

**MINUTES**  
**of the 5<sup>th</sup> STEERING GROUP MEETING of PA5**  
**Budapest, 30<sup>th</sup> May 2013**

**AGENDA**

Time	Item	Documents
09.30 – 10.00	Arrival of participants	
<i>Chair: Péter Bakonyi, Hungarian Co-coordinator</i>		
10:00 - 10:30	Welcome speech and tour de table introduction	
10.30 – 10.35	Approval of the Agenda ( <b>Péter Bakonyi</b> )	1
10.35 – 11.00	Discussion and decision on projects submitted for LoR ( <b>Péter Bakonyi</b> )	2
11.00 – 11.10	Reporting from co-coordinators on the past 6 months ( <b>Péter Bakonyi</b> )	
11.10 – 11.20	Scientific Support to the Danube Strategy ( <b>Péter Bakonyi</b> )	
11.20 – 11.50	Financing EUSDR project – 2014-2020 ( <b>Anna Repullo-Grau</b> )	
11.50 – 12.10	How the Budapest Danube Contact Point can help financing ( <b>Péter Kiss-Parciu</b> )	
<i>12.10 – 13.10</i>	<i>Lunch break</i>	
13.10 – 14.30	Progress made – Actions, road maps ( <b>Péter Bakonyi</b> ) Gap analysis – What is missing to reach our targets ( <b>Péter Bakonyi</b> )	3
15.30 – 16.00	<i>Coffee break</i>	
16.00 – 16.20	Any other business	
16.20 – 16.30	Closure of the meeting, conclusions ( <b>Péter Bakonyi</b> )	

PARTICIPANTS: See the list in Annex 1.

**Welcome speech and introductory round**

Mr Péter Bakonyi welcomed the participants of the Steering Group (SG). He expressed his special pleasure to welcome Mr Balázs Medgyesy, State Commissionaire, the Hungarian National Contact Point; Ms Anna Repullo-Grau of DG REGIO and Mr László Perger, PA4 coordinator.

Mr Balázs Medgyesy in his welcome speech emphasised the importance of Priority Area 5 which deals with environmental risks like flood and drought, but also with manmade risks. He referred to a new initiative from JRC, which will provide scientific support to the implementation of Danube Strategy in five nexuses from which one deals with water related issues - the Danube Water Nexus. He gave a brief overview of the High Level Event on the JRC Scientific Support Initiative held in Bratislava on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013 and pointed out that Danube countries were positive and supportive of the initiative and encouraged PA5 to built connection with JRC. He also mentioned that attention should be given to the upcoming Stuttgart meeting on Danube Strategy.

Mr László Perger in his welcome speech noted that his presence in this PA5 SG meeting is related to the fact of horizontal relationships of environmental related PAs. His PA4 is dealing with water quality and has five main targets such as among others the management objectives of Danube RBMP, nutrient level reduction of water resources, protection of biodiversity. He wished a successful meeting for the participants.

Before the discussion and approval of the agenda participants of the meeting introduced themselves (tour-de-table.)

#### Approval of the Agenda (Péter Bakonyi)

There was no suggestion to amend or modify the agenda and it was approved unanimously.

#### Discussion and decision on projects submitted for LoR (Péter Bakonyi)

Péter Bakonyi gave a PowerPoint presentation and first he listed the criteria for labelling a project and to issue a Letter of Recommendation.

##### CRITERIA FOR LABELLING A PROJECT AND TO ISSUE A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

1. The project makes a clear contribution to one or more Actions of the Priority Area 5 (contributes to the achievement of its targets),
2. The project has a **transnational impact** on the macro-region or a significant part of it, which can derive from national, regional and local activities as well,
3. The project is **realistic, technically feasible** and **equipped with credible funding**,
4. The project demonstrates visible **benefits and added value for implementation of the EUSDR**,
5. The project provides **concrete sustainable results** for the Priority Area objectives,
6. The project is **not in contradiction with other policy objectives**,
7. The project and its activities are **located** for the most part **in the geographical perimeter of the Danube Region**,
8. The project is **agreed by the Steering Group**.

In the next part of his presentation he introduced briefly 6 projects, which were submitted for a Letter of Recommendation.

#### 1. *Common HU-UA flood protection development Programme on the Upper Tisza*

Experts from Upper Tisza Valley Water Directorates - who were present on the SG meeting - gave a brief introductory PowerPoint presentation about the project proposal.

Péter Bakonyi (**PB**) added that the project sheet was distributed two weeks ago to the SC members. He pointed out that this is a programme; rather a single project and the proposing organisation will develop different projects in this framework programme.

VOTING: The project was unanimously supported by the present six countries.

#### 2. *Danube River Research and Management (DREAM) from Austria*

Jakob Schrittwieser (**JSch**), PA5 representative of Austria verbally presented the project proposal.

**PB** added that project data sheet is available. He asked: as the project proposal has already been supported by PA7, why it was submitted to PA5 as well? Answer by **JSch**: Yes, it was already supported by PA7, but the project has PA5 elements, as well. They thought that receiving support from PA5 was necessary. **PB** also asked that project needed high budget and he wanted to know if it could be financed. **JSch** thought that the project had good chance, because it looks for national contributions as well.

**PB** commented that DREAM might be considered as a programme rather than a single project.

VOTING: The project was unanimously supported by the present six countries.

#### 3. *Climate of the Danube Region (DANUBECLIM) - HU and partners*

The project data sheet was sent to SG members prior to the meeting, but it was a short notice.

**PB** introduced the proposal in a PowerPoint presentation.

VOTING: Because of late notice, it was decided that members of PA5 would vote about this project via email correspondence.

TASK: **PB** to send a request email for voting to PA5 members in line with the RoP.

4. *Conducting the comprehensive environmental monitoring and developing model for forecasting the ecological situation of basin of the Danube Delta (UA developed the project idea. No partners were identified yet.)*

**PB** introduced briefly the project in a PowerPoint presentation. Data sheet was sent out in time. Mr **Bon** gave additional information about the project, but he admitted that the proposal is not fully elaborated. **PB** commented that this proposal was very much about biodiversity of the Danube Delta and he asked why it was not submitted to PA4 or PA6 or other PAs?

Mr Balázs Medgyesy (**BM**) also mentioned the good proposal examples with relevant context to PA5. He encouraged submitting proposals to the relevant PAs.

Ms Anna Repullo-Grau (**ARG**) noted that it would not be a problem if a project proposal was examined by more than one PA.

VOTING: UA withdrew the proposal for further elaboration it in details.

5. *Creating a single geographic information system of the Danube Basin (UA developed the project idea. No partners were identified yet.)*

The proposal was briefly presented by **PB** in PowerPoint. The content of the proposal was not fully elaborated. UA withdrew the proposal for further elaboration in details.

6. *Improvement of cooperation in monitoring, prevention and elimination of consequences of transboundary emergencies (UA developed the project idea. No partners were identified yet.)*

**PB** presented the concept in a brief PowerPoint presentation.

Igor Liska (**IL**) mentioned that at ICPDR they have not heard of this project proposal. Good networking is needed before a successful proposal could be submitted.

**PB** noted that if this proposal could specify the objectives in details and specify what types of emergencies the project wants to target.

**IL**: If other than rivers would be targeted than it is recommended to explore the project feasibility with DG ECHO.

**PB**: One year ago a relevant proposal was discussed, called SEERISK. He recommends contacting SEERISK project manager before finalizing the proposal.

VOTING: UA withdrew the proposal for further elaboration it in details.

#### Reporting from co-coordinators on the past 6 months (**Péter Bakonyi**)

**PB** gave a brief PowerPoint presentation listing the events and actions on the past 6 months:

1. **3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of National Contact Points and Priority Area Coordinators** (Brussels, 30 – 31 January 2013)
  - Horizontal Activities of Priority Area 10
  - = The Danube Financing Dialogue
  - = The Technical Assistance Facility Danube Region Projects
2. **Priority Area Coordinators meeting of the EUSDR** (Sofia, 29-30 April 2013)
  - PACs needs towards the 2014-20 Danube Programme
  - PACs coordination needs
  - “Technical Assistance Facility for Danube Region Projects” Workshop
3. **Scientific Support to the Danube Strategy** (Bratislava, 16 May 2013)

4. **Danube Parliamentarian Floating Conference** (May 20 - 25, 2013; Passau, Linz, Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest, Ilok, Belgrade)
5. **Workshop of the EUSDR Priority Area Coordinators and ETC Danube Programme Task Force** (Ljubljana, 21 May 2013)
  - Programming framework and perspectives of the Danube Transnational Programme
  - Perspectives of the EUSDR
6. **PA4, PA5 and the Hungarian NCP visited DG ENVI** (Brussels, 27 May 2013)
7. **REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS concerning the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region** (Brussels, 8.4.2013)

**"2.2. Protecting the environment in the Danube Region**

- New momentum to existing projects
  - = The DANUBE FLOODRISK project explores methods and databases on which countries can work together jointly. In all, 19 institutions in 8 Danube countries are participating, and accelerating progress towards shared databases and flood mapping.
  - = The European Flood Awareness System (EFAS) is also carrying out complementary work."

**JSch**, Austria: It is recommended to hold PA4 and PA5 meeting back to back with ICPDR meetings.

**Scientific Support to the Danube Strategy (Péter Bakonyi)**

**PB** gave a brief PowerPoint presentation about the JRC initiative on scientific support:

1. **1st Annual Forum of the EUSDR** (Regensburg, 27-28 November 2012)
  - Mr Vladimir Šucha, Deputy Director-General, **JRC** announced the "Scientific Support to the Danube Strategy" an initiative aiming **to provide scientific support** to the EUSDR
2. **Scientific Meeting** (Ispra, 21-22 March 2013)
  - Cooperating scientific institutes
3. **High Level Event on the Scientific Support to the Danube Strategy** (Bratislava, 16 May 2013)

János Fehér (**JF**) supplemented the presentation with additional information.

With the support of its scientific partners of the Danube Region, the JRC has identified flagship clusters aiming to provide policy makers with the appropriate scientific support to tackle interlinked policy issues."

**PRIORITIES:**

1. Environmental protection
2. Irrigation and agriculture development
3. Navigability
4. Energy production

These clusters will address some of the main scientific challenges faced by the Danube Region:

1. *Danube Water Nexus*
2. *Danube Land and Soil Nexus*
3. *Danube Air Nexus*
4. *Danube Bioenergy Nexus*
5. *Danube Reference Data and Service Infrastructure*

Expected outputs of the Danube Water Nexus

- **Scenarios of environmental and economic impacts** of alternative water allocation measures across competing water-using sectors for the years 2030-2050, including an assessment of the provision/valuation of **ecosystem services**
- Methodology for **modelling of water resources** in the Danube River Basin, integrating quantity, quality, ecology and hydro-morphology, in coordination with other tools at national and river basin level and extension to non-EU countries of the Danube Region
- Supporting efforts of countries and international cooperation in the **implementation of the**

**Water Framework Directive** and planning of medium and long-term actions for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycles of River Basin Management.

To reach the expected outputs JRC foresees collaborative work with Danube Basin research institutions:

- **Build on existing experience** deriving from national projects and international initiatives (e.g. ICPDR, KLIWAS, GLOWA-Danube, Danube Flagship project DREAM)
- Establish a **Transboundary Modelling Partnership** aiming at the development of a multi-model ensemble for the Danube Region with a common database
- Facilitate **joint building of assessment capacity** and contribute to harmonization across countries

#### **Phase 1.**

1. **Development of an inventory of the models Danube country partners could use in the work**
  - Listing, input requirements, outputs they produce potentially limit to models that operate at large sub-basins
2. **Ask Danube Countries what (transboundary) problems / indicators they find important**
  - Access water, navigation bottlenecks, etc.
  - Establish an agreed concept
  - Develop a Questionnaire to survey models used in Danube countries
3. **Establish Danube database**
  - Include regional model results
  - Include JRC available data (land use projections with LUMP at 100m grid, downscaled CC data, meteorological data, including Carpathian database)
  - Include updated soil information from existing projects
  - Include new data provided by partners
  - Where we do lack information (data availability screening)
  - Linking to available ICPDR data(base) (complementary)
4. **Making regional/ local model simulation results available digitally for benchmarking and further model improvement**
5. **Feedback / validation with regional experts on land use projects**
  - Database of actors in the Danube
  - Climate scenarios: downscaling & corrections
  - Setup of navigation model for entire Danube
  - Bottom up approach, negotiate with stakeholders

#### **Phase 2.**

1. **Suggestions for improved model equations** by partners + compilation associated Pan- Danube data sources
  - For implementation by JRC (needs recalibration, thus deadline needed)
  - Describe mode of operation
  - Refine economic sub-models
2. Inventory of **flood damage functions** ( discharge - stage - damage)
3. **Nested approach**: regional model results are made available and used to feed the full- Danube runs / as pre-computations for optimization (daily fluxes Q, N, P)
4. **Optimization tool to be made available to regional modellers** for implementations testing
5. **Update land use projections** following feedback in Phase 1.

#### **Phase 3.**

1. Include JRC Soil Nexus **new soil map in database**
2. Run single **scenarios at Danube scale**  
Pass results to post-processing tools / models (e.g. navigation)
3. **Optimization at Danube scale** (giving indications of core areas for further work)  
Identify critical vulnerable areas

**Optimization at regional scale** (with optimization tool provided to local groups by JRC; JRC helps with implementation)

#### **Preliminary timing of the roadmap:**

- September 2013                      Model inventory
- October 2013                        Specification data needs
- December 2013                      Available scenario inventory, further scenario development needs

- June 2014 Deliverable Danube database
- December 2014 Deliverable Pilot River Basin results
- December 2014 Deliverable Scenarios (land use and climate scenarios)
- June 2015 Deliverable Integrated modelling toolbox
- December 2015 Deliverable Impacts of scenarios

**Next steps:**

- Search for partners from Danube Basin countries interested in modelling at basin scale.
- Search for funding opportunities for Danube Basin partners to finance cooperation with JRC.
- Built consortium for proposal submission to international funding sources.

Financing EUSDR project – 2014-2020 (**Anna Repullo-Grau**)

**ARG** delivered a PowerPoint presentation on financing EUSDR projects in the 2014-2020 period.

**1. Alignment of policies of funding**

- Condition for success: some examples already available in the past, in the future this should be **sustainable** and **systematic**
- It includes **all available resources**: ESIF (country-specific + ETC) + other EU initiatives, e.g. CEF, Horizon 2020, **LIFE**, as well as national /regional/local funds + additional sources, e.g. EIB or private

**2. How? Provisions in the draft Regulations for ESI Funds:**

- **Macro-regional strategies** highlighted in the Common Strategic Framework (5 Funds) , Partnership Agreements and Operational Programmes. Obligation + opportunity + challenge.
- Link between TN OP and existing MRS : **Danube Transnational Programme**
- **(Already now)**: budget for regional OPs can supplement transnational budgets aimed at supporting macro-regional priorities
- **New instruments**: Joint Action Plan, Integrated Territorial Investments (funding for several OPs to follow integrated investment strategy for a functional area), Integrated Operations (an operation to be financed through several EU funds).

**3. The philosophy**

MRS should be seen as a part of the **strategic framework** for future funding:



National needs and interests must be identified through **macro-regional** (co-operation) approach.

**and the practice**

- Linkages between the PA/OPs and the EUSDR **Action Plan**.
- Continuous **co-operation and networking** between PA/OP coordinators and the Strategy actors (NCP, PAC, SG members) during programming and implementation. Bringing together the "two worlds" (e.g. meeting in Bucharest, 16/17 April, TF meetings Danube programme)
- **Operationally**: Programmes co-financed by all ESIF should decide: specific calls, additional points for projects deriving from the Strategy (criteria)? + Danube Transnational programme to support implementation (projects and governance)

**4. Danube Transnational Programme: content and agenda**

- Thematic concentration (Article 5 ETC Reg) – 5 (instead of 4) priorities OR a concentration of 80% of the programme resources on 4 thematic priorities?
- Reference to "strategically important projects" identified by the strategies (Article 7(2) of ETC Reg)
- Development and implementation of macro-regional and sea-basin strategies (within the thematic objective of enhancing institutional capacity and an efficient public administration)

**Agenda:** On-going programming Task Force, Joint NCP/PAC/TF in 21 May. Operational programme ready by 2014

After the presentation **PB** emphasised the importance of including PA5 objectives into national Operational Programmes (OPs). The country representatives were asked to inform the SG meeting about the current status of OPs preparation:

- Lotta Blaskovicova, SK: Slovakia is working on including the objectives in OPs.
- Sylvia Neamtu, RO: They also work on it.
- **JSch**, AT: OK
- **PB**, HU: The Hungarian PACs and the steering group members of the other priority areas have been involved in the OP programming in Hungary,
- Oleksandr Bon, UA: He was not aware of the OP programming in Ukraine.

**ARG:** The National OPs should be open enough to include new ideas / projects when the programme goes on.

**BM:** In HU we are quite systematic on the programme development. In terms of roadmaps we should be specific, but there could be areas where we should be more flexible. One of the main challenges for us in the next funding period is the coordination of new issues surfacing. Preferences, flagships, etc. are indicated in the OPs, but they should be flexible while they are going on.

#### How the Budapest Danube Contact Point can help financing (**Péter Kiss-Parciu**)

Péter Kiss-Parciu gave a PowerPoint presentation introducing the Budapest Danube Contact Point.

What is the BDCP?

- Organization of international experts promoting the macro-regional approach by supporting large scale financeable and implementable projects in the framework of the EUSDR, primarily in the energy, environment and transport sectors

Basic principles of the BDCP

- Works in the framework of the EUSDR
- Cooperates with Priority Area Coordinators/Steering Groups, project promoters, other EUSDR stakeholders
- Offers a „smart tool” for large scale concepts and projects
- Promotes a transnational and integrated approach
- to create macro-regional added value
- Avoids any additional management or administrative level
- Acts as a motivator and facilitator to help the existing stakeholders
- Acts as a financing expert

Services Offered – for Steering Groups

- Project identification
- Project prioritization and selection
- Reality check and needs assessment
- Using EIB/JASPERS technical support
- Involving stakeholders
- Planning the financing of selected actions
- Promoting the macro-regional approach

Services offered – for Project promoters

- Financibility and implementability check
- Assigning optimal financing structure and developing roadmap for financing
- Using EIB/JASPERS technical expertise
- Strategic project monitoring
- Stakeholder involvement and coordination
- Capitalizing on EUSDR framework!

Progress made – Actions, road maps (**Péter Bakonyi**)

Gap analysis – What is missing to reach our targets (**Péter Bakonyi**)

**PB** presented Actions, road maps with a GAPs box to each of the investigated Action description.  
(See attached Action sheets)

Identified gaps are

Action	Milestone	Gap
1	3	To generate flood risk management project ideas for non-EU countries
2	2	There was no progress in this. Methodology is needed + master plan for the Danube
	3	Workshop need to be organised
3		No gap
4		The action is not ready yet!
5		Help ICPDR execute the ARS inventory, create ARS maps and write guidelines
6		No gap. Help ICPDR standardise the AEWS
	3	PB asks Igor Liska to review Milestone no. 3 and update it with the new up to date information
7	4	Generate projects to fill <u>the knowledge gaps</u> identified in the <i>Danube Climate Adaptation Strategy</i> . Research is needed.
8		No progress as yet. Wait for the outcome of the Action 7.

Any other business

- Péter Bakonyi drew the attention to the participants that the deadline for both the Annual report and the Periodic Report is 30 June 2013. He asked members to report back on any actions taken in the line of Actions
- Sylvia Neamtu informed the SG that the next Annual Stakeholder Seminar is to be held in Romania and there is a plan to hold it back to back with the 6<sup>th</sup> SG Meeting. Anna Repullo-Grau noted that the next Danube Strategy Annual Forum will be held also at end of October 2013 in Romania. She suggested harmonizing these events and avoiding inviting almost the same group of people for all three meetings.
- PB asks the SC members to send info to co-PAC (RO) about the meetings in autumn they know.
- Balázs Medgyesy informed the SG that a Danube Regional Conference on Water will be held on 11-12 September 2013 in Budapest in joint organisation with Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the JRC as well as PA4 and PA5.

## **List of Participant**