



Perspectives for IWT in the Danube region from an NGO point of view

**Irene Lucius,
Laurice Ereifej, Tamas Gruber, Georg Rast
WWF DCPO/WWF Hungary/WWF Germany**



General remarks

WWF

- has participated in the development of the Joint Statement
- supports the document as agreed
- strongly committed to promoting JS
- committed to participating in implementation on the basis of the agreed guidelines and procedures



WWF's viewpoint on process up to date

- Little or no progress with on-going projects regarding „integrated approach“ (chap.3) and „recommendations“ (chap.4) of JS
- Transparency and participation for interested and obligatory parties very limited
- Base data and intention to properly apply environmental legislation (e.g. WFD) still weak or missing



WWF's viewpoint on process up to date

- JS does not yet cover all navigation development projects from big scale structural projects to maintenance works at local/regional level
- poor cooperation of key govt. institutions (e.g. MoTransport, MoEconomics, MoENV)
- SEA application missing or weak



All free flowing Danube river stretches are at risk by unsustainable IWT development...



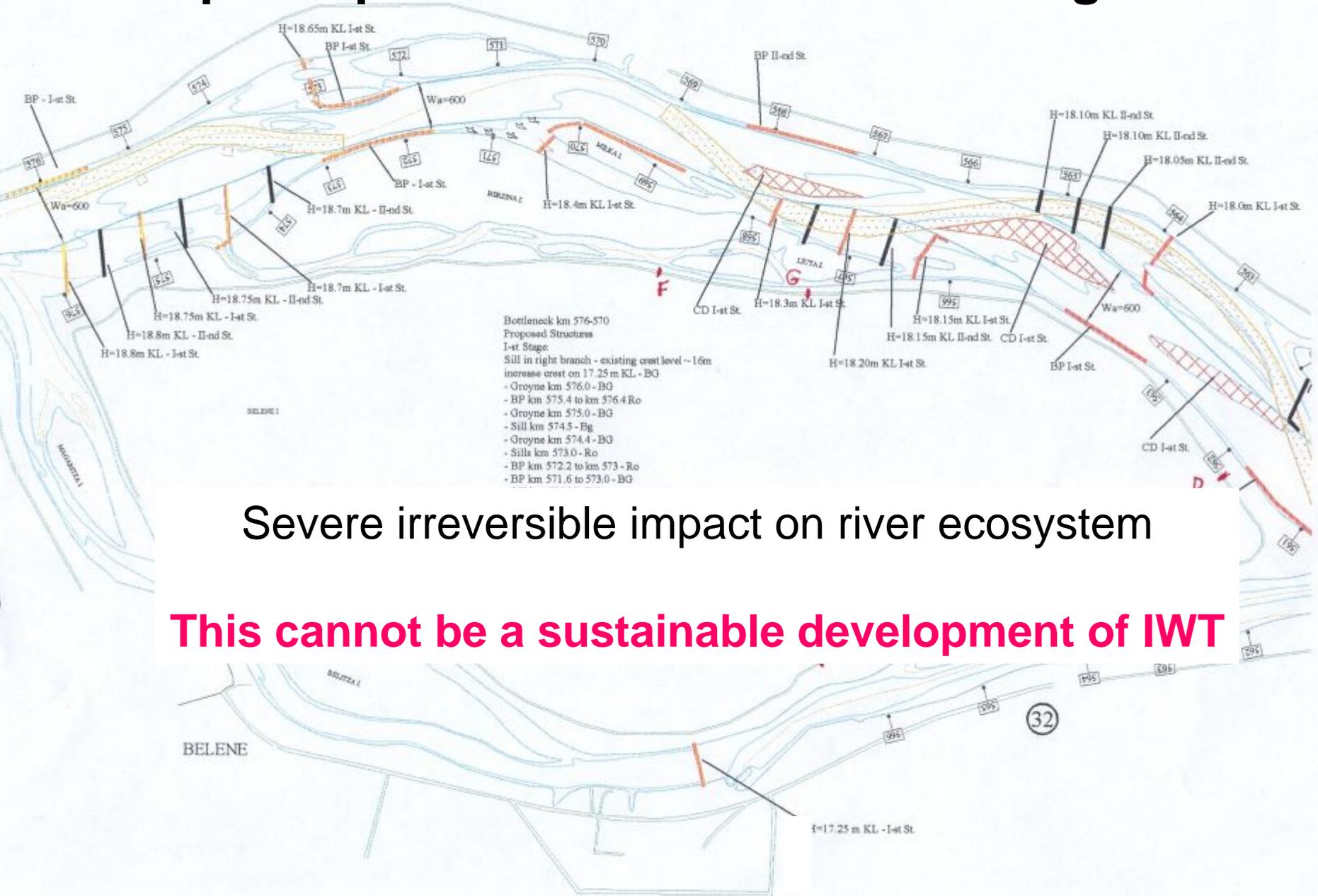
-  areas of high ecological value
-  priority sections for inland navigation (EU TEN-T axis No 18)
-  other navigation projects (supported e.g. by EU EAR, ISPA, Ukrainian government)



Sediment extraction → channel incision → threat for environment and IWT



Example of plans on Lower Danube along RO-BG



Severe irreversible impact on river ecosystem

This cannot be a sustainable development of IWT



Perspectives for IWT from WWF's viewpoint

- Danube waterway a major European route for IWT but not with one general minimum draught
- Future development based on container traffic and better intermodal transport links
- Short-term: waterway development focused on improvements by non-structural means and temporary fairway maintenance (no-regret)
- Better integration of govt. bodies



Perspectives for IWT from WWF's viewpoint

- Development plans are based on
 - SEA at different levels (river sections, national, international)
 - EU env. legislation enforced and provides a reliable framework for assessment of impacts
 - principle guidelines of JS respected
 - case by case approach (draught, width, period of year)



Perspectives for IWT from WWF's viewpoint

- development of detailed recommendations as JS annex
- monitoring TOR: who/how/when (national and intern., involvement of NGOs and other stakeholders)
- transparent processes
- maintain flexibility in order to accommodate Climate Change effects by focussing on non-structural no-regret measures



Let's make Joint Statement come alive!

Thank you for your attention!