

Cooperation and Governance in the Danube River Basin PART I – the ICPDR Framework



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The Danube has always been one of Europe's most important river



Europe

The Danube Basin



Lifeline for people and countries

Ecological richness & biodiversity



The Danube is a connector with the Black Sea: Important regarding many aspects
Cooperation and related governance play a key role in the Danube Basin



The Danube River Basin



- ✓ 800.000 km²
- ✓ 10% of surface Continental Europe
- ✓ 19 countries
- ✓ 79 million people
- ✓ Role model in transboundary cooperation



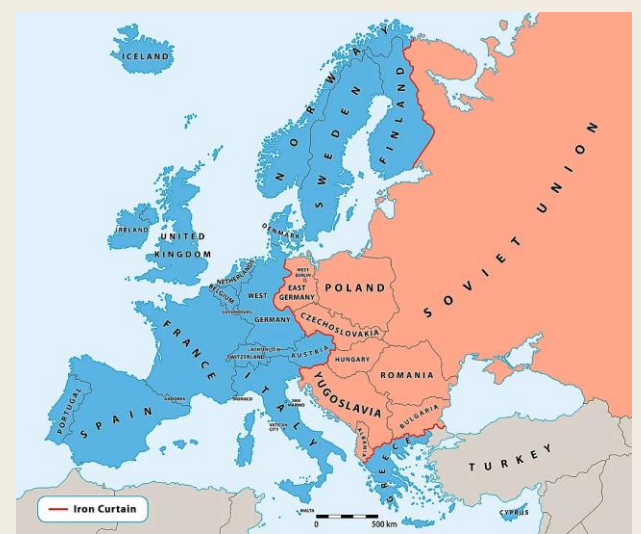
Historical Transformation / The Danube as Connector



Early Agreements: Focus on trade and navigation
Later agreements: Focus on cooperation and water quality

1985 / Bucharest Declaration :

- Water monitoring, resources conservation & rational use
- Prevention and control of Danube pollution
- Integration into national law
- Potential objective: Stepwise development towards Danube Convention



1989 / Fall of the Iron Curtain: Geo-political transformation

- New frontiers through Europe
- Bringing Danube Basin countries closer together
- Basis of a new cooperation basis



Source: www.worldatlas.com/geography/iron-curtain.html

Historical Transformation / The Danube as Connector



- 1991 - Environmental Programme for the Danube River
- Interim Task Force to develop Strategic Action Plan
 - From planning to implementation
 - Addressing environmental threats with action
 - Danube countries, EC, Banks, UNDP, UNEP, NGOs
 - Coordination Unit in Vienna

Danube River Protection Convention

- signed 29 June 1994, Sofia (Bulgaria)
- enforced in October 1998
- 1998/99 ICPDR established / ICPDR Secretariat in place



Protection of water & ecological resources



Sustainable & equitable use of water



Reduce nutrients & hazardous substances



Manage floods & ice hazards

Zooming in: The Genesis of Danube Cooperation



● June 1994: Signing of the Danube River Protection Convention (DRPC) in Sofia, Bulgaria

Sustainable & equitable use of water

Protection of water & ecological resources

Cooperation, trust, will, and ownership backed-up with effective cooperation and participation mechanism ensuring joint management and public outreach.



Reduce nutrients & hazardous substances

Manage floods & ice hazards

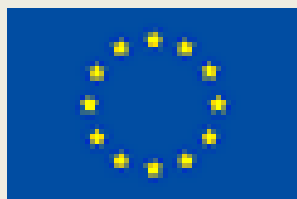
Zooming Out: Transforming Cooperation & Commitment



The Convention was initially signed by 12 Contracting Parties

Only 1 was an EU Member State back then: Germany

1995: Followed by Austria in 1995



2000: EU Water Framework Directive enforced;
Obligatory implementation for EU MS and Accession countries

2004: CZ, HU, SI, SK become EU MS

2007: BG, RO become EU MS

2013: HR becomes EU MS

High diversity of ICPDR CPs: 9 EU MS / 5 Non EU MS

- Economy, history and politics

Different legal basis transformed in more cooperation

- **Sofia Declaration signed in 2000**

- Non EU MS implement EU WFD/FD as far as possible

- Learning from each other

ICPDR Contracting Parties



Germany



Austria



Czech Republic



Slovakia



Hungary



Slovenia



Croatia



Bosnia & Herzegovina



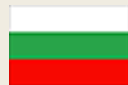
Serbia



Montenegro



Romania



Bulgaria



Rep. of Moldova



Ukraine



European Union



EU Member States (9)

Non-EU Member States (5)

24 Observers

10 staff in the Secretariat

Budget: € 1.25 mio

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International Commission
for the Protection
of the Danube River
Internationale Kommission
zum Schutz der Donau

Stakeholder Involvement - 24 Observers



Danube Strategy
Civil Society
Forum



viadonau



dstf
Danube Sturgeon
Task Force



DANUBE PARKS
network of protected areas



Danube Tourist
Commission

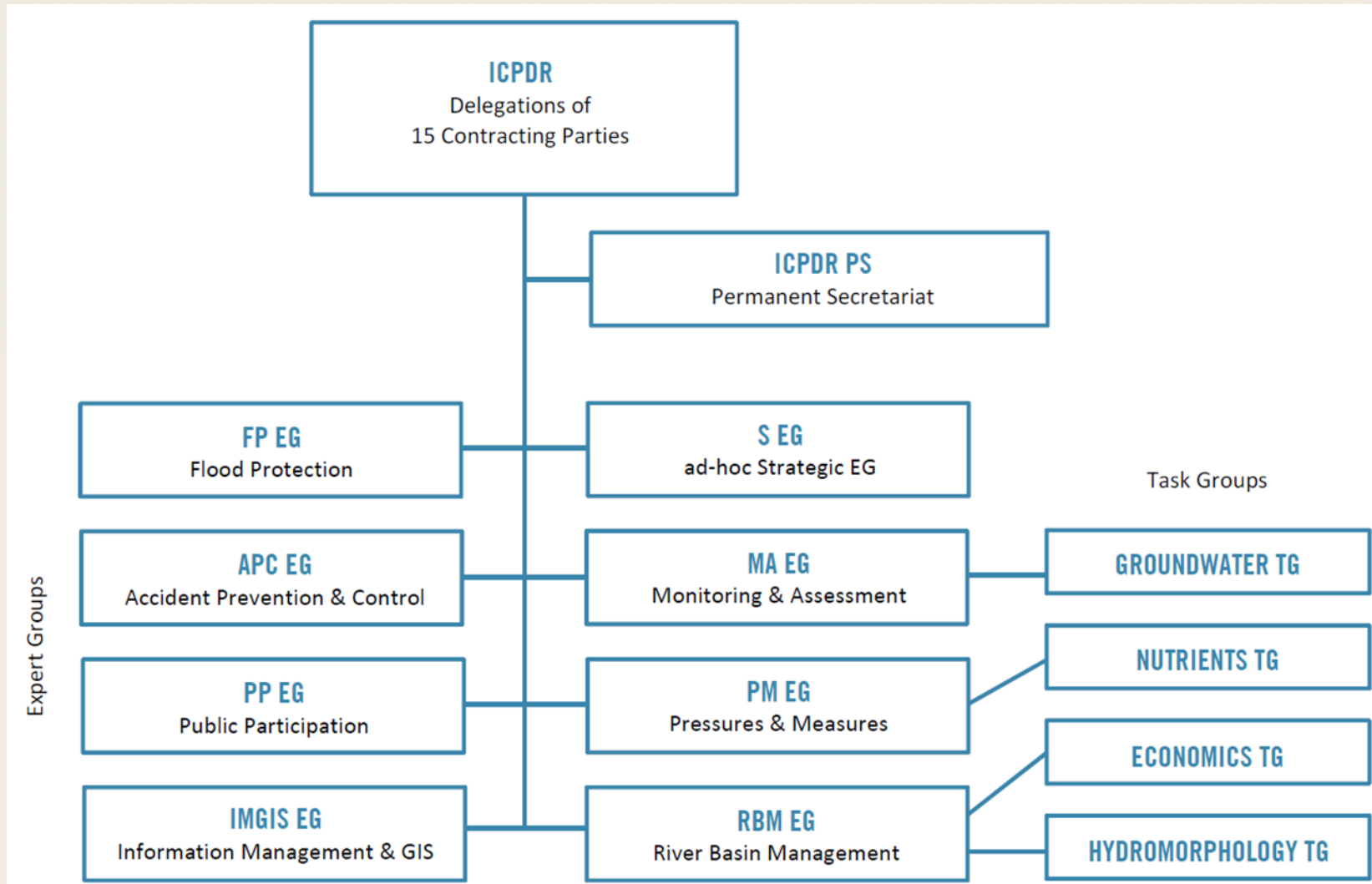
dsc | danube
competence
center

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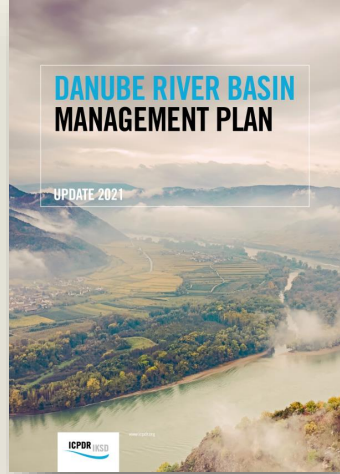




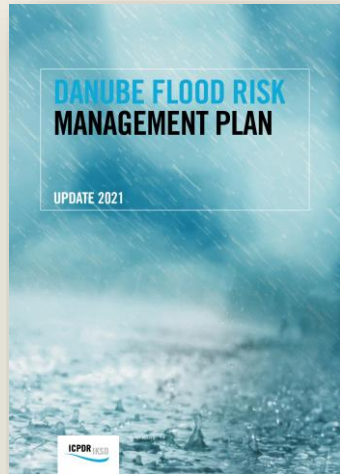
Cooperation Mechanism



Transforming National RBM Approaches into Basin-Wide Ones



2021 / 3rd Edition



2021 / 2nd Edition

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Danube Declaration 2022

On 8 February 2022, in Vienna, the ICPDR convened its 4th Ministerial Meeting of Ministers and high-level representatives responsible for water management from the 14 Danube River Basin countries (Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine) as well as the European Commission.

This Ministerial Meeting endorsed two essential plans for the Danube: the updated **Danube River Basin Management and Danube Flood Risk Management Plans**. The meeting also adopted the 2022 Danube Declaration, which shows the highest level of commitment for the ICPDR concerning its future work to address the Danube basin's shared challenges.

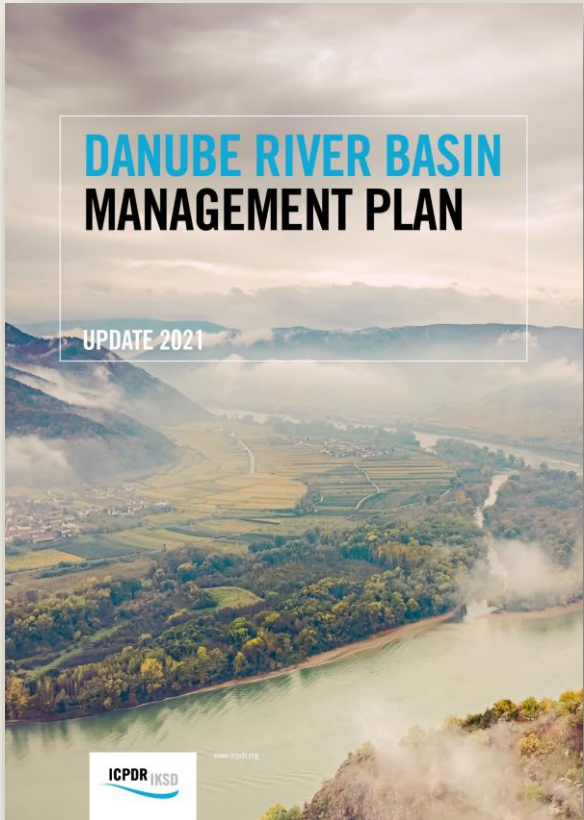
Danube Declaration – Let us explain!

Every six years, a new and updated 'Danube Declaration' is signed and adopted by the ICPDR countries, updating, and extending the objectives and direction of travel for the Danube River Basin (DRB). It's a vital part of strengthening the ICPDR's goals for improving and maintaining the DRB.

Transforming National RBM Plans into Basin-Wide Ones



5 Significant Water Management Issues



**Organic
Pollution**



**Nutrient
Pollution**



**Hazardous Subst
Pollution**



**Hydromorphological
Alterations**



**Effects of Climate
Change (drought,
water scarcity,
extreme hydrological
phenomena and other
impacts)**

Improving Wastewater Treatment/Water Status: Progress 2009 - 2021



- 60% organic emission

Investments	€ 28 billion
Wastewater Infrastructure	45 million PE / appr. 6000 projects
Ongoing/Planned Projects	26 million PE

- 30% nitrogen emissions

- 50% phosphorous emissions

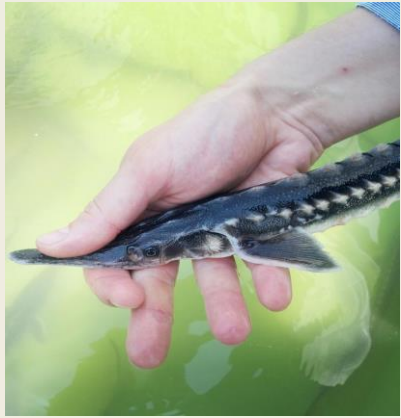
Investments	€ 12 billion
Nutrient Removal	35 million PE / appr. 1700 projects
Ongoing/Planned Projects	13 million PE
Agricultural Best Practice	> € 95 billion

Transforming National RBM Approaches into Basin-Wide Ones



- 2008: Protecting our Flagship species the Sturgeon – Task Force
- 2023: Feasibility options to make Iron Gate Dams I&II passable for fish
- 2022 onwards: Work on Feasibility for Gabčíkovo passability

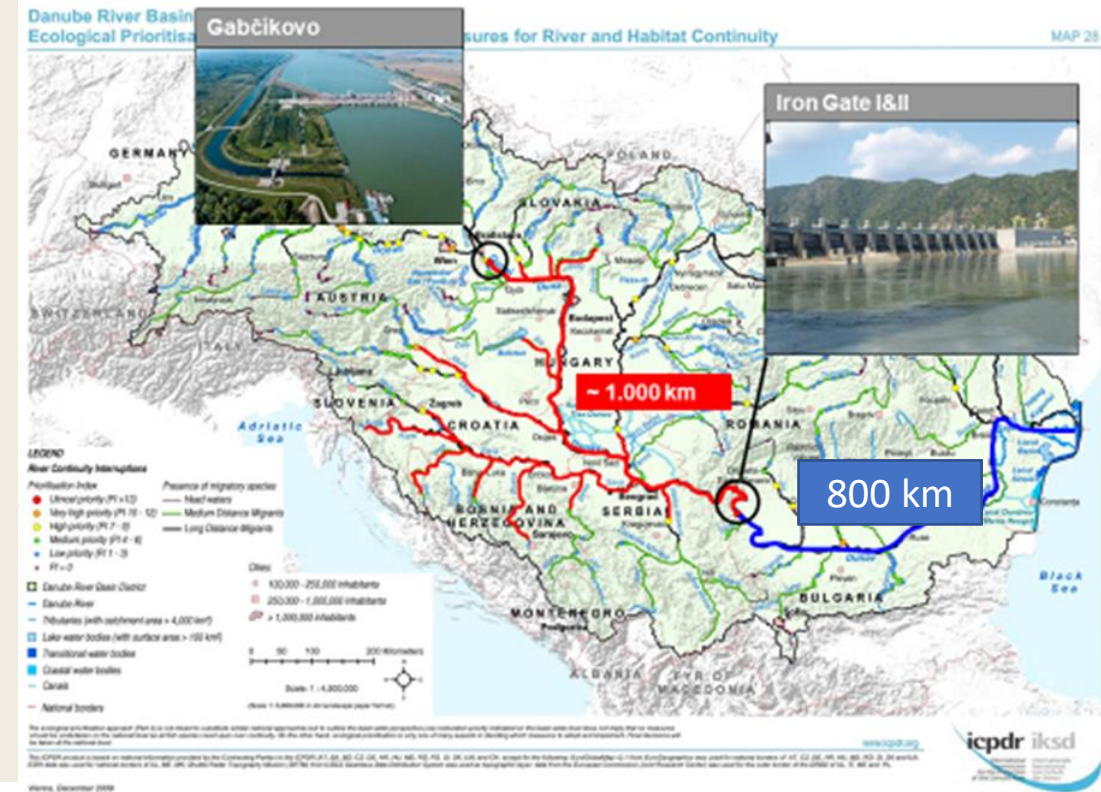
Aim: Connect 1.800 km of the Danube itself and to the Black Sea



Picture: FAO-FIGS



Picture: FAO-FIGS

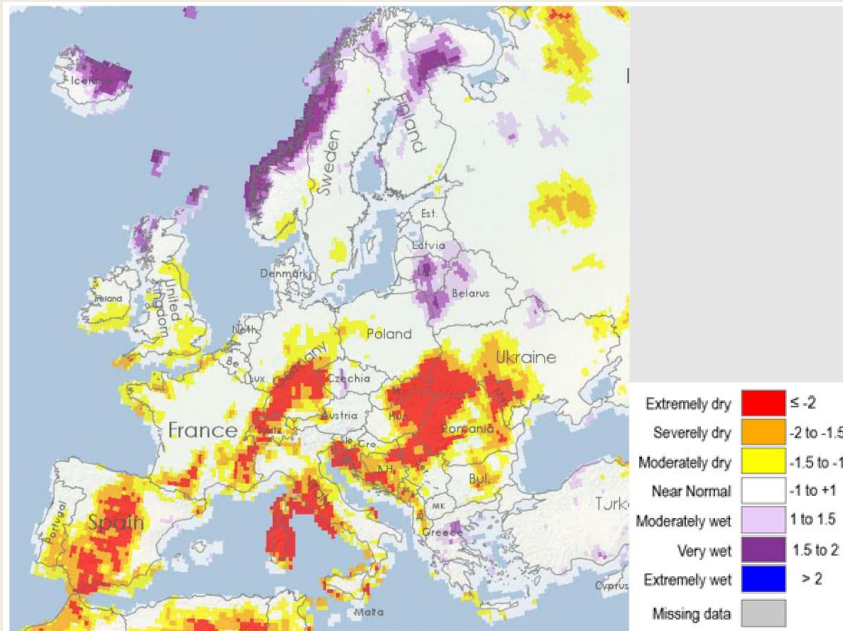


Transforming Climate Change Effects towards Water Resilience



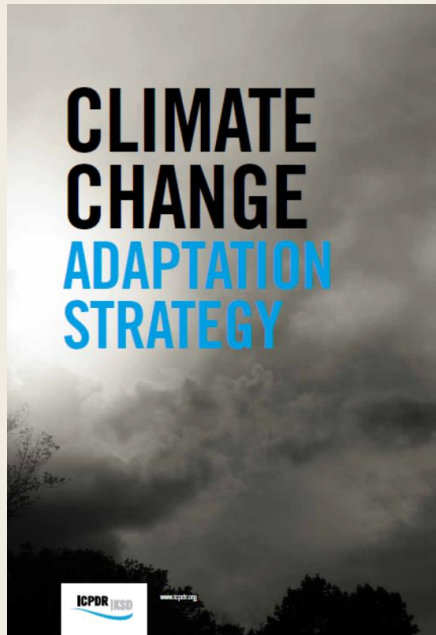
Droughts in Europe and the Danube Basin



- Clear trend in increasing temperatures and less precipitation over last 30 years
- Drought events and low flows in rivers became increasingly frequent
- Economic losses are linked to drought events



JRC (2022), Drought in Europe August 2022

- Internal *ICPDR* workshop on *Droughts and Low Water Levels in the DRB* on 16 June 2023
 - Identified follow-up activities
- Overview report on droughts (June 2024)
- Identify drought activities to be tackled within the *ICPDR* framework





Strengthening Connections: PART II – Communication & Outreach for the Danube River Basin & its People

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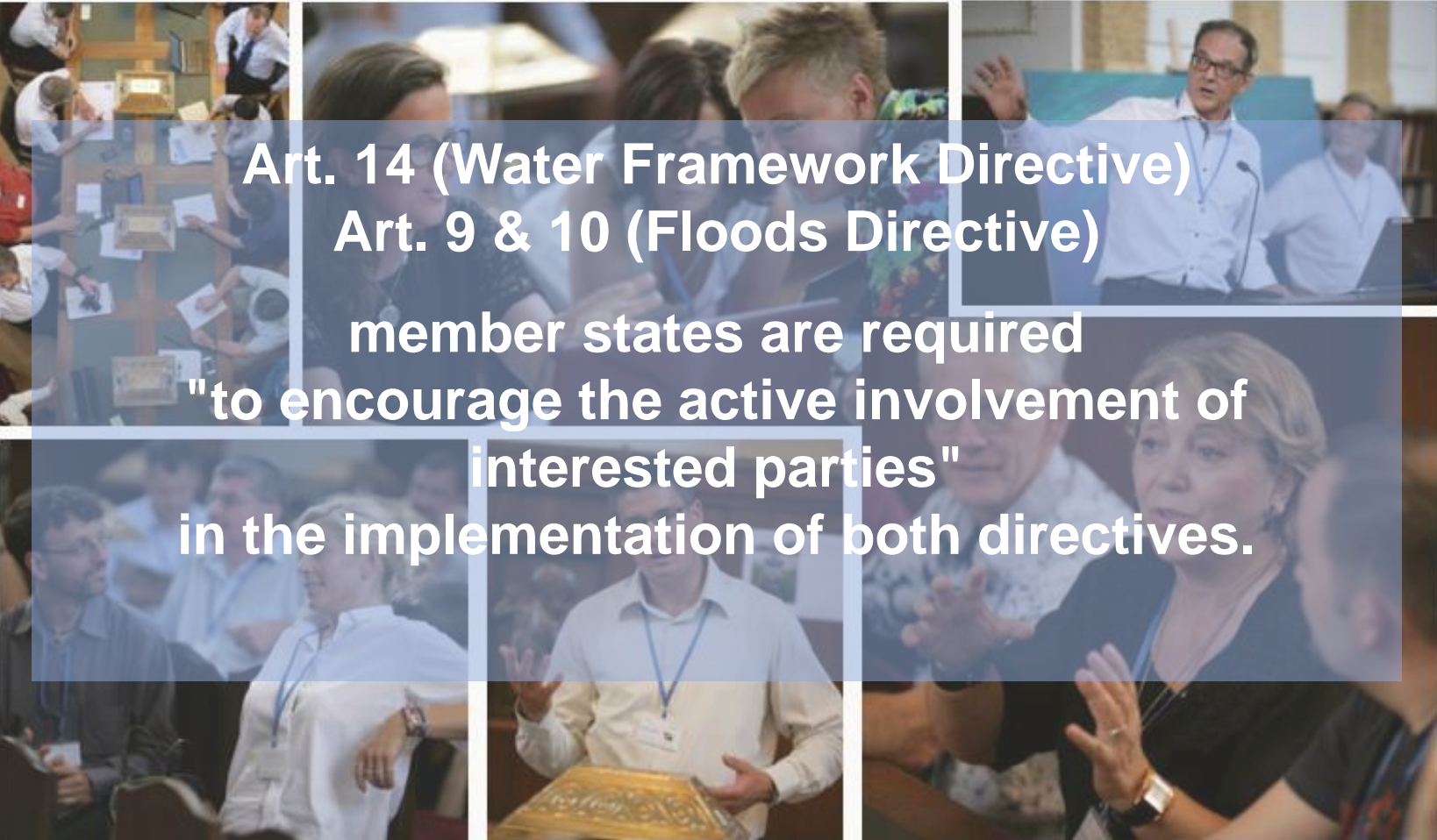
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Public Participation & Transparency



**Art. 14 (Water Framework Directive)
Art. 9 & 10 (Floods Directive)**
member states are required
"to encourage the active involvement of
interested parties"
in the implementation of both directives.

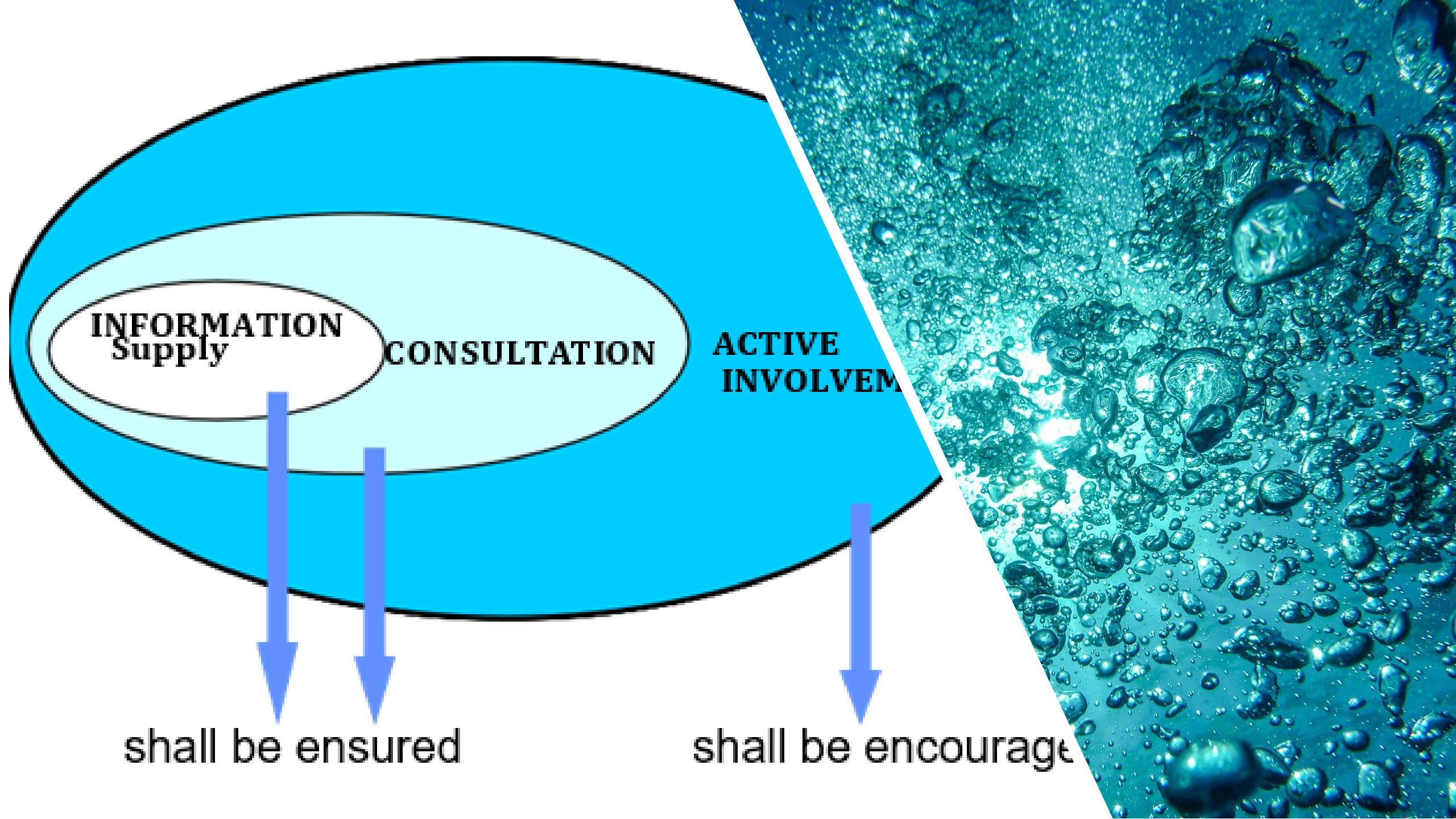
Public participation (a broad definition):

Allowing people to influence the outcome of plans and working processes.

It is a means of improving decision-making, in the context of the ICPDR this means:

- **Creating awareness of environmental issues**
- **Helping to increase acceptance and commitment towards the intended plans**





**INFORMATION
Supply**

CONSULTATION

**ACTIVE
INVOLVEM**

shall be ensured

shall be encouraged

Who should we involve?

The Directive is prescriptive in the sense that at least stakeholders (i.e. interested parties) should be involved when dealing with active involvement and also the public when dealing with consultation.

Background information should be available at any time for anyone.

No blue-print exists for public participation and the public participation process should be organised and adapted to national, regional and local circumstances.

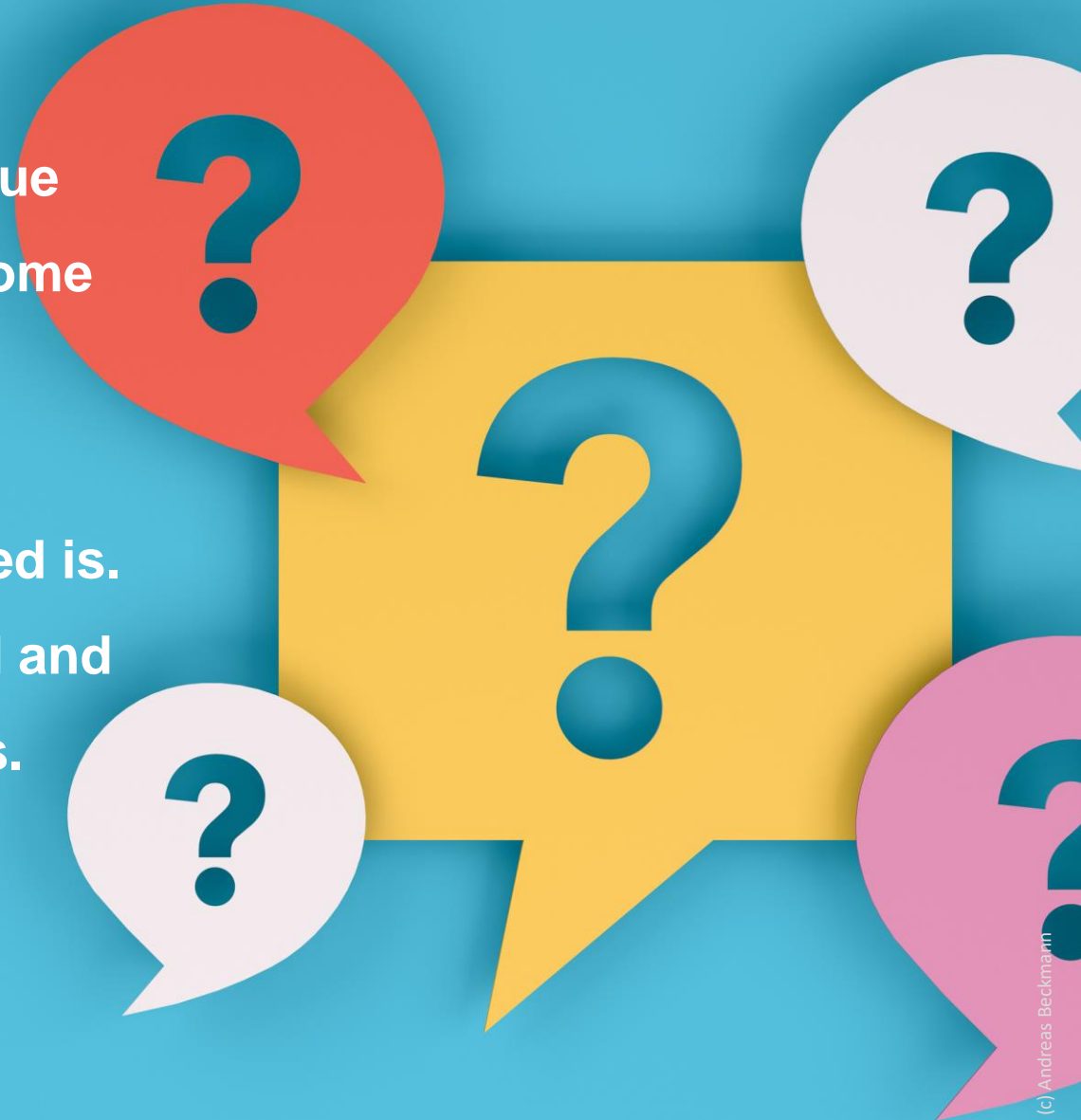


Who is a stakeholder?

A stakeholder will generally have an interest in an issue because he/ she or it is either affected or may have some influence.

To avoid disappointing the parties involved it is very important to make clear what the role of those involved is. The public participation process should be organized and adapted to national, regional and local circumstances.

We have created a 'tailor made public participation process' at Danube-wide level based on our ICPDR toolbox.



The ICPDR Public Participation Toolbox



- 24 Observer Organisations
- A dedicated Public Participation Expert Group
- Outreach activities across a broad spectrum
- Educational tools and flagship events (Danube Day, Danube Box, Danube Art Master)
- Public information: on/offline publications
- Stakeholder consultations
- Social Media
- Inter-sectorial dialogue: stakeholder workshops
- Branding campaigns
- 3 pillars: CLEANER, HEALTHIER, SAFER WATERS





HAVE YOUR SAY!

Public Voices matter
Building Legitimacy & Trust
Informed & Effective Policies
Enhancing Accountability



Why public participation works:

The public participation process requires investment of time, energy and resources.

Investing in a well-managed public participation process pays off in the end

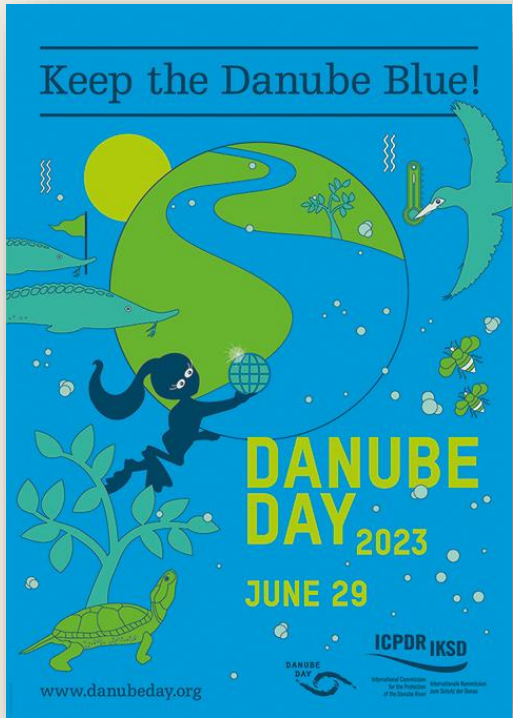
Public participation is a tool to achieve environmental objectives of Water Framework Directive not an end in itself

Trust, transparency and good management of expectations are essential for successful public participation



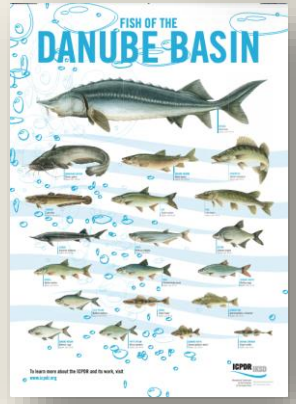
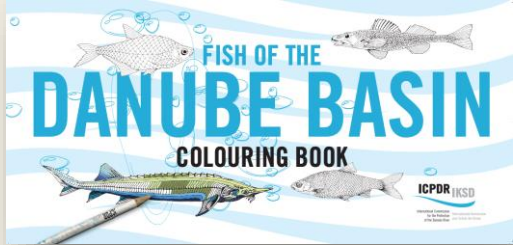
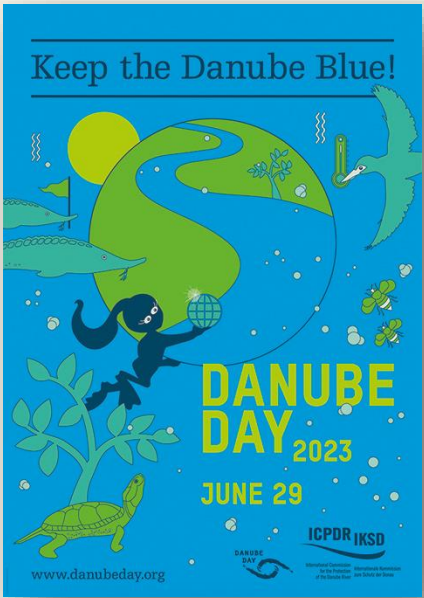


Outreach: Engaging the Public with our Flagship Events



International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River / Internationale Kommission zum Schutz der Donau

Engaging Audiences: Leveraging Giveaways for Outreach



The ICPDR Newsroom: Working 24/7 on and offline



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DANUBE4all
The project aims to restore the Danube River Basin for ecosystems and people. An EU 'ighthouse' project supporting the mission to 'Restore our ocean and rivers by 2030' (launched in January 2020). DANUBE4all is a 3-year EU 'ighthouse' project funded by Horizon Europe, aiming to restore freshwater ecosystems in the Danube River Basin.

ICPDR Jones Fellow International Water Update of the United Nations Water Conference in New York City
The UN 2023 Water Conference took place at its headquarters in New York City from 20-24 March 2023, the weekend of the International Decade for Action on 'Water for Sustainable Development' (2018-2028). It was the first conference dedicated to freshwater since 1977.

EU joins forces with the International Community to Danube in Water Action Agenda to Ensure the Sustainability and Sustainable Management of Water and Sanitation for All
To ensure that water and sanitation are available and sustainably managed for everyone, the European Union (EU) has announced with the international community to present a Water Action Agenda at the UN Water Conference on World Water Day. The EU has announced 60 commitments that will be a reason for a world that can withstand water stress and other water security to all.

Styrian (Wasser/Wander/Wunder-)Weg project wins World State Prize
On March 14, 2024, the Styria Water Prize

BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT SEE IN THE WORLD
The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) Celebrates World Water Day 2023

DANUBE WATCH
1/2020
THE MAGAZINE FOR THE DANUBE RIVER
WWW.ICPDR.ORG

10 JOINT DANUBE SURVEY 4: Working in Crisis-mode

16 DATA: Surfing it all out and Putting it to Use

24 PRESIDENCY 2020: Cooperation, Collaboration and New Perspectives

Mr. Veljunačić
ICPDR President 2023

Follow us!

Did you know?

Save our Danube Sturgeon

Danube Watch magazine

DANUBE WATCH
3/2019
THE MAGAZINE FOR THE DANUBE RIVER
WWW.ICPDR.ORG

8 WATER AND AGRICULTURE WORKSHOP: Exchanging Ideas to Shape Future Sustainability

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Shared Basin - Shared Destiny
Principles of Effective River Basin Management



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Our News Ticker

Our Image Platform

Our Visual storyteller

Connecting professional Platform

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Conclusion: Communication is Key!



Keeping dialogue Solution-Oriented!

foster collaborative partnerships with different sectors as we understand the significance of addressing issues that impact people's daily lives.



Bringing attainable accomplishments!

Our experience in working for the Danube River Basin and its people is a source of pride, as we strive to protect and enhance this vital ecosystem



Bridging the Information Gap!

We prioritize effective communication by presenting information in a language accessible to the broader public while maintaining scientific accuracy.



Building bridges together!

We proudly foster understanding and champion the well-being of the Danube River Basin and its people.



Thank you for your attention!