate key basin ecosystems such as wetlands to act as nutrient sinks, and to strengthen both the region's legislative framework and its enforcement. UNDP is thinking about possible new projects in the near future.

### 2.3.3. *Related activities*

– The EU delegations in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova are currently preparing sector budget support (SBS) programmes in the field of environment (€45 million including €10 million from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)) and water supply/sanitation (€45 million), respectively.

– In the frame of the EU Water Initiative (EU WI) which aims at achieving the water-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), OECD and UNECE are implementing a project in EECCA countries until the end of 2012 with a total budget of €1.9 million supporting national policy dialogues on better management of water services and water resources at national level. The project also provides support to reform efforts by producing strategic analyses, policy documents, as well as draft legal texts. Given that the policy dialogues are on a national level, they are complementary to the proposed regional project.

– The European Council has formally asked the European Commission to prepare an EU Strategy for the Danube Region by the end of 2010 to pursue sustainable development through an integrated approach. It is envisaged to have 3 'pillars' to improve connectivity and communication systems (transport, energy, and information society), to preserve the environment and prevent against natural risks, and to reinforce the potential for socio-economical development.

– The European Environment Agency (EEA) is implementing a project on environmental data in ENPI East and South from 2010-2014 (total budget €5.8 million). It aims at strengthening capacities for monitoring, storing, disseminating, evaluating, and reporting of environmental data and to set up a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) in line with the EU approach. The project will not tackle

the measurement of biological and chemical water quality but only address subsequent steps in the data chain and is thus complementary to the proposed project.

- A regional EU project running for 18 months from 2010 with a budget of €1.3 million aims at assessing social and economic benefits of convergence towards the policy principles and approaches of selected parts of the EU environmental acquis including water resource management. This will complement the proposed project by demonstrating the potential negative economic effects of disregarding environmental protection and thus lifting these issues higher on the political agenda.
- Other initiatives funded by EU Member States are on-going or planned, for example the “Wider Europe Initiative” of Finland which will include a water sector programme in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus.
- Loans for infrastructure projects in the field of water supply and sanitation are given by the World Bank (WB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), and banks of the EU Members States, as for example Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and Agence Française de Développement (AFD). The Danube Black Sea (DABLAS) task force provides a forum for preparation and coordination. The EU is supporting investments by giving additional grants through the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF).

## **2.4. Donor coordination**

Although the coordination process for regional projects is more difficult than for bilateral ones and donors' coordination in the fields of environment and water even at national level of the partner countries is often not regularly in place, the project was announced and discussed on several occasions with donors and partner countries (for example DABLAS task force, wrap-up conference of Black Sea project, EUWI EECCA meeting, Steering Committee meeting of Kura river project). The Black Sea Commission welcomed the proposed project (19-21 January 2010) and suggested to strongly build on local experts, to include all riparian countries in the project, to use similar methodologies to set up Basin Management plans as for the Danube, and to consider targeting the Çoruh river basin shared between Turkey and Georgia.

Bilateral exchanges of information about on-going and future projects took place with UNDP, UNECE, and ENVSEC. This exchange revealed that joint implementation is not feasible given the different time schedules of project preparation and implementation. However, complementarity of actions will be ensured at the time of drafting the terms of reference.

## **3. DESCRIPTION**

### **3.1. General**

The project will be implemented by two components, component A targeting environmental protection of international river basins and component B targeting environmental protection of the Black Sea. Given that most of the trans-boundary rivers of the region discharge into the Black Sea, component A indirectly targets also component B and a close coordination between the two components will be ensured.

For component A, several transboundary rivers will be selected in a way that all seven ENPI countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine) are covered by the project. Following the lessons learnt from past projects, activities and expected results will be further defined during the formulation of the terms of reference in cooperation with the partner countries and other donors. For component B, activities will be carried out in Georgia, Russia, and Ukraine. Other countries of the wider Black Sea region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Republic of Moldova) and Belarus may be included if thematically justified.

If funds from the Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA) are available, the both components might be extended to Turkey, which would be highly desirable. Participation of other countries at their own expenses will be sought, as for example Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey. The budget distribution for the two components (€ 8.5 million for component A and €4.5 million for component B) reflects the different number of eligible countries and the need to have projects of reasonable size and duration.

Both components will dedicate a significant amount to training and capacity building and will involve local training institutions. In order to promote ownership, engagement of local experts and organisations will be favoured during the tender procedure. This could be achieved by, for example, requiring experts who speak local languages (not only English and Russian) and requiring applicant consortia to include companies and/or institutions and/or NGOs of the partner countries. Non-key local experts could be selected in agreement with the partner countries' institutions. Alignment with partner countries' policies and strategies will be achieved by consultations at all stages of project preparation and implementation.

These arrangements aim at implementing the principles of ownership, alignment, and harmonisation of the Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness and the guiding principles 1, 4, 5, and 6 of the Backbone Strategy for Reforming Technical Cooperation.

### **3.2. Objectives**

The overall objectives of the project are for component A): an improved water quality in the transboundary river basins of the wider Black Sea region and Belarus, and for component B) an improved protection of the Black Sea environment.

The specific objectives (project purposes) are:

A.1 Improved availability and quality of data on the biological, chemical, and hydromorphological status of transboundary river basins including groundwater

A.2 Improved design and implementation of River Basin Management Plans

B.1 Improved availability and quality of data on the chemical and biological status of the Black Sea

B.2 Increased number and size of protected areas in the Black Sea and increased degree of protection

B.3 Improvements in sustainable use of coastal zones

### **3.3. Expected results and main activities**

#### *3.3.1. Expected results*

A.1 Increased capacities of the respective national authorities for biological, chemical, and hydromorphological monitoring of water quality including groundwater; quality assurance procedures in laboratories in place

A.2 Increased awareness for the necessity to and increased capacities to design and implement River Basin Management Plans

B.1 Increased capacities of the respective national authorities for biological and chemical monitoring of water quality in the Black Sea; quality assurance procedures in laboratories in place

B.2 Increased awareness for the necessity to and increased capacities to identify, designate, and manage protected areas;

B.3 Increased awareness for the necessity to and increased capacities to implement Integrated Coastal Zone Management

#### *3.3.2. Main activities*

Activities to achieve results A.1 and B.1 are similar and will be closely coordinated as some laboratories are responsible both for monitoring of marine and freshwaters. Activities will start with a review of the existing monitoring systems and an assessment of the data needed with regard to regional and national needs, reporting obligations under international conventions, and an approach to the EU environmental acquis. Regional events will be organised to ensure a harmonised approach to obtain comparable data. Following this, a staged programme will be elaborated to agree between concerned institutions how to provide and share data in the most cost-efficient way. After this, an assessment of needs regarding laboratory infrastructure, equipment, and training will be conducted. The cost implications will be calculated and the needs assessment adjusted according to the limited financial resources of the countries. No equipment will be provided under this action. From the training needs assessment, a comprehensive training programme on monitoring methods and quality assurance (aiming at adhering to ISO 17025 standard) will be elaborated and implemented. This programme will include on-site training, regional training events, joint monitoring exercises, working stays for laboratory personnel in EU laboratories, and e-learning. Restitution of knowledge will be ensured via "Training of Trainers" and support to training institutions in the partner countries. Training activities on data storage, management, analyses, and reporting will be included if not covered by the EEA project.

Activities to achieve result A.2 will very much depend on the concerned river basins which will be selected after further consultations with the countries and other donors. Activities will build on results of past projects and be aligned with the work programmes of existing River Basin Management bodies and projects funded by other donors. Activities may include, for example, (further) development of joint GIS-based information systems, preparation and refinement of River (Sub-)Basin Management Plans, studies on the impact of climate change on water resources and inclusion in management plans, training of staff to implement existing legislation and

management plans including pilot projects as tools, guidance to include civil society in the preparation and implementation of management plans, and awareness raising activities for the general public, target groups, and stakeholders.

Activities to achieve result B.2 will start with a review of the existing protected areas in the Black Sea with a special focus on possible deficiencies regarding law enforcement and implementation of management plans. Relevant results and experiences of previous projects and the Black Sea Commission will be taken duly into account. From this, a work programme will be developed in close cooperation with the respective national, sub-national, and local authorities aimed at identifying, designating, and, above all, managing protected areas (coastal and/or marine). The focus of the work programme will be to train staff of the partner countries and exchange experiences and best practices within the region. Activities will also promote the establishment of bilateral protected areas which currently do not exist. Pilot projects will be used to provide practical experience on how to establish and manage protected areas, but also to raise awareness. Activities to raise awareness will be further implemented for the general public, target groups, and stakeholders.

Activities to achieve result B.3 will start with a review of the existing laws and management plans regarding coastal zone management, and in particular, the draft national strategy for Georgia and the draft coastal zone law for Ukraine, both developed during the past EU funded Black Sea project. Special focus of the review will be on possible deficiencies regarding law enforcement and implementation of management plans. As with protected areas, a training programme will then be developed to increase capacities of the respective national, sub-national, and local authorities to implement Integrated Coastal Zone Management. Regional events and pilot projects will be used as tools. Awareness raising activities for the general public, target groups, and stakeholders will be important to ensure the long-term sustainability of the results.

### **3.4. Risks and assumptions**

#### *3.4.1. Risks*

- Political instability in the region with several frozen conflicts (Abkhazia, South-Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria) poses a major risk which is to some extent out of the projects' control, but keeping the work at technical level will avoid arriving at a completely blocked situation.
- Frequent changes of governments and staff followed by changes in political priorities could harm the efficient implementation. The project will try to mitigate this risk by allowing for certain flexibility and by recurring to tools such as Training for Trainers and e-learning.
- Environment protection is usually not among the priorities of partner countries' policies with their scarce financial resources. The project on socio economic benefits is supposed to lift environmental issues higher on the political agenda.
- Turkey's participation in this project would be much desirable in view of its large Black Sea coast and its river basins flowing into the Black Sea, but it would depend on the contribution of its own funds and/or IPA funds.

### 3.4.2. Assumptions

- Political support from the partner countries' ministries and agencies not only at national, but also at regional level is needed to reach the projects' specific objectives. Experience from recent projects shows that this assumption is reasonable if project results and activities are agreed in advance and the countries' wishes for changing project priorities are duly taken into account.

### 3.5. Crosscutting Issues

The action directly targets the cross-cutting issue of environmental sustainability. Climate change may have a profound influence on the total availability and seasonal variability of water resources as well as on biodiversity and will thus be taken into account when drafting and implementing management plans. The specific objectives of the project shall be reached by improving governance and management practices. This includes the promotion of stakeholders' information and participation in the decision making process in line with the EU Water Framework Directive. Deteriorating environmental conditions often have a bigger impact on women while their participation in environmental protection and management as well as in the formulation, planning and execution of environmental policies is lower. Efforts will be made to promote women's participation in the project.

### 3.6. Stakeholders

The target group of the actions are the respective Ministries of Environment and Agencies responsible for water governance and management in a regional context, the laboratories responsible for monitoring of water quality and quantity, relevant regional river basin bodies and the Black Sea Commission with its Secretariat, Advisory Groups, and Activity Centres. Other governmental institutions will be included if appropriate, for example ministries of agriculture, economy, regional development, housing, tourism, transport, and finance. Sub-national and local authorities will be targeted according to their responsibilities for planning and implementation.

The Black Sea Commission and several joint River Basin Organisations were set-up in the past, sometimes with the help of donors, and although the institutional structure of these organisations could be stronger, they will ensure ownership and sustainability of the project results. Further evidences are that Armenia and Republic of Moldova decided to establish River Basin Management institutions on a national level while Ukraine tried to reinforce the existing ones. All countries except Armenia and Georgia have ratified the UNECE Water Convention.

Political level contacts and relationships are sometimes difficult. Experience from past projects suggests keeping activities and meetings at technical/expert level promoting a long-term, bottom-up improvement in regional cooperation. Remuneration of civil servants in the partner countries is generally low. Skilled staff therefore often leaves for the private sector or international cooperation projects. "Training of Trainers" and e-learning will be used to mitigate this risk.

Key stakeholders include industries (including water supply and wastewater treatment companies) and NGOs. Attention will be paid to include civil society in the preparation and implementation of Integrated River Basin Management Plans.

Further important stakeholders include the Organisation for Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), IFIs, and international organisations such as UNECE, UNDP, and UNEP.

The further preparation and implementation of the project will be aligned with the outcomes of the meetings envisaged within the forthcoming Black Sea Synergy Environment Partnership and also the Eastern Partnership panel on environment.

#### **4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

##### **4.1. Method of implementation**

The project will be implemented through Direct Centralised Management, preferably through one single service contract for each component.

##### **4.2. Procurement procedures**

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

Participation in the award of contracts for the present action shall be open to all natural and legal persons covered by regulation EC/1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. Further extensions of this participation to other natural or legal persons by the concerned authorising officer shall be subject to the conditions provided for in article 21(7) of regulation EC/1638/2006.

##### **4.3. Budget and calendar**

The indicative overall budget will be €8.5 million for component A and €4.5 million for component B. Evaluations and audits will be funded from other resources. For each component, a single service contract will be signed. The indicative date for launching the procurement procedure for both components is early 2011 to start the project in the second semester 2011. The indicative operational duration of both contracts as from signature is 48 months.

##### **4.4. Performance monitoring**

Indicators for measuring progress are included in the logframe. Objectively verifiable indicators (qualitative and quantitative) will have to be part of the methodologies included in the technical proposals. Internal monitoring will be ensured by meetings of the projects Steering Committees, external monitoring by the framework contract for Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM).

##### **4.5. Evaluation and audit**

Expenditure incurred will have to be certified, as part of the obligations of the contracted parties. Final evaluation of the results achieved will be entrusted to

independent consultants, as well as external audits (which will be carried out if necessary). These evaluations and audits will be funded from other sources than the project budget, since no commitment will be possible once the validity of this Decision has expired ("N+1" rule will apply).

#### **4.6. Communication and visibility**

The Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions shall be followed. The project will develop a communication plan containing information and communication activities (towards national and/or international media, stakeholders, final beneficiaries) and ensuring visibility of the project in all produced materials (website, newsletter, booklet, training material, etc.). Visibility and communication actions in the partner countries will be carried out in collaboration with the delegations and the ENPI Info centre web portal.