

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE USE AND PROTECTION OF
THE DNIESTER RIVER BASIN

Sixth meeting

Venue: “Nadiya” hotel, 40 Nezalezhnosti Street, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine

Dates: 04 - 05 December 2025.

**Minutes of the sixth meeting of the Commission on the Sustainable
Use and Protection of the Dniester River Basin**

I. The sixth meeting of the Commission on the Sustainable Use and Protection of the Dniester River Basin (hereinafter - Commission) was held on 04-05 December 2025 at the “Nadiya” hotel, 40 Nezalezhnosti Street, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine.

II. The Commission considered the following items on the Agenda.

1. Opening of the Meeting: Welcome Remarks and Adoption of the Agenda
2. Presentation of Information
 - 2.1 Reports on the implementation of the Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on the Joint Use and Protection of Transboundary Waters
 - 2.2 Institutional and personnel changes in the executive authorities responsible for implementing the Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on Cooperation in the Field of Protection and Sustainable Development of the Dniester River Basin
 - 2.3 Reports by the Co-chairs of Working Groups (hereinafter – WGs) on activities carried out from December 2024 to the present
3. Update on the Implementation of National Dniester River Basin Management Plans
4. Update on the Implementation of National Flood Risk Management Plans in the Dniester River Basin
5. Update on the Implementation of the Project “Advancing Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Dniester River Basin through the Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme” funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) serving as the implementing agency, the OSCE as the executing agency, and support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
 - 5.1 Project status update
 - 5.2 Social and Environmental Standards / Environmental and Social Management Framework
6. Other Current Issues in the Dniester River Basin
 - 6.1 Implementation of the Protocol of the 5th Meeting of the Commission held on November 28–29, 2024
 - 6.1.1 Regarding the operative notification of the Republic of Moldova concerning significant instantaneous water releases from the buffer reservoir of the Nizhny-Dniester HPP to reduce the negative consequences for the population and natural ecosystems downstream

- 6.1.2 Identification of solutions to facilitate border crossing by the Moldovan side on the Dniester River to enable monitoring activities at the Unguri hydrologic station
- 6.2 Information on the expansion of the capacity of the Dniester Hydropower Complex
- 7. Public Initiatives to Promote Sustainable Management of the Dniester River Basin
 - 7.1 Approval of amendments to the Regulations of the “Colours of the Dniester” contest
 - 7.2 Possible joint initiatives on nature restoration measures in the Dniester River Basin, based on the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869
- 8. Other questions
- 9. Determining the time and place of the next, 7th meeting of the Commission and closing the meeting

III. The Commission approved the following decisions:

1. Opening of the Meeting: Welcome Remarks and Adoption of the Agenda.

Opening of the Meeting and welcome remarks by:

- **Mr. O. Sobolev**, Minister of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine;
- **Mr Gh. Hajder**, Minister of Environment of the Republic of Moldova, Co-Chair of the Commission;
- **Ms I. Ovcharenko**, Deputy Minister of the Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine, Co-Chair of the Commission.
- **Mr. V. Sozonyk** – Deputy Head of the Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast’s State Administration.
- **H. E. Ambassador B. Dzhusupov** - Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, OSCE

The Commission approved the Agenda of the meeting (see - Annex 1 to the Minutes of the 6th Meeting of the Commission).

2. Presentation of information:

2.1 Presentation of information by the Plenipotentiaries of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on the implementation of the Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on the Joint Use and Protection of Boundary Waters.

The Commission heard and took into account the reports presented by the Plenipotentiaries of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Moldova regarding the implementation of the Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on the Joint Use and Protection of Boundary Waters.

2.2 Institutional and personnel changes in the executive authorities responsible for implementing the Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on Cooperation in the Field of Protection and Sustainable Development of the Dniester River Basin.

The Chairman of the Ukrainian part of the Commission presented information on the impact of institutional and personnel changes that have taken place in Ukraine since July 2025 on the activities of the Commission.

The Chairman of the Moldovan part of the Commission presented information on the changes that have taken place in the Government of the Republic of Moldova following the parliamentary elections.

The Commission took into account the information heard.

The Commission also noted the information provided by the representatives

- of the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine on the need to change the Ukrainian co-chairs of the WGs, namely the Legal WG and the WG on the Protection of Ecosystems and Biodiversity;
- of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova on the need to change Moldovan co-chairs of the WGs, namely the WG on monitoring and information exchange and the WG on emergency situations.

The Commission decided to appoint the following co-chairs of the working groups:

- Mr Strulea Nicolae, Deputy Director, Environmental Agency as the Co-chair of WG on monitoring and information exchange (Moldovan Part);
- Mr Mutaf Vitali, Main Consultant, Pollution Prevention Policy Direction to the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova, as the Co-chair of WG on emergency situations (Moldovan Part);
- Ms Olesiya Petrovych, representative of the Recovery and Reform Support Team of the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine (subteam on environment protection) as the Co-chair of the Ukrainian Part of the WG on Ecosystems and Biodiversity (Ukrainian Part);
- To be defined (see below), as the Co-chair of the Ukrainian Part of the Legal WG (Ukrainian Part).

Due to pending staffing adjustments within the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine, the nomination of the Ukrainian Co-chair of the Legal Working Group remains under consideration. Ukraine will identify a suitable candidate and inform the Republic of Moldova by official letter at the earliest opportunity.

2.3 Reports by the Co-chairs of WGs on activities carried out from December 2024 to the present.

The co-chairs of the WGs reported on the implementation of approved work plans and the planning of further activities.

The co-chairs of the WG on river basin planning and management reported on the results of the WG meeting (the 9th meeting, held on 3 October 2025 in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova) see Annex 5.1. The meeting was supported by the GEF/UNDP/OSCE project “Development of transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the Dniester River Basin through the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP)”.

The WG report contained concise information on:

- Progress in implementing the Dniester River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) as of October 2025 and a brief assessment of the compliance of the national RBMP structures with the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD);
- Results of the official screening within the Negotiation Chapter 27 “Environment and Climate Change” regarding the WFD;
- Assessment of the chemical and ecological status of surface water bodies in 2024 (Ukrainian part of the basin), including transboundary water bodies;
- Progress in implementing national flood risk management plans in the Dniester Basin;
- Amendments to legislation on water resources management;
- Technical issues:
 - Analysis of the hydrological regime in 2024;
 - Analysis of hydropeaking;
 - Review of spring ecological flow 2022–2025;
 - Approaches to developing a methodology for determining ecological flow (Ukraine);
 - On the prompt notification of the Moldovan side about significant water discharges from the buffer reservoir of the Lower Dniester HPP;
- Other issues, including the celebration of Dniester Day, the Summer School, and the “Colors of the Dniester” competition.

The WG co-chairs presented a draft work plan for 2026.

The Commission took note of the information provided by the WG and approved the work plan for 2026 (Annex 2.1).

The co-chairs of the WG on monitoring and information exchange reported on the results of the WG meeting held on 2 October 2025 in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, see Annex 5.2.

The WG report contained concise information on:

- Results of surface water monitoring in the Dniester Basin in 2024, exchange of information on water quality, and assessment of chemical and ecological status;
- Monitoring of groundwater in the Republic of Moldova and the need to resolve financing issues for groundwater monitoring in Ukraine;
- Results of hydrological monitoring and information exchange on water levels and discharges;
- Joint water sampling and analysis of the results obtained;
- Preparation of National Reports on the state of waters in the Dniester Basin;
- Completion of official screening within Negotiation Chapter 27 “Environment and Climate Change” regarding the WFD and the Environment Quality Standards Directive in terms of water monitoring;
- Development of a concept for the Terms of Reference to compare the legislation of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova with EU legal acts in the field of water monitoring;
- Other current cooperation issues.

The WG co-chairs presented a draft work plan for 2026.

The Commission took note of the information provided by the WG and approved the work plan for 2026 (Annex 2.2).

The co-chairs of the WG on emergency situations reported on the results of the WG meeting held on 17 November 2025 (online).

The concise report contained information on:

- Implementation of the WG activity plan for 2024–2025;
- Progress achieved by the Parties in implementing the Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) in the Dniester River Basin;
- Development of the WG activity plan for 2026.

The WG co-chairs presented a draft work plan for 2026.

The Commission took note of the information provided by the WG and approved the work plan for 2026 (Annex 2.3).

The co-chairs of the WG on ecosystems and biodiversity presented a presentation of the Moldovan Part of the WG (see Annex 5.3) and draft work plan for 2026.

The Commission took note of the information provided by the Moldovan part of the WG and approved the work plan for 2026 (Annex 2.4).

The co-chairs of the Legal WG presented a draft work plan for 2026.

The Commission took note of the information provided by the WG and approved the work plan for 2026 (Annex 2.5).

3. Update on the Implementation of National Dniester River Basin Management Plans.

The Parties exchanged information on the progress made in implementing the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for the Dniester River Basin.

The Commission instructed the Working Group on River Basin Planning and Management to continue its coordinated efforts toward implementing the RBMP and to report on progress at the next Commission meeting.

4. Update on the Implementation of National Flood Risk Management Plans in the Dniester River Basin.

The Parties exchanged information on the progress made in the implementation of the Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) for the Dniester River Basin.

The Commission instructed the Working Group on Emergency Situations to continue its coordinated efforts toward implementing the FRMP and to provide an update on progress at the next Commission meeting.

5. Update on the Implementation of the Project “Advancing Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Dniester River Basin through the Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme” funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) serving as the implementing agency, the OSCE as the executing agency, and support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

5.1 Project Status Update

The Commission took note of the information presented by representatives of the organizations responsible for the implementation of the GEF-UNDP-OSCE project “Advancing Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Dniester River Basin through the Implementation of the Strategic Action Program”. In particular, the Commission acknowledged the updates provided by the OSCE, as the executing agency, and by UNECE, as the organization supporting the project.

In line with the priorities identified during the project inception phase, the Commission received updates on the following areas:

a) Support to the Working Groups of the Dniester River Basin Commission

(Corresponding to Output 1.1.1: Fully operational Dniester Commission; Activity 1.1.1.1: Supporting the Dniester Commission and its Working Groups)

In line with the approved project workplan, the Commission has agreed that, in 2026, the first two Working Groups that request funding for the organization of their annual meetings (one meeting per Working Group per year) should be considered by the project for financial support. To the extent possible, the meetings of the Working Groups should be held back-to-back or simultaneously.

b) Twinning and Capacity Building Activities

(Corresponding to Output 1.1.1: Fully operational Dniester Commission; Activity 1.1.1.2: Facilitating capacity building and experience exchange with other European river commissions)

The Commission took note of the information presented and expressed interest in receiving, at the earliest opportunity, an update on potential opportunities for sharing experience with other European river basin commissions. The Commission may avail itself of the possibility to indicate to the project any thematic and/or focus areas of interest to be covered during the twinning exercise during the first quarter of 2026.

c) DniesterGIS Platform

(Corresponding to Output 1.1.1: Fully operational Dniester Commission; Activity 1.1.1.4: Developing and operating the Dniester-GIS platform)

The Commission further encourages relevant stakeholders to participate actively in all project activities related to the development of the platform and to provide the required information and feedback to support its timely development.

The Commission instructed the Legal Working Group to perform (till to the end of the second quarter of 2026) an assessment of the conformity of a transboundary Dniester-GIS in accordance to national legal frameworks.

The Commission instructed the WG on Monitoring and Information Exchange and WG on river basin planning and management (alongside all other Working Groups) to develop a list of available data that could be used in connection to the development of the Dniester-GIS platform.

d) Demonstration project on TSF¹ and the Strategic Framework for Adaptation to Climate Change in the Dniester River basin

(Corresponding to Output 3.1.2: Demonstration projects to improve the ecological status of the Dniester River basin & Output 4.1.1 Update of the “Strategic Framework for Adaptation to Climate Change in the Dniester River basin” and of its Implementation Plan, and implementation of selected adaptation actions)

The Commission was informed about the initial work on updating the Strategic Framework for Adaptation to Climate Change and its Implementation Plan, namely on updating climate change scenarios for the Dniester basin. The Commission was also informed about the initial discussions with the experts on the necessary steps to implement priority adaptation measures (such as water balance, restoration of the Yahorlyk river and elimination of evaporation) and the demonstration project on tailing storage facilities addressing the countries’ needs expressed at the inception workshop and PSC meeting.

e) Dniester Commission Website

(Corresponding to Output 5.2.1: Project website within existing Dniester Commission website; Activities 5.2.1.1–5.2.1.3: Technical support, content management, and SEO² for the Dniester Commission website)

The Commission approved the handover of the Dniester River Basin Commission website (Save the Dniester River Together) to the project, with a view to ensuring its update, improvement, and maintenance throughout the project duration. The Commission assessed the «A» scenario (based on the list of scenarios proposed by the project) for updating the website as the most appropriate and granted approval for its implementation.

f) Development of the Ecological Flow Methodology

(Corresponding to Output 6.1.2: Applied research as prioritised in SAP on issues such as biodiversity, including invasive species, protected areas, wetlands and monitoring; Activity 6.1.2.1: Analysis of hydropower impacts and development of mitigation recommendations)

The Commission instructed all relevant Working Groups to facilitate the provision of any information required by the project team for the development of the ecological flow methodology, based on the most up-to-date data and materials available.

The Commission further encourages relevant stakeholders to participate actively in all project activities related to the development of the methodology of the ecological flow and to provide the required information and feedback, including through the indication of technical experts who could support its timely development.

5.2 Social and Environmental Standards / Environmental and Social Governance Framework

The Commission took note of the information provided by the OSCE, as the executing agency of the project, and UNDP, as the implementing agency, regarding compliance with the social and environmental standards and the Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) framework applicable to the project.

The Commission emphasized the importance of adhering to these standards and safeguard the principles as outlined in the project documentation. It encouraged continuous interaction with the ESPOO Convention National Focal Points, relevant experts, the Working Groups of the Commission, and the Secretariats of both the Moldovan and Ukrainian sides of the Commission.

The Commission was informed about the Grievance Mechanism to be established in the framework of the project. It took note about the associated information to be placed on the Dniester River Basin Commission’s website.

6. Other actual issues in the Dniester basin.

6.1 Implementation of the Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the Commission held on November 28–29, 2024.

¹ Tailing storage facilities

² Search Engine Optimisation

6.1.1 Regarding the operative notification of the Republic of Moldova concerning significant instantaneous water releases from the buffer reservoir of the Nizhny-Dniester HPP to reduce the negative consequences for the population and natural ecosystems downstream.

The Commission heard the information presented by the co-chairs of the WG on river basin planning and management, as well as additional proposals provided by representatives of PJSC “Ukrhydroenergo” and the Ukrainian Hydrometeorological Center of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine.

In order to ensure the prompt notification of the Republic of Moldova regarding significant instantaneous water discharges from the buffer reservoir of the Lower Dniester Hydropower Plant (HPP), with a view to minimizing negative impacts on downstream populations and natural ecosystems, the Parties agree to the following procedure (see figure in the Annex 3):

1. In the event that the planned discharge volume exceeds 300 cubic meters per second, and following the decision taken by the responsible authorities managing the buffer reservoir of the Lower Dniester HPP, Mr. Arseniy Zelensky, Acting Chief Engineer of PJSC “Ukrhydroenergo”, shall immediately transmit the relevant information through the Prompt Information via Messenger (PIvM) mechanism, using a dedicated communication group established in WhatsApp or Messenger.
2. The communication group shall include the following persons:
 - Mr Igor Gopchak, Deputy Co-chair of the Commission, Plenipotentiary of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine for the implementation of the Agreement on the Joint Use and Protection of Boundary Waters;
 - Mr Radu Cazacu, Deputy Co-chair of the Commission, Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Republic of Moldova for the implementation of the Agreement on the Joint Use and Protection of Boundary Waters;
 - Ms Viktoriia Korniienko, Member of the Ukrainian part of the Commission, Deputy Head of the Department for Hydrological Forecasts of the Ukrainian Hydrometeorological Center, State Emergency Service of Ukraine;
 - Ms Mariana Prepelița, Head of the Division for Hydrological Forecasts, State Hydrometeorological Service of the Republic of Moldova.
3. Should any of the above-designated representatives be relieved of their duties or otherwise become unable to perform the function assigned under this notification mechanism, the respective Party shall promptly inform the other Party in writing and submit updated contact details of the newly assigned representative.

6.1.2 Identification of solutions to facilitate border crossing by the Moldovan side on the Dniester River to enable monitoring activities at the Unguri hydrologic station

The Commission heard the information presented

- by the co-chair of the Moldovan WG on issues of monitoring and information exchange regarding the appeal of representatives of the Hydrometeorological Service of the Republic of Moldova to the representative of the Ministry of Environment (in January 2025) to resolve the issue of crossing the border on the Dniester River by the Moldovan side for monitoring at the Unguri hydrological station;
- by the representative of the Ministry of Environment regarding the response to the said appeal.

The Commission recommended to determine a clear format for appeals of authorized state bodies of the Republic of Moldova to authorized state bodies of Ukraine regarding crossing the border on the Dniester River by the Moldovan side for monitoring at the Unguri hydrological station.

The format of the appeal must meet the following requirements:

- The observation program with precise data on the time and place of sampling, the number of personnel, and the number of vessels that will be involved in sampling must be accompanied by a letter from the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova;
- The cover letter and the observation program must be sent:

- in the case of original hard copies - through diplomatic channels to the address of the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine;
- in the case of sending electronic versions - exclusively to the official mail of the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine, as indicated on the Ministry's website (see <https://me.gov.ua/Documents/Detail?lang=uk-UA&id=9b28fa4c-ee75-4c79-8a27-0f6588cd36eb&title=Kontakti>);

6.2. Information on the expansion of the capacity of the Dniester Hydropower Complex.

The Commission heard and took note of the information provided by the representative of PJSC “Ukrhydroenergo” regarding the established design capacity of the Pumped Storage Hydro-Power Plant within the Dniester Hydropower Complex, which foresees a total of seven turbines, of which four are currently operational. It was further clarified that construction activities on the remaining three turbines are ongoing, with completion timelines dependent on the security situation caused by the ongoing war. The Ukrainian side confirmed that there are no projects, plans, or intentions to increase the currently envisaged operational capacity beyond the seven turbines.

7. Public Initiatives to Promote Sustainable Management of the Dniester River Basin

7.1 Approval of amendments to the Regulations of the “Colours of the Dniester” contest

The Commission considered and approved in general the new version of the draft Regulations on the “Colors of the Dniester” contest, which was presented by representatives of civil society of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine (see Annex 4 to this Protocol where presented the Regulations on the “Colors of the Dniester” contest in Romanian and Ukrainian languages, English version will be prepared later). Till 10th January 2026, all interested stakeholders shall propose their amendments to the Regulation and follow to WG co-chairs. Commission instructed the WG on river basin planning and management to ensure the final version of the Regulation during 2 months after the receipt of proposals. Regulation will be adopted by parties using exchange of letters.

The Commission also heard and took into account the information of the representatives of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine regarding:

- organization of the Dniester Day;
- organization of a summer school and expedition on the Dniester River in 2025;
- organization of the “Colors of the Dniester” 2025 competition.

The Commission recommends using the opportunities of international technical assistance projects to continue supporting the organisation of the above-mentioned events and competitions, promoting the ecological education of children, and emphasises the special importance of involving children and youth in such projects.

7.2 Possible joint initiatives on nature restoration measures in the Dniester River Basin, based on the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869

The Commission heard and took into account the information provided by the representative of civil society of the Republic of Moldova on possible joint initiatives on nature restoration measures in the Dniester River Basin, based on the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869 (hereinafter referred to as the Regulation).

The Commission instructed the Co-Chairs of WG on ecosystems and biodiversity, to consider joint initiatives proposed by the representative of the Republic of Moldova as well as provisions of the above-mentioned EU Regulation and prepare, with the support of all other WGs, propositions taking them into account and further use in the Commission's future work.

8. Other questions

The Commission will request the GEF-UNDP-OSCE project "Advancing Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Dniester River Basin through the Implementation of the Strategic Action Program" to conduct an assessment of the current structure and mandates of the working groups, and to propose recommendations for their reorganization. The proposals should take into account the overarching objectives of the Commission as well as relevant international best practices (as example those ones of the Danube and Sava Commissions).

Presentations were presented to the attention of the Commission are located in Annex 6.

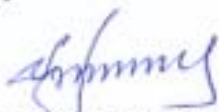
9. Determining the time and place of the next 7th meeting of the Commission

The Commission has set the tentative date for the next meeting, namely the October – November 2026. The Republic of Moldova will additionally inform the other Party of the venue of the meeting, which will be held in the Republic of Moldova.

10. Closing the meeting

The Co-Chairs of the Commission solemnly concluded the 6th meeting of the Commission with their speeches.

**On behalf of the
Republic of Moldova:**



Mr RADU CAZACU

**Deputy Co-chairman of the Commission,
Deputy Chairman of the Moldovan part of
the Commission,
Deputy Director, National Administration
"Apele Moldovei"**

**On behalf of the
Ukraine:**



Mr IHOR GOPCHAK,

**Deputy Co-chairman of the Commission,
Deputy Chairman of the Ukrainian part of
the Commission,
Chairman of the State Water Resources
Agency of Ukraine**