

The International Odra Project (Summary)

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The International Odra Project (IOP), which started work in July 1997, is supported by the Federal Ministry for Research, Technology, Education and Science of the FRG. In this interdisciplinary research project presently 11 German and Polish groups of scientists are co-operating. In the future the inclusion of Czech research groups is planned.

Besides a contribution to the development of the European integration and especially the intensification of the German-Polish-Czech collaboration it is the primary scientific goal of the IOP to describe the status, dynamics as well as the metabolism of the pollutants present. Basis for this is the simultaneous and comprehensive determination of all scientific parameters in all compartments of the Odra River. On the basis of these results it is possible to:

- define a modern monitoring system which comprises all toxicologically relevant pollutants;
- provide arguments for sanitation measures;
- develop quality criteria for several regions (settlement and industrial areas, areas used for production of drinking water, Regions for protection of nature and landscape).

Moreover the project will create a forum for all internationally and nationally working, presently scattered and not well co-ordinated Odra research. For this reason the IOP intends to initiate and organize a series of International Odra Research Conferences (IORC). The first one will be held from June 16 to June 19 1998 in Sklarska Poreba.

Analogous to the strategy at other transboundary rivers (e.g. at the Elbe and Rhine) the results will be made available to the International Commission for the Protection of the Odra River (ICPO), involved governments as well as the commission of transboundary waters as a basis for decisions on political activities as well as measures of hydrological engineering.

In particular the following regionally differentiated activities are planned:

- searching of inorganic and organic pollutants in all compartments (biota, water, suspended matter, sediments as well as flood sediments) of the Odra river. This includes the search for totally new pollutants not covered by non-target screening so far;
- characterization of synergistic and toxic effects;
- description of the transport and conversion behaviour of pollutants;
- determination and characterization of sources and sinks of the pollutants as well as parameters influencing their transport and metabolic behaviour.

These investigations contribute to the evaluation of the amount of pollutants reaching the Baltic Sea via Szczecin Lagoon as well as the characterisation of their sources. In this way the interests of HELCOM are touched.

During the workshop about flood consequences held from January 12 to 14 in Hamburg it became obvious that by using different analytical methods in the framework of monitoring of the Baltic Sea and Odra river respectively the after-flood data are not well comparable. For this reason the IOP offers to develop a uniform standard of analytical procedures in co-operation with HELCOM and in consideration of European defaults.

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