

Project Information Document (PID)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 2- April-2020 | Report No: XXXX

BASIC INFORMATION

Basic Project Data

Country Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Serbia	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any) P168862	Project Name Sava and Drina Rivers Corridors Integrated Development Program
Region Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Estimated Appraisal Date XXXX, 2020	Estimated Board Date XXXX, 2021	Practice Area (Lead) Water
Financing Instrument Multiphase Programmatic Approach	Borrower(s) Republic of Serbia Bosnia and Herzegovina Montenegro	Implementing Agency International Sava River Basin Commission	GEF Focal Area International Waters- focal area

OPS

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Objective of Project (Phase I of the Program) is to improve flood protection and enhance transboundary water cooperation in the Sava and Drina Rivers Corridors.

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	8.00
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DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)	0.00
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Non-World Bank Group Financing

Trust Funds	8.00
Global Environment Facility - IBRD as Implementing Agency	8.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification
High

Concept Review Decision

A. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **The Sava and Drina rivers form a natural connecting backbone for the region.** A pivotal feature of the Western Balkans region is the Sava River Basin, one of Europe’s largest transboundary basins. It covers over one third of the Western Balkans in area and population, and physically connects the five riparian countries through inland waterways. The Sava river is the basin’s mainstay. It is navigable between Serbia, BiH, and Croatia (from which it continues upstream into Slovenia) and is connected at its mouth to the Danube river (of which it is one of the largest tributaries), thus linking these countries to Danube riparian markets and to international markets via the Black Sea. The Drina river is the Sava’s largest tributary, draining over a 20,000 km² mountainous area, half the size of Switzerland. The economy and jobs in the region depend heavily on these shared water resources, whether to transport goods, generate energy, grow food and fibers, sustain biodiversity, or provide for leisure and eco-tourism activities.

2. **The Sava and Drina have a proclivity for both dry spells and devastating floods—most recently occurring in 2010 and 2014¹.** The 2014 Sava flood—the largest flood in a century—caused 79 casualties and damages totaling €1.5 billion in Serbia (4.7% of GDP), €2.0 billion in BiH (15% of GDP), and €300 million in Croatia (0.5% of GDP). In 2010 the Drina Basin was flooded extensively—partly due to spilling hydropower reservoirs—and saw its highest water levels in 100 years. The trends and changes in mean values of precipitation, evapotranspiration, and discharges in this basin are well documented and indicate that climate change is expected to cause more intense flood and drought episodes, both in terms of scope and duration.² Specifically, current climate change projections for the Sava River Basin foresee a rise in flood peaks of up to 8 percent, and droughts occurring with increased frequency and intensity. While droughts are particularly unfavorable to navigation,³ they also negatively affect agricultural production, biodiversity, fisheries, and energy generation,⁴ and raise water demand. Floods and droughts thus create risks for livelihoods and impose constraints on trade, food security, and productive investment. These climate change related risks have led to increased receptivity for transboundary cooperation on flood protection and water resources management in the region, and thus have served as the main impetus for this project.

3. **The hydraulic infrastructure in the Sava and Drina rivers, while nominally extensive, has been poorly maintained and only partially modernized and expanded since the conflicts of the 1990s and the breakup of Yugoslavia, hampering regional economic integration and suppressing growth.** Years of neglect, a lack of avenues for lasting cross-border collaboration on waterway development projects—as the Sava river is also the border between Croatia and BiH for much of its navigable fairway—and remnants from the war itself, in the form of land mines still present along the river’s right bank within BiH, have severely deteriorated navigation standards.

¹ Average annual temperatures in the region are projected to rise by about 1.8°C by 2050 (with the highest increases in the southern parts of BiH, Serbia, and Montenegro). Overall annual mean precipitation is expected to decrease by 10–20%. Precipitation is expected to become more variable, resulting in a higher number of days with intense weather events, and dry spells becoming more severe and prolonged (by around five days). Available hydrological analyses estimate a decrease of 20–25% in runoff. Under these conditions, the frequency and severity of floods, droughts, and extreme weather are expected to increase.

[Source: UNDP. 2013. *Natural Disaster Risks and Risk Assessment in South East Europe*].

² R. Milačić et al. (eds.) 2015. *The Sava River. The Handbook of Environmental Chemistry*. DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-44034-6_2. Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg.

³ Schwarz, U. 2016. Sava White Book. *The River Sava: Threats and Restoration Potential*. Radolfzell/Wien: EuroNatur/Riverwatch.

⁴ Thermal power plants need water for cooling purposes, while hydropower plants need water for electricity generation.

Similarly, in the Drina, a sustained lack of maintenance and investments in upgrades to make infrastructure able to withstand climate change–related extreme weather events has reduced the capacity of the river’s cascade of reservoirs to be resilient to service disruptions and to safeguard nearby communities from climate-related risks, such as major flooding events (the devastating floods of 2014 being the most recent example).

4. **As such, the Sava River Basin has considerable untapped potential as an enabler of economic growth, regional connectivity, resilience to climate change risks, social cohesion, and job creation.** Income per capita among the riparians ranges from US\$6,000-9,000 (Serbia, BiH, Montenegro) to US\$15,000 (Croatia) and US\$26,000 (Slovenia), signaling opportunities for income convergence. As the Sava flows from west to east across Slovenia, Croatia, and BiH, ultimately reaching the Danube in Serbia, and, via the Danube, connecting the region with other parts of Europe and the Black Sea, the river offers a tangible opportunity to address the need for re-establishing it as a core economic corridor and as a driver of low-carbon multimodal transportation. There is also an urgent need to pursue no-regret investments; for example, investments to help maintain the water flow at levels suitable for navigation (imperiled by recurring droughts), thereby reducing flood risk and strengthening the social and economic resilience of the communities within the Sava’s catchment in the face of climate change. Similarly, the Drina corridor has significant potential for food production and tourism development, while the 2014 floods have shown the importance of improved management and protection of its existing reservoirs.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

5. **Since the mid-1990s, several regional and international treaties and associated protocols have been established to underpin transboundary collaboration in the Sava River Basin, most notably the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin (FASRB).** Signed in 2002 by the Sava riparians (at the time, the Republic of Slovenia, Republic of Croatia, BiH, and the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), the FASRB calls, inter alia, for cooperation among the signatory parties towards more sustainable water resources management across the basins and the resilience of communities in the basin to adverse weather events, such as floods and droughts. The **International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC)** is a Zagreb-based regional institution established in 2005 to oversee implementation of the latter FASRB provisions on behalf of the signatory parties⁵. Since inception, ISRBC has served as a platform for multilateral dialogue in the region, has supported basin development through planning, and has coordinated the delivery of practical tools such as a River Information Services (RIS). In delivering on its mandate, ISRBC has historically collaborated with other international institutions, including the European Commission and the World Bank, such as in the development of the 1st Sava River Basin Management Plan of 2014.

6. **Despite tangible accomplishments by ISRBC and the FASRB signatories, the continued need for improvement in water management among Sava-Drina riparian countries demonstrates the challenge of deepening regional coordination on shared natural resources.** Both the Sava and Drina waterways have the particularity that critical portions of their length mark the border between riparian countries—for example, between Croatia and BiH in the case of the Sava, where the border splits the river down the middle of its navigable fairway. This renders most interventions in the Sava within the territories of Croatia and BiH transboundary by

⁵ Montenegro gained sovereignty after the ISRBC was established and cooperates on a technical level with the signatory parties to the FASRB based on a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between ISRBC and Montenegro, signed in Belgrade on December 9, 2013.

nature, making it necessary for infrastructure investments to be planned and executed in a coordinated manner on both sides of the border. In other words, transboundary collaboration is an essential condition for the development of this shared resource, and the lack of it has hampered regional economic integration and associated economic development to date.

7. **Partly in response to the above challenges, over the past 13 years the Bank has engaged the region extensively with policy advice, technical assistance, and investments.** At the national level, the Bank has supported water programs covering different sub-sectors. Ongoing activities at the regional level include the Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded Drina River Basin Management Project (Drina GEF) and the BiH Drina Floods Protection project. After years of engagement, the riparian countries are working with the Bank to develop a regional investment program that can turn the recommendations from previous technical assistance at the national and regional level into tangible outcomes on ground.

8. The proposed **Sava and Drina Rivers Corridors Integrated Development Program (SDIP)** supports integrated water cooperation, by investing in infrastructure improvements and complementary measures that take into account the current and expected impact of climate change. Specifically, the project intends to address the climate change-exacerbated risk of floods and droughts, thus increasing the resilience of the targeted areas' economic activities and residents to these threats. Given the basin's transboundary nature, this will be achieved by supporting coordinated development and management of shared water resources across countries in the basin. The integrated management and development approach envisaged in this program is one that will promote the coordinated and multisectoral planning and utilization of the water and related resources of the Sava and Drina Rivers Corridors in order to maximize economic and social benefits, without compromising the sustainability of these vital natural resources.

9. The integrated management and development approach envisaged in this program is one that will promote the coordinated and multisectoral planning and utilization of the water and related resources of the Sava and Drina Rivers Corridors in order to maximize economic and social benefits, without compromising the sustainability of these vital natural resources. This will be achieved progressively throughout the program as presented in Figure 1 below, which illustrates the positioning of SDIP as a bridge towards a more integrated development approach for the Sava and Drina corridors.

FIGURE 1. POSITIONING OF THE SDIP PROGRAM IN THE BANK'S ENGAGEMENT IN THE SAVA AND DRINA RIVERS CORRIDORS

	Moving towards regional cooperation 2010-2019		2020-2026 SDIP 2023-2030		Beyond 2030
	National initiatives	Regional initiatives	Phase I	Phase II	Beyond SDIP
ISRBC			Water cooperation <i>River Basin Management Plan, Floods forecasting, data sharing, Tourism Development Plan, etc.</i>		Integrated Sava/Drina corridors development
BiH	Drina Floods Protection Project	Drina GEF TA - Floods management - Water planning Drina ESMAP - Energy optimization study	Floods protection investments Preparation of Phase II integrated investments including demining of Sava in BiH	Integrated investments - Navigation - Flood protection - Hydropower optimization - Environmental improvements - Recreation and tourism	
Serbia	Floods Emergency Recovery Project				
Montenegro		WBIF and other TAs (through ISRBC and SEETO) - Flood forecasting - River Basin Management Plan - Regional transport plan (REBIS)	Awaiting demining		
Croatia ¹			No investments planned		
Slovenia					

National activities
 Regional activities
 Integrated investments

Relationship to CPF

10. SDIP is proposed as a two-phase program under the World Bank's Multiphase Programmatic Approach (MPA) instrument, to support long-term and climate smart economic growth and regional cooperation. SDIP's focus on transboundary inland waterway freight transport, flood protection, and river basin management at the regional level addresses complementary dimensions of integration. This broader approach is expected to be more effective than shorter-lived efforts to tackle the long-standing challenges in economic integration, connectivity, and resilience facing the region that are within the programs' scope of influence.

11. The investments proposed under SDIP are aligned with (i) the World Bank's twin goals, (ii) the priorities set out by the national/entity governments of the program's beneficiaries, and (iii) the EU's policy goals for the region. SDIP will unlock economic growth potential in the Sava River Basin while protecting communities from flood damage and the impact of droughts, which tend to disproportionately impact the poor and other vulnerable communities. SDIP aligns with the development priorities identified in the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) of the riparian countries⁶. Common development priorities stated in the CPFs across Sava River Basin riparians include investments in economic infrastructure to enhance growth, enhancement of coping capacity against environmental risks, and protection of natural resources to achieve sustainable growth. These overarching goals are adjusted to reflect country-specific circumstances and priorities in the respective national programs.

12. The EU's environmental acquis is increasingly considered the unifying regulatory framework for water management across the Sava and Drina basins, although it is recognized that policies and institutional capacities need to be significantly strengthened to allow full implementation of such standards. All Sava countries have

⁶ Country partnership frameworks are available for BiH (World Bank Report 99616, November 14, 2015), Croatia (World Bank Report 130706, May 7, 2019), Serbia (World Bank Report 94687, May 22, 2015), and Montenegro (World Bank Report 105039, May 24, 2016).

completed, or are in process of preparing, the Flood Hazard and Flood Risk Maps, and Flood Risk Management Plans in line with the EU Directives. The Bank collaborates with EU programs to seek synergies and complement the EU's strengths.

13. SDIP's objectives are consistent with GEF's strategic long-term priorities for international waters (IW). During the GEF 7th replenishment cycle, its International Waters focal area prioritized the development of disaster early warning systems, capacity building, institutional support, and the protection of ecosystems. As a result, some analytical studies related to environmental management and flood protection improvements included in this program could be co-financed with support from GEF. These activities also build on lessons learned from past GEF engagements, such as the GEF-SCCF funded Drina River Basin Management Project.

B. Proposed Development Objective(s)

14. The objective of the Project (phase I of the Program) and the higher level Global Environmental Objective (GEO) is to ***improve flood protection and enhance transboundary water cooperation in the Sava and Drina Rivers Corridors.***

Key Results (From PCN)

15. The PDO level indicators are:

- People protected from 1 in 100-year flood event in the Sava and Drina River Basin under the project (of which female) (Number).
 - This indicator also provides data for GEF Core Indicator 11 "Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment". Target for GEF Core Indicator will be adjusted to reflect the appropriate scope to correspond with the size of the investment.
- Areas protected by flood risk mitigation measures under the project (hectares)
- River basin management plan reflecting integrated measures updated and endorsed by countries (Yes/No)
 - This indicator also provides data for GEF Core Indicator 7 "Number of shared water ecosystems (fresh or marine) under new or improved cooperative management.

C. Concept Description

16. Phase I activities have been identified and prepared through ongoing Bank support in the region as well as other initiatives financed by national resources and other financiers including GEF. This phase will allow trust-building and learning while financing activities of limited complexity and interdependency. Sub-projects will be implemented at national level and will have cumulative regional benefits. Phase I will also finance the preparation of additional transformational, multi-purpose regional investments to be financed under Phase II. Requested GEF funding will support the prioritization and preparation of activities related to the regional dialogue and studies that enhance transboundary water cooperation, flood early warning system and risk management, wetland protection and management plan that feeds into a master plan for eco-tourism in the Sava and Drina River Basins.

This component, solely financed by GEF IW focal area, will serve as a crucial bonding platform that will bring together the national actors and strengthen the institutions and procedures through which the Sava riparian countries collaborate. IBRD loans that are relevant to GEF IW strategic goals are highlighted in Table 1.

17. The proposed project is fully aligned with GEF7 Programming Directions, international water focal area strategy, Objective 3 – enhancing water security in freshwater ecosystems. The GEF grant financing will enable the governments to: 1) advance information exchange and early warning through enhancement of the regional flood monitoring, forecasting and management system; 2) enhance regional and national cooperation on shared freshwater resources through the update of the 2nd Sava River Basin Management plan and promotion of joint decision making among national, regional and global stakeholders; and 3) improve flood and environmental management through studies on and promotion of nature based solutions. In the absence of GEF financing, these activities will be financed through grants provided from other sources (such as WBIF TA grant) or national budget from participating countries.

18. Component 1: Integrated Management and Development of the Sava River Corridor (US\$106.2 million, of which IBRD is US\$ 97.3 million and WBIF grant financing US\$ 8.9 million⁷.)

19. This component will finance investments in renovation and upgrading of flood protection infrastructures to address the increasing risk of flooding due to climate change. These activities will reduce the risk and impact of floods, thereby increasing the resilience of the riparian countries to these climate change-related threats.

20. **Sub-component 1.1: Flood protection and environmental management.** This sub-component will finance construction and rehabilitation of embankments at selected priority areas along the Sava River Corridor as well as nature-based solutions to re-vitalize selected protected areas of ecological significance to the Western Balkans. This sub-component complements GEF financed efforts on enhancing water security in freshwater ecosystems through advance information exchange and early warning.

21. **Sub-component 1.2: Waterway Improvements.** Under this sub-component, grant financing will be mobilized to support demining activities along the Sava's right bank within BiH, as a pre-requisite to the execution of civil works—planned for Phase II of the program—to increase the navigational capacity of the Sava river.

22. **Sub-component 1.3: Enhancement of ports facilities, services and logistics.** The project will finance cargo handling capacity expansion, equipment modernization, and potential connectivity improvements at the port of Sremska Mitrovica.

Component 2: Integrated Management and Development of the Drina River Corridor (US\$29.4 Million, all IBRD)

23. This component will support multipurpose investments along the Drina river to reduce the risk and potential impact of floods. This component will facilitate the implementation of actions, management measures and investments identified by the Drina Strategic Action Plan being prepared under the ongoing Western Balkans

⁷ The program is seeking a Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) investment grant to cover the costs of demining. An application was presented by the Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Communications and Transport in November 2019 and is expected to be confirmed by year-end calendar 2020, but in the current absence of formal commitment this amount is registered as a financing gap.

GEF-SCCF Drina River Basin Management Project and investments identified through the ESMAP Integrated Water and Hydropower Development Project. The above measures will contribute to increased resilience of the riparian countries to floods and droughts.

24. Sub-component 2.1: **Flood protection and environmental management.** This sub-component will finance infrastructure works, studies, surveys, consultations and preparation of detailed design of interventions related to the management of environmental assets (the protection of local ecosystems that act as carbon sinks) along the Drina Corridor. This sub-component complements GEF financed efforts on enhancing water security in freshwater ecosystems through advance information exchange and early warning.

25. Sub-component 2.2: **Integrated development of lower Lim watershed.** This sub-component will finance improved watershed management in the Lim and Grncar River basins of Montenegro, as well as works related to flood protection, drainage and irrigation measures within the Lim River Basin (a tributary of the Drina River) to mitigate flood risks and promote sustainable use of natural resources. This sub-component complements GEF financed activities on enhancing water security in freshwater ecosystems through investments in water and environment security.

Component 3: Project preparation and management (US\$20.6 million, all IBRD)

26. This component will support: 1) preparation of Phase II regional activities; and 2) operational costs, consultancies, non-consultancy services, and goods required for the establishment and operation of the national/entity PIUs.

27. Sub-component 3.1: **Project preparation.** This sub-component will either finance or provide technical support for the preparation of project documentation for Phase II of the program, including environmental and social safeguard assessments. This sub-component complements GEF financed activities on enhancing water security in freshwater ecosystems through investments in water and environment security.

28. Sub-component 3.2: **Institutional strengthening and project management.** This sub-component will finance activities to increase institutional capacity and inter-sectoral coordination in the participating countries to ensure more efficient decision making and program management. This sub-component complements GEF financed activities on enhancing water security in freshwater ecosystems through enhanced national cooperation on shared freshwater surface and groundwater basins.

Component 4: Regional activities (US\$ 8 million, all GEF Grant)

29. This component is key to strengthening strategic regional dialogue, joint planning and sustainable management and development of the shared water resources in the Sava and Drina River Basin, including building resilience to climatic shocks. It will support policy dialogue, consultations, preparation of Basin plans and studies, and investments to strengthen the nexus between water services and development and economic cooperation objectives of the Sava and Drina Corridor. The Component will finance the establishment including operations of the Regional Task Force and Regional Implementation Unit, which will bring together the national actors to monitor project progress, review and adjust overall program implementation, promote knowledge exchange and good practices. This component will promote joint action and decision making in river basin management and flood risk management among riparian countries, thus enhance the climate adaptation capacity of the region.

The component will also allow for the preparation of key regional studies and plans that will further inform the design of the Program, including:

30. **Preparatory studies** for key integrated investment activities, such as cross-country or cross-sector, strategic investments;
31. **Technical studies** underlaying the 2nd Sava River Basin Management Plan, such as a hydrological Study for Sava River Basin, analysis of sediment, water and biota in Sava River Basin, and a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for the Sava River Basin;
32. **The 2nd Sava River Basin Management Plan** itself, building on the afore-mentioned studies and national RBMPs;
33. Further **water cooperation and corridor development studies and plans**, such as a Regional ecotourism strategy including nature-based solutions;
34. Improvement in **regional resilience management and forecasting**, such as advanced flood and drought monitoring, forecasting and management systems;
35. Regional collaboration **advocacy and communication activities**.

36. River Basin Management Plans and Hydrological assessments will ultimately support integrated water resources management and development, thereby indirectly increasing the resilience of riparian countries to climate change. The first Sava River Basin Management Plan was adopted by the countries in December 2014 and requires to be updated every 6 years. The development of the 2nd RBMP is included as a milestone in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region. The study on sediment, water and biota will provide environmental data for preparation of the first sediment management plan for the Sava River Basin. A regional ecotourism strategy will be developed as part of the strategy for promoting nature-based solutions to harness ecotourism and economic growth through wetland protection, job creation and other benefits.

37. In addition, 1% of the GEF financing will go towards IWLEARN which will support an advocacy and communication plan to facilitate partnerships between participating countries to stimulate knowledge sharing and capacity building while implementing activities related to regional dialogue and studies.

TABLE 1. PROJECT COST TABLE AND RELEVANCE WITH GEF IW FOCUS AREAS²

Components	Cost (USD Million)	Relevant GEF IW Focus Areas ¹
Component 1: Integrated Management and Development of the Sava River Corridor		
Sub-component 1.1: Flood protection and environmental management	78.4	IW 3-5
Sub-component 1.2: Waterway Improvements	8.9 (WBIF Grant)	
Sub-component 1.3: Enhancement of ports facilities, services and logistics	18.9	
Component 2: Integrated Management and Development of the Drina River Corridor		
Sub-component 2.1: Flood protection and environmental management	14	IW 3-5
Sub-component 2.2: Integrated development of lower Lim watershed	15.4	IW 3-7
Component 3: Project preparation and management		

Sub-component 3.1: Project preparation	9	IW 3-7
Sub-component 3.2: Institutional strengthening and project management	11.6	IW 3-6
Component 4: Regional activities	8 (GEF Grant)	IW 3-5, IW 3-6 and IW 3-7
Note: ^{1.} IW 3-5: Enhance water security in freshwater ecosystems through advance information exchange and early warning IW 3-6: Enhance water security in freshwater ecosystems through enhanced national cooperation on shared freshwater surface and groundwater basins IW 3-7: Enhance water security in freshwater ecosystems through investments in water and environment security ^{2.} Sub-component 1.2 and 1.3 are not relevant for GEF IW focus areas, thus can not be considered as IBRD co-financing.		

Legal Operational Policies	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	Yes
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

Summary of Screening of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

38. The Project is rated with an overall High Risk for both Environment and Social. The activities to be supported include a variety of sectors, issues and stakeholders. Through two Phases of the Program, there are at least forty identified locations, mostly at or immediately adjacent to the rivers Sava and Drina, although some of investments may be located at the wider catchments. The first phase (2020-2026) will include activities on flood protection and environmental management, regional dialogue and studies. Considering the geographic and sectoral width of the Program, the need for coordinated stakeholder consultations and decision making, as well as the associated limited Borrower capacity and number of institutions involved across the countries, the environmental and social risk is high. This risk will be mitigated through targeted trainings for all participating institutions as well as establishment of monitoring tools that will ensure transparent and quality implementation of environmental and social safeguards management.

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