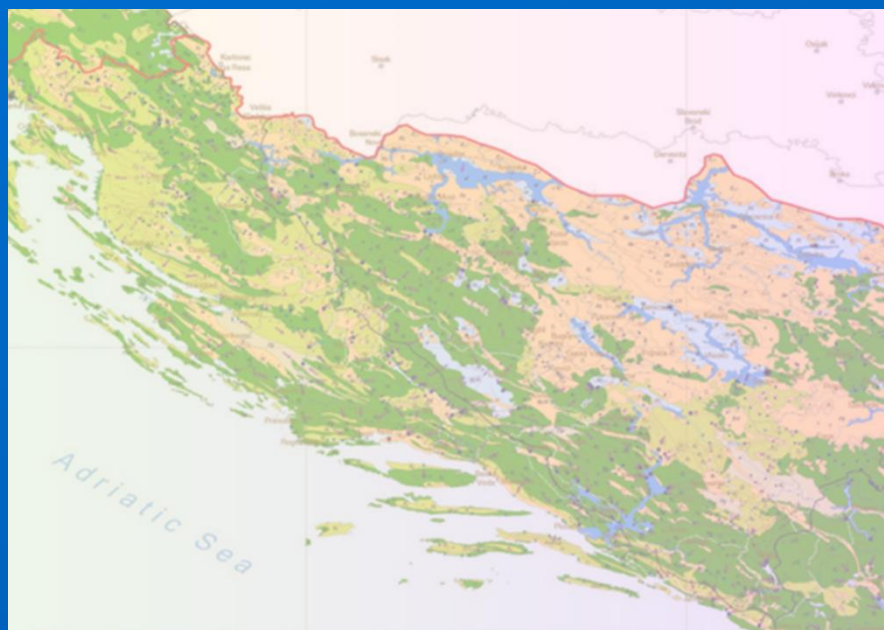


DIKTAS II

Implementation of the strategic action program (SAP) of the Dinaric karst aquifer system:
improving groundwater governance and sustainability of related ecosystems.



2nd in-person EXPERT MEETING

10-11 November 2025

Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina



EXISTING BILATERAL AGREEMENTS AND OPTIONS FOR UPGRADE

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Bilateral Agreements and Management Bodies: Component 1, Output 1.3 (from DIKTAS II project document)

ASPECTS	DESCRIPTION
Purpose	To formulate options for bilateral agreements and management bodies addressing issues in transboundary aquifer (TBA) areas, and/or strengthen existing ones.
Countries' Role	Countries are encouraged to propose and discuss bilateral agreements relevant to their shared aquifers.
Topics to be considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Common methodology for monitoring ecological status of surface waters in contact with groundwater - Bilateral data exchange and legal instruments - Joint Rulebook for sanitary protection zones (SPZ) - Measures to prevent hazardous substances entering groundwater - Emergency response protocols for pollution incidents
Timeline	According to the Annual Work Plan, the output 1.3 shall be in focus. No end date or adoption deadline has been set.
Decision-Making	Final decisions on bilateral agreements are to be made by national governments.

Transboundary aquifers and sharing countries

TBA	Sharing Countries
Una	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia
Trebišnjica	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia
Neretva	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia
Cetina	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia
Bilećko Lake	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro
Cemi/Cijevna	Albania, Montenegro

Existing bilateral agreements and draft agreements

AGREEMENT TITLE	COUNTRIES INVOLVED
Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the Regulation of Water Management Relations	Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Framework Agreement between the Government of Montenegro and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania on Cooperation in the Field of Water Management	Montenegro, Albania
Draft Agreement between the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Government of Montenegro on Cooperation in the Field of Water Management	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro

- Establishes bilateral cooperation in water management based on mutual interest and the Helsinki Convention.
- Covers joint activities related to water use, pollution prevention, flood protection, and infrastructure maintenance.
- Applies to watercourses forming or crossing the state border.
- Applies to other areas of shared water management interest.
- Promotes rational, fair, and environmentally sound water use, with mutual notification of pollution incidents.
- Creates a Joint Water Management Commission with equal representation from both countries.
- Enables simplified customs procedures for materials, equipment, and personnel involved in joint water projects.
- Provides a mechanism for dispute resolution, including arbitration if needed.

- Establishes long-term bilateral cooperation in managing transboundary water resources.
- Defines areas of cooperation including water use, pollution control, flood protection, and management of shared water bodies
- Promotes sustainable, fair, and environmentally sound water use, aligned with EU Water Framework Directive.
- Promotes the principle of prevention and precaution, an application of "polluters pay" and the full transparency.
- Requires mutual notification and coordination in case of accidental pollution or activities with transboundary impact.
- Requires both parties to take measures to prevent aggravation, to protect the waters from harmful effect and to improve the status of water resources
- Establishes a permanent Water Resources Management Commission with equal representation and expert support.
- Ensures joint monitoring, data exchange, and risk assessment to maintain water quality and ecosystem health.
- Regulates financial responsibilities, including cost-sharing and access to international funding for joint projects.
- Provides mechanisms for dispute resolution and allows for amendments, with the agreement valid for an indefinite period.

- Establishes bilateral cooperation for sustainable management of shared water resources, aligned with EU Water Framework Directive and international conventions.
- Covers joint activities related to water use, flood protection, pollution control, and management of key water bodies (Bilećko Lake, Piva, Tara, Čehotina).
- Defines principles of fair and reasonable water use, including compensation for transboundary impacts and damage.
- Introduces a permanent Water Management Commission with equal representation and authority to coordinate implementation.
- Requires joint monitoring, data exchange, and risk assessment to ensure water quality and ecosystem protection.
- Regulates construction, operation, and maintenance of water infrastructure, including procedures for shared hydroelectric potential (e.g. Trebišnjica system).
- Ensures simplified customs procedures and cross-border movement for project-related goods and personnel.
- Provides mechanisms for dispute resolution, including arbitration under the Helsinki Convention if needed.

Comparative Analysis of Bilateral Agreements Relevant to DIKTAS II

Agreement Title	Groundwater Mention	Scope	Monitoring & Data Exchange	Management Bodies	Further steps (recommendation)
Croatia–Bosnia and Herzegovina Agreement	Implicit	General water management cooperation; groundwater not explicitly addressed	Not specified	Joint Water Management Commission	Consider the necessity and feasibility of amending existing bilateral agreements and draft agreements to adapt the legal framework for the implementation of future Water Master Plans for all six Transboundary Aquifers (TBAs) identified in the project scope
Montenegro–Albania Framework Agreement	Explicit	Covers shared water bodies including Cemi/Cijevna; sustainable use and protection	Mutual notification and coordination; joint monitoring	Permanent Water Resources Management Commission	
Draft Agreement Bosnia and Herzegovina–Montenegro	Explicit	Addresses shared aquifers (e.g. Bilečko Lake, Piva); sustainable management and compensation for impacts	Joint monitoring and data exchange; risk assessment	Permanent Water Management Commission	

Thank you

