

## Summary Minutes

### 15<sup>th</sup> Steering Group Meeting of EUSDR PA4

### 18 April 2018, Budapest, Hungary

The objective of the meeting was (1) to provide information on recent activities of EUSDR PA4 -PA5, ICPDR, ICSRB, JRC, Carpathian Convention (2) to update on project financing possibilities with a special focus on the LIFE Programme, on Interreg Europe, the Danube Transnational Programme (DTP) and the Seed Money Facility (SMF), (3) to initiate discussion with other priority areas of EUSDR (PA1a, PA5, PA6 and PA7) water related priorities of different macro regional strategies and (4) to disseminate information about project proposals and project implementation related to PA4 cooperation with different NEXUS partners and organizations.

The meeting was held back to back with the first EU-macro-regional workshop on water (held on 19 April 2018) to promote synergies of events. The meeting was hosted by the General Directorate of Water Management. Over twenty participants from six countries were present at the meeting: representatives from Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany (Bavaria), Hungary, Romania and Slovakia participated as well as delegates of the EUSDR Priority Area 1a (inland waterways), EUSDR Priority Area 5 (environmental risks), EUSDR Priority Area 7 (knowledge society), the ICPDR, the Sava Commission (ISRBC), the Joint Research Centre (via skype), GWP-CEE, the Danube Transnational Programme Joint Secretariat, the Interreg Europe National Contact, the LIFE Programme National Focal Points, Interact, Sediment project management, the Dri-Danube and the Joint Tisza project representatives were present at the meeting. Detailed list of participants is attached in Annex 1.

#### 1. Opening of the meeting

Mr **Balázs Horváth HU PAC** opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. He announced that the meeting is organized back to back with the first EU-macro-regional workshop on water (held on 19 April 2018) that will follow the SG meeting on the second day. He called attention that EUSDR PA1a, PA5 and PA7 are represented at the SG. Mr **Vladimir Novak SK PAC** also welcomed the participants. The agenda was adopted.

The national coordinator of **EUSDR Hungary, Mr Gábor Jenei** welcomed the participants and welcomed the countries present at the event. He stressed that the new financial period is approaching, and that the new Multiannual financing framework will be announced in a week. It is foreseen that the EU sources will be somewhat reduced, and it will require more efficient approach from our side, also more thematic focus and simplification on the other hand. These circumstances might mean that we will need to use regional envelopes, not national envelopes. It is the common interest of the EUSDR countries to have a clear joint statement on a common approach for future financing. The DTP's Seed Money Facility is helping us selecting the priorities facilitating our work.

#### 2. Information about EUSDR PA4, PA1a, PA5 and PA7 ongoing activities

## 2.1 EUSDR PA4

### Events

Ms Diana Heilmann and Zsuzsanna Kocsis-Kupper from the PA4 HU team jointly presented information about the main PA4 activities since the last SG meeting as of 16-17 October 2017 as follows:

On 17 October 2017 an international Stakeholder Seminar of EUSDR Pillar B was held. On 19 October 2017 two workshops were organized in the frame of the 6th Annual Forum in Budapest: a workshop on Funding opportunities for Pillar II of the EUSDR and a „Water management” thematic pole workshop. On 27 February 2018 a trilateral meeting of EUSDR PA4-ICPDR-ISRBC was held in Slovakia, Bratislava.

EUSDR PA4 colleagues participated on 14-15 November 2017, at the 46th RBM EG Meeting, in Bucharest. On 28-29 November 2017 PA4 colleagues presented and assisted in moderation in an International Workshop on Wastewater Management in the Danube River Basin in Bucharest, Romania (by ICPDR-World-Bank, IAWD, JRC). On 7 December 2017 PA4 colleague participated at EU TAIEX Funding Opportunities for the Water Sector workshop in Brussels, organized by DG Environment, DG NEAR and DG Regio. On 1 February PA4 team participated at the 2018 EUSDR PAC meeting in Sofia and on 27 February 2018 at the Trilateral meeting in Bratislava. Furthermore, PA4 colleagues were presenting on 27-28 March 2018 in Sofia, at the 10th BULAQUA „Investment Challenges for the Wss Sector – Innovative Solutions and Financial Strategies”. Ms Heilmann stressed cooperation with EUSDR PA6 and mentioned presenting on 27 March 2018, at the EUSDR PA6 SG meeting in Budapest and on 28 March, 2018 at the PA6 Danube Ecological Corridor Seminar in Budapest. PA4 was also represented on 27-28 March 2018 at the ICPDR Climate Change Adaptation Workshop in Belgrade, Serbia.

### Reporting

The PA4 colleagues informed the SG about the following reports: the DTP PA4 PAC1 report was circulated via the SG and was submitted to the Danube Transnational Programme Secretariat by 31 March 2018. The JOINTISZA partner report (PA4 HU team acts as a partner in the project) was submitted to DTP by 15 January 2018.

The 2018 Commission implementation report of MRS (Joint PA4 HU-SK PAC Team report) was submitted to DG Regio on 16 April 2018.

### Documents

The updated PA4 Brochure and a Special issue of Hungarian Journal of Hydrology (10/2017) were circulated in the frame of the 6th Annual Forum.

A new leaflet on Funding possibilities draft available, will be printed in spring 2018 and it will be circulated in the Danube Day in June 2018 and in the 7th Annual Forum in Sofia. Furthermore, a summary report on macro-regional strategies in relation to the topic on „water” will also be prepared until December 2018.

### Project preparation

- PA4 SK is compiling a project proposal on e-learning to submit by 1 July 2018 to a Fund for Regional Cooperation (EEA and Norway Grants) to support to knowledge sharing related to water with PA7. Partners are welcomed!

- New projects were submitted in the past months: CE – DEEPWATER, WETLANDMONITOR, Trimonitor, EARTH, Plastic Cup – LoR is issued for the latter 3 projects and to LIFE IP MEDER project. As to date it seems that the projects proceeded the first checks and passed further. LoR for CE-Deepwater and Wetlandmonitor projects passed the SG approval process.
- Preparation: Particulate organic matter in streams – linkage between catchment and local hydromorphology.
- DTP 2nd call – SIMONA, Danube Floodplain, Measures (Revistur), DAREFFORT (decision was held on 22/03/2018), the projects were awarded funding, congratulations!

#### **Upcoming PA4 joint events:**

- Workshop on water management in the different macro-regional strategies, on 19 April 2018, Budapest (with all 4 EU macro regions) Budapest
- International Plastic waste round table in the frame of the Danube Day events, on 28 June 2018, Budapest (JOINTISZA event – joint organisation with PA5) Budapest
- PET CUPA on Aug 4-12 (JOINTISZA event – joint organisation with PA5)
- PA4 Trilateral meeting, on 6 September 2018, Budapest
- Article 4.7 WFD workshop – on 12 Sept 2018, Bratislava
- WS on Guidance on sustainable agriculture, autumn 2018 (joint organisation with ICPDR)
- 16 SG November 2018, Bratislava

#### **Other linked events with PA4 participation:**

- Danube Water Forum 2-3 May 2018
- EUSDR Joint NC/PAC meeting 25 May 2018 Sofia
- 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum of the Baltic Strategy – 4-5 June 2018 Tallin
- EUSDR Joint NC/PAC meeting with Commissioner Cretu, 26 June 2018, Brussels
- ASEM seminar 11-12 September 2018, Budapest – moderation of thematic session
- JOINTISZA and Measure project – involvement
- 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum 18-19 October 2018, Sofia
- ICPDR expert group meetings and OM, STWG – participation.

Ms Kocsis-Kupper further added that PA4 will focus on cooperation with other macro-regions, on funding, post 2020, on emerging issues (such as microplastics, pharmaceuticals), will strengthen further capacity building, will be involved in project preparation, and networking. Called attention to stronger involvement of SG members.

Mr Horváth added that the 5<sup>th</sup> European Water Conference will be held in 20-21 September 2018 in Vienna and it will also focus on the assessment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> RBMP and the future of the WFD.

## **2.2 EUSDR PA1a**

Mr Muilerman PA1a PAC stated that they are not only focusing on inland shipping, but on 3 main components and their main objective is to develop the Danube waterway. PA1a is coordinated by Austria and Romania. They target to increase cargo transport on the river by 20% by 2020. Solve obstacles on navigability, develop efficient multimodal terminals at river ports; implement harmonised River Information Services (RIS) on the Danube and its navigable tributaries and ensure the international exchange of RIS data preferably by 2020. PA1a also aims to solve the shortage of qualified personnel

and harmonize education standards in inland navigation in the Danube region by 2020, taking duly into account the social dimension of the respective measures. More than 100 projects already ongoing!

The EUSDR PA 1a has an online project database that is to be found at: [www.danube.navigation.eu/projects](http://www.danube.navigation.eu/projects). Mr Muilerman referred to that waterway rehabilitation and maintenance is and will remain a national responsibility. Budget decisions and operational measures are ultimately taken (or not) at national level. The quality of the Danube corridor is as strong as its weakest link: corridor approach in waterway maintenance is essential. PA1a completed its Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan, started already in 2014, endorsed by the majority of Danube Transport Ministers in June 2016. The National Action Plans create a level of transparency in national waterway maintenance issues, which was previously not available, and it is also important that environmental dimensions are included and monitored equally. He mentioned the currently ongoing Danube STREAM project and called attention to the intersectoral conferences (to be held on 29-30 May 2018 in Kladovo) and the Danube Awareness Day and intersectoral seminar that will be held on 13 September 2018. (Connected to the Austrian EU presidency.) There are joint activities and intersectoral cooperation with DANUBE parks CONNECTED and Danube Sediment projects as well.

PA4 PAC HU highly appreciated the presence and participation of Mr. Muilerman and agreed on future cooperation between PA4 and PA1a, especially the involvement of PA4 in the PA 1a work on good navigation status.

#### Questions/remarks:

Q Ms Kocsis-Kupper (PA4): how are you involved in 100 projects?

A: The 100 projects are the projects that submitted request for LoR over 6 years, update their project data annually. Some of them are filled project initiatives.

Q Ms Szudi (PA7): do you have flagship projects?

A: There are 6 flagships as labelled strategic (done together with DSP)

Target: The baseline is 2010. Targets were slightly updated 2 years ago, in 2016.

Q: Working groups: experience and how you communicate?

A: Seek combination of ongoing projects, always combine a project meeting with a WG meeting.

### **2.3 EUSDR PA5**

From PA5 HU Mr Viktor Oroszi introduced the main PA5 tasks under development. The 12<sup>th</sup> SG meeting was organized in Vienna (13-14/12/2017) back-to-back with the 20th ICPDR Ordinary Meeting to utilize the possible synergies. Signature of the Memorandum of Understanding document with the Carpathian Convention also happened during the event. PA5 HU PAC participated at an INTERACT Joint meeting of macro-regional coordinators on climate and disaster risk reduction (Budapest, 16-17/11/2017) and participated on the EUSALP Annual Forum and invited EUSALP relevant expert to the 12nd PA5 SG Meeting (Vienna, 5/12/2017). As a follow-up the coordinators of the 4 macro-regions jointly organized a conference session on the EU Civil Protection Forum 2018 in Brussels “SCALING UP PREVENTION: Cross-border cooperation for effective disaster risk management” highlighting their achievements for the whole European civil protection community. PA5 also participated at the 6th ASEM Seminar on „Integrated Water Resources Management for Sustainable Development” (Lao PDR, 25-26/10/2017) - representing PA4 & PA5 achievements and projects for Asian experts, on the General Assembly of Danube Chambers of Commerce Association (Budapest, 5/12/2017) – representing HU Pres., PA2 & PA5; on the East-West Cohesion International Conference (16-17/11/2017, Dunaújváros,

HU) – non-EU involvement within EUSDR, PA4 & PA5 projects and on the UNESCO IHP - ISRBC Transboundary Training Workshop on Governance and Technology for Flood Risk Reduction (Zagreb, 5-7/12/2017).

For project support: Issuance of EUSDR Letter of Recommendation (LoR) for projects (1 DTP, 4 HUSKROUA, 1 HU-SRB, 1 HU-SK, 1 DSPF in 2017 and 1 Interreg CE in 2018) and publication of a LoR leaflet in line with PA4-5-6 regulation. Supported projects: InterFloodCourse, DAREFFORT, Danube Floodplain, DAMWARM+, DEVICE support of project elaboration.

DAREFFORT (Danube River Basin Enhanced Flood Forecasting Cooperation) and Danube Floodplain projects are currently under condition clearing with DTP.

6 proposals were submitted under DTP SMF call related to PA5, such as:

- DADDI Development of a Danube Trans-national Local Exposure and Damage Information Datasets network in support to the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster risk reduction
- LAREDAR LAkes and REservoirs in the DANube River Basin
- DEVICE Danube DEVELOPMENT of the ICE management project concept for the Danube Region (preparatory project for "DANICE" application)
- PSP DB RO-BG Protection and Security of the Population on the Danube Border of Romania-Bulgaria
- SCWI ECP Safety of critical water infrastructure of shared river basins, emergency and crisis response planning
- DIERMS Danube Interregional Environmental Risk Management System

Plastic waste pollution: common Pillar B challenge. Organization of the 7th ASEM Sustainable Development Dialogue (Danube – Mekong cooperation) – Budapest 11-12/9/2018.

#### Remarks:

- Mr Muilerman (PA1a) highlighted for attention the *Plastic for Danube* project.
- Mr Arzet (D) appreciated all the EUSDR activities, but also stressed that there are so many events are held and that there is also a capacity issue to be present everywhere.
- Mr Horváth (PA4) mentioned efforts made to organize common meetings.

## 2.4 EUSDR PA7

Ms Szudi PA7 PAC informed the SG that their priority area is as very horizontal PA, it is coordinated by Slovakia and Serbia. Their operation is transnational, inter-sectorial and interinstitutional and that it has 5 working groups:

- **WG 1 Higher education and mobility (RS)** cooperation among universities and research institutions (Danube Rectors' Conference, Alps-Adriatic Rectors' Conference, the Central European Exchange Program for University Studies (CEEPUS) and others.) mobility in the Danube Region, joint master and doctoral programmes.
- **WG 2 Information and Communication Technologies (SI)** provision and uptake of Information and Communication Technologies in the Danube Region.

- **WG 3 Danube Funding Coordination Network (AT-RS)** monitoring progress of DRIFFF coordination of funding sources (rotate annually).
- **WG 4 Communication with JRC with special emphasize on RIS3 (SK)** smart Specialisation Platform, scientific support to EUSDR (4 nexuses: water, land & soil, air, bioenergy).
- **WG 5 Research and Innovation (possibly via thematic pole II DTP)** strengthen the capacities of research infrastructure.

The PA7 targets are the following:

- To increase the effectiveness of investment in R&I through establishment of a funding coordination network aiming to initiate a minimum of 2 dedicated EUSDR activities each year
- To increase the number of co-publications in the region by 15 % by 2020.
- To develop RIS3 in all Danube countries (or their regions) by 2020.
- To reach 20% of academic mobility within the region by 2020.
- To increase the number of EPO and PCT patent applications from the Danube Region by 20% by 2020.

PA7 has seven flagship projects among which Ms Szudi highlighted **DREAM** - Danube River REsearch And Management - from Basic Research to Knowledge Society lead by Boku University.

PA7 set-up the Danube Funding Coordination Network in May 2016 for the coordination of funding mechanisms in the DR, outcomes and recommendations of the feasibility study on DRRIF and on activities of the FP7 funded project Danube-INCO.NET. The primary objective of the DFCN is to coordinate and synchronise national, bilateral and regional efforts in the Danube Region (DR) to foster multilateral collaboration in Research and Innovation.

There are PA7 studies ongoing related to cooperation between higher education institutions (HEIs), industry and government (public) institutions; a common study course focused on “the Development of the Danube region, an Analysis of status quo in research and innovation performance in the Danube Region and Empowering Research and Innovation Support Centres.

### 3 Information about the EC, ICPDR, Sava Commission, JRC and Interact ongoing activities

#### 3.1. EC activities

Mr Horváth PA4 PAC HU provided a short information and showed the presentation on behalf of Mr Giacomo Luciani, European Commission (DG Environment). The presentation highlighted several ongoing processes that are linking and influencing the implementation of the macro-regional strategies (MRS) and stated that making the best out of the MRS work, coordination and synergies with related activities/processes at EU level are essential. It was further highlighted that most of water-related challenges could be addressed only by coordinating and joining efforts at macro-regional and EU levels. A Fitness check on EU water legislation is currently ongoing and important financing possibilities of the LIFE Programme was just opened for application.

#### 3.2. JRC activities

We held a skype session with the JRC (Mr Alberto Pistocchi) and he also sent his ppt that was showed to the SG during the skype discussion. Mr Pistocchi provided an overview of the recent activities conducted by the JRC in the context of the Danube Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus project.

Related to **Sediments and nutrients** Mr Pistocchi mentioned that work finished, datasets and model (SWAT) is ready. Advised to obtain details from [faycal.bouraoui@ec.europa.eu](mailto:faycal.bouraoui@ec.europa.eu).

Related to **Water balance and climate scenarios** he referred that work being finalized and linked with the Danube climate adaptation work. Advised to obtain details from [ad.de-roo@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ad.de-roo@ec.europa.eu).

About **groundwater** he mentioned that experts from DE, AT, SK, RS, HU, HR, SI, RO, BG are cooperating and that data on abstractions, water levels, K, T were collected, and the database is organized. A report with edited expert reports is under finalization (to be ready by June 2018). Demonstration of opportunities and limitations for a bottom-up development of groundwater models and mentioned that PhD/MSc theses are welcomed – JRC supervision and GIS infrastructure offered. Wastewater treatment/synthesis centres he stressed that Feasibility studies in RS (“large plant”, focus on energy recovery) and SI (“small plants”, focus on constructed wetlands) being prepared, a “reality check” underway in RO, BG, HR, BA, ME, UA, MD (deadline end May 2018), preparation of a report by June 2018. Continuing support to ICPDR/WB/IAWD Danube wastewater initiative. He highlighted for small treatment systems: issues with performance enforcement; monitoring and for large systems: extending system boundaries introduces complexity, logistic and technical challenges. For the future mentioned test cases in MD, UA, HR, BA, RO and BG. Properly designed small decentralized plants can be useful; issues with monitoring/responsibility can be partly addressed through aligning interests (e.g. water reuse). Extending the boundaries of the WWT system (e.g. energy from organic waste, nutrient recovery) may stimulate the circular economy and add value. JRC supporting “solutions exploration”: synthesis centres approach.

For the 2016 Danube scenarios JRC activities he mentioned that related to the Foresight workshop in Budapest, October 2016 the draft report is being finalized (to be ready by June 2018), remarks will be welcomed.

#### Remarks:

Mr. Kovács (ICPDR) suggested to ensure publicity to all mentioned works by making the respective reports available.

### 3.3 ICPDR activities

Mr Ádám Kovács presented the main ongoing activities of the ICPDR.

He mentioned that **Germany took over the annual Presidency of the ICPDR**. The new President is Mr Helge Wendenburg, Director General of the Dep. Water Management and Resource Conservation, German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. The three main priorities for 2018 are:

- promote adaptation to climate change
- take the next steps in the implementation of the WFD and the Flood Directive
- strengthen the integrated approach and the basin-wide exchange of experiences.

He provided detailed timeline for the **Roadmap towards the Interim Report on the JPM Implementation 2018** and highlighted the main features of the Interim Report on the JPM Implementation 2018. Related to the Roadmap he stressed the finalisation and adoption of Interim Report 2018 by December 2018 at the ICPDR OM Meeting. An illustrative report that is more appealing to the public will be developed, 10 key and short messages will be communicated.

He mentioned the **EU LIFE Grant to support implementation of the 2nd DRBMP and 1st DFRMP**, its duration of 21 months, started on 1 September 2017 (180.000 EUR Grant contribution, 52.26%). Narrowing existing knowledge gaps and strengthening capacity are addressed in the project.

**A waste water management** workshop was held in November 2017 in Bucharest, hosted by the “Romanian Waters” National Administration. The main topics of the workshop were: investment & financing, management & operation, technology & innovation. The event was co-organized by the ICPDR, WB, IAWD and JRC. Around 120 experts and stakeholders were present. Mr Kovács appreciated the involvement and cooperation of PA4 at the event. The draft report is available at Danubis. Discussions are ongoing what further actions should be taken towards sustainable wastewater management in the DRB.

**Sustainable agriculture.** The guidance document on sustainable agriculture is being developed by the ICPDR. A knowledge base on agriculture has been developed (focusing on policy implementation and agro-economy). A core team has been established on water and agriculture (agri experts from AT, HU, HR, RS and RO, WWF, WIFO). Drafting the structure and outline of the guideline will be done in summer 2018 (topics, objectives, principles). A stakeholder workshop is planned in autumn/winter 2018 in cooperation with the EC and the EUSDR.

**Hazardous substances.** A successful WWTP sampling campaign has been conducted in cooperation with the SOLUTIONS project (targeting organic emerging chemicals and heavy metals). The sample analysis is on-going (heavy metals: done, organics: in progress). Project development is on-going on HS emissions. A pre-study has been implemented on data availability, the modelling and project concept development has been also finalized. A follow-up project is being implemented funded by DSPF to further investigate national situations and to prepare a proposal for large project preferably to be submitted to DTP3.

**Accident prevention.** A draft technical report on risk assessment is available but it needs to be fine-tuned, the expected finalization is at the end of 2018 (for ARS), whilst the work on CS will be continued. Public report and leaflet are being elaborated on accident prevention and control (planned publishing in spring 2019). An activity on tailings management facilities (TMF) has been started – a small project on risk assessment is on-going financed by the ICPDR. TMF training events will be organised in RO and RS in 2019-2020 for operators and inspectors to be financed by UBA Germany.

**Hydromorphology:** Mr Kovács highlighted the Danube Floodplain Project, that aims at reducing the flood risk through floodplain restoration and that was accepted for funding under DTP2. The GEF “Danube River Basin Hydromorphology and River Restoration (DYNA)” Project, addressing HYMO issues in non EU-MS in the DRB has been launched. The Kick-Off Workshop was organized on 12 March 2018, the implementation will be started early 2019. A workshop on financing HYMO measures is planned back to back with 20th HYMO Meeting in Bucharest at the end of September 2018.

**Joint Danube Survey 4:** Preparatory document for JDS4 is available. New concept with stronger involvement and responsibility of the countries has been designed. Core expert team has been established, national and technical coordinators have been nominated. Preparatory workshops on several topics are under preparation (fish, macrophytes, macrozobenthos), social media campaign is in planning phase.



**Sturgeons:** The ICPDR Sturgeon Strategy has been approved at the OM-20 (comprehensive overview of actions and measures to be taken by all partners). Sturgeon communication strategy is being discussed by PP EG and will be integrated into the overall strategy. Currently, work is on-going on DG REGIO Grant application for Support for the Implementation of the Feasibility Study to analyse options for fish migration at Iron Gate I & II (envisaged start in July 2018). The European Sturgeon Conference (9-10 July 2018 in Vienna) is being organized by AT EU Presidency and ICPDR. MEASURES project proposal (managing aquatic bio-corridors for migratory fish species) has been accepted for funding under DTP2.

**Adaptation on Climate Change:** Knowledge base and scientific research study have been finalized by the Ludwig Maximilian University. The ICPDR organised a workshop on climate change adaptation on 27-28 March 2018 in Belgrade. Discussions were focusing on the knowledge base and its outcomes, presentations and summary report are available on Danubis. The Update of ICPDR Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is to be developed by December 2018 (adoption at OM-21).

Questions/remarks: -

### 3.4 Sava Commission (ISRBC) activities

Mr Samo Groselj introduced the ongoing activities of the Sava River Basin Commission, mentioning about the following main achievements and ongoing work:

- **2nd Sava River Basin Analysis Report**  
ISRBC accepted at the 46th session and it is available at the ISRBC web site.
- **Significant Water Management Issues**  
Final report was accepted by ISRBC.  
Joint Plan of Actions (JPA) developed and adopted by the ISRBC – next steps defined
- **PA5: Flood management and Accident prevention:** to upgrade management plans, to develop replicable response system toolbox with University Ljubljana, partners from the Sava countries. WBIF project: Sava FRM Plan (kick-off in April, Inception workshop in July 2017, draft Outline soon)  
Simulation models: Hydrological model of the Sava River Basin, incorporated into Sava FFWS AND Hydraulic model will be finalized in April 2018, training will be held on 15-17 May 2018. Sava GIS and Data hub for flood forecasting is under development.
- **Water Pollution Contingency Management System:** Project proposal submitted to DTP 2nc Call with 11 partners. (failed)
- **Wetlands Ecotourism in the Danube River Basin (Danube Wets Ecotour)** (failed)
- **Sediment-quality Information, Monitoring and Assessment system (SIMONA) supported by DTP, also DARREFFORT and TIES supported.**

Adaptation on climate change: Outline of the Climate Adaptation Strategy and priority measures basin-wide for the Sava River Basin, the project was supported by France and lasted from June-Oct 2017. Future support is expected from Italy.

#### ISRBC Priorities for 2018:

- Preparation of the new Strategy on implementation of the FASRB
- Continuation of work on the 2nd Sava RBMP
- Development of the 1st Sava FRMP

- Finalizing and taking over the Sava FFWS by the Parties
- Maintenance and upgrade of Sava GIS & HIS
- Development of Climate adaptation strategy for the SRB
- Sustainable development issues (tourism...)
- The 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Parties will be held on 7 June 2018 in Bled, SI.

### 3.5 Carpathian Convection (CC)

Mr Sándor Szalai was presenting on behalf the CC Secretariat and summarized that the CC has several documents, publications in connection with water quality. He presented the Sustainable and integrated water/river basin management and referred to the Carpathian Wetland Initiative and ICPDR as partners. He further mentioned the **Agriculture** Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural development and Art 15, **Forestry**: Protocol and Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the Forest Protocol. **Cultural heritage**: the Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI) published an electronic brochure on Carpathian cultural heritage in wetlands. Climate Change: Strategic Agenda on Adaptation to Climate Change in the Carpathian Region, water quality issue is mentioned several times. There is a new publication on CC adaptation in the Carpathian -mountains. Related to water he mentioned the changes in precipitation pattern and declining water levels, both river and groundwater levels.

#### Questions/remarks:

Q: Mr Samo Groselj (ISRBC): what is the difference between protocol and strategic plan?

A: Protocol was signed by Ministers, Strategic agenda was accepted by COP, but was not signed.

## 4. Funding and cooperation possibilities

### 4.1. INTERREG EUROPE

Ms Lilian Csintalan, National Contact Point introduced the Interreg Europe Programme and mentioned that it is a pan- European programme, a thematic programme: with 4 priorities, open for public bodies, bodies governed by public law, with 85% ERDF contribution. Private non- profit bodies receive 75% support. Will need to involve policy responsible organizations and it finances exchange of experiences. It is only possible to involve pilots during implementation, not during the planning phase. Average budget: 1-2 M EUR and usually 5-10 partners. The 4<sup>th</sup> call will be launched on 7 May until 22 June 2018; all four priorities are open, all remaining ERDF funds are available, probably it will be the last call: 74 M EUR available, approximately 50 projects will be funded. So far there are 184 approved projects, all data available at the website. **She called attention to underrepresented topics: water quality**, renewable energy, waste management. There are new features: reducing phase from 2 to 1 year. She also mentioned that the amount of national contribution was removed from partner declaration and annexes will be generated automatically by iOLF. She also highlighted the importance of impacting 2014-2020 period: at least 3 regions to be addressed. Conditions on eligibility related to geographical coverage will be a new factor.

At least 3 out of the 4 areas below to be represented in the project partnership

Areas	Countries covered
North	Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden
East	Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia
South	Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain
West	Belgium, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom

There will be further changes: Lump sum for phase 2, first in Interreg programmes! New way of thinking: lump- sum linked to deliverables and not directly to real costs.

#### Questions/remarks:

Q: Mr Arzet (D): Why water quality projects are underrepresented under Interreg Europe?

A: Not known reason, the number of applications were low. There are lot of projects under cultural heritage. Water projects should be encouraged to apply.

**Biljana Rajic from Bosnia and Herzegovina** asked for the floor, thanking the presentation.

She provided some additional comments related to BiH situation: There are limited funds for non-EU member states, in **BiH it was calculated 2167 billion EUR for approximation.**

Water protection is a very important issue in BiH and, in the shortest possible time, the construction of infrastructure and wastewater collection and treatment facilities, and the establishment of a sustainable system for financing the construction and management of infrastructure and facilities. In May 2017, the Strategy of approximation of regulations to the BiH acquis in the field of environment, adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, estimated the cost of approximation of the Urban Waste Water Directive in BiH to EUR 2.167 billion. Such a high level of investment is the result of the fact that currently a very low percentage of waste water is treated in BiH (about 3%). This points to the enormous need for financial resources in the next 30-40 years, but also to the need for further regulation of the water sector in the BiH water sector. At present, only 16 wastewater treatment plants are in operation in BH, in the following local communities: Sarajevo (ongoing trial), Bihac, Gradačac, Srebrenik, Živinice, Odžak, Trnovo, Žepče, Mostar (soon commissioned), Konjic, Ljubuški, Čitluk, Neum, Grude, Trebinje, Bileć and Bijeljina. Activities on the reconstruction of several additional facilities are underway. By launching new wastewater treatment plants, the percentage of treated wastewaters will increase considerably, but will continue to need to continue construction of infrastructure and facilities in this area. The most important infrastructure projects in this area are:

- "Water Supply and Wastewater Project in FBiH", totalling approximately EUR 120 million, of which EUR 60 million is EIB lending and the rest is local participation. The project is being implemented in 19 local communities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- "Project for Plumbing and Sewerage Infrastructure in Republika Srpska", totalling EUR 100 million, of which EUR 50 million is loan, while the rest is own resources and grants from various sources (European Commission and bilateral donors). Project implementation is planned in the period 2011-2018. and is currently being implemented in 26 local communities in Republika Srpska where

rehabilitation, upgrading or construction of infrastructure waterworks, water supply systems, water treatment plants, water and energy efficiency measures are being carried out. Up to now, 50% of the funds have been withdrawn.

In order to continue the implementation of the project in accordance with agreed terms, it is necessary to provide for the withdrawal of additional grant funds in both Entities.

#### 4.2 Danube Transnational Programme (DTP): Seed Money Facility (SMF)

Mr Gusztáv Csomor from DTP described that in the **second DTP call** 128 projects were submitted, 22 were approved with conditions. Important for water sector: under **2.1 Water management and floods**: 3 proposals were approved with conditions out of 8 submitted. Under **2.3 Ecological corridors**: 5 proposals were approved with conditions out of 7 submitted. Projects in connection to PA4: SIMONA, Danube Floodplain, Measures. Condition clearing process is currently going on, the final MC decision is expected in the 2nd half of May 2018. Project start expected from June 2018.

**The SMF call**: 2 proposals were submitted related to PA4, 1 already failed. The quality assessment is ongoing, the next decision making will be on 17-18 July 2018, project start is expected in September 2018.

**Third Call**: already planned, but not clear when, more likely that it will be launched next year, early 2019. Still to be decided whether to reallocate from other objectives, as water objectives funds were already spent.

#### 4.3 The LIFE Programme

Ms Judit Novák, National Contact Point introduced the programme and mentioned that the LIFE call opened on 18 April 2018. Available budget 2018: 217 M EUR for the Environment sub-programme. Average project size: 1-3 million EUR, usually for 2 -5 years, no territorial and institutional eligibility, EU fund: 55%. Submission dates: 1st stage – June (2018); 2nd stage: January (2019); project starting date: next July after the submission (1st July 2019). Applicants and partners: no territorial and institutional eligibility criteria „any legal person registered in the European Union”. Ratio of financial support: EU fund: max. 55 % in case of ENV projects. In the current call there is more emphasis on: continuation, replication, transfer potential, results-orientation, measurable effects (KPI – key project-level indicators), synergies, multi-purpose approaches, encouragement of further engagement of private entities („close-to-market projects”). Reduction of the number of project topics – more focus on EU policies and priorities. ENV - Thematic priorities for Water: Water, floods and drought; Marine and coastal management, Water Industry and projects under Government and Information priorities.

#### 4.4 EEA and Norway Funds

Ms Andrea Vranovska, PA4 SK team presented information about the EEA and Norway Funds and summed up that it aims for reducing economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area. Strengthening relations of the Donor States Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein with 15 Beneficiary States in Northern, Central and Southern Europe. 15 million EUR is available for this call for proposals. Deadline for submitting the project concept note is 1 July 2018. Final day for eligibility of expenditures is 20 April 2024.

Project consortium must consist of at least three countries, including at least two from Beneficiary States (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta,

Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia) - i.e. each project must include one lead partner and at least two beneficiary partners of which at least one must be from a Beneficiary State.

Eligible lead partner: any eligible entity established in Beneficiary State; Eligible beneficiary partner: any eligible entity established in Beneficiary State or in Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine. Expertise partners: any eligible entity established in a Donor State, in a non-eligible EU Member State or international organisations. The amount of grant assistance per project - no less than 1 million EUR.

Project co-financing:

- Non-governmental organisations: up to 90% of their eligible expenditures (up to 50% of the required co-financing may take the form of in-kind contributions in the form of voluntary work)
- Project partners with the status of universities and research organisations: up to 90% of their eligible expenditures
- Any expertise partners from the Donor States: up to 100% of their eligible expenditures
- Other entities: up to 85% of their eligible expenditures.

**PA4 SK is preparing a proposal, welcomes partners!** PA4 project proposal outline: Working name: Water – think about using it forever! Objective – to improve public awareness on rational water utilisation and water sources protection respecting the impacts of climate change.

#### Questions/remarks:

Mr Ádám Kovács (ICPDR) also mentioned that the RS member of the ICPDR PM EG approached the Secretariat to prepare a project proposal on capacity building for wastewater management in non-EU countries and asked the Secretariat to share this idea with the other non-EU MS. The project idea is welcomed and will be discussed at the next PM EG meeting.

## 5. Projects and LORs

Diana Heilmann PA4 shortly summed up the projects received LoRs from PA4 as follows: PLASTIC FREE WATERS, TRIMONITOR, EARTH, MEDER IP, REVITAL I.

The LoRs were already sent to the SG, short info on the LoR projects are available at the website: <https://www.danubewaterquality.eu/news/letter-of-recommendations-2018>

### 5.1 JoinTisza

Diana Heilmann PA4 HU summarized project information and highlighted that all 5 involved countries are cooperating with each other with 12 partners and 5 ASPs. Overall objective is to update the ITRBMP. Main expected outputs: GIS database, guidelines on urban hydrology, training of best management on urban hydrology. Guidance paper on climate change-induced water quantity issues - Shared Vision Planning (SVP) concept testing to strengthen cooperation of RBM and flood risk management sectors [Pilot action] and enhanced stakeholder involvement.

Diana also mentioned that data collection was done last year. Status assessment will be ongoing. First PR was submitted to DTP already. Transnational cooperation for Sustainable River Basin Management conference was organized. (April 11 2017). In July 2017 a Capitalization workshop side event was held at the Hydrological Society. An article was also prepared for a special issue of the Hungarian Journal of Hydrology.

**Next major events:** 24-25 May 2018, 2nd SVP Seminar for stakeholders of the Pilot action, Szolnok 5-7 June 2018 Bucharest (RO) and 29 June 2018, International Danube Day.

## 5.2 DanubeSediment

Mr Péter Bakonyi presented the updates of this DTP funded project. Coordinated by Technical University Budapest, with a budget of 3,5 M EUR to improve sediment management. Information on sediment collection for all the monitoring sites. Mr Bakonyi mentioned that there are some difficulties and some results available already. Activity 3.2 comparative analysis: on site comparison. Just received a sediment balance budget with the following figures: 44% artificial supply, 37% bed degradation, 10% upstream, 9% tributaries. (There will be an expected outcome in WP4, like the one for the Rhine River.)

## 5.3 DriDanube

Mr Sándor Szalay presented the project updates. 27 partners, 1,9 M EUR to manage droughts, to improve emergency response with a Lead partner: ARSO/DMCSEE. 7-8 seminars were organized already about drought management. Drought User service – common view on drought development in real time. Questionnaire was prepared, based on US standards, interaction with reporters on weekly bases. A risk map is to be prepared for the whole region. Final outputs will be risk maps for the whole region. DriDanube Strategy: aims at going beyond present national mechanisms that regulate drought preparedness and response common strategic document to combat current partial and insufficient drought management to cover entire region. Decision: to provide a common drought management model for all participating countries. There will also be a common strategy document, there will be a twin pilot project with the JointTisza.

DriDanube project has intention to increase technical capacities and elaborate more targeted water management policies taking into account water scarcity and droughts; results will be considered and used as input for further strengthening of RBMP (3rd DRMBP & 2nd DFRMP) according to the EU WFD; stronger link with EC and support with the preparation of drought related policy or other regional policy (EUSDR) advised.

## 5.4 Camaro-D

Mr Siegel could not be present at the meeting, but he sent his presentation and Mr Horváth PA4 PAC HU shortly introduced the project results to the SG. He summed up that the project focuses on land use impacts on water regime. (AT Federal Ministry, 14 partners, 2,6 M EUR.) There will be GAP-analysis about current land use practices and their impacts on water management, SWOT-analysis (based on a questionnaire), Policy review about existing policy instruments/governance and their current practical Implementation, Best Management Practices (BMP): review + recommendations, by means of stakeholder workshops, interviews, expert teams and literature/previous project studies. BMP catalogues: Agriculture – arable land, Agriculture – grassland, Forestry and Spatial planning.

There are important contributions to the EUSDR Priority area 4 and 5: based on a process of know-how exchange, state-of-the-art techniques/methods, intensive stakeholder involvement; valuable source of information on the environmental challenges in the Danube river basin from the point of view of the CAMARO-D project scope. It provides possible solutions and mitigation measures for a wide range of challenges (best land use practices from an interdisciplinary field of expertise on water management, flood control and spatial planning).

### Questions/remarks:

- Ádám Kovács (ICPDR) mentioned that related to the sediment project, good cooperation is ensured among the partners, Igor Liska is involved from the Secretariat. With regard to DriDanube it will be discussed how to develop cooperation between the project and ICPDR to achieve further synergies.
- Balázs Horváth (PA4 PAC HU): ICPDR helped significantly in the data collection, and PA4 by thematic platform coordination ensures also information exchanges.
- Klaus Arzet (D) congratulated to the project achievements.

### **5.5 Energy Audit of WWTP in Hungary-Baden-Württemberg (Germany) and Hungarian collaboration**

Dr Janos Tamas presented the preliminary results of the case. He mentioned that Hungary is a priority country in the Danube-basin for Baden-Württemberg- DRS Strategy and that BW shares the latest knowledge and know how in the field of energy-efficiency in WWTPs. The project is a good tool to explore further projects in the future. The overall fix costs in public water utility sector in Hungary is 88 %, from that 90 % is the electric energy cost. The Nyíregyháza WWTP was mentioned as example where sewage collection from 67 towns and villages – service for households, public institutions, industrial parties with separated sewer network, length: 1995 km and service for 270,000 people. 4 townships are out of the sewer network – sewage transported to the WWTP by the company. Data collection related to: technical parameters, water quality monitoring data sources, energy consumption, data base structuring, energy audit, evaluation and suggestions. The expected results are the following: Recommendation for:

- Data type, database structure, new types of data is needed (kw/h/m<sup>3</sup>, PE)
- Site evaluation methods
- Standardization of WWTPs' energy audit
- Legislation and regulation of WWTPs'
- Cheaper technology, lower maintenance cost
- Improved water quality
- Dissemination of results

### Questions/remarks:

Q: Viktor Oroszi (PA5): He remembers a project meeting from 2016 Clean River Ukraine, there was a site visit in east Hungary and they have prepared a feasibility study. It is nice to see how we work together, HU goes to Germany to cooperate, while UA goes to HU to visit.

Q: Klaus Arzet (D): Is it a seed money project?

A: It is a bilateral HU-BW project, BW Ministry introduced this as obligatory.

Ádám Kovács (ICPDR): He was happy to see this initiative from Baden-Württemberg. He recommended to pay attention to the large EU project called POWERSTEP that is about saving energy and optimizing energy management and production.

Viktor Oroszi (PA5): offers to also share project details with PA2.

## 6. Interact activities and first EU macro-regional workshop on water

Ms Baiba Liepa from Interact III programme provided an introductory presentation about Interact and its work on promoting new ways of cooperation, including the EU macro-regional strategies. She stressed that Interact supports various events, meetings, studies, analysis, pilots and exchange of experience across macro-regions. Additionally, she highlighted that Interact runs capitalization networks of Interreg programmes that are relevant also in the context of the macro-regional work.

Under its task to support exchanges across the macro-regions, Interact has organised 2 meetings of transport coordinators, the meeting with climate and civil security experts, meeting with capacity coordinators/support structures. Later this year Interact is planning several further events that are organised in cooperation with the macro-regional stakeholders.

Following **overall conclusions** can be drawn from the across the macro-regional strategies meetings: there are similar development processes, different context and similar challenges; potential for further cooperation and exchanges; possibilities for informal exchange and learning across the Strategies. She noted that despite differences, there is a need to embed political level commitments in concrete actions (allocations and implementation) on the ground and that setting-up steering/coordination groups is an exhaustive task performed by the thematic coordinators. Conclusions from the meetings and Interact plans for 2017 are available in the Interact's presentation.

Ms Liepa expressed her appreciation to the initiative of the EUSDR PA4 to co-organise a meeting of the representatives of all 4 EU macro-regional strategies to exchange on water related activities and collaboration possibilities.

## 7 AOB:



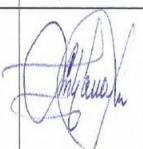
Mr Horváth thanked all members for active participation and reminded that the workshop on EU macro-regional strategies on water will be held on 19 April 2018. The next SG meeting is planned in November 2018 in Bratislava.





The minutes were compiled by Ms Kocsis-Kupper. Signed participants list is attached in Annex 1. The presentations are available at: <https://www.danubewaterquality.eu/news/15-sg-meeting-on-18-april-2018-budapest>










**15<sup>th</sup> STEERING GROUP MEETING**  
of the Water Quality Priority Area of the EUSDR  
18 April 2018  
Budapest






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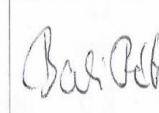

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SZÉCHENYI 2020



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