

**DRAFT DECLARATION OF CO-OPERATION CONCERNING
THE TISZA/TISA RIVER BASIN**

We, Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning of Hungary, Romania, State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic and Ukraine, being in Ljubljana on 16 September 2003 at the 13th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for regional planning (CEMAT), thanks to the Council of Europe for the work done in order to achieve the Initiative on Sustainable Spatial Development of the Tisza/Tisa River Basin in the goal to implement 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;
- [– decide to continue work for the preparation of an agreement].

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

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

Recalling the decisions of the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers of 7 March 2001 considering an issue of the “Possible contribution of the Council of Europe in cases of environmental disasters in rivers such as the Tisza/Tisa and Szamos/Somos rivers”, and inviting the States concerned to continue efforts on this issue with a view of 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 in favour of a sustainable spatial development of the Tisza/Tisa River Basin allowing full consideration to be taken of the natural, cultural and landscape heritage of the concerned area, improving at the same time 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 the Recommendation Rec (2002) 1 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to the member States, adopted on 30th January 2000, 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;

Recognizing 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 the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, 19 September 1979), the European Outline Convention on Co-operation between Territorial Communities and Authorities (Madrid, 21 May 1980), the Torremolinos European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter (Recommendation Rec (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 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 European Charter on Water Resources (Recommendation Rec (2001) 14 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the European Charter on Water Resources), the 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 cooperate as follows:

Article 1. Area covered by the Initiative

The Initiative concerns the geographical area of the Tisza/Tisa River hydrographic Basin, as it will be defined according to the provisions of the Appendix of the Initiative.

Article 2. Objectives

1. The Parties agree 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.

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 take particularly into account:

- the protection of landscapes and fragile ecosystems, the management of water systems in connection with spatial planning, the limitations of the intensive consumption of land by the expansion of urban areas and intensive agriculture, flood prevention and the conservation of rivers and lakes;
- the promotion of territorial cohesion (balanced spatial organisation, 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 recognize the function of spatial planning in horizontal and intersectoral co-operation. They also recognize the role of local and regional authorities as well as 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, in the framework of their co-operation, the numerous projects and ongoing activities in the area of the Tisza/Tisa River Basin, in view 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 an 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;
- United Nations Environment Programme;
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO);
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF);
- Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC);
- Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI).

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

6. The Joint Commission will elaborate 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:

- establish a Work and Action Programme, according to the provisions appearing in the Appendix, which is part of the Initiative;
- 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 divergences on interpretation or implementation of this Initiative shall be resolved by means of negotiation between the Parties.
2. Each Party shall disseminate the Initiative among the relevant authorities and administrations within its country.

The 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.

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

A Work and Action Programme is established accordingly to the Initiative in order to support the common Strategy of sustainable spatial development of the Tisza/Tisa River Basin.

FIRST PHASE 2003-2005

The first phase of co-operation in the Tisza/Tisa River Basin, based on the Guiding Principles, will allow for broad analysis of the existing situation and foreseeable evolution. This analysis will especially attempt to highlight the fields, for which operational co-operation appears a priority and has to serve as a basis for a common development strategy and for the elaboration of spatial plans.

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

- cartographic delimitation of the Tisza/Tisa River hydrographic Basin, which is used as a background for various co-operation activities;
- the inventory, analysis and evaluation of the structures and practice of the intergovernmental/interregional co-operation within the Tisza/Tisa River Basin (existing relevant agreements and their implementation);
- the inventory and evaluation of available studies and sources of information, either on the level of the entire river basin, or for its significant parts (works of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the European Union (EU), the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI), the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) notably;
- analysis of the existing situation and foreseeable evolution with regard to problems concerning:
 - water system, fragile ecosystems, levels and causes of pollution and of environmental pressures, floods and other natural disasters;
 - territorial cohesion issues (urban patterns, rural zones, accessibility, relevant transborder problems);
 - urban evolution, problems of demography and labour forces;
 - habitat characteristics;
 - agriculture and forestry;
 - tourism and free time;
 - systems of transportation and technical equipment;
 - energy in relation to safety measures and the environment;
 - the natural (apart from the water system), cultural and landscape heritage and the development of tourism.

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

- zones of existing and foreseeable problems with particular intensity, where co-operation could contribute to an effective solution;
- under-utilized potential, where coordinated measures could generate significant synergies;
- successful solutions already applied which could be used as examples;

- possible needs for legal instruments complementing those already existing.

SECOND PHASE 2005-2008

The second phase will be dedicated to the preparation of a common Strategy of sustainable spatial development of the Tisza/Tisa River Basin based on the common concept of sustainable development formulated in the Recommendation Rec (2002) 1 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent.

The Parties will give notable effort to adopt an action programme of natural, rural and urban zones of the Tisza/Tisa River Basin.

In the framework of harmonising actions the following elements are taken into account:

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

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

FURTHER PHASES

The next phases will be defined on the basis of the results obtained.