

Appeal of the Steering Group

of Priority Area 1a of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) concerning the implementation of the Luxemburg Declaration

Whereas:

1. Two targets within Priority Area 1a – To improve mobility and multimodality: Inland waterways – of the EUSDR are referring to
 - a. increase the cargo transport on the river by 20% by 2020 compared to 2010
 - b. 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
2. Shippers, terminal operators, logistic service providers and other users of inland waterway transport have repeatedly requested for improving the navigation conditions and eliminating the existing, mainly financial, technical and administrative barriers
3. The provisions of the Belgrade Convention as well as of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin stipulate that the riparian states undertake to maintain their sectors of the waterway in a navigable condition
4. The European Commission expressed willingness for supporting the Member States in solving the bottlenecks which are hampering navigation (letter from 27 of February 2012).
5. The ***Declaration on effective waterway infrastructure maintenance on the Danube and its navigable tributaries***, signed in Luxemburg, on 7 of June 2012 foresees the measures for the regular fairway maintenance works on these waterways and the role of Coordinators of Priority Area 1a on the monitoring the implementation of the Declaration
6. The ministers responsible for transport committed to meet once a year or as necessary to follow up on the conclusions of the Luxemburg Declaration and make sure that they are implemented as agreed.

The Steering Group would like to offer their support for the preparation of a first ministerial meeting on the follow-up of the implementation of the Luxemburg Declaration, which could be scheduled in 2014 (e.g. at the occasion of the Transport, Telecommunication and Energy Council meeting).

In spring 2013 the Steering Group decided to have a **Fairway Maintenance Master Plan for the Danube Region** drafted, which will be highlighting the national needs and short-term measures in order to ensure the realisation of harmonised waterway infrastructure parameters in line with the existing international legal framework and the related PA 1a targets. This document is to be finalised in spring 2014 and is expected to be available as a basis for further discussions during a first ministerial meeting on the Luxemburg Declaration.

The Steering Group would like to express appreciation for the efforts of the **partner Governments** to the implementation of the Luxemburg Declaration and **to invite** the riparian States which have not signed or endorsed the Declaration and to take all the necessary measures to endorse the Declaration.

The Steering Group of Priority Area 1a of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) **appeals to the Danube region partner states** to provide information on the needed support from the European Commission.

The Steering Group of Priority Area 1a of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) **recalls to the partner Governments** to take on a national level the necessary measures for the implementation of the Luxemburg Declaration and to inform the Steering Group of PA 1a on the results.

Done in Budapest, on the 21 of November 2013

On behalf of the Steering Group of the PA 1a,

Reinhard Vorderwinkler

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