



PROCEEDINGS

of the 4th Joint Statement meeting on Inland Navigation and Environmental Sustainability in the Danube River Basin

Danube Commission, Budapest, September 17-18, 2012

PROTOCOL

Day 1 (17 September 2012)

The ICPDR (International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River), the ISRBC (International Sava River Basin Commission) and the DC (Danube Commission) have jointly launched the process to develop the *Joint Statement (JS) on Guiding Principles on the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin*.

On 17-18 September 2012 the 4th Meeting on the Follow-up of the Joint Statement on Guiding Principles on the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin (JS) was held under the auspices of the three Commissions: the DC (Danube Commission), the ISRBC (International Sava River Basin Commission) and the ICPDR (International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River) at the Headquarters of the Danube Commission in Budapest. The Meeting was attended by over 50 persons from European Commission, state transport and environmental authorities (7 countries: AT, BG, HR, HU, RS, SK, RO.), representatives of 3 Embassies (Russia, Ukraine, R. Moldova), NGOs (WWF), coordinators of the EU Danube Strategy and other stakeholders (Pro Danube International, KTI - Hungary, ERSTU Duna Régió, Hidroing Osijek - Croatia, WELL Consulting, s.r.o- Czech Republic, North-Transdanubian Water Directorate-Hungary, PIM Serbia).

The objectives of the Meeting were:

- Information about progress in the implementation of the Joint Statement on the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Sustainability in the Danube River Basin;
- Discussion on the further development and application of the *Joint Statement* and its implications (regular information exchange);
- Information and discussion about new facts and perspectives of European inland waterway transport, including the EU Danube Strategy;
- Information about the state of IWT projects in the Danube basin.

The Meeting agenda and the List of Participants are given in Annexes 1 resp. 2.

Introductory Statements

The Meeting was opened by welcome speeches of the President of the DC, **Ambassador Mrs. Biserka Benisheva** (Bulgaria), Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, **Mr. Philip Weller**, and Secretary of the ISRBC, **Mr. Dejan Komatina**. They welcomed all participants on behalf of three commissions and expressed the best wishes of success for this important process.

Mrs. Biserka Benisheva, *President of the DC*, in her welcome address got back to the basics of the Joint Statement that was developed in 2007 through a process of intensive, cross-sectoral consensus building between stakeholders with responsibility and interest in navigation, river ecological integrity and water management in the Danube river basin.

She noted that during this process the participating stakeholders generated a common understanding on the protection of the riverside environment and the necessary processes and conditions for conducting and developing sustainable inland navigation (including the maintenance of existing infrastructure and the development of new navigation projects).

Navigation on the Danube has a sufficiently strong impact on the national economies of the most of the Danube states. As it is known, transport market and appropriate infrastructure of the Danube navigation were basically shaped more than 20 years ago and determined by geographical location and current logistics of major industrial centres in the Danube river basin.

In view of the current economic developments, recovery of transport volume on the Danube to its traditional level is progressing rather slowly reflecting the regional economic certainties as well as the fact that there is still room for regaining economic potential

Mrs. Benisheva stressed that the development of freight transport by redirecting freight flows from related modes of transport to the traditional river transport lines would be possible provided that the infrastructure of the Danube navigation navigable waterway, ports and communication systems are the most seriously modernized.

Insufficient infrastructure and uneven development of some of its elements are the main reason of weak market and constitute an impediment to introduce new high-speed transport technologies, which in terms of cargo delivery time can compete with railway transport and motorways.

Existence of a large number of fords, which in critical precipitation periods throughout a year close navigation (for instance, situation on the Lower Danube in August - October 2011), puts the Danube transportation in an unfavourable situation.

She underlined that if we compare the estimation of losses incurred in the Danube navigation, including ports and other enterprises, for a period of 3,5 months – beginning September 2011 to the first decade of December 2011, we should come to the conclusion that these figures were quite comparable to the costs arising from the implementation of the main projects of the DC Member States aimed at improving navigation conditions on the Danube.

Also, the current situation on the Danube, caused by critical shallow water period in the second half of 2011, pushed the European Commission to come up with the proposal to the Ministers of Transport from the Danube countries to consider this issue at a special meeting on 7 June 2012 in Luxemburg, resulted in the adoption of "Declaration on effective waterway infrastructure maintenance on the Danube and its navigable tributaries".

The DC President highlighted that the Member States of the Danube Commission as well as the Danube Commission itself and other colleagues should continue efforts to improve current situation, inter alia within European Union Strategy for the Danube region. Projects being currently implemented or under consideration should conform to the main principles outlined in the Joint Statement. Progress and development under the implementation process should be reported to the ICPDR, Danube Commission and International Sava River Basin Commission by the responsible authorities and all states.

Mr. Dejan Komatina, *Secretary of the International Sava River Basin Commission*, informed that since the last meeting within this process held in April last year in Vienna the ISRBC has continued its efforts to apply an integrated approach in accordance with its responsibility for the whole water resources management including both the environmental protection on one hand side and navigation development on the other. Also being aware that the JS process can provide and the value to the implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin itself. He admitted that it was a period of hard work for the Commission and briefly informed participants on the main achievements relevant for the JS implementation.

First of all, Mr. Komatina mentioned that the project of the rehabilitation and development of the Sava river waterway had entered the final phase of planning, namely, development of the EIA studies at one river section and detailed design of the whole waterway. However, he stressed that already now during the last year they made considerable efforts, and progress as well, in implementing the principles of JS on this project. Other achievements of the ISRBC include several improvements of technical standards and safety of navigation which are expected to contribute to environmental protection as well, such as further upgrading and harmonization of the rules on technical issues and navigation safety on the Sava basin level and also on European level in cooperation with EU, UNECE and river navigation commissions, such as Danube, Rhine and Mosel River Commissions. In this context, he underlined the following activities undertaken by the ISRBC: further issuing of two important publications, the first ever Album of bridges for the Sava River and Indicator of river kilometres for the Sava river renewed after 50 years, as well as development of two rules related to the implementation of RIS in the Sava river basin and also development of a new web application which enables an online preparation of annual marking plans for the Sava river waterway by the responsible authorities of the countries. The marking plan for this year was the first one generated using this web application. The next point to be mentioned is certainly the Sava River Basin Management Plan which has been prepared with the financial support of EC and this plan is expected to be adopted by the countries in the coming months. Great attention in the Sava Plan was paid to the integration of water protection into development activities in the Sava river basin including navigation development as well. Next point was climate change. The analysis of the climate change impacts in the Sava river basin is under development aiming to provide better understanding of these impacts on different water subsectors, and one of this is navigation as well. And the last point in this regard was the Protocol on Sediment Management to the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin which entered the phase of final harmonization and this protocol is expected to contribute to the establishment of the sustainable sediment management including the actions associated with navigation development as well.

Mr. Komatina reported that the ISRBC had also been involved in a number of projects implemented on the European and Danube level such as PLATINA, WANDA, NEWADA and NELI, additionally the last year was a period of further improvement of cooperation and coordination of activities with the ICPDR and the DC. The ISRBC perceived this as another element contributing to the implementation of the Joint Statement in the Sava basin. Last but

not least, new Strategy on the Implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin and the accompanying Action Plan for the five years period from 2011-2015 has been adopted meanwhile between the two meetings that are developed fully in line with the EUSDR, as the Danube Strategy is perceived by the ISRBC as an appropriate framework for the implementation of all projects agreed by the countries in the Sava river basin including these relevant for the Joint Statement implementation. The ISRBC believes that through the above-mentioned activities step forward has been made and conditions have been provided for the continued progress for the Joint Statement implementation in the Sava river basin.

Finally, Mr. Komatina expressed a wish that the meeting would bring an additional progress to the process of the Joint Statement implementation.

Mr. Philip Weller, *Executive Secretary of the ICPDR*, on behalf of the ICPDR President Wolfgang Stalzer from Austria that took over presidency in 2012 welcomed participants of the workshop. Mr. Weller reminded that the ICPDR is a forum for cooperation of the countries of the Danube related to environmental considerations through which the Danube River Basin Management Plan has been produced. This plan identified significant water management issues and measures to address them within an implementation cycle of six years. The Joint Statement process was a very important activity for the ICPDR. Mr. Weller thanked the attendees for supporting the intersectoral work of the ICPDR and for the continuing commitment to maintain an exchange that is necessary for addressing mutual interests from institutions and organizations whose mandates are not the same, but whose mandates influence one another. Through the dialog process, these institutions are able to be influenced in a positive way.

The Executive Secretary said that the Joint Statement process has been a success and an important achievement. He informed about presentations prepared for today's session: about the activities where the integration of environmental considerations and improvements of navigation was achieved along the Danube, driven by the good will of the responsible actors. Then Mr. Weller highlighted lessons to be learned from this process, and areas in which additional input and information or resources are needed from external authorities or the institutions such as ICPDR, Danube Commission, Sava Commission, European Commission.

He agreed with Mr. Komatina who pointed out that the issue of climate change calling for increased cooperation between different organisations. Making reference to the statement of the DC President, he reminded the meeting that it has been confronted with some low water periods that limited shipping on the Danube, which is against the interests of development of this region and an issue that needs to be discussed in the context of this meeting, ensuring that environmental considerations are taken into account. Based on meetings of the ICPDR from the past year that have reported on various activities, Mr. Weller got the impression that significant progress has been made. Stakeholder processes were set up to develop project activities in various areas. But the necessity exists to evaluate further actions. We have the fortunate situation of having the EUSDR being adopted – a mechanism on the political level that reinforced many of the things we want to achieve through the Joint Statement and the commitments the participants have made.

Mr. Weller pointed out that he appreciates the participation of both of the EC representatives, but also Priority Areas coordinators for PA1a, PA5 and PA6. He thanks them for their ability to take some of the commitments that have been made under the JS and see how that may be brought in the processes which are underway in relation to the EUSDR. Also he expresses gratitude to the DC for the hosting of this meeting. He recalled that each year the

responsibility for convening this meeting is passed on from one Commission to the other: the first meeting was held in Budapest and after completing a full cycle, he is very happy to be back to share the optimism that has been expressed by the two other Commissions. He hopes that this meeting will help to bring the agenda the participants jointly have agreed on under the Joint Statement.

Session 1: Inland Waterways - Sustainable Transport developments within the Danube Strategy

Mrs. Irina Ploeg Cruceru, *European Commission, DG Regional Policy*. Mrs. Cruceru highlighted the EUSDR as a very important element for inland navigation, provided through the daily work of the people and essential support they had from Priority Areas Coordinators. In this regard, Mrs. Cruceru highly appreciated the work of Transport Ministries of Austria and Romania – Coordinators of PA 1A, aiming to advance the implementation of the goals assigned to this PA. Reviewing of what had happened this year, she mentioned that one year passed since EUSDR has been approved and already the first Annual Report of implementation has been received. The development of a stable framework of dialog considered as an achievement, namely establishment of the Steering group where representatives of all the countries meet to discuss also projects on infrastructure but not only, because EUSDR is extended to education measures for inland navigation, the maintenance issues, RIS, etc. It's quite a wide range of measures that are expected to contribute to their results. PA 1A has also set up working groups except for the country level representatives, also there is a room for less formal framework where a lot of relevant representatives from NGOs, industry, waterway administrations are effectively brainstorming on the topics that are most important for inland navigation.

Another great achievement that came from the initiative of the EUSDR but also from the need of the region and from the call of industry was the signature of Declaration on effective waterway infrastructure maintenance on the Danube and its navigable tributaries. DG Regional Policy together with the DG MOVE called the Ministers to sign this Declaration in order to reinforce their commitment for the maintenance issues. Following the big losses of last year and low water levels during the three months between August and October there is a need to bring the Ministers together to restate and to reinforce the necessity to maintain the appropriate water levels on the Danube. According to the Joint Declaration the follow-up actions would be mainly done within the PA 1A of the EUSDR and within the annual reporting, in relation to the Priority Project 18 with the coordinator Mrs. Karla Peijs.

Also Mrs. Cruceru said that they have been doing steps forward, discussing also in PA 1A about meeting more in the PAs and coordinating more with the PAs dealing with environment: PA 4, 5 and 6, and they plan this year to have joint event with them in order to discuss a sustainable way forward for inland navigation. It should be mentioned that two relevant projects for inland waterways were approved recently – WANDA 2 and NEWADA 2. The activities in the two projects will be continued. Meanwhile, DG Regional Policy is seriously taking into consideration the launch of the transnational programme dedicated to the Danube region. She informed that the consideration is given to the possibility of having EU transnational programme to cover the macro-regional area, to be the same area as EUSDR is covering now. This will come into force starting 2014, but it has been proven that together with the tools of DG MOVE transnational cooperation is of great importance, specifically for the coordination between transport and environmental authorities. Also, a wide range of

activities on the Danube and inland navigation could be funded under this initiative. She summarized that they are now looking forward for confirmation from the Member States.

Mr. Cesare Bernabei, *European Commission, DG MOVE*. The implementation of the Joint Statement principles started 5 years ago. He considered as a very positive initiative that the three Commissions: the International Sava River Basin Commission, the Danube Commission and the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River stick together to insist on this process. He said that what we have done in the past is something which has been achieved but is not finalized yet. We need to continue working on it. The presence of everybody is extremely important to keep this process alive and to start also reflecting what are the progresses that we have done, what are the areas where we failed, and what can we actually do more in order to better implement the Joint Statement Principle.

Mr. Bernabei noted that this process have triggered a few things which in his opinion are very much important. The presence of the WWF at this meeting as well as the other organizations during the different meetings is very important to remember always that we have two targets – sustainable and efficient transport – and that any progress has to be done taking into account these issues. On the other side it is also important that inside the EC the Directorates-General for Environmental, Regional Development and Transport, each with its own policy will not acting as independent pillars but will work together; The demonstration of such coordination is that we are here to commit continuously our development in that sense. Mr. Bernabei expressed his regret that DG Environment is not represented at this event, however he reminded that they are working quite tight together and there are continuing exchanges between their services in order to keep this exercise alive. He told that soon, possibly next year, they should start a revision process on it. Another important development has been the launching of the EUSDR, which is giving another dimension to the integration, particularly for those countries that are not EU Members. The next step which has to be mentioned is what is happening inside the DG Transport. The new framework programme for 2014-2020 is being drafted within which are included few initiatives that will have a strong impact on all related activities. The first, in terms of time, is the recovery of a large part of the budget which has not been spent during the previous framework programme for 2007-2013. EC is launching a Call for proposal in November in order to tackle the navigability issues which are still pending and which have not being addressed in previous calls. Together with colleagues dealing with research activities they are cooperating in the development of more sustainable operations like the use of light oil and more efficient engines.

Concerning future programmes of the EC Mr. Bernabei informed about a period of debates when the new guidelines for the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) and for Connecting European Facility (CEF) programmes are discussed with the European Parliament and the European Council. He marked out that within CEF Programme transport, energy and soft infrastructure for telecommunication complement each other. The Commission has presented these two proposals in October and during the first half of the year there was a long lasting discussion with the Council and the Member States while the discussion with the European Parliament is now ongoing. The final vote by the Transport Committee of the European Parliament is expected on the 27 November. In the same week, besides the vote in the Transport Committee, on 26 November, there will be reporting to the Parliament by the European Coordinators on the developments in each priority project and therefore they are going to report on the Danube and, on the 28-29 November there will be the so-called TEN-T Days where stakeholders of all groups and private citizens will be informed about the policy that EC is going to implement in the next framework programme. On 29 November there will

also be the information day concerning the Call for Proposal. Mr. Bernabei stressed that it is of utmost importance to have tight cooperation between the different actors at European, national and local authorities' level including also different groups of interest.

Session 2: Sustainable and efficient transport on the Danube-viewpoints from an industry association

(Chaired by Mr. Istvan Valkar, Director General of the DC Secretariat)

Mr. Manfred Seitz, *General Secretary of the Pro Danube International* presented the Platform of private companies with strategic economic interest in better framework conditions and higher public investment in the Danube transport and logistics system. Pro Danube is established in 2011 by companies and associations from RO and AT (more than 120 companies) with core objectives to create a more favourable policy framework, improve waterway infrastructure and promote investment in ports and fleet, education, training and innovation in navigation on the Danube.

The General Secretary of the Pro Danube International underlined the Viewpoints from an industry association related to needs for efficient and sustainable Danube navigation: significantly better waterway maintenance, elimination of infrastructure bottlenecks (2,5 m draught/300 days according UNECE/AGN), investment into waterway infrastructure as priority of EU programs 2014-2020, investment in Danube ports. He stressed the importance of the modernization of Danube fleet and informed about the development of long-term public funding schemes for fleet renewal, implementation of LNG as fuel as well as cargo for Danube navigation.

He highlighted the important instruments: EU Strategy for Danube Region (EUSDR) and NAIADES (2) Action Program, maximum use of EU Cohesion and Structural Funds, fight against barriers imposed by public administrations, proposal to EC to launch a study: "Economic situation of the Danube sector and recommendations for improvement".

Mr. Manfred Seitz informed about the new project initiatives related to LNG Masterplan for the implementation of LNG on the Danube (Liquid Natural Gas – an environmentally friendly fuel and precious cargo), Danube Ports as centres for sustainable regional development – Flagship Project, Green Danube Ports and EU commissioned study regarding the innovative Danube vessel (Identification of innovative ship design and measures which can improve efficiency and sustainability of Danube navigation).

Finally he remarked that the Pro Danube International fully supports the rationale and the objectives of the "Joint Statement on Inland Navigation and Environmental Sustainability in the Danube River Basin".

Session 3: Perspective of NGOs on Development in Navigation in the Danube

Mrs. Irene Lucius on behalf of the WWF DCP presented the NGO Perspective on developments in navigation in the Danube (but did not speak for all NGOs) and assessed the compliance with the main Joint Statements principles of the current navigation projects. She underlined the importance of creation the interdisciplinary planning teams, experts and public participation from the start the project. She highlights with enthusiasm the project East of

Vienna and current project in Serbia as a good examples of implementation the JS principle related to interdisciplinary planning team from the beginning and activity of the stakeholders forum.

Mrs. Lucius reminded the necessity to develop navigation fully in line with environmental legislation and underlined needs to much more attention on: Aarhus, EIA, SEA Directives, WFD (art 4.7) and Habitats Directive, (art. 6). She expressed her hope that is possible to implement the principle “Case by case approach”, working with nature and minimum engineering intervention in each project. For navigation needs related to fairway depths and widths have to find sustainable solutions. She underlined the Ecosystem restoration should be more than just compensation measure but an integral part of project objectives. She also stressed about the necessity of adaptive management and monitoring before, during and after river bad construction which needs the budget and time. Top level support is also very important as well as a budget allocation.

Mrs. Lucius concluded that the stakeholder forums are essential and reasonable. The adaptive management needs flexible project conditions and without ecological data and monitoring is not possible to implement the JS principles. If there is a will, integrated planning is possible. She recommended know-how exchange of good practice and said that EU Strategy for the Danube Region can support the integration the principles and needs of the both sides in every project.

Session 4: Current state of IWT projects in Danube countries, experience in planning and implementation of bottleneck projects on the Danube

(Chaired by Mr. Istvan Valkar, Director General of the DC Secretariat)

Mr. Robert Tögel, on behalf of Via Donau, presented the Integrated River Engineering Project on the Danube East of Vienna, a project realized on behalf of the Austrian Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology as a priority project of the European Commission (Trans-EuropeanTransport Network, PP18). With this project Via Donau is fulfilling the statutory mandate to provide for better environmental and navigational conditions and riverbed stability on project area. He briefly informed about the pilot projects East of Vienna: Side Arm Reconnection Schönau, Side Arm Reconnection Orth, Side Arm Reconnection Haslau-Regelsbrunn, River Bank Restoration /Groyne Optimisation Witzelsdorf, River Bank Restoration Thurnhaufen (live project).

Mr. Tögel very picturesquely showed important features of the Pilot Project Bad Deutsch-Altenburg as an Integrated River Engineering Project. The project is in progress and including the river bed stabilization, river bank restoration, side arm reconnection and groyne optimisation on approximately 3 km long stretch (km 1887.5- km1884.5).

He described the overall status and implementation of the Joint Statement principles to the Pilot Project Bad Deutsch-Altenburg. The construction works are accompanied by a technical and ecological on-site supervision, an integrative Monitoring-Team, the Christian Doppler Research Lab "IM Fluss" for more complex and scientific monitoring and the Stakeholder Forum. The stakeholders are supported by an independent Scientific Board. It is made of 5 experts for the fields of navigation, ecological river engineering, hydrology and ground water, biodiversity, hydrobiology and fish ecology.

Mr. Tögel underlined the importance of the Stakeholder Forum which allows the structured integration of stakeholders in the Pilot Project Bad Deutsch-Altenburg. The outcome of the Forum discussion and consequences could be very useful for future projects, especially the consequences for the Integrated River Engineering Project. He reminded that the measures East of Vienna are the result of an integrative planning approach and presents a living and successful example for integrative planning for combining the needs of navigation and ecology. In “Manual on Good Practices in Sustainable Waterway Planning” (2010) project East of Vienna is described as good practices for ecologically orientated river engineering.

Mrs. Lidija Hubalek, from the Agency for Inland Waterways, on behalf of the Croatia Ministry of Maritime affairs, Transport and Infrastructure, first presented the Danube reach from 1380 to 1433 river km, specially the major problems occur on the river reach between 1400 and 1410 rkm (Apatin sector). She briefly described the other river reaches with navigation problems: sector Sotin – bank erosion problems, bifurcation; sector Mohovo – problems with variable depths; confluence of Drava – sedimentation of the mouth of Drava; other potentially problematic sectors for navigation due to bank erosion (Šarengrad, Vukovar, Dalj) or problems with sediment deposition.

Mrs. Hubalek introduced in details the Danube reach between 1400 and 1410 river km – Apatin sector. She stressed that the Apatin sector needed and needs the urgent intervention in the riverbed (dredging) because there are significant changes in the riverbed are obstacles to navigation. Erosion of the right bank would cause a water breach from Danube River to the area of Kopački rit Nature park. She underlined that the imperative to accept the economic (waterway), sociological (state border), ecological (nature park) and legislative terms during the planning of Danube River Training Works.

Mrs. Hubalek also informed participants about EIA for Danube River from 1380 to 1433 river km. Republic of Croatia had started preparation of project for section of the Danube River from 1380 to 1433 river km, in coordination with the Republic of Serbia at the common border section. She described the proposed solution based on analysis performed within EIA and gave the recapitulation of analysis of regulation structures on the right bank of the Danube River. The Environmental Impact Assessment, for the above mentioned section, is currently in the process of evaluation. She also stressed the general need to harmonize the mutual technical solutions for the reach and EIA study for both countries, Croatia and Serbia.

Mrs. Žaneta Ostojić – Barjaktarević, Director General of the Plovput-Serbia, reported on the Preparation of Documentation for River Training and Dredging Works on Critical Sectors on the Danube River in Serbia in general. She informed about the strategic and legal framework, basic project data, critical sectors, range of the project, basic orientation, dissemination and next steps. She underlined that in 2011 are identified 24 critical sectors in Serbia with 70 km total length of the Danube.

Mrs. Ostojić – Barjaktarević described all activities related to main designs and tender documentation for works, supervision and monitoring on 6 critical sectors on the national Danube sector in Serbia. She stressed that the documentation is being prepared in accordance to national legislation, as well as EU legislation, supported the EU funding Programme IPA 2010. The goal of the Project is to guarantee sustainable minimum depth and width for low water periods with the best combination of works and monitoring of effects. She informed about a time perspective for supervision of works and monitoring of effects from 2013 to 2016.

In relation to the Joint Statement Mrs. Ostojić – Barjaktarević presented the interdisciplinary approach to the project in Serbia and underlined their cooperation activities which aim to ensure the proper integration of environmental aspects in the development and maintenance of IWT infrastructure. Current project in Serbia incorporated stakeholders of inland waterway transport, hydrotechnics, industry, nature and environment protection, as well as archaeology. She also mentioned about opening the integrated planning process for critical sectors on SRB-CRO joint stretch of the Danube River.

Mrs. Cristina Cuc, on behalf of the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Romania presented the Improvement of navigation conditions on the Romanian - Bulgarian common sector of the Danube and accompanying studies. She described the history of the integrated planning process since 2007 on and gave detailed review of studies and workshops during the 2007, 2008 and 2009. She informed about discussion since 2009 related to the Feasibility Study and also about ongoing EIA Report.

Mrs. Cuc indicated all respectable environmental legal frameworks in the Danube River Basin and assessed the current situation of the common Romanian-Bulgarian critical sectors. She informed participants about the ongoing methodology followed during the Study. She reported on the alternatives and strategy for analysis and gave the partial results for different Scenarios: Autonomous Scenario, No Over-depth Scenario, Basic scenario, Enhanced Engineering Scenario (3 variants: EEA1, EEA2 and EEA3).

Mrs. Cuc described the results of the Optimized Alternative (OA) which consists of the measures: realignment of the navigation channel to deeper areas, dredging and engineering measures (groins, bottom sills, chevrons and bank protection) to stabilize morphological changes if needed. She concluded that the OA costs considerably less than both EEA1 and EEA2. The OA has maintenance dredging requirements (and associated costs and impacts) that are lower even than those of EEA1 and far lower than those of the other alternatives. The OA foresees constructions in only 14 critical sectors (compared to 22 for EEA1 and 20 for EEA2) and has less structure (both in number and in total length) than EEA1 and EEA3. The overall environmental impact of the OA is considerably lower than the one of EEA1 and EEA2, due to less structures overall, less bottom sills and less maintenance dredging. Finally, the OA is the best solution for improving the number of navigable days at all locations.

Mrs. Cuc also reported on the construction schedules and implementation phases (I, II and III). She underlined all aspects which have to be taken into account during construction: phasing of dredging taking into account fish spawning/migration, phasing of larger training works to reduce environmental impact, keep impact on deep areas as low as possible (spawning sites), dredging technique should be BATNEEC (Best Available Technology) in order to minimize environmental effects (e.g. turbidity) and useful application of dredged material. She praised the constant dialog and constructive proposals from environmental side.

Mrs. Catalina Dumbrava on behalf of the River Administration of the Lower Danube from Galati, Romania, presented the Improvement of the navigation conditions on the Danube between Calarasi and Braila, km 375-km175. Underlining the importance of this project, she stressed that the main objective of the Project is improvement of the navigation conditions (ensuring the minimum depths of 2.5 m of the fairway during the entire year), increase the safety of navigation and eliminate the risk of accidents. At the same time the goals of the Project are re-distribution of water flows between Bala-Borcea Branch and the Danube, between Caleia branch and the main branch of the Danube, in the area of Ostrovul Lupu, as

well as modifying the flows distribution during low level and medium-level periods in the area of Epurașu (Lebăda) branch.

Mrs. Dumbrava briefly informed participants about the history of the Project, contribution and recommendations received from the EC –DG Environment, ICPDR and IAD experts. She also reminded that the EC recommended in July 2010 to complete the Monitoring Programme in line with the recommendations expressed by the EC experts. In September 2010 the RO Ministry of Transport has stated in their reply to the EC that they fully agreed with the EC recommendations. The Regional Agency for Environmental Protection Galati has analysed the Monitoring Programme and notified in October 2010 that all its requirements are observed. As part of this project, the Feasibility Study for the fish ladder will be prepared. Critical points where during dry season the minimum depths are reduced down to 1.40 m. The Works are executed only in 3 critical points during Phase I. During the migration season of the sturgeons no works are executed in the fairway. The Monitoring Programme was substantially improved with the restarting date: 02.08.2011.

Mrs. Dumbrava also reported on the Monitoring of environmental impact of the works for improvement of the navigation condition on the Danube between Calarasi and Braila, km 375 -km175 (started in March 2011, duration 72 months). Monitoring includes 3 phases: Pre-monitoring - before starting the works, During the entire period of execution of the hydro-technical works and Post-monitoring after completion of the works in all critical points for 36 months. The Project includes the monitoring of air quality, noise, soil, hydro-morphological, water quality, as well as Ichthyologic fauna monitoring, Aquatic fauna and flora monitoring, Terrestrial fauna and flora monitoring, Avian fauna monitoring, Site activities monitoring, Monitoring observance of the Pollution Prevention Plan. Following the recommendation of the European Commission – DG ENV to ensure the transparency of the activities and in order to involve the key stakeholders in the process of implementing the mentioned project the River Administration of the Lower Danube, as beneficiary, has published on their website the http://www.afdj.ro/rmd_ro.html monitoring reports.

In relation to the Joint Statement Mrs. Dumbrava stressed that the implementation of the Environmental Monitoring Programme to Project between Calarasi and Braila before, during and after the construction works, now is satisfactory.

Mr. Zeljko Milkovic from the ISRBC presented the project on Rehabilitation and development of navigation on the Sava River. He first described the background of the Project as a priority project in the framework of the ISRBC. He reminded that the main objective of the Project is rehabilitation and development of the Sava River waterway infrastructure and described the locations and measures for improvements: training works and dredging (19 locations), river bend improvements (20 locations), bridges (3 locations), sunken vessels (2 locations) and River Information Services.

Mr. Milkovic reported on the current Project status and activities in progress related to detailed design for the sector Brčko (rkm 234) – Sisak (rkm 594) and detailed design and EIA for the sector Belgrade (rkm 0) – Brčko (rkm 234).

He underlined the interdisciplinary approach in all phases of this ongoing Project. In relation to the Joint Statement and Platina Manual, Mr. Milkovic mentioned the implementation of important principles, "case-by-case approach", "working with nature" and establishing the interdisciplinary planning teams involving key stakeholders.

Mr. Milkovic informed participants that the Project Committee for monitoring and coordination of implementation of the Project "Rehabilitation and Development of Transport and Navigation on the Sava River Waterway", established by the ISRBC Decisions 7/11 and 11/12, has tasks to monitor the Project and coordinate the activities within the Project in general. The Committee consists of the representatives of: a) each of the competent ministries of the Parties to the FASRB (at least two per country, representing the water management / nature conservation / environmental protection and navigation sectors in a balanced way); b) international organizations and stakeholders (1 representative of the ICPDR, 1 representative of the Danube Commission, 2 representatives of regional/national NGO community, and 2 representatives of the economic/navigation sector), and c) Secretariat of the ISRBC. The participating representatives of the NGO community and the economic/ navigation sectors are elected within their own groups. The Project Committee could formulate the Project-related information needs, comments, questions and recommendations to the Project team with support of the Interdisciplinary Advisory Board, if needed. Also, the Project Committee has to motivate the implementation of the principles of the Joint Statement, to stimulate all activities on informing the public concerned and involving the stakeholders in the Project. The Committee has an obligation to regular reporting to the ISRBC on its work and progress regarding the Project. Reports from the Committee meetings shall be published on a publicly available section of the ISRBC web site.

Mr. Milkovic stressed that the mandate of the Committee members is bound to the organization they are representing and each organization has the right to withdraw their representative at any time in written form. Additional experts may also participate in the meetings, should their specific expert knowledge be needed or requested. The Committee may, with the prior consent of the ISRBC, establish an Interdisciplinary Advisory Board, in order to provide help and advice to the Committee on the development of the Project. Representatives of international organizations and stakeholders have the right to regularly participate in the Committee meetings, express their position and views, and have them reflected in relevant meeting documents.

Mr. Milkovic additionally informed participants about the Sisak Port Master Plan and specific project focus on Green Port Engineering following the intentions of the Joint Statement and Ecoport/Green Danube Port Concept.

Conclusions of Day 1

In the short discussion it was stressed that the JS does not yet cover all navigation development projects from big scale structural projects to maintenance works at local/regional level. Cooperation among key government institutions, Ministries for Transport, Economics, and specially Environment, is missing or weak. The NGOs consider the Danube waterway as a major European route for IWT but not with one general minimum draught and width. Base data and intention to properly apply environmental legislation are still weak. SEAs should be done at different levels. The EU environment legislation is a reliable framework for assessing impacts on a case-by-case approach.

Participants agreed and proposed to monitor the JS application on international and national level and to involve NGOs and other stakeholders in transparent processes. All participants expressed the great support for the projects principles respected in the project East of Vienna and Project in Serbia. Two good project examples for project communication and stakeholder involvement could be a model for further activities in other projects.

Day 2 (18 September 2012)

Session 5: Improving the application of the Joint Statement

(Chaired by Mr. Philip Weller, Executive secretary of the ICPDR)

(a) Updating the Annex 3

Mr. Horst Schindler, Secretariat of the Danube Commission, reported on the current status of the Inland Waterways Transport projects in the Danube River Basin. He informed participants about the ongoing work on different sections of the Danube and gave comments to the updated project list as of 1 January 2012, incorporated into the Joint Statement under Annex 3. Along with the countries' contribution Mr. Schindler highly appreciated cooperation with the Sava Commission concerning various projects along the Sava Basin.

Mr. Schindler showed the impression of the updating process of Annex 3 and informed participants that the section Straubing-Vilshofen in Germany, two projects in Austria, Wachau and East of Vienna, two new projects in Slovakia, newly built port in the Divinska Nova Ves and the multipurpose project close to Bratislava–Wolfstar, are implemented in Annex 3. There are also the Gabčíkovo power plants and downstream another TNT project area with some critical bottlenecks on common section of Hungary and Slovakia where we still have pending case – Gabčíkovo/ Nagymaros which has to be solved somehow. Mr. Schindler mentioned that we don't have any further information concerning the entire Hungarian stretch. Hungary is not provided with detailed information on the official way. He underlined once again that Hungary is the heart of Danube. Mr. Schindler also briefly reported on the current status of other downstream critical sections in Croatia and Serbia (Apatin sector), critical bottlenecks on common section of Romania and Bulgaria, and finally the bank restorations at a long Sulina canal.

The Annex 3 of the JS is given in Annex 3 of the Protocol.

(b) Presentation and discussion of the proposal on a unified mechanism of reporting on the bottleneck projects

Mr. Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, admitted that the interests that they had related to the JS were to generate the overview of those activities that have taken place, to put them in unifying form which could not necessarily exist before and the process in written form doing was one of the commitments made under the JS process. Further discussion was turned to the unified mechanism of reporting on the bottleneck projects. Mr. Weller informed on certain activities, but also highlighted the existence of uncertainty: "Who is managing and reporting?", "How is the reporting process happening and what information is required?"

Mr. Dejan Komatina, Secretary of the International Sava River Basin Commission, reminded that the three Commissions prepared draft reporting template which was presented in Zagreb, at the meeting which was held two years ago. In the meantime, EUSDR PA 1A actually developed new project data sheet reporting template which was agreed by the countries. Aiming at acknowledging this work and also trying to avoid duplication of the work by the countries in reporting on the projects, we have simply contacted the Coordinators PA 1A asking for this template to be used within the Joint Statement implementation process. Coordinators kindly offered the template to be used in this process. Further he introduced

existed template for reviewing basic project data, status, timeframe, information on project team financing, project environment and EUSDR related data. Since the existing template has been agreed within EUSDR PA 1A, Mr. Komatina offered to provide additional information on implementation of the JS principles within the very same template already being worked out. The template was enriched by the block "integrated planning approach" with the reference to the integrated planning principles of the JS, information on environmental public in the implementation of projects and information on the interdisciplinary planning teams proposed by PLATINA Manual. Firstly, the ISRBC considers as important to give information on how the main principles of the JS were implemented in particular project. Secondly, there is no necessity to extend the existing template by more than 20% of information. Also he noted that this is an initial concept and initial proposal prepared for distribution after the meeting for comments and suggestions. Once we agree on the content of this template, the three Commissions will work on its final layout.

Mr. Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, Mr Weller found it critical that the participants maintain some sort of overview data base of what is happening. Now PA 1A has a data base that fulfils some of the original functions. The essential side of this aspect is that the participants tried to minimize work for the countries by doing activities. At the same time, he pointed out that there are specific things in the JS that need to be checked – to see that they are being done, to have each participant thinking about whether they have been done in the context of what is happening. It would be useful if the participants were able to compare presentations on the different projects made on 17 September. The proposal is related to the further development of the Annex 3 or utilization of the data base to maintain a similar set of information.

Mr. Markus Simoner, Via Donau, Austria, agreed to use such a form, but he reminded that they have different tasks as PA Coordinators. Via Donau created one form which is suitable for all different kinds of projects. In the 1st year of the EUSDR they were tasked to collect information on projects with regard to the infrastructure but also ports development, fleet modernization, education and training. They created a general form and received more than 90 different projects. The purpose of this form was originally to look what is there in the Danube region in the field of IWT, collected data and also to make it available on the website. He noted that the reporting process and the mechanisms should be discussed to keep in mind the role of the JS and of the Commissions as well as the roles of PA Coordinators. Mr Simoner offered to discuss plans for the next year because their form hasn't been designed for keeping track of progress made every year but only for having these data gathering process.

Mr. Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, noted that the development of the template is important. But the issues Mr. Simoner has just raised are critical. Each year, the status of the individual projects would have been reviewed. Also as a part of this mechanism, to be able to keep track of what new things are happening, a verbal and a written report has to be issued. It has to be determined how the data will be collected or the mechanism by which measures are implemented.

Mrs. Irene Lucius, WWF DCP, proposed to consider proposal on paper and may be they can make further comments. Just as a suggestion to add the question asking "Are there good practice to share?" and "Are there challenges or questions that I would like to discuss with colleagues from other projects?".

Mrs. Irina Ploeg Cruceru, European Commission, DG Regional Policy, supported that idea, particularly for the countries that have to report. She stressed that every time we come with

new initiative and something that we want to improve our first concern is how not to increase, at least to maintain the workload of the people to the level that it is now. She noted that the PA 1A would have to keep an eye on how this projects that have been submitted would be proceeding in the future. They don't have annual obligation on reporting, but it would be useful for both sides to have an eye on the progress. Mrs. Cruceru offered to involve an integrated fiche which will be further developed and show the progress to be used in the JS framework. She assured that PA 1A will continue the work and will work out something that will fit both purposes and will keep the level of information on equal basis for everybody.

Mr. Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, proposed that the section related to JS could be separately communicated and added to the projects, so that the Commissions could take responsibility to do that. The Danube Commission, the Sava Commission and the ICPDR, when sending correspondence prior to the each year's JS meeting, will make an update of that section of the template that was provided on the basis of the existing data in the template.

Mr. Markus Simoner, Via Donau, Austria, shared his opinion and welcomed the idea to put additional information on the website.

Mr. Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, underlined that two countries or perhaps more did not report their activities the day before. He gave a negative assessment to that situation. All three Commissions received very strong messages that there is no lack of commitments to this process. For Hungary, the situation is not satisfactory. The same with the countries of the Lower Danube, the situation on the Kilia arm, the Ukrainian section, which was not presented here. He said that even if nothing is happening, an update is beneficial. In his view, anything that each of the Commissions considers as relevant should be addressed on their specific meetings. That should be openly discussed here – he sees an overall lack of reporting.

Mr. Weller asked the Commissions to take responsibility on this matter. A letter has to be sent out to all those projects indicating updates and completion of the sections related to the JS, which will be supplementary to what exists under PA 1A template developed by the PS coordinators. By Christmas time, there would be a revised version for the next meeting available. He would forward his proposal now to get the first input and the next meeting would ask whether there are any updates on that time. The participants will receive the overall template but also extra part related to the JS which should be clearly identified.

(c) Lessons of Stakeholder Forums

Mr. Ivan Mitrovic, from Plovput-Serbia, informed participants about the all activities of the Stakeholders' Forum on Preparation of Documentation for River Training and Dredging Works on Critical Sectors on the Danube River in Serbia. He underlined the basic principles of Stakeholder Forum work in Serbia from the beginning of the project: acknowledging and respecting each other, building trust, asking and listening each other, learning from each other, common understanding, planning and working together. He presented the results of evaluation of the common work of stakeholders on 6 critical sectors in Serbia and expressed full satisfaction on discussions and inputs of Forum.

Mr. Attila Bencsik on behalf of ERSTU presented the Practical aspects of impact of the navigable waterway conditions on safety and efficiency of the Danube navigation. He informed participants that the European River-Sea-Transport Union Berlin is representing the

interests of the inland- and river-sea shipping industry at the institutions of the European Union and European and international shipping organisations, at associations of trade, commerce and traffic. He described the structure of the Organization which including 79 members from 12 countries in Section Germany, Section Danube and Section Baltic. Representative of ERSTU informed about the main objectives and vision to integrate the Russian Waterways into European Waterway System.

Mr. Bencsik showed the map of the missing water depths in the Danube and very described in details the effects of the low water level on the Danube in 2009, losses due to unused capacity on the Danube in 2009 and all nautical and commercial circumstances in Eastern and Western relations. He underlined the common objectives of the DC and ERSTU: the implementation of the DC recommendations for the minimum requirements of the regulation of the waterway (min. 2.5 m draught for 300 days per year) because the vessels on the Danube need every decimetre. He requested for real actions, objectivity, government and EU support for vessel modernisation and port development plan for the whole Danube.

Session 6: Implementation of the ship waste management project along the Danube

(Chaired by Mr. Philip Weller, Executive secretary of the ICPDR)

Mrs. Ivana Kunc, Secretariat of the DC, informed participants very briefly about some activities and decisions of the DC Ship Waste Experts Group in March and September 2012. related to the future processes of ship waste management integration on the Danube. She reported in a few words regarding the outcome of the first Wanda Project related to international financing model for oily and greasy ship waste. She underlined that the experts from German delegation on the regular DC experts group presented in details the relational analysis of regulation of CCNR Strasbourg Waste Convention (CDNI) and DC Recommendation on collection of ship born waste on the Danube. She stressed that we have to respect that the CDNI is already implemented from 1 November 2009 along the German part of the Danube and that the German experts strong believe that is necessary to harmonize the regulation in the Danube and Rein Region and make one integrated Convention for all Inland Waterways in Europe regarding the ship waste management.

Mrs. Kunc concluded that the most important input from the DC experts meeting is suggestion to the partners of the CO-WANDA project, to prepare together with German experts in the DC one essential document relating to the all differences of Strasbourg Waste Convention and DC Recommendation, with ambition to harmonize Danube – Rhine system of ship waste management.

Mr. András Munkácsy, on behalf of KTI Institute for Transport Sciences Non Profit Ltd. Transport Organization and Network Planning Division presented the Implementation of transnational ship waste management projects along the Danube. He listed the Key objectives: protection of the Danube from pollution by inland navigation in order to preserve valuable ecosystems and water resources, promotion of inland navigation by strengthening its environmentally friendly mode of transport, establishment of a cross-border coordinated ship waste management system along the Danube.

Mr. Munkácsy briefly described the Classification of ship borne wastes and broad political and legal framework. He reported on the Project WANDA (2009–2012) and underlined the Key results: International framework concept, Harmonized pilot actions for the collection of

ship borne wastes in AT, HU, BG &RO, International financing model for oily and greasy ship waste and Map of ship waste reception facilities along the Danube.

Mr. Munkácsy informed participants about Project CO-WANDA (2012–2014), undelining the current legal situation. He presented the Key activities: Advancement of running ship waste management systems , Implementation of practical tests and pilot activities, Development of an International Danube Ship Waste Convention (International Implementation Board, Preparation of International Danube Ship Waste Convention, Implementation Strategies for Convention, International Coordination and Promotion of Convention).

Session 7: Discussion of the future steps and key lessons from the existing situation

(Chaired by Mr. Dejan Komatina, Secretary of the ICPDR)

Mr. Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, presented his approach to balancing commercial and environmental interests in waterway management. He underlined some key principles of the Joint Statement again: Integrated planning processes from the beginning; minimizing the impacts of engineering interventions; the use non-structural measures; the application of EIAs with public input; respecting the Danube River Basin Management Plan of 2009.

Mr. Weller reminded that the best practice has to achieve the required objective of the Manual on Good Practices in Sustainable Waterway Planning (See Platina Manual: <http://www.naiades.info/platina/downloads>).

During his presentation, Mr. Weller opened the several questions for further reflection:

- Reporting Mechanism (Why? How? Relation to PAIA)
- Revision of the Joint Statement (Update? Binding application?)
- Maintenance Issues (Do principles apply?)
- Sharing information between projects (Process e.g. Stakeholder Forums?)
- Issues affecting all projects (Fish migration, Sediment management)
- Utilizing the Danube Strategy for support (Team of technical experts, Projects on overarching issues, PLATINA 2)
- Commitment to the process / Role of the Commissions?

Mr. Cesare Bernabei, European Commission, DG MOVE, expressed thanks for the presentation performing what was in the past and what challenges we have to tackle in near future. He admitted that we have to start from the past to briefly review the situation taken place a few years ago, when there was very little open discussion between the groups of interests for navigation and for the protection of the river. Now we can evidence the discussion being progressed quite a lot but still is not where we want. We have a number of best practices and good practices which are perceived differently. The examples have been presented, and certainly, the JS principles and practices are there to be used and people are

encouraged to open and frank discussion. It doesn't mean there is no room for the individual opinion, but a forum for presenting challenges in such a way that everybody is looking into the eyes of the others and simply expressing the needs and fears as well as problems to be put on the table.

Mr. Bernabei noted that at a present time we have three groups of instruments to tackle pending issues, to improve the current situation and to implement further steps. The three Commissions who are actually the depositary of the JS principles together with the Manual drafted by the EC project PLATINA and with PLATINA 2 continuation will continue these activities and keep it alive. The third one is the opportunity of the EUSDR which came two years ago basically, and which has progressed in many ways in these two years. This is really the opportunity that we have two sides represented at this event, the inland navigation and the environmental impact aspects.

From point of view of Mr. Bernabei we have to start reflecting on two directions and at the same time to revise mechanism of integration the activities of the EUSDR, because at the moment we have the reports which are in the pillars. Report by PA 1A on inland navigation is very useful, an extensive work was undertaken. It classifies a number of issues, basically the entire major projects which are needed to guaranty navigation. But what is the impact on the others? How can we manage this? Going back to the principle of the EUSDR: no additional money, legislation, bureaucracy, we don't want to make more layers. Our initiative is a linking frame in all the activities done in the past.

Mr. Bernabei advised to render opinions in November when the PA will meet. Otherwise, this is going to be restricted to a few volunteers and to the functionaries. He explained that the EC can only transfer, try to put together different parts but the other stakeholders have to be active. Mr. Bernabei suggested to reflect on the revision of the JS, particularly thinking at proposal for binding applications and this is obviously impacting enormously legislation and therefore not only participation of sector or interested people from environment and transport is needed but also the policy responsible for this activity. Additionally, according to the EUSDR principles we have to make the process more integrated, to try to have more connections.

Mrs. Irene Lucius, WWF DCP, in principle welcomed the idea to make the JS legally binding but only under two conditions. The first one is that it is not being weakened; the second is that we only impact on that when we know this is a good chance. The European Commissions' representatives know how difficult it is to propose new legislation. Therefore, she proposed to work on bringing the JS as it is to live and to go on communicating it. Further point mentioned was an integrated planning, integrated work, interdisciplinary work is really the key to sustainability but in practice it is also incredibly difficult to implement.

Mrs. Lucius thought that we will be only successful if we identify the obstacles: resistance, misunderstanding, where do we need to raise awareness, to educate, to convince. It would be important step to make stakeholder analysis and identify the needs. In this regard, the EUSDR can be of real help, because it brings together the political level, decision-makers, and we have to identify what we have to communicate to them in order to become really supportive. We are little bit disappointed, because in principle the EUSDR also involves stakeholders, but there has been no so far a real mechanism to provide platform for them, but nevertheless different ways of involving stakeholders will be a process because there are not so many NGOs or CBOs (community-based organizations) that have understanding in this area to

make a meaningful contribution, to understand that is important for them. This will be a process of learning, also of mutual learning and it's important now to start with the most important issues, to begin working on them but also be aware that this is really the start of a long-term journey effecting different sectors.

Mr. Markus Simoner, Via Donau, Austria, underlined the importance to come together and to speak about these issues in a formal basis which is JS by itself. He drew attention that in one hand we speak about theoretical parameters and on the other hand there is a reality with a lot of problems and also challenges ahead of us. But the answer is the recent commitment from the countries and we will follow-up in the EUSDR for the maintenance issues. For the projects there is a role and obligation and for the PA Coordinators to take it together.

Mr. Simoner stressed that existing 6 working groups, Steering group, all the countries, river commissions, the European Commission being involved, but also we need to become more integrative, to start cross-sectoral discussion also involving NGOs and not just environment, but also navigation companies and industry. Coordinators invite everyone to participate in Working Groups. The utilization of the EUSDR has to be further discussed but surely the follow up will take place and most probably the next meeting in the beginning of November, will be in Belgrade. He informed about a big European Conference organized by the European Commission in Regensburg dedicated to the overall status of the EUSDR. Mr. Simoner invited to participate in the PA A1 Conference. He marked out that they don't have formal role in the JS process therefore they have possibility to bring people on a more informal setting, also in the WGs.

Concerning legally binding status of the JS Mr. Simoner had an impression that we don't have a lack of missing legal instruments having a lot of legal tools to take into consideration from different fields – from environment, transport sector. The problem is not that those legal tools are insufficient, which is missing is the atmosphere of mutual trust. Important factor is that the JS hasn't been written as a legal document, and this is the biggest strength.

Mr. Dejan Komatina, Secretary of the International Sava River Basin Commission noted that we would need to act in parallel. The first line is a certain improvement of reporting mechanism for exchange of information between projects and all the projects within the basin. The second line would be update or revision of the JS with the assistance of EC, particularly EUSDR. The only issue on which we didn't respond, or there was no response on it, was the other relevant issue – fish migration, sediment management. He considered it as a topic for the discussion at the future meetings.

Results and conclusions

Mr. Horst Schindler, Secretariat of the DC, said that this revealed that we are trying not only to learn but also to teach. He underlined the importance of the JS for the development of a successful infrastructure project on the Danube. This is the reason why there is no necessity to elaborate new legislation. We have ecological legislation, a lot of other legislations, which are binding, and we need to create and to apply an approach in order to achieve a goal. There is a real benefit inside that open process – not clearly defined how to do it, because this gives you the opportunity to decide on your own, find your own way of communication in achieving goals. At the end he thanked participants for open discussion and invited them to Zagreb.

Mr. Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, reinforces the messages just been said: in the previous year, he was very concerned that the JS would not be implemented

sufficiently, due to a lack of tools, but also a lack of understanding. Now there is significant progress. There are some areas where we can still do more. This meeting identified what can be done jointly – sharing of information, particular issues that need to be worked on. On behalf of the ICPDR Mr. Weller thanked the DC. We look forward for further progress and we are able to do some reporting perhaps in written form next year again that will help discussions to take place in next year's event. We work jointly and he would like to encourage each of the participants to do that, particularly those countries which were less presented at the workshop. Mr. Weller expressed commitment to bring these ideas forward, because there is an interest in these activities from other parts of the world. He said that high commitment should be maintained and participants who are less presented here are encouraged to improve this, as their presence is very welcome next year.

Mr. Komatina, Secretary of the ISRBC, expressed the very positive impressions of this meeting and informed participants that the next meeting will be hosted by the ISRBC in September 2013 tentatively. He also invited all present stakeholders to attend and contribute to stakeholder conference on the project of the rehabilitation of navigation on the Sava river which will take place in February next year. Mr. Komatina stressed that we didn't yet achieve to have the participation of representatives of both governmental sectors of the countries, namely the environmental and transport ministries, at the meetings – we have to work on this to ensure this tendency of both sectors. He shared the optimism that the next meeting will show further progress on this process. Numbers of very good advices and suggestions for future work within this process have been made on the 4th Meeting on the Follow-up of the Joint Statement.

Annex 1: Final Agenda

Annex 2: LoP

Annex 3: Updated Annex 3 of the JS (status 1 January 2012)