CHINA, DANUBE REGION AND REPUBLIC OF SERBIA IN THE LIGHT OF CONTEMPORARY ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims to review the basic similarities and differences between the Chinese environmental policy and policies of the countries in the Danube region. Contemporary environmental challenges of global character represent the general context of the debate. The Chinese response to contemporary environmental challenges is analyzed in the second part of the paper through review of the development and the basic characteristics of politics and law in China. The third part of the paper highlights some of the factors that determine the environmental situation and the strategic objectives of the Danube region countries in the context of the EU objectives. The paper also points to some specifics of importance for the Republic of Serbia as the Danube country in the process of the EU integration. In order to examine the similarities and differences between the national environmental policy of China and policies of the Danube region, the authors point to the several criteria such as a level of economic development and membership in international treaties of the global character. The indicators of importance for climate change (the difference in the level of economic development and CO2 emissions, the vulnerability of the state and the production of nuclear energy) are underlined. The authors discuss the view that the similarities and differences between Chinese and the Danube region states environmental policies should be researched primarily through the prism of the similarities and differences between Chinese and the EU policy,

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due to the fact the all countries in the Danube region are either member of the EU or in the process of the EU integration. However, because of the huge differences within the Danube region countries, the specifics of each country of the Danube region individually should be included in a detailed analysis. These similarities and differences represent the factors that determine the conditions for the establishment of cooperation between China and the Danube region.

Key words: China, Danube region, Danube Strategy, Serbia, EU, environmental policy, environmental legislation, climate change, EU integration.

1. CONTEMPORARY ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

While, at a first glance, China and the countries of the Danube region are two separate and distinct legal, political, economic, etc. units, the existence of similarities and differences in the globalization takes on a special character.[2] Contemporary problems in the environment may have elements of the special challenges, bearing in mind the overall circumstances that arise in the process of globalization, as well as their connection to environmental problems.[3] The main expectations directed towards an attempt to provide solutions to common problems, or problems in different ways related to all countries of the world are faced with various constraints. Some authors speak of "global risks".[4] However,

[2] The importance of looking at the similarities and differences between the Chinese approach to solving environmental problems and one that is practiced in the Danube region could be assessed in different methodological ways and with different defining criteria. Here that issue is not considered in a special way but it is considered in the context of the general contemporary environmental problems.

[3] Globalization and the unfolding of global trends imply that environmental conditions and policies cannot be fully understood – or properly managed – in isolation from global dynamics. A selection of global megatrends include following: Diverging global population trends; Towards a more urban world; Changing disease burdens and risks of pandemics; Accelerating technological change; Continued economic growth; An increasingly multipolar world; Intensified global competition for resources; Growing pressures on ecosystems; Increasingly severe consequences of climate change; Increasing environmental pollution; Diversifying approaches to governance. EEA, 2015, The European environment – state and outlook 2015: synthesis report, European Environment Agency, Copenhagen, p. 37.

[4] See for example Hertwig J., Maus, S., zu Schwabedissen A.M., Schuller M. (Eds) *Global risks – Constructing world order through law, politics and economics*, Dresden papers on law and policy of the United Nations, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, 2010.

the question of their prioritization and understanding of the relationship between short-term and long-term interests is a subject of serious debates. In the absence of an innovation and reform of the global governance system, harmonization of global, regional and local peculiarities, general and specific interests of various entities, long-term and short-term goals, and so on, takes on the characteristics of issues which (almost) cannot be solved.[5] The complexity of this process is supported by the differences systemic in nature and penetrates into the need of redefining the overall relations in the international community. "Responses at national and regional levels are already available, but addressing the underlying drivers of global environmental degradation, rather than the pressures or symptoms, would require the sustained evolution of rules, institutions, economic systems and values to transform the current approach to environmental management."[6] The intertwining of universal, regional and local dimensions of contemporary environmental problems, and ways of regulating the relationship between the various entities about it, has an impact on the various issues outside the inner "ecological" context.[7] However, one of the first questions that should be given a response in a more detailed analysis is associated with the method of defining the contemporary problems in the environment. The debate on global issues in the environment is essentially a debate about contemporary dilemmas of globalization in general and their implications on the environment, or vice versa. In addition, consideration of the relationship between globalization and the environment can be done in different ways depending on several factors (for example, the dominant aspect of globalization is taken as a starting point, that environmental issues are given particular importance, which institutions are at the centre of analysis, how to understand the position of some subjects, how to understand the situation of developing countries, etc.).[8]

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[5] See for example Biermann F., Davies O., van der Grijp N. Environmental policy integration and the architecture of global environmental governance, *International Environmental Agreements*, 9/2009, 351–369.

[6] *GEO 5 – Global Environment Outlook, Environment for the future we want, UNEP*, 2012. p. 460.

[7] For a broader comparison of global and local dimension of environmental problems see: Todić, D., Grbić, V., Globalni problemi životne sredine i lokalna samouprava u procesu evropskih integracija Republike Srbije, *Megatrend revija,* 2/2013, 193–208.

[8] There are a significant number of references in which in a variety of ways considering these questions. For example: Panayotou, T. *Globalization and environment*, CID

Definition of the most important environmental problems in some international documents and theoretical debates has recognizable common elements, although we can notice some differences. However, the UN Millennium Declaration, in a concise way, as the most important environmental problems mentions the following: climate change and the Kyoto Protocol, preservation, management and sustainable development of all types of forest, full implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Desertification, water resource management, natural and man-induced disasters and access to information on the human genome.[9] The final document of the Conference in Rio de Janeiro in 2012 "The Future We Want" has special points to several major problems in the environment and they include: climate change, protection of biodiversity, forests, desertification and the loss of land, management of chemicals and waste, etc.[10] Different authors in different ways define the key issues and challenges of the current environmental policy. Thus, for example, when talking about global problems Howard mentions: population pressure, climate change and wars. When he speaks of "environmental health" at the regional level, he analyzes: air pollution, energy production, urbanization, transport problems, water and health. In local problems, he classifies: solid and

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Working Paper No. 53, July 2000, Center for International Development at Harvard University; *Globalization and the environment – perspectives from OECD and Dynamic Non–Member Economies*, proceedings, OECD, 2000. *Globalization, growth and poverty: building an inclusive world economy*, A World Bank Policy Research Report, Washington, 2002; *From Globalization to Sustainable Development: UNEPs work on trade, economics, and sustainable development*, Background Paper No. 1, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, May 2002. Falk, R. Environmental Protection in an Era of Globalization, *Yearbook of International Environmental Law*, 6.1/1996, 3–25; Yousuf T., Environmental Protection in the Era of Globalization "A Quest for Global Consensus", *International Journal of Innovative Research & Development*, 2/2013, 141–146; Boomgaard P., Hart M., Globalization, Environmental Change, and Social History: An Introduction, *International Review of Social History*, 55/2010, Supplement, 1–26.

[9] *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, A/res/55/2, 18 September 2000, par. 23. See, also, Kofi A. Annan, *We the Peoples – the role of the UN in the 21 century*, New York, UN, 2000.

[10] *The Future We Want: Outcome document adopted at Rio+20*, A/CONF.216/L.1. 19 June 2012. http://www.uncsd2012.org/content/documents/727The%20Future%20We%20Want%2019%20June%201230pm.pdf

hazardous waste management, pesticide control, food safety, quality of indoor air, workplace safety, radiation, preparation for emergency situations, etc.[11] Environmental protection is of a high importance both for the present and future generations.[12] For a discussion on the similarities and differences between the Chinese attitude towards the environmental problems and the one that exists in the countries of the Danube region there are more issues that should be kept in mind. In addition to differences of historical, cultural, economic and political character, there is also a question of the developed - underdeveloped relationship, and the position of developing countries in contemporary globalization processes that contain elements relevant to the field of the environment.[13] This question for this article has a specific

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[11] Frumkin H. (Ed) *Environmental Health, from global to local*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2006.

[12] Sanja Jelisavac Trošić, Jasmina Subić, „Krivično-pravna zaštita životne sredine u Republici Srbiji i Evropskoj uniji", *Evropsko zakonodavstvo*, br. 54, oktobar-decembar 2015, UDK: 34 God XIII, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Beograd, pp. 230.

[13] According to the definition of the International Institute of Statistics developing countries are defined according to their total national income (gross national income - GNI) *per capita* per year. For all countries (total 139), whose GNI is US $ 11.905 or less than this amount, it is considered to belong to the category of developing countries. The World Bank classifies countries into several groups: countries with low income (up to $ 1.036), countries with lower average incomes (to $ 4.085), countries with higher medium income (up to $ 12.615), and high-income countries (over $ 12.616). UN classification in a special group allocates the least developed countries and small island states. See Internet: http://www.isi-web.org/component/content/article/5-root/root/81-developing. (29.12. 2013); Internet: http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications. (2.1.2014); Internet: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/ policy/wesp/wesp_current/2012 country_class.pdf. (2.1.2014); For UNCTAD classification see: *The Least Developed Countries Report 2012*, UNCTAD, United Nations, New York and Geneva, 2012. pp. xii, xiii. http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ldc2012_en.pdf. (14.12.2013); Internet: http://www.g77.org/doc/. (8.1.2014). For the broadest definition of the concept of "developing countries" we could consider the one that derives from membership of the G-77, formed in 1964. Meanwhile, the number of countries belonging to this "largest intergovernmental organization of developing countries in the UN" has risen to 133 countries. Sometime later they (1971) formed the Intergovernmental Group of 24 (G-24) on international monetary issues and development. All member states of the G-77 that are not members of the G-24 have the opportunity to participate in the meetings of the G-24. See Internet: http://www.g24.org/about.html. (8.1.2014).

significance not only because of the specific situation of China, but also because of the huge difference in the level of economic development that exists between the countries of the Danube region.[14]

2. CHINA, STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND POLICY

When we talk about the state of the environment in China (as a prerequisite for the development of environmental policy and law), the literature usually first points to the fact that China is a country that has the world's largest population, with nearly 1.3 billion people, "raw natural conditions, a relatively small area of arable land, few water resources and heavy pollution.[15] Half of China's population lives on 13% of the territory (118 inhabitants per km2) causing enormous pressure on the environment."[16] This high level of population concentration in urban areas has resulted in the fact that policy measures were mainly aimed at state-owned large urban areas.[17] A problem related to the state of the environment in China is an issue that causes different reactions. Multi-decade dynamic economic growth is one of the main reasons for large importance and influence that nowadays China has at the international level. We witnessed, at the beginning of 2016, that the dynamics of the Chinese economy has had a global impact and the repercussions on all economies in the world.[18] With the rapid economic development, after the reform and opening of China from the beginning of the seventies of the twentieth century, the problems related to environmental

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[14] In this work, we shall not further discuss this question even though it deserves further attention.

[15] Part of the article referring to China is based on the text from Todić, D., Kina i Evropska unija – sličnosti i razlike u pravu i politici životne sredine i članstvo u međunarodnim ugovorima, *Strani pravni život*, 3/2015, 63–79.

[16] S.Beyer, „Environmental Law and Policy in the People's Republic of China", *Chinese Journal of International Law*, 1/2006, 187.

[17] M. Joshua, „The Paradoxes of Environmental Policy and Resource Management in Reform-Era China", *Economic Geography*, 3/2000, 255.

[18] Miroslav Antevski, Sanja Jelisavac Trošić, „Chinese Response to Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and Trans Pacific Partnership", *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol. LXVII, No. 1161, January–March 2016, pp. 124.

pollution became more and more pronounced.[19] The spectacular annual growth of almost 10 percent on average over the last two decades has resulted in a significant increase in the living standards of hundreds of millions Chinese. At the same time, this development had resulted in the increasingly prominent environmental problems.[20]

The current state of the environment can be described in four key characteristics as follows: 1. Complex problems of pollution with a wide scope of pollution; 2. Population exposure to the pollution is large, lasts for many years, and the impact on the health is accumulated which cannot be eliminated in a short period of time; 3. The difference between urban and rural areas is significant, although the pollution of water and soil is a major problem in rural areas; 4. Traditional health problems were caused by inadequate sanitary infrastructure and today the problems are increasing due to industrialization and urbanization.[21] Recognizing that the country "is one of the most polluted in the world," and that the environmental problems reached enormous proportions, Chan mentions the following arguments: at least seven of the ten most polluted cities in the world are located in China, two-thirds of the 660 cities are surrounded by waste dumps, a one-third of the country is exposed to soil erosion, 75% of lakes and half rivers are polluted, 75% of the water is discharged without treatment, 93% of the Yellow river flow does not meet the Chinese quality standards, 60% of the population uses drinking water that does not meet WHO standards, one in four residents dies from respiratory diseases.[22] According to the findings of the UNEP Report,

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[19] M.Zhilin, B.Shuchun, X.Bing, „Environmental Legislation in China: Achievements, Challenges and Trends", *Sustainability*, 6/2014, 8968; doi:10.3390/su6128967

[20] S.Beyer, 187. It is estimated that economic growth in the past three decades have resulted in significant destruction of the environment in the range of 8% to 13% of GDP. G.Heggelund, E.B. Backer, „China and UN Environmental Policy: Institutional Growth, Learning and Implementation", *International Environmental Agreements*, 4/2007, 4.

[21] The 12th Five-Year Plan for the Environmental Health Work of National Environmental Protection, Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China, 21st, September 2011, 3.

[22] C.Gerald, *China's Compliance In Global Affairs, Volume 4: Trade, Arms Control, Environmental Protection, Human Rights*, World Scientific Publishing Co, River Edge, NJ, USA, 2005, 144. In the same work, among other things, we can found presentation

China suffers from water shortages due to diminishing supply and industrial pollution. Similarly, M. Oksenberg and E. Economy, emphasize the problems associated with air quality, water pollution, lack of water, soil erosion, and loss of arable land and inadequate management of hazardous waste.[23] When it comes to greenhouse gas emissions, it is estimated that the share of China's GHG (Greenhouse Gas) emissions (*per capita*) is between 5 and 6%. However, according to per share in total emissions, China is first in the world.[24] The objectives of the national environmental policy are defined in a number of strategic documents and adopted regulations. The key objectives of industrial development in the environmental field are: the prevention and control of air pollution, the prevention and control of water pollution, solid waste treatment, water saving technologies, clean production technologies, environmental monitoring instruments, materials and chemicals for the protection of the environment, rationalization of resources and the development of instruments in the field of environment.[25] It is believed that the beginning of the development of the environmental legislation in China came relatively late compared to many other countries.[26] The first special law in the environmental field is the one that was passed in 1979, and the regulations aimed at controlling environmental pollution reached its peak in 1990.[27] In the broadest sense, strategies and objectives in the field of climate change are part of the

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of the development of the country policies and regulations in the environmental area, overview of the occurrence of non-governmental organizations and Chinese diplomacy in the field of environmental protection, etc. *Ibid*, 143–171.

[23] M.Oksenberg, E.Economy, China's Accession to and Implementation of International Environmental Accords 1978–95, in B.Weiss, H.K. Jacobson, editors, *Engaging Countries: Strengthening Compliance with International Environmental Accords* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998), Chapter 11. 4.

[24] For more see: Dragoljub Todić, *Klimatske promene u pravu i reforma sistema upravljanja*, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Beograd, 2014, 56–57.

[25] The 10th Five – Year Plan for the Development of the Environmental Protection Industry, State Economic and Trade Commission, People's Republic of China, 2014, http://english.mep.gov.cn/Plans_Reports/special_10th_plan/200709/t20070910_108976.htm. 10.3.2015.

[26] Ying this development directly linkes to the strengthening of international activities in the field of environment including the results of the Stockholm Conference in 1972. V. S.Ying, „The Chinese Environmental Lawmaking Framework", *Chinese Journal of International Law,* 1/2002, 232.

[27] M.Zhilin, B.Shuchun, 8968.

measures provided by the five-year plan of national economic and social development (2010), which made projections of GDP growth (7% per year). This way, for the first time, China provided plans for the reduction of CO2 emission intensity per unit of GDP by 17% and provided measures relating to strengthening the capacity of adaptation to climate change, strengthening international cooperation, etc.[28] However, the question of implementation of the legislation in practice remains open.[29] Joshua Muldavin points to the paradox that is reflected in the fact that while the economic reforms brought "deregulations in many spheres of production, regulations have been strengthened on paper." The transfer of powers to the local level have, among other things, resulted in the fact that many regulations remained poorly or not at all implemented in practice.[30] China is a member of the UNFCCC and the KP (from 1994 and 2005 respectively). Following the policy of opening to the world, the 1978 economic reforms and "spectacular economic growth" after which "China's energy picture has changed dramatically" to the year 2009, China overtook the US and became the largest energy consumer in the world.[31] The International Energy Agency estimates that by 2035, China's energy needs will be doubled compared to 2008, thus the Chinese share in international demand will increase from 17.4% to 23.4%. Still, the main energy sources will be domestic coal reserves, but with "the growing dependence on oil imports."[32]

3. DANUBE REGION

In an analysis of the environmental conditions in the Danube region, we should take into account the specificities of the economic and social

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[28] *Second National Communication on Climate Change of The People's Republic of China*, p. 46. http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/natc/chnnc2e.pdf, 22/02/2013.

[29] V. B.Rooij, „Implementation of Chinese Environmental Law: Regular Enforcement and Political Campaigns", *Development and Change,* 1/2006, 57–74. B.Rooij, W.Hung, L.Carlos, "Fragile Convergence: Understanding Variation in the Enforcement of China's Industrial Pollution Law", *Law & Policy,* 1/2010, 14–37.

[30] Joshua, M. op. cit. 255.

[31] Zhang X. Z., An analysis of China's energy demand and supply policy framework, *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews, Energy and Environment*, No. 2/July/August 2013, 422. doi: 10.1002/wene.12.

[32] *Ibid*, 423–426.

development of the countries.[33] A particular attention should be paid to the fact that a significant part of the countries in this region belongs to the most developed countries in the world economy.[34] The European Union presents a general framework within which the environmental conditions should be considered. The EU is in the last 40 years a world leader in solving the environmental problems. All collected information show that significant results in reducing the pressures on the environment are achieved and that the standards established within the EU, depending on the area, are among the strictest in the world. However, the EU is exposed to significant challenges, particularly with regard to global environmental problems and the effort to stimulate the activity of all subjects in international relations to resolve them. Nevertheless, the GDP/pc for countries in the region reaches only about 2/3 (65%) of the member countries EU-27 and 58% levels of OECD countries in 2011.[35] Assessment of the situation in various sectors shows the existence of the numerous differences between the countries belonging to the region. The main differences can be perceived through the differences in the level of economic development between the countries of the region members of the

[33] According to the provisions of Article 1a Convention on Cooperation for the Protection of the sustainable use of the river Danube, as "Danube country" are considered "sovereign countries that share a significant part of the hydrological catchment area of the river Danube. Under significant part is considered one that exceeds 200 km2 of the total hydrological catchment area."

[34] It may be interesting the fact that the report of the European Environment Agency (2015), in the part relating to the regions, especially examines the situation in the Danube region. It gives an overview of the situation in the Black Sea region, the Arctic region and the region of the Mediterranean Sea. Within the framework of the Black Sea region are included the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine. http://www.eea.europa.eu/soer-2015/countries/black-sea (16.9.2016).

[35] *"Socio-Economic Assessment of the Danube Region: State of the Region, Challenges and Strategy Development"*, Final Report Part I March 2014, Centre for European Economic Research GmbH (ZEW) Mannheim, nna Institute for International Economic Studies (wiiw), 4.

For an overview of characteristics see: *The Danube River Basin District, Part A – Basin-wide overview*, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) in cooperation with the countries of the Danube River Basin District, Vienna, 2005. 26–36.

EU and the countries which are not members of this organization. In some of the Danube region countries one part of the population is even exposed to the extreme poverty. "About 2.3 million people within the Danube region live on less than $2.50 a day (purchasing power parity [PPP]), which is the regional level for extreme poverty. The poor disproportionately reside in rural areas, and there are 10 million to 12 million Roma, the largest and poorest minority group in the region."[36] Within the countries that are the EU members we can also monitor some other differences, primarily between old member states and countries that became members in one of the last few rounds of enlargement. In addition to differences in the level of economic development, the specifics of historical development, the inherited characteristics of the economic structure, the dynamics of the process of economic transition, etc. also strongly influence the possibilities of resolving certain environmental issues and attitude to contemporary environmental challenges.[37] The strategic commitment of the Danube Region countries in the environmental issues are in a substantial way defined by the strategic objectives of EU, which majority of countries in the region belongs, while the rest of the countries has ambitions to become a member of this organization.[38] Visions of the EU by 2050 are defined by the VII Action Plan, entitled "Living well within the limits of our planet" and several other strategic documents. Activities for the realization of the vision 2050 are directed at three key areas: 1) protection of natural resources, which are to support economic prosperity and welfare of the people; 2) promoting low-carbon economic and resource-efficient social development; and 3) protection of human health from the risks related to the conditions in the environment. Specifics of the Danube region countries are presented in the Danube Strategy, which is part of an effort to strategically devise a common

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[36] *Water and Wastewater Services – A State of the Sector*, Regional Report | May 2015, World Bank Group, Danube Water Program, Vienna, Austria / May 2015. p. ix.

[37] In the mentioned report by the European Environment Agency (2015), the differences between countries within the European Region are observed in relation to the following issues: organic farming, emissions of air pollutants, protected areas, energy consumption, emissions of greenhouse gases, efficiency and productivity of material resources, passenger transport and the production and management of municipal solid waste. http://www.eea.europa.eu/soer#tab-cross-country-comparisons (16.9.2016).

[38] For the wider EU strategic objectives see: Grbić, V., Antevski M., Todić, D., *Finansiranje i zajedničke politike Evropske unije*, Beograd, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, 2013. 244–255.

policy in the region, led by the EU. 19 countries share the Danube River Basin, which makes it the world's most international river basin.[39] The area covered by the EU Strategy for the Danube Region stretches from the Black Forest (Germany) to the Black Sea (Romania-Ukraine-Moldova) and is home to 115 million inhabitants.[40] Protecting the environment is one of the four pillars identified in the Danube strategy, as areas of activity of the Danube region countries. With the restoration and maintenance of water quality and biodiversity and land preservation, also as a special priority area of environmental protection is the management of the environmental risks.[41] Especially points to preventive activities in the context of possible natural disasters and those caused by human factor, as well as analytical elaboration of possible consequences of climate change in the region. Finally, starting from the existing international frameworks and approaches to climate change, but also from the significance of the problem for the overall development of the Danube Region and the whole EU, it is envisaged to develop a Danube strategy for adjustment to climate change.[42] Legislation in the field of environment, for the most part, represents the EU inheritance. The development of the EU regulations started at the end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies of the twentieth century.[43] For several decades, this organization has been able

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[39] See: https://www.icpdr.org/main/danube-basin/countries-danube-river-basin (23.9.2016).

[40] See: http://www.danube-region.eu/about/the-danube-region (23.9.2016).

[41] In addition to activities related to connecting the Danube Region (transport, energy, tourism), building prosperity (education, science, information technology, etc.) and strengthening the region (institutional capacity, security, the fight against organized crime), for more see: *European Union Strategy for Danube Region*, European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions, COM (2010) 715 final, Brussels, 8.12.2010, 8-9. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/ LexUriServ/LexUri Serv.do?uri =COM:2010:0715:FIN:EN:PDF. (16.6.2013). Stojović J., Knežević S., Bogdanović A., Knežević I., *Vodič kroz dunavsku strategiju*, Beograd, Evropski pokret u Srbiji, Beograd, 2012. http://emins.org/sr/publikacije/knjige/12-dunavska_sr.pdf. (165.2013). Stojić-Karanović E., Petrović D.: *Dunavska strategija–od vizije ka ostvarenju*, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Međunarodni naučni forum „Dunav–reka saradnje", Beograd, 2010.

[42] See: *ICPDR Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change*, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, Vienna, 2013.

[43] For more see: Todić, D., *Vodiči kroz EU politike – Životna sredina*, Evropski pokret u Srbiji, Beograd, 2011.

to develop an entirely new system of regulations with standards that are considered to be the highest in the world. For the Member States, these regulations have a specific character and represent a significant part of the system of norms in the field of environment, in addition to the regulations of the national character. Relations between the national rules, which must comply with the EU legislation requirements, depending on the nature of certain rules and regulations of the EU, have specific characteristics that resemble the relations within the federal government. Meeting the requirements of the EU legislation is under the jurisdiction of a Member State, but monitoring mechanisms have been established at the level of the organization. The Danube region countries, which are not members of the EU, are in various stages of the process of harmonization of national legislation with the EU regulations. In the case of the Republic of Serbia (RS), we should take into account several key determinants of Serbia's position, such as the Danube character, its participation and contribution to the total global emissions of greenhouse gases, membership in international treaties with global character, attitude towards regional and local environmental problems that are related to global problems, dynamics and content of European integration, and so on. The dynamics of the EU integration is a key factor that determines the current and (probably) future efforts of the Republic of Serbia. The answer to the global environmental challenges, including climate change, is in part defined by a number of strategic and other documents of the Republic of Serbia in different areas (environment, energy, water resource management, protection of biodiversity, waste management, hazardous chemicals, etc.). A year prior to the adoption of the Danube Strategy by the EU Council, in June 2010, Government of the Republic of Serbia set its own objectives and priority areas. The general aim was the utilization of the Danube potentials as a resource significant for the sustainable development of Serbia. The one of the Priority Area is the Environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources along the entire Danube River Basin.[44] The common denominator of the main

[44] Sanja Jelisavac Trošić, "Research, education and information and communication technologies in Serbia", in: Danube Strategy: From Idea To Implementation – From Theoretical Considerations To Investment Projects – Compendium Of Presentations At The 25th Conference "Danube – River Of Cooperation, eds.: Edita Stojić Karanović, Nevenka Jeftić Šarčević, Institute of International Politics and Economics, International Scientific Forum "Danube – River of Cooperation", 2016, pp. 209.

RS objectives, in different important fields for facing the global challenges, is contained in the determination of the Republic of Serbia that by the end of the second decade of the XXI century harmonize its legislation and policies with the regulations and policies of the EU. With this in mind, for the cooperation between China and Serbia, the question of the both countries' relationship with the EU, have a decisive character.

4. DANUBE REGION AND CHINA[45]

4.1. Membership in international treaties with global character

A part of the obligations of the Danube region countries and China comes from international obligations, including obligations prescribed by the multilateral environmental treaties. Hence, membership in these international treaties can represent one of the criteria for assessment of the attitude towards the environmental problems of global character. Table 1 presents data on the membership of the Danube region countries and China in key international treaties of significance for solving global environmental problems (climate change and protection of the ozone layer, biodiversity, hazardous waste and chemicals management, protection of land and forests and the water management).

Table 1: The Danube Basin and China – membership in the global international agreements

State	UNFCCC	KP	PA	OLP	MP	CBD	Cites	CMS	RAM.	WCNH	BC	PIC	POPs	UNCD	UNWC
AL	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
AT	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
BA	+	+		+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	
BG	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	

[45] There are a number of methodological issues that may be raised when comparing data for one country (like China) and a group of countries (such as the Danube countries). Selection of the criteria (indicators) is one of such issues. Here we point to some elements of importance to cope with contemporary environmental challenges. Otherwise, the total comparison deserves much more space. It includes clearly defined methodological rules.

State	UNFCCC	KP	PA	OLP	MP	CBD	Cites	CMS	RAM.	WC NH	BC	PIC	POPs	UN CD	UN WC
ME	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
HR	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
CZ	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
IT	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
HU	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
MK	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
MD	+	+		+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	
DE	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
PL	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
RO	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
SK	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
SI	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
RS	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
CH	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
UA	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
EU	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	-[46]	-[47]	+	+	+	+	-[48]
CN	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	***RS***	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Note: AL – Albania, AT – Austria, BA – Bosnia and Herzegovina, BG – Bulgaria, ME – Montenegro, HR – Croatia, CZ – Czech, IT – Italia, HU – Hungary, MK – The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, MD – Moldova, DE – Germany, PL – Poland, RO – Romania, SK – Slovakia, SI – Slovenia, RS – Serbia, CH – Switzerland, UA – Ukraine, EU – European Union, CN – China; UNFCCC – UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, KP – Kyoto protocol, PA – Paris Agreement, OLP – Convention on Ozone Layer Protection; MP- Montreal protocol, CBD – Convention on biodiversity; CITES –

[46] All EU member states are members of the Ramsar Convention.

[47] ll 28 EU member states are members of the Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

[48] A total of 13 EU member states are parties to the Convention. They are: Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=UNTSONLINE&tabid=2&mtdsg_no=XXVII-12&chapter=27&lang=en#Participants (22.3.2015).

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; CMS – Convention on migratory species, RS – "Range state", RAM. – Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowls Habitat; WCNH - Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, BC - Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal; PIC – Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, POPs - Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, UNCD - United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, UNWC - Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses.

Source: official websites of international treaties (28.9.2016).

From the above table, a high level of uniformity in the membership of the Danube region countries and China can be seen. However, in a more detailed analysis, protocols and/or amendments to international treaties should be included. Also, there is a relatively uniform absence of the Paris climate change agreement's ratification. Only a several countries in the region ratified the UN Convention on the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses.

4.2. CO2 emissions, nuclear power and the (potential) threat

For few factors, it can be said to represent the starting conditions for the discussion of the Danube region countries' policy in the field of climate change. These are, for instance, the percentage of each state territory participation in the total Danube basin area, number of residents in such territory and gross national product per capita (GDP / pc).

a) In Table 2 we can see that the smallest share of territory in the Danube Basin occupy Albania, Macedonia, Poland, Italy with 0.1% and Switzerland with 0.2%. The largest share of the national territory that belongs to the Danube Basin occupies Romania (29%), Hungary (11.6%) and Serbia (10.2%).[49] The interests of the ten countries of the Danube region (Romania, Hungary, Serbia, Austria, Germany, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Ukraine)

[49] This criterion, along with the percentage of the population that inhabits the territory of the Danube basin of these (and other) countries, could be a prime factor in the detailed analysis of the determinants of climate change policy.

could be considered as a key policy for profiling the region as a whole, given that these are the countries with the highest share of the territory (constituting about 92%) and the largest number of residents who inhabit this region.

Table 2: The Danube Basin and China – the main indicators: population, GDP, CO2 emissions and production of nuclear energy

State	% DRB	POP.	GDP/ pc	CO2	CO2/ pc	CO2/ GDP	CO2/ kWh	CO2/kW h-coal	CO2/k Wh-oil	CO2/k Wh-ng	% nuclear energy	
											2010	2014
AL	< 0,1	<0.01	4 094	3.8	1.18	0.15	2	-	-	-		
AT	10	7.7	46 659	69.3	8.27	0.23	188	1 059	529	305		
BA	4,6	2.9	4 475	19.9	5.29	***0.72***	729	***1 368***	809	***632***		
BG	5,9	3.5	6 762	43.8	5.81	0.51	579	1 055	806	238	33.1	31.8
ME	0,9	0.2	6 682	2.1	3.31	0.33	405	1 328	-	-		
HR	4,4	3.1	13 509	19.0	4.30	0.27	305	866	548	367		
CZ	2,9	2.8	19 764	114.5	***10.89***	0.46	589	994	975	405	33.3	35.8
IT	< 0,1	0.02	35 851	398.5	6.59	0.24	406	968	823	374		
HU	11,6	10.1	13 009	48.9	4.89	0.29	317	1 101	860	365	42.1	53.6
MK	< 0,1	<0.01	4 561	8.2	3.99	0.43	687	1 033	977	-		
MD	1,6	1.1	1 631	6.1	1.72	0.62	583	-	687	520		
DE	7,0	9.4	41 788	***761.6***	9.32	0.28	461	889	583	346	28.4	15.8
PL	< 0,1	0.04	12 597	305.1	7.99	0.46	***781***	*865*	463	320		
RO	***29***	***21.7***	8 297	75.6	3.52	0.32	499	1 060	582	332	19.5	18.5
SK	5,9	5.2	16 554	35.9	6.45	0.32	197	1 001	674	385	***51.8***	***56.8***
SI	2,0	1.7	23 438	15.3	7.48	0.30	325	953	1 049	378	37.3	37.2
RS	***10,2***	***7.5***	***5 411***	***46.0***	***6.31***	***0.66***	***724***	***1 051***	***767***	***463***		
CH	0,2	0.02	***74 277***	43.8	5.63	0.15	27	-	975	253	38.0	37.9
UA	3,8	2.7	2 974	266.6	5.81	0.96	419	975	587	375	48.1	49.4
CN	-	-	***4 514***	***7 258.5***	***5.40***	***0.77***	***766***	***967***	***1044***	***507***	***1.8 19.3***	***2.4 18.9***

Note: DRB - the Danube river basin; POP. - The population in the DRB (mil); GDP/pc – GDP per capita, US$, 2010; CO2 emissions: Sectorial Approach, 2010. *million tons of*

CO2; CO2/ population – CO2 emissions / population, tons CO2/capita, 2010; CO2 emissions / GDP using purchasing power parities *kilograms CO2 / US dollar using 2005 prices;* CO2 emissions per kWh from electricity generation; CO2 emissions per kWh from electricity generation using coal/peat; CO2 emissions per kWh from electricity generation using oil; CO2 emissions per kWh from electricity generation using natural gas; The table outlines maximum and minimum values in each column.

Data source: http://www.icpdr.org/main/danube-basin/countries-danube-river-basin (10.8.2014); *CO2 Emissions from Fuel Combustion – 2012 Edition*, International Energy Agency, Paris. 2012; Source for GDP/pc (for 2010, in $) World Bank: http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?Code=NY.GDP.PCAP.CD&id=af3ce82b&report_name=Popular_indicators populartype=series&ispopular=y# (30.9.2016); Source for the share of nuclear power in energy production: World nuclear association: http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/Facts-and-Figures/Nuclear-generation-by-country/ (30.9.2016). Data for China (Mainland and Taiwan)

b) The estimated CO2 emissions, and trends in the part that refers to emissions per capita or emissions per GDP shows significant differences. It is possible to draw certain conclusions regarding the possibility of the countries of the region to participate in activities relating to climate changes. However, the largest differences between countries in the region are resulting from the basic indicators of the countries' level of economic development. The highest GDP/pc has Switzerland, with more than 70 000 $, and the smallest Moldova with $ 1,632. Differences in the proportion of the territory of certain countries that belong to the Danube basin and in connection with that, the number of people living in the territory that belongs to the Danube basin, are also enormous. From 11 countries through which the Danube flows, the highest GDP/pc has Austria ($ 44,916) and Germany ($ 40,164) and the lowest Moldova ($ 1,632) and Ukraine ($ 2,794). The difference between the highest and the lowest GDP/pc is 27 times. On the other hand, the highest CO2 emissions/pc has Czech Republic (10.89) and Germany (9.32), and minimum Moldova (1.72) and Croatia (4.3).

Chinese GDP/pc is in the level of the lowest in the Danube region, but above the Ukrainian and Moldovan GDP/pc. Chinese CO2 emissions/pc ranges between the minimum and maximum values of the Danube region countries.

c) For understanding the difference in the position of some countries in the Danube region, among other, it can be significant to monitor trends in

emissions of CO2/pc.[50] We can notice a continuous reduction of CO2 emissions/pc, since 1980 until today, only in the case of Germany, while other countries have oscillations, which include an increase in these values in individual periods. However, since 2005, for most of the countries there is a trend of reducing CO2 emissions/pc. On the other hand, in the case of China there is a trend of continuous increase in CO2 emissions/pc from 1.44 (1980) to 5.40 (2010).

d) Indicators relating to the share of nuclear energy in total energy production, as well as some other indicators in this respect, may be of importance for understanding the situation of individual countries in the region in relation to climate change policy.[51] As it can be seen from the Table 1, a part of the Danube region countries depends to a great extent on the production of nuclear power and it would be possible to talk about a special group of countries within the Danube region.[52] The share of this type of energy is particularly high in Hungary, Slovenia and Slovakia (over 50%), Ukraine (40%), and not insignificant proportion in the Czech Republic (35%), Bulgaria (31%), Romania (19%) and Germany (16%). The Danube region countries that produce nuclear energy (total of 9) constitute just over 63% of the territory of the Danube basin and about 58 million people. It is interesting that CO2 emissions from this group of countries make up a significant part of the total emissions of the Danube region countries, from which we could draw different conclusions. Six of the before mentioned ten states with the largest share in the territory of the Danube basin and the largest population, belongs to the group of countries dependent on nuclear power, and CO2 emissions/pc were

[50] The further analysis of new trends should take into account all the circumstances of the transition through which they passed (and pass) individual states of the Danube region.

[51] However, it should be borne in mind the need for cautious approach when performing final conclusions about the relationship between the use of nuclear energy and climate change stems from the different circumstances associated with the influence of the modes of production and use of nuclear energy to climate change in the continent. For certain aspects of this debate look at: Todić C. D. Nuklearna energija i klimatske promene u međunarodnom pravu: konvergencija i/ili divergencija ciljeva, *Politička revija*, 1/2014, 249–268.

[52] Consideration of the interests of this group could be the subject of specific analysis.

largest in Germany and Austria. In the case of China, the share of nuclear power is at a level of 2.4%.

e) Vulnerability (and potential) threat to countries in the Danube region can be seen through the data of the World Bank.[53] For example, a range of expected changes in the annual temperature for the period from 2045 to 2065 range from 1.7 to 3.1° C. (In the case of China 2.1-3 ° C). The highest percentage of the population living in areas below 5m above sea level, has Albania (8.2%), and a few states does not have such areas. (In the case of China, 8.1%). The highest percentage of the population living in urban areas, according to these indicators, has Austria (20), Hungary (17) and Italy (17). (In the case of China 18). The lowest percentage of the land under irrigation has the Czech Republic (0.3), Croatia (04), and Poland (0.4). (In the case of China 10.2% of total agricultural land). The largest percentage of the population that was threatened by natural disasters, in the period from 1990 to 2009, (droughts, floods, extreme temperatures) had Albania (5.3). (In the case of China 8.0). The largest area of its territory under the regime of protection has Germany (40.5%) and Austria (22.9), and the lowest BiH (0.6%) and Moldova (1.4%). (In the case of China, 16.6%).

5. CONCLUSION

Although these are two separate legal, economic, political, cultural, etc. entities that are difficult to compare in a classical way (in the first case it is the country, in the second case it is the region which, according to the Sofia Convention, consists of 19 countries), the data show that we can talk about a lot of differences and similarities. If we take, for basic criteria, attitude and reaction to contemporary environmental challenges (climate change, biodiversity protection, waste management, chemical management, water management, etc.), it can be concluded that differences are largely the result of overall circumstances and peculiarities of historical development, economic structure and strategic goals. At the same time, it should bear in mind that huge differences between countries in the Danube region contribute to balancing the

[53] Data source: *The Little Data Book on Climate Change 2011*, The World Bank. Washington, DC. 2012. To assess the effects of climate change on the countries in the Danube region, see: *Danube Study – Climate Change Adaptation*, Final Report: 1.12.2010-31.1.2012. Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitat Munich, Germany.

differences between China and the average of the Danube region countries. Therefore, the differences in the level of economic development should be viewed separately, first, within countries of the Danube region, and then between the countries of the Danube region and China. Precise strategic goals, high standards and the development of environmental regulations in the case of countries of the Danube region are the result of the leadership ambitions of global proportions and activities carried out in the framework of the European Union. All countries of the Danube region are either the EU members or are in various stages of the accession process. Data on CO2 emissions trends shows also significant differences. In the case of China, there is a continuous trend of increasing CO2 emissions/pc, while data in the case of the Danube region countries clearly shows the opposite trend. There are also differences in terms of individual energy sources share in the total energy production, including nuclear energy. In terms of indicators relating to the assessment of the risks, we can see that the data for China range between maximum and minimum values for certain countries of the Danube region. The high level of uniformity between China and the Danube region countries exists in terms of membership in international multilateral agreements, which constitute the basic framework for defining the response measures to global challenges. The difference in terms of membership in international treaties exists relating to the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the UN Convention on the Law of Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses, in which China is a member, but a majority of the Danube region countries are not members. The question of the way the existing similarities and differences could affect the cooperation between China and countries in the region could be disputed in a variety of ways. This would certainly entail prior definition of the criteria and elements of importance for measuring the relevance and impact of certain factors on the achievement of the objectives of cooperation.

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