LIFE Project Number

< LIFE19 PRE/AT/006 LIFE DRBMP DFRMP 2021 >

Final Report
Covering the project activities from 02/12/2019 to 30/04/2022

Reporting Date
< 31/05/2022 >

LIFE PROJECT NAME or Acronym


Data Project

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Data Beneficiary

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<tr>
<td>Contact person:</td>
<td>Mr Ivan Zavadsky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal address:</td>
<td>Wagramer Strasse, 5, 1220, VIC D0412 PO Box 500, Vienna, Austria (AT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone:</td>
<td>+43 1 26060 5738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ivan.zavadsky@icpdr.org">ivan.zavadsky@icpdr.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Index of deliverables with short description annexed, in English</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mid-term report</strong>: Deliverables due in the reporting period (from project start) annexed</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Deliverables in language(s) other than English include a summary in English</td>
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*signature by a legal or statutory representative of the beneficiary / affiliate concerned*
1. Table of contents

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   6.3. Evaluation of Project Implementation
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2. List of key-words and abbreviations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>BA</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAT</td>
<td>Best Available Techniques</td>
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<td>CAP</td>
<td>EU Common Agricultural Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>Common Implementation Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFRM Plan</td>
<td>Danube Flood Risk Management Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRB</td>
<td>Danube River Basin</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRBD</td>
<td>Danube River Basin District</td>
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<td>DRBM Plan</td>
<td>Danube River Basin District Management Plan</td>
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<td>DRPC</td>
<td>Danube River Protection Convention</td>
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<td>ECON TG</td>
<td>Economic Task Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>Expert Group</td>
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<td>EU MS</td>
<td>European Union Member States</td>
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<td>EUSDR</td>
<td>EU Strategy for the Danube Region</td>
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<td>FD</td>
<td>EU Floods Directive 2007/60/EC</td>
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<td>FRMP</td>
<td>Flood Risk Management Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
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<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HYMO TG</td>
<td>Hydromorphology Task Group</td>
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<td>IAS</td>
<td>Invasive Alien Species</td>
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<td>ICPDR</td>
<td>International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River</td>
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<td>JDS</td>
<td>Joint Danube Survey</td>
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<td>JPM</td>
<td>Joint Programme of Measures</td>
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<td>MA EG</td>
<td>Monitoring and Assessment Expert Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>RBM</td>
<td>River Basin Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>RO</td>
<td>Romania</td>
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<td>RS</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
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<td>SI</td>
<td>Slovenia</td>
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<td>SWMI</td>
<td>Significant Water Management Issue</td>
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<td>TransNational Monitoring Network</td>
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<td>UWWTP</td>
<td>Urban Wastewater Treatment Plant</td>
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<td>WFD</td>
<td>EU Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC</td>
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3. Executive Summary

The specific project objective was the support for the development of the 3rd Danube River Basin Management and 2nd Danube Flood Risk Management Plan (updates 2021) as required by EU environmental policy and legislation, namely by the EU Water Framework Directive and EU Floods Directive.

With regards to activity A.1 (Modelling and Assessment of Nutrient Emissions in the Danube River Basin), a service contract (SC 2020-14) with IGB was prepared and signed on 23 July 2020, based on the result of an open tendering process. The contract was terminated by 15 December 2021, with all requested tasks fulfilled. The contractor IGB established a new model structure, developed an updated model database including all relevant spatial and temporal data and specific model inputs and parameters, incorporated the latest model developments into the former Danube-algorithm and performed updated model calculations at analytical unit level for both the reference status and scenarios. The results were directly used to support the assessments of the DRBMP Update 2021. The IGB developed two progress reports and a final report as well as submitted the final model results in an electronic format. The Secretariat and IGB provided support for non-EU MS on data collection issues by preparing detailed explanations on the required data and offered information exchange opportunities helping non-EU MS to get familiar with the requested data, liaising data collection in a consistent way and discussing data availability challenges and possible solutions.

As for activities A.2 (Support for Assessments on Hydromorphology), A.3 (Support for Assessment of Invasive Alien Species) and A.4 (Economic Analysis), three contracts with external consultants had been drafted and signed: 1) Service contract SC 2020-10 between the ICPDR and the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), Vienna, Austria Institute of Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management (Ms Carina Seliger) was signed on 6 May 2020. This service contract supported the implementation of action A.2 (Support for Assessments on Hydromorphology). 2) Service contract 2020-09 between the ICPDR and Mr Momir Paunovic was signed on 9 April 2020. This service contract supported the implementation of action A.3 (support for assessment of invasive alien species). 3) Service contract SC 2020-06 between the ICPDR and InterSus – Sustainability Services (Mr Eduard Intervies) was signed on 23 March 2020. This service contract supported the implementation of action A.4 (Economic analysis). The implementation of activities A.2, A.3 and A.4 were accomplished according to the ToRs of the service contracts and the grant agreement LIFE19 PRE AT 006 LIFE DRBMP DFRMP 2021 and related results directly fed into the relevant chapters of the DRBMP Update 2021, namely chapter 2 (Significant Pressures), chapter 7 (Economic Analysis) and chapter 8 (Joint Programme of Measures). A Report on HYMO analysis including update of ecological prioritisation approach for 3rd DRBMP as well as an inventory/brochure on best case examples HYMO measures was produced under activity 2.1 and 2.2, in close coordination with the ICPDR HYMO TG. An update of the “Guidance document on Invasive Alien Species in the DRB” as well as the final report on work on invasive aquatic species within the DRB was prepared under activity 3.1, in close cooperation with the ICPDR MA EG. Under activity 3.1, a report on the on the updated economic analysis for 3rd DRBMP was delivered, in close coordination with the ICPDR ECON TG.

As for activity A.5 (Ensuring Coordination and Public Consultation) and A.6 (Dissemination of DRBMP and DFRMP), the Workshop “WFD-FD (DRBMP & DFRMP Updates 2021) Internal Preparatory Workshop for the Stakeholder Consultation Workshop Our Opinion – Our Danube” was held on 21 April 2021. The Stakeholder Consultation Workshop was organised
from 29 to 30 June 2021 as an online event. A dedicated page on the ICPDR webpage (https://www.icpdr.org/main/activities-projects/public-consultation-draft-management-plan-updates-2021), social media posts and an online questionnaire were prepared to support the public consultation process of the DRBMP and DFRMP Update 2021.

Including the results of activities A.1 (Modelling and Assessment of Nutrient Emissions in the Danube River Basin), A.2 (Support for assessments on Hydromorphology), A.3 (Support for Assessment of Invasive Alien Species) and A.4 (Economic Analysis) as well as the feedback of the public consultation on both plans (supported by A.5 Ensuring Coordination and Public Consultation), the ICPDR adopted the Danube River Basin Management Plan (DRBMP) Update 2021 and Danube Flood Risk Management Plan (DFRMP) Update 2021, its Annexes and Maps, at the 24th ICPDR Ordinary Meeting from 14 to 15 December 2021. During the 4th ICPDR Ministerial Meeting on 8 February 2022, both plans were endorsed by Danube Ministers guiding water management for the next six years cycle (2022-2027). Both plans were published on the ICPDR webpage as follows: http://www.icpdr.org/main/2021-updates-danube-river-basin-flood-risk-management-plans-published.

The dissemination of the project results (activity B.1) was regularly performed through the ICPDR webpage, the ICPDR inhouse magazine Danube Watch and other ICPDR social media channels.

With regards to activity C.1 (Project management and Reporting to EC) by coordinating beneficiary ICPDR, the ICPDR Secretariat with all concerned technical experts was regularly discussing the project implementation status-quo and progress. Information about the project was regularly shared in all ICPDR Expert Group and Task Group Meetings as well as in meetings of all ICPDR Heads of Delegation. The first Progress Report was submitted to the European Commission on 29 May 2020; on 30 June 2020 the first virtual monitoring mission with Mr Felix Bergmann of the External LIFE Monitoring Team was organised. A letter of the European Commission with an evaluation of the Progress Report as well as the findings of the first mission was received on 12 October 2020. Both technical and financial Mid-term report was submitted to the European commission on 6 May 2021 and a letter of the European Commission with an evaluation of the Mid-Term Report was received on 11 June 2021. On 14 June 2021 the second virtual monitoring mission with Mr Felix Bergmann of the External LIFE Monitoring Team was organised. A letter of the European Commission with the findings of the second mission was received on 28 June 2021. The third and last monitoring mission with Mr Felix Bergmann of the External LIFE Monitoring Team took place as in-person meeting in Vienna on 22 March 2022. A letter of the European Commission with the findings of the third mission was received on 2 May 2022.
4. Introduction

The general objective of this project was to support the development of the 2021 updates of the Danube River Basin Management Plan (3rd DRBMP) and Danube Flood Risk Management Plan (2nd DFRMP). The preparation/update of the River Basin Management Plan and Flood Risk Management Plan every six years is a requirement of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Floods Directive (FD) respectively. The preparation of the plans includes all information as described in Annex VII WFD and the Annex of the FD respectively.

The proposed project focused on the following topics: nutrient emissions, river continuity, ecological corridor, invasive alien species, economic analysis and public consultation and fed in the respective chapters of both updated plans.

The project strengthened and harmonised the implementation of the WFD and FD in the Danube River Basin, including in five non-EU Member States (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine) which committed themselves to implement both related Directives. Building on previous transnational achievements in this regard existing knowledge gaps were addressed, and capacities strengthened towards further improved approaches for the sustainable management of Danube basin’s water resources.

The main implementation actions and means towards the achievement of the objectives included the following: 1) Assessment of nutrient emission scenarios using the model MONERIS (Modelling Nutrient Emissions in River Systems), 2) Supporting approaches and harmonisation of hydromorphological assessments and update of the Ecological Prioritisation Approach for River Continuity Restoration, 3) Supporting assessment of invasive alien species in the Danube River Basin as a potential significant water management issue, 4) Supporting economic analysis and 5) Ensuring coordinated implementation of the WFD and FD and public consultation as required by both Directives.
5. Administrative part

The project was managed by coordinating beneficiary ICPDR. Ms Edith Hödl, Technical Expert for River Basin Management in the ICPDR Secretariat, acted as project manager. All concerned technical experts of the ICPDR Secretariat were regularly discussing the project implementation status-quo and progress. Information about the project was regularly shared in all ICPDR Expert Group and Task Group Meetings as well as in meetings of all ICPDR Heads of Delegation.

During the regular weekly staff meetings, the project manager Ms Edith Hödl, responsible for activity C.1 as well as activities A.2 and A.4, under supervision of ICPDR Executive Secretary Mr Ivan Zavadsky and in joint cooperation with Ms. Martina Noitzmüller (Finance Administration Officer), discussed the progress with regards to the project with the involved technical experts and ICPDR support staff:

- Mr. Igor Liska (Technical Expert for Water Quality), responsible for activity A.3;
- Mr. Adam Kovacs (Technical Expert for Pollution Control), responsible for activity A.1;

Whenever necessary, additional bilateral/multilateral meetings among the ICPDR Secretariat staff and/or with external consultants were organised in order to ensure a common understanding and overview for the implementation of the different activities of the project, as well as to decide on the necessary steps for the implementation of the project.

It was decided to make use of the ICPDR time-recording system as a management tool for tracking the days spent of individual experts on project implementation and the different activities. The system was adapted based on the outcomes of discussions with Mr Bergmann and following the virtual mission with Mr Bergmann of the External LIFE Monitoring Team on 30 June 2020.

The cooperation with Mr Bergmann of the External LIFE Monitoring Team proved to be very useful, efficient and valuable for the project implementation. Open questions were always clarified with Mr Bergmann on short notice, a common understanding of project outputs, progress and preparation of deliverables was achieved in three monitoring visits organised with Mr Bergmann on 30 June 2020 (online), 14 June 2021 (online) and 22 March 2022 (in-person).
6. Technical part

The following tables outline the implementation actions, actions for communication and for dissemination of project lessons as well as project management and monitoring of the project progress activities, as outlined in the grant agreement:

- Implementation Actions

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<td>Modelling and assessment of nutrient emissions in the Danube River Basin</td>
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<td>A 1.1</td>
<td>Modelling of nutrient emissions using MONERIS</td>
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<td>A 1.2</td>
<td>Supporting Non-EU MS in data collection</td>
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<td>A.2</td>
<td>Support for assessments on hydromorphology</td>
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<tr>
<td>A 2.1</td>
<td>HYMO analysis including update of ecological prioritisation approach for 3rd DRBMP</td>
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<td>A 2.2</td>
<td>Inventory/brochure best case examples HYMO measures</td>
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<td>A.3</td>
<td>Support for assessment of invasive alien species</td>
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<td>A 3.1</td>
<td>Invasive alien species identification</td>
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<td>A.4</td>
<td>Economic analysis</td>
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<td>A 4.1</td>
<td>Economic analysis 3rd DRBMP</td>
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<td>A 4.2</td>
<td>Economic analysis 2nd DFRMP</td>
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<td>A.5</td>
<td>Ensuring coordination and public consultation</td>
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<td>A.6</td>
<td>Dissemination of DRBMP and DFRMP</td>
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<td>A 6.1</td>
<td>Improved layout version for DRBMP and DFRMP &amp; dissemination of plans</td>
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- Actions for communication and for dissemination of project lessons

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<td>Dissemination of project results</td>
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- Project management and monitoring of the project progress

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<td>Project management and reporting to EC</td>
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6.1. Technical progress, per Action

**Action A1: Modelling and assessment of nutrient emissions in the Danube River Basin**

**Sub-action A 1.1: Modelling of nutrient emissions using MONERIS**

Foreseen start date: April 2020          Actual start date: April 2020
Foreseen end date: March 2022           Actual (or anticipated) end date: December 2021
This sub-action started in April 2020 as planned with preparing a tender documentation for selecting an appropriate sub-contractor. Based on the volume and required capacity of the modelling task and in line with Article II.10 and Article II.11 of the Grant Agreement and the procurement rules of the EU (Directive 2014/24/EU) and the ICPDR (IR 14 Guidelines for Administration of Procurement Procedures), an open tender was announced at the ICPDR website to invite qualified institutions to submit a tender dossier for the modelling. The tender was announced on the ICPDR website on 14 April 2020. The deadline for submission was 15 May 2020, at 12:00 CET, tenders had to be submitted in both, printed and electronic form. The ICPDR Secretariat established an Evaluation Committee to select the most suitable candidate. The tender documentation is attached to this report.

By the specified deadline, only one tender dossier was submitted by the Leibniz-Institute of Freshwater Ecology and Inland Fisheries (IGB) from Germany. Based on the tender evaluation including formal requirements, technical competence and cost-efficiency, the Evaluation Committee proposed to select and subcontract the IGB for the nutrient emission modelling task in line with the conditions of the Terms of References (ToR). The ICPDR Secretariat prepared a contract for the IGB based on the ToR (SC 2020-14) that was signed by both, the IGB and the ICPDR on 23 July 2020, starting the assignment the same day. The end date of the assignment was 15 December 2021. The submitted tender, the tender evaluation report and the contract of the winner are attached to this report.

By mid-October 2021, the IGB established a new model structure, developed an updated model database including all relevant spatial and temporal data and specific model inputs and parameters, incorporated the latest model developments into the former Danube-algorithm and performed updated model calculations at analytical unit level for both the reference status and scenarios. The IGB developed two progress reports and a final report as well as submitted the final model results in electronic format. The final report and the final model results are attached to this report.

The IGB conducted a very intensive information exchange with and data collection through the ICPDR Pressures and Measures Group (PM EG). The representatives of the IGB participated in three PM EG meetings (in October 2020, April 2021 and October 2021) and in two specific MONERIS Working Group meetings (in December 2020 and May 2021) to present the work progress and discuss the technical details of the modelling work with the PM EG experts. Moreover, the Secretariat organized several bilateral discussions with the IGB to monitor the modelling progress and performance and to discuss open issues and technicalities.

The final model results were directly used to support the assessments of the DRBMP Update 2021. In particular, Chapter 2.1.2.3 (Point Source and Diffuse Nutrient Pollution) and 8.1.2.5 (Estimated Effect of Measures on the Basin-wide Scale) were fed with the modelling outcomes, accompanied by 8 thematic maps (Maps 7a-d and 32a-d) and an Annex (Annex 5).

By fulfilling all required tasks by the IGB and by accepting all requested deliverables by the Secretariat, the contract was terminated by 15 December 2021.

**Sub-action A 1.2: Supporting Non-EU MS in data collection**

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<td>Foreseen end date: August 2021</td>
<td>Actual (or anticipated) end date: August 2021</td>
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In full coherence with sub-action A1.1, this sub-action was continuously coordinated and regularly implemented by the ICPDR Secretariat in close cooperation with the IGB and the PM EG. The Secretariat and IGB provided support for each data collection round with detailed explanations on the required data.

Moreover, at two PM EG meetings (in October 2020 and April 2021) and one MONERIS Working Group meeting (in December 2020), specific agenda items with targeted discussions were dedicated to data collection, helping non-EU MS to get familiar with the requested data, liaising data collection in a consistent way and discussing data availability challenges and possible solutions. On the top of this, several bilateral discussions and exchanges took place to clarify particular data issues and to facilitate data provision.

Thanks to the sub-action, the IGB received highly important data from all the Non-EU MS concerned that helped filling previous data gaps and obtaining more reliable input dataset supported by official national data.

**Action A.2: Support for assessments on hydromorphology**

| Foreseen start date: May 2020 | Actual start date: May 2020 |
| Foreseen end date: October 2021 | Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2021 |

A Service contract SC 2020-10 between the ICPDR and the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), Vienna, Austria Institute of Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management (Ms Carina Seliger) was signed on 6 May 2020. This service contract supported the implementation of action A.2 (Support for Assessments on Hydromorphology). Ms Carina Seliger, BOKU University Vienna, and responsible external expert for activities A 2.1 and A 2.2 who has performed all activities under task A.2 from May 2020 onwards, had started her maternity leave on 12 April 2021. The ICPDR was officially informed on 9 April 2021 that activities related to actions A 2.1 and 2.2 were taken over by Mr. Florian Borgwardt, BOKU University Vienna, from 12 April 2021 onwards.

The total budget foreseen (10,000 EUR) for activity 2.1 (Support in HYMO analysis including ecological prioritisation) has already been used up as of 15 March 2021 due to additional workload occurred by data inconsistencies reported by HYMO TG members and the associated need to constantly repeat data analyses as well as provided input to the DRBMP Update 2021. In order to continue the support in the final data analysis and the completion of the DRBMP Update 2021 in autumn 2021, the request for an amendment of the service contract SC 2020-10 for activity 2.1 (Support in HYMO analysis including ecological prioritisation) with a total budget increase of EUR 5,000 was sent to the ICPDR on 18 March 2021. An amendment of the service contract SC 2020-10 for activity 2.1 was signed on 22 July 2021.

**Sub-action A 2.1: HYMO analysis including update of ecological prioritisation approach for 3rd DRBMP**

| Foreseen start date: May 2020 | Actual start date: May 2020 |
| Foreseen end date: October 2021 | Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2021 |

During the ICPDR HYMO-23 meeting, scheduled for March 2020 and held online on 31st March 2020, both the outline for the HYMO analysis (A 2.1) and the template for the brochure on best-case examples (A 2.2) were discussed and reviewed by/with the ICPDR HYMO TG. After March 2020, several updates of data for the DRBMP Update 2021 by ICPDR countries were reported. BOKU University Vienna conducted a very intensive information exchange...
with and data collection through the ICPDR Hydromorphology Task Group (HYMO TG). Ms Carina Seliger participated in two HYMO TG meetings (September 2020 and March 2021) and Mr Florian Borgwardt participated in one HYMO TG meeting (September 2021) to present and discuss the work progress towards the updated HYMO chapters (chapter 2.1.6 on pressures and chapter 8.1.5 on measures related to “Hydromorphological Alterations”), Annexes 15 (“Progress on Measures Addressing Hydromorphological Alterations”), Annex 16 (“Ecological Prioritisation Approach River and Habitat Continuity Restoration (work in progress)”), Annex 17 (“Detailed list of Hydrological Alterations”) and Annex 18 (“Hydromorphological lighthouse projects in the Danube River Basin District (2015-2021)”) as well as related maps for the DRBMP Update 2021. Several revisions of the HYMO chapters, Annexes and related maps were needed from May 2020 to September 2021; the milestones of sub-action A 2.1 were reached and the updated HYMO chapters, Annexes and maps (as part of the updated DRBMP Update 2021) are attached to the final activity report.

**Sub-action A 2.2: Inventory/brochure best case examples HYMO measures**

Foreseen start date: May 2020  Actual start date: May 2020
Foreseen end date: October 2021  Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2021

The inventory/brochure best case examples HYMO measures was developed, prepared and drafted by Ms Carina Seliger and Mr Florian Borgwardt, both from BOKU University Vienna in close cooperation with the HYMO TG; the milestone of sub-action A 2.2 was reached and the new Annex 18 (as part of the updated DRBMP Update 2021) including best case examples of HYMO measures with descriptive text and pictures was prepared and is annexed to this report. The document was added as Annex 18 to the final DRBMP Update 2021.

**Action 3: Support for the assessment of invasive alien species in the Danube River Basin**

**Action A 3.1: IAS identification**

Foreseen start date: January 2020  Actual start date: January 2020
Foreseen end date: January 2022  Actual (or anticipated) end date: January 2022

During the project realization, the following tasks have been finalised under action A 3.1:

Collection of new data on the distribution of alien species in the DRB: The data on the distribution of non-native aquatic species have been primarily updated based on the Joint Danube Survey 4 expedition (2019) (Csányi et al., 2021), but also consequent research activities. Based on collected information, four new alien species of aquatic macroinvertebrates (two gastropods and two leech species) are added to the list of alien species of the Danube – Clathrocaspia knipowitschii (Makarov, 1938), Ferrissia fragilis (Tryon, 1863) (Gastropoda), Barbronia weberi (Blanchard, 1897) and Batrachobdelloides moogi Nesemann & Chanyi, 1995 (Hirudinea). Based on the analyses of the data during 2013, 2018, 2019 and 2020, within the scope of different investigations (beside JDS3 and 4, the data involved two sampling campaigns in 2018 in Iron Gate stretch of the Danube, as well as detail investigation of Hungarian stretch in 2019 and 2020), aquatic snail belonging to family Hydrobiidae has been detected.

Update of the list of the alien species for the Danube River: As presented above, beside the update of the information on C. knipowitschii, the list of alien taxa for the Danube River and the main tributaries has been updated with F. fragilis (Gastropoda), B. moogi and B.weberi (Hirudinea).
Update of the methodology of risk assessment and assessment of pressures caused by biological invasions adapted to the DRB: Updated document has been provided (deadline 31st of October 2021) and presented at 34th MA EG (online ZOOM meeting of the Monitoring and Assessment Expert Group of the ICPDR, 13-14 October 2021) Updates refer to:

- Testing the procedures for assessment of pressure caused by invasive species and risk assessment tools – calculation for macroinvertebrates based on Kick and Sweep JDS4 dataset provided; It should be noted that two parallel dataset for macroinvertebrates obtained by multihabitat and Kick and Sweep sampling procedures during JDS4 survey obtained same results for the main Danube stretches.
- Review of the situation on non-native riparian plants based on JDS3 (2013) and Sava Survey data (2014-2015); Neophyte species were proved to be an important component of riparian zone of the Danube River and its main tributaries. The involvement of this component in regular activities in respect to river basin management was considered at 34th meeting of Monitoring and Assessment Expert Group of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (online ZOOM meeting, 13-14. October 2021 – 34th MA EG); and
- Methodology for identification vulnerable areas for IAS within the DRB has been proposed for further consideration – model applied for Serbia is presented in the document. The methodology was presented at 34th MA EG and it is agreed that it should be further considered to be used as potential tool in activities on the IAS within the DRB.

Update of Risk Assessment Procedure for the IAS: In respect to the update of the Risk Assessment Procedure for evaluation of the invasiveness of non-indigenous species relevant for the Danube River - IASRAP-Danube it is confirmed that, based on available data, B. weberi and F. fragilis could not be considered as invasive. The frequency of occurrence and abundance of both species in the Danube River and the main tributaries are low. In last period of the project realization the activity has been focused on the calculation of level of invasiveness of newly detected taxa Clathrocaspia knipowitschii (Makarov, 1938). In that, based on available information, the “Species Invasiveness has been assessed as 2.20, while Impact to the Danube is assessed as 2.00, which characterise the species as invasive. This is confirmed by the fast spreading of C. knipowitschii in period 2013-2021 (new data available from Hungarian stretch – Csányi, B. personal communication) – the species seems to have spread along more than 800 kilometres in six years (in period 2013-2019) and recently (2020-2021) it has been recorded with high population abundance in Hungarian stretch). Anyhow, more data is needed to assess the real impact of this species to recipient area – to be considered in consequent period.

Testing of indexes for the assessment of pressures cause by biological invasions: The BAI index for 39 sites along the Danube River and 12 on its main tributaries has been calculated for fish and aquatic macroinvertebrates, in parallel with calculation of site specific SBC (Site-specific Biological Contamination) index (Panov et al., 2009).

Update of Guidance document on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in the Danube River Basin: The updates refer to:

- Presentation of the results of testing indexes for the assessment of level of pressures caused by biological invasions;
- Providing Risk Assessment procedure for C. knipowitschi – the species is assessed as invasive for the Danube River and further observations are needed;
- Incorporation of subchapter on non-native riparian plants and
• Update of further activities on IAS within the Danube River Basin.

Data collection procedure development: Confident assessment of the state in respect to pressures caused by biological invasions, as well as an effective management strongly depends on availability of reliable and comparable data. Thus, development of standardised data collection procedure is an imperative to properly assess the IAS for the DRB. In general, on the level of the ICPDR, it was agreed to take into the consideration only aquatic species, but the involvement of riparian plant species was also considered recently, based on the request from Hungary and conclusions from the 34th MA EG meeting. In respect to data collection, standard operational procedure for data collection for JDS4 has been developed, which is of relevance for specific surveys organized regularly (each six years) along the Danube, aimed, between other things, to provide data for update of the River Basin Management Plan for the Danube.

Preparation of protocol for collection of the data on alien species: The protocol developed to be used within Joint Danube Survey 4 expedition was used as the bases for further development. It contains the procedure of field data collection, sample collection, samples and data processing, as well as reporting guidelines. Sampling data collection includes exact coordinates, matrices, sampling dates and methods, plus accompanying photos, if available. The data could be collected via 3 alternative tools:
- ODK Collect app for Android mobile devices – primarily for usage in the – records collected using the device’s GPS sensor
- Web form usable in a modern web browser on any platform and device
- Excel template which allowed batch upload of sample data collected by other means.
In previous period, Open Data Kit for mobile data collection was used for the JDS4 data collection and it was found to be useful for collection of the data on alien species, as well.

Additional survey in Hungarian, Bulgarian and Serbian Danube sections: In Hungarian section of the Danube during 2019 additional crayfish survey has been done. The survey has been realized in summer (regular JDS4 activity) and autumn (additional sampling). Since three Decapoda species are alien for the Danube River Basin, this survey is an important contribution to the knowledge on alien and potentially invasive taxa in the region. Beside of the regular LiNi crayfish trap sampling two additional methods were applied on the Hungarian Danube section during two seasons, summer and autumn:
- Electrofishing (EF);
- Hand searching (HS).

Identification of principal recipient areas in the Danube River Basin: Identification of principal recipient areas for the IAS within the DRB is ongoing process. A considerable work has been done in order to make biological invasions in fresh and transitional waters, as well as in marine ecosystems more predictable and to develop a Risk Assessment Tools (RAT). The efforts are mostly focused on identification of the main vectors of IAS introductions, assessment of inoculation rate (propagule pressure), assessment of species invasiveness, evaluation of the level of biological invasions and applicable RAT, suitable for use in water management, has been developed and tested (Paunović and Csányi, 2021).

Management/Mitigation measures: In general, design of effective management measures for suppression and control of biological invasion is complex issue that has been extensively discussed in scientific literature. Management measures has to be developed based on the frame
regulated in the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species (No 1143/2014, from 22. October 2014). Based on the review of current knowledge on biological invasions in aquatic ecosystems within the DRB (Csanyi & Paunović 2020), taking into the consideration other circumstances (e.g. ecosystems that types are most exposed, socio-economic situation) five measures aimed to suppress and control biological invasions were proposed to be considered in a consequent period for the DRB:

**Measure 1:**
- To identify and implement methods of collection of comparable data on invasive species.
- To design and constantly upgrade appropriate database.
- Design of early warning system for the DRB, with involvement of advanced techniques, such as eDNA, but also with the support of institutions already providing information platforms (beside information platform of the ICPDR – Danubis and DanubeGIS, the IAS platform of the Joint Research Centre should be considered).
- Identification of the main means of introduction and dispersal.

**Measure 2:**
- Providing platform for collaboration between countries on the issue on suppressing aquatic invasions in the DRB.
- Providing platform for harmonized approach to the management of biological invasions, through the work of the ICPDR experts groups and support of Danube Countries.

**Measure 3:**
- Strengthening activities on raising public awareness, in collaboration with the expert groups of the ICPDR.

**Measure 4:**
- Development of a set of technical measures for reduction of abundance of aquatic invasive species – applicable for smaller rivers and isolated ecosystems.

**Measure 5:**
- Providing input for development of more effective administrative measures for prevention and control biological invasions of water ecosystems in the DRB, which involve development of legislative and means of control, including penal policy implementation.

**Action A.4: Economic analysis**
Foreseen start date: March 2020   Actual start date: March 2020
Foreseen end date: October 2021   Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2021

A Service contract SC 2020-06 between the ICPDR and InterSus – Sustainability Services (Mr Eduard Interwies) was signed on 23 March 2020. This service contract supported the implementation of action A.4 (Economic analysis).
As for activity A.4.1, the ICPDR received a formal request of Mr Eduard Interwies for a shift of budget of 3.500 Euro from activity A.4.2 to activity A.4.1 (1.500 Euro of resources have been used up to November 2020) on 16 March 2021. The reasons for this budget shift from A.4.2 to activity A.4.1 were as follows: Preparatory work regarding the support to the DFRMP Update 2021 ECON aspects (A.4.2) was only relevant up to November 2020 (identification of update needs from the previous plan/annexes, preparation of an information collection template, discussions on the topic in the Economics Task Group) and afterwards taken care of by the Flood Protection Expert Group (FP EG) of the ICPDR. However, activity A 4.1 has proven to be much more resource-intensive, some of the main reasons being: the entire process of finalizing the DRBMP Update 2021 version to be published for consultation took longer than planned, leading to continued effort/updating-being available for any modification needs for a longer period of time; linked to this, the number of draft versions that had to be prepared was higher than expected; the DanubeGIS-information proved not to be as easy to be integrated as expected.

**Sub-action A 4.1: Economic analysis 3rd DRBMP**

Foreseen start date: March 2020  
Actual start date: March 2020  
Foreseen end date: October 2021  
Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2021

During the ICPDR ECON-20 meeting, scheduled for April 2020 and held online on 3rd April 2020, both the outline for the DRBMP and DFRMP Update 2021 were discussed and reviewed by/with the ICPDR ECON TG. After April 2020, several updates of data for the DRBMP Update 2021 by ICPDR countries were reported.

Mr Eduard Interwies conducted a very intensive information exchange with and data collection through the ICPDR Economics Task Group (ECON TG). Mr Eduard Interwies participated in three ECON TG meetings (September 2020, March 2021 and September 2021) to present and discuss the work progress towards the updated ECON chapters (chapter 7 “Economic Analysis” and chapter 8.5 “Financing the Joint Programme of Measures”) as well as Annexes 12 (“Economic Analysis”) and Annex 20 (“Financing Joint Programme of Measures”), Annex 17 (“Detailed list of Hydrological Alterations”). Several revisions of the ECON chapters and Annexes were needed from March 2020 to September 2021; the milestones of sub-action A 4.1 were reached and the updated ECON chapters and Annexes (as part of the updated DRBMP Update 2021) are attached to the activity report.

As for the updated economic analysis included in the DRBMP Update 2021, it can be stated that there are considerable differences in the Danube countries socio-economic data like GDP and GDP per capita, highlighting significant differences between Danube countries’ economic activity. This fact is also reflected in terms of the heterogeneity in levels of investments which were possible in the past for basic water services like water supply and wastewater treatment, leading to different levels of infrastructure development (e.g., regarding the levels of UWWT). Closing this gap remains one of the key challenges for the DRB and the WFD planning period 2021-2027. Sustaining cost-recovery is a key tool for ensuring the financial sustainability of utilities, whereas socio-economic circumstances and affordability issues have to be taken into consideration. Efforts will be required in order to close remaining knowledge gaps and further work remains regarding methodologies and joint efforts towards the harmonisation of approaches e.g. on tools like cost recovery, including environmental and resource costs, in order to make best use of economic instruments offered by the WFD for water management planning, at the national level as well as in a transboundary context. Cost-effectiveness or cost-benefits analyses and affordability assessments are approaches for determining
disproportionality of costs. These can be relevant for justifying possible exemptions. Consequently, best possible harmonisation of approaches would be especially beneficial in the transboundary context. With regard to trends, the overall population in the DRB can be expected to decline slightly, while economies are mostly expected to grow – however, the COVID-19 pandemic is significantly increasing uncertainty and is already having a negative effect on economic growth. Sectors with significant consequences for water quality and quantity related aspects, such as agriculture, hydropower and production of energy from biomass, are also expected to grow, but less than foreseen in the DRBMP Update 2015.

Sub-action A 4.2: Economic analysis 2nd DFRMP
Foreseen start date: March 2020 Actual start date: March 2020
Foreseen end date: October 2021 Actual (or anticipated) end date: November 2020

Preparatory work regarding the support to the DFRMP Update 2021 ECON aspects was only relevant up to November 2020 (identification of update needs from the previous plan/annexes, discussions on the topic in the Economics Task Group) and afterwards taken care of by the Flood Protection Expert Group (FP EG) of the ICPDR. FD stipulates that when available, for shared river basins or sub-basins, a description of the methodology, defined by the Member States concerned, of cost-benefit analysis used to assess measures with transnational effects shall be provided in the flood risk management plan. The summary of existing national approaches to the cost-benefit analysis is provided in the chapter 8 of the DFRMP Update 2021.

Action A.5: Ensuring coordination and public consultation
Foreseen start date: June 2020 Actual start date: June 2020
Foreseen end date: February 2022 Actual (or anticipated) end date: April 2022

To ensure the coordination of and public consultation pertaining to the Danube River Basin Management Plan and Danube Flood Risk Management Plan Updates 2021, the ICPDR’s Technical Expert for Communication and Public Participation (Ms. Hélène Masliah-Gilkarlov) carried out the following activities in coordination with the staff of the ICPDR Secretariat:

- Conceptualization and preparation of the necessary materials and activities, including the creation of a placeholder page inviting the public to wait for the updates as information went online on 1 April 2021. This planning stage ran from November 2020 until end of March 2021.
- Preparation of a dedicated section on ICPDR.org. This section is accessible via: https://www.icpdr.org/main/activities-projects/public-consultation-draft-management-plan-updates-2021. It was officially announced as an online launch on 1 April 2021 but was already available in March 2021. The page was designed in the form of boxes, separating the various key activities into separate sections for ease of access to the public. This page has monitorable traffic figures via the ICPDR’s online backend which show a steady increase in the number of visitors. Between the publication of the two draft plans in March 2021 and the publication of said plans in their layouted version in March 2022, a total of 267,112 unique visitors had visited the page. This page was continually updated throughout the lifetime of the project.
• Production of a visually striking banner for the project, to aid in identification and promotion of public consultation activities. This was provided to the ICPDR countries and used across a variety of platforms and partner websites to unify communications on this subject.

• A social media campaign was carried out simultaneously to increase the attention and online traffic relevant to this consultation. This campaign utilised multiple social media channels to disseminate relevant information in addition to guiding users to the relevant pages on the website and is being coordinated with the social media channels of relevant stakeholders and partners to further boost impact. A full report of this campaign was produced after its completion to measure its success in terms of impact, impressions, clicks, and online engagement and can be found with the annexes to the report under the deliverables for Activity B1. A total of 82 posts were published between the launch of the consultation period and the online publication of the layouted plans which generated 129,142 impressions most of which on Facebook.

• To expand the target groups of public consultation beyond expert stakeholders, a simple and accessible online questionnaire was developed. Questions related to very general aspects of the management plans and sought feedback from the public in an attempt to both explaining the main visions and missions of both plans and confirm their satisfaction with the proposed measures. The online questionnaire was created to create
a speedy and educational way for the public of the Danube River Basin to participate in the consultation process for both the DRBMP & DFRMP. It was made online and available to the public on 1 April 2021. It was translated into a variety of regional languages, to maximize accessibility and reach. The final results of the online questionnaire were processed and summarized in the Online questionnaire results documents, to be found with the deliverables for Activity A5.2.

A total of 350 individuals opened the questionnaire; 265 individuals filled in up to and including question 5; 255 individuals filled in up to and including question 8; 232 individuals fully filled in the entire questionnaire.

The questionnaire was available in 11 languages: (English; Bulgarian (Български); Croatian (Hrvatski); Czech (Čeština); German (Deutsch); Hungarian (Magyar); Romanian (Română); Serbian (Српски); Slovak (Slovenčina); Slovenian (Slovenščina); Ukrainian (Українська)).

The full results and insights taken from this Online Questionnaire are included in the report included under A5.2 documentation.

The questionnaire was opened by individuals in 15 countries:

The individuals who filled in the Online Questionnaire came from a wide variety of relevant fields. The single largest group (excluding ‘Other’) was Water Management Authority, followed closely by Administration.

The majority of those who completed the questionnaire were women:
This action was completed successfully. The website space, questionnaire, and social media campaign were all launched according to schedule on 1st April 2021, following the preparation period. No complementary action took place outside of the scope of the LIFE project. Activities completed within the frame of the LIFE project are noted as such on the ICPDR website via the presence of the LIFE logo and an explanatory text. This action will formulate a basis for and inform similar future consultation processes to be undertaken by the ICPDR.

**Sub-action A 5.1: Workshop Coordination WFD and FD**

Foreseen start date: March 2021  
Actual start date: March 2021  
Foreseen end date: May 2021  
Actual (or anticipated) end date: May 2021

All activities below were undertaken by the ICPDR’s Technical Expert for Communication and Public Participation (Ms. Hélène Masliah-Gilkarov) in cooperation with the ICPDR Secretariat:

- Define target audience for the workshop: in this case, the workshop was an internal event aimed at responsible experts and staff who led the forthcoming Stakeholder Workshop (“Our Opinion – Our Danube”).

- Participants of the WFD-FD Internal Preparation Workshop were:
  - Chairpersons of the following ICPDR expert and task groups: PP EG, RBM EG, FP EG and HYMO TG, ECON TG, NTG, PM EG, MA EG, GW TG
  - Affiliated ICPDR Secretariat staff
  - PP EG, GWP-CEE organisational team members, support staff

- The goals of the workshop were developed in coordination with the invitees:
  - The aim of this internal preparation workshop was to make sure everybody involved in the Stakeholder Consultation Workshop was as prepared as possible for involvement in ‘Our Opinion – Our Danube’. The aim was to maximise efficiency, and be fully prepared to give input for the break-out thematic sessions at the Stakeholder Consultation Workshop.
  - In short, this internal workshop was an opportunity for respective staff to agree on roles at ‘Our Opinion – Our Danube’, as some of the thematic areas covered would overlap with their areas of expertise. This workshop also acted as a brief rehearsal/run through of the main events to be expected at the stakeholder consultation workshop which was held on 29-30 June 2021.

- Drafting of the agenda was another topic of the meeting: a standard process of agreement done with the invitees.

- Venue: due to the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, this event was planned as an online workshop from the outset. and was held online via Zoom.

The workshop was organised on 21 April 2021. A report on the outcome of the workshop was prepared following the workshop and finalised and delivered by the 10 May 2021 (a slight delay compared to the grant agreement, report was initially foreseen to be prepared by 31 March 2021). The report delay was due to the date at which the workshop was held (21 April 2021). This late date is due to the fact that the workshop was initially planned to be held as an in-person event and had to be moved online due to the latest developments in the COVID-19 pandemic. By the second week of April, the agenda was agreed upon, meeting the expectations of all participants. No technical or financial issues have occurred or are foreseeable. However, the foreseen travel costs and subsidence costs (4750 EUR) could no longer apply due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that this event had now moved online and was attended by over 200 participants. A shift of costs for external support and contracting foreseen in preparation of Activity 5.2. was requested and granted by the EC with letter of 11 June 2021.
The learnings and outcomes of this WFD-FD workshop, went on to inform the agenda and planning for the Stakeholder Workshop held on 29/30 June 2021 ("Our Opinion – Our Danube").

For this action, only 45.3 % of the planned person-days were incurred. This reduction was a result of the workshop, initially planned to be held as an in-person event, being moved online due to the latest developments in the COVID-19 pandemic. This change led to the elimination of several costs which would have been incurred relating to in person event logistics (catering, etc.). The cost savings were used to cover the higher personnel costs of the project and the higher cost for external assistance of Action A.2.

**Sub-action A 5.2: Stakeholder consultation Workshop**

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All activities below were undertaken by the ICPDR’s Technical Expert for Communication and Public Participation (Ms. Hélène Masliah-Gilkarov) in cooperation with the ICPDR Secretariat:

- **Defining the target audience for the workshop** was done successfully in the framework of the internal ‘WFD-FD Workshop’. Based on the previous Stakeholder Workshop conducted by the ICPDR in 2015 in the frame of public consultation for the previous DRBMP update and first DFRMP publication, this internal event was aimed as broadly as possible to include all people and stakeholders within the Danube River Basin. The core target audience of key participants however, included responsible experts and staff who would take the lead at the workshop, including:
  - Chairpersons of the following ICPDR expert and task groups: PP EG, RBM EG, FP EG and HYMO TG, ECON TG, NTG, PM EG, MA EG, GW TG
  - Affiliated ICPDR Secretariat staff
  - PP EG, GWP-CEE organisational team members, support staff
  - GWP-CEE technical assistance staff

- **Defining the goals of the workshop**:
  - A vital part of the ICPDR’s six-year management cycle, this stakeholder workshop was aimed at supporting the WFD/FD public consultation procedure by receiving and facilitating input from a variety of stakeholders and members of the public. It included several informative talks about the DRBMP & DFRMP Updates 2021, and culminated with a workshop including breakout sessions, where we directly received input from all stakeholders in attendance, altogether 200 registered participants.

- **Drafting of the agenda**: this was completed with internal consultation at the WFD-FD workshop under Action 5.1, plus via coordination by the ICPDR’s Public Participation Expert Group.

- **Thematic Areas for Breakout Sessions (Danube Café)**: five 5 breakout sessions were planned for the agenda of the workshop, covering the main highlights of the two plans. These were divided up based on pre-existing ‘Thematic Areas’, utilised by the ICPDR at the previous consultation a proven track record of success, confirmed again this time. These areas are:
  - Thematic Area 1 - Organic, Nutrient and Hazardous Substances Pollution of Surface and Groundwater
The Workshop took place in accordance with the updated planning, online on 29/30 June 2021 for on-and-a-half days hosting more than 200 participants. Stakeholders and interested parties from across the Danube were invited to contribute their input to the Danube River Basin Management Plan and Danube Flood Risk Management Plan Updates 2021.

Discussions during a Danube Café, with rotation in 5 Thematic Areas were the pivotal point of the stakeholder consultation workshop Our Opinion – Our Danube. This is where participants could #HaveTheirSay. The organizers split the participants randomly into groups where they took part in 5 x 30-minute discussions. This meant visiting 1 breakout room for each Thematic Area. After the time ran out in each room, each group rotated to the next breakout room to have a chance to #HaveTheirSay on every topic.

Below is an overview of the summarizing messages for each thematic area. More details on the stakeholder workshop (schedule, calls to action, remarks, etc.) are annexed to the A5.2 documentation.

Summarizing messages from each thematic area (1 to 5):

- **Thematic Area 1**: Organic, Nutrient and Hazardous Substances Pollution of Surface and Groundwater

  1. Data gaps: Important data gaps to be filled between scientific understandings of pollution issues and legislative aspects (e.g., groundwater, accident prevention)
  2. Alignment with different directives and management mechanisms
  3. Engagement with other sectors, including agriculture
  4. Public engagement: Further public engagement around pollution is crucial, but the “how” deserves careful consideration
  5. Social and ecosystem impacts: pollution impacts can highlight equity aspects
  6. Bring forward less visible dimensions of pollution and adjust to emerging issues: groundwater, microbial pollutants, microplastics, etc.
  7. Take into account climate change impacts

- **Thematic Area 2**: Hydromorphological Alterations & Integration Issues (Flood Risk Management, Hydropower, Nature Protection, Navigation, Agriculture)

  1. Increase the level of ambition in integration issues, working closely with the relevant sectors, including agriculture and the general public.
  2. Improve public communication by explaining how people can profit personally from measures such as restoration and environmental protection measures. Use appropriate language and terminology.
  3. Increase funding available for hydromorphological issues at the level similar to investments targeting pollution.
4. Share the financial burden for projects with international / basin wide benefits.
5. Support projects addressing more than one objective (seeking for synergies).
6. Focus on improvement of existing status and preventing further deterioration of water status. Properly assess new projects.
7. Talk more about solutions and potential instead of (only) problems. It is time for action!

- **Thematic Area 3:** Objectives and measures of Flood Risk Management Plans
  1. Relevant challenges and processes are incorporated in the plan
  2. Synergies by implementing NWRM, NBS with the implementation of the WFD, CC Adaptation Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy, etc. shall be better promoted
  3. Some extra effort is needed (e.g., executive summary) to make the DFRMP better understandable, especially for the general public
  4. Cooperation/coordination and integration of all relevant sectors is the key element of reducing flood risk in a sustainable way.

- **Thematic Area 4:** Support to implement both plans, Financing of the measures
  1. The recovery funds offer significant additional funding opportunities; to be used wisely - use of the Do No Harm principle when planning/executing new projects (esp. for flood protection), e.g., the Recovery and Resilience Facility in some countries
  2. Need to prioritize projects offering multiple benefits (e.g. including ecosystem services related benefits). Nature-Based Solutions is a useful approach for this.

- **Thematic Area 5:** Communication and Public Participation
  1. The 3 pillars of “Cleaner, Healthier, and Safer” represent pivotal points of the future communication
  2. “Popularize the plans”
  3. You “can’t spend water twice”: you need to know – On the farmers? On the sturgeons?
  4. It is imperative to involve younger generations
  5. The agricultural sector needs to be brought on the table
  6. There is a capacity issue: too few people for COMs
  7. Make it clear that you’re a partner for the public
  8. People are more interested in topics that relate to them
  9. Converting national questions to local ones helps securing support among people
  10. Positive framing – make sure to always present win-win situations. The ‘win-win’ situation paradigm is a good one if the situation is not critical
  11. Water sector issues can only be solved in an integrated way with other sectors
  12. Search and present ‘hot topics’ such as: Climate change and Microplastics that get the public’s attention

Reporting on the stakeholder workshop was completed as scheduled by end of October 2021. The publication of the Draft DRBMP & DFRMP texts was delayed, meaning publication of the plans could not be completed and the texts made available for consultation (important for workshop participants) until a slightly later date of 1 April 2021 (originally, publication had been planned for 15 February 2021). This delay did not have a major impact on the planning or execution of this workshop however and the publication date of the two plan updates suited
the needs of the workshop participants. The foreseen travel costs and subsidence costs (4750 EUR) no longer applied due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that this event (had moved online. Given the scope of the event (stakeholder workshop addressing the public of the Danube River Basin) and fact that there was no longer onsite assistance from local partners, this activity required additional budget to be used for the following three positions:

- Moderation of the online workshop (EUR 3500): given the character of the workshop and the fact that it moved online, a moderator had to be contracted for the overall event when all other actors involved will be in charge of the technical aspects of the event and the expertise through the different breakout sessions and reporting activities.
- Contracting of a supporting organisation (EUR 5000) who was in charge of the workshop’s technical organization and implementation, comprising the following:
  - Technical support of online event system
  - Pre-workshop actions
  - Workshop co-facilitation, including reporting
- Assistance (EUR 1000) in initial preparation of online communications campaigns and deliverables relating to the project and first facilitation of a reorientation of all activities into the online environment.

Thus, the unused financial resources from Activity 5.1 (travel costs and subsidence costs (4750 EUR)) and the foreseen travel costs and subsidence costs (4750 EUR) for this activity were required to ensure an enhanced online organisation of the stakeholder workshop including external support for online technical coordination as well as online moderation. This budget shift was accepted by the EC with letter of 28 June 2021. The results, comments and outcomes of this workshop played a role in the revision and update of the texts of the DRBMP & DFRMP Updates 2021. This final update following consultation took place following the workshop. The report on the stakeholder workshop is available with the deliverables for Activity A5.2.

The person-days spent for this action were slightly higher than initially planned. This increase was due to the fact that the event moved online, which in the case of this workshop required an entire rethink and reimagining of the program to suit the online format (screen sharing, timing, online breakout rooms, participants briefings, online and technical support coordination, etc.). By taking place online, the event was able to host a larger number of attendees as in previous years, which in turn required a certain amount of person days to facilitate. While online events do not require a venue or catering, other costs have to be included in the preparation. Much more time and effort had to be put in planning. The event took place in accordance with the updated planning, on 29th-30th June 2021.

**Action A.6: Dissemination of DRBMP and DFRMP**

Foreseen start date: February 2021       Actual start date: April 2021
Foreseen end date: April 2022       Actual (or anticipated) end date: April 2022

In general, major contribution were made to the dissemination of the DRBMP & DFRMP by the activities taken under Action 5 (see above). Preparation of a dedicated section on ICPDR.org was completed to assist in dissemination of the draft texts. This section is accessible via: [https://www.icpdr.org/main/activities-projects/public-consultation-draft-management-plan-updates-2021](https://www.icpdr.org/main/activities-projects/public-consultation-draft-management-plan-updates-2021). It was designed in the form of boxes, separating the various key activities into separate sections for ease of access to the public. This page has monitorable traffic figures via the ICPDR’s online backend. It was officially launched online on 1 April 2021, and PDF versions of all relevant text was made available via [http://icpdr.org/main/wfd-fd-plans-published-2021](http://icpdr.org/main/wfd-fd-plans-published-2021). Final version of the respective texts replacing draft versions and dissemination
are still ongoing following the conclusion of the Public Consultation Process. The publication of the Draft DRBMP & DFRMP texts was delayed, meaning publication of the plans could not be completed and the texts made available for consultation (important for workshop participants) until a slightly later date of 1 April 2021 (originally, publication had been planned for December 2020). This delay however did not have a major impact on the public consultation process. These texts will remain available via the ICPDR website after finalisation. The final version of the respective texts replaced the draft versions and dissemination continued following the conclusion of the Public Consultation Process.

**Sub-activity: A 6.1: Improved layout version for DRBMP and DFRMP & dissemination of plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreseen start date:</th>
<th>January 2022</th>
<th>Actual start date: January 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreseen end date:</td>
<td>February 2022</td>
<td>Actual (or anticipated) end date: March 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once the mandatory public 6-months consultation period (31 March to 30 September 2021) was completed, the final drafts were reviewed and became final approved versions. These were put into an improved layout and were sent to print by end of December 2021. The previous versions of the layout were deemed to be somewhat too ‘bare’ and less attractive to the public and are due for a visual upgrade. Additional focus was put on improving the accessibility of the PDF (digital) versions of the text, in addition to the print versions – i.e., proper indexing and structural revisions. The documents now have a more appealing visual look, attractive to the public. This revised layout for the plans is foreseen to contribute to future plans and communications under the ICPDR.

The person-days for action 6.1 were far higher than initially planned. This increase is partially due to the fact that additional corrections had to be made in both Management Plans during the layouting phase which was somewhat disrupted by in-person meetings being prevented during the pandemic. Additionally, ensuring that both documents were adequately layouted as both print and pdf documents, special care had to be given to the user-friendliness and navigability. This included several adaptations to a new digital format matching the print format. Furthermore, layouting of the maps for the DRBMP-Update 2021 required additional work also as a result of the transition towards a new type of digital format, both plans are annexed to this report (Annex A.6.1).

**Action B.1: Dissemination of project results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreseen start date:</th>
<th>December 2019</th>
<th>Actual start date: December 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreseen end date:</td>
<td>April 2022</td>
<td>Actual (or anticipated) end date: April 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ICPDR communication channels were constantly used to inform the public. These are:

1) **ICPDR.ORG**

- With the handing over of the ICPDR presidency to Montenegro on 26 January 2021, the ICPDR published a statement from the new President Momčilo Blagojević (drafted in cooperation with secretariat staff), which highlighted the public consultation process and emphasized the development of the DRBMP & DFRMP Updates 2021: [https://www.icpdr.org/main/press-release-montenegro-takes-over-icpdr-presidency-moldova-2021](https://www.icpdr.org/main/press-release-montenegro-takes-over-icpdr-presidency-moldova-2021).
was enhanced. In its most recent form, it was adapted after the draft plans updates went online with the launch of the public consultation process, it now contains most of the relevant details on the process.

- A press release published by the ICPDR in support of World Water Day on 22 March 2021, also made sure to highlight the Public Consultation process, and to guide the public back towards the important online areas: https://www.icpdr.org/main/press-release-world-water-day-2021-valuing-water-our-shared-basin.
- The online consultation process was first announced in early-March 2021, via an informative news post on the ICPDR's front page, which teased the process and highlighted the necessity of going online during the pandemic. See: https://www.icpdr.org/main/icpdr-prepares-first-fully-online-public-consultation-process.
- The publication of the plans and launch of the public consultation were announced via a news post put on the ICPDR website on 31 March 2021. The article included background information on the process, in addition to links to key documents and the newly refreshed area of the ICPDR website dedicate solely to the public consultation. See: https://www.icpdr.org/main/public-consultation-draft-river-basin-and-flood-risk-management-plans-2021.
- An additional side block was added to the structure of the ICPDR website following the launch of the process on 31 March 2021. This side block appears on every single page on the site, and guides users consistently to the online side of the consultation process, in particular to the questionnaire where they are being encouraged to make a contribution.
- The publication of the layouted versions of both the DRBMP and DFRMP Updates 2021 was announced via a post ICPDR.org on 1 March 2022. See: https://icpdr.org/main/new-designs-summary-brochures-icpdrs-two-management-plan-updates
- The two plans, the maps, and the annexes can also be found on these respective pages on ICPDR.org: http://icpdr.org/main/publications/management-plans

2) ICPDR Social Media platforms

The ICPDR has been active on social media platforms since November 2018. This means that, unlike previous consultation processes, the ICPDR has been employing social media as a key channel for communication and dissemination surrounding information pertinent to the public consultation process. Since the entirety of the Public Consultation process – including the Stakeholder Consultation Workshop – has officially become an online-only event (due to the pandemic), additional dedicated social media campaigning took place to yield further results and increase engagement in a very competitive online environment. During the lifetime of the public consultation project to date, the ICPDR posted on several occasions on the ICPDR social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn). The statistics and overview of the social media campaign can be found with the deliverables under Activity B.1. Basic figures below:
Action C.1: Project management and reporting to EC

Foreseen start date: December 2019  Actual start date: December 2019
Foreseen end date: April 2022  Actual (or anticipated) end date: April 2022

The ICPDR Secretariat with all concerned technical experts regularly discussed the project implementation status-quo and progress. During the regular weekly staff meetings, the project manager Ms Edith Hödl (Technical Expert for River Basin Management), responsible for task C.1 as well as activities A.2 and A.4, under supervision of ICPDR Executive Secretary Mr Ivan Zavadksy and in joint cooperation with Ms. Martina Noitzmüller (Finance Administration Officer), discussed the progress with regards to the project with the involved technical experts and ICPDR support staff:

- Mr. Igor Liska (Technical Expert for Water Quality), responsible for task A.3;
- Mr. Adam Kovacs (Technical Expert for Pollution Control), responsible for task A.1;

Information about the project was regularly shared in all ICPDR Expert Group and Task Group Meetings as well as in meetings of all ICPDR Heads of Delegation.

As there were no staff costs foreseen in the initial budget for Ms. Martina Noitzmüller (Finance Administration Officer), it was proposed to shift some person-days from Ms. Edith Hödl and Mr. Adam Kovacs to task C.1 and Ms. Noitzmüller in order to support her work with regards to financial and administrative aspects of the implementation of the project (granted by the EC with letter of 11 June 2021).

Whenever necessary, additional bilateral/multilateral meetings among the ICPDR Secretariat staff and/or with external consultants were organised in order to ensure a common understanding and overview for the implementation of the different activities of the project, as well as to decide on the necessary steps for the implementation of the project.

It was decided to make use of the ICPDR time-recording system as a management tool for tracking the days spent of individual experts on project implementation and the different activities. The system was adapted based on the outcomes of discussions with Mr Bergmann and following the virtual mission with Felix Bergmann of the External LIFE Monitoring Team on 30 June 2020.
The first Progress Report was submitted to the European Commission on 29 May 2020; on 30 June 2020 the first virtual monitoring mission with Mr Felix Bergmann of the External LIFE Monitoring Team was organised. A letter of the European Commission with an evaluation of the Progress Report as well as the findings of the first mission was received on 12 October 2020. Both technical and financial Mid-term report was submitted to the European commission on 6 May 2021 and a letter of the European Commission with an evaluation of the Mid-Term Report was received on 11 June 2021. On 14 June 2021 the second virtual monitoring mission with Mr Felix Bergmann of the External LIFE Monitoring Team was organised. A letter of the European Commission with the findings of the second mission was received on 28 June 2021. The third and last monitoring mission with Mr Felix Bergmann of the External LIFE Monitoring Team took place as in-person meeting in Vienna on 22 March 2022. A letter of the European Commission with the findings of the third mission was received on 2 May 2022.

6.2. Main deviations, problems and corrective actions implemented

No major deviations in planned technical activities were identified. The only challenge in project implementation was associated with limited/no possibilities to organize physical meetings of relevant ICPDR Expert and Task Groups as consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, all meetings were held as online meetings. Changes with implications to the budget planned were reported for activity A.2.1, A.4.1 and A.4.2, A.5.1 and A.5.2 as well as C.1:

- As for activity A.2.1 (Support in HYMO analysis including ecological prioritisation) the total budget foreseen (10,000 EUR) was already used up as of 15 March 2021 due to additional workload occurred by data inconsistencies reported by HYMO TG members and the associated need to constantly repeat data analyses as well as provided input to the DRBMP Update 2021. In order to continue the support in the final data analysis and the completion of the DRBMP Update 2021 in autumn 2021, the request for an amendment of the service contract SC 2020-10 for activity A.2.1 (Support in HYMO analysis including ecological prioritisation) with a total budget increase of EUR 5,000 (see table below) was sent to the ICPDR on 18 March 2021. An amendment of the service contract SC 2020-10 for activity 2.1 was signed on 22 July 2021.

- As for activity A.4.1, the ICPDR received a formal request of Mr Eduard Interwies for a shift of budget of 3,500 Euro from activity A.4.2 to activity A.4.1 (1,500 Euro of resources were used up to November 2020) on 16 March 2021. The reasons for this budget shift from A.4.2 to activity A.4.1 were as follows: Preparatory work regarding the support to the DFRMP Update 2021 ECON aspects (A.4.2) was only relevant up to November 2020 (identification of update needs from the previous plan/annexes, preparation of an information collection template, discussions on the topic in the Economics Task Group) and afterwards taken care of by the Flood Protection Expert Group (FP EG) of the ICPDR. However, activity A4.1 proven to be much more resource-intensive, some of the main reasons were: the entire process of finalizing the DRBMP Update 2021 version to be published for consultation took longer than planned, leading to continued effort/updating/being available for any modification needs for a longer period of time; linked to this, the number of draft versions that had to be prepared was higher than expected; the DanubeGIS-information proved not to be as easy to be integrated as expected.

- As for activity A.5.1, the foreseen travel costs and subsidence costs (4750 EUR) were not used due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that this event has moved online.
The costs were shifted to external support and contracting foreseen in preparation of Activity 5.2 (see details explained in chapter 6).

- As for activity A.5.2, the foreseen travel costs and subsidence costs (4750 EUR) were not used due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that this event has now moved online. Given the scope of the event (stakeholder workshop addressing the public of the Danube River Basin) and fact that there is no longer onsite assistance from local partners, this activity required additional budget. Thus, the unused financial resources from Activity A.5.1. (travel costs and subsidence costs (4750 EUR)) and the foreseen travel costs and subsidence costs (4750 EUR) for activity 5.2 were used to ensure an enhanced online organisation of the stakeholder workshop including external support for online technical coordination as well as online moderation (see details explained in chapter 6).

- One personal/organisational change was reported for activity A.2. Ms Carina Seliger, BOKU University Vienna, and responsible external expert for activities A 2.1 and A 2.2 started her maternity leave on 12 April 2021. The ICPDR was officially informed on 9 April 2021 that activities related to activities A 2.1 and 2.2 will be taken over by Mr. Florian Borgwardt, BOKU University Vienna, from 12 April 2021 onwards.

The reported deviations did not have any impact on the outcomes and deliverables of the project.

6.3. Evaluation of Project Implementation

All actions of the project were conducted as planned; the used methodologies to implement the planned activities were successful.

Including the results of activities A.1 (Modelling and Assessment of Nutrient Emissions in the Danube River Basin), A.2 (Support for assessments on Hydromorphology), A.3 (Support for Assessment of Invasive Alien Species) and A.4 (Economic Analysis) as well as the feedback of the public consultation on both plans (supported by A.5 Ensuring Coordination and Public Consultation), the ICPDR adopted the Danube River Basin Management Plan (DRBMP) Update 2021 and Danube Flood Risk Management Plan (DFRMP) Update 2021, its Annexes and Maps, at the 24th ICPDR Ordinary Meeting from 14 to 15 December 2021. During the 4th ICPDR Ministerial Meeting on 8 February 2022, both plans were endorsed by Danube Ministers guiding water management for the next six years cycle (2022-2027).


6.4. Analysis of benefits

Flood Risk Management Plans according to the Floods Directive and River Basin Management Plans according to the Water Framework Directive are the key tools for implementing the FD, and WFD respectively. They are drawn up after extensive public consultation and are valid for a six-year period.

The DRBMP Update 2021 sets out further aims to protect and enhance the status of all waters in the basin, and to prevent their deterioration while ensuring sustainable, long-term use of water resources. The plan also includes latest assessments on significant pressures, water...
status and a programme of measures jointly agreed by the Danube countries for the next six years. It establishes and strengthens several integrated principles for river basin management and connections to other sectors’ policies like energy, transport and adaptation to climate change. The DFRMP Update 2021 – the first update to the plan first published in 2015 – represents a key step forward in the ICPDR’s work towards sustainable flood risk management. It strengthens various aspects of flood risk management focusing on prevention, protection and preparedness, including measures for achieving the established objectives and calls for solidarity among all ICPDR Contracting Parties.

The updates 2021 of the DRBMP and DFRMP are addressing the management cycle 2022-2027 in the Danube River Basin and will be implemented by all ICPDR contracting parties. For the next six years, the work of the ICPDR will be streamlined with the implementation of the plans and the measures contained therein.

More concretely, action A.1 developed a water quality model that was used for nutrient emission calculations at the DRB level to support the assessments of the DRBMP Update 2021, but potentially it could be utilized also at national level. The model is able to identify regional emission hot-spots where water quality problems might occur and therefore measures need to be implemented. Future scenario analysis can also be conducted focusing on certain pollution control measures and their potential impacts on water quality as well as simulating climate change impacts. The model serves as a water management tool in order to reduce nutrient emissions and hinder eutrophication, to increase resource efficiency by decreasing nutrient losses and to find the best set of measures to be implemented in line with the respective environmental targets. The model has economic benefits by helping reduce unnecessary fertilizer costs and potential ecosystem remediation costs. From social dimension, the tool can contribute to preserve vulnerable water resources subject to various uses. The model is replicable for future management plans and applicable for national or sub-regional purposes.

Actions A.1, A.2, A.4, A.5 and A.6 are directly linked to the implementation of the WFD and FD, and the development of the DRBMP and DFRMP Update 2021 respectively. Thus, the project strengthened and harmonised the implementation of the WFD and FD in the Danube River Basin, including in five non-EU Member States (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine) which committed themselves to implement both related Directives. Building on previous transnational achievements in this regard existing knowledge gaps will be addressed and capacities strengthened towards further improved approaches for the sustainable management of Danube basin’s water resources.
7. ANNEX: List of Final Deliverables

Overview of Final Deliverables (see separate ZIP folder for Annex I EU Life Final Deliverables)

**Action number A1**
- A 1.1 Report on nutrient emission modelling
- A 1.1 Final modelling results

**Action number A2**
- A 2.1 Report on HYMO analysis including update of ecological prisonisation approach for 3rd DRBMP
- A 2.2 Inventory/brochure best case examples HYMO measures

**Action number A3**
- A 3.1 Final report on IAS in DRB
- A 3.1 Guidance document on IAS in DRB

**Action number A4**
- A 4.1 Report on the updated economic analysis for the 3rd Danube River Basin Management Plan (DRBMP)

**Action number A5**
- A5.1 Workshop coordination WFD and FD report
- A5.2 Stakeholder consultation workshop report
- A5.2 Online Questionnaire Results

**Action number A6**
- A 6.1 DRBMP Update 2021
- A 6.1 DFRMP Update 2021

**Action number B1**
- B1 DRBMP and DFRMP Updates 2021 public activities report
- B1 ICPDR consultation social media status
- B1 DRBMP Public brochure
- B1 DFRMP Public brochure
- B1 Web Site Statistics DRBMP DFRMP Update 2021

**Action number C1**
- C1 First progress report ICPDR 29052020
- C1 Midterm report ICPDR 06052021