

**STEERING GROUP MEETINGS:
MEETING MINUTES, LIST OF ATTENDANCE
RULES OF PROCEDURE**

1st meeting of the Steering Group for Priority Area 1a of the EUSDR

Vienna, Austria – 21 June 2011

MINUTES

1. Opening, welcome and round of introductions

The Coordinators for Priority Area 1a (henceforth: PA 1a) of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Austria and Romania (represented by Mr. Vorderwinkler and Mr. Cucu), welcomed the members of the Steering Group to the meeting (the attendance list is attached at the end of these minutes).

This was followed by a round of introductions in which each attending Steering Group member introduced himself/herself and the organisation he/she is representing.

2. Organisational structure and role/responsibilities of Steering Group

The PA 1a Coordinators introduced a proposed organisational structure for the implementation of Priority Area 1a of the EUSDR (please cf. slide no. 3 of the enclosed Presentation by the Coordinators).

The Coordinators described the main aim of the PA 1a Steering Group as being an open group for discussions. The PA 1a Coordinators will inform and involve the Steering Group in bi-annual meetings (spring and autumn) regarding, e.g., progress made in Working Groups and stakeholder participation. In its turn, the Steering Group will provide feedback and guidance to the Coordinators.

3. Expectations by DG REGIO for Priority Area 1a

Ms. Cruceru (DG REGIO) communicated the Commission's expectations on how to implement PA 1a of the EUSDR together with a timeline and milestones for implementation:

- Concerning the Steering Group, a structured method of work and a structured way to communicate with Steering Group members should be assured. This should be done by developing Terms of References for Steering Group matters, based on ToRs for Steering Groups of other Priority Areas of the EUSDR.
- A first progress report by PA Coordinators has to be sent to the Commission in July 2012. The report should contain short-, medium- and long-term milestones and deadlines for actions in PA 1a as well as clear responsibilities for the countries involved. The progress report will be presented to the European High Level Group in December 2012.
- An amended Communication and Action Plan for the EUSDR is set to be finalised at the beginning of 2013 based on all progress reports by Priority Area Coordinators.
- Progress is expected for the projects listed in the EUSDR's Action Plan. "Short-term" priorities as well as three new projects should be identified by the Steering Group. Steering Group members should also recommend projects on the basis of an identification of cross-border/international projects in their countries.
- Communication issues are important for implementing the EUSDR. Hence, a website is to be set up on the short term for PA 1a by the Coordinators featuring information on the work being done and on the results achieved (the websites of DG REGIO and INTERACT will feature a link to this Priority Area website). In addition, an "image" should be created for PA 1a.

- The EU will hold a financing meeting in October 2011 to identify the financial resources still available for the EUSDR in the current financing period. The INTERACT programme (“Lab Group”) will provide assistance on a horizontal level by identifying funding sources and developing a coherent information database. Financial technical assistance will be provided for Priority Area Coordinators by the Commission.
- Upcoming meetings relevant for all Priority Areas are planned as follows by DG REGIO:
 - December 2011: Common meeting of Priority Area Coordinators, National Contact Points, Steering Groups and European Commission (based on Gödöllő blueprint)
 - March 2012: Annual Stakeholder Forum for all Priority Areas; countries are invited to host this event
 - November 2012: Second common meeting of Priority Area Coordinators, National Contact Points, Steering Groups and European Commission
 - March 2013: Second Annual Stakeholder Forum

4. Revision of exemplary targets

The European Commission's Communication COM(2010) 715 final (“European Union Strategy for Danube Region”) includes the following three exemplary targets for PA 1a of the EUSDR:

- (1) Increase the cargo transport on the river by 20% by 2020 compared to 2010.
- (2) Remove existing navigability bottlenecks on the river so as to accommodate type Vlb vessels all year round by 2015. (Footnote: The international classification of European Inland Waterways (UNECE/TRANS/120/Rev.4, p. 28/29) in the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN) classifies the parameters for motor vessels and pushed convoys. In the present text, category Vlb uniquely refers to pushed convoys and inland waterways vessels with a draught of up to 2.5m).
- (3) Development of efficient multimodal terminals at Danube river ports to connect inland waterways with rail and road transport by 2020.

A proposal for a reformulation of target (2) on waterway infrastructure as well as two additional targets were submitted by the Priority Area Coordinators for discussion in the Steering Group. After extended discussion, the following wording for the five targets for PA 1a of the EUSDR was proposed:

- (1) Increase the cargo transport on the river by 20% by 2020 compared to 2010.
- (2) Solve obstacles to navigability, taking into account the specific characteristics of each section of the Danube and its navigable tributaries and establish effective waterway infrastructure management by 2015.
- (3) Development of efficient multimodal terminals at Danube river ports to connect inland waterways with rail and road transport by 2020.
- (4) Implement harmonised River Information Services (RIS) on the Danube and its navigable tributaries and ensure the international exchange of RIS data by 2015.
- (5) 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.

All targets as formulated above were endorsed by most members of the Steering Group, with the following exceptions:

- The representatives of Germany, Ms. Schumann, and Hungary, Mr. Berencsi, will have to collect the mandate from their Ministries to endorse the targets as proposed in the meeting.
- Mr. Bernabei, representing the European Commission's DG MOVE, also endorses these targets, but will have the proposal for target (2) discussed by the EC's Services for approval. For

documentation purposes, the following proposal for a reformulation of target (2) was submitted by DG MOVE as an alternative version during the review process before the meeting: "Remove existing navigability bottlenecks on the river so as to comply with the classification of all Danube river sections according to the "European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance" 1996 (AGN)", accompanied by the following footnote: "In the case of the Bavarian sector between Straubing-Vilshofen, a Study for the evaluation of navigability conditions and their impact on the environment is undergoing and it will be completed by the end of 2012."

5. Project fiche template

Ms. Cuc, representing the Technical Secretariat for PA 1a in the Romanian Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, suggests on behalf of the Coordinators to collect information on ongoing and planned projects also project ideas by means of a project fiche template. This template will be created by the Priority Area Coordinators and fine-tuned with the European Commission. It will then be sent out to the country members of the Steering Group with a two months horizon for collecting the respective project information so as to furnish a sound basis for discussion of projects in Working Groups and Steering Group meetings.

6. Closing, date and venue of next meeting

Due to the extensive discussion on the revision of the exemplary targets for PA 1a, a discussion on the planned number and scope of the Working Groups and Ad hoc Working Groups for PA 1a proposed by the PA Coordinators was not possible. Hence, the respective proposal by the PA Coordinators can be found in the presentation which is sent out to the Steering Group members together with these minutes.

The 2nd meeting of the Steering Group for Priority Area 1a of the EUSDR will be held in autumn 2011, presumably in mid-October. The exact date and venue will be communicated by the Priority Area Coordinators in due time.

Enclosures

- (1) Presentation given by the PA 1a Coordinators at the Steering Group meeting.
- (2) List of attendants as circulated during the meeting.
- (3) List of contact details for members of the Steering Group.

1st meeting of the Steering Group for Priority Area 1a of the EUSDR

Vienna, Austria – 21 June 2011

List of Attendance

Last name	First name	Organisation
Berencsi	Miklós	Coordination Centre for Transport Development, Hungary
Bernabei	Cesare	Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport, European Commission
Čáky	Peter	Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development, Slovakia
Čop Bajde	Katarina	Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure, Croatia
Cruceru	Irina	Directorate-General for Regional Policy, European Commission
Cuc	Cristina	Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, Romania
Cucu	Șerban Alexandru	Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, Romania
Ellenrieder	Fruzsina	Directorate-General for the Environment, European Commission
Fastenbauer	Michael	via donau - Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH, Austria
Hartl	Thomas	via donau - Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH, Austria
Milković	Željko	International Sava River Basin Commission
Novák	Vladimír	Waterborne Transport Development Agency, Slovakia
Schumann	Stefanie	Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development, Germany
Schwetz	Otto	Pan-European Transport Corridor VII
Simoner	Markus	via donau - Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH, Austria
Suvorov	Pjotr	Danube Commission
Vorderwinkler	Reinhard	Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology, Austria
Weller	Philip	International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River

Apologies / Absence

Last name	First name	Organisation
Benov	Petar	Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications, Bulgaria
Dabrowski	Vojtěch	Ministry of Transport, Czech Republic
Karkin	Kemal	Ministry of Communications and Transport, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Komatina	Dejan	International Sava River Basin Commission
Mehmedovski	Senaida	Ministry of Communications and Transport, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ostojić Barjaktarović	Žaneta	Directorate for Inland Waterways – Plovput, Serbia
Schindler	Horst	Danube Commission
Von Rimscha	Nicolai	Bavarian State Ministry of Economic Affairs, Infrastructure, Transport and Technology, Germany
Yancheva	Tonka	Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications, Bulgaria
Žepič	Franc	Ministry of Transport, Slovenia

EU Strategy for the Danube Region

Priority Area 1a – To improve mobility and multimodality: Inland waterways

2nd Meeting of the Steering Group for Priority Area 1a of the EUSDR

Bucharest, Romania – 28 October 2011

MINUTES

Author(s):

Technical Secretariats of PACs 1a

Version (date):

V 1.0 (final) | 04-05-2012

1. Welcome to the participants, introduction, presentation of finalised targets

The Coordinators for Priority Area 1a (henceforth: PACs 1a) of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Austria and Romania (represented by Mr. Vorderwinkler and Ms. Patrichi), welcomed the members of the Steering Group to the meeting.

This was followed by a round of introductions in which each attending Steering Group member introduced himself/herself and the organisation he/she is representing.

Thereafter, the PACs 1a briefly presented the finalised targets for Priority Area 1a which were also sent out to the participants before the meeting. The final targets for the implementation of Priority Area 1a of the EUSDR, i.e. to improve mobility and multimodality: inland waterways, are as follows:

1. Increase the cargo transport on the river by 20% by 2020 compared to 2010. [target maintained as in EC Communication of December 2010]
2. Solve obstacles to navigability, taking into account the specific characteristics of each section of the Danube and its navigable tributaries and establish effective waterway infrastructure management by 2015. [target reformulated from EC Communication of December 2010: "Remove existing navigability bottlenecks on the river so as to accommodate type Vlb vessels all year round by 2015."]
3. Develop efficient multimodal terminals at river ports along the Danube and its navigable tributaries to connect inland waterways with rail and road transport by 2020. [target reformulated from EC Communication of December 2010: "Development of efficient multimodal terminals at Danube river ports to connect inland waterways with rail and road transport by 2020."]
4. Implement harmonised River Information Services (RIS) on the Danube and its navigable tributaries and ensure the international exchange of RIS data preferably by 2015. [new target; not in EC Communication of December 2010]
5. 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. [new target; not in EC Communication of December 2010]

2. Agreement on “Rules of Procedure of the Steering Group”, adoption of the Minutes from the previous meeting and adoption of the Agenda

The “Rules of Procedure of the Steering Group” with changes proposed by some Steering Group members were adopted by the Steering Group (for final version please cf. Enclosures).

The Minutes from the previous meeting as well as the Agenda for the 2nd meeting were approved without any amendments.

3. Presentation on the main results from the Working Groups kick-off meeting

Mr. Simoner informed the participants that on 27 of November 2011 a kick-off meeting of the five thematic Working Groups for Priority Area 1a of the EUSDR was organised in which representatives from the public and the private sector took part.

The main conclusions of the meeting were that Working Groups are necessary for the implementation of Priority Area 1a of the EUSDR and that two meetings per year of two days each would be viable (while making use of the electronic means of communication). Working Group meetings will be organised by the Technical Secretariats of PACs 1a. These meetings will be open to the public and the private sector as well as to NGOs and other interested parties.

Having in view that the Technical Secretariats of PACs 1a have started to collect information about ongoing projects and project proposals it was decided that the next Working Group meeting will be

held in common for all five thematic Working Groups, i.e. waterway infrastructure & maintenance, ports & sustainable freight transport, Danube fleet, River Information Services and education & jobs.

The submission of the Project Fiche for information on ongoing projects and project ideas is still possible and is expected that all Danube countries will collect the relevant information as soon as possible and forward filled-out project data sheets to the Technical Secretariats.

As a result of the discussion on the labelling of projects as being in line with the targets of EUSDR's Priority Area 1a, Working Groups should not have a right to take decisions, as projects or project ideas are not obliged to be examined by Working Group members and can be submitted directly to the Steering Group for discussion and approval.

4. Presentation on the new Structural Funds Regulations

Ms. Ploeg Cruceru, representative of the European Commission, DG REGIO, provided information on the EU's new architecture of the Structural Funds Regulations for the future programming period 2014-2020 which are relevant for tapping EU funding for projects in line with the EUSDR. At the moment, new transnational areas are being developed for funding at the European Commission.

Ms. Ploeg Cruceru also reported on the draft regulation concerning the review of the TEN-T Guidelines and the accompanying Connecting Europe Facility, which is an entirely new funding instrument of the EU.

Regarding projects which are in line with the objectives of EUSDR PA 1a, Ms. Ploeg Cruceru requested countries to present their priorities with respect to project development in the next meeting of the Steering Group, taking into consideration those projects which are also listed in the Action Plan.

At the end of her intervention, Ms. Ploeg Cruceru informed the members of the Steering Group about the following upcoming meeting and events:

- 21 Nov. 2011: EUSDR High-Level Group meeting (EU-27 & non-member states involved in the EUSDR): approval of targets for all Priority Areas on the European level
- 30/31 Jan. 2012: Common meeting of PACs, NCPs and European Commission (based on Gödöllő blueprint): basically on technical issues (project cycle management)
- Feb. 2012: Financing Conference ("Bratislava II") focussing on the coordination of EU funding, attendance by national managing authorities of the EU's Objective 1-3 Programmes

5. Presentation on the revision of the TEN-T Guidelines

Mr. Bernabei, representative of the European Commission, DG MOVE, gave an overview on the Trans-European Network – Transport and the revised TEN-T Guidelines, explaining the general and specific objectives of the EC's White Paper.. Solutions to current problems were identified as to move from today's patchwork to a network, filling the missing links (cross-border, bottlenecks); to make the network multimodal, interoperable and efficient and to make the framework for realising the network more binding. This will be achieved by issuing the TEN-T Guidelines in the form of an EU Regulation.

The new TEN-T Guidelines provide implementation of projects of common interest; two network layers with complementary functions and specific strategic objectives; a clear prioritisation with a view to project implementation; corridors and further developed instruments for project implementation; strong link between network policy and relevant financial instruments.

A two-layered approach will be established: A core network and a comprehensive network, where the core network will be a selection of the most important parts of the network to be realised as a priority until 2030 while the comprehensive network will cover the entire EU territory, accessibility for all citizen and businesses. Mr. Bernabei also said that the amount allocated to inland waterway development was increased.

Mr. Bernabei was asked by the participants if in the case that a non-EU Member State has become a Member State after the initial definition of the TEN-T network, the network could suffer some changes in this respect, and he responded that this should be the case. In answering a question concerning the relation between IWT projects within the scope of the EUSDR on the one hand and TEN-T on the other hand, Mr. Bernabei explained that all projects concerning TEN-T development will have to be included in the EUSDR.

6. Presentation by river commissions on current activities

International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Weller, Executive Secretary of the ICPDR, notified the members of the Steering Group in an e-mail of 25 October 2011 that attendance by the ICPDR was not possible because of a conflict with a pre-planned meeting held in Belgrade. In his e-mail, however, Mr. Weller stressed that the ICPDR remains strongly committed to actions under the Danube Region Strategy and is interested to be an active and involved member of Priority Area 1a.

International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC)

Mr. Milković, Deputy Secretary for Navigation of the ISRBC, provided an overview on the function and organization of the ISRBC and its ongoing projects. The Commission was established in 2004 and has as members Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia. Among the ISRBC's tasks are the establishment of an international regime of navigation on the Sava River and its navigable tributaries; the establishment of sustainable water management and to undertake measures to prevent or limit hazards.

Currently, the ISRBC is carrying out, in different stages of implementation, several projects of regional importance as, e.g., the rehabilitation and development of transport and navigation on the Sava River, the implementation of RIS on the Sava River (fully operation in 2013), the establishment of a system for the collection, treatment and disposal of hazardous and other ship wastes on the Sava River as well as the preparation of the Sava River Basin Management Plan.

Considering the very low water levels on the Sava River, some river training and dredging works are necessary for providing better navigation conditions. Other interventions pertain to bridges and the implementation of RIS.

Danube Commission (DC)

Mr. Suvorov, Deputy Director General of the Secretariat of the DC, explained that while for other European river basins a rise in transport volumes for inland navigation is recorded to have reached pre-crisis levels, this is not the case on the Danube. Mr. Suvorov stressed that development of freight transport on the Danube would be possible if infrastructure would be seriously modernized; this would also help to avoid the difficulties occurred this year on the Lower Danube.

Mr. Suvorov mentioned that the achievement of target 1 of PA 1a (Increasing the cargo transport on the river by 20% by 2020 compared with 2010) will be a direct consequence of achieving targets 2 – 5 from the final list of targets (see above). He proposed that the Master Plan on the achievement of recommended fairway parameters, hydro-technical and other facilities on the Danube and the List of national infrastructure projects (projects of DC member states as of 1 December 2010) should be addressed within the Working Group on waterway infrastructure & management.

He also explained the status of the fleet and crew personnel, highlighting existing problems and possible solutions. Taking into account the age of the existing fleet, modernization would be needed in order to improve its economic and environmental performance. Regarding nautical personnel, Mr. Suvorov informed the participants that the DC is working on the establishment of the system of harmonised requirements for certain professions for movement of high skilled personnel from maritime transport into the Danube navigation. The DC will send the relevant information to the Working Group on education & jobs.

Mr. Suvorov expressed the DC's willingness to further contribute to the promotion of actions which will lead to a reasonable compromise approach to the interpretation of certain articles of the revised Convention regarding the regime of navigation on the Danube.

The DC will actively participate in the activities of the Working Groups established within the EUSDR's Priority Area 1a..

Mr. Schindler, Counsellor for Inland Waterways Maintenance of the DC, gave a presentation on the Master Plan for the achievement of recommended fairway parameters focused on the critical sections along the Danube and a general description of known projects. The most critical sections were identified on the sectors Straubing – Vilshofen, Wien – Bratislava, Sap – Mohacs, Belgrade and Romanian – Bulgarian sector. For these sections there are ongoing studies or projects scheduled to be implemented in the next years.

7. Presentation by country representatives on current national IWT policy/master plans as well as on current IWT related activities

Countries' representatives explained the current situation in their country related to waterway infrastructure, ports development, safety of navigation and environmental protection. They reported on ongoing or planned projects to be implemented which will contribute to achieving the EUSDR's PA 1a targets.

Serbia provided information on the Master Plan for IWT in Serbia, on the Serbian Transport Development Strategy for the period 2008–2015 and on the General Master Plan for Transport in Serbia. The participants were also informed about the current status of the implementation of projects like RIS (which will be fully implemented by 2013), training works for solving obstacles on five critical sections of the Danube in Serbia as well as the NEWADA and WANDA projects.

Slovakia outlined the national institutional organisation as well as the bodies responsible for inland navigation in Slovakia and gave information on the waterborne development focused on projects for improving the parameters of the fairway, reconstruction of berths and equipment in the Port of Bratislava and the Port of Komárno.

Croatia provided information on ports development (Vukovar, Osijek), on projects for solving navigation obstacles by means of training works and water regulation on several sections (Apatin, Sotin, Mohovo, confluence of Drava river), on projects for the rehabilitation and improvement of the Sava River waterway and on RIS implementation.

Bulgaria made a brief presentation on the Strategy for the development of the transport system in Bulgaria until 2020 and on the National transport policy priorities for 2010–2020, providing project examples like the improvement of navigation conditions on the Romanian–Bulgarian section of the Danube, RIS, VTMIS, improvement of the system for navigation, topo-hydrographic measurements on the Danube River and ports development.

Austria informed the participants that all projects aimed at the development of inland navigation in Austria are in line with the National Action Plan on Danube Navigation, including ongoing projects for improving fairway conditions, RIS, education, etc.

Romania presented projects on the Calarasi–Braila section and on the Romanian–Bulgarian common section of the Danube waterway, several ports which are to be modernised, RIS implementation and projects for waste management. Some of the projects will be finalised in the near future while others will be implemented by 2017.

Hungary informed the participants on the activities and projects for improving the navigability on the Danube, the status of RIS implementation, the WANDA project and projects to be implemented in the field of education and jobs (e.g., NELI).

Representing **Ukraine**, the Ukrainian Embassy in Bucharest expressed the interest of Ukraine in the implementation of the EUSDR and confirmed that Ukraine will contribute more actively in the next Working Group and Steering Group meetings.

8. Wrap-up & next steps

The 3rd meeting of the Steering Group for Priority Area 1a of the EUSDR will be held in the spring of 2012, presumably in March. The exact date and venue will be communicated by the Priority Area Coordinators in due time.

A specific focus of the next meeting will be discussions on concrete projects and project proposals received from interested parties.

Enclosures

Please note: All documents are available for download at the website of EUSDR PA 1A
→ <http://groupspaces.com/MobilityWaterways>

- (1) Presentations given by the participants at the Steering Group meeting
- (2) Approved Rules of Procedure of the Steering Group of EUSDR Priority Area 1a
- (3) List of attendants
- (4) List of contact details for members of the Steering Group

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
Bucharest, 28 of October 2011

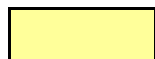
No.	Name	Organization	Country	Phone	Fax	e-mail	Working Group				
							Modernize the Danube fleet	Invest in education and Jobs	Implement River Information Services	Improve the waterway infrastructure and the waterway management	Develop multimodal ports and sustainable freight transport
1	Gerhard Skoff	Danube Tourist Commission	Austria	+43 676 563 5024		stage@gmx.com				x	
2	Reinhard Vorderwinkler	Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology	Austria	+43 664 818 88 68	+43 1 711 62-655999	reinhard.vorderwinkler@bmvit.gv.at	x	x	x	x	x
3	Otto Schwetz	TINA VIENNA	Austria	+43 664 3450458	+43 1 4000 7997	otto.schwetz@tinavienna.at				x	
4	Markus Simoner	via donau – Österreichische Wasserstraßen-GmbH	Austria	+43 5 04321-1607	+43 5 04321-1050	Markus.Simoner@via-donau.org	x	x	x	x	x
5	Michael Fastenbauer	via donau – Österreichische Wasserstraßen-GmbH	Austria			Michael.Fastenbauer@via-donau.org	x	x	x	x	x
6	Thomas Hartl	via donau – Österreichische Wasserstraßen-GmbH	Austria	+43 5 04321-1603	+43 5 04321-1050	Thomas.Hartl@via-donau.org	x	x	x	x	x
7	Cesare Bernabei	European Commission	Belgium	0032-2-2958149	0032-2-2954349	cesare.bernabei@ec.europa.eu					x
8	Irina Ploeg Cruceru	European Commission	Belgium	+322 299 6049		irina.cruceru@ec.europa.eu	x	x	x	x	x
9	Ivelin Zanev	Executive agency for Exploration and Maintenance of the Danube River	Bulgaria	0035982823133	0035982823130	appd@appd-bg.org			x	x	
10	Miroslav Istuk	Agency for inland watrwrways	Croatia	00385321450613	3338532450653	miroslav.istuk@vodniputovi.hr			x	x	

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
Bucharest, 28 of October 2011

No.	Name	Organization	Country	Phone	Fax	e-mail	Working Group				
							Modernize the Danube fleet	Invest in education and Jobs	Implement River Information Services	Improve the waterway infrastructure and the waterway management	Develop multimodal ports and sustainable freight transport
11	ANA BARIŠIĆ	Ministry of the Sea Transport and Infrastructure	Croatia	+385 1 37 83 913	+ 385 1 37 83 901	ana.barisic@mmpi.hr			x	x	x
12	Nicolai von Rimscha	Bavarian Transport Ministry	Germany	0049 89 2162 2643	0049 89 2162 2805	Nicolai.vonrimscha@stmwivt.bayern.de				x	
13	Detlev Conrad	Ministry for Transport and Infrastructure	Germany, Baden-Württemberg	+49 711 231 5652	+49 711 231 5603	detlev.conrad@mvi.bwl.de					
14	Miklós Berencsi	Coordination Centre for Transport Development	Hungary	00 36 70 7022134		berencsi.miklos@kkk.gov.hu	x			x	
15	Horst Schindler	Danube Commission	Hungary	+36 1 461 8010	+36 1 352 1839	secretariat@danubecom-intern.org	x			x	
16	Pjotr Suvorov	Danube Commission	Hungary	+36 1 461 8010	+36 1 352 1839	secretariat@danubecom-intern.org	x			x	
17		Embassy of Germany	Romania			wi_1@buka.diplo.de					
18	Alexandru Serban Cucu	Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure	Romania	+40 21 319 61 47	+40 21 319 61 78	serban.cucu@mt.ro	x	x	x	x	x
19	Cristina Cuc	Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure	Romania	+40 21 319 62 03	+40 750 032 441	eurodtn@mt.ro	x	x	x	x	x
20	Monica Patrichi	Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure	Romania	+40 21 319 61 11	+40 21 319 61 06	monica.patrichi@mt.ro	x	x	x	x	x

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No.	Name	Organization	Country	Phone	Fax	e-mail	Working Group				
							Modernize the Danube fleet	Invest in education and Jobs	Implement River Information Services	Improve the waterway infrastructure and the waterway management	Develop multimodal ports and sustainable freight transport
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23	Vladimir Novac	Waterborne Transport Development Agency	Slovakia	00421 2 594 94 752	00421 2 524 54 057	Vladimir.Novak@arvd.gov.sk				x	
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26	Andrii Hryniuk	Embassy of Ukraine	Ukraine	+4021 230 36 65	+4021 230 36 60	tem.in.romania@gmail.com				x	
27	Zeljko Milkovic	International Sava River Basin Commission		+ 385 1 4886962	+ 385 1 4886962	zmilkovic@savacommission.org	x	x		x	



= regular members of the Steering Group

EU Strategy for the Danube Region

Priority Area 1a – To improve mobility and multimodality: Inland waterways

3rd Meeting of the Steering Group for Priority Area 1a of the EUSDR

Bratislava, Slovakia – 3-4 May 2012

MINUTES

Author(s):

Technical Secretariats of PACs 1a

Version (date):

V 0.3 (final draft) | 31-05-2012

The 3rd meeting of the Steering Group for Priority Area 1a - *To improve mobility and multimodality: Inland waterways* was held in Bratislava, Slovakia and has started in the presence of Mr. Johannes Hahn – Commissioner for Regional Policy, Mrs. Nikolina Nikolova, Bulgaria's Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Public Works and Mr. Andrej Holák - State Secretary within the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic. In the first day the discussions were targeted to the waterway maintenance and measures that could be implemented in short time in order to avoid the negative effects of the low water periods. In the second day, discussions were focused on EUSDR projects proposed to receive a Letter of Recommendation, Roadmaps and contributions of the EUSDR States for the Action Plan (SEC 1489 (2010)) implementation.

Waterways maintenance

In the opening speech Mr. Andrej Holák welcomed the participants and thanked the European Commission for the interest showed for the inland waterways transport. Slovakia actively participated in the preparation of European Union Strategy for the Danube Region and it is interested and committed in removing the navigation obstacles. Although 16.5 million of Euro was spent in the last 5 years for waterway maintenance, the navigation on the Slovak Danube stretch was affected by low waters and ice and to solve these problems constructions are necessary and also international cooperation.

Mr. Johannes Hahn said that navigability is a core priority area of EUSDR, having a great potential on development and has a impact on other cooperation areas as economy, tourism, competitiveness of enterprises, environment. At this time it is a crucial moment because the implementation of EUSDR has started already and the next financial framework (2014-2020) is under preparation. DG REGIO intends to allocate money in different programmes for the next EU funding period to finance projects having an impact on the Danube region development.

In the last time we had many days without acceptable conditions for inland navigation on the Danube. This happened due to the weather but also because of the lack of maintenance. A letter regarding the maintenance measures was sent to the Danube riparian countries in order to identify what specific measures were taken in 2011 during the low water periods and what are the plans in order to prevent this issue in 2012. The outcome of this correspondence between Commission DGs (DG MOVE and DG REGIO) will be discussed during the Council meeting (7 - 8 June 2012, *Luxembourg*) with the responsible ministers of transport. A *Common Declaration* will be also prepared aiming at the commitment of the countries that necessary maintenance have to be done and the financing will be assured.

It can be estimated that the development of industry, shipyards, ports facilities or other new companies along the river banks will increase sustainably a certain number of jobs. DG REGIO is preparing the terms of reference for a study with the aim to evaluate the impact on jobs when volumes of transport by inland navigation are increasing. Such a study could help to increase improve the financing in appropriate river and ports development.

Also Mr. Hahn underlined that each country should make the maintenance on the Danube and also develops the fleet, ports, etc. and should speed up the projects implementation.

In the end of his speech, Mr. Hahn expressed the Commission's interest and commitment for achieving the targets within the EUSDR and for closer cooperation with the actors involved and, in this sense, recommended for the next period more frequent meetings.

Mr. Romeo Soare gave a presentation about the content of the report regarding the management of 2011 low water level period and the catalogue of identified measures on short term (2012) and medium terms (2013 – 2015) in the framework of NEWADA Project. He presented statistics showing that last year and at the beginning of this year were the worst periods for navigation because of the

low waters and ice on the Danube. The conclusions were that dredging is no longer enough and measures as for increasing the monitoring and maintenance are needed.

Reports by countries on possible measures for effective waterway maintenance

Romania. Between August and December 2011, on the Lower Danube sector, downstream of the Iron Gates II, the water flow values were smaller than the multiannual mean value, and this generated low water levels that had a negative influence on the navigation conditions. The mean number of days with level values below ENR values, recorded in 2011, was of 91 days, and it represents a percentage of 60% of the analyzed period. The short term measures identified were: the improvement of water level information by acquisition and installation of automatic water gauges; Improvement of the quality of the exchanged data by a more frequent exchange of such information and by the diversification of the communication channels towards all stakeholders; creation of joint cross-border Romanian-Bulgarian Experts Group meant to elaborate joint plans for the maintenance of the navigation conditions (measurements, signalling and dredging works) required on the common Danube sector. For mid – term (2013 – 2015) the measures which were identified are: Calibration of water gauges on the border sector, to the same reference system, in order to improve the quality of the data exchange; acquisition of specific dredging equipments to be used to ensure the minimum depths of the fairway; the modification of the *Agreement on the maintenance and improving the fairway on the Romanian – Bulgarian sector of the Danube*, signed in 1955, in order to allow common and unitary actions for ensuring the efficiency of all interventions

Croatia adopted a Strategy of development of Inland Waterways and Inland ports in the period 2008 - 2018 based on the NAIADES. Croatia has adopted medium - term plan for development of Inland Waterways and inland ports in the period 2008–2016 and has completed the harmonization of legislation with the *acquis communautaire*. In 2009 an agreement with Serbia on maintenance and works was signed. Several projects for eliminating the bottlenecks are proposed within the EUSDR and the preparation of project documentation for the Inland Waterways of the Danube River from the mouth of river Drava, upstream to the border with Hungary has started. There are several bottlenecks for navigation. The most difficult situation is in the sector Apatin - Kopački rit. During the low-water level in the fall of 2011 there were frequent visits to this sector in cooperation with responsible institutions from Serbia and additional recording and marking of waterways was done. The mouth of the Drava into the Danube, riverbed was deepened on several occasions in the fall of 2011. Funds for the rehabilitation of the bottleneck from the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia are not sufficient so Croatia will endeavour to try to provide the same from EU funds.

Hungary A high level meeting; partners informed each other on the situation; further investigation of environmental aspects; statement of the ministry. Hungary is involved in the IRIS Europe; inland transponders obligation for ships >20 m and >12 passengers; establishment of legal criteria for international data exchange; working on national strategy which will be finalized at the end of 2013. Hungary is involved also in NEVADA, WANDA and NELI Projects.

Serbia. From the river administration – PLOVPUT measurement was seen that the number of sections with low water levels increased from 18 to 24 in the period 2006 – 2011 and dredging is not efficient for solving the problems. The short term measures identified are: implementation of the project “Preparation of necessary documentation for river training and dredging works on selected locations along the Danube River” (IPA 2010 project, 2011-2013), maintenance of the winter ports, increasing frequency of hydrographical data collection using cross-border cooperation, improving quality of hydrological data on critical sectors by installing new automatic gauging stations on critical sectors, implementation of RIS in Serbia (will be finalized in March 2013), up-to-date stakeholders information on Plovput website. An additional proposal made to the Commission is to investigate the possibility to allow Serbia to use other financial instruments, other than IPA, such as Connecting Europe Facility, having in view that Serbian Danube stretch has 588 km (second longest stretch of the Danube River) and there is a mutual interest from both EU and Serbia for the navigation on the Danube River.

Moldavia Having in view that Moldavian Danube stretch is just a few meters not urgent measures were needed and the priority is the development of Giurgiulesti port. Since it was opened in 2009, the traffic increased every year.

Slovakia Through the period with low water level in the year 2011 emergency procedures have not been performed, excepting the regulatory dredging of Danube in r. km 1786,800 – 1786,000. There are also other sections which creates problems for navigation (for ex. between rkm 1714 – 1708, rkm 1799 – 1792 Dunaja, rkm 1736 – 1731, between Morava and old bridge Lafranconi) and dredging is a short term solution but is not enough. The costs of the fairway maintenance were of 16.5 MEURO in the period 2007 – 2011. Financial support is necessary in order to solve the navigation bottleneck on the Slovak stretch of the Danube, to maintain the fairway on common section of Danube with Austria and Hungary but also for construction of water works on Danube. Other measures needed to be implemented by Slovakia are: to intensive morphological monitoring of Danube river bed, to equip the vessels of river administration with ENC, to modernize staking vessel of river administration and obsolete technical equipments.

Bulgaria In 2011 more than 3 months the water level was below the DC recommendation and daily variation was registered. The measures taken in the period July - October 2011, on the Danube sector administrated by Bulgaria were: 61 corrections to the fairway trajectory were made and an entirely new fairway on 4 occasions was drawn; limitation of the allowed dimensions of vessels and convoys passing through the critical areas; 116 floating signals were used to ensure safe navigation conditions and better outline of the fairway; 150 hydrographical pictures of critical sections were made using echo sounders and the monitoring of the traffic increased for the safety of navigation. The short term measures identified were: improving the communication between all parties concerned from both the public and private sectors; acquisition of new software for hydro-graphic pictures and a greater number of floating signs to be deployed. The medium terms measures definitely consist in the implementation of projects like Improvement of the navigational systems and topohydrographic measurements along the Danube River (*financed under OP "Transport" 2007-2013*) and Danube WATER integrated management (WATER) (*financed under the CBC Programme "Bulgaria-Romania" 2007-2013*).

Ms. Nikolova underlined the commitment for improving the navigation condition on the Romanian - Bulgarian common sector of the Danube and considers that new TEN-T Regulation will support such activities through financing support for acquiring dredges and other equipments for maintenance activities.

Austria Integrated approach for navigation, flood protection and environment is applied in Austria. Regarding the maintenance monitoring is done every month, dredging of shallow area is carried on and then again the survey of the dredged areas. Around 10 MEURO are allocated every year for waterway maintenance of the Austrian Danube stretch. The short term measures identified for an effective waterway management were: pro active dredging (starting in September) before a potential low water period in autumn, improved display of shallow sections (trackplots) via the internet; updated internal directive for all surveying activities & revised legal framework for contracting of dredging works; start of pilot project at "Bad Deutsch Altenburg": Reconstruction of groynes & optimization of interaction to continuous maintenance works; start of project "water level forecast" with Technical University of Vienna (objective: at least reliable 3 days water level forecast) and start of internal projects: Creation of a comprehensive electronic waterway management system (EMS) & set-up of internal process management. via donau has set up an internal project: Customer-oriented & integrated waterway management in which all internal procedures are considered and discussed, waterway management has to be understood as continuous improvement process. The Danube river is the most international river of the world (10 riparian countries), therefore Danube waterway administrations should cooperate & learn from each other in order to achieve harmonised waterway standards along the Danube river.

Mr. Vorderwinkler wanted also to mention the situation that is happening in Hungary. Although there are International Conventions signed by Hungary like the AGN which establishes the class of inland waterway based on the dimensions of ships and convoys (Hungarian stretch is classified as VII) and

Belgrade Convention based on which Danube Commission recommends 2.5 m to be assured on the Hungarian stretch, Hungary adopted recently a legislation which limited the numbers of barges in convoys and also the draughts. Reducing the allowed vessel draught means less transport capacity, which is in contradiction with EUSDR targets. The overall opinion is that Hungary should reconsider the new national regulation in this sense and the delegate member of Hungary in the Steering Group was kindly asked to forward this message to the Hungarian Government. This is considered a matter of legal situation and having in view that the navigation on the Hungarian stretch is since decades and recommendation of 2.5 m were applied it is also a matter of national policy.

The representatives of the professional association **Pro Danube International** appreciated the work that have been done till now by the European Commission, PA 1a Coordinators and Steering Group and also expressed the satisfaction that private sector is involved within the activities carried. In the winter 2011 – 2012 for more than 80 consecutive days the navigation was not possible on the Danube which causes losses of about 3 – 4 MEURO for its members. The confidence in reliable infrastructure was actually lost and 2 large companies don't want to use Danube anymore. Transparent short term measures for ensuring the depths are needed. Pro Danube proposed to organize a **task force experts group** in order to discuss the problems faced and possible solution for the next autumn.

Danube Tourism Commission mentioned that not only cargo but also the passengers transport was affected and it is desirable that the passengers not to be transferred from Danube and transported by busses or trains as it were the case last year. Other issue raised was the berthing places for passengers' ships in Budapest. There is an agreement between local council and shipping companies that they can berth now in the city centre, but the situation is uncertain for 2014 – 2015.

In order to avoid the size of the negative effects of the Danube navigation, the participants were asked to provide their input in order to prepare a draft *Common Declaration* which is going to be signed by the Ministers with the occasion of the next Council meeting which will take place on 7 – 8 of June 2012. Mr. Otto Schwetz proposed to make use of the text of the Memorandum of Understanding of the development of the pan European Transport Corridor VII (Danube), which more than 10 years was applied and could be adapted to current needs.

Participants expressed that flexibility in financing, better communication, increased funds, partnership agreements where the case are necessary.

Ms. Ploeg-Cruceru underlined the main conclusions following the commissioners letters are that national administrations in charge with the fairway maintenance is lack of budget, equipments, navigation aids, specialized personnel and information systems. She supports the idea of creating a task force, as soon as possible.

International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC) Mr. Milkovic proposed that also the tributaries to be included in the text of Common Declaration.

After the discussions, Commissioner Hahn asked PACs to draft the Common Declaration and to send it to SG members. Also he asked to be calculated the average yearly costs for inland waterways maintenance and to be prepared concrete projects for the future. The possibility to use solidarity fund will be analysed for financing additional costs of maintenance for urgent measures under extraordinary circumstances. The probability that the same problems will appear is relatively high, so it is time now to react and for short term is necessary the commitment of the ministers of transport in order to find funds for maintenance and to find solutions for sharing the dredging equipments between the states. Having in view that at the moment Solidarity fund exists at the Commission but dredging is not eligible a solution could be to reallocate funds within the existing financing programmes if the Member States would want to.

The second day of the meeting started with discussions on how the Common Declaration will be drafted and how will be organized the "task force experts group" (TFEG).

The general opinion was that should be one task force for all Danube countries and this should be supported by the ministries. Meetings should take place for short term measures under extraordinary situations. Within the Common Declaration could be included references on the necessary budgets for dredging, signalization, information to be provided to the RIS users, regular works, surveys, measurements, and extraordinary works. The TFEG could work in the framework of priority Area 1.a. *Inland Navigation* facilitating also the communication between private sector and national authorities.

The Steering Group approved the Minutes of the 2nd Steering Group which was held in Bucharest, on 28th of October 2010, and the agenda for the 3rd SG meeting.

The Priority Area Coordinators gave a presentation on the current status of EUSDR implementation. The 2nd meeting of the Working groups was held in Vienna, on 15th and 16th of March 2012 with the aim to have an input from the stakeholders on draft version of Road Map for the implementation of PA 1a. There was a feedback of attendants regarding waterway infrastructure, integrative waterway management, ports & sustainable freight transport, fleet modernisation, River Information Services, education & jobs. A detailed minute is available online at www.danube-navigation.eu. Till present 91 project fishes were received by the technical secretariats. For several known projects, data sheets are missing in the following fields: Waterway infrastructure, port infrastructure and River Information Services. Regarding the Preparation of EUSDR "flagship project" - Innovative Danube Vessel, the terms of reference were finalised and the tender will be in June 2012. The overall objectives are elaboration and development of innovative vessel and technology solutions with high potential for implementation on the Danube, an analysis of solutions derived from existing R&D projects with respect to their potential for implementation and further development in the Danube region and provision of recommendations for further technology development within the framework of the Danube Region Strategy. PA 1a website www.danube-navigation.eu is permanently updated with information and documents. The Coordinators informed about the **1st Annual Stakeholder Conference** and requested SG members to participate and to give a short presentation on the second day of the conference (25 May) on the contribution to the implementation of PA 1a on inland waterways and priorities for the near future.

PACs mentioned that 91 project fishes were received, for projects being in different stages (under definition phase, in preparation, in implementation and even finalized) and presented the criteria for the projects selected to receive a Letter of Recommendation (LoR). The projects fishes were published on the PA 1a website and all the received projects will contribute to the EUSDR actions and targets and have an impact on the macro-region. The criteria were sent before the meeting to the participants and no objections were expressed during the meeting. The proposed criteria were approved. The document was named *Criteria for project labelling* and the observation of Mrs. Ploeg-Cruceru from DG REGIO was taken into account and the name of the document will be changed in *Criteria for projects that will receive a Letter of Recommendation*.

According to the proposed criteria, 9 projects will receive a Letter of Recommendation. Also it was mentioned that if other requests for a LoR will be forwarded to the PACs, the written procedure will be followed according to the Rules of Procedures (art. 6).

Mr. Vojtěch Dabrowski from Czech Republic mentioned that they submitted a project **Analytic study of the need of water corridor Danube–Oder–Elbe**, which has financing for the feasibility study and was not chosen to receive LoR. The PACs explained that the project is taken into account on the global picture of the macro-region development and it is labelled as EUSDR projects, but will not receive a LoR because it is not necessary having financing is assured.

Mr. Bernabei said that LoR do not have an added value now and DG MOVE is concerned about the value of such a letter in the future programmes.

The Roadmap, a document necessary for each EUSDR priority area, requested by the European Commission was elaborated and sent before the meeting to the SG members. Mr. Thomas Hartl, from Austrian technical secretariat, presented briefly the content of the Roadmap. The Roadmap is a

strategic concept, having recurrent and specific activities and for each those activities describes milestones, responsible and involved organisations, timeframe of implementation, tasks (sub-activities) and the expected output / results.

Mrs. Ploeg-Cruceru from DG REGIO proposed that chapter 4 – *Thematic overview* to become chapter 2 and said that the document will be analysed in detailed by DG REGIO and if there are other comments will be send in due time. As there were no other observations or comments on the Roadmap it was decided that the SG members can send their inputs in the next few weeks, in due time to insert the comments before first progress report to be send to the European Commission.

In order to prepare the content of the first Progress Report which will be delivered by PACs to European Commission at the end of June 2012 the SG members were requested to present how they are contributing to the implementation of the EUSDR's actions and targets for Priority Area 1a on inland waterways and what its specific priorities are for the near future in implementing the Strategy.

Romania considers that the contribution is done through projects focused on improvement of the conditions of navigation on the Danube (especially on Calarasi – Braila sector and on the Romanian - Bulgarian common sector), rehabilitation and development of ports infrastructure and also port facilities for collection and treatment of ships' waste and implementation of Romanian River Information Services. The stage of these projects was presented and the priorities for the near future are finalisation of the ongoing projects, implementation of necessary measures on short term in order to ensure more days /year with good conditions for navigation, elaboration of a General Master Plan for Transport and participation in transnational cooperation projects like NEWADA, HINT an IRIS Europe.

Croatia considers that the contribution is done by measures to ensure the safety of navigation and improvement of the conditions of navigation on its inland waterways, respecting and using the provisions of the Manual on Good Practices. For the Danube River, the environmental assessment is in process for the sector from rkm1380 (mouth of river Drava) to rkm 1433 (border with Hungary) on whose part is the worst bottleneck for navigation (Apatin- Kopački rit 1400-1410 rkm). For arrangement of the waterway on the Danube River from 1325 -1321 rkm construction permit will be issued in the first half of 2013 and also for arrangement of winter shelter Opatovac. The performance of works in the future time can be hardly implemented because of the establishment of the border with the Republic of Serbia on some parts on the Danube. Regarding the bottlenecks on the Sava River main design for the arrangement of the waterway from Brčko (rkm 234) to Sisak (rkm 590) is in preparation.

Serbia contributes to the EUSDR through the improvement of infrastructure and economic performance of waterway navigation and Improvement of the organizational framework and human resources for inland waterway navigation. For the Danube River 24 critical sectors were identified and prefeasibility study for the improvement of the conditions for navigation was finalized. The preparation of conceptual designs in progress and financing is assured through EU IPA 2010 Programme, 2011-2013. The financing for works is not assured and there is the concern that if funds will not be allocated in time the technical documentation will be obsolete having in view the dynamic of the river. Removal of UXO near Prahovo and implementation of RIS are also ongoing. Serbia is sharing a common vision with its strategic partners in all fields of actions and especially on the transnational cooperation projects like NEWADA, PLATINA and IRIS Europe.

Bulgaria contributes to the implementation of EUSDR through a strategic planning of the works on the corridors crossing Bulgaria and the connections with intermodal nodes and neighbouring countries. Regarding the ongoing projects on the Danube river, they are focused on the improvement of the navigability in the common Bulgarian - Romanian section of the Danube River, establishment of River Information Services System (BulRIS), improvement of the systems for navigation and topo-hydrographic measurements on the Danube River, establishment of the Danube water integrated management (WATER) and the transnational cooperation within IRIS Europe.

Mrs. Nikolina Nikolova Bulgaria's Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Public Works and Bulgarian national coordinator for EUSDR presented a proposal for an action which was made to the Romanian authorities for the **Development of Pan European corridor VII through improvement of the navigability on the Romanian – Bulgarian common sector of the Danube river, modernization of the port infrastructure, promotion of the intermodal transport, surrounding infrastructure and development of the information systems using Connecting Europe Facility.** For such a complex action Bulgaria had prepared a draft Roadmap which establishes concrete actions and timeframes for the identification, preparation and implementation of projects. The roadmap also foresees to set up an Interministerial Committee which will be responsible for carrying out this complex action. Mrs. Nikolova mentioned that this example was presented also to the European Commission and can be followed by others neighbouring countries.

Moldova contributes on PA 1a activities by developing the port of Giurgiulesti. The port of Giurgiulesti provides facilities for receiving tankers, grain carriers, container ships, vessels for the carriage of general cargo, passenger ships, Ro-Ro. The priorities for the near future are to develop the port infrastructure according to the Giurgiulesti Port Complex Master Plan, to develop facilities for waste collection and to promote the port at international level.

Hungary contributes to the PA 1a of EUSDR by elaborating a national transport strategy which will be ready in 2013, by carrying out RIS activities like updating ENC and working on legal framework for data exchange and cooperation within the transnational projects like NEWADA and WANDA. A river buss will be under operation starting with 2012 between Budapest and its neighbourhoods.

Slovakia consider that the contribution is done through the actively involvement in the international projects like NEWADA, NELI, PLTINA and project implementation for improving the waterway infrastructure in Slovakia (on the stretch above Bratislava, below Bratislava and on the river Váh waterway). The ongoing study INWAPO will assess the needs of Slovak ports in terms of infrastructures and links/services to improve the trimodality. For the port of Bratislava is under preparation the development of infrastructure for a new container terminal. The priorities for the near future is to deal with water levels, completion of infrastructure in ports and to eliminate bottleneck on Danube (conditional by international agreements) represented by the old bridge in Bratislava.

Austrian contribution is made by carrying out actions and activities foreseen in the Austrian Action Plan Danube Navigation (NAP). NAP is a comprehensive and dynamic planning and decision-making instrument for Austrian IWT policy until 2015. This catalogue of measures was developed in cooperation with inland ports and the inland navigation sector and it is totally in line with European NAIADES action programme and the European Strategy for the Danube Region PA 1a. The priorities for the near future are for instance "the improvement of the environmental performance of the Danube fleet", "the improvement of the security standards of the Danube inland navigation", the support for Danube riparian countries to implement the RIS etc.)

Danube Commission 11 states (10 riparian counties + Russia) are parties to the Belgrade Convention and each country has its own work procedure in order to ensure 2.5 m depths. DC presents the common position on certain matters of its Member States. In 2011 DC launched a project on market observation for Danube navigation. Was reflected that transport on the Danube is inferior comparing with Rhin for example and this is because weak economy and navigation infrastructure. A large number of critical sectors were identified, where main parameters recommended by DC are not meet. The projects of DC Member States aim mostly on the improvement of infrastructure by maintenance and traditional regulation works. Lack of progress in the implementation of these projects causes real losses for the DC Member States but also reduces confidence in transport on the Danube. Several documents were prepared or under preparation by the DC as plan for major works for achieving the recommended fairway parameters, recommendation on minimum requirements for standard fairway parameters, harmonized requirements for certain professions, etc. These documents could be used as basis for works within the Working Group for Infrastructure and DC expressed its availability for further cooperation.

International Sava Basin River Commission is contributing to the EUSDR implementation through a unique coordinated approach of four states (Coordination Committee) for the development of the Sava waterway infrastructure. The feasibility study was finalized in 2008 for the rehabilitation and development of transport and navigation on the Sava River Waterway and EIA for the sector Brčko – Sisak was adopted in 2011. The estimated value of works is 85 MEURO and next steps are detailed design and works. Three RIS base station in test operation, decision on RIS Data exchange in preparation and it is expected that RIS on the Sava river to be fully operational in 2015, same with EUSDR PA 1a target. The priorities for the near future are continuation of the project on waterway infrastructure development and urgent measures on fairway improvements on the most critical sectors (to avoid 2011 situation).

International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) states that all countries participate actively in the ICPDR activities which have a lot of synergies with the navigation. Since Joint Statement on Navigation and the manual on good practices in Sustainable Waterway Planning were elaborated there is an improvement in the preparation of projects related to the fairway, which takes much more into account the environment protection. In 2012 Austria has the presidency of ICPDR and one of the next activities is to get financing for a study regarding the transport of sediments on the Danube River.

Corridor VII contribution was taken into account in drafting the Action Plan. The future activities are concentrated on the ports developments as intermodal centres and the model of Vienna container terminal could be used for other ports. Ongoing projects are PORTFINO (Assessment of the economic environment of the smaller ports on the Danube) and DONAUHANSE (Network of Danube Cities). Mr. Otto Schwetz is member of the Expert group for the TEN-T planning and extension outside EU within DG MOVE.

Danube Tourist Commission stated that River Cruise segment is growing. Cruise season is from March to January, which means 240 days the safety navigation conditions and water depths should be assured. Latest activities consisted in Danube Emergency Drill 2012 and one objective of this exercise was the development of a general alarm plan for the Danube Region. Danube Tourist Commission considers that the tax for locks on the Danube – Black Sea Canal are high.

In the end of the meeting the representatives of the European Commission took the floor. Mr. Cesare Bernabei from DG MOVE appreciated that a lot of work have been done and information collected. It is extremely important to have discussions between the countries and some problems tackled. The discussion of the 3rd Steering Group for PA 1a it is an input for the ministers Conference in June. Also he considers that LoR is not a crucial point for the group activity because is not clear how could be used in an efficient way. Mrs Irina Ploeg-Cruceru appreciated the work done so far within the PA 1a and encouraged everybody to continue the active involvement.

Next steps

- **24 - 25 May 2012:** 1st Annual Stakeholder Conference of PA 1a, Bucharest (Romania);
- **Mid-June 2012:** Draft Progress Report to be commented and adopted by SG members by written procedure;
- **30 June 2012:** First Progress Report to the European Commission based on Road Map for PA 1a;
- **Fall 2012:** 3rd meeting of Working Groups of PA 1a + 4th meeting of Steering Group of PA 1a
- **27 - 28 November 2012:** 1st Annual EUSDR Stakeholder Conference, Regensburg (Germany).

Enclosures

Please note: All documents are or will be available for download at the website of EUSDR PA 1A
→ www.danube-navigation.eu

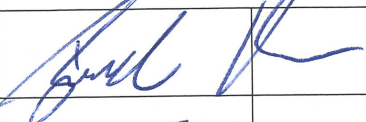

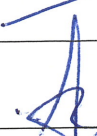
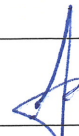
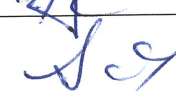
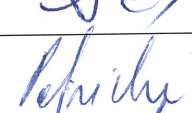
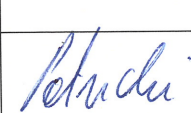
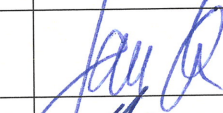
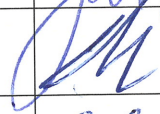
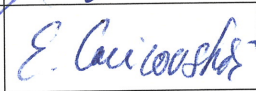
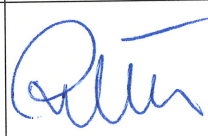

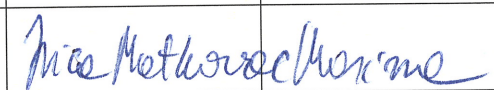
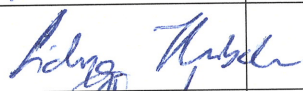
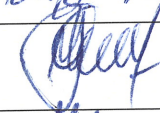
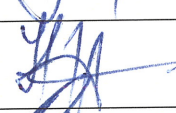
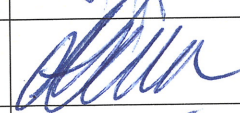
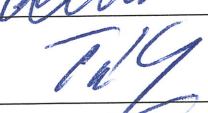
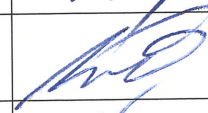
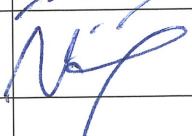
- (1) Presentations given by the participants at the Steering Group meeting
- (2) List of attendants
- (3) List of contact details for members of the Steering Group

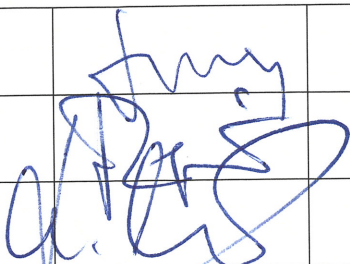
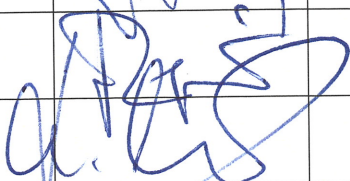

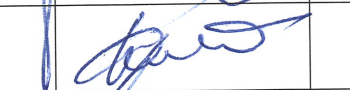

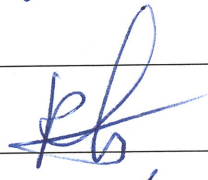
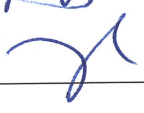
3rd Steering Group meeting,

Priority Area 1a of the EU Danube Region Strategy on inland waterways

3rd – 4th of May 2012, Bratislava

No	Name	Country/Organization	3rd of May 2012	4th of May 2012
1	Commissioner Johannes HAHN	DG REGIO		
2	Andrej Holák	SK		
3	Irina PLOEG CRUCERU	DG REGIO		
4	Cesare BERNABEI	DG MOVE		
5	Philip WELLER	ICPDR		
6	Zeljko MILKOVIC	ISRBC		
7	Pjotr SUVOROV	DC		
8	Karol ANDA	DC		
9	Horst SCHINDLER	DC		
10	Otto SCHWETZ	ARGE DL, Corridor VII		
11	Eric BARTHA	CODCR		
12	Gerhard SKOFF	DTC		
13	Hans-Peter HASENBICHLER	AT		
14	Reinhard VORDERWINKLER	AT		
15	Michael FASTENBAUER	AT		
16	Markus SIMONER	AT		
17	Thomas HARTL	AT		

18	Harald BEUTL	AT		
19	t.b.d.	DE		
20	Alexandru Serban CUCU	RO		
21	Cristina CUC	RO		
22	Monica PATRICHI	RO		
23	Jan VLCEK	CZ		
24	Vojtech DABROWSKI	CZ		
25	Elena CACICOVSCHII	MD		
26	Zaneta OSTOJIC BARJAKTAREVIC	RS		
27	Marina IVICA-MATKOVAC	HR		
28	Lydia HUBALEK	HR		
29	Nikolina NIKOLOVA	BG		
30	Nadezhda BUHOVA	BG		
31	Anna NATOVA	BG		
32	Peter CAKY	SK		
33	Vladimír NOVAK	SK		
34	Matej Vániček	SK		
35	Anna Hanzelová	SK		
36	Miroslava Tegelhoffová	SK		

37	Stanislav OPIELA	SK		
38	Franc ZEPIC	SI		
39	Manfred SEITZ	PDI (advisor)		
40	Alexandru CAPATU	PDI (advisor)		
41				
42	PONZO SCARE	AFDJ		
43	ROBERT RAFAEL	RSOE		
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EU Strategy for the Danube Region

Priority Area 1a – To improve mobility and multimodality: Inland waterways

RULES OF PROCEDURE of the Steering Group

Author(s):
Priority Area Coordinators of PA 1a

Version (date):
V 1.0 final | 28 Oct. 2011

Preamble

Representatives of the Countries of the Danube Region have established
on the basis of the

- European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (COM(2010) 715 final) of 8 December 2010 and the accompanying Commission staff working document "Action Plan" (SEC(2010) 1489 final) and the
- Council Conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region of the 3083rd General Affairs Council Meeting (8388/11) of 13 April 2011
- Conclusions of the European Council (EUCO 23/11) of 23/24 June 2011

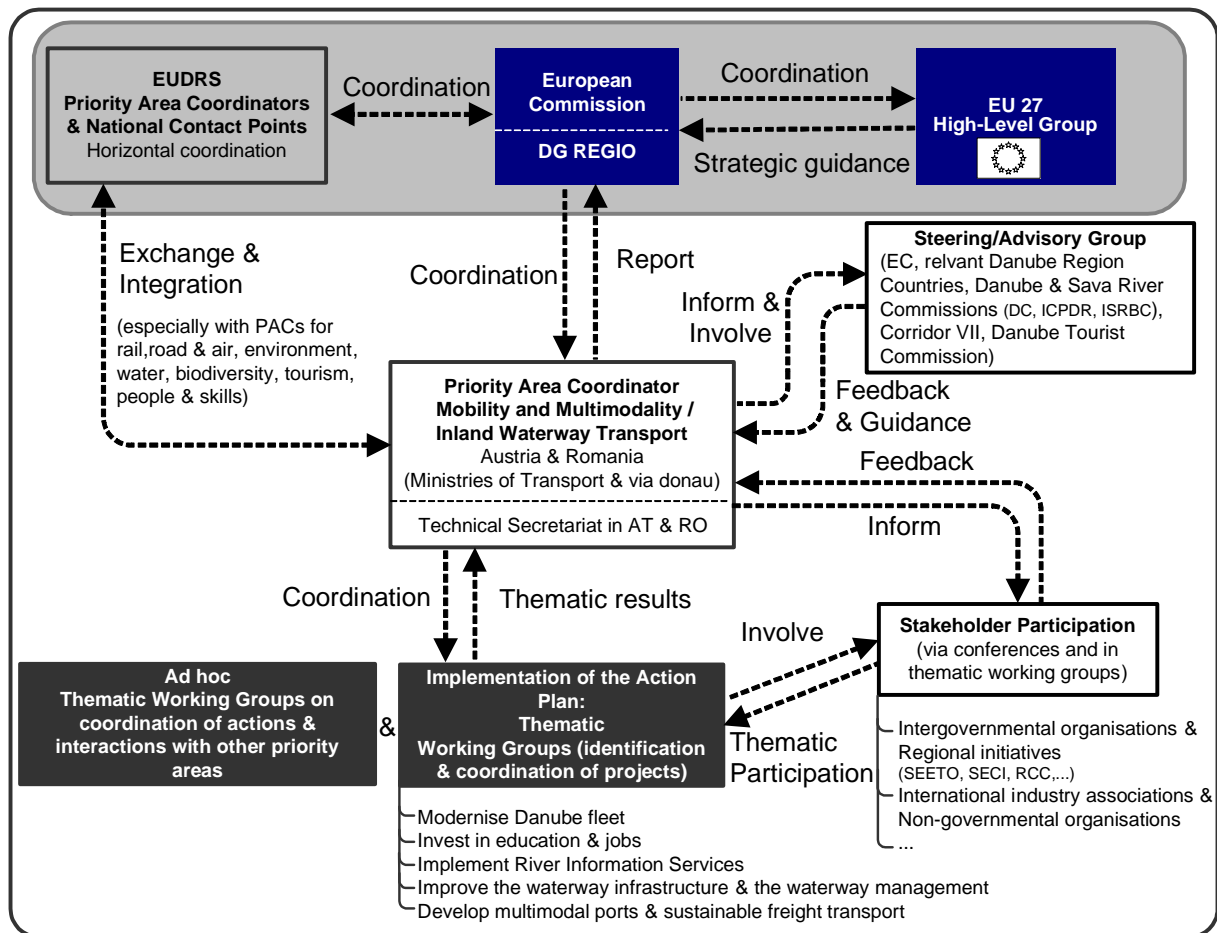
a Steering Group (hereinafter referred to as "SG") for the implementation of Priority Area 1a - "To improve mobility and multimodality: Inland waterways" (hereinafter referred to as "PA 1a") of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (hereinafter referred to as "EUSDR")

Art. 1 – General provisions

- (1) The SG for the Implementation of PA 1a comprises representatives of all Danube Region Strategy Partner States (i.e., Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine), the European Commission (DG REGIO, DG MOVE and DG ENV) and relevant international organisations (Danube Commission, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, International Sava River Basin Commission, Pan-European Transport Corridor VII, Danube Tourist Commission, Working Community of the Danube Regions, Council of Danube Cities and Regions).
- (2) PA 1a is coordinated jointly by the Federal Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Romania, the Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology of Austria and via donau - Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH.
- (3) The SG is chaired by the Priority Area Coordinators (hereinafter referred to as "PACs").
- (4) The SG is assisted by the Technical Secretariats of the PACs.
- (5) Working Groups may be established in order to investigate thematic issues and support the SG and the PACs.
- (6) The duration of the term of office for the SG will cover the whole period of implementation of the EUSDR.

Art. 2 – Role and tasks of the Steering Group

- (1) The SG is created in order to advise and assist Romania and Austria in their capacity as PACs, for the smooth implementation of PA 1a and to ensure that suitable actions are anchored all over the region and in all participating states. Furthermore, the SG should also make decisions regarding the future development of the area, its objectives, co-operations and guidelines. The following figure provides an overview on the organisational structure of PA 1a and the position of the SG:



- (2) The SG is responsible for the labelling of projects which are seen as being in line with the EUSDR, but not for the operational initiation, administration, organization or execution of such projects.
- (3) The SG members shall submit to the PACs a list of ongoing, planned projects and possible project ideas in line with the EUSDR's Action Plan. This list is to be continuously updated during the implementation phase of these projects. New project ideas shall be assessed according to whether or not the proposal is in line with the goals of PA 1a, its relevance to the macro-region and its added value compared to on-going projects.
- (4) The SG discusses the Action Plan adopted by the Commission and may propose adjustments of the following three types to the European Commission:
 - Clarification/correction of the details of a project
 - Addition of a new action or project
 - Deletion of an action or a project
- (5) The SG shall discuss and finally approve the annual implementation progress report for PA 1a to the Commission, which has to be drafted by the PACs.
- (6) Already existing and well-established platforms should be utilized in order to identify synergies with the EUSDR.
- (7) The SG facilitates the work of the PACs regarding the implementation and the development of PA 1a, in particular with regard to

- Establishing a network of national counterparts
- Identifying possible relevant stakeholders, with particular emphasis on Project Leaders
- Promoting public awareness
- Promoting the cross-sectoral approach of the EUSDR
- Ensuring policy discussion and policy development
- Ensuring communication and visibility of results

(8) The SG members entitled to vote have the following tasks:

- Participate in the SG meetings and involve in the decision-making process;
- Inform the SG about the activities developed in the countries they represent and which are related to the implementation of PA 1a;
- Contribute to implement the decisions of the SG, according to their responsibilities.

Art. 3 – Working language and communication

- (1) Aiming at an efficient and rapid communication among the Partners of the SG, English is adopted as working language.
- (2) Communication among the members of the SG and between the SG Secretariat and the members of the SG shall generally be done by e-mail. Any document which shall be sent to the members of the SG or the SG Secretariat shall be sent via e-mail or, if this is not possible, by fax.

Art. 4 – Membership

- (1) There are three types of membership in the SG:
 - Members nominated by the Partner States with a right to vote
 - Other regular members with an observer status
 - Invited members with an advisory capacity
- (2) All Danube Region Strategy Partner States named in Art 1. (1) have full membership and shall delegate at maximum two representatives to the SG. The participation in the SG shall be voluntary. The members shall act under the mandate and on behalf of their respective countries. Full membership of a Partner State provides equal rights and possibilities for participating in the coordination of PA 1a.
- (3) In addition to the Partner States the European Commission and the relevant international organisations named in Art 1. (1) are regular members of the SG on the basis of an observer status. These SG members shall have the same tasks as the members entitled to vote of the SG, with the exception of the participation to the decision-making process (i.e. no right to vote).
- (4) The meetings of the SG are open, ex officio, to the participation of staff members of the PACs and the EUSDR's National Contact Points. Upon invitation of the PACs, other countries, international organizations, existing cooperation mechanisms, regional initiatives, experts and other partners may participate as guests with an advisory capacity.
- (5) SG members are allowed to send substitutes to the meetings upon prior notification of the PACs in writing and in due time.

Art. 5 - Meeting organization

- (1) The SG meets at least twice a year. PACs are in charge of convening the meetings of the SG and shall inform the members of the SG about the venue and date of the next SG meeting at least one month in advance.
- (2) Electronic exchange and web-based co-ordination shall play a crucial role within the PACs and the SG's communication.
- (3) At each of the meetings, the PACs provide a draft agenda, write meeting minutes and distribute all the relevant documents among the SG members.
- (4) At the beginning of each meeting, the agenda of the respective meeting will be adopted together with the minutes of the previous SG meeting.

Art. 6 – Decision-making

(1) Decision-making during SG meetings:

- a. Decisions that the SG is entitled by the European Council to make will be taken by consensus, which, in principle, is understood as absence of objection. Decisions can be made when at least 50% of the Partner States plus one more – i.e. eight Partner States – are present. If there is no quorum of 50% of the Partner States plus one more at the meeting, the meeting will be held and the decisions will be taken according to procedure under section (2) a.
- b. Each Partner State shall have one vote.
- c. In the case that consensus cannot be reached, the Chairperson sets down a 30 minutes recess for consultations in order for the present members to reconsider their position. The impossibility to reach consensus appears if, after two rounds of discussions on one certain issue, a consensual decision cannot be reached.
- d. In case of opposition by several members entitled to vote, the Chairperson decides whether the decision is postponed or defeated. However, if consensus cannot be reached due to one single opposing Partner State, the SG may decide, at the initiative of the Chairperson, by "unanimity minus one", meaning, all members but one shall support the decision.
- e. Decisions which directly affect one of the Partner States cannot be taken without the approval of that particular Partner State.

(2) Decision-making by written procedure:

- a. In addition to the decision-making at the SG's meetings, the PACs – also on request of SG members – can initiate a written decision-making process via e-mail. In this case, the SG Secretariat on behalf of the Chairman shall send the draft decision to the members entitled to vote and shall fix a deadline, giving the addressees at least 10 working days time for reply. In all cases the exact date and time of reaction shall be put in the e-mail. If no objection was received by the deadline, the proposal is considered approved in the sent format (silence is considered as agreement).
- b. In case objections are received, the SG Secretariat sends all received objections to the PACs. The PACs formulate their joint position regarding the received objections, which is consequently transmitted by the SG Secretariat to the SG members entitled to vote. The lack of reaction on proposals/objections is equivalent with agreement with the joint position of the PACs. In case new objections are formulated, the matter shall be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the SG.
- c. SG members not entitled to vote will be informed about the decision-making process via e-mail.

- d. In any case, after the time limit has expired, the SG Secretariat shall immediately inform all members on whether the decision is deemed to be taken or the matter is placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the SG.

Art. 7 – Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

- (1) The Steering Group shall adopt these Rules of Procedure by unanimous decision at its next SG meeting in autumn 2011. In case unanimous consensus cannot be reached the decision-making provisions of Art. 6 shall be applied in order to reach consensus.
- (2) After their adoption the rules of procedure may be amended by consensus.