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The Petition “Not just eight are using the Black Sea”

Geographically, the Black Sea is almost isolated from the ocean and a third of Continental Europe belongs to its catchment area. The Black Sea is very sensitive to anthropogenic impacts due to its large water drainage basin and its limited connectivity with the planet's ocean. Therefore, the pollution of coastal waters and the quality of the main and the amount of drained river water are factors that determine its overall ecological status.

So, apart from the eight riparian countries (Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Georgia, Armenia, Russia, Ukraine and Moldova), the environmental status of the Black Sea is significantly determined by the environmental status of the waters flowing into the Black Sea Basin.

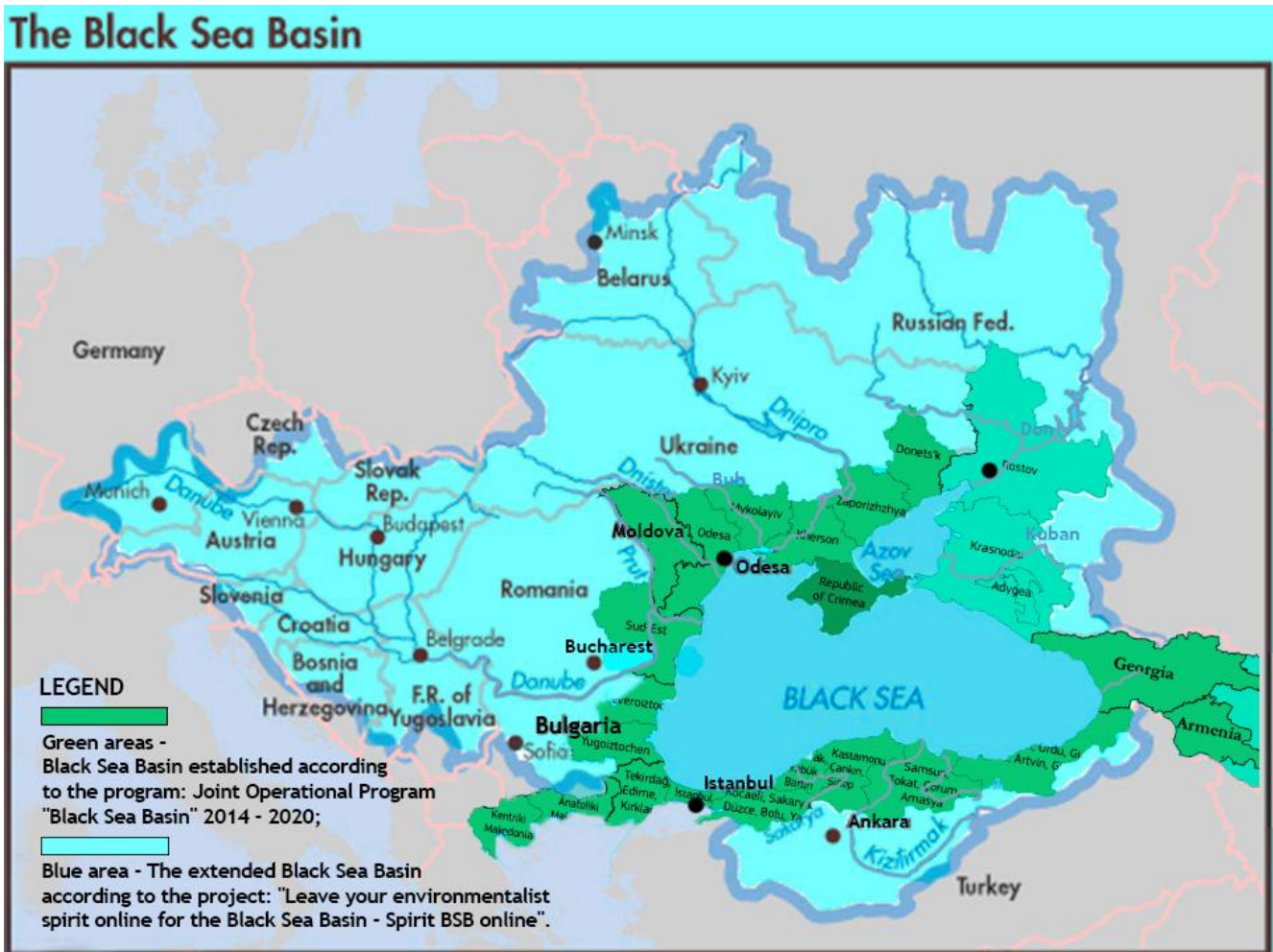


Fig.1 The Black Sea Extensive Basin with the hydrographic basins of the component rivers

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Our project "Leave your Environmentalist Spirit Online for the Black Sea Basin - Spirit BSB online", developed on the Joint Operational Programme Black Sea Basin 2014 - 2020, aims to investigate all possible sources of pollution in the Black Sea Basin. Into this purpose we have established an Extended Black Sea Basin comprising 17 countries (Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Bosnia, Slovenia, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Turkey, Bulgaria) with rivers (Danube, Dniester, Dnieper, Don, Rioni, Kizil-Irmak, Chorokhi, Sakarya, Yesil-Irmak, Kodori) which flow into the Black Sea. The rivers from the Extended Black Sea Basin are real "highways" for collecting all pollutant emissions and accidental discharges, with final destination into the Black Sea.

Therefore, not only 8 riparian countries use and bring their impact of pollution on the Black Sea. Those areas from the 17 countries crossed and served by polluting "highways" by rivers bring their significant impact on the state of the Black Sea environment.

Consequently, not only the 8 riparian countries must participate in the protection of the Black Sea. All areas and all actors from the 17 countries identified as being the Extended Black Sea Basin must actively contribute to the protection of the Black Sea, because they also use it to a large extent.

We want to sound the alarm to decision-makers, environmental authorities, scientists, environmental NGOs, citizens accountable for raising awareness.

Our petition seeks to draw the attention of all countries in which the Extended Black Sea Basin is located to step up efforts to limit pollution of the Black Sea.

To achieve this difficult goal, we address you with the following suggestions:

- I) Improved waste management;
- II) Cooperation with neighboring states for the reduction of organic pollutants, sewage, agricultural practices, plastics (Rivers are today highways for plastic waste);
- III) Promoting the circular economy and reducing waste, especially plastic waste;
- IV) Concluding agreements and conventions for the protection of the environment in the extended Black Sea Basin between environmental organizations and economic agents that produce pollution;
- V) Development of awareness programs for the protection of the Black Sea to be implemented in all countries of the Extended Black Sea Basin;
- VI) Development of new (innovative) management strategies for the prevention and reduction of water pollution (rivers, streams) in the Extended Black Sea Basin
- VII) Introduction of punitive measures in international environmental legislation for repeated violations of water pollution regulations
- VIII) Strengthening the environmental control and training the volunteers of the environmental activists for notifying the water pollution and the pollution sources.

Finally, what we ask of you in the petition "Not just eight are using the Black Sea" is to convey to us that you undertake to contribute to the protection of the Black Sea through one of the measures suggested or others identified by you.

And if you send us the simple message that you are aware that your area also uses and has an impact on the state of the Black Sea environment and that you assume that you must participate in

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its protection, we will note that our petition gained and brought add value within the general actions for the protection of the Black Sea. In the end, the awareness that we are polluting the Black Sea is the first step in protecting it!

Thank you for reading the petition and we look forward to hearing from you!

Additional information on pollution and sources of pollution in the Black Sea Basin, as well as about our project can be found on the platform www.spiritbsb.online.ro.

We also want to inform you that in May 2022 our team will organize in Constanta, Romania, THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE "*NOT JUST EIGHT ARE USING THE BLACK SEA*", the conference for which please send us your interest to participate, in order to send you the invitation and the agenda in advance.

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