EU4ENVIRONMENT WATER AND DATA ACTION GROUP MEETING

22 June 2022

AGENDA

- Opening remarks by DG NEAR, Austria and France

- Short video presentation to introduce the new programme

- Presentation of the proposed Programme work packages and inception phase findings by Implementing Partners

- Feedback, questions and clarifications by EaP officials on the proposed Programme.

- Feedback from NGOs, EU funded projects and Development Cooperation Partners

- Next steps and closing remarks

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OPENING REMARKS

- **Diana Jabłońska**, Head of Unit Georgia, Moldova, Economic Investment Plan, DG NEAR, European Commission

- **Monika Mörth**, Managing Director, Environment Agency Austria, Austria

- **Eric Tardieu**, Director General, International Office for Water, France

- **Heinz Habertheuer**, Director of Department of Programmes and Projects International, Austrian Development Agency, Austria

PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME WORK PACKAGES AND INCEPTION PHASE FINDINGS BY IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

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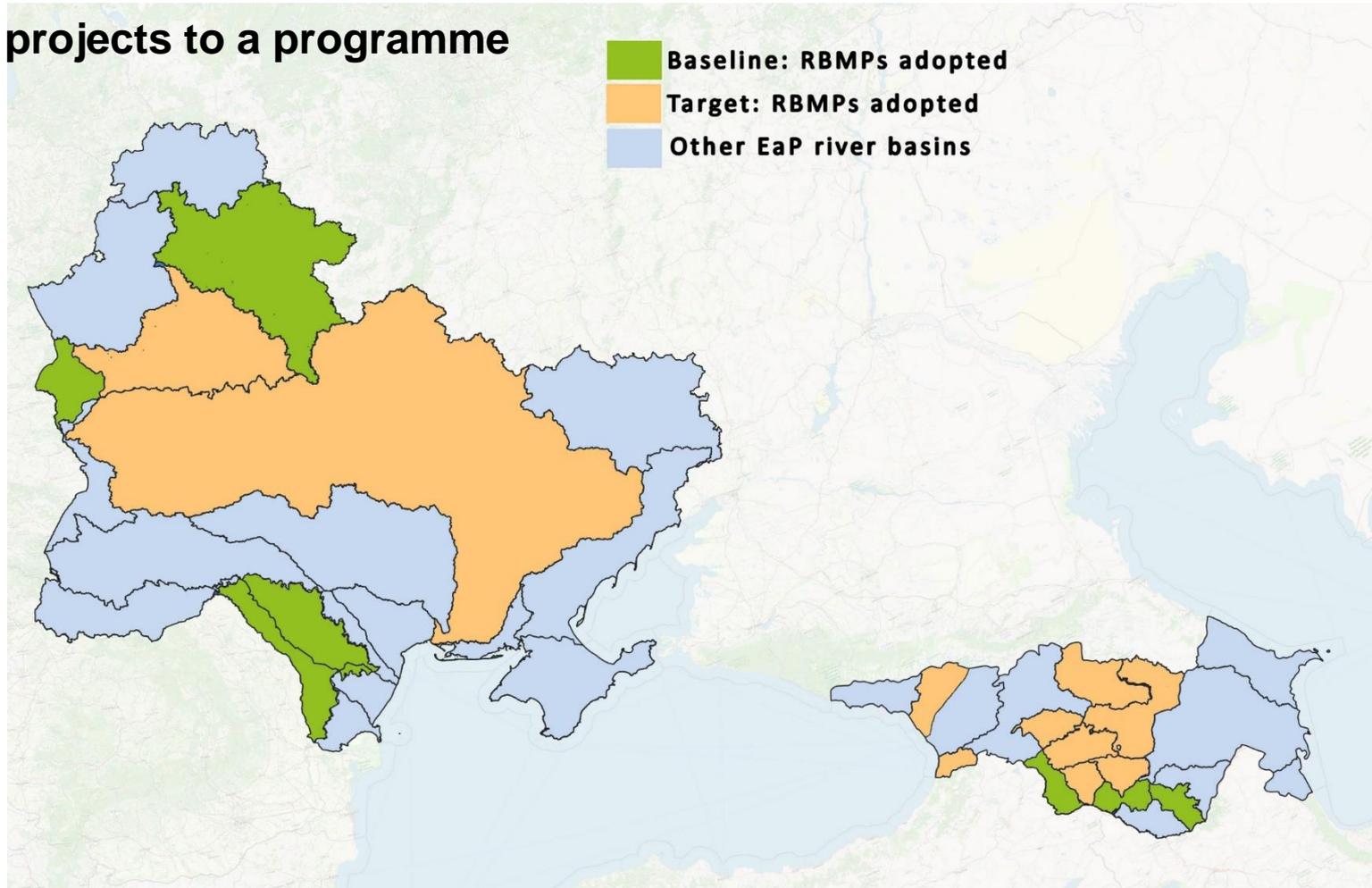# From projects to a programme

Baseline: RBMPs adopted
Target: RBMPs adopted
Other EaP river basins

Coherence of action towards strengthening water management and environmental data in EaP countries

EU4Environment
Water and Data in Eastern Partner Countries

Focus areas

- RBMPs
- Water monitoring
- Multistakeholder dialogue
- Water and health policies
- Transboundary cooperation
- Economic instruments
- Promotion of peer to peer exchange
- Education, training and development
- Water allocation
- Water accounting
- Data and indicators
- Communication and visibility
- Climate change adaptation

Desired outcomes

- Improved governance
- Political ownership
- Stakeholder engagement and awareness
- Regional resource management and security
- Capacity strengthened
- Policy coherence
- Increased confidence for finance mobilisation
- Increased resilience
- Healthy environment
- Improved decision making
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Sustainable development and growth

Output 1.1	The first cycle of river basin management planning in line with the EU WFD is extented
Agreed activities	• Strenghten ownership of River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) • Delineation of River Basin Districts (AZ) • Development of 2 new RBMPs (AM: Northern Basins, GE: Enguri-Rioni) and finalization of Dnipro RBMP (UA), ready for adoption • Measure implementation in Nirnova sub-basin (MD) • Adaptation and promotion of EUWI+ guidance documents use for RBMPs development • Promotion of Nature Based Solutions in the 5 countries: identification of local examples, production of a catalogue, dedicated communication, initiation of pilot actions, proposal of financing models

Output 1.2	Water strategies, policies and practices include climate-proofing measures
Agreed activities	• Organisation of a regional workshop on water allocation for adaptation to climate change • Production of a specific guidance document • Development of a sustainable water allocation plan for Qasakh sub-basin (AM)

Output 1.6	Water utilities, private sector and the general public are better involved in water management
Agreed activities	• Organisation of consultations involving stakeholders in the frame of the planning process (AM, GE, UA) • Extending works with universities through careers' events to motivate students towards water-related jobs • Support to implement Basin Councils (AM, AZ, GE) or to strenghten their activities in the long term (MD, UA) • Organisation of communication campaigns jointly with Ministry (AZ, MD) during consultations (AM, GE, UA) on qualitative and/or quantitative issues • Support to outreach events in the 5 countries (World Water Day, Danube Day, Dnipro Day or Sevan Day)

Output 1.4	Novel approaches to water monitoring are further promoted
Agreed activities	Refreshment of **monitoring competences** by new **surveys:** *groundwater, surface water* (chemical and biological), *coastal* (AZ, GE) and *investigative* Review of the existing **monitoring designs** Trainings: **interpretation** of monitoring data national methodology for **GW status** assessment **Transboundary** surveys on surface water (AM-GE; MD-UA?) and groundwater

Output 1.4	Novel approaches to water monitoring are further promoted
Agreed activities	**_Laboratory_**: Refreshment and completion of **trainings** on analytical equipment and methodologies, assistance in **adopting new methods** on analytical equipment; Further support for (re-)**accreditation** and **quality management** **_Introduction of COVID-19 wastewater monitoring_** Assessment with Ministries of Health resp. national health agencies Pilot **testing** with wastewater and health institutions Support and promotion of a **collaborative design** for a wastewater-based Covid-19 epidemiological sentinel surveillance system for **practical implementation**

Output 2.1	Water accounts are extended
Agreed activities	**Building capacity** on water accounts and water statistics with water and statistical authorities through seminars Support competent authorities in establishing/enhancing data exchange on **supply and use tables for physical flows** between environment and economy at national or river basin level (annual or seasonal) Establishing/enhancing **data validation processes and data gap filling** at national level Facilitating knowledge exchange on water accounts via national working group and **share experience** in a joint regional conference. International experience will be provided as appropriate.

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Output 1.3	The implementation of water for health agenda advances
Agreed activities	Promotion of the implementation of **water and health goals, with emphasis on COVID-19** challenges & international commitments: ➢ Assistance with revision of relevant policies in view of COVID-19 considerations (incl. implementation of national targets under the Protocol on Water and Health) ➢ Policy recommendations on how equitable access to water and sanitation can be improved & application of the PWH scorecard (GE, MD) ➢ Development of a roadmap for implementation of the Drinking Water Directive under CEPA (AM) ➢ Preparation of progress report on implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health for the period 2019-2021 (UA) Provision of **recommendations for post-pandemic recovery measures** related to sustainable water-management (with links to outputs 1.5 and 1.8) **Technical advice and capacity building** for implementation of policy recommendations **related to water & health**

Output 1.7	The national and international water governance and cooperation are further strengthened
Agreed activities	Regular **National Policy Dialogues** on IWRM
	Enhanced **transboundary water cooperation (**Khrami-Debed basin, Alazani groundwater aquifer, Prut and Dniester basins, Danube River**)**
	Regional workshop on monitoring & assessment in transboundary basins
	Further **elaboration of national legal frameworks** for IWRM & transboundary water cooperation:
	➢ Support for adoption of the Water Code Amendments, the Law on the National Water Policy and the Law on the National Water Program (AM)
	➢ Support for adoption and implementation of the updated National Water Strategy and National Action Plan (AZ)
	➢ Further elaboration of national legal frameworks on IWRM related to environmental quality standards and SEA (UA)
	Facilitation of the 3rd **reporting under SDG indicator** 6.5.2 on transboundary water cooperation in 2023-2024, **capacity building & experience exchange**

Output 1.5	The economic soundness of water strategies and policies is improved
Agreed activities	6 roadmaps for improving policy coherence across water management and assessing opportunities and barriers to development of economically and financially sustainable strategies and policies. Focus areas include: Armenia - reform of **water abstraction fees**, including application in hydropower sector, maximising impact of **polluter pays principle**, review of **irrigation service fees and subsidies** Azerbaijan – use of economic instruments to **incentivise water use efficiency**, including in agriculture, consideration of the opportunities for **differentiated tariffs** recognising regional scarcity of water Georgia - implementation of recommendations on the reform of **water abstraction fees** consider ongoing work on a **new irrigation tariff**, work on **changing tariff structures with a focus on affordability** Moldova - development of a methodology on **setting and revision of the water tax** Ukraine - opportunities for **reform of water tariffs and subsidies** to **support river basin management plan implementation and financing**, **strengthening the role** of River Basin Management Organisations and opportunities for **earmarking sector revenues** and the potential for a **revolving fund**.

Output 1.8	Priority measures are supported through finance mobilisation
Agreed activities	A roadmap to indicate barriers to and opportunities for improved mobilisation of finance from bilateral and multilateral institutions and consideration of domestic/private-sector finance. Roadmap will consider opportunities for funding of programmes of measures of RBMPs,possible role for and financing of nature-based solutions, and opportunities for embedding new technologies and innovative solutions to improve costing of schemes. Work on nature based solutions will look to leverage experience from the recent EU instrument for financing nature - Natural Capital Financing Facility (NCFF). Links to the OECD's Roundtable on Water Financing will be established.

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Output 2.2	Land and agriculture monitoring and data are improved
Agreed activities	Implementation of the standard **European CORINE Land Cover (CLC) project** for selected areas in Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan (20%), the Carpathians in Ukraine and whole Moldova, including mapping a status layer and a change layer. Support the search for donors to raise funds to cover the CLC program for the complete **mapping** of countries. Organising t**rainings** on data mapping and working with satellite images. **Helpdesk** to discuss setting up the CLC mapping project, use of the dedicated software tool, clarifying photointerpretation questions, etc. Support the country in preparation of a request to EC on the extension of **High-Resolution Layers (HRL)** In case of HRL extension, Implementation of a pilot project with a team of experts from the countries on the interpretation of HRL data.

Output 2.3	Air and waste management data and statistics are improved for policy-relevant use
Agreed activities	Analyse **waste data reporting and use** in relation to waste management policy needs - 2022 operational status check - capacity-building on waste reporting and waste statistics - progress by mid-2024 towards European and national requirements Further improving **air quality monitoring and data services** - check current development status and operational plans for air quality monitoring, laboratories and data management - capacity-building on established key issues - provide up-to-date air quality data to European Air Quality index / EEA - awareness raising in municipalities on fine particulate matter Further improving national **air pollutant emission inventories** - Accompany 2023/2024 inventory reporting - capacity-building on specific gaps - expert participation in international level-3 review (2023)

Output 2.4	Open data and citizens' participation in data collection and analysis are further operationalised
Agreed activities	Supporting technical measures of the roadmaps related to E-government and Open Data initiatives and environmental information management - Scheme summarizing action plan in conformity with technical measures of the road map (AM, AZ, GE, MD, UA) - Portal(s) used as entry point for access on water and env. data actualized (AM, AZ, GE, MD, UA) - New interoperability processes for access to data with support to update databases in some specific cases (AM, AZ, GE, MD, UA) - New water and env. datasets available online (AM, AZ, GE, MD, UA) - New metadata focusing on the description of the new datasets available online (AM, AZ, GE, MD, UA) - Questionnaire of the open data maturity report actualised with focus on water and environment open data (AM, AZ, GE, MD, UA) - New procedures for citizen feedback (AM + AZ)

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Output 2.5	International sharing of data and networking is maintained
Agreed activities	Review status and gaps of international reporting obligations - Baseline report 2022 - Capacity-building actions in improvement areas - Progress analysis 2024 Enhance co-operation with international partner institutions on environmental monitoring and assessment - Develop cooperation/integration model with EEA/Eionet - Support regular participation in UNECE WGEMA and JTFESI - Contribute to OECD Environment at a Glance platform (indicators) Support SEIS implementation and SDG monitoring in the EaP countries - Training activities on revised set of UNECE indicators - Support annual thematic SEIS reporting focuses selected by UNECE WGEMA („air" proposed for 2023) - Analyse and support SDG indicator reporting with priority on action focus themes (water, air, waste)

COMMUNICATION & VISIBILITY

	EU4Environment Water and Data outcomes are visible
Agreed activities	For Programme's beneficiaries, stakeholders and potential donors: - 1 **website** regularly updated with Programme's results and activities - 1 **FB page** regularly updated with Programme's results and activities - Products / events to deepen the comprehension of Programme's activities, main **concepts** of IWRM, EU WFD, environmental data - Products / events to highlight **results** relevant for EU, Ministries and IFIs. For the large public in the EaP countries: - **Awareness-raising campaigns** on water and air pollution (angles, and key messages tbd) for water users and citizens - **Career in water events** for students - Participation to **green dates** (2022,2023, 2024): World Water Day, river days (Danube, Dnipro, Sevan), EU Days, EU Green Week, World Environment Day, World Clean-Up Day -> in coordination with EaP Ministries, other EU-funded projects and EU Neighbours East

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COUNTRY FEEDBACK

- Armenia - **Ms Gayane Gabrielyan**, Deputy Minister of Environment

- Azerbaijan - **Mr Faig Mutallimov**, Head of Environmental Policy Division, MENR

- Georgia - **Ms. Maia Javakhishvili**, Deputy Head of Environment and Climate Change Department, MEPA

- Republic of Moldova - **Mr Radu Cazacu**, Deputy Director, Agency Apele Moldovei

- Ukraine - **Mr Ruslan Grechanyk**, First Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Nature Resources of Ukraine

FEEDBACK FROM NGO, EU FUNDED PROJECTS AND DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PARTNERS

- EaP Civil Society Forum (**Ruslan Havrilyuk**)
- EU4Environment – Towards a Green Economy (**Krzysztof Michalak**)
- EIB (**Marco Beroš**)
- AFD (**Raphaël Jozan**)
- Open Floor to include feedback from other participants and stakeholders

NEXT STEPS AND CLOSING REMARKS

- **Alexander Zinke**, Action Leader, Environment Agency Austria, Austria

- **Michaela Hauf**, Team Leader for Green and Connectivity, DG NEAR, European Commission

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