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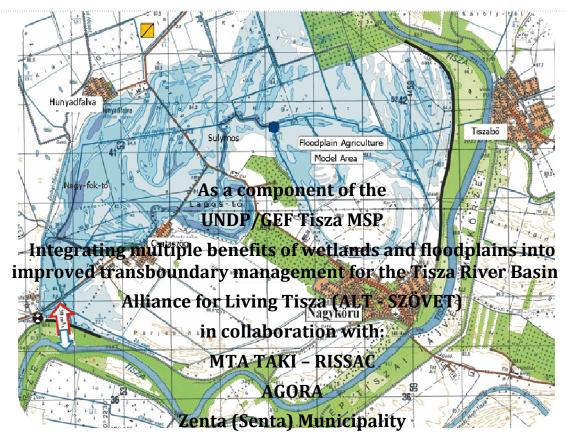
25 July, 2009



UNDP/GEF Integrated River Basin Management in the Tisza

INCEPTION REPORT-

INTEGRATED LAND DEVELOPMENT (ILD) PROGRAM
TO IMPROVE LAND USE AND WATER MANAGEMENT
EFFICIENCY IN THE TISZA BASIN



supported by:

KÖTI-KÖVIZIG, Szolnok, Hungary

Jászkisér Water Board, Hungary

Civil szervezet, Zenta, Szerbia

Gradevsinksi fakultet Subotica, Újvidék, Szerbia

Károlyi Gáspár Reformatic University, Budapest, Hungary

Integrated land development (ILD) program to improve land use and water management efficiency in the Tisza basin – SZÖVET, MTA TAKI, AGORA, Senta Municipality

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ACRONYMS

EU CAP: European Union Common Agricultural Policy

ILD: Integrated land development

GIS: geographical information system

GF: Gradeviski fakultet Subotica, Serbia

FARLAND: Future approaches in land development, Interreg IIIC project

HU: Hungary

LC: land consolidation LD: Land development

LU: land use

LUC: land use change

KÖZIKÖVIZIG: Central Tisza region Environemntal Protection and Water Management Directorate (Közép Tiszavidéki Környezetvédelmi és Vízügyi

Igazgatóság)

MARD: Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Development

MEW: Ministry for Environment and Water

N2000: Natura 2000 – EU nature protection program

NGO: Non-governmental organization

SH: stakeholder Ro: Romania RS: Serbia

TEV: total economic valuation

VTT – New Vásárhelyi Plan for integrated flood, rural development and nature development in Hungary

WFD: Water framework Directive

SZÖVET: The Alliance for the Living Tisza Association (ALT)

MTA TAKI: Research Institute for Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry

AGORA: AGORA – Working Group for Sustainable Development, Romania

Zenta: Zenta- Senta Municipality, Serbia





1 Project summary

The lessons learned from UNDP GEF Tisza Biodiversity (2005-2008) project highlighted the need for integrated land management – landscape planning, utilization programming, land consolidation, property management. To support higher-level policy objectives - such as sustainable water and river basin management, flood risk reduction, carbon sequestration, nature protection -, and harmonize it with local stockholder's short term (livelihood) and long term (improved life quality) goals require new approaches at different scales (EU, national, regional, village, farm and parcel level), taking into account the transboundary effects as well (nation to nation, region to region).

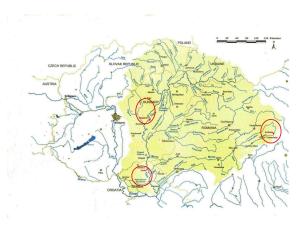
In our project the objectives and outputs are three folded:

- 1. to elaborate the institutional framework (legal and management situation, economic circumstances) related to ILD and provide useful recommendation on base of 5 Tisza country survey (based on the knowledge gained in Hungary structured questionnaire/survey is preformed at all demo sites, involving project partners);
- 2. to implement the ILD at Nagykörű village and its surrounding as a pilot to serve as a basis to develop further pilots at our partners' regions;
- 3. to disseminate the experience and the lessons of the implementation at our partners in Serbia and in Romania to define ILD projects. Further on to improve cooperation, understanding on different circumstances and develop common knowledge ground for large scale RBMP implementation are important tasks as well. Training materials will be available for all countries in the Tisza basin; local 'ILD *mediators*' to support bottom up land development processes are going to be trained (training of trainers), based on the applications at the pilot sites in the Tisza region.

These tasks will lead to an integrated land and water management protocol based on case studies to support efficient water and land management at areas with high risk (water stagnation, flood, flash flood, biodiversity loss).

2 Introduction

During the project inception phase (March-June) two large stakeholder meetings and many interim project team meetings took place. Due to large geographical distances (Budapest-Székelyudvarhely is 620 km, Budapest – Zenta is 280 km) the implementation



of one large SH workshop was cancelled, instead we have a series of Workshops, where the second was formally planned as an IWS, while the third already will discuss progresses made in Romania (21-22, October, 2009), but in all cases the involvement of wide range of local SHs has aimed to disseminate the project idea, and main methodological concepts.

Figure 1. Location of Pilot site and partners

Nagykörű Meeting 27-28, March 2009: The first meeting has been organized in Nagykörű, where all project partners from 3 countries and external local, regional Hungarian partners were invited. Additionally an internationally developed 'Floodplain management game' (IIASA/MTA TAKI/SZÖVET, NEWATER project) supported the development of common understanding of the project's challenges as well as served team-building purposes. The filed visit in Nagykörű region main aim was to list potential pilot areas and to present previous project results (such as Kubik-program, LIFE, 2004).

Zenta meeting 15-16, June, 2009: The second meeting was launched as Inception Workshop to have a core project team meeting as well as wider participant meeting, involving increased number of Serbian regional partners. The second day field visit of Zenta microregion took place.

At both meetings the main objectives were:

- Team building and increase understanding among core team;
- Detailed formulation and specification of project objectives and tasks;
- Overview of monitoring and reporting activities, modify the logframe matrix;

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- Discussion of budgetary issues and co-financing options;
- Get acquainted with pilot sites and understand landscape functionalities (land and water system; landscape infrastructures, management practices). (in case of Romania the field visit will be linked to a core team meeting in October, 2009)
- Develop the links to the project to the UNDP-GEF-ICPDR Tisza project.

In the followings the main outcomes of these meetings are summarized based on the IW documentation requirements provided by the donor organizations. Officially the Zenta meeting is the ILD project IW, where the delegation of UNDP and ICPDR could be presented.

3 Changes in project environment that may affect the project implementation

During the Inception phase several issues have emerged which can modify the project implementation. During the meetings and filed visits the geographical, land utilization practices found very different. These landscape conditions are already challenging, and enriched by socio –economic differences in the three countries. The main issue is the EU membership, however the Romanian partners highlights the implementation barriers of ongoing post-accession works (eg. land consolidation, nature protection).

In two countries parliamentary *election* next year will slow down the policy outreach work, besides we agreed to keep the project away from election processes.

Transparent decision making, 'quasi-democracy' (especially related to national assets like land, water, forest) is a problem in all countries of course with local differences discussed at IWS. Related to land management in case of HU the so called "pocket contracts", in case of Serbia the unfinished land consolidation are identified issues.

Public participation is not improved during the WFD implementation in 2009. Many problems and issues emerged and instead of increased trust and activity the participation profile even lowered.

Sectoral thinking and management is an important barrier to implement complex programs with multiple objectives, especially in Serbia.

Additional local environmental problems, such as illegal waste water discharge by companies, low profile of water distribution structures (channels), wetlands degradation are linked to out project aims at all pilot sites. During the project implementation we have to harmonize complexity with time and financial limitation of the ILD project.

The *investment orientation* (so called 'beton lobby') in the project planning turned out an issue everywhere, especially in water management in the Tisza (Csongrád case; Törökbecse water dam) since it could contribute to operation cost of the authorities and income opportunities for local companies and municipalities. Eco-management and small scale projects are not in the decision makers scope. This highlights the need of such projects like the ILD (and the UNDP/GEF project).

4 Project activities, methodology

The ILD project document was detailing the activities and methodologies, which mainly has been approved by IW and discussed at core team meetings. In the followings the final activities and proposed methodologies are listed (normal letters present activities for all sites, *italic* only Nagykörű site).

- 1. To perform foundational works on ILD at all pilot sites and other Tisza RB member states (filed and office survey, questionnaire; data assessment and interpretation by GIS, introducing results at Project team meetings and local SHs meetings)
 - a. evaluating recent land use, utilization changes and property rights; its legals basis
 - b. demonstrating alternative land utilization and LU (ILD necessities and potentialities)
 - c. participatory planning with land users to involve local land and water management
 - d. scheduling works for LUC (for implementation of ILD)
 - e. managing the implementation (setting lessons, arranging dissemination)
- 2. To complete ILD at selected pilot sites (arranging administration, setting parcels, improving conditions for pasturage eg. removing improper vegetation, confining invasive species, fencing)
 - a. arable land ∞ grazing forest
 - *b.* arable land ∞ floodplain lake
- 3. To adapt selected canals to serve ILD at sites
 - a. "soft" improvement: adapting working method of canals for water allocation
 - b. "hard" improvement:

- *i.* adapting morphological characteristics of canals to natural channels (slope and course correction as far as possible)
- ii. building lateral outlets to let out the water and collect the surplus volume (steering by sluices)
- 4. To change the land use on selected sites, adapting vegetation to elevation (arable land ∞wetland in former riverbeds)
 - a. "soft" improvement: administration of LUC, fitting parcels to elevation
 - b. "hard" improvement: morphological and biological implementation
 - i. some physical works to accentuate and actuate different elevations (improving inland-water steering)
 - ii. improving flora fit to elevations to promote evolution of the natural pattern (implementing green corridors)
- 5. To put improved ILD protocol into practice at other pilots (further project development)
 - a. evaluating the local land management and related landscape structures (identifying possible sites, projects)
 - b. defining the locally adaptive ILD for establishing LUC
 - c. co-design further projects at pilot sites
 - d. training of trainers for ILD methodology
 - e. informing the stakeholders about lessons learned, getting a local initiative under way

5 Changes in original project design

Based on the emerging challenges and discussing them at Zenta meeting the following changes are proposed in timing of the above listed tasks:

- perform legal review, summarize a policy paper and discuss it at each country /region higher level decision makers before December (originally we planed to wait for pilot results before having policy level roundtables)
- participatory planning will have higher importance due to the WFD –RBMP communication failures in Hungary, so the action will take longer and probably need more financing (Activity 2.2)
- ILD tool kit will have extra elements linking ILD to other environmental issues and will try to provide evidences on eco-engineering and small scale investments.

6 Refined Work Plan

Based on Chapter 5, there are only few modifications in our work plan.

Outcome 1: ILD Protocol based on Tisza catchments countries legislation and governance, decision making framework

The objective is reached by implementing the following actions:

- **Activity 1.1** Legal overview going to be performed in the 3 participating countries, general comparison will be written for all Tisza countries by applying a questionnaire. The planned steps are:
 - ➤ Define the assessment framework with the support of the Károly Róbert University, Faculty of Law and the involvement of national LD and LC experts from the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development and the National Collective Property Agency.
 - Debate the assessment results on the HU situation and provide a sample document for the other partners. Based on the results of the TALK and the FARLAND project a harmonized and suitable framework for assessment is going to be developed which helps to implement the survey by non-legal experts.
 - > Perform questionnaire for the assessment by partner organizations at pilot sites.

Activity 1.2 Analysis of legal constrains based on the pilot sites results.

- ➤ Discuss the difficulties with partners, identify further needs for involvement utilization of demonstration project network and the ICDPR expert network.
- ➤ At all partners workshop legal framework assessment to apply ILD will be discussed and participants will define general and country specific recommendations with involvement of land development expert (involving FAO SEUR LD expert)
- **Activity 1.3** Recommendation on good governance for sub-catchments, small landscapes in light of the proposed changes for water retention areas in the Tisza basin
 - ➤ Based on the result of the legal assessment as well as the results of the pilot implementation and the series of workshops recommendations on good governance are formulated.
 - ➤ Draft report is going to be circulated, commented among the partners and supervision bodies.
 - ➤ By finalizing recommendations a short policy paper and a longer report will be prepared.

Most important methods and tools applied: literature review and assessment, interviews, reporting, workshops

Output 2: ILD at selected sites implemented

- **Activity 2.1** The development of data and information system locally to support the ILD process, including socio-economic data on local business and ecological services.
 - ➤ Geographical data collection and integration into a GIS system, with special attention on soil quality, LU, elevation conditions and ecosystems (level of protection).
 - Socio-economic data collection on land utilization trends and related incomes, expectations of farmers (short survey) and risks of production.

➤ GIS system for the ILD process, with data in Nagykörű pilot is going to be established with the support of MTA TAKI.

Activity 2.2 Elaboration of different LU alternatives

- Apply participative land utilization planning, as a key processes on discussing land development alternatives for the selected sites based on the developed GIS system, calculated water balance and water system management options.
- Economic assessment and comparison of the alternatives based on the TEV and ecosystem service approach.
- > Summarizing the results in a matrix liking to selected indicators and build consensus on the pilot alternatives, and the ILD measures required.

Activity 2.3 Water management measures planned and verified by water-board (WB) and water directorate (WD) at selected sub-basins/sites.

- > Selection of the site for implementation involving affected farmers, water board and water directorate as well as relevant municipality
- ➤ At Nagykörű start implementation application of ILD measures selected.
- ➤ At other partners start detailed feasibility planning of future implementation, project proposal development.
- > Evaluation of measures effectiveness and procedures
- ➤ Summarizing the results evaluation of the process and the progress

Most important tools applied: field work, GIS development, land consolidation, engineering plans, participatory planning and landscape visioning, workshops, reporting, modelling of water balance

Output 3: Dissemination of ILD concept and results in the entire Tisza river basin and at UNDP-ICPDR level.

Activity 3.1 Trainings at location of implementation and at the partners locations

- Each partner will host 1 workshop, SZÖVET will host 2 workshops and 2 site trainings to share the knowledge gained and harmonize the conceptual framework.
- ➤ Participation at UNDP/GEF TRB project all partner meetings and Tisza expert group meetings.
- Training of trainers in the 3rd part of the demonstration project will take place to ensure the proper dissemination of methods applied and developed for ILD

Activity 3.2 ILD toolkit and CD-ROM development

- ➤ Based on the performed activities, study tours and international literature review the key modules of effective and efficient ILD is summarized.
- ➤ The sub-team of partners set up the frame of the toolkit and do editing of the collected results and documents.
- ➤ Draft version of toolkit is discussed at all-partner workshops and at the training of trainers.

Finalization of toolkit and CD with effective search function prepared.

Activity 3.3 Final Stakeholder Workshop to evaluate the process and to approve the recommendations.

Most important tools, methods applied: workshops, assessment of results, reporting and editing of reports, publishing works (editing, translation, etc.)

7 Updated monitoring indicators, baseline and target values, with refined logframe

During the project both qualitative and quantitative indicators are applied. The main criteria and indicators are listed in the Table below.

Table 1. Criteria system and identified indicators in the ILD project

Cluster	Criteria	I	Indicator	Method of		
		(bas	eline value / expected value)	assessment		
Environmental	Water retention capacity of landscape (in flood risk, in normal operation)	1.	% of m3 potential stored water at parcels (0/20%)	Field work, monitoring		
	Landscape-river connectivity, water steering structures	2.	parcel – channel connection (pc) (θ/I)	GIS assessments, DTM		
	Soil conditions and agricultural productivity Ecological value of habitats (Natura 2000) revitalisation capacity and water dependence (water stress-index) Duration and depth of water cover in spring	 4. 	class level of ecosystem services at modified landscape (based on Costanza methodology) (low/medium) ha of parcel under ILD (0/40)	Landscape development history assessment (from 18 th century) Small scale ecological surveys		
Social	Reduce risk and system vulnerability Empowered land utilisation, knowledge on floodplain management, ILD	5.	class level amount of area under water stagnation risk in Nagykörű (high/medium or low)	Social discussion, forums Trainings		
	Inhibit not sustainable land development strategies	6.	knowledge level on ILD (0/medium)	Survey on values, expectations, knowledge		
	Joined responsibility, management and ownership, improved local – micro regional network and lobby power Equity, transparency of system benefits	7. 8.	data and GIS system to support ILD (θ/I) legal review (θ/I)	Elaboration of alternatives of models, data and		
	Equity, transparency of system benefits		policy paper to support ILD implementation (based on	information gained from assessments		
			legal review) (0/1)	Networking with other pilots		
Economic	Lower the implementation cost of water	10.	cluster of cost of measures	TEV		
	steering and land management measures Lower the long term maintenance cost Maximised landscape production	11.	for water retention (high/medium or low) cluster of maintenance cost (high/medium)	Land use structure assessment ES assessment		
	Realised environmental service cost (subsidies, payments, support)	12.	,	СВА		

The logframe has been approved by IWS partners in the original form.

8 Financial management and co-financing

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The co-financing has slightly changed based on the discussions with partner organizations. The Farland + project has not been approved by EU, so the MTA TAKI inkind contribution will come on staff base. The WateRisk project will support modelling and assessment activities (socio-economic assessment methods). The Romanian and Serbian partners and their local SHs will contribute with substantial amount of work ours, approximately 100 ours each case.

Financial management is performed by SZÖVET secretary.

9 Planning, reporting and monitoring

Monitoring plan, including data collection for indicators

Planning, reporting, mid-term and final review

Plan of supervisory and coordination meetings

10 Project implementation arrangements:

Roles and responsibilities of project staff, project partners and key SHs

The project management has been discussed and the following management structure is developed:

Project management and supervision

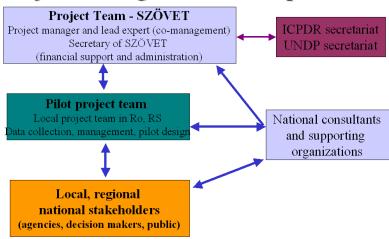


Figure 1.

Project team: The ALT - SZÖVET has the overall responsibility to implement the project. The secretariat of SZÖVET is responsible for administrative and financial issues. The project manager (Péter Balogh), who has a 6 ours employment is responsible for the overall management of the project. Since ALT - SZÖVET is a new organization established during the Tisza biodiversity project (UNDP-GEF-MEW, 2005-2008), management supported (both in technical and content issues) by MTA TAKI (which has a co-management role in the project through a lead expert).

Pilot project team: At Romanian and Serbian partner organizations 2 persons team are taking the overall responsibility in the project implementation, gaining support from their organizations.

Regular meetings for the core team are planned in combination with the ICPDR meeting and regular UNDP/GEF IRBM in the Tisza project meetings.

Field surveys and additional meetings are planned based on progress made in local negotiations, weather conditions and task harmonisation in Nagykörű, Bereg, Zenta and Székelyudvarhely.

Key stakeholders: Both at national, regional and local level key stakeholders have been identified and contacted in the preparation and in the inception phases. The most important key players were more closely involved, and these organizations have become

supporting organizations at all 3 sites (due to lack of funding – \$10000 brutto in Romania and Serbia) these organizations are working free of charge, their contribution is taken as in kind contribution). These organizations are:

- KÖTI-KÖVIZIG, Szolnok, Hungary
- Jászkisér Water Board, Hungary
- NGO, Zenta, Serbia
- Gradevsinksi fakultet Subotica- Újvidék, Serbia
- Károlyi Gáspár Reformatic University, Budapest, Hungary

They provide data and useful information; take part in consultation and trainings and support dissemination and conceptualisation activities during the project implementation. After the project finished these organizations would have an important role in follow up and implementing or incorporating ILD concept into their activities.

Besides at local level farmers and land owners are key players as well, in Nagykörű their representation at team meetings supported by an elected representative.

National consultants: The project implementation is supported by national consultants, in the field of water management, legal issues and international legislation on land and water issues. Consultation has planned with Central Statistical Agency and FÖMI National Remote Sensing Agency to collect information and data on land management costs.

Project supervisory and coordination structures

Project management and supervision has been designed and set up during the preparation phase. Péter Balogh has been employed by SZÖVET for field experiment and management tasks. The secretariat of the SZÖVET is responsible for financial and general administration (Krisztina Matúz is a person in charge). Dr. Nándor Veres, the mayor of Nagykörű and the president of the SZÖVET has an overall supervising role in the project. Péter Kajner and other members of the SZÖVET advisory council support the project implementation as well as supervision. On behalf of the MTA TAKI Zsuzsanna Flachner is a contact person, since she is member of the SZÖVET advisory council. Several colleagues are

involved from MTA TAKI, especially in case of field works from the Institute, but there are two researchers providing continuous support, dr.László Pásztor, GIS expert and dr. Zsófia Bakacsi, geologist and soil scientist.

The SZÖVET advisory council (members list: see www.elotiszaert.hu) is in charge for overall supervision, its meetings will have additional agenda point to review the activities performed in the ILD project (26th September, 2009 is the next meeting, and after every half a year.)

Coordination with GEF MSP umbrella project

According to the service contract the ILD team has several occasions to work together with other pilots and the MSP core team at ICPDR and UNDP.

The *Tisza Group meetings* provide excellent occasion to learn about the ongoing initiatives and negotiations at ICPDR level. It is important to understand the negotiation challenges as well as national priorities.

The commenting role during the project is an excellent opportunity to communicate some of the SZÖVET and ILD project ideas for member states and their experts.

Regional stakeholder meetings will be hold twice during the project lifetime. Key players from all partners are going to be invited to link the national level and local levels, as well as discuss important policy issues. Direct lobby activities and submitting short policy papers are options to utilize at these meetings presenting project ideas, results and problems.

Core team on-line contact with donor organizations and their experts will help the implementation and tackle both management and scientific issues.

Appendix: Final Budget table

Outrote and activities	Expenditure	Amount / quarter (USD)				TOTAL		
Outputs and activities	account	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	(USD)
Output 1								0
Activity 1.1 legal overview in Tisza basin countries	service contract personnal cost office supplies	6000	6500					12 500
Activity 1.2 Assessment	travel&workshop postal and communication cost			4000				4 000
Activity 1.3 governance protocol development	personnal cost service contract workshop&travel				1200	1450	2000	4650
Subtotal 1		6000	6500	4000	1200	1450	2000	21 150
Output 2								0
Activity 2.1 data and information collection, socio-economic assessment	personnal cost service contract workshop&travel	3200	2400	3500			1000	10100
Activity 2.2 participatory evaluation of alternatives	worskhop&travel communication printing cost		2500	2500				5000
Activity 2.3 ILD implementation	service contract personnal cost office supplies		6600	3500	16400	14500	6000	47 000
Subtotal 2		3200	11500	9500	16400	14500	7000	62 100
Output 3								0
Activity 3.1. trainings of trainers	travel &workshops service contract			4800			4100	8900
Activity 3.2. ILD toolkit +CD development	service cotract printing cost office supplies					4200	2100	6 300
A sticitus 2.2 Final consideration	service cotract travel, DSA communication hospitality						4500	0.000
Activity 3.3 Final workshop Subtotal 3		0	0	4800	0	4200	10700	6 000 19 700
Project management, monitoring and reporting		v	v	4000	U	4200	1000	1000
Project management and coordination	Project staff and experts	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	7200
participation at ICPDR meetings (3)	travel &workshops		200		200		200	600
WS /5-6 persons at 2 days workshops at different locations on behalf of the	travel &workshops		1000		1000		1000	
project/		4200	2.100	4200	0.100	4.000	0.100	3000
Subtotal PM		1200	2400	1200	2400	1200	3400	11 800
TOTAL		10400	20400	19500	20000	21350	23100	114750

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Expenditure accounts		Amount (USD)
Project Staff	Project staff and experts (external or those of partners) contracted on project substance	32000
Travel & workshops	Local, international travel tickets, fuel, DSA, meeting rooms etc.	14350
Service contracts	Contracts with companies on different types of services	31000
Materials / equipment	Purchase of equipment required to undertake demonstration project	5650
Communication	Mobile and land telephone charges, postage and courier	4550
Office supplies	Paper, cartridge	4200
Hospitality	Refreshment to participants on the meetings, workshops (if DSA not charged)	13500
Audit costs	Financial audit costs	1000
Printing costs	Printing, copying, translation	8500
TOTAL		114750