

EU STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION

IMPLEMENTATION REPORT OF EUSDR PRIORITY AREA

“to restore and maintain the quality of waters”

Reported period: from 07/2016 to 12/2016

(Final Report)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A:	ACTION
DRBMP:	DANUBE RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT PLAN
DSP:	DANUBE STRATEGY POINT
DTP:	DANUBE TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMME
EC:	EUROPEAN COMMISSION
EU:	EUROPEAN UNION
EUSDR:	EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION
GWP:	GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP
ICPDR:	INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE DANUBE RIVER
ICZM:	INTEGRATED COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT
ISRBC:	INTERNATIONAL SAVA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
JDS:	JOINT DANUBE SURVEY
MS:	MEMBER STATES
MSP:	MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING
NCP:	NATIONAL CONTACT POINT
PA:	PRIORITY AREA
PAC:	PRIORITY AREA COORDINATOR
RBM:	RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT
SG:	STEERING GROUP
SWG:	STANDING WORKING GROUP
TA:	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
TAF:	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FACILITY
WG:	WORKING GROUP
WFD:	WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE
WWT:	WASTE WATER TREATMENT
UWWTD:	URBAN WASTE WATER TREATMENT DIRECTIVE

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Question 1: Summary of progress achieved during the reporting period.

The main outputs of EUSDR Priority Area 4 (PA4) “Maintain and restore the quality of waters” was to coordinate and manage the implementation of the PA4 targets elaborated in detail into 14 activities of action plan (Roadmap) with the aim to contribute to the improvement of water quality in the Danube Region. The main activities are focused on supporting the protection of water resources, assistance in the implementation of EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD), improvement of fish migration, addressing the water issues related to climate change impacts, promotion of measures addressing agricultural pollution, facilitation of sub-basin activities. PA4 provided assistance in project generation, partnership search, networking, alignment of project funding, dissemination.

PA4 team **deepened synergies and strengthened cooperation with international organizations**, signed **Memorandum of Cooperation between the Carpathian Convention (CC) and the EUSDR, PA4** (Annex 1), actively participated at CC and ICPDR events.

Moreover, PA4 was concentrating on **new project preparation** and assisting in setting up project consortia, two **project proposals, strategically important for PA 4**, were adopted by DTP 1st call for funding - **JOINTISZA and DANUBE SEDIMENT**.

PA4 team continued to **implement Road map activities** in accordance with the topics of the Slovak EUSDR Presidency - organized the international **workshop “Trust-building between Water and Agriculture Sectors in the Danube Region”** in Bratislava on 04/10/2016 (see link <http://www.danubewaterquality.eu/news/workshop-trust-building-between-water-and-agriculture-sectors-in-the-danube-region>); participated in the workshop “Water and agriculture” organized within the Slovak Presidency in the Council of the European Union on 24/10/2016 in Bratislava and **workshop titled “Water – non-alternative source for life”** (see the following link - <http://www.danubewaterquality.eu/news/5th-eusdr-annual-forum>) during the **5th EUSDR Annual Forum**. PA 4 helped to organize **Budapest Water Summit** held on 28-30/11/2016 within which the **Stakeholder Seminar** took place.

PA4 prolonged the **cooperation Non-EU countries** in Solotvyno, Ukraine and **other Priority Areas** within Pillar B (PA4-PA5-PA6); PA10 and PA7.

To **coordinate PA4** effectively, namely its Roadmap activities and managing priority area, PA 4 team participated at the **Danube Transnational Program PAC seminar and Danube Strategy Point Consultation meeting with the EUSDR Priority Area Coordinators** (09/2016, Budapest) and **EUSDR Consultancy Group meeting** (07/2016, Bratislava). PA4 **organised the Trilateral working group meeting** among PA4 SK-HU, ICPDR and Sava Commission on 9/9/2016 in Budapest (Annex 2), **Stakeholder meeting** (21/11/2016, Bratislava) and **12th PA4 Steering Group Meeting** (1/12/2016, Budapest) (Annex 3) where PA4 Seed Money facility (SMF) priorities were adopted.

The **project proposal comprised the PA4 work plan for the period 2017-2019** was submitted within Danube Transnational Programme, Specific Objective 4.2 Support to the governance and implementation of EUSDR.

The **visibility of PA 4** and dissemination of its achievements is ensured via continuous update of PA4 website www.danubewaterquality.eu. The achievements and plans of the priority area were presented at the **Slovak National Participation Day** (21/10/2016, Bratislava). The brochure **“What is new in the update of Drinking Water Directive?”** was issued in October 2016 - see link http://www.danubewaterquality.eu/uploads/files/Drinking_Water_cela_web.pdf. Moreover, the information on conference and workshop organised by PA4 were published in **Water Management Journals 7-8 /2016** (Annex 4) and **11-12 /2016** (Annex 5), in Slovak.

2 PROGRESS OF THE PA

2.1 PROGRESS ON POLICY LEVEL

2.1.1 POLICY AREAS AT FOCUS

Question 2: What are the policy areas (important policy topics/thematic issues) that the PA selected as main focus (i.e. priority) for work during the reporting period?

Cooperation with ICPDR and ICPDR Tisza Group especially in river basin management planning process, strengthening sub-basin cooperation: Tisza, Sava, Prut, Danube delta, awareness raising, synergies, NON-EU cooperation.

Moreover, cooperation with the Carpathian Convention in joint projects and synergy activities and topics as climate change, water resources protection and others.

Cooperation with the Sava Commission in joint projects and synergy activities.

Question 3: What are the main arguments for selecting those policy areas as priority ones?

ICPDR-EUSDR PA4 and PA5 coordination – signed Joint Paper on Cooperation and Synergy for the EUSDR Implementation.

Signed Memorandum of Cooperation between Carpathian Convention and EUSDR, PA4 “To restore and maintain the quality of waters”

Sava Commission – common sphere of interest – geographical area – brought mutual benefit.

2.1.2 MAIN POLICY ACHIEVEMENTS

Question 4: Based on what has been reported under section 2.1.1: what are the PAs' main policy achievements and developments during the reporting period?

- Joint Trilateral meeting with EUSDR PA4 and ICPDR and Sava Commission aiming in update and coordination of PA4 EUSDR roadmap activities implementation (09/09/2017, Budapest);
- Implementation of 2nd Danube River Basin Management Plan

2.1.3 POLICY LESSONS LEARNED

Question 5: Based on what has been reported in sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2: what are the policy related lessons learned (positive or negative) from the PAs implementation during the reporting period (with focus on those that are important for the future EUSDR policy development)?

- Mutual cooperation between ICPDR and Sava Commission resulted in mutual benefits;
- Closer cooperation with Carpathian Convention based on Memorandum signed;
- Widespread dissemination activities are fostering the strengthened cooperation with regional organisations and international organisations (JRC, GWP) as well as commencing new connections with EIP Water and the OECD;
- The successful workshop “Trust-building between Water and Agriculture Sectors in the Danube Region” presented synergic aims with the workshop “Water and agriculture” organized within Slovak Presidency in the Council of the European Union. The outcomes of this workshop were brought to the attention of Water Directors at their meeting on 28-29 November 2016, with the aim to get a mandate to organize a joint meeting of Water Directors and Agriculture Directors in the spring 2017.

2.1.4 FUTUREPOLICY DEVELOPMENT

Question 6: Based on what has been reported in section 2.1.3: what next steps and challenges for future policy development the PA finds important to share for further consideration discussion or development (incl. possible solutions to overcome the challenges)?

- Further strengthening sub basin cooperation, also focusing on Prut and Danube Delta.
- Further strengthening cooperation with Non-EU countries.
- Further involvement in project generation focused on UWWT, hazardous and problematic substances, pharmaceuticals and updated solutions in the assessment of new sustainable human development activities towards the Danube Region development - Article 4.7 of Water Framework Directive
- Further cooperation & coordination with the ICPDR (e.g. joint publications, project proposals, workshops, meetings, etc.)

2.2 PROGRESS ON PA'S TARGETS

Table 1: Progress on targets during the reporting period

PA Targets (number and wording of the target)	Progress during the reporting period				Clarifications
	Completed	Satisfactory progress	Delayed progress	Other	
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
1. Achieve the management objectives set out in the Danube River Basin Management Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Reduce the nutrient levels in the Danube River to allow the recovery of the Black Sea ecosystems to conditions similar to 1960s	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Elaborate a Danube Delta Analysis Report as a step towards completion of the Delta management Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Target 3 of PA4 was modified in 2016 as part of overall revision & update of EUSDR Targets with regards to all PAs. <u>The new Target</u> is presented in column (a)
4. Secure viable populations of Danube sturgeon species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Elaborate, adopt and implement the sub-basin management plans, such as Sava, Tisza and Prut sub-basins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Question 7: Based on the information provided in Table 1, what is the PAs overall self-evaluation with regards to reaching the applicable targets? Any other positive experience or other important information to that respect that the PA considers necessary (or good) to be shared should be included here as well.

Several activities and tasks have been achieved in previous period, especially related to the implementation of Roadmap Action 4 (Assessment of financial needs of the Danube countries for the implementation program on building and updating UWWT technology) and Action 11 (Dissemination and integration of results of the best practices and policies for decision-makers and stakeholders into the Risk assessment and 2nd DRBMP – updated to current conditions the issues on drought and water scarcity).

Within this reporting period there was implemented the Roadmap Action 6 (Strengthening the cooperation between agriculture and water authorities) and Action 13 (Promotion of dissemination of guidelines concerning the safeguarding of drinking water supply).

However still many tasks are yet to be completed as PA4 has 14 actions including 63 milestones and PA4 continuously work on their implementation.

Question 8: What, if anything, was/is missing in order to achieve the progress in reaching the targets as previously planned?

PA4 is working jointly with the ICPDR and Sava Commission to reach the targets. For their successful completion necessary funds need to be explored and further utilized by PA4.

Question 9: Are there any plans (or needs) for revising/updating the list of targets, applicable for the PA? If so, please provide details.

No. The revision of targets were discussed and adopted by the SG in the previous reporting period. SG decided that only a timeline is to be modified related to Target 3. The new revised EUSDR Targets, including for PA4 were adopted by the EUSDR National Coordinators and Commission on 23 May 2016 in Bratislava at the joint NC/PAC Meeting. Therefore no further modifications are applicable to PA4.

2.3 PROGRESS ON PA'S ACTIONS

Table 2: Progress on actions during the reporting period

PA Targets (number)	Progress on action for reaching the targets during the reporting period																
	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13	A14	A15	A16	A17
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)	(m)	(n)	(o)	(p)	(q)	(r)
1	ASP		ASP	ASP				ASP	ASP		ASP	ASP	ASP				
2					ASP	ASP	ASP						ANS				
3		ASP									ANS			ASP			
4										ASP							
5		ASP															

Legend:

ASP	actions, whose implementation is satisfactory progressing (according to what was initially planned in the Roadmap);
APD	actions, whose implementation is progressing with delays (comparing to what was initially planned in the Roadmap);
ACcp	actions completed in current reporting period;
ACpp	actions completed in previous reporting period(s);
ANS	actions, whose implementation has not started yet;

Question 10: Based on the information provided in Table 2, what is the PA's overall self - evaluation regarding the progress in implementing the actions? A positive experience or other important information to that respect that the PA considers necessary (or good) to be shared should be included here as well.

PA4 has reached significant progress in the implementation of the targeted actions. Steps have been done in case of all actions, however, taken into account that most of the actions include several milestones, which have long term implementation period. Some actions (Action 1) can be considered finalised in the frame of adoption 2nd DRBMP, but the action is ongoing in its implementation. The Joint cooperation with the ICPDR, Sava Commission and other relevant international organisations has also facilitated the development of the tasks and PA4 could avoid duplication of work. The harmonisation of the common tasks with relevant international organisations was also encouraged and appreciated by the experts, working in these processes (e.g. in ICPDR, Sava Commission and EUSDR).

To strengthen cooperation with international bodies, the Memorandum of Cooperation between Carpathian Convention and PA4 EUSDR was signed. The remarkable achievements were reached not only in the field of coordination and projects preparation, but the roadmap actions implementation in this reporting period – see Chapter 2,5

Question 11: What, if anything, was/is missing in order to achieve the progress in implementing the actions as previously planned?

The previous funding of EUSDR concentrated on managing and coordination financing did not provide wide possibilities for project funding. Therefore, the newly established Danube Transnational Programme (DTP) as well as other financial opportunities offer good possibilities to accelerate the implementation process, especially Roadmap actions implementation. DTP provides visible links to EUSDR priorities and tries practically to embed the strategy into the programme. In 2015-2016 PA4 has supported the development of two proposals for PA4 relevant projects in the subject of sediment issues and Tisza sub-basin cooperation, which were adopted for financing from DTP and are fully linked to the PA4 Roadmap.

The problem of all PAs is the low attendance of SG members at SG meetings. Moreover, the low involvement of SG members is reflected in feedback to the activities performed by PAC4 teams. One of the possibilities to enhance the attendance of SG members in SG meetings could be the NCPs involvement of all Danube states to motivate their SG members to participate at SG meetings of particular priority areas.

Question 12: Are there any plans (or needs) for revising/updating the actions, applicable for the PA? If so, please provide details.

The PA4 Roadmap actions and milestones were revised in cooperation with ICPDR in autumn 2016 and then adopted by PA4 SG members. Subsequently, the updated version was provided to DTP as the Annex to PA4 action plan for the upcoming period (2017-2019). For these reasons we do not predict the update/revision of PA4 actions in upcoming period.

2.4 PROGRESS ON MILESTONES

Table 3: Progress on milestones during the reporting period

PA Actions (numbers)	Progress on milestones during the reporting period									
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)
A1	MCpp	MSP	MCpp	MCpp	MNS	MNS	MNS			
A2	MSP	MCpp	MSP	MSP	MCcp	MSP	MSP	MSP	MSP	MSP
A3	MSP	MCpp	MNS	MCpp	MCpp	MNS	MSP			
A4	MSP	MNS	MNS							
A5	MCpp	MCpp	MCpp	MSP	MSP					
A6	MSP	MSP								

PA Actions (numbers)	Progress on milestones during the reporting period									
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)
A7	MSP	MSP	MCpp							
A8	MSP	MSP	MSP	MSP						
A9	MCpp	MSP	MSP	MNS						
A10	MCpp	MCpp	MSP	MSP	MSP	MNS				
A11	MSP	MSP	MSP							
A12	MSP	MCpp	MSP	MCpp	MSP	MNS				
A13	MCpp	MCpp	MSP							
A14	MCpp	MSP	MNS							

Legend:

MSP	milestones that are satisfactory progressing (according to what was initially planned in the Roadmap);
MPD	milestones that are progressing with delays (comparing to what was initially planned in the Roadmap);
MCcp	milestones completed in current reporting period;
MCpp	milestones completed in previous reporting period(s);
MNS	milestones, whose implementation has not started yet;

Question 13: Based on the information provided in Table, what is the PAs overall self - evaluation regarding the progress in reaching the milestones? A positive experience or other important information to that the PA considers necessary (or as good) to be shared should be included here as well

Out of the 66 milestones specified by PA4 experts up to 2016, almost one third have been completed (20). That is more than satisfactory, because many of the milestones are ongoing, partly reached, and prolonged to upcoming period, although there were made significant steps forward. The implementation of the actions via organisation of events for dissemination experts' knowledge, looking for new solutions, facilitating financing possibilities, fostering projects generation does not mean in this viewpoint the finalising of the milestones, only the way of proceeding.

Question 14: What, if anything, was/is missing in order to achieve the progress in reaching the milestones as previously planned?

The implementation of the milestones was slowed down in 2012-2015, since no suitable funds for the implementation were available. The newly available funds via the Danube Transnational Programme as well as other financial opportunities offer good options to accelerate the implementation process. For instance, in 2015-2016 PA4 supported the development of two proposals for PA4 relevant projects – JoinTisza and Danube Sediments – which were adopted for financing within DTP 1st call. The aims of the projects are fully coherent with PA4 Roadmap.

2.5 PROGRESS ON ACTIVITIES

Table 4 Activities undertaken to progress on PA implementation

<i>PA Actions (numbers)</i>	<i>Activities undertaken during the reporting period to progress on PA implementation</i>
<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>
A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of updated (2nd) Danube River Basin District Management Plan elaborated by the ICPDR. The management plan includes a chapter on financing possibilities of the Joint Program of Measures.
A2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tisza Declaration put into operation. ▪ JOINTISZA project for the strengthening of Tisza sub-basin cooperation, supported by the ICPDR, has been adopted for financing by the DTP coordinated by the PA4 and NC/HU.
A3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Joint Tisza Survey 2 related actions are included in the JOINTISZA project ▪ INSPIRE compliant DanubeGIS system put into operation and developed by the ICPDR including tools for integrated visualisation and interpretation of data
A4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ICPDR integrated the revised and updated database on UWWTPs into DanubeGIS.
A5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PA4 is continuing the work in relation to the survey of the situation on alternative collection and treatment wastewater in small rural settlements. This work is linked to Action 5 and A7. PA4 is aiming at to develop a short overview on the outcomes of the field studies ▪ Discussions on the good agricultural practices are regularly initiated at the ICPDR PM EG/NTG Meetings. ▪ Preparation of the study – “Challenges of waste water treatment in the Danube River Basin and its impact on water quality in basin wide level - Candidate and Non-EU countries are in the focus”.
A6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ICPDR has launched a dialogue with the agricultural sector in 2016, which will last minimum two years. The objective is to strengthen cooperation between agriculture and water sectors and to develop guidance on sustainable agriculture to reduce nutrient emissions. ▪ Organisation of international workshop „Trust-building between Water and Agriculture Sectors in the Danube Region“ focused on dialogues between these two sectors. The workshop was followed up by the event “Water and agriculture” organized within Slovak Presidency in the Council of the European Union. ▪ Dissemination of the brochure on effective reduction of diffuse water pollution by nutrients from agricultural land informing on necessity of environmentally efficient and cost effective measures, which address the problems of water pollution from agriculture
A7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using the results of scenario calculations for P reduction in laundry and dishwasher detergents developed by the ICPDR incorporated into the DRBM Plan – Update 2015.

<i>PA Actions (numbers)</i>	<i>Activities undertaken during the reporting period to progress on PA implementation</i>
<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>
A8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the list of activities and research needs in relation to the control of the hazardous substances emissions included into the DRBM Plan – Update (Joint Program of Measures). Data collection is on-going for risk assessment on accident risk sites and contaminated sites.
A9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the first draft list of the Danube River Basin Specific Pollutants presented in the DRBM Plan – Update 2015 prepared by ICPDR.
A10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICPDR further developed and updated the ecological prioritisation approach for addressing longitudinal continuity interruptions in the Danube River Basin incorporated into DRBM Plan – Update 2015. Sturgeon restoration projects supported by the ICPDR have been/are being implemented (Feasibility study on ex-situ conservation measures, Preparatory study on sturgeon behaviour at the Iron Gates dam, Ex-situ survey to preserve sturgeon genetic diversity in the Middle and Lower Danube - STURGENE, LIFE project on sterlet restoration - STERLET) Adoption of the project Danube Sediment Project supported by the ICPDR for DTP financing PA4 participation in the REVISTUR (a basin wide harmonized approach to secure the REVival of Danube STURgeons’ – working title) project proposal preparation in cooperation with PA6, supported by the ICPDR.
A11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific activities undertaken in the reporting period.
A12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EUSDR activities and events were advertised and reported at the ICPDR homepage, in Danube Watch and through the ICPDR network. PA4 website is continuously updated with topical information (http://www.danubewaterquality.eu/) Dissemination of information on PA4 events in the Water Management Journal 7-8 /2016 on the international conference „Effective Utilization of Water Resources in the conditions of climate change (Drought and Water Scarcity)“ and in the Water Management Journal 11-12 /2016 on the international workshop “Trust-building between Water and Agriculture Sectors in the Danube Region” (both in Slovak)
A13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printing and dissemination of the brochure on information of the Drinking water directive update
A14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific activities undertaken in the reporting period.

2.6 EUSDR STRATEGIC PROJECTS

Table 5: Projects identified and proposed by PA (PACs + SG) as EUSDR strategic project (SP)

<i>Title of project proposed by PA as ESDR SP during the reporting period</i>	<i>Date of PA meeting when the project was approved as potential ESDR SP</i>	<i>To which PA target the project is relevant?</i>	<i>Main project activities of the EUSDR SP</i>	<i>Targeted funding source(s) for the SP</i>
<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>	<i>(c)</i>	<i>(d)</i>	<i>(e)</i>

Question 15: Were any of the projects included in Table 5 already approved for funding during the reporting period? If so, please complete Table 6 below with the information only for those projects.

Table 6: Proposed EUSDR strategic projects, which were approved for funding

<i>Title of project proposed by PA as ESDR SP, approved for funding</i>	<i>Total amount of approved funding</i>	<i>Approved funding source(s) for the EUSDR SP</i>
<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>	<i>(c)</i>

3 FUNDING

3.1 MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS IN TERMS OF FUNDING

Question 16: What is considered as PAs main achievement/s with regards to funding sources and opportunities for EUSDR projects? Short analysis relevant only to the duration of the reporting period needs to be provided.

PA4team organised the 3rdStakeholder Seminar within the Budapest Water Summit on 30 November 2016, in Budapest. The aim of the seminar was to provide an overview about the water-related Priority Areas (priority area on ‘water quality’ and ‘environmental risks’), to present the results achieved and to provide detailed information about funding instruments from central funds to specific territorial cooperation instruments. Furthermore, the seminar offered a possibility for partner search, presented country needs and assisted in the alignment of funding procedure for future project beneficiaries by promoting further project ideas.

To promote the setting up of project consortia, PA4 facilitated to setup JOINTISZA project consortium as well as strongly contributed to sub-basin cooperation via Tisza Office that originated in April 2016 in Szolnok.

Moreover, PA4team participated actively in DANUBE SEDIMENT project proposal.

Both projects which are considered to be relevant and “strategic” for PA4 were adopted for financing within the 1st call of DTP. PA4 is honoured that two relevant PA4 projects passed through in very high competition of the projects in DTP 1st call.

PA4supports the new project ideas in cooperation with ICPDR such as DanubeFloodplain and Danube Surgeon. The projects are supposed to be submitted in upcoming DTP call.

3.2 LESSONS LEARNED

Question 17: What are the lessons learned (positive or negative) during the reporting period, with regards to funding sources and opportunities for EUSDR projects and what responses to those the PA considers as relevant?

- With regard to the water pollution from agriculture the PA4 reached success in bringing together and starting the dialogue between water and agricultural sectors. The successful international workshop was organised with the title “Trust-building between Water and Agriculture Sectors in the Danube Region”. The topic was important for Slovak Presidency in EUSDR as well as for the Slovak Presidency in the Council of the European Union, so the workshop was followed up by the event “Water and Agriculture” organized by MoE SR.
- The topic of agriculture and water cooperation is important for the upcoming period where ICPDR will prepare the guidance document in this regard. PA4 plans to cooperate with ICPDR on this topic in the future.
- Successful project development procedures (two proposals for projects of strategic importance to PA4 were adopted by the DTP for financing, such as the JOINTISZA and DANUBESSEDIMENT. The project ideas will further strengthen basin wide and sub basin wide activities as well as cooperation among relevant international and regional organisations.
- Participation on preparation of new project proposal planned to be submitted in the upcoming DTP call – Danube Floodplain and Danube Surgeon.
- Dissemination of PA4 achievement and plans at PA4 website – www.danubewaterquality.eu and other relevant events (for instance Danube Participation day)
- Printing the brochure on information “What is new in the update of Drinking Water directive?”

3.3 THE FUTURE

Question 18: Based on what has been reported so far in Sections 3.1 and 3.2, what next steps and challenges in terms of funding sources and opportunities for EUSDR projects that are important to be shared for further consideration, discussion or development (incl. possible solutions to overcome the challenges)?

Please answer also the same question with respect to better alignment of funding to support the PA and the EUSDR in general.

With regard to PA4 coordination financing, PA4 successfully submitted the project on PA4 work plan for 2017-2019 with the Specific Objective 4.2 Support to the governance and implementation of EUSDR of Danube Transnational Programme. The project was approved and at present it is under administration process of the contract signing.

The two proposals for projects of strategic importance to PA4 were adopted by the DTP for financing - JOINTISZA and DANUBE SEDIMENT. The project ideas will further strengthen basin wide and sub basin wide activities as well as cooperation of relevant international and regional organisations. PA4 strongly support these projects implementation which are in close connection to PA4 Roadmap actions implementation.

Moreover, PA4 clearly participated in cooperation with ICPDR and other Danube region partners in preparation of new project proposal planned to be submitted in the upcoming DTP call – Danube Floodplain and Danube Sturgeon. PA4 is also participating in the development of the REVISTRUR project proposal, which objectives are strongly linked to target 4 of PA4.

PA4 teams regularly inform the SG members and EUSDR stakeholders about the possibilities of project funding from various EU funds (LIFE, Central Europe, Horizon 2020, DTP, Danube Strategic Project Fund etc.) and try to connect them in various types of cooperation, so called project networking.

PA4 will further develop and facilitate new project proposals and concentrate on its flagship/strategic projects. PA4 supports continuously to set up new project ideas, create consortia and facilitate partners search within the programs mentioned above.

Priority area 4 will carry on activities in relation to the submitted project proposals and in case no funds are secured PA4 will organise follow-up actions to make sure that the targeted issues are supported with funds.

Furthermore, PA4 will continue organizing stakeholder seminars concerning funding possibilities and will encourage further networking among possible project partners for the sake of setting up further project consortia.

Moreover, PA4 will continue its concentration on non-EU countries cooperation, mainly in the field of waste water treatment and drinking water supply.

4 GOVERNANCE

4.1 ORGANISATION AND FUNCTIONING OF PA

Question 19: Describe shortly any significant changes that have occurred during the reporting period on PA's governance in terms of organisation and functioning of PACs and SGs?

No changes occurred since the last Annual Report.

The PA has a **tripartite governance** ensuring wide spectrum of the development of the actions: the Hungarian and the Slovakian Priority Area Coordinators (PACs) and the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR). Beside these three actors also the International Sava River Basin Commission, (i.e. Sava Commission - ISRBC) plays an important role for the PA4.

The Priority Area Coordinators are Mr László Dr Perger, Chief Advisor of the Directorate General of Water Management, Hungary and Mr Vladimír Novák, Director General of the Water Section from the Ministry

of Environment of the Slovak Republic. The joint work between EUSDR and ICPDR has been facilitated via joint meetings, so called Trilateral meetings, held twice a year and by signing the memorandum on synergies between EUSDR PA4 and PA5 and ICPDR.

The **Steering Group** of PA4 meets twice a year. For better and more effective coordination and more over for saving money, as well, the PAC coordinators strive to organize back-to back meetings with ICPDR and cover the participation of SG members from non-EU countries.

Question 20: Please provide in Table the requested information on attendance (+/-) of Danube countries at SG meetings held during the reporting period.

Table 7: Attendance of SG meetings

SG meeting	AT	BA	BG	CZ	DE	HR	HU	MD	ME	RO	RS	SI	SK	UA
1 December 2016	x	x		x	x		x				x		x	

4.2 COORDINATION AND COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

Question 21: Based on what has been reported in Section 0, please provide short description on what has been achieved with the undertaken activities for coordination, cooperation and establishing links with other PAs? Please describe also any methods/tools that are put in place as a result (if applicable).

PA4 strongly supported the cooperation with the Carpathian Convention (CC). As the consequence, the Memorandum of Cooperation between CC and EUSDR, PA4 was signed at the end of August 2016. PA4 cooperated in solving of common issues (i.e. climate change) and actively participated at CC events (PA4 participation at CC Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change meeting – Vienna, 27-28/10/2016).

PA4 has put strong emphasis on the horizontal cooperation in the level of Pillar B from the very beginning, which includes actors from PA5 and PA6. Within the 5th EUSDR Annual Forum in Bratislava, PA4 organised the workshop “Water – non-alternative source for life” where all the mentioned priority areas presented their relevant projects.

Strong emphasis for cooperation with PA6 is put on sturgeon issues. Tasks are coordinated by PA6 and Sturgeon Task Force. PA4 is also involved in project proposal development of REVISTUR (a basin wide harmonized approach to secure the REVival of Danube STURgeons) and participated in the project proposal of Danube Sturgeon.

In cooperation with PA5 and other partners (including ICPDR) it participated at the project proposal preparation of Danube Floodplain project.

Furthermore, JOINTISZA project enables cooperation with PA4 in relation to the flood management issues (PA5).

Referring to the previous joint SG meeting with PA7, Priority Area 4 intends to prolong the cooperation, to organise the meetings together, to inform each other about relevant project ideas and ongoing projects and trying to find the common platform for further cooperation. The initiative of wider cooperation among PAs was also initiated by PA6 at the PAC meeting in Brussels in January 2017.

Question 22: Based on what has been reported in Section 0, please provide short description on what has been achieved with the undertaken activities for coordination, cooperation and establishing links with EU institutions (EC, EP, CoR, EESC, etc.) and/or other institutions (national, regional, international, as appropriate). Same applies also for activities for using the funding opportunities of the EC centrally managed programmes. Please describe also any methods/tools that are put in place as a result (if applicable).

- Signed Memorandum of Cooperation between CC and EUSDR, PA4 (August 2016). PA4 cooperated in solving of common issues (i.e. climate change) and actively participated at CC events

(PA4 participation at CC Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change meeting – Vienna, 27-28/10/2016).

- Set up cooperation with JRC – participation of Water Nexus in 12 SG meeting, presentation of their work and looking for cooperation platform
- Continuous cooperation with ICPDR in the field of Roadmap actions implementation and active participation at relevant meetings of ICPDR Expert groups and Working groups and other ICPDR meetings.
- Updated and adopted PA4 targets and Roadmap activities in cooperation with PA4 SG and ICPDR, set up PA4 priorities within Seed Money Facility, DTP.
- Prolonged synergy with Sava Commission, Global Water Partnership, JRC and EU funding instruments as DTP.
- Provided the information of funding possibilities of the projects and start-ups for SG members and provided the platform for discussion on new possibilities on mutual projects preparation at the stakeholder meeting held on 21 November 2016 in Bratislava for relevant project partners in Slovakia – Slovak Technical University, Faculty of Natural Sciences of Comenius University and Slovak University of Agriculture.
- Adopted two PA4 relevant strategic projects for financing within the 1st call of Danube Transnational Programme – JOINTISZA and DANUBE SEDIMENTS. The projects implementation will contribute significantly not only to fulfilling the PA4 Roadmap actions, but it will strengthen the horizontal synergy, basin wide and sub basin wide activities and cooperation of relevant stakeholders on international and national levels.
- Supported cooperation with non-EU countries – Solotvyno, Ukraine – outcomes of the scoping and 3 weeks advisory mission.
- Forced cooperation between Water and Agriculture Sectors (Action 6 of Roadmap) - organised the international workshop “Trust-building between in the Danube Region” (04/10/2016 in Bratislava). The topic was one of the main „water” topics of Slovak Presidency in EUSDR in 2016 and Slovak Presidency in the Council of the European Union. The goal of the workshop was to build mutual trust, improving relations and strengthening the cooperation between water and agriculture sector. The presentations – see the link <http://www.danubewaterquality.eu/news/workshop-trust-building-between-water-and-agriculture-sectors-in-the-danube-region>. The outcomes were brought to the attention of Water Directors at their meeting in November 2016, with the aim to get a mandate to organize a joint meeting of Water Directors and Agriculture Directors in the spring 2017 resulting to help Water Directors to be informed on the importance of this process.
- Prepared and printed the brochure “What is new in the update of Drinking Water Directive?” which was distributed at the 5th Annual Forum (3-4/11/2016, Bratislava) and 12th PA 4 SG meeting (01/12/2016, Budapest). The brochure is available at the link- http://www.danubewaterquality.eu/uploads/files/Drinking_Water_cela_web.pdf.
- Active participation in the 5th Annual Forum and organisation the workshop titled “Water – non-alternative source for life” (3-4/11/2016, Bratislava) - see the link - <http://www.danubewaterquality.eu/news/5th-eusdr-annual-forum>). The workshop topics were in synergy with priorities of SK EUSDR Presidency for water sector and presented the horizontal cooperation of Pillar II - Priority areas 4, 5 and 6.
- Co-organization of Budapest Water Summit within which PA4 organised the Stakeholder Seminar (28-30/11/2016, Budapest).
- Dissemination of PA4 achievements – continual update of PA4 website www.danubewaterquality.eu and participation at relevant events as Slovak National Participation Day (21/10/2016, Bratislava).

Question 23: Based on what has been reported in Section 0, please provide short description on what has been achieved with the undertaken activities for cooperation between the PA (PACs and SG) and the authorities dealing with ESIF funding and more specifically with the Managing Authorities and the Monitoring Committees of programs of interest to the PA. Please describe also any methods/tools that are put in place as a result (if applicable).

Despite the fact that PA4 regularly informs and disseminates the information on financial possibilities to SG members, orally at SG meetings (12 PA4 SG Meeting), PA4 participates at events organised by ESIF Managing Authorities (DTP) as Seminar held in September in Budapest.

Consequently, during the preparation of PAC financing project for SO4.2 in DTP special call (deadline October 2016), PA4 team actively cooperated and discussed with DTP Joint Secretariat the PA4 working plan for 2017-2019 which was incorporated into PA4 coordination project. Not only the quality of PA4 project proposal, but also the way of PA4 cooperation was highly appreciated by DTP Joint Secretariat.

4.3 ACTIVITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Question 24: Based on what has been reported in Section 2.5, please provide short description on what has been achieved with the undertaken activities for involvement of stakeholders, incl. civil society (e.g. stakeholder conferences, activities with national/regional parliaments, other events, networks, platforms, etc.). Please describe also any methods/tools that are put in place as a result (if applicable).

PA4 teams promoted and achieved:

- Signing of Memorandum of Cooperation between the Carpathian Convention and the EUSDR, Priority area 4 to promote synergy and to proceed mutually in joint topics for the sake of cooperation of two geographical regions – Danube and Carpathian.
- Active participation at relevant ICPDR meetings to cooperate with relevant stakeholders.
- Organization of the international workshop “Trust-building between Water and Agriculture Sectors in the Danube Region” for active involvement of water and agriculture stakeholders.
- Organisation of workshop titled “Water – non-alternative source for life” during 5th EUSDR Annual Forum to promote cooperation between water and agriculture sectors and 3 priority areas – PA4, PA5 and PA6.
- Co-organization of the Budapest Water Summit within which the Stakeholder Seminar took place with the aim to provide information on financing possibilities and partners search for various stakeholders.
- Prolongation of the cooperation with relevant stakeholders in non-EU countries (Solotvyno, Ukraine) to reveal the complexity of the problem needs with engineering exploration and a future oriented planning.
- Organisation of the Stakeholder meeting for relevant project partners in Slovakia – Slovak Technical University, Faculty of Natural Sciences of Comenius University and Slovak University of Agriculture.
- Active participation in the Slovak National Participation Day providing the information on PA4 projects to NGOs.
- Organisation of the Trilateral working group meeting and 12th PA4 Steering Group Meeting for PA4 partners and SG members.
- Permanent update of PA4 website www.danubewaterquality.eu.
- Issue of the brochure “What is new in the update of Drinking Water Directive?” that was disseminated to relevant stakeholders during EUSDR events.
- Dissemination of the information to specialists on PA4 events - in Water Management Journal 7-8/2016 on international conference „Effective Utilization of Water Resources in the conditions of climate change (Drought and Water Scarcity)“ and in Water Management Journal 11-12 /2016 on the international workshop “Trust-building between Water and Agriculture Sectors in the Danube Region” (both published in Slovak). Moreover, in Water Management Journal 1-2/2017 was provided the information on the 5th Annual Forum held in Bratislava.

4.4 PUBLICITY AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Question 25: Based on what has been reported in Section 2.5, please provide short description on what has been achieved with the undertaken activities for better publicity and communication (e.g. publications, website developments, etc.). Same applies also for activities for better communication of PA's results and work as well as those related to public debate(s) on the macro - regional approach. Please describe also any methods/tools that are put in place as a result (if applicable).

- Continuous update of PA4 website www.danubewaterquality.eu
- Issue of the brochure “What is new in the update of Drinking Water Directive?” providing the update information and disseminated to relevant stakeholders during EUSDR events
- Dissemination of the information on PA4 events - in Water Management Journal 7-8/2016 on international conference „Effective Utilization of Water Resources in the conditions of climate change (Drought and Water Scarcity)“ and in Water Management Journal 11-12 /2016 on the international workshop “Trust-building between Water and Agriculture Sectors in the Danube Region” (both published in Slovak). Moreover, in Water Management Journal 1-2/2017 was provided the information on the 5th Annual Forum held in Bratislava.
- PA4 team developed a text of the brochure related to Urban Waste Water Treatment and its situation in the Danube River Basin (working title).

4.5 LESSONS LEARNED

Question 26: Based on what has been reported so far in Section 4: what are the lessons learned (positive or negative), in terms of PA governance during the reporting period and what responses to those the PA considers as relevant?

- Trilateral meetings between ICPDR-EUSDR-Sava Commission facilitated the better harmonisation of tasks among the three organisations.
- Joint SG meetings (especially PA5 and PA7) might have a value of further networking with other priority areas and ease the participation of EC and DSP.
- In case it is possible, PA4 meetings organised back to back with ICPDR core events should be better attended by countries. This initiative is highly respected by the members of the SG.
- If available, PA4 SG meetings should be organised in synergy with other relevant EUSDR events, as the EUSDR Annual Forum, to ease SG members' participation.

4.6 THE FUTURE

Question 27: Based on what has been reported so far in Section 4: what next steps and challenges for better PA governance in the future that the PA finds important to be shared for further consideration (incl. possible solutions to overcome the challenges)?

- PA4 team will continue the good practice of trilateral meetings between ICPDR-EUSDR-Sava Commission, which help more efficient harmonisation of tasks between the three organisations.
- PA4 intends in the future to do its best to involve the countries via SG members to participate at PA4 work plan fulfilling and project generation. In this respect the closer cooperation with NCP is planned. This way of work is intended to be passed to other NCPs as a positive example.
- Dissemination of PA4 outcomes in large conferences and international workshops serve as good practice and should be further considered in the next period as well.

LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1: Memorandum of Cooperation between the Carpathian Convention and the EUSDR, Priority Area 4

Annex 2: Minutes of Trilateral working group meeting

Annex 3: Minutes of 12th PA4 Steering Group Meeting

Annex 4: Water Management Journal 7-8 /2016 - information on the international conference „Effective Utilization of Water Resources in the conditions of climate change (Drought and Water Scarcity)“ in Slovak

Annex 5: Water Management Journal 11-12 /2016 - information on the international workshop “Trust-building between Water and Agriculture Sectors in the Danube Region” in Slovak

ANNEX A: ROADMAP TO IMPLEMENT EACH PA4 ACTION

ANNEX B: PA4’S WORKPLAN FOR 1 YEAR 2017

