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Events

09.-10.08.2012

7. Steering Group meeting in Dresden, DE

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INFRASTRUKTUR & UMWELT,
Professor Böhm und Partner

Special Edition: Final conference

ELBE-LABE - Adaptation to flood risk in the Elbe river basin

ELBE-LABE - Anpassung an das Hochwasserrisiko im Elbeeinzugsgebiet

LABE-ELBE - Adaptace na povodňové riziko v povodí Labe

All in the same boat

10 years Transnational Cooperation in Flood Risk Management at the LABE-ELBE

On 21.-22.6.2012 the successful final conference of the project LABEL took place and was followed with great interest. Around 300 participants, among them several high-level political representatives from Germany, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and Austria came together in the chamber of the Saxon State Parliament to honour the results of the project and to discuss the future of the Elbe catchment.



The event was held under the patronage of **Dr. Matthias Röbner, President of the Saxon State Parliament**, who welcomed the participants of the conference in the Saxon State Parliament. He reminded of the floods in 2002, which also caused major damages to the Parliament's building. He appealed for that people need to review their attitude towards their environment.

The Saxon State Minister of the Interior,

Markus Ulbig emphasized that the cooperation with the neighbouring countries in the Elbe catchment has significantly improved in the past 10 years. The transnational projects ELLA and LABEL, originated by from the Saxon State Ministry of the Interior, have considerably contributed to this. Today, said Ulbig, the cooperation goes far beyond flood protection; it aims at a joint, secure development in the Elbe catchment.

The **Vice-Hejtman of the Central Bohemia Region, Miloš Petera** agreed. In his Region a comprehensive study on flood risk adapted development of water tourism was compiled and based on this, first specific investments are being prepared. He stressed the great importance of the cooperation in LABEL for his region. E.g. a flood protection concept was worked out which was included in the official planning documents of the Region.



Taking all into the same boat: Strategies for the Elbe catchment



LABEL is funded by the EU-INTERREG IVB Programme CENTRAL EUROPE – only with this support was the intensive cooperation of the participating organisations in LABEL possible.

The head of the Joint Technical Secretariat of the funding programme in Vienna, **Luca Ferrarese** presented the current debate and perspectives of transnational cooperation in CENTRAL EUROPE.



The orientation towards the Europe 2020 strategy will be of central importance. The strategy is aiming for intelligent, sustainable and integrative growth. Furthermore, a simplification of administrative structures should be reached in future transnational cooperation. The discussions are ongoing and concerning some issues there is still dissent, e.g. concentration on topics or contrarily more flexibility.

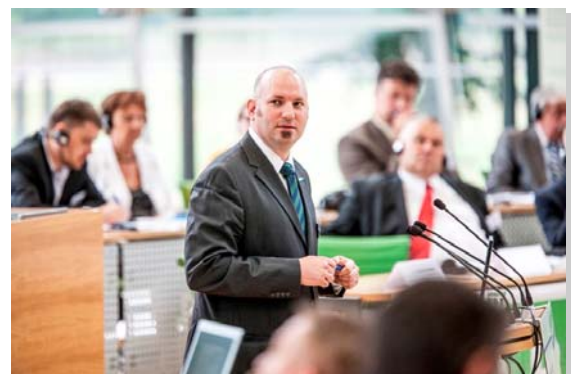


From the federal point of view, **Dr. Katharina Erdmenger** from the Federal Ministry for Transport, Building and Urban Development described the discussion around the new funding period as well as the significance of the Elbe catchment and LABEL as flagship project. The Federal Ministry for Transport, Building and Urban Development has also funded LABEL with all together 125.000 Euro from the Federal Programme "Transnational Cooperation".



Andreas Köhl from the Saxon State Ministry of the Interior presented the project LABEL and several main results acting for the Lead Partner of the project. In LABEL a strong and enduring network was established between the participating organisations and people but also between different cooperation projects. A compilation of all results and recommendations of the project can be found in the strategy LABLE-ELBE 2012plus, which was finalized for the conference. This overview encourages all experts and decision makers to use the results of the project to

- support a risk adapted and sustainable development in the Elbe catchment area,
- deepen the joint approaches in flood risk management in a continuing exchange,
- keep the risk awareness of the population high with regular meetings and events.



Risk prevention for upstream and downstream riparian on the Elbe and Danube

Flood risk prevention is a central topic of the project LABEL. Not only upstream and downstream riparians at the Elbe worked together, experiences were also exchanged with the Tisza and Danube catchment.



Prof. Hans Moser from the Federal Institute for Hydrology presented the results of large scale simulations calculated together with the Czech Masaryk Institute in the project LABEL.

These show that flood retention areas at the Vltava, Ohře and Saale can have a significant effect on flood protection of regions along the whole German Elbe. Flood reductions of up to one meter at the gauge Usti nad Labem and 33 cm at the gauge Wittenberg are possible. During the flood, the downstream regions at the upper and middle Elbe significantly profit from the water retention at the barrages upstream in the Czech Republic and Thuringia



The analysis has also shown that there is no definite basis for the long-term flood statistic at the Elbe in Germany. It is therefore recommended to revise the statistical basis for the 2nd cycle of the implementation of the flood risk management directive (from 2016 on).

Under the title „Responsibility of upstream riparian – Preventive flood protection measures in the Czech Republic“, **Josef Reidinger** from the Czech Ministry for the Environment, presented the work in the field of flood prevention. Despite the structural measures, several non-structural measures, like flood portals, are being also implemented. Cooperation within the International Commission for the Protection of the Elbe (ICPE) and also in projects like LABEL are furthermore an important component of the Czech flood risk management.

The status on the implementation of the flood risk management directive in Austria was presented by **Dr. Clemens**

Neuhold from the Austrian Lebensministerium.

The special challenge in the Danube catchment is mainly the international coordination, due to the numerous riparian states: The INTERREG IVB project DanubeFloodrisk has brought them together and aims at a knowledge transfer as well as a harmonisation of approaches and data. The result amongst others will be a Danube-Atlas, which provides risk maps catchment-wide analogous to the Elbe Atlas worked out in the project ELLA. The coordination within the Danube catchment is organised by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube (ICPD).

Attila Lovas, head of the Middle-Tisza Water directorate in Hungary reported from on the challenges at the river Tisza, which is situated in the Danube catchment and has similar dimensions as the Elbe catchment. After the disastrous floods at the Tisza in 2000, an action plan was worked out, which proposes huge investments in flood retention: a dike reallocation and two polders with together almost 200 Mio. m³ retention volume were already finalised. Further polders with more than 500 Mio. m³ retention volume are currently under construction or in planning.

In LABEL, simulations of dike breaks of three different polders were calculated as well as flood risk maps prepared. Furthermore, the exchange with the German and Czech colleagues regarding the implementation of the flood risk management directive was focussed.

“International cooperation is essential for joint action because everyone profits – upstream and downstream” - with these words Attila Lovas concluded the block risk prevention for upstream and downstream riparian.



Elbe 2002 to 2012 – We have learned a lot

Ulrich Kraus, Saxon State Ministry for Environment and Agriculture presented the lessons-learned in Saxony from 2002: a reconstruction 1:1 wasn't and is not made possible. A river catchment-wide cooperation is furthermore necessary for an effective flood protection, said Kraus. After 2002 Saxony promoted a targeted expansion of public flood protection: prevention and natural flood retention, intensification of water body maintenance and technical flood protection. A further insight was, that an absolute flood protection is not possible; private risk provision on the contrary should be a major goal for everybody. Additionally, warning and alarm systems as well as strategies on flood control were improved ever since.



The **Elbe floods in 2002 and 2006** from the perspective of emergency management were illuminated by **Karsten Neumann, County Sächsische Schweiz-Osterzgebirge** and **Jaroslav Pikal, Usti Region**. The extreme flood 2002 caused basically two major damage areas for the emergency management: on the one hand, massive devastations resulted from flooding of the rivers in the low mountain area. On the other hand, a quickly increasing water level at the Elbe caused wide-spread flooding. The flood of 2006 on the contrary was characterized by slowly rising water levels due to snow melt and strong rainfall.



The experiences showed, that every flood is different, a pre-defined resource planning and qualified personnel are therefore necessary. Despite improved technical structures, information systems, internet platforms as well as alarm and resource planning, especially the contacts with the colleagues across the border were improved. The warning systems have to be further enhanced in the future, especially in regard to sudden and flash floods. The existing structures and information systems have to be developed further transnationally, as big catastrophes can only be dealt with jointly.

The **summer flood 2010 in the catchment area of the river Neisse** was commented on by **Bernd Lange, chief administrative officer of Görlitz County** and **Aleksander Marek Skorupa, Voivod of Lower Silesia**. The cause of the flood was at first heavy rainfall in Northern Czech Republic and South-West Poland; the situation was deteriorating through the breaking of the barrage Niedów at the river Witka. The event has shown, that the information flow happened too slowly and only with many detours. Since then, the neighbouring regions have first achievements to present: the German-Polish cooperation on a regional level was improved; amongst others a cooperation agreement for mutual assistance in case of emergencies was signed.



On national level there are still tasks to fulfil, attested both speakers. Moreover, the information paths and systems have to be improved further in future, not only bilaterally but also between the three states Poland, Czech Republic and Germany. Likewise, the mobile networks in the borderland have to be expanded, so they can be used in emergencies.

Emergency preparedness and response from a local point of view

From a municipal point of view, the emergency management is also better set-up than it was during the last great flood events, certified **Uwe Restetzki** from the Görlitz municipal fire brigade and **Dr. Steffen Laub**, mayor of Olbernhau. The municipalities have invested since 2002: they have not only improved technical protection sites and equipment but also increased staff numbers and their know-how. Furthermore, need for improvement is still given regarding coordination and communication between administrative levels and beyond borders.



Looking towards to the future: LABE-ELBE 2012plus

In a joint presentation of selected LABEL results an overview was provided about the conducted activities, the compiled studies and concepts, and also about the practical cooperation in the project. Regarding the following topics, several project partners had their say and presented their results as well as the localisation of the activities:

- Flood maps, Elbe Atlas, risk management
- Development potentials, risk adapted planning
- Increase of flood risk awareness
- Transnational cooperation / network

All results of the project can be found on the LABEL webpage. Furthermore, all activities were put together in the brochure LABE-ELBE 2012plus. The brochure can also be downloaded from the Website.



Political forum



The **Prime Minister of the Free State of Saxony, Stanislaw Tillich** opened the Political Forum of the conference and announced, that Saxony wanted to invest all together one billion Euro in 315 flood protection measures until 2020, whereof more than 520 billion investments were already realized.

He called upon the authorities and municipalities to be resolute and consequent regarding the building permits, in order to stop the trend of increasing flood damages. Also the individual responsibility had to be encouraged. Furthermore, Prime Minister Tillich forcefully pointed out, that there needs to be more awareness and acceptance for flood protection in the public, even if a long time has passed since the last flood event.

The **Voivod of Lower Silesia, Aleksander Marek Skorupa** stressed the importance of the international cooperation at risk prevention in order to protect the security of the people living in the region. Thanks to the good cooperation with Germany and the Czech Republic, said Skorupa, the impacts of the flood in 2010 could be minimized in the three countries. The cooperation though needs to be enhanced, to create even better forecast systems and to optimize mutual support.



The **Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Transport, Building and Urban Development, Jan Mücke** gave perspectives for the flood risk management of the future: "Further cooperation for the improvement of flood prevention is part of the priorities in spatial development policy". The Ministry will support projects like LABEL with the Federal programme "Transnational cooperation" also in the upcoming years, said Jan Mücke. The project LABEL was a good example for how valuable Europe is for us.

Also **Libor Ježek, Deputy Minister and State Secretary in the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic**, explicitly praised the good cooperation with the neighbouring states Germany and Poland. He nevertheless also referred to the challenges of the future: these include a continuing exchange in the field of flood risk management, better forecasts and the set-up of new flood retention areas.



The project received compliments for the expert results, but also for the successful international cooperation from **Dr. Wolfgang Streitenberger, advisor to the General Director of the Directorate-General for Regional Policy of the EU Commission**. "Risk prevention has a truly European dimension promoting integration", said Streitenberger. Risk prevention also plays an important role in European territorial cooperation (ETC). In the upcoming funding period, the budget will be heightened with almost 50% to 11.7 billion Euros.



Mastering flood risks - 10 years after the Elbe flood



„10 years after the Elbe flood we have reached a lot“, said **Frank Kupfer, Saxon State Minister for Environment and Agriculture**. This is valid for within Saxony but also for the cooperation with the Czech Republic, Poland and the neighbouring German States. E.g. the flood centres and water management authorities closely and efficiently work together. The work of the International Commission for the Protection of the Elbe or Oder but also the project work has significantly improved the cooperation between the authorities in charge. The State Minister Kupfer has honourably mentioned the good cooperation between the Polish neighbours during the aftermath of the Neisse flood 2010 and the removal of damages. E.g. at the moment German and Polish experts discuss plans for the reconstruction of the Niedów barrage at the River Witka. Furthermore, the removal of unused bridges over the Neisse is coordinated with the Polish neighbouring cities and regions.

Successful transnational cooperation is always also due to many committed persons on both sides of the borders, said Kupfer. Despite the content work, e.g. the creation of flood risk management plans and natural flood prevention, the alliance between state level and municipalities has to be further improved. Herewith it should be achieved, that the protection measures should be better accepted in the public and property owners should be sensitised for private risk provision.

Awards ceremony for the media contest on flood protection „All in the flow?“



Prof. Thomas Köhler from the Media center of the Technical University Dresden presented the media competition held by the Saxon State Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Geology and which was supported by the project LABEL. The best works in the categories poster, movie and creative were introduced:

- 1st place in the category poster: Sabrina Hamberger and Gregor Sams
- 1st place in the category movie: Frauke Rahr and Tim Kurth
- 1st place in the category creative: Anne and Julia Schaffhirt with their song "Is Everything Already Under Water?" which they wrote and sang themselves.

Frank Kupfer, Minister of Saxon State Ministry for Environment and Agriculture gave the winners Frauke Rahr, Tim Kurth, Anne and Julia Schaffhirt their certificate which entitled them to the prize money.

The winning contributions can be seen and heard on the LABEL website:
www.label-eu.eu/results0/further-topics/media-contest-on-flood-protection.html

10 years of transnational cooperation – results and wishes for future policies



Andreas Kühl from the Saxon State Ministry of the Interior and Helena Skalová from the Ministry for Environment of the Czech Republic jointly presented the key messages of the project LABEL acting for all project partners of the project:

- **Taking everyone into the same boat!** Sustainable flood risk management requires cooperation between all stakeholders from , for example: water resource management, rural planning, nature conservation, agriculture and local economy.
- **Reduce the risks locally!** Whether risks are taken into consideration in planning processes is largely decided at municipal level. Therefore, a close cooperation between the international level and the local authorities is decisive.
- **Solidarity!** Many flood protection and retention measures do not only have a local impact. Therefore, one should take the whole river basin into consideration when planning measures and coordinate all activities upstream and downstream.

- **Learn from each other!** Through regular exchange across regions, we can pass on information and experiences and learn from each other. The goal should be to establish an exchange between all bordering river basins.
- **Stay aware!** After a flooding event, the level of risk awareness among the people diminishes steadily over time. Only with continuous information-sharing and the update of risk awareness will everything remain prepared.
- **Follow up the success!** The regions in the Elbe catchment have grown close after nearly 10 years intensive collaboration. In the future, the collected experiences and knowledge in LABEL should be further promoted and expanded!

In the subsequent **panel discussion** with Frank Kupfer, Saxon State Minister for Environment and Agriculture, Dr. Wolfgang Streitenberger, Adviser to the General Director of the Directorate-General for Regional Policy of the EU Commission and Josef Reidinger, Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, the recommendations from the project were taken up and discussed.

The participants underlined firstly the assets of European cooperation projects, which provide possibilities for cooperation independent from difficult budget situations in the regions. E.g. pilot projects can test approaches in the different regions and hence gain important insights even for other regions. A cooperation project provides the ideal platform for the improvement of risk awareness as well as for the establishment of transnational, but also trans-sectoral networks.

Even wishes for the future policies were named: at first, it is important to continue working on the upcoming tasks of flood risk management. In the long-term, also new problems in the context of climate change should not be disregarded, e.g. increased number of flash floods and low water events. Moreover, the participants hope for a simplification of the administration of projects.





THURSDAY, 21.06.2012

- 9:00 **Opening and welcome**
Dr. Matthias Rößler, President of the Saxon State Parliament (DE)
Introduction: Ten years later – Cooperation at many levels
Markus Ulbig, Saxon State Minister of the Interior (DE)
Good neighborhood in practice – upstream and downstream residents
Miloš Petera, Vice-Hejtman of the Central Bohemia Region (CZ)
- Taking everyone into the same boat: Strategies for the Elbe catchment area**
- 9:30 **Current debate and perspectives of transnational cooperation in CENTRAL EUROPE**
Luca Ferrarese, Joint Technical Secretariat CENTRAL EUROPE Programme (EU)
Political cooperation for spatial development in the Elbe region from a Federal view
Dr. Katharina Erdmenger, Federal Ministry for Transport, Building and Urban Development (DE)
Adaptation to flood risks in the Elbe catchment – The LABEL Project
Andreas Kühn, Saxon State Ministry of the Interior (DE)
- Risk prevention for upstream and downstream riparian on the Elbe and Danube**
- 11:00 **Effects of technical flood retention measures on the upper reaches of the Elbe**
Prof. Dr. Hans Moser, Federal Institute for Hydrology (DE)
Responsibility of upstream riparian – Preventive flood protection measures in the Czech Republic
Josef Reidinger, Ministry of the Environment (CZ)
International cooperation in the Danube catchment – Comparison with the Elbe
Dr. Clemens Neuhold, Federal Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management (AT)
Learning from the Elbe? Challenges on the Tisza
Attila Lovas, Middle Tisza Water directorate (HU)
- Elbe 2002 to 2012 – We have learned a lot**
- 13:30 **Lessons-learned from 2002 – Experiences and measures**
Ulrich Kraus, Saxon State Ministry for the Environment and Agriculture (DE)
Elbe flood in 2002 and 2006 in terms of emergency management
Karsten Neumann, County Sächsische Schweiz-Osterzgebirge (DE)
Jaroslav Pikal, Usti Region (CZ)
Summer flood of 2010 in the Lausitzer Neisse catchment
Bernd Lange, chief administrative officer of the Görlitz County (DE)
Aleksander Marek Skorupa, Voivod of Lower Silesia (PL)
DISCUSSION Emergency preparedness and response from a local point of view with:
Uwe Restetzki, Görlitz municipal fire brigade (DE)
Dr. Steffen Laub, Mayor of the City of Olbernhau (DE)
- Looking towards the future: LABE-ELBE 2012plus**
- 15:45 **All in the same boat: Knowing the risks – adapt!**
Results from the LABEL Project
Joint presentation by the LABEL partners / discussion

PROGRAMME



FRIDAY, 22.06.2012

Political forum

9:00

Opening and welcome

Stanislaw Tillich, Prime Minister of the Free State of Saxony (DE)

Perspectives: Flood risk management for the future

Libor Ježek, Deputy Minister, State Secretary, Ministry of Environment (CZ)

Jan Mücke, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Transport, Building and Urban Development (DE)

Dr. Wolfgang Streitenberger, Adviser to the General Director
of the Directorate-General for Regional Policy, EU Commission (EU)

10 years of transnational cooperation – results and wishes for future policies

10:00

Mastering flood risks - 10 years after the Elbe flood

Frank Kupfer, Sächsischer Staatsminister für Umwelt und Landwirtschaft (DE)

Awards ceremony for the media contest on flood protection"

11:00

Wishes for future policies: the LABEL messages

Andreas Kühl, Saxon State Ministry of the Interior (DE)

Helena Skalová, Ministry of the Environment (CZ)

PANEL DISCUSSION

All in the same boat - What can we improve in the future?

Frank Kupfer, Saxon State Minister for Environment and Agriculture (DE)

Dr. Wolfgang Streitenberger, Adviser to the General Director of the Directorate-General for Regional Policy,
EU Commission (EU)

Josef Reidinger, Ministry of the Environment (CZ)

12:30

End of the conference

Moderation of the conference:

Robert Burdy, Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk (mdr)





Optional programs to the Conference

Three **excursions** were followed with great interest by many participants:

- Albertinum – Ark for the Art: installed after the flood 2002, the flood protected storage area for not exhibited artwork, the "Ark for the Art", was shown to the participants by the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Dresden State Art Collections).
- Gläserne Manufaktur (The transparent factory): The unique production site of the VW Phaeton, located in an open, transparent building, was visited.
- City tour: Flood protection sites of the Dresden old town. Starting from the Flood nature trail around the old town, some interesting flood protection sites were presented, which were expanded and renewed since the 2002 flood.

At a subsequent **dinner reception** in the Saxon State Chancellery all participants came together again and could socialize further, foster their network and intensify discussions.



LABEL at a glance

Lead Partner:

Saxon State Ministry of the Interior

Duration:

09/2008 – 08/2012

Total budget:

4.215.680 €

thereof:

EFRE (EU-funding):
3.317.246 €

National co-financing:
898.434 €

www.label-eu.eu

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LABEL Partnership

