



One River, Two Countries. Shared Commitment for Millions of People.

Advancing transboundary co-operation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Dniester River Basin through implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP)

Turning the Strategic Action Programme (2021-2035) into Action

Project objective

The project aims to advance Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in the Dniester River Basin, shared by the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, and to contribute to sustainable development by supporting the implementation of the priority actions identified in the Strategic Action Programme ([joint-statement-signed-4-languages-SAP_Eng.pdf](#)).

Geographical coverage: Republic of Moldova (including Transdnistria) and Ukraine

Duration: 2025-2029

Project Budget: USD 6 000 000

Donor: Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Implementing Agency: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Executing Agency: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Partner: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

4-year project

turning the Dniester SAP into results and impact

- **Enhanced co-operation:** support joint governance via the **Dniester River Basin Commission**
- **Stronger frameworks:** improve governance, legal and regulatory capacity to implement SAP commitments, ensuring alignment with applicable international and regional frameworks (e.g. EU Water Framework Directive, UN Water Convention, etc.)
- **Healthier river:** targeted measures to improve **ecological status** and reduce key anthropogenic pressures
- **Climate readiness:** advance **climate change adaptation** and increased **resilience** to naturally induced disasters
- **Inclusive participation:** promote **public awareness, stakeholder engagement and transparent information-sharing**
- **Evidence-based decisions:** strengthen **applied research, monitoring and data exchange** for governance

Gender mainstreaming (cross-cutting priority)

Integrated across all project components to promote equitable participation, inclusive benefits and gender-responsive water governance.

Dniester River Basin

Key Facts

- 9th largest river in Europe
- Part of the Black Sea basin

Basin significance

- Largest river basin in the Republic of Moldova (≈57% of national territory)
- 4th largest river basin in Ukraine (≈8.9% of national territory)

River length

- Total: ~1,350 km
 - ~425 km in the Republic of Moldova
 - ~925 km in Ukraine

Basin area

- 72,000+ km²

People and economies

- More than 8 million people depend on the Dniester River basin, including about 2.7 million people in the Republic of Moldova and 5 million people in Ukraine.
- The Dniester provides drinking water to **over 80% of Moldova's population**, including Chişinău (~2.4 million people).
- In Ukraine, **Odesa (~1 million people)** relies on the Dniester as a primary drinking water source.

Environmental value

- High-value freshwater and wetland ecosystems, floodplains and biodiversity hotspots.
- The Lower Dniester wetlands provide ecosystem services, such as water purification, fisheries and tourism, valued at **~€39.2 million per year**, benefiting both Moldova and Ukraine (€10.2M in Moldova and €29M in Ukraine).

- Fish migration routes and ecosystem functions depend on flow and connectivity.
- Lower Dniester wetlands are among the most ecologically significant areas in the region.

Ecosystem services include: natural flood regulation, water purification and climate resilience.

How the project delivers results

The project is implemented through **six interlinked components**, aligned with the key directions as outlined in the Strategic Action Programme.

Project components

Component 1: Strengthening Moldovan–Ukrainian co-operation in water resources management

- Support to transboundary co-operation and joint governance mechanisms
- Enhancing the capacity of the Dniester River Basin Commission and its Working Groups

Component 2: Strengthening regulatory frameworks and national capacities

- Strengthening regulatory frameworks and institutional capacities for SAP implementation

Capacity building to support implementation of the UN Water Convention and the EU Water Framework Directive (EU WFD)

Component 3: Improving ecological status of the Dniester River Basin

- Reducing anthropogenic pressures identified in the SAP
- Addressing pollution and hydromorphological impacts affecting water bodies and ecosystems

Component 4: Climate change adaptation and disaster preparedness and resilience

- Increasing preparedness for floods and droughts
- Supporting climate-resilient water management approaches

Component 5: Public awareness, participation and outreach

- Empowering stakeholders through inclusive public consultations
- Project communications, outreach and support to stakeholder engagement

Component 6: Enhancing research and data for governance

- Strengthening monitoring, data exchange and research
- Supporting evidence-based decision-making in line with SAP priorities

Gender considerations are mainstreamed across all project components and activities, ensuring that project interventions are designed and implemented in a gender-responsive manner and contribute to inclusive and equitable outcomes.

Expected Results by 2029

By the end of the project, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine are expected to achieve the following results:

- **Stronger transboundary co-operation and governance**, with enhanced political commitment and improved functioning of the Dniester River Basin Commission and its Working Groups, supporting effective implementation of the Dniester Treaty and the Strategic Action Programme (SAP).
- **Improved legal, institutional and regulatory frameworks** aligned with the EU Water Framework Directive and observing countries commitments under the UN Water Convention strengthening national capacities to implement SAP commitments.

- **Improved ecological status of the Dniester River Basin**, supported by targeted, replicable measures that reduce priority pollution, hydromorphological pressures and other key environmental impacts.
- **Enhanced climate change adaptation and disaster preparedness**, increasing resilience to floods, droughts and other climate-related risks through coordinated, basin-wide approaches.
- **Better informed, empowered and engaged stakeholders**, with strengthened participation of authorities, experts and the public in water management and transboundary co-operation processes.
- **A stronger joint knowledge base**, underpinned by applied research, improved monitoring and data exchange to support evidence-based decision-making across the basin.

Governance and Co-operation

The **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe** is the world's largest regional security organization, with **57 participating States** and a comprehensive approach to security that includes environmental and economic considerations.

Since 2004, OSCE support has helped build sustained transboundary co-operation in the basin. The bilateral Dniester Treaty provides the legal basis for joint management, and the Dniester River Basin Commission serves as the main institutional platform for cooperation on the joint management of the Dniester River Basin between the riparian countries. The Strategic Action Programme for the Dniester River Basin 2021 -2035 (SAP) ([joint-statement-signed-4-languages-SAP_Eng.pdf](#)) is the first long-term, jointly endorsed basin-wide action plan, aligning national policies with international and EU standards.

Contributing to:



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GEF/UNDP/OSCE Project

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