Appeal of IHP UNESCO's 28th Conference of the Danube Countries

We gained insight into the hydrological circle owing to terrestrial measurements of the individual components of water cycling: precipitation, surface water level and discharge, velocity, air and water temperature, groundwater table, streamflow, evapotranspiration, transpiration, soil moisture, etc. Remote sensing gave new impetus overall and provided the assessment of the spatial distribution of the various phenomena. State-of-the-art technology provided measuring probes equipped with computer memory and wireless connection. This development has allowed us to carry out complex hydrological measurements and observations with much smaller resources than in the past. Environmental protection and the expected climate change pose new challenges and require additional, more detailed measurements. Unfortunately, in the Danube River Basin, we have witnessed a reduction in the measuring sites for hydrological and meteorological measurements. During the economic crisis that began over a decade ago, there were reductions in financial resources in the national services in charge of the measurements mentioned. Many measuring points were abandoned and never restored. The requirements to monitor the various anthropological impacts, environmental protection, and climate change require an increase in the number of measuring points and the introduction of new measuring technologies into practice.

Therefore the participants of IHP UNESCO's 28th Conference of the Danube Countries appeal to the governments from the Danube River Basin to stop the process of reducing measuring points but, on the contrary, to increase their number. In fact, without additional measurement sites, our estimates of anthropological impacts and predictions of the effects of climate change on the water regime will contain more significant uncertainty that can also lead to wrong decisions. Further, we need more water stations and accurate measurements for better understand and manage transboundary impacts and common participation in water management.

Head of IHP Danube cooperation

Mitja Brilly