



ICOLD - European Club

Proposed and lead by GREECE and SPAIN

Invited countries: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, North Macedonia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Iceland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom

TOR PROPOSAL FOR A WG ON

“Dams in the context of EU policies”

Preamble

Integrated river basin management contributes to the sustainable evolution of agriculture and rural development, tourism and local development, land management, and water uses - including clean and renewable energy and the key role in facilitating decarbonation of the economies, -, to securing drinking water supplies as well as natural hazards mitigation.

Dams and reservoirs have a crucial role and a very dynamic interaction with all the above.

However certain questions need to be answered to better appreciate this role.

- Are these dynamics thoroughly examined and well understood across the involved scientific disciplines?
- Is the role of dams and reservoirs appreciated by the decision makers and the public?

The EU WFD has formulated common vocabulary, legislative framework, platform, libraries, and toolboxes aiming to enhance River Basin Management across its borders through a uniform and comparable approach. Hence, River Basin management Plans have been prepared and implemented in 19 out of the 26 ICOLD European club members. Furthermore, Members of the ICOLD European Club that are not currently EU members (7 out of 26 members) have also been affected by the WFD taking into consideration that:

- a) *«For river basins extending beyond the boundaries of the Community, Member States should endeavor to ensure the appropriate coordination with the relevant non-member States. This Directive is to contribute to the implementation of Community obligations under international conventions on water protection and management, notably the United Nations Convention on the protection and use of transboundary water courses and international lakes, approved by Council Decision 95/308/EC and any succeeding agreements on its application. »*

- b) *Four (4) Euroclub members (namely North Macedonia, Albania, Iceland, and Turkey) are in the process of Implementing the EU WFD as part of their pre-accession preparation.*

The ICOLD EUROPEAN CLUB Working Group on European Water Framework Directive (Topical Focus of the Perspective of Reservoir Operators) has issued under the Co-ordination of: G. Heigerth (Austria) the FINAL REPORT in 2004.

The WFD is now on its 3rd implementation cycle in all MS and largely implemented or under implementation in all of IPA countries.

ICOLD European Club, possesses the expertise and is interested to further proceed to formulate the answers to the following questions:

- To what extend is integrated river basin management approach leading to a uniform appreciation of the role of dams & reservoirs?
- How are policies focusing on integrated River Basin Management across Europe affecting the future of dams?
- To what extend are dams and reservoirs in the European Club Members allowed to perform their best towards an integrated River Basin Management? Identification of policies enhancing the role of dams and those that impede dams' integration in IRBM.
- What dam design and/or reservoir management practices can best contribute to meeting the environmental goals of the reservoirs and the downstream water bodies?¹

Scope of Works

To create a unified point of reference on the interaction of Integrated River Basin Management policies and Dams and Reservoirs (in terms of conception, implementation, operation, and rehabilitation prospects).

Towards this end, the EWG will compare and analyse across both similar and varying political, social, environmental, and economic habitats of Europe, including in transboundary river basins:

- a) the contribution of dams and reservoirs in the integrated river basin management
- b) the effect of the EU WFD after 20+ years of application on dams' conception, construction, operation, and rehabilitation

In terms of scope a', the analysis will focus on the dams' effect on

- Statistics of river impoundment reservoirs as well as of the downstream river reaches as regards their actual Ecological quality and characterisation, environmental objectives, and exceptions.

- Sediment management in terms of reservoir efficiency as well as of downstream ecosystem preservation.

In terms of scope b', the analysis will focus on

- Measures related to dams and reservoirs, proposed (in regional or national scale) to
 - o reach the environmental objectives set
 - o enhance climate change / drought resilience
 - o mitigate flood risks in the frame of the EU Floods Directive.
- Regulatory modifications introduced (regionally or nationally) to harmonize the operation of the reservoirs with the objectives of the WFD
 - o The progress of their implementation
 - o Their efficiency and lessons learnt.

In both analyses it is important to

- i) Give examples of selected cases
- ii) Discuss how different political, social, environmental conditions, public awareness, institutional preparedness, and regulatory issues affect both the policy adopted by the stakeholders and the results of the measures.

References and Sources

- EU WFD and Guideline Documents
- Reports on Progress of RBMP Program of Measures Implementation for EU MS and European IPA countries²
- Other documentation by non-MS and non-IPA countries³.
- EU Floods Directive
- Reports on Progress of FRMP Program of Measures Implementation for EU MS and IPA countries
- SEA Directive
- EUROSTAT initiative

² The new Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance III (https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/enlargement-region-european-commission-welcomes-final-adoption-eus-new-eu14-billion-pre-accession-2021-09-15_en) (IPA III) 2021-2027 is covering six Western Balkan countries WB6 (North Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo*), as well as Iceland and Turkey

(source : https://idscs.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/A5_IPA_3_Tilev.pdf)

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with [UNSCR 1244/99](#) and the [ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence](#).

³ ...The non-EU members of the European Club are invited to contribute with relevant documentation



Deliverables

- Annual report on survey of insight of reservoirs in the IRBM
- Benchmark on how different countries faced the implementation of regulatory measures for meeting WFD goals under IRBM approach. (to be updated regularly)

Cooperations and Affiliations to be sought

- ICOLD TC_G_Environment
- ICOLD TC_U_RBMngmnt
- ICOLD TC_Y_Climate Change
- ICOLD TC_J_Sedimentation
- Relevant National Committees of ICOLD European Club