

MINUTES PA4, ICPDR AND SAVA COMMISSION EXPERTS MEETING 3.2.2016, Bratislava

The main objective of the meeting was to discuss on the joint activities relevant for 2016 and to conclude the administration related to the Grant Agreement II. The meeting was hosted by the Water Research Institute, Bratislava, Slovakia. The HU PAC Team (*Mr Laszlo Perger, Ms Zsuzsanna Kocsis-Kupper, Ms Diana Heilmann*), the SK PAC Team (*Mr Vladimír Novák, Ms Andrea Vranovská, Ms Alena Kurecová*), the ICPDR Secretariat (*Mr Raimund Mair, Mr Adam Kovács*) and the Sava Commission (*Mr Samo Groselj*) representatives were present at the meeting.

As the guests from WRI and MoE SR for particular items of the Agenda, *Ms Andrea Rollerová*, financial manager, *Mr Radoslav Bujnovský*, agricultural specialist and *Ms Renata Magulová*, expert from the Ministry of Environment SR, were invited.

Mr Vladimír Novák, PAC4 SK, welcomed the participants, introduced his team and opened the meeting. Consequently Mr Perger, PAC4 HU, introduced his team and welcomed the participants.

1. Reporting related to the Grant Agreement II

Ms Vranovská welcomed the participants and mentioned the agenda items. Consequently Mr Perger presented some important information about the DSP meeting which was organized on 14-15 January 2016 in Brussels since the Slovak side was not present there. Firstly there was given a general overview of the action, progress and new communication and support activities. There was presented the information that PA4 and PA5 launched their new websites. Danube Strategy Point introduced the new technical assistance TA 3 and showed many templates for the reporting which seemed to mean much more bureaucracy for PACs. He mentioned that the final templates for reporting will be presented soon. Finally there was the debate of targets revision – PA4 already revised the targets and there are no new points about it.

Regarding the Grant Agreement II, after discussion it was complemented and signed. Regarding the final Report signing procedure, Mr Mair brought the last page of the Final Report signed by Mr Zavadsky and both PACs signed it. Final manager of the SK side, Ms Rollerová, provided the HU partners with the original of the Auditor's Report.

Conclusions:

1. *SK side will send the missing list of invoices (done already)*
2. *The costs of all 3 sides (HU, SK, ICPDR) are not interpreted the same way, therefore they need to be consolidated, the draft financial forms will be sent to the EC for pre-checks.(done already)*
3. *10th SG meeting files shall be reorganized at the website (done already)*
4. *Annexes to the Final Report were approved and there was one annex added containing the minutes from the 10th SG meeting (done already)*

2. Brochure on Agriculture Pollution

Agriculture specialist of the SK side, Mr Bujnovský, prepared the draft of the *brochure informing about reduction of diffuse pollution from agriculture* in the Danube Region and he was invited to the meeting to present the information about it. Publishing the brochure is one of the activities of PA4 SK side for the year 2016 that is in synergy with ICPDR activities in this field for the year 2016. ICPDR started preliminary discussions on the development of a more complex strategic document related to agricultural pollution. A roadmap and technical details how to develop the document will be elaborated and discussed by the end of the year. Mr Bujnovský asked the ICPDR experts about their opinion regarding this material. Mr Kovacs said that there is no doubt about the professional quality of the brochure, but the official regular procedure has to be followed – the draft of brochure has to be circulated within the ICPDR Pressures and Measures Expert Group and Nutrient Task Group before publishing. Till the end of February the circulation could be finished and the feedback of the ICPDR experts should be clearly displayed. Then the brochure will be circulated among the PA 4 Steering Group members.

Mr Groselj said that it is very difficult to get these both side together – he meant water and agricultural sector. Therefore, this brochure should not hopefully be only a theoretical paper but also a starting point for more discussions. He added that there will be the Sava Water Council Meeting in the mid of February and there will also be these questions raised.

Mr Novák concluded the discussion by the words that this brochure will be a small PA4 contribution to a discussion between Water management and Agriculture, which is expected to improve during Netherlands Presidency in the Council of the European Union.

Conclusions:

1. *Mr Kovacs said that in the brochure there shall be a proper reference to the Danube River Basin District Management Plan – Update 2015 clearly displayed.*
2. *Mr Kovacs added that the last paragraph on the last page shall be completely deleted because the activities which are mentioned there related to the guidance document about decreasing diffuse water pollution by nutrients from agriculture are only at the preparation phase (the whole process will last at least 2 years).*
3. *Ms Kocsis-Kupper advised that the PA4 website should be added there.*
4. *Mr Perger commented that the main goal of the brochure is missing – at the very first page there should be the information that the material is very relevant to the Danube Region development and there should be the list of the target groups stated.*
5. *PACs decided that the logos of EUSDR PA4 and implementing organisations will be put on each printed document issued by PA4.*
6. *Logos of ICPDR and ISRBC will not be displayed in the brochure.*
7. *After ICPDR circulation the brochure will be circulated among the PA4 Steering Group members and then printed.*

3. HU and SK Action Plan for the year 2016

Both HU and SK plans were presented according to the project proposals which were approved by the Danube Strategy Point. Both PACs teams presented to the participants of the meeting and discussed in detail the planned activities and events for 2016. Among others Slovak side plans to evaluate the *questionnaire regarding financial needs for the implementation program on building and updating UWWT technology and information on BAT (best available technologies)*. So far two countries have replied to this issue. Mr Kovacs commented that that answers to the questions 1-6 of the questionnaire can be found in the Danube River Basin District Management Plan – Update 2015 (see also its Maps and Annexes).

HU side plans to prepare the leaflet about the projects successful in the PA 4 for dissemination purposes. Since also SK side plans to issue the leaflet on PA4 achievements and general information, both efforts shall be consolidated.

Ms Kocsis-Kupper informed about the Water Platform, focusing on rural and agricultural activities impacting water quality which she will organize under the umbrella of LIFE programme in the second half of 2016 or at the beginning of 2017. The main focus will be the experience exchange and the approximate amounts of 50 participants, 20 projects and some EU representatives are expected.

Ms Kocsis-Kupper also informed participants that she will represent the Danube Strategy in the large EIP Water Conference to be held in Holland on 10-11 February 2016; about a possibility to organize the 2017 EIP Water Conference in Budapest and about a large Budapest water summit that will be held in the end of November 2016 in Budapest. She mentioned about an internship possibility from CEU/ISEPEI Environmental Practicum Course and mentioned that PA4 would cooperate with two students for practical matters in the 2016 spring period.

Conclusions:

1. *After the meeting there will be prepared a consolidated table with all activities for the year 2016.*

4. ICPDR and ISRBC activities in 2016

Mr Mair informed about the Danube River Basin and Flood Risk Management Plans which were adopted and published on the ICPDR website. Political endorsement will take place at the ICPDR Ministerial Meeting on 9 February 2016 in Vienna.

In the upcoming time the work programs for different expert groups will be discussed.

On 21-22 April 2016 there will be organized 43rd River Basin Management Expert Group Meeting in Austria and on 16-17 June 2016 there will be held 14th Standing Working Group meeting in the Czech Republic. There appears the possibility to organize the 11th Steering Group meeting back to back to this event.

Regarding further upcoming activities, there will be a Report on the 2015 Droughts elaborated by the ICPDR during 2016.

An ICPDR hydropower workshop is planned in autumn 2016 and the preparatory works are starting. Mr Kovacs said that more information about the emissions of hazardous substances should be gathered in the near future. Discussions on this topic are on-going towards developing a project to be financed either from the Danube Transnational Programme or Horizon 2020. This field will be particularly addressed by the ICPDR as there have been some knowledge gaps identified. Moreover,

the update of the basin-wide risk assessment of accident risk sites and contaminated sites is being finalised. The main focus of the current discussions is how to make use of the updated accident hot-spot inventories and how to assess the accident risk of mining sites.

Sava Commission prepared the Protocol of Emergency some years ago, however, but final harmonization of the protocol has not started yet because some countries are not prepared for its implementation. Mr Groselj informed about the 6th Meeting of the Parties to the FASRB which will take place on 1 June 2016. He also mentioned the workshop in the framework of the STAWA project which will be organized on 10-12 February 2016 in Ljubljana. The project will be finished at the end of March 2016.

Conclusions:

- 1. After the meeting both sides will send the information about their activities for the year 2016.*

5. Others

Ms Kocsis-Kupper suggested to establish some stronger links with the European Commission, DG Environment in 2016 and to organize a meeting in 2016 to discuss further cooperation.

PA 4 SK invited everybody to participate in the Conference about Drought and Water Scarcity which is going to be organized in May 2016 in Bratislava. ICPDR experts were kindly asked to provide the topics and presenters. In this connection it was mentioned that the Drought Management Centre was established in Ljubljana and the Global Water Partnership developed a paper about drought.

Mr Novák informed the participants about the upcoming Ministerial Conference on Waters which will be held in Bratislava on 11-12 July 2016. The topic will be related to the protection of water resources related to drought but it has not been fixed yet. Speakers from JRC, EEA, ICPDR and the Rhine Commission are expected. The conference will be organized at the level of the Slovak Presidency in the Council of the European Union.

After discussing individual items of the Agenda, PAC4 HU Mr Perger thanked everybody for active participation and hospitality. PAC4 SK Mr Novák thanked all participants for their constructive approach, finished the session and wished them safe trip home.

Minutes taken by Alena Kurecová, February 2016