

Joint Session: ICPDR RBM EG and EUSDR PA4



Gaps, remaining challenges and future tasks until 2027



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24th October 2018, Bratislava, Slovakia

1 Organic pollution

- Wastewater treatment and sewer **projects** that are still to come in the Danube River Basin are numerous
- In the old EU MS, investments needs will be shifted towards the proper **maintenance and rehabilitation** of the existing infrastructure
- In new and non-EU MS **financing** infrastructure projects, **tariff setting and affordability**, establishing proper **legal framework** and **restructuring** the utility sector are issues of high importance
- **Capacity** should be strengthened at national and local **administration** level as well as at **utility** level to improve financing, operation and technology of the wastewater infrastructure and services

2 Nutrient pollution

- Efforts are needed to **enhance wastewater treatment** technologies and to better align the goals of **water and agricultural sectors**
- **Win-win strategies** and solutions should be developed and promoted accompanied with proper funding mechanisms in order to **decouple** nutrient pollution and water demand from agricultural development
- Knowledge gaps on **measure efficiency** need to be closed
- **Awareness raising** is needed related to the link between agricultural practices and biodiversity, agro-environmental measures should be made more **attractive**
- **Technical & financial support** and **appropriate information** on modern technologies and tools should be provided for farmers to improve agricultural practices

3 Hazardous substances pollution

- Further investigations are needed to **close knowledge gaps** on monitoring of hazardous substances in surface waters, determining sources and pathways of hazardous substances emissions, quantifying water emissions and loads and implementing mitigation measures
- There is a need to more comprehensively evaluate the **measure efficiency** and help the whole region implement the practices that work best
- **Capacity building** is needed to improve safety management at industrial facilities storing large amount of dangerous chemicals, particularly in the mineral processing, energy and chemical industries

4 Hydromorphology

- Insufficient **harmonization between different policy areas e.g. agriculture and water protection**; sometimes contradictory requirements for different financial aids and subsidies
- There is still a significant lack of sound scientific and technical information regarding the **planning of measures for fish protection in downstream migration**; knowledge gaps exist regarding monitoring for pressures related to downstream fish migration
- Generally gaps remain regarding the **interconnection between hydromorphological measures and ecological status** or changes/improvements in ecological status
- Insufficiently harmonised or total **lack of documentation of water abstractions**
- **Property rights disputes with land** suitable for implementation of measures

5 Groundwater

- In order to achieve the WFD environmental objectives until 2027 it is necessary in addition to the ongoing measures **to encourage deliberate and effective water consumption by the civil and industrial consumers**. The most critical obstacle to achieve the good status of the water bodies in both chemical and quantitative terms is the **overexploitation of the water resources**
- Mitigation of overexploitation and of uncontrolled, inappropriate water uses with governmental tools is **less effective without involving citizens**
- The focus has to be given to **raising public awareness towards the environmental friendly, economic, efficient and safe water uses** as well as **strengthening the environmental consciousness of the public** using social media, information materials and targeted guidance documents

6 Monitoring

- Need to further **harmonize monitoring practices (especially for BQE)** across the Danube countries
- **Lack of analytical instruments and methods** in certain areas preventing a full assessment of the chemical and ecological status

7 Sturgeon conservation

- The ICPDR recognises that Danube sturgeons are “living fossils” representing a natural heritage of the Danube River Basin and endorsed Danube sturgeons as **flagship species for the Danube River Basin to advance broad public awareness and political commitment for the Danube sturgeons and the ecosystem of the Danube River Basin** as a whole
- Need to foster sturgeon conservation activities including **protection of habitats, restoration of fish migration routes and ex-situ conservation measures**

8 Financing of JPM

- Greater emphasis on **financing measures for reaching WFD objectives from EU funds** would be beneficial
- Funding instruments are **very demanding as concerns administrative processing and require difficult approval procedures**
- Gaps in **monitoring, licensing and controlling capacities**
- The main challenges to implementation lie in the speed and the acceptance of measures. When measures are implemented on public property and financed through public funds implementation can be relatively fast. When there are **private stakeholders involved and these are expected to accept restrictions** or even to contribute financially to the measures, processes can become long and drawn out, costing public administration a lot of effort without much benefit for the aquatic environment.

9 Integration issues

- Need for continued close cooperation with different sectors, such as
 - **flood risk management,**
 - **inland navigation (Joint Statement meetings),**
 - **hydropower development,**
 - **agriculture and**
 - **climate change adaptation**
- through regular meetings and Workshops



International Commission
for the Protection
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Thank you for your kind attention