



PRIORITY AREA 4



WATER QUALITY

TO RESTORE AND MAINTAIN THE QUALITY OF WATERS



PA4 - recent activities in 2024

- Drying pipes - navigating the impact of water scarcity and droughts on water supply, IAWD webinar; 07/10/2024
- 60th ICPDR RBM Expert Group Meeting, Bratislava; 15-16/10/2024
- River engineering, sediment management and river hydromorphology in the Danube River - streamed discussion with Professor Helmut Habersack, (BOKU, Vienna); 18/10/2024
- DSTF General Assembly, Vienna; 21-22/11/2024
- Stakeholders Roundtable - Empowering the Next Generation in Water Management, Bratislava; 26-27/11/2024
- Aquatic Plastic project train-the-trainer Workshop, Bratislava; 26-27/11/2024
- Micro(knowledge) transfer webinar for sampling, laboratory instruments and analytical techniques – Microplastics; webinar, 04/12/2024
- EUSDR Joint Meeting of NCs and PACs, Vienna; 10-11/12/2024
- Regional workshop Upper and Middle Danube - "Supporting Conservation and Protection Actions to Implement the Pan-European Sturgeon Action Plan (PANEUAP)", Vienna, 12-13/12/2024
- EUSDR Consultation Group – national SK, online; 13/12/2024
- Micro(knowledge) transfer webinar on general state of the art of microplastics in drinking water resources, webinar, 16/12/2024

PA4 - recent activities in 2025

- *Progress Partner report – January 2025, Progress Report of PAC4 DRP project April 2025*
- *Update of PAC4 project activities for 2025-2026; January 2025*
- *Evaluation report 03/2024 – 03/2025 – published*
- Meeting PA 4 - DYC members, online; 13/02/2025
- Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (D2.3): Presentation of Methodology and Exemplary Results for Slovakia, webinar, 10/02/2025
- EUSDR PACs meeting, Sarajevo; 26 – 27/02/2025
- Trilateral meeting, Bratislava; 04/03/2025
- 1st PAs WEB workshop – WordPress, online; 05/03/2025
- WG Circular Economy and Bioeconomy meeting, online, 07/03/2025 (sludge management – A.Fürstand)
- SMF projects -PACs networking online event - PA 4-5-6; 18/03/2025
- DSTF General Assembly meeting, online, 26/03/2025
- Capitalisation workshop organised by EUSDR PA7 and PA8, 26-27/03/2025, Bratislava
- 3rd EUSDR Governance Development Task Force meeting, 01/04/2025, online

PA4 - recent activities in 2025

- ICPDR PM EG and NTG meeting, 23-25/04/2025, Sarajevo - PA4 sludge presentation
- EU Missions – Soil Deal for Europe 29/04/2025 online SK
- ICPDR RBM EG meeting, 6-7/05/2025, Vienna
- EU Missions - Restore our Ocean and Waters 15/05/2025 online SK
- Stakeholders' workshop on Nature Based Solutions in the Danube River Basin in Romania: Unlocking private investments in Nature Based Solutions (NBS), 15/05/2025, online
- 29th PA4 SG meeting – 3-4 June 2025, Bratislava

Upcoming PA4 activities/events

- **Wastewater utilization options: workshop on sewage sludge management and energy efficiency** – online workshop, 20 June 2025
- **Macro-regional and Sea Basin Strategies Days 2025** – 24-25/09/2025, Brussels (planned session)
- **Migratory fish workshop** – 7 October 2025, Budapest
- **30th SG meeting (PA4-5-6)** – 8 October 2025, Budapest
- **14th EUSDR Annual Forum** – 5-6 November 2025, Sarajevo; (planned session)
- **Streamed discussion** – topic microplastics/plastics in water, Nov 2025
- **Climate Change: Challenges in Agriculture and Water Sectors** – workshop, 4 December 2025, Bratislava
- **Online quiz** for youth and general public on the topics of sturgeon restoration (Dec 2025) and water quality (Dec 2026)

Future....

Pharmaceuticals in water – conference 2026, Bratislava

Global practice on nature-based solutions, 2026 Budapest

Sediment management workshop 2027, Budapest

Wastewater treatment (e.g. removal of pharmaceuticals) – conference 2028, Bratislava

Wastewater Utilization Options: Workshop on Sewage Sludge Management and Energy Efficiency

EU GREEN WEEK PARTNER EVENT

WASTEWATER AS A RESOURCE:
REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON
SEWAGE SLUDGE MANAGEMENT
AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

**#EU
GREEN
WEEK**

ONLINE
20 June 2025

to register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/D1iFvIm5Rg2qaTtejndHBA>



AGENDA

I. OPENING

10:00 – 10:10

Introduction of the event and relevance of sludge management in the Danube Region
Zsuzsanna Kocsis-Kupper, EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Water Quality Priority Area
Adam Kovacs, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River

Setting the scene

10:10 – 10:30

KEYNOTE: Overview of the European legislation related to sludge management
Sylvie Grajales, European Commission, Directorate-General for Environment

II. Sewage sludge management in Europe and in the Danube Region

10:35 – 10:50

Sewage sludge management in the Danube Region-overview
Attila Fürst, TRENECON Consulting and Planning Ltd

10:50 – 11:10

Managing sludge from an EU country perspective (Hungary)
Károly Kovács, Hungarian Water Association

11:10 – 11:25

Managing sludge from a non-EU country perspective (Bosnia-Herzegovina)
Maja Colovic-Daul, DEKONTA

11:25 – 11:50

Coffee break

III. Utility experiences

11:50 – 12:00

Bosnia-Herzegovina: Alma Džubur, Sarajevo WWTP

12:00 – 12:10

Croatia: Wanda Pljacko, Zagreb WWTP

12:10 – 12:20

Germany: Sven Vogt, Augsburg WWTP

12:20 – 12:30

Romania: Monica Isacu, Timisoara WWTP

12:30 – 12:40

Slovakia: Lucia Šperňáková, Liptovský Mikuláš WWTP

12:30 – 12:40

Slovenia: Špela Železnikar, Ajdovščina WWTP

Closing words

12:40 – 12:50

Zsuzsanna Kocsis-Kupper and Adam Kovacs



Interreg Programme
Danube Region



Co-funded by
the European Union



<https://waterquality.danube-region.eu/sewage-sludge-management-online-workshop-on-20-june-2025/>

<https://green-week.event.europa.eu/partner-events/wastewater-utilisation-options-workshop-sewage-sludge-management-and-energy-efficiency-2025-06-20> **en**

Macro-regional and Sea Basin Strategies Days 2025

Brussels; 24-25/09/2025

5 parallel sessions (energy, marine, coastal communities, Interact + **water**)

Working title: **Water extremes, water resilience and disasters' risk management**

- **24 September 2025, 15.00 – 16.30 Brussels**
- joint event of Baltic Strategy (Policy Area Nutri); Alpine Strategy and Danube Strategy (PA4, PA5, PA6)
- topic + format will be clarified
- Concept note - by the end of June 2025
- registration will be open on mid June 2025

Migratory fish workshop

- 7 October 2025, Budapest
- Joint venture of PA4, PA6 and DSTF
- Agenda is under consideration yet
- ...Back to back 30th joint SG meeting (PA4-PA5-PA6) – 8 October 2025, Budapest

EUSDR Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Flowing together, growing together

01.01.2025 – 31.12.2025

➤ **top priority - speed up the European integration process**

Challenges in stimulation of young generation to stay in the Region, and to tackle brain drain, skills gap, depopulation, youth unemployment and the consequent demographic shifts as labour market shortages and declining labour force.

➤ **thematic priorities:**

- **Water Security**, civil protection and **disaster preparedness**;
- Tourism and culture;
- Connectivity and green transition - focus on digital and energy connectivity
- Education, skills and labour market

EUSDR Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

12th Danube Participation Day - 4 November 2025, Sarajevo

14th EUSDR Annual Forum, 5-6 November 2025, Sarajevo

PA4, PA5, PA6 plan to organise joint side event „Increasing Water Security: A key to achievement of SDG“

Objective: To bring attention to the SDG Agenda, recognizing the water as a connector to all goals of sustainable development. Presentation of good practices in protection of water quality, measures to adapt to climate change extremes and importance of the restoration of vital ecosystems dependent on water.

Proposed agenda

(including keynote speech, 2-3 presentations, interactive part depending on time slot)

- Safeguarding drinking water supply, sewage systems and wastewater treatment (PA4)
- Floods and droughts – interlinked phenomena (PA5)
- Restoration of water related ecosystems (PA6)

Climate Change: Challenges in Agriculture and Water Sectors

international workshop as a platform for knowledge and best practice sharing

4 December 2025, Bratislava

- **Organized by** EUSDR SK Priority Area 4 "Water Quality,, (Water Research Institute, Slovakia) together with the Water Directorate of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic.
- **Purpose** - Sharing experience, knowledge and best practices on sustainable agricultural practices while enhancing resilience to water and climate change impacts, e.g. adoption of drought-resistant crop varieties; improved irrigation systems; climate-smart farming techniques; reducing diffuse pollution, tackle nutrient retention and emissions; and better land-use management.
- **Target Groups** - Agriculture practitioners, water providers, academic and research sector, policy makers, international water related bodies and stakeholders involved in water management and agriculture of the Danube Region countries
- **Concept note** will be distributed soon

Climate Change: Challenges in Agriculture and Water Sectors

Draft Agenda

Opening session

Session 1: Setting the scene: bringing together key strategic documents in agriculture and water sectors with focus on climate change adaptation

Strategic approaches at EU level, EU Climate Adaptation Strategy, EU Common Agriculture Policy, EU Water Resilience Strategy

Session 2: Connecting point of Water Framework Directive and Common Agriculture Policy: funding possibilities to maintain sustainable water use and water protection

Sharing experience on availability of EU funds for supporting farmers to maintain Water Framework Directive objectives and national experience in this field at EU level and Danube countries

Session 3: Best practice examples, lessons learnt from water and agriculture sectors to address climate change adaptation

Best practice examples on climate change adaptation measures in agricultural production from

- a) administration level (e.g. permitting water abstraction)
- b) application level (use of techniques that have win-win effect to climate change adaptation and water management, e.g. water saving irrigation systems, proper application of fertilisers and pesticides for water protection in dry periods, measures to decrease soil erosion and measures to expand water retention in landscape)

3.1 Danube region perspective (Strategic and guidance documents at Danube region level, water reuse, projects activities and achievements)

3.2 National perspectives (Measures to ensure and expand retention and availability of water in the agricultural land, application of fertilizers and pesticides in conditions of climate change)

3.3 Local perspectives (Smart irrigation at farm level; opportunities and limits of precision farming)

Closing session

Projects' funding possibilities

3rd call Danube Region Programme

- last standard call
- planned to be launched in September 2025
- preliminary announcement is expected in June 2025, it will include an overview of the available specific objectives and their detailed description
- selection criteria remain unchanged
- maximum duration of projects - 30 months
- Specific objectives which will not be open:
 - 1.1 Strengthening innovation and technology transfer,
 - 2.4 Protecting and conserving biodiversity in ecological corridors and ecoregions of national importance,
 - 3.3 Socio-economic development through heritage, culture and tourism.

4th call Interreg Central Europe Programme

- last call with the total call budget 23.9 million EUR
- Timeframe: Call preview 6.5.2025; Call duration: 29.9.2025 - 27.11.2025
- projects of strategic importance - capitalization call - follow-up to cross-border cooperation projects of Central Europe Programme and other programmes
- Duration: 18 - 24 months
- Budget per project: up to 1 million EUR

LIFE Calls 2025 – Summary (1)

Call	Indicative budget (M€)	Opening date	Closing date	Application procedure
SAP – Nature and Biodiversity SAP – Circular economy and quality of life SAP – Climate Action	299,400	24/04/2025	23/09/2025	one stage
Strategic Projects (SIPs and SNaPs) LIFE CEQL, LIFE Climate Action, LIFE Nature & Biodiversity	158,000	24/04/2025	04/09/2025 (concept note) 05/03/2026 (full proposal)	two stages
Technical Assistance for Replication (TA-R)	6,500	24/04/2025	23/09/2025	one stage
Other Actions - Policy and Legislative Priorities projects (PLP)	22,500	24/04/2025	23/09/2025	one stage





Strategic Project Calls & funding in 2025

Topic	Topic Budget	Indicative range of project budgets	Indicative # of projects	Indicative expected project duration
STRAT-NAT-SNaP	EUR 72 million	EUR 12*	3 – 5 projects	60 - 120 months
STRAT-ENV-SIP	EUR 56 million	EUR 12*	3 - 4 projects	60 - 120 months
STRAT-CLIMA-SIP	EUR 30 million	EUR 12*	2 - 3 projects	60 - 120 months

* Applicants should as far as possible avoid asking for LIFE co-financing exceeding EUR 12 million per project, taking into account the need to ensure the maximum number of projects financed.



Priority topics

1. Circular Economy and Waste

1.1. Recovery of Resources from Waste

1.2. Circular Economy and the Environment

2. Zero pollution and sustainable management of natural resources

2.1. Air

2.2. Water

2.3. Soil

2.4. Noise

2.5. Chemicals

2.6. Industrial Emissions and Safety

2.7. A new European Bauhaus

3. Environmental governance

- Proposals linked to topics 1-2 compete among each other, Bauhaus has a dedicated envelope
- Env. Gov. has a separate budget
- The definition of SAP and the **strategic use of 'innovative'** in the description of priority topics
- Where priority topics are evaluated (Eligibility and Award)

Topic	Topic budget	Indicative range of project budgets	Estimated number of projects to be funded
LIFE-2025-SAP-ENV-ENVIRONMENT - Circular Economy and Zero Pollution	EUR 77,000,000 (of which EUR 4,000,000 for Bauhaus sub-topic)	EUR 2-10 Mln	30 projects
LIFE-2025-SAP-ENV-GOV — Environment governance	EUR 4,000,000	EUR 0,7 - 2 Mln	3/4 projects

LIFE Calls 2025 – Summary (2)

Call	Indicative budget (M€)	Opening date	Closing date	Application procedure
Other Actions - Coordination and Support Actions	91,400	24/04/2025	23/09/25	one stage
Operating grants for NGOs– SGA call	1.1	26/05/2025 (invitation only)	25/09/2025	one stage NGOs that signed a framework partnership agreement (FPA) for 2025-2026



LIFE Standard Action Projects (SAPs) should be SMART !

Specific – targets a specific feature (species/ habitat type) for improvement

Measurable – quantify / suggest indicators of progress

Assignable – specify who will do it

Realistic – state what results can be achieved, given available resources

Time-related – specify when the result(s) can be achieved.

EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT FOR WATER (EYPW)



PA4-PA5 team met the organisers on 29 May 2025 in Budapest.

The **next EYPW will take place in Strasbourg and Alsace in March 2026** (probably around World Water Day) and will be coordinated by Solidarity Water Europe in cooperation with the Alsatian European Community (Collectivité européenne d'Alsace).

To gather delegations from the major European river Basins on the topic of the **Roles and responsibilities of the European Youth in the management of transboundary river basins.**

The identification of the members of Danube delegation will take place from September to December.

A support in the preparatory process of the delegation from January to March, including preparatory works to present during the plenary the programs and initiatives led at the level of the Danube River Basin.





Thank you for your attention

<https://waterquality.danube-region.eu/>

