



ROADMAP FOR AN ACTION

Priority Area 5 - To manage environmental risks

Action 2 - “To support wetland and floodplain restoration as an effective mean of enhancing flood protection, and more generally to analyse and identify the best response to flood risk (including “green infrastructure”)”. Protection against flood requires taking specific measures which can vary across the Region according to a series of geographical or hydromorphological elements. Building reinforced dykes and banks is not always the most sustainable way to protect an area from potential floods. Wetlands and floodplains (giving the rivers space) also contribute significantly to protecting and preserving biodiversity and ecosystems, they have a positive impact on water filtering and prevent erosion. In addition, they offer great potential for green tourism. This approach should be explored more systematically within the 17 Danube sub-basins.

Taking into account the new challenges brought by the effects of the climate change is clear that continue to use the same approach of only building levees alongside the river in order to keep the high level water inside will no longer work or will become a bigger threat to humans. Therefore we have to think to give back some of the floodplains and to leave more “room for rivers”. This new approach will be good both for reducing the flood risk and for improving aquatic environmental conditions

Milestone n°1: Successful implementation of the Morava-Thaya Basin initiatives

- *Work:* Protection of the ‘Donau March-Thaya-Auen’ wetland leading to the lowering of flood risks in the flooding areas and to the improvement of urban water courses.
- *Output n° 1:* Development of a plan and a strategy for promoting environmentally benign, soft, quality tourism, including leisure navigation
 - *Responsible:* Austria, Czech Republic and Slovakia
 - *Deadline:* December 2013

Output n° 1: A new breeding raft was introduced in a lake near Zwerndorf. The river tern (*Sterna hirundo*) are using the the old as well as the new breeding raft at Zwendorf very well. Due to the cool and very different weather conditions this spring, the young birds have very different age distribution. In total 8 young birds and another 8 breeding birds breeding adult birds were counted. A great success and a new record at the site Zwerndorf!
The project has been finalized.

Milestone n°1 completed.

Progress made between July 2014 and June 2015:

The project has been finalized.

Milestone n°2: Development of a Master Plan for the restoration of Floodplains of the Danube and its tributaries from spring to its discharge into the Black Sea

- *Work:* Assessment of the existing projects and identification of the future possible areas where the floodplain could be restored and evaluation of the benefits for flood control and improvement of the aquatic environment including the connection between the main bed with the floodplain.
- *Output n° 1:* Development of an application to be submitted for financing from the EU funds
 - *Responsible:* ICPDR, Romania
 - *Deadline:* 31 May 2013

Output n° 1: A project concept was handed in by Romania under EUSDR PA5 in spring 2015 for receiving Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) support towards the elaboration of a Danube Floodplain Project. The application was successful and TAF support was granted.

The project overall objective is to reduce the flood risk through floodplain restoration along the Danube and other DRB rivers. The specific objectives include the following:

- to develop a common approach on restoring the water storage capacity of floodplains, from upstream to downstream sections;
- to develop best practice on using 'green infrastructure' for sustainable flood risk management in the Danube River Basin;
- to contribute to the more effective implementation of the EU WFD and Floods Directive with their Programmes of Measures;
- integrating the requirements and opportunities related to other EU policies, notably the Nature Directives, Biodiversity and Climate policy, and of the 2020 Strategy;
- to foster cooperation among Danube Basin countries in using restored floodplains for flood management;
- to demonstrate the feasibility of integrated flood management, including a combination of classical and “green infrastructure” in selected floodplain areas;
- to stimulate stakeholder involvement and cooperation in floodplain restoration / flood management planning and implementation.

The project concept was presented at the meetings of the FP EG, HYMO TG and RBM EG during the respective meetings of the groups in autumn 2014, with the objective of helping to build the project consortium by inviting relevant institutions from the Danube countries to join the consortium.

The final report of the Technical Assistance Facility became available in January 2015. The document provides a basis for the possible future elaboration of a Danube Floodplain Project Proposal.

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- *Output n° 2: Development of Master Plan*
 → *Responsible:* DRS countries
 → *Deadline:* June 2015

Output n° 2: Not relevant as yet

- *Output n° 3: Development of Master Plans for Large Tributaries*
 → *Responsible:* DRS countries
 → *Deadline:* June 2021

Output n° 3: Not relevant as yet

Milestone n°3: Organisation of national and regional workshops concerning the Danube Floodplain restoration

- *Work:* Development of the documents and organization of the workshops with the involvement of all concerned stakeholders in order to present the local and regional benefits of the wetland restoration as well as the Danube Floodplain Master Plan concept
- *Output n° 1: 10 national winners identified in each of the 14 ICPDR countries*
 → *Responsible:* ICPDR, Romania and Danube countries involved
 → *Deadline:* December 2013

Output n° 1: Not relevant as yet