
2nd ICPDR Stakeholder Forum



Report on the 2nd ICPDR Stakeholder Forum
Hotel Park Inn Danube, Bratislava, SK
29-30 June 2009

Document number:
Version: draft3
Date: 20-JUL-2009

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Imprint

Published by:

ICPDR – International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River

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1 About the Forum

The 2nd ICPDR Stakeholder Forum took place on 29-30 July 2009 in Bratislava, Slovakia and aimed to encourage the active involvement of stakeholders and draw maximum attention to the preparations of the Danube River Basin Management Plan (DRBMP).

The International Commission for the Protection of the River Danube (ICPDR) invited stakeholder and interested parties to this event to discuss the draft DRBMP. The Forum was designed to provide room for discussion and dialogue between the different stakeholder, and the stakeholders and the ICPDR.

This Forum makes part of a series of activities aiming to ensure the involvement of stakeholders in the work of the ICPDR. The general guidelines for the involvement of the stakeholder groups are described in the [Danube River Basin Strategy for Public Participation in River Basin Management Planning 2003-2009](#).

About 70 stakeholders from the entire Danube River Basin and beyond representing public administrations, various water-use sectors (including water utilities, detergent industry, beverage industry, energy production), environmental NGOs convened. A list of participants can be found in chapter 4 of this report.

This report reflects the main outcomes of this Forum and serves as the basis for further discussions as well as reference point for future activities of the ICPDR, especially regarding the finalisation of the Danube River Basin Management Plan.

The purpose of this report is to capture the main comments of the stakeholders. It was not the intention of the forum, or this report, to achieve a consensus among the stakeholders on issues raised.

The ICPDR Stakeholder Forum was organised under the ICPDR Presidency 2009 of Slovakia and in cooperation with Global Water Partnership for Central and Eastern Europe (GWP CEE).

This conference summary as well as all presentations is available at <http://www.icpdr.org/participate>

2 Proceedings

MONDAY, 29 JUNE

9:00 – 9:30: OPENING OF THE FORUM - Plenary

The opening session set the outlines of the ICPDR Stakeholder Forum and provided the basic background on the conference purpose.

Welcome note by Olga Srsnova, ICPDR President 2009

Ms. Srsnova thanked all participants for their participation at the meeting and pointed out the effort by numerous experts around the Danube river basin to develop the draft DRBMP. Ms. Srsnova also thanked all the stakeholder groups being involved in the work of the ICPDR over the years.

Welcome note by Ania Grobicki, Executive Secretary of GWP

Ms. Grobicki gave an introduction to GWP¹ and underlined the importance of integrated water resources management, which is also the main goal of GWP. Ms. Grobicki underlined the importance of partnerships by mentioning an African proverb: “If you wish to go fast, go alone – if you wish to go far, go together”.

Statement of conference purpose and technical introduction by Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR

Please see presentation: [01 Introduction WELLER](#)

9:30 – 13:00: INTRODUCTION TO THE DRAFT DRBMP - Plenary

This block opened with an overview presentation on the outcomes of the draft DRBMP, followed by specific presentations on the key results per topic. After each presentation space was given for questions, comments and technical discussions. Comments and suggestions given during this session are summarised in chapter 4 of this report.

Overview on the draft Danube River Basin Management Plan by Marieke van Nood and Knut Beyer, Chairpersons of the ICPDR River Basin Management Expert Group

Please see presentation: [02 Overview BEYER & VAN NOOD](#)

Pollution by organic substances and nutrients by Mihaela Popovici, ICPDR Technical Expert

Please see presentation: [03 Organic Substances & Nutrients POPOVICI](#)

Pollution by hazardous substances by Joachim Heidemaier, Chairperson of the ICPDR Pressures and Measures Expert Group

Please see presentation: [04 hazardous Substances HEIDEMEIER](#)

Hydromorphological alterations by Birgit Vogel, ICPDR Technical Expert

Please see presentation: [05 Hydromorphological Alterations VOGEL](#)

Groundwater issues by Igor Liska, ICPDR Technical Expert

Please see presentation: [06 Groundwater LISKA & SCHEIDELEDER](#)

14:00 – 17:00: WORKING SESSIONS – in three groups

After the plenary, three working sessions were offered, focusing on specific significant water management issues including ‘organic substances and nutrients’, ‘hazardous substances’ and ‘hydromorphological alterations’. For each working session ICPDR experts were nominated as facilitator and rapporteurs. Before breaking into the three groups a general introduction to the working sessions was given by Philip Weller. Additionally, for each working session a set of specific questions was developed and presented during the respective sessions, to help guide the discussion.

¹ For more information, please see <http://www.gwpforum.org> and <http://www.gwpceeforum.org>

Introduction to the working sessions by Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR
Please see presentation: [07 Introduction to working sessions WELLER](#)

19:00: DANUBE DAY CELEBRATION

TUESDAY, 30 JUNE

9:00 – 11:00: REPORT BACK FROM WORKING SESSIONS – Plenary

For each working session a presentation on the outcomes of the discussion in the working sessions was prepared and given to all participants in the plenary session. Each presentation was followed by a discussion on the presented outcomes. Additional comments were made in some cases, which are summarised in chapter 3 of this report. The outcomes of the working sessions are listed in detail below and are also summarised in chapter 4 of this report.

Working Session 1: organic substances and nutrients

Moderation: Elena Tuchi

Rapporteur: Mihaela Popovici

1. Are the goal and the main measures against organic and nutrient agreed as proposed in the draft?

- *General agreement considering the current level of information, methodologies and national commitment*
- *Issues to consider:*
 - a. *Keep the average use of fertilisers as low as possible*
 - b. *P-free detergents: a cost efficient supplementary measure helping achieving management objectives and vision on nutrients (dialogue with the countries, EU regulation and commitment of detergent industry)*
- *Other supplementary measures should be also considered in the next cycle*
- *Make use of existing or potential synergies between CAP reform and WFD (cross compliance, subsidies)*

2. What are the expectations on further development in agriculture, industry etc. in the Danube countries?

- *Agriculture: sustainability principle must be considered (especially for small scale farms)*
- *Difficulties in implementing EU Nitrates Directive (designation of vulnerable zones)*
- *Industry: rehabilitation, scenario to be considered also for industrial measures, implementation of BAT followed up in those Danube relevant industries such as pulp and paper*
- *Economic consequences properly assessed during measures implementation*

3. Which of the measures can be implemented easier which harder and why?

- *The implementation of JPM depends on the national commitment, and technical and financial resources available*

- *WFD & CAP synergies will simplify the implementation process*

4. How will wastewater treatment, agriculture, biomass production, industry etc. look like in 2015?
Can we gain a common picture of what will really be reached?

- *Government role is key in achieving the mgt objectives*
- *Gap in rural areas in comparing with urban areas*
- *Improvements will be for large agglomerations but in very small communities it will be difficult to achieve cost recovery and payment for water services*
- *Delays in implementation due to timing, financing and proper feasibility studies*
- *GWP can assist in the implementation process through dialog between sectors*

5. How far is the JPM for organic substances and nutrient effective to achieving the environmental objectives for groundwaters?

- *JPM contributes to reducing the amount of nutrients entering ground water*
- *Monitoring the measures implementation*
- *Balancing water needs and ensuring a sustainable groundwater management*
- *Adaptation measures to consider climate changes*
- *Improvement national capacity of authorities to ensure the integrated groundwater management (water abstraction, licensing, users register, measuring)*

Working Session 2: hazardous substances

Moderation: Igor Liska

Rapporteur: Joachim Heidemeier

1. What are the expectations from the new e-PRTR to improve knowledge about HS in the DRB?

- *It is necessary to link the e-PRTR with the Danube Emission inventories.*
- *This link will enable us in the future to close the knowledge gaps regarding point sources.*
- *In future it will cover most of the relevant point sources and via time series the development of the standard of waste water treatment.*
- *This will allow the monitoring of the implementation of IPPC and the development of more targeted measures in future.*

2. What are the anticipated developments in agriculture, industry etc. in the Danube countries which can influence the HS inputs?

- *Implementation of BAT waste water treatment will reduce the input of hazardous substances significantly.*
- *The focus of the remaining inputs will shift of inputs from production related discharges to product related inputs.*

- *This will shift the attention from installation related treatment technologies to substance regulations.*
- *For agriculture intensification from the very low standard in the lower basin can be expected.*
- *This does not necessarily mean an increase of pesticide inputs to the waters, as this depends strongly on equipment, boundary conditions (e.g. buffer strips, erosion prevention) and knowledge and training of the farmers.*
- *In this context also the problems of cooperation with the agricultural sector and role of public awareness was discussed.*
- *Climate change and water scarcity may boost the development and application of water reuse technologies in future (zero discharge concept) beyond the level which is part of today's BAT, i.e. described in the BREF-Notes.*
- *Emerging technologies in urban waste water treatment will allow the breakdown of persistent hazardous substances in future, at present they are economically not feasible in the whole basin*

3. Which of the measures can be implemented easier which harder and why?

- *The implementation of IPPC or other point sources related measures are - despite all problems, i.e. in coordination of authorities - are likely to be easier implemented compared to substance specific regulations.*
- *The enforceability of measures have to be taken into account to reach real progress*
- *The practicability and effectiveness of the just starting REACH processes has to be closely monitored.*
- *The Art. 5 emission inventory of the Priority Substances Directive will also lead to an improvement of knowledge. A coordinated approach should be taken.*
- *The experiences of other countries in relation to smaller scale measures should be evaluated (example mercury from dentist shops).*
- *Education and raising of public awareness is a very important long term measure.*

4. How will wastewater treatment, agriculture, industry etc. look like in 2015? Can we gain a common picture of what will really be reached?

- *A clear picture cannot be drawn due to*
 - a. *heterogeneous starting situation*
 - b. *lack of data on both emissions and*
 - c. *in-stream concentration*
- *Due to the high costs for state-of-the-art analytics to monitor hazardous substances it will be a challenge to mobilize the necessary resources for monitoring*
- *Regional cooperation could be a way to address the problem, at present only applied with the JDS.*
- *2015 is not so far in the future so that expectations should not be too high to avoid (unnecessary) disappointment.*

5. How far is the JPM for hazardous substances effective to achieving the environmental objectives for groundwaters?

- *In principle the discussion and the results for surface water also applies to groundwater.*
- *The problem of contaminated sites will be very important for groundwater, remediation measures are very costly.*

Working Session 3: hydromorphological alteration

Moderation: Birgit Vogel

Rapporteur: Jozsef Gayer

- *Please see a presentation by [IAD on wetlands](#)*
- *Please see a presentation by [IAD on the 'good ecological status'](#)*

1. Do you support the general decision that HYMO alterations are an issue of basin-wide importance and that respective impacts on the water status have to be followed-up/improved by 2015 and beyond?

- *Clear answer: YES*
- *A paradigm change took place during the last few years from pollution issues to HYMO alterations toward integrated water resource management*

2. Do you agree that the identified HYMO components are the most relevant ones on the basin-wide scale?

- *Yes, the components addressed are relevant on the basin-wide scale*
- *However, revision and adaptations needed on the issue of disconnection of wetlands*
 - a. *The reported 600,000 ha for wetlands with reconnection potential seems too small for DRB:*
 - b. *Urge countries to revise/increase the provided information by 14 September 2009*
 - c. *Case studies for wetlands and their reconnection potential should be on future agenda incl. cross country support and funding for respective investigations and reconnection projects.*

3. Can you propose other HYMO alteration issues of basin-wide importance in the DRB? Did we cover all HYMO issues?

- *Sediment quantity and transport as part of HYMO*
 - *Currently too weakly represented*
 - *Should be for sure on the agenda as an SWMI in the next RBM planning cycle*
 - *Currently, mobilise countries for investigations on sediments quantity/transport on the national level to upscale to the basin-wide level*
- *Hydropower and sediment quantity*

- *Important to investigate on sediment quantity: find solutions for sustainable sediment management*
- *Issue of sediment retention in alpine regions*
- *Agriculture/land use and HYMO*
 - *Should play a stronger role as driver for HYMO alterations in future*
 - *Development of best practices for agriculture/HYMO alterations to foresee future measures*

4. Agreement on the ecological prioritisation approach toward coordinated basin-wide measures to improve river continuity? Further proposals how to approach the issue of river/habitat continuity most effectively?

- *Conclusion that the approach chosen for river/habitat continuity interruption and ecological prioritisation is very good*
- *Sturgeons and the DRB:*
 - a. *Sturgeons are good indicators for migration and good ecological potential*
 - b. *Good strategy to re-open Iron Gate Dams and perform feasibility study: Well invested funding*
- *Keep an eye on and take into account the entire system when taking measures*
 - a. *Future infrastructure projects should not interfere with the objective to re-open the Iron Gate Dams 1&2 (i.e. ISPA 1)*
 - b. *Contradicting impacts of projects need to be prevented*
 - c. *Holistic view approaches and apply integrated planning*
 - d. *Sustainable development should be core part of the overall approach*
- *Screen now/in future if the reported migration aids do function or not*
 - a. *Include respective DRBM Plan success control in future*
 - b. *BAT for migration aids*
 - c. *Monitoring regarding functioning of migration aids*
- *Overall strategy will be needed to*
 - a. *Outline priority actions on HYMO alterations and other issues considering the overall socio-economic frame (e.g. within Danube Strategy frame).*

5. Which measures should be taken to prevent negative impacts on the water status? Do you agree on the development of good practice manuals (e.g. regarding the environmental friendly operation of hydropower plants and navigation)?

- *DRBM Plan List on future infrastructure projects (FIPs) seems not complete*
 - a. *Projects are missing*
 - b. *Urge the Danube countries to revise and complete the list by 14 September 2009*

- c. *Eventually, consider revision of criteria for FIPs of basin-wide importance in future (2nd RBM cycle)*
- *Handbooks for BAT/BEP are good tools but not enough:*
 - a. *ICPDR together with EC should ensure transparency regarding FIPs and their implementation*
 - b. *Follow rigid implementation of EC legislation regarding SEA, EIA and Article 4(7)*
- *Ensure/include climate proofing for FIPs*

Issues to be improved in the DRBM Plan

- *HMWB and outline how to achieve the good ecological potential*
- *Neozoa should be outlined in more detail*
- *Climate changes should be outlined in more detail*
- *Consideration of groundwater as ecosystems and interlinkage to surface waters (in following RBM cycles)*

11:30 – 13:00: CONCLUSION – Plenary

Conclusion and Way forward by Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR

After the presentations and discussions, Philip Weller, gave a short summary of the key messages. It was also underlined that all input received will be discussed in the respective ICPDR Expert Groups. He emphasised that some of the suggestions could already be reflected in the final Danube River Basin Management Plan to be prepared by the end of 2009 (short-term), others can only be considered in the long-term and might influence the work in the next cycle (until 2015).

However, the ICPDR Secretariat will publish a ‘response paper’ including all comments received during the consultation period (18 May – 31 July 2009) and the respective response by the ICPDR.

Philip Weller also thanked all participants for their active participation in this Forum and their ongoing involvement in the work of the ICPDR.

Thank you by Ania Grobicki, Executive Secretary of GWP

Ms. Grobicki thanked all participants for their participation at the meeting and offered the support of GWP in spreading the work on the work of the ICPDR.

Closure by Olga Srsnova, ICPDR President 2009

Ms. Srsnova thanked all participants and underlined the ongoing need for cooperation, such as pictured in the puzzle of the Danube river basin. Only cooperation will lead to success.

3 Summary of key issues raised in the frame of the 2nd ICPDR Stakeholder Forum

This summary reflects the key issues expressed during the Forum. Note that the following does not necessarily reflect the view of all participants.

Stakeholder involvement

The information and involvement of all relevant stakeholder groups is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of the DRBMP. Some stakeholders are actively involved in the work of the ICPDR. Others such as the agriculture sector are not reflected as it would be desirable. Further efforts should be undertaken to include these sectors in the dialogue.²

It was noted that some countries are not implementing the public participation provisions requested by the EU Water Framework Directive on the national level. The ICPDR should undertake efforts to encourage public participation on the draft river basin management plans during the upcoming 6 months.

The use of English as the working language of the ICPDR is limiting the involvement of organisations. The ICPDR should think of translating more documents in national languages and better use environmental NGOs in this process.

Awareness raising

Public awareness is crucial for the implementation of the WFD. The ICPDR should continue in raising general awareness about the Danube river basin.

Without the better involvement of industries, the implementation of the RBMP will not be possible. The ICPDR should raise more awareness amongst the consumers to reach the industries.

The awareness and outreach activities of the ICPDR should be continued.

Local Agenda 21 / small project fund

Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action to be taken in every area in which human impacts on the environment. The ICPDR should see the provision of the Agenda 21 and see how this programme could be used.

The ICPDR could set up a Small Project Fund for local activities, which raise awareness and support the sustainable water management (possible in the frame of the annual celebration of Danube Day).

Environmental objective (Art 4.5)

Rather often the environmental objectives seem not to be reached by 2015. Exceptions seem to be needed; it should be ensured that this process is transparent and justified.

Phosphates

Stakeholder felt that the impact of phosphates (P) used in households is overestimated and asked for focused work on the reduction of the use of P in the industries.

² GWP CEE offered assistance in reaching stakeholders throughout the Danube river basin, especially in the countries where GWP is active. Also the REC offers assistance in reaching stakeholder groups.

Nutrient reduction

According to the draft DRBMP, the target set for the reduction of nutrients can not be reached, as it depends strongly on the agricultural practices and the phosphorus ban in laundry and dish washers. It is strongly suggested that the new EU Common Agricultural Policy takes the problems resulting from the excessive use of nutrients into account. What is the ICPDR doing to ensure a proper link between the new CAP and integrated water management?

Hazardous substances

Over 100.000 substances are registered in the EU, out of which 30.000 to 70.000 are in daily use. Despite the increased knowledge that some of them are bio-accumulating, most of them are not monitored. How can the possible threat of these substances be avoided? The ICPDR should improve the monitoring schemes to detect also bio-accumulating substances.

The ICPDR is asked to evaluate small scale project, which are currently carried out in several countries (such as the mercury removal of dentists in Germany) , as they might have a positive impact on the reduction of hazardous substances.

Polluter-pays-principle

Pollution is often transported from up-stream to down-stream countries. What is the ICPDR doing to implement the polluter-pays-principle?

Breaching the non-deterioration clause (Art 4.7)

According to the draft DRBMP XX infrastructure projects are planned, but only for 18 of them existence of the requested study to fall under Art. 4.7 are indicated. What is the ICPDR doing to ensure that the requested studies are carried out for all planned projects? Does the ICPDR make the studies accessible to the public?

Some infrastructure projects with a clear transboundary effect, such as the project on the Kilia arm to improve navigation are not included in the draft DRBMP. What is the ICPDR doing to receive a full picture on the national infrastructure projects?

Some very controversial projects are missing in the draft DRBMP. The ICPDR is asked to especially provide information on such projects to avoid the impression that such information is hidden on purpose.

Monitoring / data bases

The quality of the data has been increased over the past years, high quality monitoring substances is crucial for meaningful measures to reduce pollution. How can the ICPDR ensure the improvement of institutional and organisational capacities in the countries?

To improve public access to information on the environment and thus contribute in the long term to the prevention and reduction of pollution, the European Union is setting up a European pollutant release and transfer register (PRTR). This Regulation requests the setting up of a PRTR at EU level in the form of a publicly accessible electronic database. This database needs to meet the requirements of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE) Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, which is valid for non EU Member States. How can the ICPDR better use these legislative provisions?

How does the ICPDR ensure that the data is made available to the interested public?

Groundwater

How is the ICPDR monitoring that the measurements have a positive impact on the groundwater?

The ICPDR is asked to undertake trainings in national level for improved groundwater management. The full consideration of groundwater bodies as ecosystems and their interlinkage to surface waters should be considered in the following RBM cycles.

Climate change

The aspect of the results of the climate change on water is only reflected to a minimum in the draft DRBMP. This chapter in the main report should be expanded (especially regarding the aspect of water quantity – floods/ droughts) and to point out for what chapters of the plan are climate change adaptation measures are needed. This should help to start developing strategies for the next WFD cycle.³

All future infrastructure projects should be climate proof.

Neozoa

The aspects and impact of neozoa are not reflected enough in the draft DRBMP and an update is suggested.

Sturgeon

The ICPDR should further work on the sturgeon project.

Wetlands

The importance of wetlands, as well as the problem of disconnected wetlands and floodplains, is not fully reflected in the draft DRBM. This chapter should be revised, expanded and also highlight that still existing wetlands should be protected.

The ICPDR could start cooperation with environmental NGOs to raise awareness on wetlands.

Sediments

The problem of sediment quantity and transport is too weakly represented and the issue of sediments should be included as an SWMI in the next RBM planning cycle. It is suggested to start the investigations on sediments quantity/transport on the national level.

Also the connection between hydropower production and the management of sediments should be investigated in order to find solutions for sustainable sediment management; of special importance is the sediment retention in alpine regions.

The impact of agriculture and land use on HYMO

The impact of agriculture and land use practices on hydromorphological alterations should be considered in the future; the ICPDR should develop best practice for agriculture / land use in reference to hydromorphological alterations.

Economics

The economic chapter of the draft DRBMP could be expanded. What is the ICPDR doing to incorporate the costs and values of environmental services in its models?

How can the ICPDR ensure a proper monitoring of the economic consequences arising during the implementation of the JPM.

³ The WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme offered assistance in enlarging the chapter on climate change.

Integrated planning /migration aids

The ICPDR should further work in the promotion of the principles of integrated planning, especially regarding new infrastructure projects.

The implementation and proper functioning of migration aids should be monitored by the ICPDR.

Future infrastructure projects (FIP)

The list of FIPs included in the draft DRBMP seems not to be complete – an update of the list is strongly suggested. In addition it is suggested to revise the criteria for FIPs of basin-wide importance in the 2nd RBM cycle.

The ICPDR, together with the EC should ensure the implementation of EC legislation regarding SEA, EIA and Article 4(7) as well as full transparency regarding FIPs and their implementation.

The ICPDR should also ensure/include climate proofing for FIPs.

4 List of participants

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