

Global View on Sustainable River Basin Management and Biodiversity Conservation



International and Regional Conventions as a legal Background

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Introduction to the Part „International Background“

What are Conventions :

multilateral treaties, adopted by international bodies, e.g. United Nations, the European Council, or others

- **Best known : „Geneve Conventions“ , the core of international humanitarian law -> rules against barbarity of war**
- **have to be ratified in parliaments before entering into force**
- **legally binding when ratified**
- **approaches how to co-operate beyond state borders**



Introduction to the Part „International Background“

Global / regional Water-relevant Conventions and Strategies:

- **Convention on Biodiversity CBD (Rio 1992)**
- **Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, 1971)**
- **Danube River Protection Convention (Sofia 1994)**
- **UNECE Water Convention (Helsinki 1992)**
- **Bern Convention 1979 (European Wildlife and Habitats)**

1971: Convention on Wetlands: „Ramsar Convention“



Preamble:

Wetlands have fundamental ecological functions
+ regulators of water regimes
+ habitats supporting characteristic flora and fauna

Article 4:

Each Contracting Party shall promote the conservation of wetlands and waterfowl by establishing nature reserves on wetlands, whether they are included in the List or not, and provide adequately for their wardening

1971 : Convention on Wetlands: Ramsar Convention



The “Wise Use” Principle :

Wise Use = sustainable Use

= sustainable utilization of wetland resources in such a way as to benefit the human community while maintaining their potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations

1971 : Convention on Wetlands: Ramsar Convention



Article 5:

The Contracting Parties shall consult with each other

- * especially in the case of a wetland extending over the territories of more than one Contracting Party
- * or where a water system is shared by Contracting Parties.

Definition of „wetlands“ in the Convention Art. 1:

areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt,

(including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres.)



1971 : Convention on Wetlands: Ramsar Convention

Ramsar COP 7 (1999) Resolution VII.18

CPs shall give priority to the application of
“Guidelines for integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management”

Resolution VIII.14 and Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 8:
land uses in and around a wetland must be managed and planned to be consistent with wise use objectives for the wetland.

1971 : Convention on Wetlands: Ramsar Convention



Today : 158 Contracting Parties

Austria	1983
Croatia	1991
Hungary	1979
Italy	1977
Slovenia	1991

1979 : Bern Convention



Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

Council of Europe

aims are similar to EU “Habitats Directive” and EU “Birds Directive” (= Natura 2000)



1979 : Bern Convention (Council of Europe)

Article 4

ensure conservation of habitats of wild flora and fauna species, especially those s in Appendices I and II and conservation of endangered natural habitats

**relevant e.g. for “ Important Bird Areas” IBA
IBAs as part of the “Emerald Network”**

CPs planning and development policies shall have regard to the conservation requirements of the protected areas

1979 : Bern Convention



Today : 47 Contracting Parties

Austria	1983
Croatia	2000
Hungary	1989/1990
Italy	1982
Slovenia	1999/2000

1992 : Convention on Biodiversity (CBD)

Objectives:

conservation of biological diversity

sustainable use of its components

fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising
from ecosystems and resources

for the benefit of present and future generations

24/05/2007





1992 : Convention on Biodiversity (CBD)

April 2002 : **reduce biodiversity loss by 2010** at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth.

CBD COP 7 in Kuala Lumpur, 9 - 20 February 2004

Decision VII/4 “**Biological diversity of inland water ecosystems**”
+ work programme on inland waters

COP 8, Curitiba 2006: **Programme for Protected Areas (PoWPA)**

conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity will strengthen friendly relations among States and contribute to peace for humankind

1992 : Convention on Biodiversity (CBD)



Today : 191 Contracting Parties

Austria	1992/1994
Croatia	1992/1996
Hungary	1992/1994
Italy	1992/1994
Slovenia	1992/1996

1992 : UNECE „Helsinki“ Water Convention (Transboundary Watercourses and Lakes“)



Art. 2:

ensure that transboundary waters are used with the aim of ecologically sound and rational water management, conservation of water resources and environmental protection;

ensure conservation and, where necessary, restoration of ecosystems

develop harmonized policies, programmes and strategies covering the relevant catchment areas,

protection of the environment of transboundary waters or the environment influenced by such waters

1992 : UNECE „Helsinki“ Water Convention (Transboundary Watercourses and Lakes“)



Today : 36 Contracting Parties

Austria **1992/1996**

Croatia **1996**

Hungary **1992/1994**

Italy **1992/1996**

Slovenia **1999**

1994 : Danube River Protection Convention (Sofia)



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Art. 2 Objectives and Principles for Cooperation:

(1) The CPs shall cooperate...on fundamental water management issues and take all appropriate, legal and administrative measures to improve the current environmental and water quality conditions in the Danube and its tributaries.

(3) ...ensure the sustainable use of water resources ...as well as the conservation and restoration of ecosystems and to cover also other requirements occurring as to public health

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1994 : Danube River Protection Convention (Sofia)



Art. 2 (5)

Water management cooperation shall be orientated on *sustainable water management*,

**that means on the criteria
of stable, environmentally sound development,**

which are at the same time directed to :

- **maintain the overall quality of life**

1994 : Danube River Protection Convention (Sofia)



Art. 2 (5)

- **maintain the overall quality of life**
- **maintain continuing access to natural resources**
- **avoid lasting environmental damage, and**
- **protect ecosystems**
- **exercise a preventive approach**

1994 : Danube River Protection Convention (Sofia)



Today : 14 Contracting Parties

Austria **1994/1998**

Croatia **1994/1998**

Hungary **1994/1998**

Italy **1994/1998**

Slovenia **1994/1998**

2008 onwards : D R A V A R I V E R V I S I O N !



existing conventions give us the background





**Let us work together
for „Man and Biosphere“
and the Drava River !**

Thank you for your attention !