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# **Turkey : Project on pollution control in Izmir Bay and integrated management of aegean rivers 1997 - 1999**

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When they met in Paris on 5 March 1997, the Turkish and French Ministers for the Environment agreed to launch a pilot project aimed at the integrated management of water resources (infrastructures and pollution control) of the three Aegean rivers, GEDIZ, KUZEY EGE and MENDERES, in the Izmir area.

This project, which particularly aimed to control pollution in Izmir Bay in the Aegean Sea, was supervised by a joint steering committee made up of the Ministry of the Environment, DSI, Iller Bankasi and SPO, on the Turkish side, and of the Ministry of the Environment, the French Embassy in Turkey, the Rhone-Mediterranean-Corsica Water Agency and IOWater, on the French side.

The French Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry paid an amount of 3.200 million French francs out of the FASEP Fund for the first phase of this programme which was jointly implemented by IOWater, ANTEA, BRL Engineering and SEURECA-SPACE, in support of a technical field team made up of the Turkish partners.

**During 18 months, IOWater organised and planned the actions of many experts.** Using existing collected information, these actions made it possible to assess the status of this area, both in qualitative and quantitative terms, in order to "**prove the feasibility of integrated water resource management in the Aegean river basins**", **and to propose measures to make further progress.**

In Izmir, on 22 March 1999, World Water Day, the International Office for Water, on behalf of the group, ceremoniously submitted the final conclusions of this first phase to Mr. Firuz Demir YASAMIS, the Turkish Under Secretary of State for the Environment, in the presence of Mr. Cyril BOUYEURE, head of the Trade Commission of the French Embassy in Ankara and Mr. Laurent CAPLAT, representative of the French Ministry of the Environment.

A detailed presentation of the document was given to the joint Pilot Committee who approved the conclusions.

In addition to an overall assessment and a detailed survey of the area, **the study of the first phase recommended three main actions corresponding to the terms of reference :**

• **A priority action programme**, with a budget of 40 million Euros, regroups 28 projects, the most important of which deal with water quality protection in the Gediz basin. In general terms, these actions are to be undertaken in the short term and involve urban or industrial treatment plants.

This priority action programme was drawn up after the assessment of the ability to pay of the different water users in the region and the simulation of a financial system based on their contributions.

• **A pilot institution for the Gediz basin** : the study proposes the creation - based on existing texts regarding associations in Turkey - of a basin organisation applying the principles of integrated management, users' participation and the use of financial incentives through the introduction of taxes on withdrawals and discharges, so that the funds collected can then be used for the preservation of water quality.

• **An integrated basin information system** : it is broadly outlined in the assessment document which deals, above all, with the quality of collected data, their comprehensiveness, and the partnership between the various data producers. In the medium term, this system could be supported by a local body such as the one proposed for the Gediz basin,

Various missions (from November 1997 to March 1999), carried out by the Group's experts, made it possible to establish precisely :

- The objectives to be set for this system, based on an analysis of the local partners' expectations ;
- The organisation of the management structure and the necessary co-ordination for the efficient operation of this system ;
- The identification of the information to be collected and the organisation of the information flow between partners, while ensuring that the quality of the data exchanged is controlled.

It is essential to get effective and reliable measurements and analyses, thus ensuring an in-depth knowledge of the uses of abstracted water and of discharges, carried out while using the same standards whoever the network manager may be.

A 3-year work programme was recommended, aiming at the collection and optimum development of regional data necessary for integrated water resource management calling upon Euro-Mediterranean (MEDA) and multilateral funds, within the framework of the METAP III Programme in particular.