



Opportunities and proposals for a revised roadmap



REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA

MINISTARSTVO ZAŠTITE
OKOLIŠA I ENERGETIKE



DTP-PAC1-PA6-06 Biodiversity, Landscapes, Quality of Air and Soils

Zagreb, 2019

This project is co-financed by the European Union

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More information on the EUSDR is available on

<https://www.danube-region.eu>

<https://twitter.com/eusdr>

<https://www.facebook.com/DanubeRegionStrategy>

More information on the Danube Transnational Programme is available on
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List of abbreviations

EU Strategy for the Danube Region (core terms):

AP	ACTION PLAN
DSP	DANUBE STRATEGY POINT
DTP	DANUBE TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMME
DRC	DANUBE REGION COUNTRIES
EC	EUROPEAN COMMISSION
EU	EUROPEAN UNION
EUSDR	EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY FOR DANUBE REGION
HLG	THE HIGH LEVEL GROUP
IR	REPORT TO THE EC: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUSDR PA 6
MRS	MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGY
NCs	THE NATIONAL COORDINATORS
PA	PRIORITY AREA
PAC	PRIORITY AREA COORDINATOR
SG	STEERING GROUP
TF	TASK FORCE
TAF-DRP	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FACILITY FOR DANUBE REGION PROJECTS
WG	WORKING GROUP

Task Forces:

Danubeparks	DANUBEPARKS - NETWORK OF PROTECTED AREAS
DIAS	DANUBE REGION INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES NETWORK
DSTF	DANUBE STURGEON TASK FORCE
SONDAR	SOIL STRATEGY NETWORK IN THE DANUBE REGION
TFAQ	TASK FORCE ON AIR QUALITY
TFPC	TASK FORCE ON PESTICIDES AND CHEMICALS
WGMPBD	WORKING GROUP MASTERPLAN BAVARIAN DANUBE

Countries:

AL	ALBANIA	HR	CROATIA	RO	ROMANIA
AT	AUSTRIA	HU	HUNGARY	RS	SERBIA
BA	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	IC	ICELAND	SI	SLOVENIA
BG	BULGARIA	IT	ITALY	SK	THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
BY	BAVARIA	MD	MOLDOVA	TR	TURKEY
CZ	THE CZECH REPUBLIC	ME	MONTENEGRO	UA	UKRAINE
DE	GERMANY	MK	FYR MACEDONIA	UK	UNITED KINGDOM
GR	GREECE	NO	NORWAY		

Other abbreviations:

CLC	CORINE LAND COVER
CLMS	COPERNICUS LAND MONITORING SERVICE
CBC	CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION
CBD	CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
CoP	CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
DG Regio	EU COMMISSION'S DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR REGIONAL POLICY
EEA	EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY
EIB	EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK
ENI	EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTRUMENT
ENPI	EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PARTNERSHIP INSTRUMENT
ERDF	EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
ESENIAS	EAST AND SOUTH EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES
ETC	EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION
EUSBSR	EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY FOR BALTIC SEA REGION
EUSAIR	EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY FOR ADRIATIC AND IONIAN REGION
EUSAPLP	EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY FOR ALPINE REGION
GEF	THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
GIS	GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM
IAD	INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR DANUBE RESEARCH
ICPDR	INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE DANUBE RIVER
IPA	INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE
IWRM	INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
JDS	JOINT DANUBE SURVEY
JRC	JOINT RESEARCH CENTER
MaB	MAN AND BIOSPHERE
MAES	MAPPING AND ASSESSMENT ON ECOSYSTEMS AND THEIR SERVICES (MAES)
MS	MEMBER STATE
NBSAP	NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIE AND ACTION PLAN
NCFF	NATURAL CAPITAL FINANCING FACILITY
NGO	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
PAF	PRIORITISED ACTION FRAMEWORKS
RBM	RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT
TBR MDD	TRANS-BOUNDARY RESERVE MURA, DANUBE, DRAVA
UNEP	THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
VASICA	VISIONS AND STRATEGIES IN THE CARPATHIAN AREA
WFD	THE EU WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE
WWF	WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

1 Introduction

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) is described in two documents: (1) a Communication from the European Commission to the other EU Institutions, and (2) an accompanying Action Plan which complements the Communication. The Strategy focuses on four pillars addressing major issues and pillars are divided into 12 priority areas (PA). The Action Plan proposes specific Actions to meet the objectives of the PA.

The subject of this Report is PA 6 “To preserve biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils”, which is coordinated by Bavarian State Ministry for the Environment and Consumer Protection and Croatian Ministry of Environment and Energy.

The two mentioned Ministries are also partners in implementation of the project DTP-PAC1-PA6 Biodiversity, Landscapes, Quality of Air and Soils (PA 6 Project), which is co-funded by Interreg Danube Transnational Programme (Priority Axis 4 Well governed Danube region), financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The objective of the Project PA 6 is to increase the stability and effectiveness of PA 6 management by increasing the capacity and ownership of PA 6 at the level of Steering Groups and Task Forces and by creating synergies with other subjects responsible for the implementation of the EUSDR and other relevant institutional stakeholders in the Danube Region policies.

Opportunities and proposals for a revised roadmap of EUSDR Priority area 6 is one of the Project PA 6 planned activities. Main outcomes of this activity are revised Action Plan and proposal of Roadmap for implementation of PA 6 Actions. Consortium - Geonatura Ltd. and Green Infrastructure Ltd., provided services on this activity for Croatian Ministry of Environment and Energy. Services included following three deliverables:

- **Initial report** – with analysis of the results, needs and challenges in implementing the EUSDR PA 6 and accompanying Action Plan, as well as Roadmap for implementation of PA 6 Actions;
- **Draft report** – with development of revised Roadmap of EUSDR Priority Area 6, which includes draft of the new Action Plan and the Roadmap for implementation of PA 6 Actions;
- **Final report** – with Revised Roadmap of EUSDR Priority Area 6.

2 Overview of EUSDR and the current Action plan

The size and diversity of the European territory warrants a differentiated, yet strategic approach to its development. A globalised economy, rapid technological change, increasing interdependence between countries, growing role of sub-national authorities', as well as borderless, territorially-relevant challenges such as climate change, ecological degradation and migratory inflows call for cooperative frameworks thanks to which groups of countries belonging to a wider geographical space can cooperate to address common challenges and opportunities. As a wish to provide an effective and collective response to issues better handled together than separately, a macro-regional approach arose to such an extent that there are now four European Union (EU) macro-regional strategies (MRS): EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR; 2009); EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR; 2010); EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR; 2014); EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP; 2016). These strategies aim at addressing challenges and opportunities specific to certain geographical area (**Figure 2-1**), (which are too local to be of direct interest to the whole EU, but on the other hand too broad to be efficiently dealt with at national level) and define a set of shared, long-term objectives agreed by the participating countries. All adopted MRS are accompanied by a rolling action plan to be regularly updated in light of new, emerging needs and changing contexts. More detailed description of the EUSDR (Communication and Action Plan) is given in following chapters.

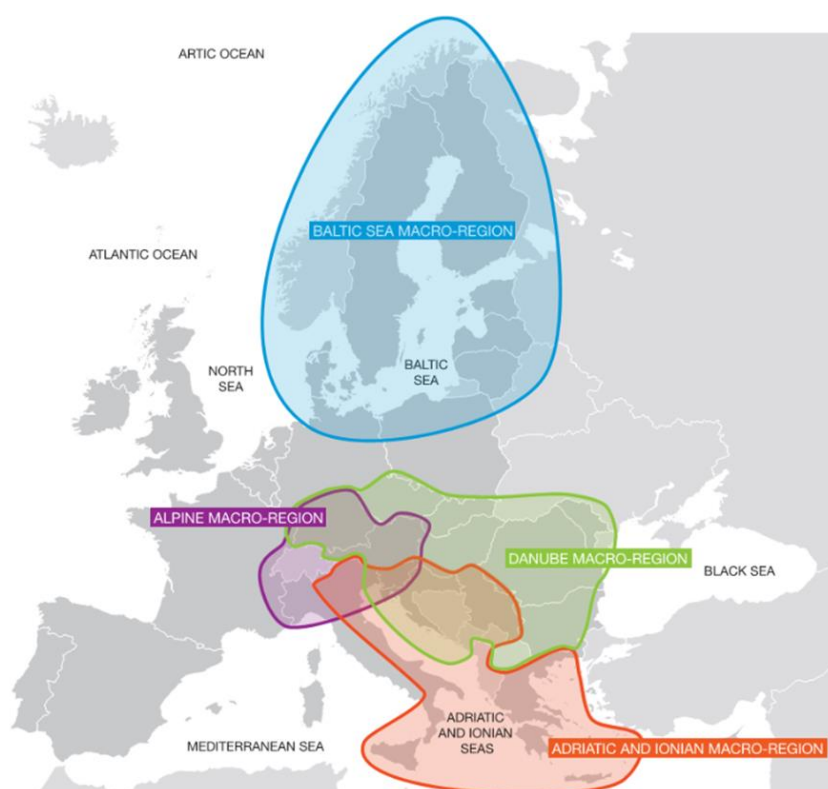


Figure 2-1 Macro-regions in Europe (Source: Study on macro-regional strategies and their links with cohesion policy).

2.1 EU Strategy for the Danube Region

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) is one of four EU macro-regional strategies. It was adopted by the European Commission in December 2010 and endorsed by the European Council in 2011. The Strategy was jointly developed by the Commission, together with the Danube Region Countries and stakeholders, in order to address common challenges together. The Strategy seeks to create synergies and coordination between existing policies and initiatives taking place across the Danube Region.

The Strategy brings together 14 countries along the Danube River, and covers an area which is home to 112 million people, or one-fifth of the EU's population (**Figure 2-2**):

- 9 EU Member States: Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Germany (Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria), Hungary, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, and Romania.
- 5 non-EU countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia (accession countries); Moldova and Ukraine (neighbouring countries).



Figure 2-2 EUSDR participating countries (Source: <https://www.danube-region.eu/about>).

The Strategy focuses on four pillars addressing major issues, and each pillar is divided into priority areas (PA):

Pillar I. CONNECTING THE DANUBE REGION

- PA 1 To improve mobility and multimodality
 - o (a) Inland motorways
 - o (b) Road, rail and air links
- PA 2 To encourage more sustainable energy
- PA 3 To promote culture and tourism, people to people contacts

Pillar II. PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE DANUBE REGION

- PA 4 To restore and maintain the quality of waters
- PA 5 To manage environmental risks
- PA 6 To preserve biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils

Pillar III. BUILDING PROSPERITY IN THE DANUBE REGION

- PA 7 To develop the knowledge society through research, education and information technologies
- PA 8 To support the competitiveness of enterprises, including cluster development
- PA 9 To invest in people and skills

Pillar IV. STRENGTHENING THE DANUBE REGION

- PA 10 To step up institutional capacity and cooperation
- PA 11 To work together to promote security and tackle organised and serious crime

The EUSDR (Communication and/or Action plan) do not provide definition of targets. The Strategy itself includes examples of targets for each PA. However, each PA has list of EUSDR targets, which were revised and validated in the meeting of National Coordinators and Priority Area Coordinators held in Bratislava on 23 May 2016 ([Appendix 8-1](#)).

2.2 The EUSDR Action plan

The Action Plan is one of the outputs of the Strategy approach. Its aim is to go from ‘words to actions’ by identifying the concrete priorities for the macro-region.

The Action Plan presents main problems and issues for each PA, and proposes specific actions (e.g. a new approach, an increased coordination in policy making, a support to a process already engaged, a networking initiative, etc.) and projects (considered to be illustrative, providing examples of types of projects or approaches to be more generally encouraged) to meet the objectives of the PA. Once an action or project is included in the Action Plan, it should be implemented by the countries and stakeholders concerned.

In identifying the actions and projects suggested in the Action Plan, the following factors have been taken into account, namely that they should: (1) address identified priorities and be supported, (2) have an impact on the macro-region (or a significant part of it), (3) be realistic, (4) be coherent and mutually supportive.

The Action Plan should also be stable for a certain period of time. However, over the years, the priorities may evolve and hence, the actions and projects may be updated, transformed or replaced. The Action Plan is therefore “rolling”, and will be regularly reviewed.

The proposed actions and projects often complement and build on already on-going activities in the Danube Region. The Action Plan also suggests that each priority area has to be considered with other policy fields. The Strategy encourages an integrated approach. For example, whilst improving transport infrastructure has a positive impact on elements such as the business environment, the attractiveness of cities and regions or the quality of life of citizens, it also has impacts on landscapes, on biodiversity or on air pollution. These cannot be taken in isolation, but have to be balanced against each other, to reach the most sustainable solution. Therefore, for the implementation of each Priority Area, it is important that there is involvement of bodies and institutions representing other policy fields.

This Report focuses on EUSDR PA 6 *To preserve biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils*, its Targets, associated Actions and related project examples which are presented below ([Figure 2-3](#), [Table 2-1](#)). The actions proposed will make a direct contribution to the **Europe 2020 Strategy**. They address specifically the goals of tackling climate change challenges, of developing sustainable use of resources (which include water, nature and land for instance) and of securing quality of life. Additionally, they will contribute to achieving the **EU 2020 target** and **2050 vision for biodiversity** and to implementing the **EU Biodiversity Strategy**.

Many of the actions to preserve the biodiversity and landscapes of the Danube river basin are already included in the Joint Programme of Measures of the Danube River Basin Management Plan, prepared by ICPDR (related with PA 4 action on water quality). The EUSDR fully supports the implementation of these measures, as well as the implementation of other Danube region-related, European and international legally binding environmental initiatives (Ramsar Convention, Alpine Convention, Carpathian Convention or Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution). The PA 6 actions should be perceived as complementary to the already existing ones.

In addition, when it comes to preserving biodiversity or maintaining and improving the quality of soils and landscapes, coordination should be ensured between actions foreseen at national level. Full use should be made of the existing networking, coordination and cooperation instruments, notably those available under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development such as the National Rural Networks and the European Network for Rural Development.

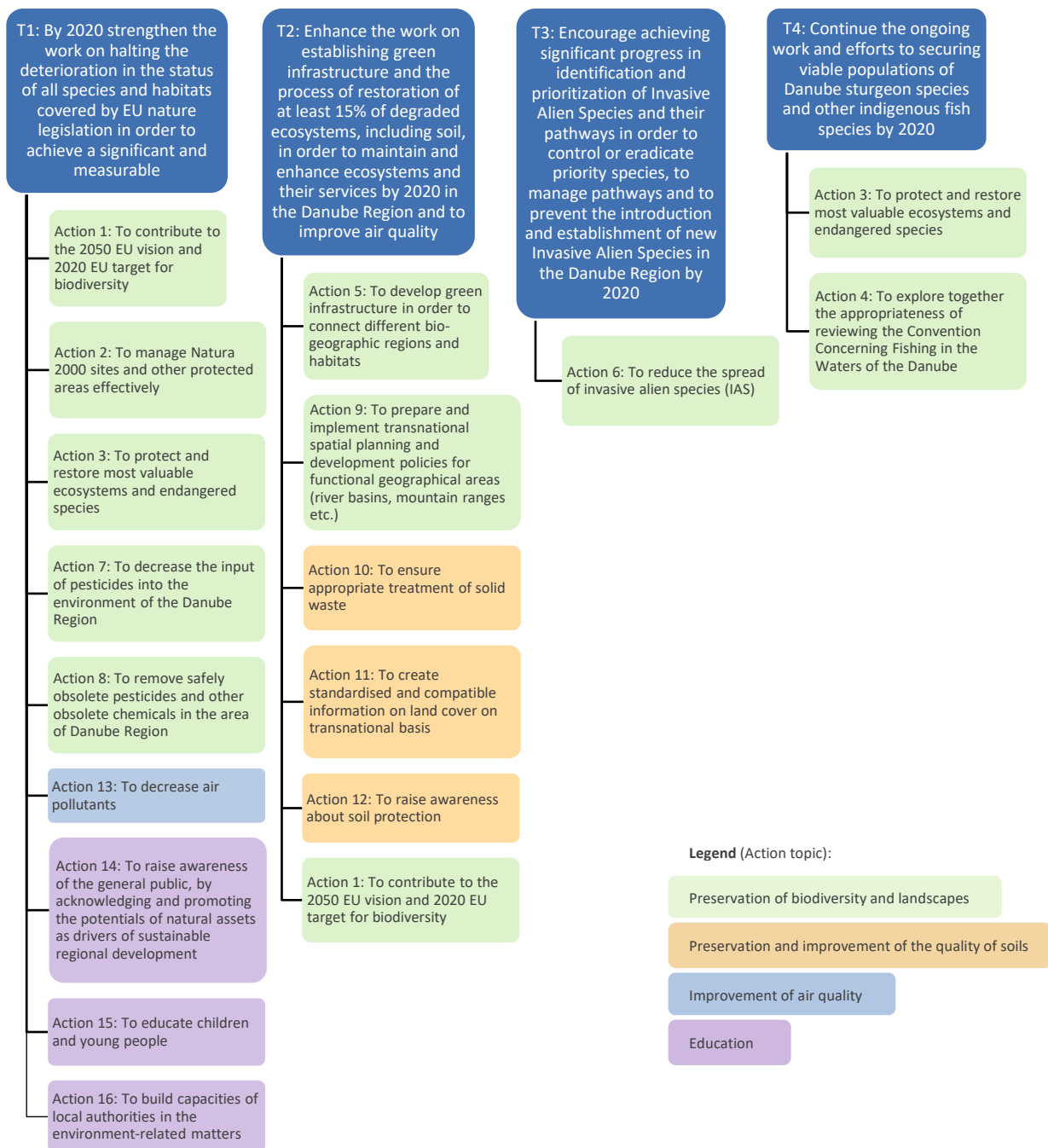


Figure 2-3 EUSDR PA 6 Targets (T1 - T4) and associated Actions.

Table 2-1 Project examples proposed by the Action Plan

Action	Project examples proposed by the Action Plan
	To implement the Danube River Network of Protected Areas (DANUBEPARKS) - This project, supported by the South East Europe transnational cooperation programme, aims at cooperation, coordination, consultation and strengthening of the links between and competences of the national administrations of protected areas of Danube countries. The links and synergies between DANUBEPARKS project and the Bavarian projects such as "Green Danube" should be established and exploited.
A2	<p>To establish fully the Mura-Drava-Danube Biosphere Reserve - Once established, this could be Europe's largest trans-boundary riverine protected wetland area, and a strong candidate for UNESCO-recognized site. Promoters of the project should focus on finding support for the reserve among five riverine countries (AT, HR, HU, RS and SI) for management of the protected area, capacity building, public awareness raising and promotion as well as support for related local development activities, including promotion of tourism and local products.</p> <p>To provide expertise related to the Danube Delta and similar protected areas - This initiative would be targeted at staff and experts from the Danube Delta and similar protected areas, in order to develop knowledge, models and simulation processes related to the Danube Delta phenomena, as well as the Black Sea interface phenomena. It would include training activities and support doctoral and post-doctoral studies.</p>
A3	<p>To restore the natural environment, wildlife and vegetation along the Danube - The project should build upon the experiences gained from the upper-Danube related projects, such as "Swabian Danube River Valley" or "The Danube's sun-favoured sides".</p> <p>To identify and protect old growth forests of the Danube basin - The Danube region contains Europe's largest remaining areas of virgin and old growth forest outside of Russia. Although they provide a host of ecosystem goods and services, many of them have uncertain status and are being felled. Activities of the project would include identification and evaluation of current status of old growth forests in the region; development of measures for preserving them and education and awareness raising as well as capacity building.</p> <p>To promote the conservation of the genetic pool and gene bank cooperation along the Danube - The project consists in identifying and studying crop, fruit and vegetable species and varieties typical to the Danube floodplain areas in ex situ gene banks and collections as well as in their original (in situ) habitats. Furthermore, the collection, conservation/maintenance and revival of traditional agricultural methods related to these species and varieties are needed. In order to achieve these objectives, trans-boundary cooperation is needed among the gene banks dealing with the conservation and maintenance of plant genetic resources for food and agricultural purposes.</p>
A5	<p>To complete the Lower Danube Green Corridor - This is the Europe's most ambitious wetland protection and restoration project, supported by Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova and Ukraine. Activities include enhancing the protected area management; preparation and implementation of wetland restoration, consultations with local stakeholders and measures to reconnect floodplains to the river system; support for related local development activities, including development of tourism and local products.</p> <p>To develop the Alpine-Carpathian Corridor - This project aims to reconstruct and improve the function and permeability of the traditional wildlife corridor within the urban agglomeration Vienna-Bratislava for red deer, lynx, wolves or bears by means of "traverse support" and green bridges. A cross border project in cooperation between Austria and Slovakia is already in the implementation phase</p>
A9	To implement the VASICA - Visions and Strategies in the Carpathian area , including the BIOREGIO Carpathians project. VASICA is the first transnational spatial development document for the entire Carpathian Space. Its main objective is to support the Carpathian Space as an area of economic, social and environmental progress and sustainability. BIOREGIO Carpathians will promote the regional development and improve the ecological connectivity in the Carpathian region.
A12	To implement the strategy for soil protection - Responsible, multifunctional use of land and soil and interlinkages to the regional development, as well as new governance tools and the "learning region" concept would be developed. The project should link to the work already undertaken by the Academia Danubiana in this field.
A13	To use GIS databases to establish critical loads of air pollutants for the Danube region ecosystems - This project is being developed by the Romanian Ministry of Environment and Forests. It will determine the critical loads, caused by the deposits of air pollutant emissions with acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone formation effects.
A14	To connect people with the Danube - The objective of the project is to increase people's awareness about the Danube benefits and their concern and support for the river values. The project would include a communication campaigns, with elements such as a Danube Ship Tour, Danube Exhibition Tour, Danube Film, Danube Day event, visiting of protected areas on the Danube etc.
A15	To build a network of Danube 'forest' schools - Forest schools are proving an educational success e.g. for Hungarian children and could be further expanded. The project would designate the Danube sections possessing particular environmental and cultural worth, and develop various levels of training/programme for primary and secondary schools, ecotourism, folk traditions etc. A series of programmes using the network elements, as well as a pilot project would be developed, followed by best practice presentation.

2.3. EUSDR / PA 6 governance and implementation

2.3.1. EUSDR governance

The **EU Commission's Directorate General for Regional Policy** (DG Regio) helps to implement the Strategy by facilitating and supporting actions of the participating countries. They also coordinate the Strategy at the policy level, assisted by a High Level Group.

The High Level Group (HLG) on macro-regional strategies is made up of official representatives from all EU Member States. It assists the Commission in the policy coordination of the Strategy. The Commission consults the HLG for modifications to the Strategy and the action plan, as well as for reports and monitoring. The HLG also addresses policy orientation and prioritisation.

Each Priority Area is jointly coordinated by two participating countries (or regions), who work in consultation with the Commission, relevant EU agencies and regional bodies. For each Priority Area, each of the two responsible countries designates a **Priority Area Coordinator** (PACs). PA 6 is coordinated by representatives of Bavarian State Ministry for the Environment and Consumer Protection and Croatian Ministry of Environment and Energy.

The Priority Area Coordinators are leading the **Steering Groups** (SG), which are the expert drivers of a day-to-day implementation. The SGs, with members from all involved countries, are established for all priority areas. PA 6 SG members are considered to be representatives from all 14 countries of the Danube Region, coming from the Ministries on national level, related to the PA subject. In case of PA 6, focal points are from Ministries responsible for Environment, Nature Protection and Public Health. In order to define the scope, work and participation in the SG The Rules of Procedure of the SG PA 6 are also established, whereby Rule 3 refers to Observers and Other Participants. According to this Rule, the SG Members can propose international governmental and nongovernmental organisations as permanent observers and grant the participation of these organisations in the meetings of the SG, as far and as long as they a) pursue the goals of the PA 6 according to its targets and Action Plan and contribute substantially to the work of the SG and the PACs; b) operate in more than one country of the Danube Region; c) are based within the Danube Region as defined by Communication COM (2010) 715 and d) have an agenda (field of activity) that has not yet been sufficiently represented by the other Observer status organisations. To date, ICPDR, the Carpathian Convention, representatives of the Interact Programme, ECNC, WWF and CEEweb were accepted as observers. Nevertheless, the same Rule leaves open a possibility of partially or completely excluding the Observers from specific sessions of the SG; as well as deciding on a case-by-case basis as to the participation of other nongovernmental organisations in the SG meetings which are not permanent observers. Furthermore, according to the same Rule:

- PACs from other Priority Areas of the Pillar Environment (PA4 & PA5) will be invited to each Steering Group meeting in advisory capacity to ensure a horizontal exchange and to use synergies among the Priority Areas (other PACs can be invited upon necessity);
- representatives of the European Commission (DG Regional Policy and/ or sectoral DG) will be invited to each Steering Group meeting in advisory capacity;
- the DSP takes part in the SG meetings (and other PA's meetings, as relevant) as permanent observer with advisory capacity;
- Task Force Chairs will be invited to the Steering Group meetings as permanent observers.

The National Coordinators (NCs) are the core strategic body within the governance structure. They have a strategic coordination function within their national or regional government. The NCs coordinate and keep an overview of the participation of their country in the implementation of the EUSDR including all Priority Areas. They also promote the EUSDR and inform at the national and regional level all the relevant stakeholders of key developments, ongoing initiatives, including alignment of policies and funding. NCs meetings are chaired by the country holding the rotating Presidency, which also prepares and organises them with the support of the EUSDR Trio Presidency, the European Commission (EC) and the Danube Strategy Point (DSP).

The **Danube Strategy Point (DSP)** has been initially established in May 2015. Its primary role is to support the EUSDR governance, implementation, communication, monitoring and evaluation. Through various activities in those areas, DSP also provides necessary information, feedback and suggestions for supporting the operational and political decision-making processes. It was discontinued in September 2017, but in 2018 Danube Transnational Programme launched the call for the new DSP. New DSP therefore represents a project financed by Danube Transnational Programme from September 2019 until December 2021. It will be implemented through two offices - DSP Office Vienna (City of Vienna, EU-Förderagentur; lead partner) and DSP Office Bucharest (Ministry of Regional Development & Public Administration)

2.3.2. EUSDR PA 6 implementation

The PACs, together with the Steering Groups, ensure the implementation of the EUSDR on policy level (e.g. by agreeing on planning, with targets, indicators and timetables, and by ensuring wide contacts between project promoters, programmes and funding sources, and by providing technical assistance and advice). Their work is trans-national, inter-sectorial and inter-institutional.

However, involvement of actors, stakeholders and their networks from different branches (Civil Society, NGO's, Scientific Community, Policy level) and different levels (local, regional, national, EU) is one of the basic principles for implementation of PA 6 "on the ground" (EUSDR stakeholders / project idea owners are to initiate and implement projects with relevance for the EUSDR). Stakeholder involvement is reflected mainly by their participation in the Steering Group and the composition and organisation of the **Task Forces (TF)**. The Task Forces are generally open to any stakeholder interested in the PA 6 topic and willing to contribute to the implementation of the respective work programme. In the past period, wide and organized stakeholder networks have been growing, mainly through the Task Force works. Currently, following Task forces are established and active:

- Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF)
- Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS)
- Danubeparks - Network of protected areas
- Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region (SONDAR)
- Task Force on Air Quality (TFAQ)
- Task Force on pesticides and chemicals (TFPC)
- Working Group Masterplan Bavarian Danube (WGMPBD)

The composition of the Task Forces can generally be seen as a positive experience, as in many cases for the first time actors from civil society, the scientific community and policy level from different regions and countries come together to jointly work on a common issue. The existing need to connect NGO's and stakeholders from nature protection and biodiversity to the policy level has been the main driver for PA 6 implementation process and provides a solid ground to further develop concrete activities and project proposals. It has to be stated that this process took longer than expected and is still ongoing.

Reporting on Implementation

PACs and Steering Groups also support the reporting and evaluation of the EUSDR – they identify progress related to the improvements that the actions and projects deliver and achievement of targets. They also regularly provide information/reports on their work. Accordingly, PAC 6 (BY and HR) prepare *Reports to the European Commission on Implementation of the EUSDR Priority Area 6* on an annual basis.

First Report to the EC on Implementation of the EUSDR PA 6 was prepared for the period 04/2011-06/2012. From then until 2014, four Reports have been made, assessing the progress on policy development, processes and funding. They were accompanied by different number of annexes, although Annex 1 was reserved for the Roadmap and Annex 2 for Projects approved by the SG. In order to better align reporting structure between different PAs, from 2015 onwards, Reports are to be prepared according to document *Guidance & Explanatory Note - Preparing Implementation Report of EUSDR Priority Area*. This document defines structure of the Implementation Report, also giving detailed clarifications on how to report on each topic. According to this document, mandatory parts of Implementation Reports are ANNEX I: *Roadmaps to implement each PA Action* and ANNEX II: *PA's Workplan for 1 year*.

Roadmaps to implement each PA Action

The purpose of the Roadmaps is to present the overall long-term planning concept (for 5 years period, i.e. end of 2020) of the PA for implementing each of the PA's Actions that are included in its scope of work. The Roadmap implementation is a responsibility of the PA (PACs and SG) and hence should be prepared by the PA (PACs and SG). Roadmaps to implement each Action are not new category (they are part of the reporting templates for a number of years already). They were used as both planning and reporting tool and through them each Action was to be broken down into milestones (incl. deadlines), outputs and list of projects. In the current reporting template, Roadmaps are only planning tool and not as reporting tool (i.e. Roadmaps would not have to be changed/updated with every report). They are used to break down each Action into milestones (incl. their definition, deadlines and responsible actors). Milestone is a significant stage or event in the development of Action. They need to be defined as measurable and observable - to serve as progress markers. Milestones need to focus on major progress points that must be reached to achieve success.

PA' s Workplan

Workplan is a tool where the PAs plan activities. Activity is a measurable amount of work that is done with the purpose of implementing the Roadmaps, including milestones in order to deliver on the achievement of the Targets and Actions. Activities are performed by the PAs (PACs, SG) and other actors (e.g. TF and other stakeholders). Examples of activities include: meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences, networking activities, cooperation activities etc. In the current reporting template, Workplans are only planning tool (for 1 year period) and not a reporting tool.

Existing Implementation Reports

So far, following Reports have been made, significantly varying in structure since the last two Reports were prepared according to the *Guidance & Explanatory Note* (Danube Strategy Point 2016):

- **Report to the EC on Implementation of the EUSDR PA 6, Reporting period 04/2011-06/2012**
 - Annex 1. Roadmaps to implement each action
 - Annex 2: Projects approved by the Steering Group
 - Annex 3: Joint Declaration by the country representatives responsible for the coordination of the Pillar 'Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region'
 - Annex 4: Project Data Sheet Pillar II EUSDR (PA 4,5,6)
 - Annex 5: Description of project labelling procedure under Pillar II
 - Annex 6: Eligibility Rules PA 6
 - Annex 7: Sturgeon 2020 Strategy - flyer
- **Report to the EC on Implementation of the EUSDR PA 6, Reporting period 06/2012-06/2013**
 - Annex 1. Roadmaps to implement each action
 - Annex 2. Projects approved by the Steering Group
 - Annex 3. Sturgeon 2020 Strategy
- **Report to the EC on Implementation of the EUSDR PA 6, Reporting period 07/2013-06/2014**
 - Annex 1. Roadmaps to implement each action
 - Annex 2. Projects approved by the Steering Group
- **Report to the EC on Implementation of the EUSDR PA 6, Reporting period 07/2014 – 06/2015**
 - Annex 1. Roadmaps to implement each action
- **Implementation Report of EUSDR PA 6, Reported period: from 07/2015 to 06/2016**
 - Annex 1. Roadmaps to implement each action
 - Annex 2. PA' S Workplan for 1 year
- **Implementation Report of EUSDR PA 6, Reported period: from 07/2016 to 12/2016**
 - No annexes

3 Analysis of results and challenges in implementation

3.1 Analysis of PA 6's actions implementation

Consistent, sustainable and timely implementation of PA 6 actions requests certain preconditions to be met. Thus, following the conclusions taken on the SG 2 meeting, PACs developed the first draft of the matrix table, proposing for each action: implementation tool, rationale for implementation, milestones, potential related projects, relation to PA 6 targets and other EUSDR targets (especially Pillar II), source of funding, deadlines, leading countries and responsible actors. All biodiversity related actions were also linked to the targets of EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and related to the targets deriving from new strategic plan of the CBD. After the consultations with the SG members and update of the matrix table, a basis was formed for the development of the first Roadmap (delivered regularly as Annex 1. of the reports to the EC on implementation of the EUSDR PA 6). At the same time, it was concluded that the further work should be done in future regarding the source of funding, deadlines, leading countries and responsible actors. Those points were updated through future Roadmaps, and though some of the milestones were replaced due to their completion, actions haven't changed from their appearance in the Action Plan.

Detailed overview of each Action - their connection to PA 6 Targets, milestones, deadlines, responsible actors, status, measurability and EUSDR added value, as well as the opportunities and challenges in implementing each Action; are given in the [Appendix 9.2 \(subchapters 9.2.1 to 9.2.16\)](#).

Results of Analysis of PA 6's Actions Implementation

The EUSDR Action Plan defined actions as important issues requiring intervention by the countries and stakeholders involved to meet the objective of the Priority Area (i.e. a new approach, an increased coordination in policy making, a support to a process already engaged, a networking initiative, etc). However, actions related to preserving biodiversity or maintaining and improving the quality of soils and landscapes could often be considered as more general, summarised description of a group of activities that would take place in longer period of time in order to support/provide/contribute to reaching the targets. Additionally, many of the actions related to biodiversity and landscape preservation have already been included in the Joint Programme of Measures of the Danube River Basin Management Plan (prepared by ICPDR), since EUSDR has fully supported the implementation of these measures, as well as the implementation of other Danube region-related European and international legally binding environmental initiatives (e.g. Ramsar Convention, Alpine Convention, Carpathian Convention or Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution). In that regard, the PA 6 actions were ment to be perceived as complementary to the already existing ones.

Potential challenge in completing some of these actions, apart from their somewhat general definitions, is the fact that some of the milestones proposed for their monitoring and evaluation are not specific (clear) enough, measurable and/or timebound. Generally, milestones should represent a significant stage or event in the development of an action, they need to focus on major progress points that must be reached for an action to achieve a success. If they are not measurable and

observable, they can't adequately serve as progress markers, i.e. they can not ensure consistent monitoring and evaluation of an action.

According to the available reports, first milestones for the proposed actions have been developed following the activities proposed by EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020, especially regarding the adoption of the new legislative framework and existing obligations deriving from the environmental acquis. This approach was chosen in order to avoid the additional reporting requirements from countries, especially MS, and in order to establish stronger cooperation with sectorial DG (DG ENV). In the next period (i.e. revised Action Plan), coordination should still be ensured between activities foreseen at national level versus those foreseen on the EUSDR level, but the focus should be on:

- actions that require or could strongly benefit from transnational and/or (trans)regional cooperation in their implementation;
- actions that go beyond existing national obligations, but add certain value by bringing more countries into the development and/or implementation process and have an impact on the regional level;
- actions that ensure consistency, sustainability and more targeted use of EU funding streams (or pooling the resources available on national level);
- actions that could help to mainstream new global and European processes related to environmental and nature conservation, thus fostering cohesion on the regional level;
- strengthening the cooperation with other EUSDR PAs (especially Pillar II PAs) and macro-regional strategies in order to identify stronger synergies and avoid duplication of work.

Furthermore, while identifying new actions, milestones, projects and activities, it would be preferable if the selected ones were specific, measurable, achievable, realistic (feasible both technically and financially) and time-bound (i.e. SMART). They should also be coherent and mutually supportive.

3.2 Established Task Forces

Task Forces assemble representatives from civil society, the scientific community and policy level from the Danube Countries dedicated to specific PA 6 topics. They have a transnational focus on the Danube Region and are generally open to any stakeholder interested in the topic and willing to contribute to the implementation of the respective work programme. Task Forces represent the implementation level of PA 6. However, they are formally integrated in the PA 6 governance structure through their chairs which serve as Observers to the PA 6 Steering Group. The existing PA 6 Task Forces represent the four targets and most of the Actions as laid down in the Action Plan. Their general overview (year of establishment, objectives, chair, related PA 6 targets and actions) is given below ([Table 3-1](#)), while the comprehensive list of their members, projects and activities can be found in [Appendix 9.3](#).

Establishment of the Task Forces has been recognized as a positive experience. They have enabled more focused and coordinated work on achieving PA 6 targets, but more importantly, they have also enabled actors from civil society, the scientific community and policy level from different regions and countries to jointly work on issues of common interest, in many cases for the first time. This need to connect NGO's and various stakeholders from nature protection and biodiversity sector to the policy level still exists - it represents the main driver for PA 6 implementation process and provides a solid

ground to further develop concrete activities and project proposals. Furthermore, this process is still ongoing and it has been acknowledged that a stronger involvement of actors from all mentioned target groups could foster the implementation of all activities, especially further integration of the civil society in the implementation process of PA 6. Last IR (2016 - 2016) leaves open the possibility of establishment of new Task Forces, but also recognizes the need to further finalize the respective working programmes of existing ones; develop and apply for projects; and strengthen the connections between SG (policy level) and TFs (implementation level). Furthermore, it mentions the possibility to stabilize the structure of TFs by developing a coordination centre or a similar structure in mid- and long-term perspective in order to stabilize the cooperation and enhancement of the links with civil society both with the implementation and policy level, which is recognized as a clear gap in most of the PA 6-relevant topics in the Danube Region.

Table 3-1 Overview of PA 6 TFs - year of establishment, objectives, chair, related PA 6 targets and actions.

Establishment	Objectives	Chair	Target	Actions
Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF)				
(2012) 2019	Sturgeon Conservation in the Danube River; Development and Implementation of Sturgeon 2020 programme	Peter Gammeltoft (Independent, formerly of DG ENV (BE))	T4	A3, A4, A16
Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS)				
2014	Strategy for Monitoring and eradication of aquatic IAS	Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BG)	T3	A6, A16
Danubeparks - Network of protected areas (Danubeparks)				
2011	Network of protected areas along the Danube; Ecological connectivity	National Park Donauauen (AT)	T1	A1, A2, A3, A5, A14, A15, A16
Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region (SONDAR)				
2011-2012	Soil protection network in the Danube region, linked to ELSA (European Land and Soil Alliance)	Government of Lower Austria (AT)	T2	A10, A11, A12
Task Force on Air Quality (TFAQ)				
2016	Measures to improve air quality (e.g. in terms of domestic fire and CO2 emissions)	Joint Research Center (JRC)	T1	A13, A16
Task Force on pesticides and chemicals (TFPC)				
2015-2016	Measures to reduce pollutant emissions (pesticides and other obsolete chemicals)	National Institute of Public Health (SI)	T1	A7, A8
Working Group Masterplan Bavarian Danube (WGMPD)				
2012	Concept and projects to preserve and strengthen biodiversity along the Bavarian Danube	Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland (Auenzentrum Neuburg) and Landesbund für Vogelschutz (LBV, Bavaria) (DE))	T1	A1, A2, A3, A14, A16

3.3 Analysis of PA 6's projects

Macro-regional strategies, such as EUSDR, offer a framework for cooperation that focuses on processes which aim to bring change on macro-regional level, with projects representing one of the tools for their implementation. Together with programmes, both MRSs and projects are considered to be a part of the overall environment of sectoral and integrated policies.

At the same time, Interact (2017) has recognized several benefits that MRSs can bring to the project during its initiation and development, implementation, closure and post-implementation phase:

- better integration in its wider context;
- easier identification of relevant partners and stakeholder;
- more productive networking, i.e. sharing knowledge and experience;
- political support that can contribute to bringing project results to the policy discussion (they establish a 'project-to-policy loop');
- provision of diversified funding opportunities;
- increased visibility, credibility and capitalisation of project results;
- extended life of a project, i.e. it's actions and/or results;
- ensurance that achieved momentum is not lost.

Projects related to PA 6

From the early days of the EUSDR implementation, PA 6 has opted for a bottom-up driven process rather than a standardized top down approach to be performed by SG members or the political level. Namely, it became evident that the targets and actions from the Action plan are comprehensive and have a long-term perspective - therefore, different approaches for definition of milestones, projects and initiatives could be taken in consideration. Moreover, it was recognized that breaking down actions in milestones, deadlines and responsibilities by the PACs without having a real ownership for these elements on the side of committed actors and project holders will not bring the expected results. Therefore, the coordinating work of the PACs in PA 6 has focused on supporting existing and emerging initiatives and projects in line with the set targets.

In 2018, as part of the study of exploiting funding opportunities (MEE and PJR Consulting 2018), an analysis of previously funded projects related to PA 6 was conducted. Study recognized 23 projects in the financing period up to 2018, financed with total of 30.345.605,01 EUR - mostly through European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA), i.e. Danube Transnational Programme, while few had a financing from large global enterprises (e.g. Coca – Cola) or help of EUSDR PA10 Institutional Capacities and Cooperation through TAF-DRP, START and The Danube Strategic Project Fund. Furthermore, analysis has shown that lead beneficiaries in those projects are NGO's, public bodies (excl national, regional and local public bodies) and enterprises; while partners are mostly national / regional / local public bodies, high education / research institutions, other public bodies, NGOs and enterprises. Moreover, the Study concluded that:

- although they haven't participated equally in all projects, more or less all countries have participated in the project implementation;
- data indicates relatively good distribution of partners between the countries and high number of partners per project (8 on average).

EUSDR Strategic Projects and PA 6

In June 2014 Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Participating States of the EUSDR and the EC adopted a Joint Statement, where, among other things, they called on the EUSDR PAs Steering groups to further develop a joint approach for labelling strategic projects for the EUSDR. Thereafter the concept of EUSDR strategic projects has been developed, resulting in concept paper published in 2015 and assessment of the first projects in the next period.

EUSDR strategic projects are conceived as projects with high impact and visibility for the EUSDR, i.e. as projects demonstrating the progress achieved in EUSDR implementation, strengthening and improving the communication on the EUSDR strategic focus, as well as serving as pilot examples for desired future changes. As such, they would frequently be a result of policy developments and discussions within a EUSDR PAs and aim at:

- contributing to stronger and clearer strategic focus of the activities and efforts undertaken within the EUSDR Priority Areas as well as fleshing out the ambition and the direction an EUSDR PA would have in certain policy area;
- supporting and further encouraging joint cooperation between EUSDR states and/or regions, which are strategically important for the Danube region;
- establishing the ground to further consider the strategic projects/processes within the revision process of EUSDR targets, actions, milestones and roadmaps.

According to the IR (2015 - 2016), focus of the PA 6 in that early period has not been on the identification of Strategic Project proposals, but on the installation and establishment of the Task Forces, which would then serve as the basis for strategic projects development. At that time DSTF and TFAQ were already elaborating projects for major funding programmes (DTP, Call 2), while the Danubeparks Network was developing and applying for projects as well. Furthermore, at its last SG meeting in April 2016 it was decided that Task Forces could be included as proposals for strategic projects having in mind that the strategic projects concept also include processes.

The formal proposal from the SG was not submitted by the end of the first deadline for Strategic project. However, in 2017, two PA 6 projects were among twelve projects selected to receive funding from Danube Strategic Project Fund (DSPF): *CONSPIRO - Breathing Together* and *Developing an E-learning tool for Environmental Education for Primary and Secondary School in the Lower Danube Region* (ELEDAN).

Due to the different methodology of the conducted desk analyses, a slightly expanded list of projects related to the PA 6 is presented in the [Appendix 9.4](#), together with a short project description, link (source) and the information on related Actions, responsible actors, countries involved, status and funding.

3.4 Analysis of Progress on PA 6's Targets

Since they were derived from Strategic plan of CBD and EU 2020 biodiversity strategy, PA 6 targets were rather comprehensive and their full accomplishment was not possible merely in the scope of a macro-regional policy. Therefore, they were modified as part of overall revision and update of EUSDR Targets, in the way that they confirm its contribution to overall EU and global biodiversity targets - targets have been revised and then approved by the PA 6 Steering group by the end of 2015. The revised Targets were adopted by the EUSDR National Coordinators and Commission in May 2016. They were defined as:

- Target 1** *By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region.*
- Target 2** *Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality.*
- Target 3** *Encourage achieving significant progress in identification and prioritization of Invasive Alien Species and their pathways in order to control or eradicate priority species, to manage pathways and to prevent the introduction and establishment of new Invasive Alien Species in the Danube Region by 2020.*
- Target 4** *Continue the ongoing work and efforts to securing viable populations of Danube sturgeon species and other indigenous fish species by 2020.*

It is important to mention that during the PA 6 targets reformulation, for the first time actors from civil society, the scientific community and policy level from different regions and countries came together to jointly work on a common issue (a process that characterizes the general approach of the PA 6).

All four targets are covered by respective Task Forces and a considerable progress was achieved through the implementation of their projects. Furthermore, PA 6's collaboration with various partners (such as other EUSDR PAs and macro-regional strategies; national, regional and local authorities; international and national NGOs, etc.) and a momentum gained on both implementation and policy level, resulted in **overall satisfactory progress on all four PA 6 targets.**

4 New processes enforced through EUSDR

One of the main EUSDR's added-values is that it links political goals with concrete project activities, their stakeholders and the respective funding sources. It allows cooperation between different levels, different policies, different stakeholders and balances implementation of various activities under the guidance of the long-term objectives. Moreover, it connects EU member states and regions, third countries and EU institutions.

Since its endorsement in 2011, EUSDR has invoked a number of new processes – while some of them are related to the EUSDR as a whole, some of them are specific to PA 6:

- governance and organizational structures:
 - regular Annual Fora, Danube Parliamentarian Conferences or the Danube Ministers meetings and PAC/NCP/EC meetings;
 - establishment of Danube Strategy Point, a new body for facilitating the implementation of the EUSDR and involvement of all concerned and potentially interested actors;
 - establishment of several Task Forces, i.e. bringing together actors from civil society, the scientific community and policy level from different regions and countries to jointly work on a common issue and provide a link between the implementation and policy level;
 - admittance of various NGOs, institutions (e.g. DGs, Interact Programme, ICPDR and the Carpathian Convention) and Task Forces as Observers to the PA 6 Steering Group meetings;
 - bottom-up driven process – coordinating work of the PACs focuses on supporting existing and emerging initiatives and projects in line with the set targets, thus backing up actions (milestones) by feasible projects;
- fostering funding and networking opportunities:
 - EU funding schemes explicitly referred to MRS - Danube Transnational Programme 2014-2020 (integrating ERDF, ENI and IPA funds) provides support to its governance (via technical assistance to PACs and the DSP) and contributes directly to the implementation through its thematic priority axes (aligned with the Strategy's priorities);
 - labelling procedures, flagship and strategic projects, Letters of Recommendation;
 - collaboration within Pillar 2 (e.g. Joint Pillar II Stakeholder Workshops), cooperation between the Pillars;
 - communication and information flow with relevant DGs;
 - fostered cooperation and collaboration with various international bodies, such as ICPDR, Carpathian Convention; Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), Joint Research Center (JRC), European Network for Soil Awareness (ENSA), European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA), Alpine Convention etc.;
 - enlargement of existing (e.g. The Danubeparks Network) and establishment of new networks (Bavarian Stakeholder Network, potential for establishing PA 6 Stakeholder Network);
- enforcing actual global and European policies, with an emphasis on:
 - CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (incl. Aichi Biodiversity Targets);
 - EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020;
 - EU Birds and Habitats Directives;
 - IAS Regulation (EU) 1143/2014;
 - EU Water Framework Directive and Floods Directive;

-
- Green Infrastructure Strategy;
 - EU Air Quality Strategy;
 - Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP);
 - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);
 - World Health Organisation (WHO)'s Resolution on Improvement of health through sound management of obsolete pesticides and other obsolete chemicals;
 - Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal;
 - Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade;
 - Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants;
 - synergies with other MRSs, especially EUSAIR and EUSALP.

Furthermore, EUSDR provides an excellent platform to follow up and enforce new global and European processes related to environmental and nature conservation – such as EU Biodiversity Strategy (post-2020), CBDs Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, UN's Sustainable Development Goals etc. Additionally, it could help implement new trends (though old processes) that need to be (more strongly) enforced through the EUSDR, i.e. require collaboration on (trans)regional level - sustainable use of natural resources; ecosystem services assessment, restoration and conservation; development of blue-green infrastructure and restoring and/or preserving the ecological corridors (i.e. connectivity); climate change mitigation and adaptation through Nature-based Solutions.

Therefore, it is evident that EUSDR implementation has already resulted in the change of existing ways of cooperation, involvement of new stakeholders and development of new dynamics. Moreover, it has led to a higher visibility of certain policies, projects and activities, but also the bottlenecks of political and territorial cooperation.

At the same time, learning from the experience gained in this implementation period, there are various possibilities available to develop new processes, foster successful collaborations, further explore potential synergies with other EUSDR Pillars and macro-regional strategies in order to achieve targets set for the PA 6.

5 Action Plan Revision

5.1 Recognized needs and priorities for the new Action Plan

Over the years, the priorities stated in the current Action Plan have evolved and hence, the actions and projects should be updated, transformed or replaced. Results of PA 6's actions assessment have also highlighted the fact that some actions:

- are sufficiently completed;
- could be merged in order to enable more consistent, sustainable and cost-effective implementation;
- have to be reformulated in order to meet new demands of European and global nature and environment conservation processes;
- do not represent MRS added value and thus could be either reformulated or replaced with some new actions.

Therefore, during the development of the new Action Plan, certain points had to be taken into consideration:

- bottom-up driven process (i.e. actions and/or milestones backed up by feasible projects);
- SMART actions and/or milestones (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) that would enable adequate monitoring and evaluation of their progress;
- new demands of European and global nature and environment conservation processes;
- EU added value – regional approach to problem-solving that includes stronger synergies with other MRSs, more targeted use of EU funding streams and pooling up resources by collaboration with other EUSDR PAs regarding:
 - Green Infrastructure (PA 1a, 1b, 2, 4, 5),
 - Soil Quality (PA 2, 4, 5, 7),
 - Air Quality (PA 1a, 1b, 2, 5),
 - Sturgeon conservation (all PAs),
 - Invasive Alien Species (PA 1a, 1b, 3, 4, 7, 11).

5.2 Revision process

As mentioned in the earlier chapters, the EUSDR Action Plan was conceived as a “rolling” plan - stable for a certain period of time, but regularly reviewed and, if need be, updated and/or transformed. Since some of the priorities have evolved or changed over the years, after eight years of implementation, the revision of the Action Plan became necessary.

Therefore, the Bulgarian Presidency launched a consultation procedure - in February 2018, during the PAC meeting in Sofia, “Roadmap - towards the revision of the 2010 Action Plan” was presented for the first time, while in May 2018 the focus of the NC - PAC meeting held in Sofia was once more on the revision of the 2010 Action Plan and the accompanying Roadmap.

Regarding the PA 6, in October 2018 the 11th SG Meeting was organised in Kopački rit Nature Park (Croatia) and dedicated to the discussion on revision of the 2010 Action Plan. As a result of the

discussion, a basis for next steps in the revision process was elaborated and the first overview of the proposal was prepared in the form of two SG matrices (Excel tables) on current Actions and Projects.

At the NC meeting in Bucharest in February 2019, chaired by the Romanian EUSDR Presidency, the NCs agreed on a structure for the further consultations proposed by DSP. Therefore, as a second stage of the consultation phase of the Action Plan revision, in May 2019 DSP form was filled by consultants, PACs, SG and TF chairs. This form, listing (among others) detailed PA 6 targets, actions and activities, was directly fed into the thematic annex substantiating the consolidated inputs, which was issued by DSP on 14th May 2019.

However, during this second stage of the consultation phase, it became obvious that Action Plan structure has been slightly modified:

- PA 6 targets needed to be accompanied with timelines, milestones and other important tools (incl. indicator values and baseline for quantifiable targets),
- actions were accompanied with descriptions only,
- there was a possibility to include activities as examples of concrete umbrella-like initiatives.

Trying to fit all the conclusions from the SG matrix into the new scheme, several changes were suggested by consultants and discussed with the SG. Accepted amendments are explained in following subchapters.

Actions Revision

For the facilitation of the discussion with the Steering Group and Observers in the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018), two matrices (Excel tables) with the current Actions and Projects were used and aligned with indicative questions. They served as a basis for next steps in the revision process, i.e. helped to prepare the first overview of the proposal. These first conclusions are presented in the **Table 5.1**.

Table 5-1 Results of PA 6's actions assessment in accordance with the SG matrix prepared in October 2018.

Actions defined by the current Action Plan	
Action 1	To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity
Evaluation remarks	Current action represents more a guiding principle than operationalized action. Furthermore, it has been proved hard to define specific, measurable and time-bound milestones and/or indicators. Thus it has been agreed to cancel the action. However, since all PA 6 actions contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity, it was proposed to keep it as a preamble to PA 6 AP.
Action 2	To manage Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas effectively
Evaluation remarks	Management of Natura 2000 sites and related activities are already carried out as part of the national obligations, both on national and transnational level. However, EUSDR could help ensure consistency and sustainability in monitoring, reporting and further use of collected data. Furthermore, it could facilitate better management of transboundary Natura sites and/or identification of more suitable conservation measures that are specific to the Danube region and/or need to be implemented on a regional scale. Therefore, it was proposed to keep the activity, but reformulate it slightly as <i>"To improve management of Natura 2000 sites through transnational cooperation and capacity building"</i> . Moreover, in the next period, focus could be more on (1) establishment of the 5-country UNESCO Biosphere Reserve "Mura-Drava-Danube" (TBR MDD) with effective management aiming at natural dynamic processes of Mura, Drava and Danube rivers; (2) strengthening of participatory cross-border management (RO-UA-MO) of the Danube Delta promoting sustainable development and biodiversity conservation; and (3) experience exchange of participatory management of Emerald Network sites aiming to maintain and restore conservation values while fostering benefits for local people.

Actions defined by the current Action Plan	
Action 3	To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered animal species
Evaluation remarks	<p>It was proposed to keep the action, potentially clarify it some more. Thus, the name of the action could be reformulated as: <i>“To promote the development and implementation of conservation action plans for endangered umbrella species of the Danube region”</i>. Moreover, in the next period, focus could be more on (1) implementation of the <i>Pan-European action plan for sturgeon conservation</i> through enforcement of the sturgeon catch moratoriums / restrictions across borders, preparing the governance and funding framework for ex-situ conservation measures, mapping and securing habitats, enabling sturgeon migration, and harmonising monitoring programmes; and (2) science-based cross-border monitoring and management of large carnivores, in particular through facilitating stakeholder collaboration (especially between enforcement agencies and nature conservation institutions) for coordinated implementation of measures for preventing and tackling illegal killings and securing critical habitats.</p>
Action 4	To explore together the appropriateness of reviewing the Convention Concerning Fishing in the Waters of the Danube
Evaluation remarks	<p>Possibilities of using the Convention on the EUSDR level should be raised on higher political level with an aim of all Danube Region Countries signing the Convention. Therefore it was proposed to cancel the action and embed appropriate elements, primarily those related to conservation of migratory species, within some other action, e.g. Action 3).</p>
Action 5	To develop green infrastructure in order to connect different bio-geographic regions and habitats
Evaluation remarks	<p>Following up on the new developments and the need for climate change mitigation and adaptation, it was proposed to slightly reformulate the action as: <i>“To maintain and restore critical Green and Blue Infrastructure elements through integrated spatial, development and conservation planning”</i>. Therefore, proposed new (i.e. broader) aim of this action would be to: (1) map key cross-country blue and green infrastructure elements in the region and facilitate agreement on management targets; (2) improve the communication, knowledge and data sharing between environmental, transport and spatial planning sectors; (3) ensure capacity building regarding the development of Strategic Environmental Assessments and their use in decision making processes; (4) identify (map) the areas that need to be restored in order to enhance the flow of ecosystem services and prepare the restoration activities (with an emphasis on those that require transborder restoration and/or cooperation and those involving economic stakeholders).</p>
Action 6	To reduce the spread of invasive alien species (IAS)
Evaluation remarks	<p>It was proposed to keep the action, potentially clarify it some more. With a slightly more emphasis on the introduction prevention, action still aims to (1) collect and analyse data about alien species in the Danube Region; (2) assess their impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services; (3) assess the risks and prioritise the alien species and their pathways of introduction and spread, (4) promote research to develop and apply the most appropriate methods for prevention and control of IAS and for management of the priority pathways in line with the DIAS Strategy and IAS Regulation (EU) 1143/2014; and (5) raise awareness and communication about IAS among all interested parties in the Danube Region. Therefore, the name of the action could be reformulated as: <i>“To reduce the introductions and spread of invasive alien species (IAS)”</i>.</p>
Action 7	To decrease the input of pesticides into the environment of the Danube Region
Action 8	To remove safely obsolete pesticides and other obsolete chemicals in the area of Danube Region
Evaluation remarks	<p>It is assumed that there are several sites with remains of obsolete pesticides and similar chemicals (OPC) located in the Danube region. Since OPCs are known for their hazardous intrinsic properties, such as persistence and the bioaccumulation potential, those sites could pose a serious threat to both human health and the environment.</p> <p>It was suggested that Danube Region Countries should identify this sites and prepare a risk management plan that would include certain risk assessments (primarily an accident risk assessment and environmental risk assessment), as well as intervention and remediation plan in order to safely destroy OPCs and restore degraded ecosystems. (Trans)regional approach would help ensure a cross-border collaboration in case of accidents on OPC contaminated sites, stakeholder involvement, education and flow of information on the local and regional level, but also more targeted use of EU funding streams and/or pooling of available resources.</p> <p>Therefore, it was proposed to reformulate Actions 7 and 8, i.e. merge them together. Aim of the merged action would be to identify locations with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains and to prepare a remediation plan and a risk management plan in the case of environmental accidents.</p>

Actions defined by the current Action Plan	
Action 9	To prepare and implement transnational spatial planning and development policies for functional geographical areas (river basins, mountain ranges etc.)
Evaluation remarks	It was proposed to cancel this action. However, it was also proposed to explore the possibility to combine it with the Action 5 (especially in connection to ecological connectivity).
Action 10	To ensure appropriate treatment of solid waste
Evaluation remarks	Since the appropriate treatment of solid waste is primarily covered by national legislation and established procedures it was proposed to cancel this action.
Action 11	To create standardised and compatible information on land cover on transnational basis
Evaluation remarks	<p>Evaluation is still in progress. Action originates from the time when available information on land resources in the Danube Region was rather limited and it focused on the possibilities to collect harmonised land cover information from national sources and to create standardized and compatible information on land cover on transnational basis. Even though the data are nowadays widely available through Copernicus Land Monitoring Services, EUSDR could still provide an useful platform for (trans)national and intersectoral cooperation that could help ensure consistency in interpretation (e.g. new indicators and scenarious development) and future use of collected data, stakeholder involvement and more targeted use of EU funding streams. Therefore, there is a possibility to reformulate the action, i.e. keep the appropriate elements, or to merge it with Action 12.</p> <p>Moreover, it is important to mention that the CORINE Land Cover provides publicly available standardised and compatible land cover information for all EUSDR countries, except Moldova and Ukraine. Therefore, future activities / projects could refer on the need to collect harmonised land cover information specifically for Moldova and Ukraine.</p>
Action 12	To raise awareness about soil protection
Evaluation remarks	It was proposed to keep, but reformulate this action in order to include conservation and restoration activities. Thus, proposed new (i.e. broader) aim of this action would be to maintain and improve the quality of soil in the Danube Region.
Action 13	To decrease air pollutants
Evaluation remarks	It was proposed to keep, but reformulate this action. Though Danube Region Countries are already obligated to report on the air pollutants level, while certain monitoring protocols and reduction measures are set up on the national level, (trans)regional approach could help ensure consistency in monitoring, reporting and future use of collected data, as well as sustainability, stakeholder involvement and more targeted use of EU funding streams for pollution control and reduction.
Action 14 Action 15	To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development To educate children and young people
Evaluation remarks	Due to considerate overlapping of these two actions, it was proposed to merge them int one, reformulated action.
Action 16	To build capacities of local authorities in the environment-related matters
Evaluation remarks	It was proposed to reformulate this action in order to include the capacity building of national authorities (especially those responsible for green infrastructure implementation) and scientific community.
New Actions proposed	
Action x1	To foster green and social innovation and businesses development in and around ecological hotspots of the region (such as Natura 2000 areas) involving sectors such as agriculture, fishing, wild plants, and ecotourism
Remark	Further elaboration on the proposed action has shown that it would be better to treat it as an activity than an action, with a focus on criteria development for labelling eco friendly business depending it's contribution to nature, water and/or soil protection. Since the proposed action is more in the scope of PA 8 (<i>To support the competitiveness of enterprises, including cluster development</i>), more detailed assessment have to be made to decide whether to promote it through PA 8 or to embed it as an activity into Action 2 (with open possibility to further strenghten the collaboration with PA 8).

Action x2	To develop in participatory manner a Danube masterplan for the conservation and restoration of biodiversity values for mainstreaming into inland navigation programmes and integration with the navigation masterplan for the Danube
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Remark Further elaboration on the proposed action has shown that it would be better to treat it as an activity than an action.

However, during the second stage of the consultation phase of the Action Plan revision in May 2019, proposed actions were further revised as an answer to the modifications of the Action Plan structure - some of them were reformulated slightly, some were upgraded to the target level, while some were kept as an activity. Consequently, some new actions have arisen.

Every action is accompanied by a short description and the list of activities. It is important to emphasize that those activities do not represent concrete project titles (topics), but are meant to serve as examples of concrete umbrella-like initiatives essential for the action's completion. General overview of the revised actions is given in the subsequent chapter (*Revised Action Plan – general overview*; [Figure 5-1](#)), while the comprehensive list of Targets, Actions and Activities with associated data (milestones, timeline, lead partners) can be found in [Appendix 9.5](#).

Targets Revision

During the first stage of the consultation phase of the Action Plan revision, the scope and focus of the PA 6 Targets was deemed adequate. Nevertheless, due to the changes of the Action Plan structure, in the second stage of the consultation phase (May 2019), four original targets were slightly reformulated:

- Target 1 has been divided into two targets - one focusing on management of protected areas (incl. Natura 2000 sites) and one focusing on efforts to halt the deterioration in the status of endangered species and habitats.
- Since the Target 2 incorporated three PA 6 topics (landscapes, soil and air), it was divided into three separate targets.
- Scope and objectives of the Target 3 have remained the same, but it was shortened in order to be in line with other targets.
- Since the topic was already covered by the Target 1, the Target 4 was combined with the newly proposed Target 2.

The DSP form (i.e. instructions) allowed for both quantitative and qualitative types of targets. Having in mind the nature of the biodiversity projects and diversity between EU SDR Countries (regarding legislations and reporting mechanisms in environmental and nature protection sectors), qualitative targets were proposed. However, all new targets are accompanied by explicitly defined and measurable milestones that allow PACs and SG to follow the progress on targets.

Accordingly, new targets were defined as:

PA 6 Target	Related topic	Suggested focus*	Associated Task Force
T1: Improve management of ecological networks and protected areas through transnational cooperation and capacity building	BIODIVERSITY	management of protected areas	DANUBEPARKs WGMPBD
T2: Strengthen the efforts to halt the deterioration in the status of species (e.g. Danube sturgeon species) and habitats occurring in the Danube region and covered by EU nature legislation	BIODIVERSITY	endangered umbrella species	DANUBEPARKs DSTF
T3: Reduce the introductions and spread of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in the Danube Region	BIODIVERSITY	IAS as one of the more serious threats	DIAS
T4: Maintain and restore Green and Blue Infrastructure elements through integrated spatial development and conservation planning	LANDSCAPES	green blue infrastructure and integrated planning	DANUBEPARKs WGMPBD
T5: Improve and/or maintain the soil quality in the Danube Region	SOIL	obsolete pesticide & similar chemical remains; soil-related ecosystem services	SONDAR TFPC
T6: Decrease air pollution in the Danube Region.	AIR	air pollution in the Region	TF AIR

* in the next planning period

Milestones and other monitoring tools

Target milestones were selected as concrete activities or results, in order to provide stronger emphasis on the desirable focus in the next planning period and they are all directly connected to the suggested activities. Since the implementation of actions (activities) depends on the funding opportunities and other external factors, somewhat simpler tools for tracking the progress were also suggested as “other monitoring tools” (in case milestones would not be reached). The same principles were followed while defining milestones and other monitoring tools for the activities.

Revised Action Plan – general overview

General overview of the revised Action Plan (Targets and associated Actions) is given below ([Figure 5-1](#)), while the comprehensive list of Targets, Actions and Activities with associated data (milestones, timeline, lead partners) can be found in [Appendix 9.5](#).

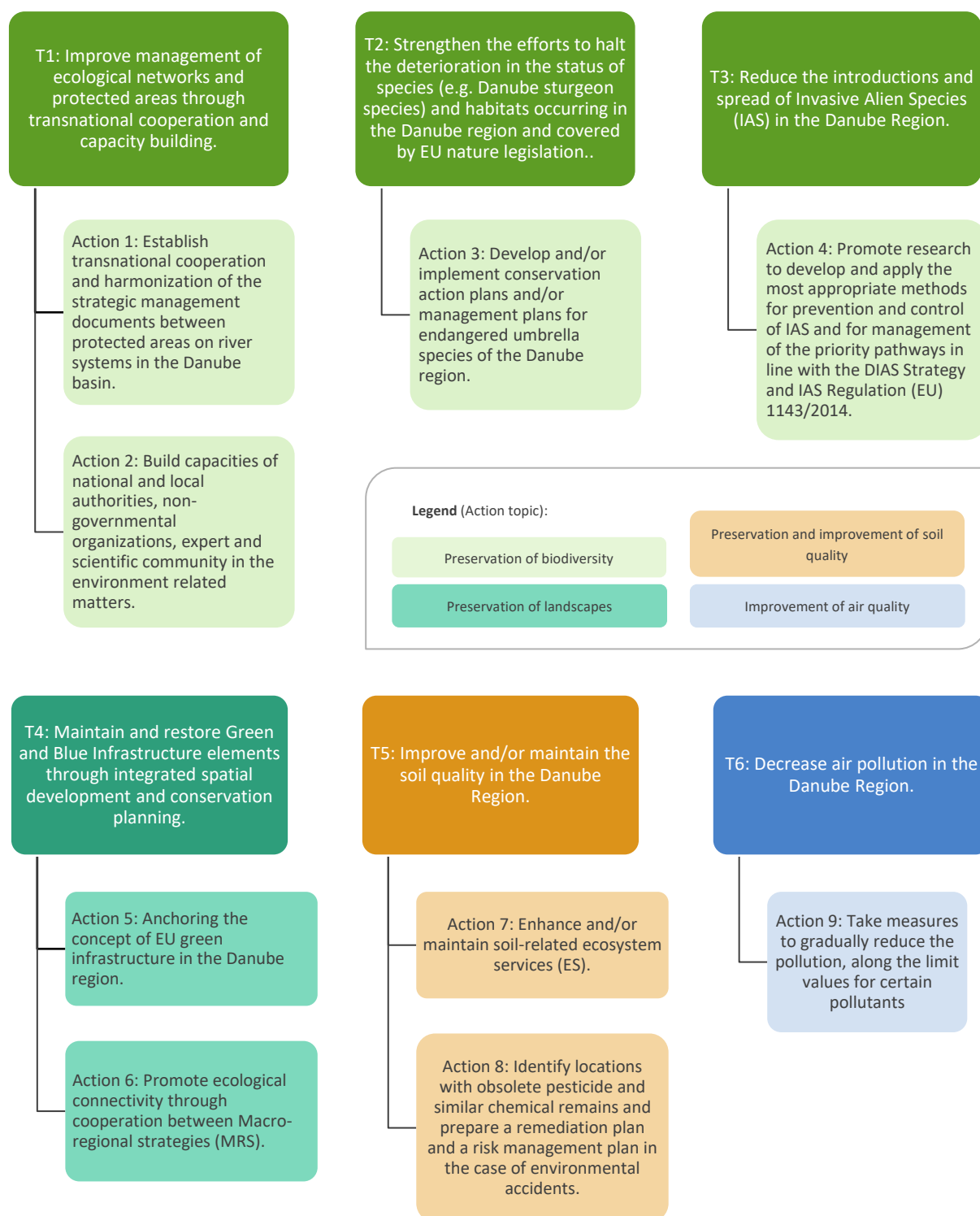


Figure 5-1 Overview of PA 6 Action Plan – Targets and associated Actions.

6 Roadmap revision

Roadmaps are part of the reporting templates for a number of years already – they are used as both planning and reporting tool and through them each Action was to be broken down into milestones (incl. deadlines), outputs and list of projects. However, in the current reporting template, they have been considered as the planning tool only (not to be changed (updated) with every report) and used to break down each Action into milestones (incl. their definition, deadlines and responsible actors).

The latest reporting guidelines (Danube Strategy Point 2016) stated that the activities to be undertaken in order to progress on the PAs targets and actions are not to be planned and included in the *Roadmaps to implement each PA action* (Annex 1), but should be first planned in the respective *PA's Workplan for 1 year* (Annex 2). At the same time, it is important to distinguish two definitions of the “activities” – the one from the reporting guidelines and other from May 2019.

Namely, the guidelines from 2016 (Danube Strategy Point 2016) considered activity as a measurable amount of work that is done for a particular purpose and includes everything that the PA plan to implement with the DSP or DTP project funding, as well as all other activities that the PA plans to implement (with examples such as: meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences, networking and cooperation activities etc.). During the second stage of the consultation phase of the Action Plan revision (May 2019) activities were considered to be examples of concrete umbrella-like initiatives that have a start date, usually require intensive cooperation and serve as platforms for exchanging experiences and good practices. Those activities also have accompanying milestones and other monitoring tools defined.

These activities, i.e. concrete umbrella-like initiatives, were used during the Action Plan revision to specify and guide the actions implementation (see [Appendix 9.5](#)). They were used again during the Roadmap revision to set certain *key steps*. Namely, while discussing the reporting guidelines, it was felt that the link between the Roadmap and the Workplan could be strengthened by dividing the milestones defined for each action into further key steps. Since the milestones, i.e. deadlines for completing each action are often set “far in the future”, this could help focus future workflows and enable development of concrete yearly Workplans. Moreover, together with *other monitoring tools* listed in the Roadmap it will help (standardize) tracking the progress on actions and focus the reporting of different actors, primarily project coordinators and TFs, but Danube Region Countries as well.

While planning the *deadlines* of various key steps, several factors were taken into consideration – time needed to secure the funding and conduct the research (data collection) needed, inter-dependence of defined key steps, european (global) strategies related to environmental and nature conservation etc.

Lastly, it is important to emphasize that *responsible actors* are not necessarily responsible for the (complete) implementation of certain key step, milestone or action. Nevertheless, they should take on the role of the coordinator of its implementation and/or follow-up, reporting the progress to the respective TF or SG.

Comprehensive *Roadmap towards 2030* can be found in [Appendix 9.6](#).

7 Reporting methodology

7.1 Recognized needs and priorities for the new reporting structure

Current structure and responsible parties for reporting on implementation of the EUSDR were described earlier in the Chapter [2.3.2. EUSDR PA 6 implementation](#). Regardless of the structure, good reporting system should serve multiple purposes by:

- ensuring monitoring, evaluation and consistent disclosure of the results achieved by the PA implementation;
- presenting concise, clear and updated progress on policy developments and achievements, most important (strategic) projects and funding opportunities;
- enabling better coordination, cooperation and improved governance of the PA;
- improving the communication and the visibility of the EUSDR achievements among the stakeholders and general public, e.g. by providing the “short business card” of the PA’s scope and work.

In order to meet the expectations, well-structured report should be consistent when reporting on the results (i.e. activities, projects, milestones and actions), address the content (not aim for quantity), use direct and clear language (avoiding the jargon or internal technicalities) and bear in mind that progress that may seem obvious to authors may not be obvious to readers, i.e. avoid vague and general comments.

Since the existing structures within PA 6 (TFs, PACs and SG) form a solid basis to ensure a consequent link from concrete activities on the ground (TF) to the policy level (SG), it is important to develop a good reporting system that would further stabilize this link, i.e. communication and information flow between them, while extending it also to relevant actors beyond TFs and SG. Assessing the methodology of existing documents, certain challenges and opportunities were identified:

- clear reporting procedures between TFs and SG need to be developed in order to avoid sporadic reporting, as well as the reports that are inconsistent in structure and content;
- well-defined (precise) template can sometimes prevent delivery of important information;
- in order to improve visibility and communication with stakeholders and general public, concise and undetailed content from latest reports could be supplemented with more detailed information provided in annexes.

Besides the internal communication of the PA 6, good communication and information flow within the Pillar II, as well as between the four Pillars is vital for ensuring the exchange of good practices, (timely) collaboration and more targeted use of EU funding streams. According to the implementation reports, exchange among PA’s has been proposed from the early years, but there is still a lack of consequent PA exchange. Since most of the PACs state that it is out of their capacities to foster a horizontal exchange, it would seem prudent to design more formal horizontal exchange. In order to reduce the complexity, it was proposed to develop an exchange based on the four Pillars, as the communication and information flow within Pillars already partially exists.

7.2 Revised reporting structure

In order to deal with recognized challenges and opportunities, there were two major points that had to be addressed while preparing the recommendations on the future reporting methodology:

- gap analysis of the reporting procedures,
- development of new reporting structure and reporting procedures between project coordinators, TF and SG & PACs that would ensure concise and informative implementation reports.

As a result, slightly modified framework was developed that will help to ensure the (relevant) information flow between all PA 6 actors ([Figure 7-1](#)), which does not exclude the state coordinated projects implemented outside the framework for the TF.

Namely, In this new reporting structure, **three main levels** (L1 – L3) were recognized:

- Level 1: Steering Group
- Level 2: Task Forces
- Level 3: Project Coordinators.

Each level is responsible for information (data) collection and summarization on its own level, as well as for reporting to the next level:

- Project Coordinators (L3) should report to relevant TFs (L2);
- each Task Force (L2) reports to the Steering Group (L1);
- Steering Group (L1) reports to the European Commission.

At the same time, there are certain information (data, progress reports) that **Danube Region Countries** should provide to the PA 6 SG. In that context, Danube Region Countries could be considered as the Level 2.

Information flow between different levels is presented in more detail in the [Table 7-1](#), while the reporting template prepared for the reporting from L2 to L1 can be found in [Appendix 9.7](#).

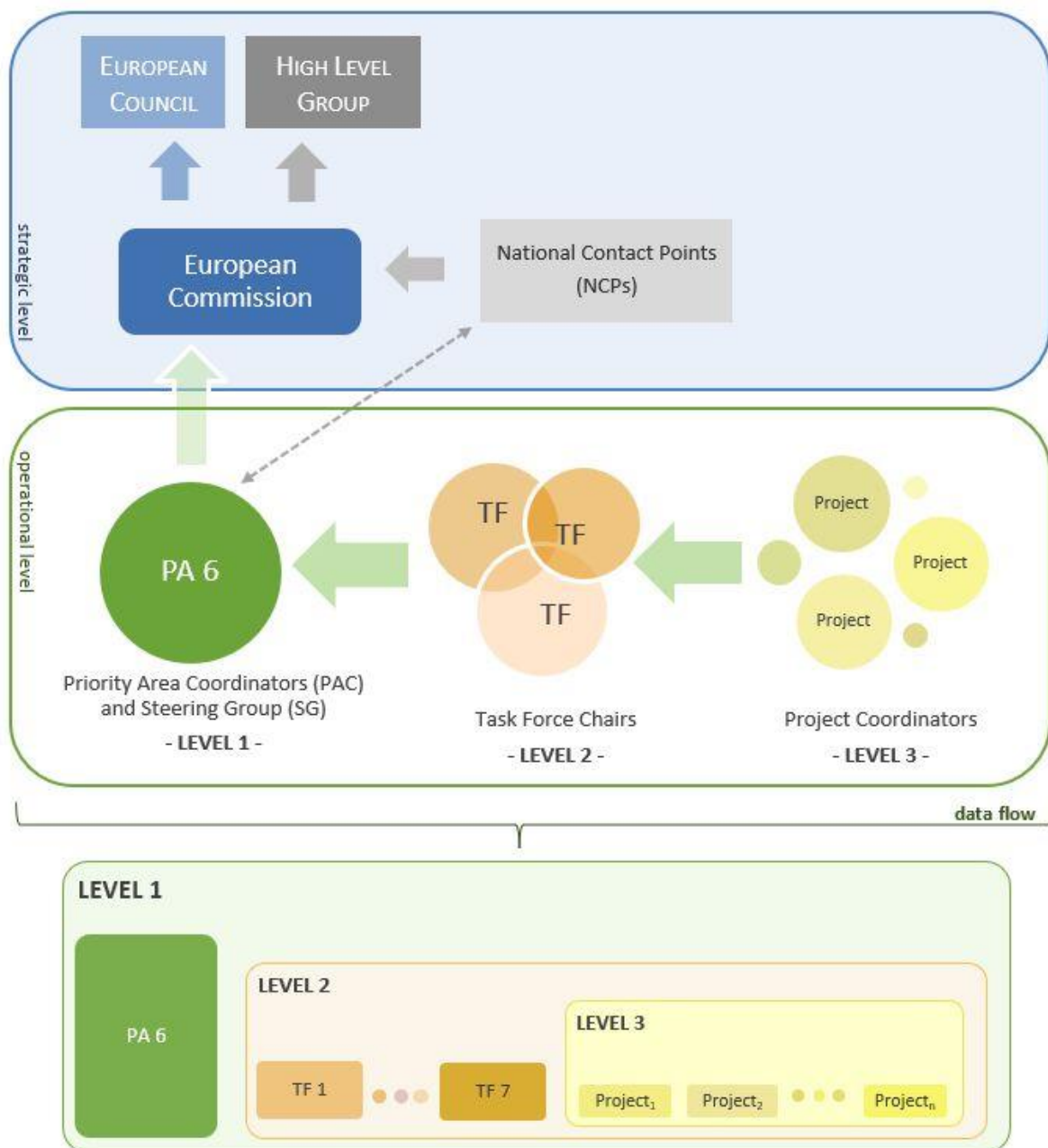


Figure 7-1. Schematic view of the reporting structure revised on the operational level (incl. the data flow).

Table 7-1 Information requirements for different levels of reporting.

Project Coordinators (L3) → relevant TF (L2)

At the beginning of a project:

- short report that includes:
 - key project information: duration, responsible actors, funding, web page
 - main project objectives

By the end of a project:

- short report that includes:
 - main project outputs
 - list of published publications and other deliverables [with a link to the published content or the said content should be attached in the Annex]
 - link to the final report [or report attached in the Annex]

Task Force (L2) → SG (L1)

A yearly report should include:

- brief summary of
 - activities carried out by the TF during the reporting period
 - conclusions on challenges and opportunities
 - activities planned for the next period
- **Annexes:**
 - minutes and/or conclusions of all TF meetings
 - signed agreements on newly established cooperations and partnerships
 - (list of) published TF publications and other deliverables [with a link to the published content or the said content should be attached]
 - information about all TF and TF-related projects (esp. those funded through the EUSDR) received by project coordinators [see level 3]

SG (L1) → European Commission

A yearly report should include:

- brief summary of
 - policy development: areas at focus, main achievements, lessons learned, future development
 - governance: organisation and functioning, coordination and cooperation, stakeholders involvement, publicity and communication, lessons learned, future development
 - funding opportunities: main achievements, lessons learned, future development
 - progress: on milestones, projects and activities, actions and targets
- **Annexes:**
 - conclusions of all SG meetings
 - signed agreements on newly established cooperations and partnerships
 - TF's summaries received by the TF chairs [see level 2; attached]

8 Literature

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9 Appendices

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9.1 List of EUSDR targets (as validated in May 2016)

Priority Area 1A "To improve mobility and intermodality of inland waterways"

- I. Increase the cargo transport on the river by 20% by 2020 compared to 2010.
- II. 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 2020.
- III. 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.
- IV. Implement harmonised River Information Services (RIS) on the Danube and its navigable tributaries and ensure the international exchange of RIS data preferably by 2020.
- V. 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.

Priority Area 1B "To improve mobility and intermodality - rail, road and air"

- I. Support efficient freight railway services and improved travel times for competitive railway passenger connections between major cities in the Danube Region (DR) by 2030.
- II. Support fully functional multi-modal TEN-T Core Network Corridors by 2030.
- III. Support the development of efficient multimodal terminals at sea, river and dry ports in the Danube Region and ensure their connectivity and access through the integration of all modes of transport and efficient logistics services by 2030.
- IV. Support improvement of the regional air connectivity and the implementation of the Single European Sky initiative.
- V. Facilitate the improvement of secondary and tertiary roads in the DR.
- VI. Support safe and sustainable transport and mobility in the Danube Region.

Priority Area 2 "To encourage more sustainable energy"

- I. To help to achieve the national targets based on the Europe 2030 climate and energy targets
- II. To remove existing bottlenecks in energy to fulfil the goals of the Energy Union within the Danube Region
- III. To better interconnect regions by joint activities with relevant initiatives and institutions

Priority Area 3 "To promote culture and tourism, people to people contacts"

- I. Develop a Danube Brand for the entire Danube Region based on already existing work
- II. Support the implementation of a harmonised monitoring system, dedicated to tourism, able to provide complete and comparable statistical data in all the 14 states part of the EUSDR
- III. Develop new and support existing Cultural Routes relevant in the Danube Region
- IV. Develop green tourist products along the Danube Region
- V. To create a 'Blue Book' on Danube cultural identity
- VI. Ensure the sustainable preservation of cultural heritage and natural values by developing relevant clusters, and networks of museums, interpretation and visitors centres within the Danube Region
- VII. Promoting exchange and networking in the field of contemporary arts in the Danube Region

Priority Area 4 "To restore and maintain the quality of waters"

- I. Achieve the management objectives set out in the Danube River Basin Management Plan
- II. Reduce the nutrient levels in the Danube River to allow the recovery of the Black Sea ecosystems to conditions similar to 1960s
- III. Elaborate a Danube Delta Analysis Report as a step towards completion of the Delta management Plan
- IV. Secure viable populations of Danube sturgeon species
- V. Elaborate, adopt and implement the sub-basin management plans, such as Sava, Tisza and Prut sub-basin

Priority Area 5 "To manage environmental risks"

- I. To address the challenges of water scarcity and droughts in line with the Danube River Basin Management Plan – Update 2015, the report on the impacts of droughts in the Danube Basin in 2015 (due in 2016) and the ongoing work in the field of climate adaptation.
- II. Provide and enhance continuous support to the implementation of the Danube Flood Risk Management Plan – adopted in 2015 in line with the EU Floods Directive – to achieve significant reductions of flood risk events by 2021, also taking into account potential impacts of climate change and adaption strategies.
- III. To continuously update the existing database of accident risk spots (ARS Inventory), contaminated sites and sites used for the storage of dangerous substances.

Priority Area 6 "To preserve biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils"

- I. By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region
- II. Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality
- III. Encourage achieving significant progress in identification and prioritization of Invasive Alien Species and their pathways in order to control or eradicate priority species, to manage pathways and to prevent the introduction and establishment of new Invasive Alien Species in the Danube Region by 2020
- IV. Continue the ongoing work and efforts to securing viable populations of Danube sturgeon species and other indigenous fish species by 2020

Priority Area 7 "To develop the Knowledge Society (research, education and ICT)"

- I. To increase the effectiveness of investment in R&I through establishment of a funding coordination network aiming to initiate a minimum of 2 dedicated EUSDR activities each year (e.g. joint calls; joint strategic project proposals (within a multilateral framework)).
- II. To increase the number of EPO and PCT patent applications filed from the Danube Region by 20% by 2020
- III. To enhance regional research and education co-operation to reach 20% of academic mobility within the region by 2020.
- IV. To increase the annual output of co-publications in the region by 15 % by 2020
- V. To develop RIS3 in all Danube countries (or their regions) by 2020

Priority Area 8 "To support the competitiveness of enterprises"

- I. Improvement of the innovations and new technologies transfer through establishing measures like consulting services by chambers and other institutions or organizations, in cooperation with other actions relevant Priority Areas of the EUSDR
- II. Establishing a cluster network with focus on connecting companies in bio-based industries and Analysis of Smart Specialization Strategies for the bio-based industry within Danube region.
- III. Improvement of the technological knowledge and implementation level of environmental technologies through presentation of the latest know-how and Best Practices in the area of sewage treatment, solid waste management, generation of energy from renewable sources etc., and through identification of the regional decision-makers responsible for submission of project application.
- IV. Improvement of framework conditions, support programs and capacity building of stakeholders, to enhance competitiveness and added value in rural areas and in particular of the agricultural sector.
- V. Development of best practise models for vocational training oriented towards employability and skills demand (theory and practice) by the implementing pilot projects.
- VI. Improvement of the entrepreneurship education in order to enhance the competitiveness of enterprises, especially SMEs through further development of the lifelong entrepreneurial learning system based on the identified set of strategic goals in line with Human Capital Dimension of the SBA for Europe.

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- VII. Improvement of business support in particular to strengthen the competitiveness of SMEs for international cooperation and trade.

Priority Area 9 "To invest in people and skills"

- I. Contribution to a higher employment rate in the Danube Region, especially through tackling youth and long-term unemployment
- II. Contribution to improved educational outcomes and relevant skills and competences in the Danube Region, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, active citizenship and well-being
- III. Contribution to increased quality and efficiency of education, training and labour market systems
- IV. Contribution to ensuring inclusive education and training and promoting inclusive labour markets, equal opportunities and non-discrimination as well as the promotion of civic competences and lifelong learning opportunities for all
- V. Contribution to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral levels.

Priority Area 10 "To step up institutional capacity and cooperation"

- I. Improve World Bank governance indicators related to government effectiveness, regulatory quality and control of corruption in comparison to 2011
- II. 80 % of participating countries involve the national, regional and local authorities and CSOs through annual National (provincial) EUSDR consultations in cooperation with the National Coordinators of the EUSDR
- III. The UPDR helps to generate, through the exchange of information and the support, on all levels of cooperation, for 25% of UPDR stakeholder organisations at least one Urban Danube Project, furthering the aim of better spending
- IV. Increase the average absorption rate of EU funds in the Danube Region in comparison to 2007-2013 period

Priority Area 11 "To work together to tackle security and organised crime"

- I. Security offensive - Enhancing police cooperation with the aim of improving security and tackling serious and organised crime in the EUSDR countries and strengthening the efforts against terrorism threats
- II. Developing strategic long-term cooperation between law enforcement actors along the Danube river by strengthening networks for cooperation by 2020.
- III. Improving the systems of border control, document inspection management and cooperation on consular related issues in the Danube region.
- IV. Promoting the rule of law and the fight against corruption.

9.2 PA 6's Actions

9.2.1 Action 1

Action 1 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T2: *Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality.*

Moreover, it's related to the all targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020. According to the Action Plan, actions under the Danube Strategy aim to fully contribute to the implementation of the post-2010 EU Biodiversity Strategy, i.e. to halt biodiversity loss and ecosystems services' degradation and to restore them in so far as feasible.

Action 1: To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity	
Milestone n°6.011	Assessment made for EUSDR region on update and revision of national biodiversity strategic documents (NBSAPs) in line with CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	In the early years: I. quarter 2015 (after the CBD COP 12) Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): still pending on the EUSDR to submit their NBSAPs
Status	In progress
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	EUSDR countries have an obligation to translate the international framework (revised and updated CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets) into national biodiversity strategies and action plans by COP 12. However, some guidelines could be provided at EUSDR level to ensure consistency, sustainability and more targeted use of EU funding streams for their implementation. Moreover, further activities that are related (specific) to the Danube region and/or need to be implemented on a regional scale could be distinguish at the (trans)regional level.
Milestone n°6.012	Follow up on implementation framework for EU Biodiversity 2020 strategy
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region Countries MS and HR Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	In the early years: ongoing (following adoption of the Common Implementation Framework) Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	No (no measurable outputs / indicators) Although progress is rather easy to follow, there are no measurable outputs and/or indicators related to this milestone - predicted output is the use of Common Implementation Framework (CIF) as the framework for monitoring, assessing and reporting on progress towards reaching the biodiversity related PA 6 targets.

Milestone n°6.012 <i>(continued)</i>	
EUSDR added value	Common Implementation Framework (CIF) for the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 includes the governance aspects related to the coherent framework for monitoring, assessing and reporting on progress towards reaching the EU targets and streamlining this work as far as possible with monitoring, assessment and reporting obligations under the CBD (notably the Aichi Targets). Follow up on the regional level could help distinguish further activities that are related (specific) to the Danube region and/or need to be implemented on a regional scale, but also complementary to actions listed in the <i>EU Roadmap for enhanced implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020</i> .
Milestone n°6.013	
Assessment made for Danube Region on progress achieved towards Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets	
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	In the early years: Assessment prepared in I. quarter 2015 Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020 (following the submission of the 6th national reports by EUSDR countries to the CBD)
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	EUSDR countries are actively involved in revision of national biodiversity strategic documents in line with CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets. At the same time, revisions of national strategic documents include implementation of national projects which contribute to this PA 6 Action. Moreover, they could help distinguish further activities that are related (specific) to the Danube region and/or need to be implemented on a regional scale

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

According to the Action Plan and later roadmaps, action was ment to ensure that EUSDR actions fully contribute to the implementation of the post-2010 EU biodiversity strategy and achievement of CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (i.e. Aichi Biodiversity Targets). Therefore, defined milestones focused primarily on following the progress of development, update and/or revision of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. Indeed, countinuous follow up on the national progress of the EUSDR countries can help identify challenges and provide guidelines to ensure consistency and expedite the process. Moreover, since revisions of national strategic documents include implementation of national projects which contribute to this PA 6 Action, this kind of regional follow up can help distinguish further activities that are specific to the Danube region and/or need to be implemented on a regional scale, but also ensure sustainability and more targeted use of EU funding streams for project implementation. However, it has been proved hard to define specific, measurable and time-bound milestones and, in the end, this action represents more a guiding principle than operationalized action. During the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) it was therefore proposed to cancel the action and to keep it as a preamble to PA 6 AP.

9.2.2 Action 2

Action 2 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T1: *By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region.*

Moreover, implementation of this action should contribute to the implementation of the PA 6 Actions 1 (*To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity*), 3 (*To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered animal species*) and 14 (*To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development*). At the same time, it is related to the other EUSDR PA's Actions:

- PA 4.01: *To implement fully the Danube River Basin Management Plan,*
- PA 4.03: *To continue to invest in and support the information collection systems already developed by ICPDR,*
- PA 4.12: *To strengthen general awareness and facilitate exchange of good practice in integrated water management issues in the Danube Basin among decision-makers at all levels and among the population of the Region,*
- PA 5.02: *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").*

Lastly, Action 2 is also related to the Target 1 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020, namely:

- Action 1: *Complete the establishment of the Natura 2000 network and ensure good management,*
- Action 2: *Ensure adequate financing of Natura 2000 sites*
- Action 4: *Improve and streamline monitoring and reporting.*

According to the current Action Plan, action should include, among other activities, exchange of experience and capacity building for protected areas/Natura 2000 sites administrations; community involvement; visitor management and tourism development; as well as coordinated management planning, implementation and evaluation. It is also indispensable to increase public awareness about Natura 2000 sites and protected areas, with the help of e.g. the National Ecological and Rural Networks or the European Network for Rural Development. The action could be implemented e.g. through the existing Danube Network of Protected Areas and the Carpathian Networks of Protected Areas.

Action 2: To manage Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas effectively	
Milestone n°6.021	Follow up on reports prepared by EC for management of N2000 in Danube Region on implementation of conservation measures
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region MS Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	In the early years: following reports preparation by COM Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020

Milestone n°6.021 <i>(continued)</i>	
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	For Natura 2000 sites MS shall establish the necessary conservation measures involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans, and appropriate statutory, administrative or contractual measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of the natural habitat types in Annex I and the species in Annex II present on the sites. However, follow up on the regional level could help distinguish further activities that are related (specific) to the Danube region, need to be implemented on a regional scale and/or could benefit from pooling the available resources.
Milestone n°6.022 Build capacity among riverine countries in Danube region	
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	In the early years: to be set out on national level Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	No (no measurable outputs / indicators) Although progress is rather easy to follow, there are no measurable outputs and/or indicators related to this milestone.
EUSDR added value	EUSDR provides a perfect platform for capacity building - discussions with colleagues from different countries and/or sectors open possibilities for future (interdisciplinary) collaborations and knowledge transfer in the Region (latest trends, state-of-the-art information, best practices).
Milestone n°6.023 Assessment made for Danube Region according to assessment of conservation status and effectiveness of measures (management framework of Natura 2000 sites) for period 2007-2012 due to in 2013 prepared by the MS/COM	
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	In the early years: 2014 (following submission of reports of MS and preparation of composite report by COM) Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	Article 17 requires Member States to report every six years about the progress made with the implementation of the Habitats Directive. Monitoring and reporting under the Directive is focusing on maintaining and/or restoring a favourable conservation status for habitat types and species of community interest. Though this is a national obligation regulated by national legislation, EUSDR could help ensure consistency and sustainability in monitoring, reporting and further use of collected data. Furthermore, it could facilitate better management of transboundary Natura sites and/or identification of more suitable conservation measures that are specific to the Danube region and/or need to be implemented on a regional scale.

Milestone n°6.024	Follow up on financial instruments available for financing Natura 2000 network in next programming period 2014 - 2020 to assess adequate financing of Natura 2000 activities in EUSDR region
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region MS Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	In the early years: 2014 Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): Programming documents for ETC programmes include the PA 6 objectives (2015)
Status	In progress
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	In order to create funding opportunities to support PA 6-related projects in the next programming period, Member States in the preparation of the Partnership Agreement and the Operational Programmes should take the EUSDR targets for preservation of biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils into account. Moreover, follow up on the regional level could help distinguish opportunities for international, (trans)regional and/or intersectoral cooperation, thus resulting in more targeted use of EU funding streams and/or pooling of the available resources.
Milestone n°6.025	To establish Mura Drava Danube bilateral Biosphere Reserve Hungary-Croatia
Responsible Actors	In the early years: HR, HU; Responsible contact point: HR – HU Nature Conservation Subcommittee and Coordination Committee Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	2012
Status	Completed
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	Proclamation of the Mura Drava Danube transboundary biosphere reserve by Croatia and Hungary is an example of good coordination, cooperation and consultation among riverine countries.
Milestone n°6.026	To establish Mura-Drava-Danube MAB Reserve Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, and Serbia
Responsible Actors	In the early years: AT, HR, HU, SRB and SI; Responsible contact point: Members of the Coordination Board for the preparation of MDD TBR Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	In the early years: following conclusions of the 2nd meeting of the Coordination Board Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	If proclaimed, Mura-Drava-Danube MAB Reserve between Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, and Serbia could become Europe's largest trans-boundary riverine protected wetland area. As such, it would serve as an example of good coordination, cooperation and consultation among riverine countries.

Milestone n°6.027	DANUBEPARKS II - Anchoring the Danube River Network of Protected Areas as driver for transnational nature conservation strategies at the Danube
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Responsible Actors	In the early years: DE, AT, SK, HU, HR, RS, BG, RO Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): Danubeparks Network
Deadline	to be added after project approval (June 2012) - accomplished in 2014
Status	Completed
Measurability	No (no measurable outputs / indicators) The predicted output was defined as a wide public/stakeholder recognition for DANUBEPARKS network by long term use of the results by target groups on international, regional and local level throughout the Danube Region.
EUSDR added value	DANUBEPARKS is a great example how networking and cooperation between different stakeholders (mostly public authorities and environmental NGOs) helps to strengthen their capacities and to make more impact at the decision making and policy level.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

Management of Natura 2000 sites and related activities is part of the national obligations, both on national and transnational level. However, EUSDR can help to ensure consistency and sustainability in monitoring, reporting and further use of collected data. Furthermore, it can facilitate better management of transboundary Natura sites and/or identification of more suitable conservation measures that are specific to the Danube region and/or need to be implemented on a regional scale.

During the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) it was therefore proposed to keep the activity, but reformulate it slightly with a general objective to improve the management of Natura 2000 sites through transnational cooperation and capacity building. Moreover, it was proposed to put some more focus on the establishment of the 5-country UNESCO Biosphere Reserve "Mura-Drava-Danube" (with an effective management aiming at natural dynamic processes of Mura, Drava and Danube rivers), strengthening of participatory cross-border management of the Danube Delta and experience exchange of participatory management of Emerald Network sites aiming to maintain and restore conservation values while fostering benefits for local people.

Regarding the opportunities linked to this action, stronger interlinkage with other macro-regional strategies is required (especially EUSAIR and EUSALP), since they feature similar (synergized) objectives deriving from EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020. There is an excellent opportunity for horizontal knowledge exchange, more targeted use of EU funding streams and/or pooling the available national resources that could streamline the achievement of the environment-related targets set out in action plans across the EU MRS.

Furthermore, newly introduced Capitalization Strategy of the DTP represents a valuable initiative aiming to link DTP funded projects with the EUSDR, thus tightening the links between EUSDR and DTP, enabling synergies and filling gaps. At the same time, the need was recognized for a contact person that would be assigned by the DTP Joint Secretariat per Priority Area. There was also a proposal to include representatives from DTP and other funding programmes to TF and/or SG meetings. Regarding the EU-steered funding programmes (e.g. LIFE, HORIZON 2020), there is an opportunity to link them more strongly and clearly to MRS, including the EUSDR. Lastly, since some of the national

priorities contributing to the PA 6 targets are funded by the national OP, there is an opportunity to include more national projects with transnational impact.

9.2.3 Action 3

Action 3 contributes to achieving three EUSDR PA 6's targets – (T1) *By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region;* (T2) *Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality;* and (T4) *Continue the ongoing work and efforts to securing viable populations of Danube sturgeon species and other indigenous fish species by 2020.*

Moreover, it's related to the EUSDR PA 4 Actions 10: *To reduce existing water continuity for fish migration in the Danube basin* and Target 2 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 (*Maintain and restore Ecosystems and their services*), namely:

- Action 5: *Improve knowledge of ecosystems and their services in the EU,*
- Action 6: *Set priorities to restore and promote the use of green infrastructure*

Action Plan highlights the importance of including the various research, inventory and monitoring activities (especially in regard to species and habitats of European and national importance), as well as addressing the conflicts with humans and illegal trade in wild animals. Furthermore, activities resulting in enhanced protection of the remaining natural ecosystems (such as the Danube Delta or the Carpathians), wetlands restoration, afforestation of non-arable land, protection of marginal forests and bioremediation of highly impacted areas are mentioned as desirable.

Action 3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species	
Milestone n°6.031	Follow up on assessment made by MS and COM applicable for Danube Region to improve knowledge of ecosystems and their services in the EU
Responsible Actors	In the early years: EUSDR EU MS Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group will follow the work of Working Group on Mapping and Assessment on Ecosystems and their Services (MAES)
Deadline	In the early years: 2014 (following preparation of the MS and COM assessment) Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	MS with the assistance of the COM will map and assess the state of ecosystems and their services in their national territory by 2014, assess the economic value of such services, and promote the integration of these values into accounting and reporting systems at EU and national level by 2020. Though this is a national obligation regulated by national legislation, some guidelines could be provided at EUSDR level to ensure consistency, sustainability and more targeted use of EU funding streams for the implementation in the Region. Moreover, follow up on the regional level could help distinguish some aspects that are specific to the Danube region and/or further activities that need to be implemented on a regional scale.

Milestone n°6.032		Follow up on assessment made by MS and COM on strategic framework to set priorities for ecosystem restoration to identify priority restoration project for EUSDR region
Responsible Actors	<p>In the early years: Danube Region Countries</p> <p>Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group will follow the progress made by Working Group on Green Infrastructure Implementation and Restoration ()</p>	
Deadline	<p>In the early years: December 2012 (project timeline: January 2011-December 2012)</p> <p>Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020</p>	
Status	In progress	
Measurability	Yes	
EUSDR added value	<p>MS with the assistance of EC have to develop strategic framework to set priorities for ecosystem restoration at sub-national, national and EU level by 2014. Follow up on the regional level could help distinguish priorities for ecosystem restoration specific to the Danube region and/or further activities (projects) that need to be implemented on a (trans)regional scale.</p>	
Milestone n°6.033		Sub-Strategy on Sturgeon Conservation
Responsible Actors	<p>In the early years: Danube Region Countries</p> <p>Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): DSTF; PACs and Steering Group ()</p>	
Deadline	<p>In the early years: 2020 (Secure viable populations of Danube sturgeon species and other indigenous fish species by 2020), mid-term deadlines to be fixed during next DSTF meeting.</p> <p>Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020</p>	
Status	In progress	
Measurability	<p>No (no measurable outputs / indicators)</p> <p>Although progress is rather easy to follow, there are no measurable outputs and/or indicators related to this milestone.</p>	
EUSDR added value	<p>Based on initiatives of WWF, IAD and other NGOs and networks, a long-term strategy on the conservation of Sturgeon Species in the Danube shall be developed. EUSDR provides perfect platform for identification of consistent and sustainable priority actions that could help ensure sturgeon conservation in the Danube Region, but also enables more targeted use of EU funding streams and pooling of available resources.</p>	
Milestone n°6.034		Reproduction of populations of rare and endangered fish species – a necessary condition for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development of the Ukrainian-Slovak transborder area of the Tisa river basin. Short title: “Fish: joint basin – joint solutions”
Responsible Actors	FORZA, Agency for sustainable development of the Carpathian region	
Deadline	Project approval in December 2012 (following approval, project timeframe will be added)	
Status	<p>Excluded (no funding)</p> <p>In 2012 Letter of Recommendation was issued by PA 6 and Application was submitted to ENPI HU-SK-RO-UA program in March 2012. Although no funding was obtained, project developers continued working on different project ideas related to this milestone. IR (2013 - 2014) stated that milestone n°6.034 will be excluded in the following reports - although recognized in the first reporting period as a project idea that is contributing to the Action 3, project was not approved for funding.</p>	
Measurability	Yes	

Milestone n°6.034 <i>(continued)</i>	
EUSDR added value	Focusing on four endangered fish species in the Tisa River Basin, project would directly contribute to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Establishment of an international fish reproduction centre of rare and endangered fish species would be of trans(regional) significance.
Milestone n°6.035 Elaboration of Masterplan Bavarian Danube to protect and enhance biodiversity	
Responsible Actors	Working Group Masterplan PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	2016
Status	Completed Though last IR (2016 - 2016) lists this milestone as “in progress”, Master Plan was published in 2017 as “ <i>Lebensraum Bayerische Donau: Vielfalt schützen und nachhaltig nutzen - Masterplan zur Entwicklung und Auswahl von Projekten zur Umsetzung der Europäischen Donaumaßnahmenstrategie in Bayern</i> ”, thus marking this milestone completed.
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	Development of the Masterplan Bavarian Danube is a great example of (intersectoral) cooperation of different stakeholders. Through mid- and long term vision for the Bavarian Stretch of the Danube it defines key projects to ensure biodiversity and environmental protection. Both the approach and accumulated knowledge could be transferred to other parts of the Danube Region.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

Since some of the milestones have been reached and some of them are related to national obligations, it was proposed during the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) to slightly reformulate the action in order to promote more strongly the development and implementation of conservation action plans for endangered umbrella species of the Danube region. Therefore, in the next period, focus could be more on

- implementation of the Pan-European action plan for sturgeon conservation through enforcement of the sturgeon catch moratoriums / restrictions across borders, preparing the governance and funding framework for ex-situ conservation measures, mapping and securing habitats, enabling sturgeon migration, and harmonising monitoring programmes;
- science-based cross-border monitoring and management of large carnivores, in particular through facilitating stakeholder collaboration (especially between enforcement agencies and nature conservation institutions) for coordinated implementation of measures for preventing and tackling illegal killings and securing critical habitats.

Furthermore, there is an opportunity for closer cooperation with the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) worth exploring. EUSDR certainly provides an excellent platform for fostering stronger collaboration between various regional stakeholders dealing with restoration of ecosystems and ecosystem services. It could also provide guidelines and/or a list of priorities tuned to the regional needs and peculiarities, but also help to ensure consistency, sustainability and more targeted use of EU funding streams for the implementation in the Region. In that regard, a study on ecosystem services in the Danube Region has been conducted (Badura et al 2018), that (1) gave a more detailed overview on the main types of ecosystem services recognized in the Danube area and their level of assessment; (2) investigated whether there are ‘ES hotspots’ with

an outstanding importance for the overall region; and (3) gave some recommendations on how to consider ecosystem services in the future within all Priority Areas of the EUSDR (in particular for further planning and investment decisions).

Finally, as for the Action 2, stronger interlinkage with other macro-regional strategies is required in order to ensure horizontal knowledge exchange, more targeted use of EU funding streams and/or pooling the the available national resources, but also to avoid duplication of the work.

9.2.4 Action 4

Action 4 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T4: *Continue the ongoing work and efforts to securing viable populations of Danube sturgeon species and other indigenous fish species by 2020*. Moreover, it's related to the EUSDR PA 4's Action 10: *To reduce existing water continuity for fish migration in the Danube basin*.

According to the Action Plan, parties to the Convention should address both the geopolitical changes in the area and policy developments related to the environmental protection and sustainable fishing. If deemed appropriate, those changes should be then reflected in the updated Convention.

Action 4: To explore together the appropriateness of reviewing the Convention Concerning Fishing in the Waters of the Danube

Milestone n°6.041	Built cooperation, if appropriate, among parties regarding review of the Convention
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Responsible Actors	PACs and Steering Group
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Deadline	2020
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Status	In progress
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Measurability	No measurable outputs / indicators Although progress is rather easy to follow, there are no measurable outputs and/or indicators related to this milestone
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EUSDR added value	EUSDR provides a perfect platform for discussion on the appropriateness of reviewing the Convention Concerning Fishing in the Waters of the Danube. However, possibilities of using the Convention on the EUSDR level should be raised on higher political level with an aim of all Danube Region Countries signing the Convention
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Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

Since the possibilities of using the Convention on the EUSDR level should be raised on higher political level with an aim of all Danube Region Countries signing the Convention, it was proposed during the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) to cancel the action. However, there is an opportunity to embed appropriate elements, primarily those related to conservation of migratory species, within some other action (e.g. Action 3: *To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered animal species*).

Regarding the other opportunities related to this action, there is a possibility of linking aforementioned elements with the PA4 Action *To reduce existing water continuity interruption for fish migration in the Danube basin*.

9.2.5 Action 5

Action 5 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T2: *Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality.* Moreover, it's related to the Action 6: *Set priorities to restore and promote the use of green infrastructure*, i.e. Target 2 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.

According to the Action Plan, action could include, among other activities, scientific research to find new ways for connecting habitats, consultations with relevant communities and stakeholders, careful and integrated spatial planning to develop and apply practices and technologies for economic investments and infrastructural development benefiting biodiversity.

Action 5: To develop green infrastructure in order to connect different bio-geographic regions and habitats	
Milestone n°6.051	Assessment made to identify activities to be implemented in Danube Region Countries from EU Green Infrastructure Strategy to best fit the EUSDR targets
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	In the early years: 2013 following development of Green Infrastructure Strategy Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): end of 2020
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	Identification of (general, common) activities and their implementation on the (trans)regional level would help ensure consistency and sustainability of deployment of green infrastructure in urban and rural areas of the Danube Region, as well as more targeted use of EU funding streams.
Milestone n°6.052	Follow up on implementation of green corridors projects identified in EUSDR Action Plan
Responsible Actors	At the beginning: RO, BL, MO, UA (Lower Danube) and AT, SK (Alpine-Carpathian Corridor) Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group will follow on the project in preparation an implementation as follows: DANUBE parks CONNECTED (as a Danube parks follow up), Alpine Carpathian River Corridor (cross-border cooperation over macro-regions) and Alps-Carpathians-Danube – together for European biodiversity (Alparc, CNPA, DANUBE PARKS)
Deadline	In the early years: to be set out by countries involved Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): end of 2020
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	EUSDR provides a perfect platform for identification of consistent and sustainable priority activities needed to promote and enable the implementation of green corridors which would benefit the nature conservation on a larger (trans-/regional) scale.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

Implementation of this action requires integrated spatial development and conservation planning, i.e. better communication, knowledge and data sharing between environmental, transport and spatial planning sectors. Additionally, Green infrastructure as such is recognized as a great potential for mainstreaming biodiversity into other sectors and is mostly included in national Ops.

In order to develop consistent and sustainable network of ecological (green) corridors through implementation of Green and/or Blue-Green infrastructure, transregional cooperation with EUSALP, EUSAIR and EUSBSR is imperative. Moreover, as mentioned in the Roadmap, this action relates to the work of GIIR – Green Infrastructure Implementation and Restoration working group (former Working Group on Green Infrastructure and the Restoration Prioritisation Framework - WG GI-RPF), since main objectives of the WG are: to support the implementation of actions of the GI Strategy, to provide a platform for sharing best practices on GI deployment, and to address the linkages between the restoration of degraded ecosystems and the deployment of GI. There is also a link and potential for cooperation with the European Green Belt Association e.V. that aims to restore and/or conserve natural heritage along the line of the former Iron Curtain to function as an ecological network connecting high-value natural and cultural landscapes, whilst respecting the economic, social and cultural needs of local communities

At the same time, taking into account climate change predictions, there are some opportunities worth exploring, i.e. a possibility to complement this action by including some of the activities related to other Nature-based Solutions (e.g. Ecosystem-based Climate Change Adaptation, Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction etc.), that would also warrant stronger cooperation with other EUSDR PAs, especially Pillar II PAs.

This is in alignment with current proposals (11th SG Meeting, October 2018) to slightly reformulate the action in order to maintain and restore critical Green and Blue Infrastructure elements through integrated spatial, development and conservation planning. Proposed new (i.e. broader) aim of this action would be to:

- map key cross-country blue and green infrastructure elements in the region and facilitate agreement on management targets;
- improve the communication, knowledge and data sharing between environmental, transport and spatial planning sectors;
- ensure capacity building regarding the development of Strategic Environmental Assessments and their use in decision making processes;
- identify (map) the areas that need to be restored in order to enhance the flow of ecosystem services and prepare the restoration activities (with an emphasis on those that require transborder restoration and/or cooperation and those involving economic stakeholders).

9.2.6 Action 6

Action 6 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T3: *Encourage achieving significant progress in identification and prioritization of Invasive Alien Species and their pathways in order to control or eradicate priority species, to manage pathways and to prevent the introduction and establishment of new Invasive Alien Species in the Danube Region by 2020.*

At the same time, control, management and eradication of invasive alien species would certainly contribute to other PA 6 targets, especially T1 (*By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region*) and 2 (*Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality*). Furthermore, it's related to the Action 16: *Establish a dedicated instrument on Invasive Alien Species, i.e. Target 5 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.*

According to the Action Plan, action would assess the impact of IAS on the ecosystems in the Danube region, identify environmentally friendly ways to control their development, promote research to identify ecologically sound ways to keep their population under control or eliminate them and raise public awareness about the danger of IAS.

Action 6: To reduce the spread of invasive alien species (IAS)	
Milestone n°6.061	To assess the effectiveness of IAS legislation in EUSDR region analysing implementation on new legislative framework on IAS in EUSDR region
Responsible Actors	At the beginning: Danube Region EU Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): DIAS; PACs and Steering Group will follow on progress made by the Committee On Invasive Alien Species
Deadline	At the beginning: 2013-ongoing, following adoption of new legislative framework on IAS Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	No (no measurable outputs / indicators) - the predicted output is the assessment of effectiveness of implementation on new legislative framework on IAS on national level
EUSDR added value	Following the adoption of the new legislative framework on IAS, this milestone proposes to assess the effectiveness of IAS legislation in EUSDR region by analysing implementation of new legislative framework on IAS on national level. However, management of invasive alien species and their pathways is certainly a problem that should be tackled on the (trans)regional level.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

Following up on the recent developments on the EU level, during the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) it was proposed to keep the action, but clarify it some more. With a slightly more emphasis on the introduction prevention, action would still aim to:

- collect and analyse data about alien species in the Danube Region;
- assess their impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services;

- assess the risks and prioritise the alien species and their pathways of introduction and spread,
- promote research to develop and apply the most appropriate methods for prevention and control of IAS and for management of the priority pathways in line with the DIAS Strategy and IAS Regulation (EU) 1143/2014;
- raise awareness and communication about IAS among all interested parties in the Danube Region.

Through DIAS, EUSDR provides an excellent platform to bring together various regional actors, stakeholders and their networks from different branches. Close link, i.e. communication and cooperation between the DIAS and EASIN and Joint Research Centre of the EC should certainly be maintained. As with previous actions, closer collaboration with other EUSDR PAs (especially Pillar II PAs) and stronger synergies with other MRS are warranted to prevent the introduction and control the spread of IAS, avoid duplication of the work and ensure more targeted use of EU funding streams.

9.2.7 Action 7

Action 7 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T2: *Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality.* At the same time, decreased input of pesticides into the environment would certainly contribute to other PA 6 targets, especially T1 (*By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region*).

According to the Action Plan, action should especially be focused on the development of ambitious programs and concepts for a reduction of pesticides in general or in specific areas as well as on the initiation of hot spot management or restrictions for the application of pesticides, e.g. by establishing buffer strips or compensating areas. In order to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides, i.e. establish a framework for the Community action, countries of the Danube Region should use efficiently the possibilities of the Pesticide Framework Directive (PFD).

Action 7: To decrease the input of pesticides into the environment of the Danube Region

Milestone n°6.071	Milestone is not defined /or no available information about definition of milestone
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Responsible Actors	TF Pesticides and Chemicals /PAC's and Steering Groups
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Deadline	End of 2020
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Status	In progress
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Measurability	Milestone is not defined /or no available information about definition of milestone
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EUSDR added value	Though DRC are already obligated to control the input of pesticides into the environment and certain monitoring and reduction protocols (projects) are set up on the national level, (trans)regional approach could help ensure consistency, sustainability, stakeholder involvement and more targeted use of EU funding streams.
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Milestone n°6.071 (continued)

EUSDR added value (continued)	Furthermore, follow up on ICPDR and PA4 activities and projects related to input of pesticides into the environment of the Danube Region could help distinguish further actions that are related (specific) to the Danube region and/or need to be implemented on a regional scale.
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Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

While there is a comprehensive chemicals legislation on the EU level, lead by REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals) and CLP (Regulation on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures), which aims to ensure a high level of protection of human health and the environment, specific groups of chemicals (such as biocides, pesticides, pharmaceuticals or cosmetics), are covered by their own European and national legislation. Furthermore, JRC's Danube land and soil nexus (DLSN) was established to study various issues related to the state and use of land and soils in the Danube Region, incl. land and soil availability and quality, land and soil-related risks and the preservation and restoration of above- and belowground ecosystems and biodiversity. Through TF on pesticides and chemicals, EUSDR provides an excellent platform to bring together various regional actors, stakeholders and their networks from different branches. Close link, i.e. communication and cooperation between the TF and DLSN should be fostered, as well as further collaboration with ICPDR Nutrients Task Group and PA4 activities and projects related to input of pesticides into the environment. Stronger synergies with other MRS are warranted to decrease the input of pesticides into the environment, avoid duplication of the work and ensure more targeted use of EU funding streams.

At the same time, it was proposed during the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) to reformulate Actions 7 and 8, i.e. merge them together. Aim of the merged action would be to identify locations with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains and to prepare a remediation plan and a risk management plan in the case of environmental accidents.

9.2.8 Action 8

Action 8 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T1: *By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region.*

According to the Action Plan, action is related to the implementation of the World Health Organisation (WHO)'s Resolution on Improvement of health through sound management of obsolete pesticides and other obsolete chemicals, adopted at the 63rd World Health Assembly (WHA; May 2010 in Geneva).

Action 8: To remove safely obsolete pesticides and other obsolete chemicals in the area of Danube Region

Milestone n°6.081	Milestone is not defined /or no available information about definition of milestone
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Responsible Actors	TF Pesticides and Chemicals /PAC's and Steering Groups
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Deadline	End of 2020
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Milestone n°6.081 (continued)

Status In progress

Measurability Milestone is not defined /or no available information about definition of milestone

EUSDR added value Identification of (general, common) activities and their implementation on the (trans)regional level would help ensure consistency and sustainability of sound management and removal of obsolete pesticides and other obsolete chemicals in the Danube Region, as well as more targeted use of EU funding streams and/or pooling of available resources.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

It is assumed that there are several sites with remains of obsolete pesticides and similar chemicals (OPC) located in the Danube region. Since OPCs are known for their hazardous intrinsic properties, such as persistence and the bioaccumulation potential, those sites could pose a serious threat to both human health and the environment. Through TF on pesticides and chemicals, EUSDR provides an excellent platform that could help :

- identify those sites;
- prepare a risk management, intervention and remediation plans in order to safely destroy OPCs and restore degraded ecosystems;
- ensure a cross-border collaboration in case of accidents on OPC contaminated sites;
- foster stakeholder involvement, education and flow of information on the local and regional level, but also more targeted use of EU funding streams and/or pooling of available resources.

During the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) it was proposed to reformulate Actions 7 and 8, i.e. merge them together. Aim of the merged action would be to identify locations with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains and to prepare a remediation plan and a risk management plan in the case of environmental accidents.

Furthermore, action is related to several conventions: *Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal*, *Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade*, *Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants*, as well as to the *Geneva Statement on the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste* acclaimed in 2013 after the joint meeting of aforementioned conventions. Close link, i.e. communication and cooperation between the TF and those conventions should be fostered, as well as further collaboration with JRC's Danube land and soil nexus (DLSN), a flagship cluster which aims to study various issues related to the state and use of land and soils in the Danube Region, including land and soil availability and quality, land and soil-related risks and the preservation and restoration of above- and belowground ecosystems and biodiversity.

A possibility of collaboration with other EUSDR PAs is also worth exploring, while stronger synergies with other MRS are warranted to avoid duplication of the work and ensure more targeted use of EU funding streams.

9.2.9 Action 9

Action 9 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T2: *Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality.* Moreover, the Action can also be related to EUSDR PA 6's target T1: *By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region.* At the same time, it is related to the other EUSDR PA 6 Actions, namely:

- A1: *To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity,*
- A2: *To manage Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas effectively,*
- A3: *To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered animal species,*
- A5: *To develop green infrastructure in order to connect different bio-geographic regions and habitats,*
- A6: *To reduce the spread of invasive alien species (IAS).*

According to the Action Plan, main objective is the development of coordinated spatial planning policies focusing on the protection and at the same time sustainable development of the functional geographical areas, based on its strengths and potential. Thus, implementation of this action is also related to all targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.

Action 9: To prepare and implement transnational spatial planning and development policies for functional geographical areas (river basins, mountain ranges etc.)	
Milestone n°6.091	BIOREGIO Carpathians - Integrated management of biological and landscape diversity for sustainable regional development and ecological connectivity in the Carpathians
Responsible Actors	Bioregio Carpathians Project partners - 16 partners from 9 countries with lead partner National Forest Administration Romsilva – Piatra Craiului National Park Administration (RO) Countries involved - AT, HU, IT, RO, SK, CZ, PL, SRB, UA
Deadline	January 2011 - June 2014
Status	Completed
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	Project serves as a good example of integrated management of protected areas and natural assets in a transnational context. Both the approach and accumulated knowledge could be transferred to other parts of the Danube Region.
Milestone n°6.092	Carpathian Convention Working Group on Spatial Development
Responsible Actors	Carpathian Convention (Conference of the Parties (CoP) - CZ, HU, PL, RO, SRB, SL, UA) PACs and Steering Group Countries involved - Carpathian Convention Countries (CZ, HU, PL, RO, SRB, SL and UA)
Deadline	End of 2020
Status	In progress

Milestone n°6.092 (continued)

Measurability **No (no measurable outputs / indicators)**

Although progress is rather easy to follow, there are no measurable outputs and/or indicators related to this milestone.

EUSDR added value A Joint Synergy Paper between the Carpathian Convention and the relevant EUSDR PAs was developed. In order to strengthen the cooperation, different Memoranda of Cooperation between the Carpathian Convention and the EUSDR **PA 1B** "Mobility | Rail-Road-Air", **PA 04** "Water Quality" and **PA 02** "Energy" have been signed, while with other PAs, the Carpathian Convention is still at an earlier stage of mutual consultation. The Memoranda will facilitate the coordination with the specific PAs and possible support to Carpathian related activities. Collaboration on the project development would help avoid duplication of work and ensure consistency, sustainability and more targeted use of EU funding streams.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

Since there is a potential overlap of this action and Action 5, there is a possibility of merging these two actions that needs to be further assessed (11th SG Meeting, October 2018). Conservation of ecosystems and natural assets, along with the assertion of a sustainable growth perspective that contributes to the enhancement of the quality of life and employment opportunities for local population could certainly benefit from regional approach. Collaboration on the EUSDR level would help avoid the duplication of work, but also ensure consistency, sustainability, relevant stakeholder involvement and more targeted use of EU funding streams.

Further collaboration with the Carpathian Convention should be maintained, while the opportunity for stronger interlinkage with other MRS should be addressed in more detail, particularly with those that feature similar (synergized) objectives deriving from EU 2020 biodiversity strategy - e.g. regarding Natura 2000 network, green infrastructure, restoration of degraded ecosystems, invasive alien species management etc. A recent example is the project development on a potential Alpine-Danube-Carpathian ecological corridor ("ADC-NET"), which shall include elements and objectives from MRS (EUSDR, EUSALP), international organizations (Carpathian Convention, Alpine Convention) and stakeholder networks (Danubeparks, ALPARC).

9.2.10 Action 10

Action 10 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T2: *Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality.*

At the same time, it is related to the other EUSDR PAs, namely PA 4 *To restore and maintain the quality of waters* (regarding the treatment of hazardous substances and contaminated sludge with the newest and best available technology) and PA 8 *To support the competitiveness of enterprises, including cluster development.*

According to the Action Plan, integrated waste management systems should be established and implemented on national, regional and local level. The development of waste management centres for municipal and non-hazardous waste is needed, as well as rehabilitation and closure of

incompliant landfills and highly polluted and contaminated sites and wild dumps. The action should also include awareness-raising about the needs of reducing and recycling waste.”

Action 10: To ensure appropriate treatment of solid waste	
Milestone n°6.101	SMIWASTRES (“Transfrontier collaboration for establishment of efficient System for Municipal and Industrial Waste Treatment on the basis of their Sorting”)
Responsible Actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Georiy Leontiy, Director of Department of Housing & Communal Service of Chernivtsi Regional State Administration (UA) - Dr. Zinoviy S.BROYDE, Director of Centre "EcoResource" (UA) - Countries involved: RO, UA, MD
Deadline	-
Status	Excluded (Although recognized in the first reporting period as a project idea that is contributing to this action, the project was not approved for funding by the ENPI Joint Operational Program)
Measurability	-
EUSDR added value	Transfrontier collaboration for establishment of efficient system for municipal and industrial waste treatment on the basis of their sorting could have provided some recommendations on enhancing the treatment efficiency and open possibilities for future (interdisciplinary) collaborations and knowledge transfer in the Region (latest trends, state-of-the-art information, best practices).
Milestone n°6.102	To develop Solid waste management strategies
Responsible Actors	PACs and Steering Group will inform on the national process on development of the strategy.
Deadline	End of 2020
Status	In progress (with delays)
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	Although all Danube Region Countries have their own procedures and legislation regarding the solid waste management, (trans)regional strategies could help to provide some recommendations, distinguish priority activities specific to the Danube region and/or further actions (projects) that need to be implemented on a (trans)regional scale. Furthermore, they could enable more targeted use of EU funding streams, pooling of available resources and future (interdisciplinary) collaborations and knowledge transfer in the Region (latest trends, state-of-the-art information, best practices).
Milestone n°6.103	Identify, agree on, design and implement the projects at the Upper Tisza Region floodplains
Responsible Actors	<p>PACs and Steering Group will follow on the activities by ICPDR (International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River) Tisza Group on the Integrated Tisza River Basin Management Plan (ITRBMP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) is a transnational body, which has been established to implement the Danube River Protection Convention. The Tisza Group, which has been established by the ICPDR, is the platform for strengthening coordination and information exchange related to international, regional and national activities and to ensure harmonisation and effectiveness of related efforts.

Milestone n°6.103 (continued)

Responsible Actors (continued) - At the ICPDR Ministerial Meeting in 2004, the representatives of the five Tisza countries signed the Memorandum of Understanding to develop a River Basin Management Plan for the Tisza River. This plan should support sustainable development of the region. Fundamental steps have been taken since then by the ICPDR Tisza Group.

Deadline End of 2020

Status In progress

Measurability Yes

EUSDR added value Projects associated with this milestone and the action are in relation with PA4 projects (Integrated Tisza River Basin Management Plan). The Priority Area 4, Action 2 is aiming to strengthen cooperation at sub basin level (including the Tisza River Basin).

EUSDR strengthens cooperative frameworks and supports existing institutions that help Member States to implement EU legislation. Close cooperation with the ICPDR with its experience and mandate in water management is therefore very important. ICPDR and EUSDR coordinate their activities to utilise synergies. Concerning PA 4 (Water Quality) and PA 5 (Environmental Risks), the identification of main issues is to a large extent based on previous work of the ICPDR, primarily from the Danube River Basin Management Plan and the Danube Ministerial Declaration from 2010.

Avoiding overlaps and the creation of parallel structures is a key principle that is followed in the cooperation between ICPDR and EUSDR. To achieve this and to ensure an efficient information flow between PA4 and PA5 on one side and the ICPDR on the other, a joint document was developed. This document characterizes particular mandates, responsibilities, tasks and modus operandi for complimentary and joint activities of ICPDR and PA4/PA5.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

Waste management issues and requirements from Action 10 are legally regulated at the national level (by strategies, plans, laws). Taking this into consideration, during the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) it was agreed that further need for the Action 10 is questionable.

At the same time EUSDR strengthens cooperative frameworks and supports existing institutions that help MS to implement EU legislation. Therefore, it could help to provide some recommendations, distinguish priority activities specific to the Danube region and/or further actions (projects) that need to be implemented on a (trans)regional scale. Furthermore, it could help to ensure more targeted use of EU funding streams, pooling of available resources and future (interdisciplinary) collaborations and knowledge transfer in the Region (e.g. latest trends, state-of-the-art information and innovation techniques, best practices etc.).

Close cooperation with the ICPDR with its experience and mandate in water management is very important and should be maintained. ICPDR and EUSDR already coordinate their activities to utilise synergies, while stronger collaboration with PA 4 (Water Quality) and PA 5 (Environmental Risks) could be fostered in the future.

9.2.11 Action 11

Action 11 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T2: *Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality.*

During the development of the Action Plan, available information on land resources in the Danube Region was rather limited. Thus the focus of this action was on the possibilities to collect harmonised land cover information from national sources and to create standardized and compatible information on land cover on transnational basis, while waiting on the land monitoring service that was under development within the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) framework.

Note: In the meantime, Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) programme became Copernicus - the European Union's Earth observation and monitoring programme. Copernicus is a user-driven programme under civilian control, building on existing national and European capacities, and continuing the work of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) programme. It has a space component and a ground-based component, and provides users with various data services, incl. Land Monitoring Service. It is based on a partnership between the EU, the European Space Agency (ESA) and the EU Member States.

Action 11: To create standardised and compatible information on land cover on transnational basis	
Milestone n°6.111	To collect harmonised land cover information
Responsible Actors	PACs and Steering Group
Deadline	End of 2020
Status	In progress
Measurability	Yes
EUSDR added value	Action originates from the time when available information on land resources in the Danube Region was rather limited and it focused on the possibilities to collect harmonised land cover information from national sources and to create standardized and compatible information on land cover on transnational basis. Even though the data are nowadays widely available through Copernicus Land Monitoring Services, EUSDR could still provide an useful platform for (trans)national and intersectoral cooperation that would help ensure consistency in interpretation (e.g. new indicators and scenarios development) and future use of the collected data, stakeholder involvement and more targeted use of EU funding streams. Moreover, cooperation on the (trans)regional level could help distinguish further activities that are related (specific) to the Danube region, need to be implemented on a regional scale and/or could benefit from pooling the available resources.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

Considerable progress has been made regarding land use data since Action 11 and its milestone n°6.111 were defined. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Global Monitoring for Environment and Security programme became Copernicus - the European Union's Earth observation and monitoring programme. The CORINE Land Cover provides publicly available standardised and compatible land cover information for all EUSDR countries, except Moldova and Ukraine.

Data is collected by different sources, including Earth observation satellites and in-situ sensors. Processed data provides reliable and up-to-date information in six thematic areas: land, marine, atmosphere, climate change, emergency management and security. Various organisations manage and deliver these six thematic information services. Copernicus Land Monitoring Service (CLMS) provides geographical information on land cover to a broad range of users in the field of environmental terrestrial applications. This includes land use, land cover characteristics and changes, vegetation state, water cycle and earth surface energy variables. The Copernicus Land Monitoring Service has been jointly implemented by the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the Joint Research Centre (JRC) since 2011. There are four main components of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service: global component, Pan-European component, local component and imagery and reference data.

Since the milestone n°6.111 can be considered completed for majority of EUSDR countries, future activities / projects could refer on the need to collect harmonised land cover information specifically for Moldova and Ukraine. Moreover, EUSDR could still provide an useful platform for (trans)national and intersectoral cooperation that could help ensure consistency in interpretation (e.g. new indicators and scenarios development) and future use of collected data, stakeholder involvement and more targeted use of EU funding streams. Therefore, during the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018), it was agreed that there is a possibility to reformulate the action, i.e. keep the appropriate elements, or to merge it with Action 12.

The Danube GIS has evaluated some elements of this issue. For calculation of harmonized inventory of point and diffuse sources of pollution, for pressures assessment and scenarios calculations, information on land cover have been collected and assessed. Input data (also information for calculating erosion, run off, land use, etc.) are updated and new scenarios calculations are expected to be available for assessing the effect of agricultural measures implemented in the Danube Region Basin. Therefore, stronger collaboration with ICPDR and also other EUSDR PAs (PA1, PA2, PA3, PA4, PA5) could be fostered in the future.

9.2.12 Action 12

Action 12 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T2: *Enhance the work on establishing green infrastructure and the process of restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including soil, in order to maintain and enhance ecosystems and their services by 2020 in the Danube Region and to improve air quality*. Moreover, it is related to the implementation of the Actions 14 (To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development) and 15 (To educate children and young people).

According to the Action Plan, this action could be achieved in cooperation with the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA), while further partnerships in the Danube Region should be initiated on

communal level and in the educational domains. Since the main expected output were promotion and awareness raising activities in the field of soil protection and sustainable development in the Danube Region, a direct link to project SONDAR has been established, that aimed at achieving quantitative and qualitative soil protection through awareness raising.

Action 12: To raise awareness about soil protection	
Milestone n° 6.121	SONDAR - Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region
Responsible Actors	PAC's and Steering Group are following on the work of SONDAR
Deadline	End of 2020
Status	ongoing
Measurability	<p>No</p> <p>Although progress is rather easy to follow, there are no measurable outputs and/or indicators related to this milestone – predicted output is a continuous promotion and awareness raising activities in the field of soil protection and sustainable development in the Danube Region.</p>
EUSDR added value	<p>Recent EU-wide awareness-raising campaigns related to the Nature and Water Framework Directives have shown that public awareness-raising activities could benefit from the regional approach (as an umbrella approach) that would ensure visibility, multiplication and the sustainability of the planned activities aimed at the promotion of soil protection. In that context, action is related to the PA 6 Actions 14 and 15. This overlapping of actions could help to ensure consistency, sustainability, stakeholder involvement and more targeted use of EU funding streams. Moreover, it could also result in some new collaborations and/or identification of further actions related to the soil protection and sustainable development in the Danube region that need to be implemented on a regional scale.</p>

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

During the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) it was proposed to keep this action, but reformulate it in order to include conservation and restoration activities. Thus, proposed new (i.e. broader) aim of this action would be to maintain and improve the quality of soil in the Danube Region.

Through SONDAR, EUSDR provides an excellent platform that could help to:

- extend the SONDAR results from cross-border projects to a transnational level;
- distinguish further priority actions that are related (specific) to the Danube region and/or need to be implemented on a regional scale;
- bring together various regional actors, stakeholders and their networks from different branches;
- foster stakeholder involvement, education and flow of information on the local and regional level;
- pool available resources.

Collaboration with the Working Group SUSTAINABILITY - Soil Protection, provides a platform for addressing new topics, such as shelter belts as Biotope Network Systems, soil fertility, development of the Soil Map for the Danube Region, micro-farming, climate change adaptation etc. Close link, i.e. communication and cooperation between SONDAR and JRC's Awareness raising and capacity building

work package, European Network for Soil Awareness (ENSA), European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA) and the Working Group “Sustainability” (within the ARGE Donauländer) should be further encouraged. Stronger synergies with other MRS could help avoid duplication of the work and ensure more targeted use of EU funding streams.

9.2.13 Action 13

Action 13 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T1: *By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region.* Moreover, it's related to the all targets of the EU clean air policy package that set out objectives for reducing the health and environmental impacts of air pollution by 2030, and contains legislative proposals to implement stricter standards for emissions and air pollution.

According to the Action Plan, since the Danube Region Countries are signatures to *Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution*, this action should concentrate on data collection on the level of air pollutants in the region and reduction measures.

Action 13: To decrease air pollutants	
Milestone n°6.131	Upgrading and further development of the monitoring network on air pollutants
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube region Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group, Task Force
Deadline	Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020
Status	In progress
Measurability	Milestone is not defined /or no available information about definition of milestone
EUSDR added value	Though DRC are already obligated to report on the air pollutants level and certain monitoring protocols are set up on the national level, (trans)regional approach could help ensure consistency in monitoring, reporting and future use of collected data.
Milestone n°6.132	To take measures to gradually reduce the pollution, along the limit values for certain pollutants
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube region Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group, Task Force
Deadline	Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020
Status	In progress
Measurability	Milestone is not defined /or no available information about definition of milestone Although progress is rather easy to follow, there are no measurable outputs and/or indicators related to this milestone.
EUSDR added value	Although DRC are already obligated to report on the air pollutants level and certain education measures are set up on the national level, (trans)regional approach could help ensure consistency, sustainability, stakeholder involvement and more targeted use of EU funding streams for pollution control and reduction.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

This action is related to PA targets, EU Air Quality Strategy and goals of UNECE LRTAP Convention (Long Range Transport of Air Pollution). As DG Joint Research Centre (JRC) has already developed infrastructures in support of EU Air Quality Regulation (ERLAP AQUILA and the European Environment Agency run EIONET) and LRTAP Convention, a new Task Force on Air Quality in the Danube Region has been established (end of 2015) in close cooperation with JRC in order to support harmonisation of Air quality regulatory activities in the Danube Region.

Towards supporting PA 6 in relation to this action, JRC has launched a programme to strengthen scientific and technical cooperation in the region in four thematic clusters (“nexus”): water, land and soils, air and bioenergy. The Danube Air Nexus (DAN) is one of the flagship projects of the EUSDR coordinated by the JRC aiming at protecting human health, ecosystems and climate from the impacts of atmospheric pollution, while Danube Bioenergy Nexus (DBN) focuses on the high potential of the Danube Region for developing renewable energy from materials derived from biological sources. The targeted studies by the JRC’s Danube Bioenergy Nexus and Danube Air Nexus on biomass combustion emissions - exposure - health effects have been developed and widened under the auspices of PA 6.

Due to the complexities in air quality related issues in Danube region (it encompasses one of the air pollution “hot spots”; different kind of sources, technologies and fuels used across macro-region resulting in different levels of emissions; different levels of implementation of environmental policies, etc.) coordinated actions at different levels: local, regional, national, European and international are needed. It is essential to involve all the relevant actors to assess possible interactions between sectorial policies in order to improve the effectiveness of the measures.

Transposing this concept into the Danube strategy would imply better coordination among the relevant priority areas (PA) on this topic taking advantage of the more interdisciplinary working approach at least, between: PA 6, PA 1B *Mobility Rail-Road-Air* and PA 2 *Energy*. Involvement of other PAs would help to better identify and monitor possible positive or negative consequences of their work plans on air quality (e.g. PA8 *Competitiveness*). In addition, strengthening links with PA10 *Institutional capacity and cooperation* would help to raise awareness of this topic among public and private managers. In this context, the PA 6 Task Force on Air Quality may play a catalysing role in the implementation of the EUSDR objectives in this field. In addition to scientific support and capacity building, the Task Force is in the position to promote the dialogue and collaboration between different actors such as experts, authorities, health professionals and non-governmental organisations.

Inline with findings of JRC scientific and technical studies, during the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) it was agreed that the action should be kept, but reformulated by the TFAQ. The studies suggest that at the local level, measures are required to control diffuse emission sources from domestic heating and traffic. In these sectors the impact of technological measures (substitution of fleet vehicles and the use of efficient stoves) is uncertain. Such measures are likely to be insufficient to bring emissions to acceptable levels and should, therefore, be accompanied by structural and behavioural changes. Reducing ammonia emissions in the agriculture sector would be an efficient way to abate secondary PM10 and PM2.5.

To reduce the impact of the long-range transport of pollutants in the eastern Danube macro-region, reinforcing international cooperation within the framework of the Convention on Long-range

Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) would help to advance the implementation of air quality and climate change policies in non-EU Eastern European countries.

Better integration of sectorial policies (EUSDR PAs) in the Danube macro-region would improve the effectiveness of the measures. Since the impact of air pollution is greater in urban areas, where the majority of the population resides, initiatives like the *Partnership on Air Quality in the EU Urban Agenda*, could help to involve relevant actors, access funding and achieve consensus for future actions. In this context, the PA 6 Task Force on Air Quality could play a catalysing role for policy implementation.

9.2.14 Action 14

Action 14 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T1: *By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region*. Moreover, it's related to the:

- EUSDR PA 4's Action 12: *To strengthen general awareness and facilitate exchange of good practice in integrated water management issues in the Danube Basin among decision-makers at all levels and among the population of the Region; and*
- Action 3: *Increase stakeholder awareness and involvement and improve enforcement*, i.e. Target 1 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.

According to the Action Plan, action would increase the perception of preserved nature as a valuable asset. Promotion of green, soft and eco-tourism is envisaged as a part of this action.

Action 14: To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development

Milestone n°6.141 Keep updated INTERACT portal on EUSDR regarding best available information on PA 6 activities, projects and financing mechanism

Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region Countries; Responsible contact point: PA 6 PACs Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group will follow on the progress
Deadline	In the early years: there was no fixed deadline – it was considered as an on-going action Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): 2014.
Status	Completed
Measurability	No (no measurable outputs / indicators) Although progress is rather easy to follow, there are no measurable outputs and/or indicators related to this milestone - predicted output is a regular maintenance and update of www.danube-region.eu web page for PA 6.
EUSDR added value	INTERACT established web page www.danube-region.eu on promotion of EUSDR. Coordinated by the Danube Strategy Point with the support of the European Commission's General Directorate for Regional Policy, this website is the the main information portal of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

Milestone n°6.142		Implement stakeholder awareness communication activities for Natura 2000 in EUSDR region parallel with COM/MS communication campaign on Natura 2000
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region MS Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group will follow the national activities	
Deadline	In the early years: ongoing, following the launch of the communication campaign on Natura 2000 Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): end of 2020.	
Status	In progress (satisfactory)	
Measurability	No (no measurable outputs / indicators); since the predicted output is defined as <i>"Stakeholder awareness communication activities implemented"</i>	
EUSDR added value	According to the last Roadmap (IR 2015-2016), PACs and Steering Group (as responsible actors) will follow the national activities. Moreover, the activities are covered by most of the Task Force on their specific issues. Thus, it would seem that the future achievement of this milestone will depend mostly on the engagement of Task Forces and Member States. However, recent EU-wide awareness-raising campaigns related to the Nature and Water Framework Directives have shown that public awareness-raising activities could benefit from the regional approach (as an umbrella approach) that would ensure visibility, multiplication and the sustainability of the planned activities.	
Milestone n°6.143		Organisation of stakeholders seminars and workshops and conferences
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region Countries Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group	
Deadline	In the early years: there was no fixed deadline – it was considered as an on-going action Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): end of 2020.	
Status	In progress (satisfactory)	
Measurability	No (no measurable outputs / indicators) Although progress is rather easy to follow, there are no measurable outputs and/or indicators related to this milestone.	
EUSDR added value	Active participation in knowledge sharing activities (e.g. seminars and workshops) and discussions with colleagues from different countries and/or sectors open possibilities for future (interdisciplinary) collaborations and knowledge transfer in the Region (latest trends, state-of-the-art information, best practices).	
Milestone n°6.144		Implementation of Green Danube Network project
Responsible Actors	DE (BY), AT, HU; Responsible contact point: PAC 6 (BY)	
Deadline	Project approval in 2012	
Milestone n°6.144		(continued)
Status	Completed	
Measurability	Yes	
EUSDR added value	International and transnational network of NGOs in the Danube Region is a prerequisite for joint activities and cooperation on project development. In later Roadmaps (IR 2013-2014 and IR 2014-2015) it is mentioned that the Green Danube Network could be linked to PA 6 stakeholder network.	

Milestone n°6.145 Follow up on the visibility activities across all identified EUSDR PA 6 projects	
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region Countries; Responsible contact point: Project leaders of PA 6 identified projects and PACs and NCPs Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group.
Deadline	In the early years: there was no fixed deadline – it was considered as an on-going action, following the implementation of PA 6 identified projects Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): end of 2020.
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	No (no measurable outputs / indicators) Although progress is rather easy to follow, there are no measurable outputs and/or indicators related to this milestone.
EUSDR added value	Follow up on the visibility activities across the EUSDR PA 6 projects would ensure better knowledge transfer, focused on issues relevant to the Danube Region Countries (latest trends, state-of-the-art information, best practices).

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

All projects, especially biodiversity related ones, have some visibility activities predicted. Thus, it was proposed that project leaders, together with the national contact points and PACs, gather information on the visibility activities taking place in the Danube Region and find the most appropriate means to disseminate information further. Moreover, networking supranational, national and local stakeholders through the proposed PA 6 stakeholder network could improve the impact and visibility of PA 6 related topics. Additionally, further cooperation with other PAs (especially Pillar II PAs) and macro-regional strategies regarding the organisation of stakeholder trainings, workshops and conferences is worth strengthening.

Even though this action formally relates to EUSDR PA 6's T1, general public represents an excellent partner in (successful) nature conservation activities. Thus raising awareness of the general public by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development (indirectly) contributes to all four PA 6's targets. Since there is a considerable overlap present between this action and Action 15, there was a suggestion of merging these actions together (11th SG Meeting, October 2018).

9.2.15 Action 15

Action 15 contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T1: *By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region.* Moreover, it's related to the Action 3: *Increase stakeholder awareness and involvement and improve enforcement*, i.e. Target 1 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.

Since there is a growing pressure on biodiversity and natural resources become scarcer, Action Plan recognized a particular need to educate the young generation about the ecosystem services, value of natural assets and benefits of nature conservation. As stated in the aforementioned document, part

of the action could be devoted to the introduction of environmental education into the educational curricula of the Danube countries.

Action 15: To educate children and young people	
Milestone n°6.151	In line communication activities from communication campaign on Natura 2000 further develop and promote activities including children and young people
Responsible Actors	In the early years: Danube Region Countries; Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): PACs and Steering Group will follow the national activities.
Deadline	In the early years: there was no fixed deadline – it was considered as an on-going action that would follow the launch of the communication campaign on Natura 2000. Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): end of 2020.
Status	In progress (satisfactory) Activities are covered by most of the Task Force on their specific issue
Measurability	No (no measurable outputs / indicators) Predicted outputs were further development of communication activities related to Natura 2000 and promotion of activities that include children and young people .
EUSDR added value	According to the last Roadmap (IR 2015-2016), PACs and Steering Group (as responsible actors) will follow the national activities. Moreover, the activities are covered by most of the Task Force on their specific issues. Thus, it would seem that the future achievement of this milestone will depend mostly on the engagement of Task Forces and Member States. However, recent EU-wide awareness-raising campaigns related to the Nature and Water Framework Directives have shown that public awareness-raising, promotional and educational activities for children and young people could benefit from the regional approach (as an umbrella approach) that would ensure visibility, multiplication and the sustainability of the planned activities.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

In order to increase the awareness and involvement of different stakeholders regarding the education of children and young people Danube Region, MS were following on the activities and outlines proposed by the EU biodiversity strategy for 2020. Implementation of the Natura 2000 communication platform certainly enabled communication and raised awareness of the ecological network, but stronger emphasis could be placed on children and young people awareness raising and education (e.g. through Childrens Corner for successful Life projects). A follow up on ICPDR's Public Participation Expert Group activities related to communication and participation issues was planned at one point. These included, among others, publications and outreach initiatives (such as Danube Day) or environmental education, especially with regards to educating young people and children (e.g. Danube box, Danube Art Master). Moreover, the Roadmaps mention that both, new publications for children and different youth material, became available on the web page of the EC (Environment section), but language could present a sort of a barrier, i.e. discourage the children and/or young people from using the materials, since they are rarely available on all languages of the Danube Region.

Around 2014 it was concluded that the projects that contribute most effectively to the achievement of this action are mostly small-scale national projects. However, it is important to mention that most of the present Task Forces (especially Danubeparks and SONDAR) include promotional and/or

educational activities for children and young adults. For example, as part of the project DANUBEPARKS 2.0, *Report of the assessment tour and quality guidelines for environmental education* was produced, analyzing the environmental education in protected areas along the Danube.

Even though this action formally relates to EUSDR PA 6's target 1, education of children and young people forms a firm basis for successful (future) nature conservation (campaigns) and (indirectly) contributes to all four PA 6's targets. Since there is a considerable overlap present between this action and Action 14, there was a suggestion of merging these actions together (11th SG Meeting, October 2018). Moreover, further cooperation with Pillar II PAs and other macro-regional strategies is worth exploring, since it could help ensure more targeted use of EU funding streams and pooling of available resources.

9.2.16 Action 16

Action 16 is related to contributes to achieving the EUSDR PA 6's target T1: *By 2020 strengthen the work on halting the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation in order to achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the respective species and habitats in the Danube Region*. Moreover, it's related to the Action 3: *Increase stakeholder awareness and involvement and improve enforcement*, i.e. Target 1 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.

According to the Action Plan, local authorities are primarily responsible for the implementation of environment related matters (such as waste or protected areas management), but they often lack knowledge and capacities to develop projects in the environmental area. Thus, main aim of this action is to provide the training for the local authorities, but also to establish an expert group helping regions and cities resolving problems and a network for exchange of good practices.

Action 16: To build capacities of local authorities in the environment-related matters	
Milestone n°6.161	Implement guidance document to improve understanding of the key sector of EU nature legislation
Responsible Actors	Danube Region MS Countries
Deadline	In the early years: On-going, following the development of develop guidance documents on EU nature legislation and its value Annex 1 IR (2015-2016): End of 2020
Status	In progress (satisfactory)
Measurability	No (no measurable outputs / indicators) Predicted output is defined as an improvement of cooperation with key sectors using implemented guidance document on EU nature legislation.
EUSDR added value	The COM and MS will improve cooperation with key sectors and continue to develop guidance documents to improve their understanding of the requirements of EU nature legislation and its value in promoting economic. Thus EUSDR provides a perfect platform that could help to ensure visibility, multiplication and the sustainability of the planned activities - provision of training for local authorities, establishment of an expert group to help regions and cities resolving various problems and a network for exchange of good practices.

Opportunities and challenges in implementing the action

During the 11th SG Meeting (October 2018) it was proposed to reformulate this action in order to include the capacity building of national authorities (especially those responsible for green infrastructure implementation) and scientific community. In that context further possibilities for cooperation with different EUSDR PAs should be addressed in more detail.

Development of guidance documents to improve their understanding of the requirements of EU nature legislation should certainly be continued. As mentioned already, EUSDR provides a perfect platform that could help to ensure visibility, multiplication and the sustainability of the planned activities - provision of training for local authorities, establishment of an expert group to help regions and cities resolving various problems and a network for exchange of good practices. Stronger synergies with other MRS could help avoid duplication of the work and ensure more targeted use of EU funding streams.

9.3 PA 6's Task Forces

Task Force	Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF)
Establishment	January 2012 (Vienna); a kickoff-meeting of the new General Assembly was held in April 2019 in Vienna
Members	<p>Group of sturgeon experts: NGO delegates; representatives of the ICPDR, the Danube Strategy and national governments</p> <p>The DSTF core group exists out of 11 members from 5 countries, whereas the larger network currently has 60 members from 12 countries.</p>
Available documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Action and Management Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action Plan on conservation of Sturgeons in the Bulgarian aquatories of the Danube River and the Black sea (Sofia, Bulgaria, 2003) ▪ Action Plan for Sturgeon species Management In Fishery Waters Of Republic Serbia (Belgrade, Serbia, 2005) ▪ Action Plan for the Conservation of the Sturgeons (Acipenseridae) in the Danube River Basin (Strasbourg, 5 October 2005) ▪ Pan-European Action Plan for Sturgeons (Strasbourg, 4 October 2018 – Draft version) ▪ Action Plan for conservation of Sturgeons (Acipenseridae) in the Danube River Basin (2005) ▪ Status of implementation of the Action Plan for the conservation of Sturgeons (Acipenseridae) in the Danube River Basin (Strasbourg, 7 November 2017) ▪ A program for the protection and rehabilitation of Danube Sturgeons „Sturgeon 2020” ▪ National Sturgeon Management Plan (To implement the Regional Strategy for the conservation and sustainable management of sturgeon populations in the NW Black Sea and Lower Danube River according to CITES) (v. 03 of 04/25/2006) (Romania, 2004) ▪ Regional Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Sturgeon Populations of the N-W Black Sea and Lower Danube River in accordance with CITES (26 November 2003) – Studies, Reports, Publications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LIFE for Danube Sturgeons: Project Newsletter (July 2017) ▪ LIFE for Danube Sturgeons: Project Newsletter (January 2018) ▪ LIFE for Danube Sturgeons: Project Newsletter (October 2017- December 2018) – Sturgeon Conservation and Management Cooperation In the Danube River Basin (Belgrade 2013)
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sustainable protection of lower Danube sturgeons by preventing and counteracting poaching and illegal wildlife trade (LIFE for Danube Sturgeons) – Ex-situ survey to preserve sturgeon genetic diversity in the Middle and Lower Danube (1.04.2015 – 31.03.2016, acronym: STURGENE) – Restoring fish migration routes in the Danube River Basin (Feasibility study on Iron Gate dams commissioned to explore joint solutions) – Sturgeon 2020 – MEASURES: Managing and restoring aquatic EcologicAl corridors for migratory fiSh species in the danUbe RivEr baSin (Interreg Danube transitional programme)

Task Force	Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF) - <i>continued</i>
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – At a kickoff-meeting of the new General Assembly (April 2019, Vienna) a new Executive Committee of 6 members was elected. The Executive Committee is responsible for managing DSTF processes, taking operational decisions, and managing relations with non-members and external organizations, the main speakers on behalf of the DSTF being its Chair and Deputy Chair - Peter Gammeltoft (formerly DG Environment) and Gheorghe Constantin (Water Director of Romania). Other members include scientific experts and water management experts with backgrounds in government and civil society - Thomas Friedrich (Boku, AT), Mirjana Lenhardt (SRB), Natalia Gozak (WWF, UA) and Florian Ballnus (PA 6, DE). Moreover, Peter Gammeltoft as the new chair will consequently become Observer to PA 6 Steering Group. – High level event for the future of Danube sturgeons from the Danube River Basin (Vienna International Center, on 2 December 2015) – Sturgeon 2020 presence at the 4th EUSDR Forum (29-30 October 2015, Ulm) – Danube Sturgeon Task Force 5th meeting (Bucharest, 2-3 September 2014) – DSTF contribution to the 3rd EUSDR Forum, Vienna 26-27 June 2014 – Danube sturgeon migration day (25 May, 2014) – WSCS Workshop "Best practice in ex situ and in situ measures as tools for conservation management" (Institute of Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management of the University of Natural Resources and Life sciences, Vienna, 14 - 16 May) – Danube Sturgeon Task Force 4th meeting (Vienna, 6 February) – Danube Day event, Bucharest, 26 June 2013 – DSTF 3rd meeting, Munich, 11 - 12 April 2013 – DSTF contribution at the First EU SDR Stakeholder Forum, Regensburg, 27-28 November 2012 – DSTF 2nd meeting, Tulcea, 26-29 August, 2012 – Establishment of the Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF), Vienna, January 20, 2012
Working Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Work Plan 2018, IR (2012 - 2013), IR (2013 - 2014), IR (2014 - 2015), IR (2015 - 2016) and IR (2016 - 2016)

Task Force	Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS)
Establishment	March 2014
Members	<p>Participating countries: Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, and Turkey.</p> <p>Supported by the Bavarian State Ministry of Environment and Consumer Protection (Munich, Germany), the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IBER-BAS), the International Association for Danube Research (IAD), and the East and South European Network for Invasive Alien Species (ESENIA).</p>
Available documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implementation of the EUSDR Priority Area 6 to preserve biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils'. Reporting period April 2011 – June 2012. Report to the European Commission. – Implementation of the EUSDR Priority Area 6 to preserve biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils'. Reporting period 13 April 2012 – 30 June 2013. Report to the European Commission. – Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) kick-off meeting. Meeting report. – Improving the Bulgarian Biodiversity Information System (IBBIS). Leaflet. – ESENIA-TOOLS project: East and South European Network for Invasive Alien Species – A tool to support the management of alien species in Bulgaria. Leaflet.

Task Force	Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) - <i>continued</i>
<p>Available documents (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 7th Joint ESENIAS and DIAS scientific conference ‘Networking and Regional Cooperation Towards Invasive Alien Species Prevention and Management in Europe’. Book of Abstracts. – Training Course ‘Impact of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services in extreme environments’. Report. – 42nd IAD Conference 2018 ‘Danube – a lifeline governed by multiple uses, pressures and a multitude of ecosystem service’. Book of abstracts. – 8th Joint ESENIAS and DIAS scientific conference ‘Management and sharing of IAS data to support knowledge-based decision making at regional level’. Book of Abstracts. – 5th Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) Meeting. Meeting Agenda. – Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network. Leaflet. – SAVA TIES - Report on Training on Stakeholder Engagement and Leaflet; – Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS). Kick-off meeting report.
<p>Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Danube – IAS Corridor (duration: 2012 - ongoing) – ESENIAS-TOOLS project: East and South European Network for Invasive Alien Species – A tool to support the management of alien species in Bulgaria (duration 2015 - 2017) – Improving the Bulgarian Biodiversity Information System (IBBIS) (duration 2015 – 2017). – Danube-IASapp project (duration: 2016 - 2017) – Establishment of the National Monitoring System for Invasive Alien Species in Croatia (duration: 2017 - 2020) – SAVA TIES - Preserving Sava River Basin Habitats through Transnational Management of Invasive Alien Species (duration: 2018 - 2021) – Kick-off meeting of Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) (Oct 2014). – Leaflet „ESENIAS-TOOLS project: East and South European Network for Invasive Alien Species – A tool to support the management of alien species in Bulgaria“ (2015). – Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) Meetings (2015 – 2016) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2nd Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) Meeting (2015); ▪ 3rd Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) Meeting (Jun 2016); ▪ 4th Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) Meeting (Nov 2016). – Leaflet „Improving the Bulgarian Biodiversity Information System (IBBIS)“. – A permanent exhibition on Invasive Alien Species within the ESENIAS-TOOLS project (Jan 2017). – Training Course ‘Impact of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services in extreme environments’ (April 2017)The training course aimed at:
<p>Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Capacity building and increasing awareness on IAS impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services in extreme environments among young scientists and PhD students from Bulgaria and the ESENIAS countries; – Imparting basic skills and competencies on IAS, its related terminology, the relevant international regulatory framework, networks, projects and information systems. – 7th Joint ESENIAS and DIAS scientific conference ‘Networking and Regional Cooperation Towards Invasive Alien Species Prevention and Management in Europe’ (March 2017) – Furthermore, the ESENIAS workshop and conference aimed at presentation of ESENIAS-TOOLS project results, establishment of cooperation in the area of invasive alien species between scientists within the ESENIAS and DIAS networks and development of cooperation with other networks, organisations and projects. – 42nd IAD Conference 2018 ‘Danube – a lifeline governed by multiple uses, pressures and a multitude of ecosystem service’ (July 2018) – Delivering of a keynote lecture ‘Invasive alien species in the Danube Region and DIAS activities towards strategy development’ to present the current issues related to invasive alien species in the Danube Region, highlight aquatic priority species and recent research results on their distribution and impact, and update on the DIAS strategy.

Task Force	Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) - <i>continued</i>
Activities (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 8th Joint ESENIAS and DIAS scientific conference ‘Management and sharing of IAS data to support knowledge-based decision making at regional level’ (September 2018) – Presentation of research results from the recent ESENIAS and DIAS project activities – Sharing of results and information on other IAS related initiatives carried out in the region, such as national and local monitoring programmes, risk assessments, pathway analyses and action plans, control and eradication projects, management plans and national strategies, citizens activities and responsibilities, data planning and management. – 5th Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) Meeting (December 2018) – Several IAS projects with participation of DIAS (Danube-IASapp, ESENIAS-TOOLS, IBBIS) have been completed and there are some ongoing projects (‘Danube – IAS Corridor’ and ‘Establishment of the National Monitoring System for Invasive Alien Species in Croatia’); – A new individual programme for monitoring of IAS will be included in the Joint Danube Survey 4 organised by the ICPDR and the Danube countries in 2019; – During the previous DIAS meetings (Sofia 2014, 2016, Budapest 2015, 2016), the first draft of the DIAS strategy and work plan has been initiated and developed. – Leaflet „Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network“ (2018). – Final Work plan for Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) (2018). – SAVA TIES - Report on Training on Stakeholder Engagement (2018). – SAVA TIES - kick-off event and 2nd steering committee meeting announcement (Sept 2018); – SAVA TIES Leaflet (2018). – SAVA TIES – pilot activities planning (Dec 2018). Project consortium has defined 7 pilot areas in 4 countries to be test-plots for the eradication. <p><u>Future (Planned) Activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Share information on DIAS activities in the Upper, Middle and Lower Danube River and adjacent Black Sea Region; – Present IAS monitoring initiative as part of the Joint Danube Survey 4 (2019); – Plan future work and organisation of this work for the development of DIAS network, including formation of working groups, and development of black and alert lists for the Danube Region, preparation of common papers, DIAS website, etc., to enable sharing of data and other information on IAS in the region; – Discuss possibilities for funding; – Seek further improvement of cooperation and networking on IAS in the Danube Region and collaboration with ESENIAS and other European and global IAS networks and initiatives.
Working Programme	– Work plan 2018; IR (2013 - 2014), IR (2014 - 2015), IR (2015 - 2016) and IR (2016 - 2016)

Task Force	Danubeparks - Network of protected areas
Establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – April 2007 (the Declaration of Tulcea) – launch of the initiative of developing a DANUBE RIVER NETWORK of PROTECTED AREAS – 2011 – close cooperation between Danubeparks and PA 6 was established
Members	<p>Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, Lower Prut Nature Reserve, Lower Prut Floodplain Natural Reserve, Small Wetlands of Braila, Kalimok-Brushlen Protected Site, Rusenski Lom Nature Park, Persina Nature Park, Iron Gates Natural Park, Đerdap National Park, Lonjsko Polje Nature Park, Kopački rit Nature Park, Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve, Duna-Dráva National Park, Fertő-Hátság National Park, Duna-Ipoly National Park, Dunajské Luhy Protected Landscape Area, Záhorie Protected Landscape Area, Donau-Auen National Park, Narrow Valley of the Danube near Passau, Donauauwald Neuburg-Ingolstadt</p>

Task Force	Danubeparks - Network of protected areas - <i>continued</i>
Available documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Declaration of Tulcea - Appeal for the Development of the Danube River Network of Protected Areas (19/04/2007)) – Declaration of Vienna – Agreement on future co-operation and joint activities of DANUBEPARKS – Danube River Network of Protected Areas (9/06/2009) – DANUBEPARKS – Danube River Network of Protected Areas – Statutes of the Association DANUBEPARKS (x/xx/200x) – Conference and Workshop Proceedings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tourism Task Force Meeting (Neuburg, Germany; May 2014) ▪ Black Poplar Conference (Novi Sad, Serbia; Apr 2014) ▪ DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 Kick Off Event (Ingolstadt, Germany; Oct 2012) ▪ DANUBEPARKS Evening Event / Final Conference (Vienna, Austria; Feb 2012) – Studies, Reports, Publications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 Project Report (2012 - 2014), ▪ DANUBEPARKS 2009-2012 Project Report (2009 - 2012) ▪ DANUBEPARKS 2009-2012 Project Brochure ▪ DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 - publications on River Morphology, Habitat Management, Tourism & Education etc. ▪ DANUBEPARKS 2009-2012 - publications on River Morphology, Habitat Management, White-tailed Eagle, Monitoring Concepts, Nature Tourism etc. ▪ Magazine Danube Inside – Project Communication Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Communication Material for DANUBEPARKS (English, Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian, Hungarian and German) and DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 (English, German, Romanian and Serbian) ▪ Project Newsletters for DANUBEPARKS and DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Development of Green Infrastructure to foster ecological connectivity between Danube, Carpathian and Alps – Alpine Carpathian River Corridor & ADC Net – Two Mountains, One River – DANUBeparksCONNECTED – DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 – DANUBEPARKS 2009-2012 – Kick-Off Conference DANUBEPARKS - Danube River Network of Protected Areas (Jun 2009) – Task Force Meetings of the DANUBEPARKS Network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The first meeting of Task Force Fish Meeting took place in Tulcea, Romania (Dec 2009) ▪ The first meeting of Task Force Birds in Duna-Drava National Park, Hungary (Jan 2010) ▪ The first meeting of Task Force Task Force Tourism in Kopacki-Rit Nature Park, Croatia (Jan 2010) ▪ The first meeting of Task Force Revitalization and Habitat Networks in Bratislava, Slovakia (Jan 2010)
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Danube Festival and Steering Committee Meeting in Mohacs, Hungary (Jul 2010) – International Workshop on River Revitalization in Donau-Auen National Park (May 2011) – Election of a new management board (Nov 2017)Active participation of PAC (BY) at project meetings in , Orth/Donau (Austria) (Sept 2011) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The 1st phase of project DANUBEPARKS was already running when EUSDR was endorsed, but it sought for a strong connection with PA 6 during preparation and application process of the follow-up project Danubeparks II. – Meeting with Bund Naturschutz Bayern, Landesbund für Vogelschutz to discuss status of projects Blue Ribbon of Biodiversity, Green Danube Network, Treasures of Danube (Oct 2011)

Task Force	Danubeparks - Network of protected areas - <i>continued</i>
<p>Activities (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Danubeparks Final Conference (Feb 2012) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the cooperation between PA 6 and Danubeparks was laid on a solid ground as basis for future initiatives. – Meeting with Auenzentrum to discuss expectations and opportunities by EUSDR / PA 6 to NGOs and environmental department on local level in the upcoming years (April 2012) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Close cooperation foreseen especially concerning international contacts, fund raising and public events. – DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 Project approved (Jul 2012) – Kick-off conference of project DANUBEPARKS Step 2.0 in Neuburg a.d. Donau (Oct 2012) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The conference was implemented back-to-back with the Stakeholder Workshop in German language. – Trilateral Workshop on the first trilateral meeting of the DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 project (Jan 2013) – DANUBEPARKS at ITB Berlin, the most important travel fair in Europe (March 2013) – Directors discuss organization structures both of the single Protected Area administrations as well as of the DANUBEPARKS Network (May 2013) – Cross-sectorial Workshop from DANUBEPARKS and NEWADA (Oct 2013) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the two projects represent the objectives of PA 6 and PA1a. Therefore, the two respective PACs were invited to the workshop to present and discuss the vision and approach of a cooperative and integrative implementation of the EUSDR in this respect. – “Danubeparks Day in Brussels” (Feb 2014) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In order to present the activities of the Danubeparks 2.0 project and network and also to discuss its potential contributions on the policy level, Danubeparks organised and conducted a presentation of the project and the meetings with representatives of the European Parliament and of DG Regio and DG Environment. – The Black Poplar Conference in Novi Sad (April 2014) – DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 and DCC-DANUBEPARKS workshops in Bulgaria (Jun 2014) – DANUBEPARKS Association founded (Sept 2014) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Final Conference of the DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 Project was connected to the first – General Assembly of the recently founded DANUBEPARKS Association, including the election of the Management Board. – “Little Sydney: Protecting Nature in Europe” Conference in the Donau-Auen National Park, Austria (May 2015). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At this meeting, the European conservation community will gather to discuss, share and showcase original approaches for conservation and development of the Danube as well as to face and discuss issues regarding protected areas all over Europe over the next decades. – DANUBeparksCONNECTED Kick-off conference in Ingolstadt, Austria (Feb 2017) – Meeting of the DANUBeparksCONNECTED Team to discuss the project activities of the "Corridor Land" (April 2017) – WILDisland Expert Workshop (Sept 2017) – commitment of close cooperation among the NGOs and PA 6.
<p>Working Programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Work plan 2018; IR (2012 - 2013), IR (2013 - 2014), IR (2014 - 2015), IR (2015 - 2016) and IR (2016 - 2016)

Task Force	Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region (SONDAR)
Establishment	First mention: IR (2011 - 2012)
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Soil protection network in the Danube region, linked to ELSA (European Land and Soil Alliance) – Chair: Government of Lower Austria (AT); Members: AT, HU, SK, CZ
Available documents	–
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SONDAR SK –AT, Soil as indicator of flood occurrence – SONDAR HU –AT, Soil as filter of pollutants, soil as reservoir for carbon – SONDAR CZ –AT, Improving quality of soil by raising soil awareness/ Soil as an archive <p>On-going projects:/ Collaboration within Working Community of the Danube Region (WG SUSTAINABILITY – Soil Protection)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Application of Water- and Soil-Data in the projects “HydroBod” and “Soil Map” in Petzenkirchen – Humus Management and regional Production of Organic Fertilizers – INTEKO Technological Innovation of Compost Application and Soil Protection – International Conference 28 March 2012 (St. Pölten, AT) which marked the start of cooperation between PA 6 / PAC and SONDAR project. – SONDAR conference, April 2013. PAC 6 addressed a key note statement to the 80 participants about the state of play and future development within PA 6. This second participation contributed to deepen the close cooperation between PA 6 and SONDAR. – In December 2013, PAC6 met with representatives of the Government of Lower Austria and IAD in St. Pölten to develop future activities as follow-up from the successful SONDAR projects on soil protection and public awareness. – PAC6 participated in the 21st Conference of the Working Community of the Danube Regions on 26-27 March 2014 in Tulln, which reunites the sustainability WG in cooperation with the Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region and the SoPro Innovation Agency. The conference focused on “Sustainability and socio-ecological production as an incentive for regional economy in the Danube regions.” PAC6 participated in a Panel Discussion, together with PAC8, and highlighted the EUSDR PA 6 contribution to the process of SONDAR, its follow-ups and issue of social production, which generally reflects the integrative approach of PA 6.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 26-27 June 2014, Vienna: 3rd Annual Forum of the EUSDR. Cooperation partners of PA 6 as WWF, ICPDR and the SONDAR project were present with exhibition stands, including a 9 meter long life-size model of a Huso huso (Beluga Sturgeon) high on the main audience hall. – PAC6 participated in the 22nd Conference of the Working Community of the Danube Regions on 25.-26. 2015 March in Tulln, which reunites the sustainability working group in cooperation with the Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region and the SoPro Innovation Agency. The conference focused on “Sustainability and socio-ecological production as an incentive for regional economy in the Danube regions.” PAC6 highlighted the EUSDR / PA 6 contribution to the process of SONDAR, its follow-ups and specifically the issue of social production, which generally also reflects the integrative approach of PA 6. The idea for a Coordination Center was presented as well. The event was an occasion to further discuss new project ideas and the general next steps to be taken within the soil-related issues of PA 6. – lecture at stakeholder conference –

Task Force	Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region (SONDAR) - <i>continued</i>
Activities (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Working Group “Sustainability” within the ARGE Donauländer continues its cooperation with Priority Area 6 “Biodiversity, Landscape, Air and Soil” of the EU Strategy of the Danube Region. In this context on-going and future projects are embedded and disseminated by the Task Force SONDAR Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region. ARGE Donauländer acts jointly with existing networks such as SONDAR, ELSA European Land and Soil Alliance, CASEE (Network der Life Science Universities) to distribute best practice examples in the Danube Region. – Work Program 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 25. Working Group “Sustainability, focusing on “soil protection and sustainable land use”, April 24/25, 2018 in Tulln /AUSTRIA cooperating with Life Science-Universities in the Danube Region (CASEE-network): “Smale-scale food production systems (micro-farming): perspectives for sustainable land use” www.unserboden.at ▪ ETC-Project CZ-AT “Climate Green – Adaptation to climate change by means of Green Infrastructure” kick of on 9th Mai 2018 in Tulln /AUSTRIA – Annual Conference of the European Land and Soil Alliance ELSA “Soil Protection under pressure” in cooperation with City of Stuttgart, June 14/15, 2018 in Stuttgart /GERMANY
Working Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Working programmes are included in the IR (2012 - 2013), IR (2013 - 2014), IR (2014 - 2015), IR (2015 - 2016) and IR (2016 - 2016) – Outlook Work Program - 2019 planned projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shelter belts as Biotope Network Systems: Assessment and Implementation of Soil Protection Hedges in the Danube Regions. ▪ Soil Fertility: Humus Management and regional Production of Organic Fertilizers provide relevant contributions to the adaption to climate change. ▪ Soil Map for the Danube Region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General Map of the Danube Region ▪ Map on regional level using the example of Lower Austria ▪ Micro-farming: Smale-scale food production systems: perspectives for sustainable land use” ▪ Adaptation to Climate Change: Protection and Improvement of Green Infrastructure under the aspects of Health and Quality of Life using the examples of the project “Climate Green” ▪ Alliance of Networks of Sustainability and Health

Task Force	Task Force on Air Quality
Establishment	May 2016 (during the Joint JRC-PA 6 Meeting in ISPRA)
Members	JRC Ispra Directorate C – Energy, Transport and Climate
Available documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Studies, Reports, Publications and Collaborations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ JRC science for policy report: A report prepared in support of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR): Sustainable use of biomass in the residential sector (2018) ▪ JRC science for policy report: Air quality in the Danube macro-region (2016) ▪ JRC technical report: Analysis of Air Pollutant Emission Scenarios for the Danube region (2016) ▪ CONCEPT PAPER: Scientific Support to the Danube Strategy (Dec, 2014) ▪ DG JRC's Scientific Support initiative, ▪ JRC: The flagship cluster fiche: THE DANUBE AIR NEXUS (DAN)

Task Force	Task Force on Air Quality - <i>continued</i>
Available documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Meetings documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meetings agenda: EUSDR Priority Area 6 Task Force on Air Quality, 4th Plenary meeting, July 18th – July 20th 2017, Venue: Institute for Environmental Studies, Benatska 2, 128 01 Prague 2, Czech Republic
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – JRC PROJECT MARREF WORKPACKAGES ENVIRONMENT AND CONNECTIVITY – CONSPIRO
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Status of the PA 6 action plan on air quality (Preparation of JRC Science Policy Report about the work carried out under the TFAQ in support to EUSDR PA 6 targets and actions in the field of air quality to the implementation of the air quality legislation) – Sustainable use of biomass in residential sector (Drafting a scientific publication on the source of air pollution in the Danube region extended to the Western Balkans with a focus on the sustainable use of biomass in the residential sector) – Preliminary study (Measurement campaign with low cost sensors for assessment of pollution levels and impacts on health) – Report of measurements in 5 locations – Communication (exchange and dissemination of best practices on heating device operation and maintenance and educational initiatives involving schools) – 5th meeting on 10th – 12th April in Sofia hosted by the National Meteorological and Hydrological Institute – 6th meeting on 13th -14th June in Bucharest hosted by the Institute for Optoelectronics
Working Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – IR (2015 - 2016), IR (2016 - 2016) – Work plan 2018

Task Force	Task Force on pesticides and chemicals
Establishment	First mention: IR (2015 - 2016)
Members	Prof. dr. Ivan Eržen, Dr. Agnes Šömen Joksić
Available documents	–
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Environmental Risk Management in the Case of Dangerous Chemicals in Danube Region” (EnRiMaDaC) (in preparation): Project idea – achievement of specific objectives 2.4. Improving authorities’ preparedness for crisis management during emergencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing common strategies and action plans for risk management: A condition assessment for the project area and the region, identification of locations, environmental impact assessment for identified locations. Contamination of necrophagous birds as a bioindicator of the impact of substances at the ecosystem level. Inclusion of specific objectives in existing strategies and action plans for environmental risk management in the region (e.g. flood safety). – Enhancing cooperation and interoperability between the authorities competent for disaster response: example of best practices in Slovenia; URSZR – MEEL. – Improvement of disaster response strategies: example of best practices in Slovenia URSZR – NLZOH. Improvement of strategies in the region
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Kick off meeting in 2015/2016 – Videoconference of Task Force on Pesticides and Chemicals. Recruitment of TF. – Attendance at 28th Meeting of the ICPDR Pressures and Measures Expert Group and to the 13th Meeting of the ICPDR Nutrients Task Group, 24-26 April 2018, in Zagreb, Croatia
Working Programme	Working program for 2018, IR (07/2015-06/2016, 07/2016-12/2016)

Task Force	Working Group Masterplan Bavarian Danube
Date of establishment	2012
Members	Arbeitsgemeinschaft Bayerische Fluss-Allianzen; Auenzentrum Neuburg-Ingolstadt; Bayerisches Landesamt für Umwelt; Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Umwelt und Verbraucherschutz; Bund Naturschutz in Bayern e.V.; Danube Environmental Forum; Donau-Naab-Regen-Allianz; Landesbund für Vogelschutz in Bayern e.V.; Landesfischereiverband Bayern e.V.; Landkreis Deggendorf; Landratsamt Neuburg-Schrobenhausen; Landratsamt Passau; Landratsamt Pfaffenhofen a.d.Ilm; Regierung der Oberpfalz; Regierung von Niederbayern; Regierung von Schwaben; Stadt Ingolstadt
Available documents	Lebensraum Bayerische Donau: Vielfalt schützen und nachhaltig nutzen - Masterplan zur Entwicklung und Auswahl von Projekten zur Umsetzung der Europäischen Donaunraumstrategie in Bayern (Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Umwelt und Verbraucherschutz, 2017)
Projects	–
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – German Stakeholder Workshop on the implementation of PA 6 of the EUSDR (Oct 2012). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A follow-up on developing a master plan for a “Living Space Danube” with the Bavarian Stakeholder Network was initiated. – Workshop “Implementation of EUSDR in Bavaria” (Feb and May 2013). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was agreed to elaborate a Masterplan for the “Living Space Danube”, focussing on the current state of play and also needs in terms of habitat networking, floodplain forests, agriculture in Danube floodplains, ecological needs of regional situations for lowland moors, meadows and pastures with the overall aim to restore and improve the ecological status of the Danube floodplains; ▪ PAC6 established links to the policy level (StMUG) and the Ministry is already involved in the process by granting funds for the development of the Masterplan; – 22nd International Danube Congress (Nov 2013). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PAC6 was invited to present the objectives and processes of PA 6 and EUSDR in general (the invitation was based on the close cooperation within the working group for the “Masterplan Bavarian Danube”). – Meetings of the integrative Bavarian working group (2013 - 2014). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3. Strategy Development meeting "Masterplan Bavarian Danube" (Sept 2013); ▪ 4. Strategy Development meeting "Masterplan Bavarian Danube" (Nov 2013); ▪ Working meeting on finalization of Masterplan Bavarian Danube (Jun 2014). – Several meetings of the integrative Bavarian working group in 2014 (2015). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4. Strategy Development meeting "Masterplan Bavarian Danube"(Aug 2014); ▪ 5. Strategy Development meeting "Masterplan Bavarian Danube" (Sept 2014); ▪ draft of the “Masterplan Bavarian Danube” was finalised in January 2015 and is currently in its revision round. – Final draft and revision of the Masterplan Bavarian Danube (2015 - 2016). – Finalization of the Masterplan (2016). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Masterplan Bavarian Danube, which has been jointly elaborated by civil society and authorities in Bavaria was finalized and approved by the Bavarian State Minister for Environment and Consumer protection; ▪ The public presentation and official kick-off of the implementation phase will follow in first half of 2017.
Working Programme	Working programmes are included in the IR (2012 - 2013), IR (2013 - 2014), IR (2014 - 2015), IR (2015 - 2016) and IR (2016 - 2016)

9.4 PA 6's Projects

Projects suggested by the Action Plan

Project	Bioregio Carpathians Project
Action(s) related	A9: To prepare and implement transnational spatial planning and development policies for functional geographical areas (river basins, mountain ranges etc.) (milestone n°6.091 <i>BIOREGIO Carpathians</i>)
Responsible actor(s)	<p>Bioregio Carpathians Project - involved 16 partners from 9 different South European, Central and Eastern European countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lead partner: National Forest Administration - Romsilva, Piatra Craiului National Park Administration (RO) – Other partners: National Forest Administration Romsilva – Maramures Mountains Nature Park Administration; National Forest Administration Romsilva – Iron Gates Natural Park Administration; Regional Environmental Protection Agency Sibiu, Environmental Protection Agency Sibiu (RO); UNEP Vienna – Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention; WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme (AT); Duna – Ipoly National Park Directorate; Szent István University (HU); Research, European Academy Bolzano – Institute for Regional Development and Location Management (IT); State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic; National Forest Centre (SK); Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic (CZ)
Countries involved	AT, HU, IT, RO, SK, CZ, PL, RS, UA
Description	<p>Project aimed at enhancing the integrated management of the Carpathians protected areas and natural assets in a transnational context and thereby increase the attractiveness of the region.</p> <p>It promoted the harmonized management of natural assets and protected areas including NATURA 2000 sites in the Carpathians by involving all relevant stakeholders and by building on the existing framework of cooperation of the Carpathian Convention, its Biodiversity Protocol and other related transnational networks and initiatives. BIOREGIO provides the identification of common standards for integrated management plans and therewith the elaboration of common integrated management measures, in particular transboundary areas and their implementation in pilot projects. Project was divided into 7 work packages with following key outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Geo web-referenced interactive Carpathian Joint Biodiversity Information System (CJBIS); – The first Carpathian wide Red Lists of Habitats and Species and a List of Invasive Alien Species in Carpathians; – Common Integrated Management Measures (CIMM) for natural assets and protected areas were developed and further implemented in three different transboundary pilot areas (transboundary management plan and pilot actions: DUNA IPOLY/POIPLIE NP, Iron Gates/Djerdap NP, Maramures/Carpathian biosphere reserve); – In order to foster ecological connectivity, the main natural, legal, social and economic barriers were identified and respective policy recommendations elaborated; – Experience was shared with the Alps and project results transferred to the Dinaric Arc and the Balkans. The project was built on existing frameworks of cooperation in the Carpathians such as the Carpathian Convention and the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) as well as the Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI) which provide multi-level governance and cross-sector integration of the project outcomes and recommendations.
Status	Completed, 2011 – 2014
Funding	ERDF, IPA, ENPI - Interreg IVB South East Europe Programme

Project	
Bioregio Carpathians Project (continued)	
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – https://www.danube-nature.eu/bioregio-carpathians – www.bioregio-carpathians.eu – Bioregio Carpathians Project – Final Publication (Köck M. et al. 2014) – IR (2011 - 2012, 2012 – 2013, 2013 – 2014) – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)
Note	The Bioregio Carpathians Project is a flagship project in the EUSDR, related to PA 6 A1, A2; and A3. Moreover, project is related to the Action 1: <i>Complete the establishment of the Natura 2000 network and ensure good management</i> (Target 1) of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.
Project	
Carpathian Project – VASICA Visions and Strategies in the Carpathian Area	
Action(s) related	A9: To prepare and implement transnational spatial planning and development policies for functional geographical areas (river basins, mountain ranges etc.) (milestone n°6.092 <i>Carpathian Convention Working Group on Spatial Development</i>)
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lead Partner: UNEP Vienna - Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (ISCC), AT – Other: 18 project partners from 10 countries
Countries involved	AT, CZ, HU, SK, PL, RO, RS, UA
Description)	<p>The Carpathian Project - Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians in a Transnational Framework, strongly contributed to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention by forming a strategic basis for the transnational political platform. At the same time, the Carpathian Project benefited from the existing transnational platform of the Carpathian Convention. Ministers of Environment from seven Parties (CZ, HU, PL, RO, RS, SK, UA) and observers (Alpine States; international organizations; national, regional and local authorities; NGOs) constitute the supreme governing body of the Convention which also guides the activities of the Carpathian Project's Lead Partner. The Secretariat is provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and hosted by Austria in the Vienna International Centre.</p> <p>One of the key results of the Carpathian Project was VASICA - Visions and Strategies in the Carpathian Area. VASICA is a transnational spatial development document for the Carpathian region. Following the success of the Alpine Space, it called for the establishment of a support mechanism for the "Carpathian Space" in European Territorial Cooperation that will shift this transnational area from the periphery to a region of sustainable development in the heart of Europe.</p> <p>VASICA is a conceptual document based on a social-economic analysis, which is exploring some development opportunities in the Carpathian area and sets some priorities for development actions. Seven main fields of policy intervention were analysed (agriculture, industry, urban network, cultural and natural heritage, transport, tourism and European territorial cooperation) and followed by policy recommendations that were further divided into proposed actions.</p>
Status	Completed, 2005 - 2008
Funding	VASICA was Part of the Carpathian Project that was co-financed by the EU through the Interreg IIIb CADSES.
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – EU Strategy for the Danube Region: The Carpathian Region – a macro-region forming an integrated part of the Danube region – http://www.carpathianconvention.org/spatial-development.html

Project	Carpathian Project – VASICA Visions and Strategies in the Carpathian Area (continued)
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Note VASICA - Visions and Strategies in the Carpathian Area was listed among the project examples presented in the Action plan, related to Action 9 and its milestone n°6.092 Carpathian Convention Working Group on Spatial Development, but it was completed before 2011 when Working Group was established.

Project	DANUBEPARKS 2009-2012 - <i>Development and Implementation of Transnational Strategies for the Conservation of the Natural Heritage at the Danube River</i>
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Action(s) related

- A1: To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity;
- A2: To manage Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas effectively;
- A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species;
- A15: To educate children and young people

Responsible actor(s)

- TF: Danubeparks
- Partners: Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (RO), Srebarna Nature Reserve (BG), Kalimok-Brushlen Protected Site (BG), Persina Nature Park (BG), Gornje Podunavlje Nature Reserve (RS), Kopački rit Nature Park (HR), Duna-Dráva National Park (HU), Duna-Ipoly National Park (HU), Dunajské luhy Landscape Protected Area (SK), Záhorie Landscape Protected Area (SK), Donau-Auen National Park (AT; Lead partner), Danube Riparian Forest between Neuburg and Ingolstadt (DE)

Countries involved AT, BG, DE, HR, HU, RO, RS, SK

Description Project's objective was to set up a long-term network to transfer knowledge and experience in the protection of nature, to draw up and implement joint strategies and concepts, optimise coherent management of the natural heritage of the Danube and strengthen protected areas at local and regional levels. Some of the activities include:

- River Morphology and Restoration - workshops and study visits on innovative approaches; compilation of past projects "Danube River's Morphology and Revitalisation"
- DANUBEPARKS Strategy on Conservation and Navigation
- Conservation actions for the Danube Sturgeon and the White-tailed Eagle (international conferences, "Action Plan for the Conservation of the White-tailed Sea Eagle along the Danube", White-tailed Eagle Online Database, Folder on the Danube Sturgeons); Danube-wide monitoring of Sand Martin and Little-ringed Plover; Establishment of a Danube-wide online fish database and implementation of a pilot fish monitoring project in Persina Nature Park; Handbook for the management of beavers in Slovakia and Study on experiences reintroducing beavers in Hungary; Pilot monitoring project for European mink in the Romanian Danube Delta (incl. handbook for its management)
- Habitats and ecosystems - a transnationally connected network of valuable natural habitats, development of cross-border conservation concepts and management plans, publication of "Perspectives for Danube Floodplain Forests" and study "Development of the Joint Monitoring Concept of species and habitats included in the DANUBEPARKS project that have been designated Natura 2000 sites"
- Tourism - DANUBEPARKS strategic positioning and action plan on tourism and environmental education, Danube Nature & Culture Tourism Conference (with the Danube Tourist Commission), online tourism platform, Joint Ranger Training and capacity-building measures
- International Danube Festivals, youth art competition "A Chance for the Blue Danube", exhibition "A Sound Map of the Danube", travelling exhibition "The protected areas of the Danube" by Duna-Dráva National Park, exhibitions by BROZ in visitor centres of Donau-Auen and Duna-Ipoly National Park, awareness-raising activities for flagship species (brochures, online game, etc.)

Project	DANUBEPARKS 2009-2012 - <i>Development and Implementation of Transnational Strategies for the Conservation of the Natural Heritage at the Danube River</i> (continued)
Status	Completed, 03/2009 – 02/2012
Funding	ETC-SEE Programme 2007-2013
Link / Source	http://www.danubeparks.org/
Note	Project was listed among the project examples presented in the Action plan (<i>To implement the Danube River Network of Protected Areas (DANUBEPARKS)</i>), related to Action 2.

Project	DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0
Action(s) related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A1: To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity; – A2: To manage Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas effectively; – A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species; – A15: To educate children and young people
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TF: Danubeparks – Partners: Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority, Rusenski Lom Nature Park Directorate, Persina Nature Park Directorate, Djerdap National Park, Vojvodinasume (representing Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve), Lonsjko Polje Nature Park, Kopacki-rit Nature Park, Duna-Drava National Park Directorate, Duna-Ipoly National Park Directorate, Fertő-Hanság National Park, BROZ – Bratislava Regional Association for Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development (representing Dunajske Luh Landscape Protected Area and Zahorie Landscape Protected Area), Donau-Auen National Park, City of Ingolstadt, District of Neuburg-Schrobenhausen (together with Col, representing the Danube Floodplain Forest Neuburg-Ingolstadt) – 17 observers – three of them were treated like project partners (as they are Protected Areas as well and the differentiation is only due to administrative and funding reasons): Iron Gates Natural Park Administration, Galati Association of Fishermen (representing the Prut Natural Park); Agency Moldsilva (representing Lower Prut Nature Reserve in Moldova)
Countries involved	AT, BG, HR, HU, MD, RO, RS, SK
Description	<p>As a continuation of the DANUBEPARKS project, DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 has the task of developing a sustainable organisational structure of network members, of conducting activities of the international action plan for the preservation of the white-tailed eagle and to set up a database of the umbrella species – the black poplar, the bank swallow, the little ringed plover. In collaboration with the ICPDR, this project is meant to raise awareness of the strategic importance of the Danube and the dynamics of river morphology. The results should improve the inter-sectoral and integrated approach to management and ultimately develop a basis for the promotion of protected areas along the Danube River as a leading destination for eco-tourism.</p> <p>Some of the activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Founding of the DANUBEPARKS Association; DANUBEPARKS Enlargement Strategy and Integration of 5 new Protected Areas into the Network – Project Managers Trainings on Presentation, Moderation, Leadership, EU Funding and Applications, and EU Policy Work, Study on organisational structures of Protected Area Administrations, Directors' workshop on organisational development – Intense collaboration with ICPDR and EUSDR; meetings with EU Parliament and EU Commission; exchange of experience with the Alpine and Carpathian Networks of Protected Areas and the EUSBSR; leading the ETC-SEE capitalization process for nature protection projects; Cross-sector workshops with NEWADA Duo, the Network of Danube Waterway Administrations

Project	DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 (continued)
Description (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Danube-wide monitoring, including several tributaries, of the Little Ringed Plover and Sand Martin as part of the JDS3 – White-tailed Eagle - first Danube-wide winter count; drafting of an implementation plan for conservation in the Protected Areas – Black Poplars - Danube-wide mapping, genetic and morphological research, designation of outstanding specimens as "DANUBEPARKS Giants" – Planning of pilot projects focusing on sediment balance and restoration; drafting of a river morphology action plan and Wild Island Habitat Corridor - WILDisLAND initiative – Concept development of a common DANUBEPARKS visitor centre – Organisation of the numerous events, e.g. transnational Chance for the Blue Danube art competition and travelling exhibition, Danube Festivals in Tulcea and Backi Monostor, DANUBEPARKS book and photo exhibition
Status	Completed, 10/2012 – 09/2014
Funding	ERDF and IPA - European Territorial Cooperation in South East Europe (ETC-SEE)
Link / Source	http://www.danubeparks.org/
Note	Project is a follow up on the project example presented in the Action plan "To implement the Danube River Network of Protected Areas (DANUBEPARKS)", related to Action 2.

Project	DANUBEparksCONNECTED - Bridging the Danube Protected Areas towards a Danube Habitat Corridor
Action(s) related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A1: To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity; – A2: To manage Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas effectively; – A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species; – A5: To develop green infrastructure in order to connect different bio-geographic regions and habitats; – A15: To educate children and young people
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TF: Danubeparks – Partners: Donau-Auen National Park (Lead Partner); Landratsamt Neuburg-Schrobenhausen; City of Ingolstadt; Passau District; World Heritage Municipalities Wachau; State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic; BROZ- Regional association for nature conservation an sustainable development; Fertő-Hanság National Park Directorate; Danube Ipoly National Park Directorate; Danube-Drava National Park Directorate; Persina Nature Park Directorate; Club Friends of Public Park Rusenski Lom; Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority; Public Institution Nature Park Kopacki Rit; Public Enterprise "Vojvodinašume" – Associated partners: Lower Prut Nature Reserve - Agency Moldsilva; International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River; viadonau - Österreichische Wasserstraßengesellschaft; ALPARC – the Alpine Network of Protected Areas; Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Public Health; WWF - World Wide Fund for Nature, Danube-Carpathian Programme Bulgaria - WWF BG; European Wilderness Society Ukraine; MAVIR; Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection (HR); ENEL DISTRIBUTION DOBROGEA S.A.
Countries involved	AT, BG, DE, HR, HU, MD, RO, RS, SK
Description	DANUBEparksCONNECTED has initiated the DANUBE HABITAT CORRIDOR campaign to counteract fragmentation. It offers Danube-wide strategies and exemplary activities aiming to restore and maintain connectivity in all habitat elements – water, land, air and fire (i.e. communication).

Project	DANUBE parks CONNECTED - Bridging the Danube Protected Areas towards a Danube Habitat Corridor (continued)
Description (continued)	<p>Some of the activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Danube Volunteers Day (Aug and Oct 2017, Apr – Jun 2018) – WILDisland Habitat Corridor (Jan – Dec 2018; WILDisland online tool and guidelines, 5 river restoration projects, cross-sector conference) – DANUBE FREE SKY (Jan – Dec 2018; inventory, marked powerlines in HU, AT and SK) – Cross-border grazing (2017, May – Nov 2018; AT dykes at Donau-Auen National Park) – DANUBE PARKS Canyons Network (Jan – Dec 2018; a Memorandum Cooperation signed in May 2018; study visit) Forest Sector Training – Cross-sector Study Visits in the Upper, Middle and Lower Danube (Feb – Dec 2018; 3 Cross-sector study visits) – Danube Habitat Corridor Guiding Principle (Sep – Dec 2018; Drafting document, beginning of discussion process with stakeholders)
Status	01/2017 – 06/2019
Funding	ERDF and IPA - Interreg – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – DANUBE PARKS Work Plan 2018 – http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/danubeparksconnected
Notes	Project is a follow up on the project example presented in the Action plan “ <i>To implement the Danube River Network of Protected Areas (DANUBE PARKS)</i> ”, related to Action 2. It is also related to the EUSDR PA 04 Action 12: <i>To strengthen general awareness and facilitate exchange of good practice in integrated water management issues in the Danube Basin among decision-makers at all levels and among the population of the Region</i> . Activity WILDisland Habitat Corridor could serve as good practice for the cross-sector cooperation among EUSDR PA 6, PA1a and PA4, while Activity Danube Habitat Corridor Guiding Principle contributes to SO 4.2 of the Danube Transnational Programme - <i>Support to the governance and implementation of the EUSDR</i> .

Project	Protecting “Europe’s Lifeline” - The creation of a Trans-Boundary UNESCO Biosphere Reserve
Action(s) related	A2: To manage Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas effectively
Responsible actor(s)	WWF Austria (Lead partner), EuroNatur (AT)
Countries involved	AT, HU, HR, SI, RS
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The main objective of this 3 year project (January 2011- December 2013), led by WWF and EuroNatur, is to support the implementation of a well-protected and managed transboundary Danube, Drava and Mura river system. Project goals are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5-country biosphere reserve; ▪ trans-boundary cooperation; ▪ ecological river management. – Milestone n°6.025 achieved: July 11th 2012, UNESCO (MaB Program Secretariat) accepted the nomination of the Biosphere Reserve Mura – Drava – Danube as a part of worlds’ biosphere reserve network. – The 3rd Meeting of the International Working Group and Coordination Board for Mura-Drava-Danube Transboundary Biosphere Reserve was held on 18-19 September 2013 in Vienna (Austria) (n°6.026) – In 2013, with assistance of the WWF, the concept of the pentilateral Mura-Drava-Danube Biosphere Reserve (Five Countries – Three Rivers – One Vision) participated in the first “European River Prize” contest, and was selected among the first four out of 20 applications (n°6.026)

Project	Protecting “Europe’s Lifeline” - The creation of a Trans-Boundary UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (continued)
Status	Completed, 01/2011 - 12/2013
Funding	MAVA Foundation and Asamer Holding
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018) – https://www.danube-nature.eu/protecting-europes-lifeline-the-creation-of-a-transboundary-biosphere-reserve-along-the-danube-drava-and-mura-rivers
Note	Project is connected to the one listed as a project example in the Action plan (<i>To establish fully the Mura-Drava-Danube Biosphere Reserve</i>), related to Action 2.

Project	SONDAR CZ-AT: Improving quality of soil by raising soil awareness/Soil as an archive
Action(s) related	A12: To raise awareness about soil protection
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: Soil- und Bioenergy-Network NÖ/EU - BIENE Network (Lead partner); Masarykova universita (Masaryk Universität) Brno; Institut für Bodenforschung (BOKU); Mendelova univerzita v Brně (Mendel Universität) Brno; Bioforschung Austria; Municipality of Nová Lhota; Svaz integrované a ekologické produkce hroznů a vína o.s. Ekovín (EKOVIN); ZERA - Zemědělská a ekologická regionální agentura, o.s. (ZERA Agency); – Strategic Partners: Ministry of Environment, Praha, CZ and IAD - International Association for Danube Research, AT – Strategic Coordination/National Cofinancing: NÖ Agrarbezirksbehörde, Fachabteilung Landentwicklung – Cooperation with European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA)
Countries involved	AT, CZ
Description	Main topics of this project were a long-term improvement of soil quality through increase in soil awareness and demonstrating and best-practice implementation of possibilities of avoidance and reduction, respectively of soil erosion.
Status	Completed, 03/2012 - 06/2014
Funding	ERDF
Link / Source	http://www.sondar.eu/cz/index.php?article_id=1

Project	SONDAR HU –AT: Soil as filter of pollutants, soil as reservoir for carbon
Action(s) related	A12: To raise awareness about soil protection
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: SENEK, Soil and Energy Network of European Countries (Lead partner); North Transdanubian Environmental and Water Directorate; West Hungarian University of Agriculture and Nutrition Science; City of Mosonmagyaróvár; University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna/Tulln; Bio Research Austria; international Working Group Danube Research (IAD) – Strategic partner: The European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA) – Strategic Control: The Department of Rural Development of the Lower Austria Government
Countries involved	AT, HU

Project	SONDAR HU –AT: Soil as filter of pollutants, soil as reservoir for carbon (continued)
Description	<p>The aim of the HU-AT project was to create a network of increasing responsibility for soil – between science and practice, between administration and users of land, between education, arts, and the entire population. Task was to implement measures and describing processes, which subsequently will be able to develop further in other regions and countries. Soil protection included (1) Quality & space, (2) Soil awareness and (3) Soil & water interaction.</p> <p>In close cooperation between Hungarian, viennese and Lower Austrian partners, best-practice examples of a sensible use of soil in the respective municipality were selected and documented.</p>
Status	Completed, 04/2011 - 12/2013
Funding	ERDF
Link / Source	http://www.sondar.eu/hu/index.php?article_id=1

Project	SONDAR SK –AT: Soil as indicator of flood occurrence
Action(s) related	A12: To raise awareness about soil protection
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – BIENE - Soil and Energy Network of European Countries, Eschenau (Lead partner); VVB Vodohospodárska výstavba (Wasserbauinstitut) Bratislava; BOKU University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Institute of Soil Protection; VUPOP Výskumný ústav pôdovedectva a ochrany pôdy (national soil protection institute) Bratislava; – Strategic partner: Societas pedologica slovaciae – Strategic Control/National Co-financing: Office of Lower Austrian Government, Department of Rural Development – Cooperation with European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA)
Countries involved	AT, SK
Description	<p>The aim of the SONDAR SK-AT project was to create a network of increasing responsibility for soil – between science and practice, between administration and users of land, between education, arts, and the entire population. Task was to implement measures and describing processes, which subsequently will be able to develop further in other regions and countries. Soil protection included: (1) Quality & space, (2) Soil awareness and (3) Soil & water interaction.</p> <p>In close cooperation between Slovak and Lower Austrian partners, best-practice examples of a sensible use of soil in the respective municipality were selected and documented.</p>
Status	Completed, 11/2010 - 10/2013
Funding	ERDF
Link / Source	http://www.sondar.eu/sk/index.php?article_id=1&clang=0
Note	Project is related to EUSDR PA 6 target 2: <i>By 2020, ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing green infrastructure and restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including degraded soils.</i> Moreover, it contributes to EUSDR PA Action 15.

Project	Transboundary Management Programme for the planned 5-country Biosphere Reserve “Mura-Drava-Danube”
Action(s) related	A2: To manage Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas effectively
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: WWF Austria (lead beneficiary); Office of the State Government of Styria - Environment and Spatial Planning (Section Nature Conservation); Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation; Municipality Velika Polana; Public institution for nature protection of Virovitica-Podravina County; Balaton-felvidéki National Park Directorate; Public institution for nature protection of Osijek-Baranja County; Public Institution for Management of Protected Natural Areas in the Koprivnica Križevci County; WWF Adria; Vojvodina Šume Public Institution; Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province – Associated partners: Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Division I/8, National Parks, Nature Conservation and Species Protection, Austria; DANUBEPARKS; Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Environment Directorate, Slovenia; Medjimurska Priroda – Public Institution for Nature Protection; Public Institution for Management of Protected Natural Areas in Varaždin County; Public Institution Nature Park Kopački Rit; The City of Sombor; UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe; ICPDR; EuroNatur Foundation; Duna-Dráva National Park Directorate; Austrian National Committee for UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere Programme
Countries involved	AT, HU, HR, RS, SI
Description	<p>The future Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube (TBR MDD) will protect core and buffer zones in all five countries through existing Nature Parks, National Parks, and Natura 2000 areas. To prepare for future joint management, all those Protected Area Administrations are part of the coop MDD project. The Management Programme jointly developed within coop MDD will include Guidelines for Dynamic River Corridor Development, a Transboundary Action Plan, and a joint concept for River Schools. This will harmonise river management in the TBR MDD and its surrounding floodplain forests and meadows. It will also discuss uses like agriculture, hunting, fishing, or tourism.</p>
Status	01/2017 - 06/2019
Funding	ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/coop-mdd – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)
Note	Project is connected to the one listed as a project example in the Action plan (<i>To establish fully the Mura-Drava-Danube Biosphere Reserve</i>), related to Action 2.

Other projects related to PA 6

Project	AGRIGO4CITIES - Urban agriculture for changing cities governance models for better institutional capacities and social inclusion
Action(s) related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A14: To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development – A16: To build capacities of local authorities in the environment-related matters
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Lead beneficiary); Municipal District Prague 9; European Development Agency; Municipality of Velenje; Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency Nonprofit Ltd.; Vaslui Municipality; ENVICORP Slovakia; Association for culture and education, PiNA; Association of South-Western Municipalities; Ifuplan – Institute for Environmental Planning and Spatial Development; Municipality of Ulcinj – Associated partners: Regionalna razvojna agencija Ljubljanske urbane regije; Employment Service of Slovenia, Regional Office Koper; EBB Europaberatung; Association Euni Partners; Association of City Municipalities of Slovenia; Prague City Hall
Countries involved	BG, CZ, DE, HU, ME, RO, SK, SI
Description	<p>AgriGo4Cities project wants to employ Participatory Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture (UPA) as a powerful and emerging method to improve public institutional capacities in order to tackle socio-economic exclusion of vulnerable/marginalized groups and to stimulate sustainable urban development in the Danube region. To this end, the project aims to develop an innovative methodology of participatory planning and integrate it into decision-making processes.</p> <p>The methodology will improve capacities of public administrators to involve relevant stakeholders and civil society into governance and public participation. Intensified cooperation will boost mutual trust and stimulate strengthened socio-economic inclusion of vulnerable/marginalized groups. The reduction of social and economic inequalities will lead to the more sustainable development of disadvantaged neighborhoods. By applying a transnational multi-level approach the AgriGo4Cities project ambition is to become a flagship of well-governed Danube region.</p>
Status	01/2017 - 06/2019
Funding	PA 10, ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/agrigo4cities – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)
Note	– Project is related to the PA 10 <i>To step up institutional capacity and cooperation</i> .

Project	Assessing and controlling the spread and the effects of common ragweed in Europe
Action(s) related	A6: To reduce the spread of invasive alien species (IAS)
Responsible actor(s)	NERC Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UK) (Lead partner), NatureBureau (UK), Economics for the environment consultancy (UK), European Centre for Nature Conservation (Netherlands), Finnish Meteorological Institute (Finland), Allergy Therapeutics (UK), Royal Agricultural College (UK)
Countries involved	All EUSDR countries are beneficiaries
Description	Common ragweed (<i>Ambrosia artemisiifolia</i>) is a non native species which is highly invasive across Europe and has harmful impacts on a range of sectors, especially human health and agriculture.

Project	Assessing and controlling the spread and the effects of common ragweed in Europe (continued)
Description (continued)	Project's aim was to synthesise and systematically review information, highlight knowledge gaps and utilise modern modelling methods to achieve: (1) an understanding of the current extent of ragweed infestation in Europe; (2) economic, social and environmental quantification of direct and indirect harmful effects in all sectors; (3) assessment of measures to control ragweed spread and introduction (now and in future climates); (4) the dissemination of accurate and up-to-date scientifically-based evidence to stakeholders.
Status	Completed, 03/2011 - 09/2012
Funding	Natural Environment Research Council, UK (Contractor)
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – IR (2012 – 2013) – http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/docs/Final_Final_Report.pdf
Note	This project has not been “approved” by Steering Group, as there was no issue to approve yet.

Project	Assessment of migratory waterbird population in the Danube Area
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	All EUSDR countries are beneficiaries
Countries involved	AT, BA, BG, CZ, DE, HR, HU, MD, ME, RO, RS, SI, SK, UA (beneficiaries)
Description	The project aims at an improvement of waterbirds conservation in the region. Specific objectives are to develop sound information basis for waterbirds conservation in the region, to prepare an Action Plan for waterbirds conservation; to involve key stakeholders in AP implementation.
Status	2014 - Project in preparation (e.g. project proposal, feasibility study)
Funding	tbd
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annex 2 of the IR (2013 – 2014); – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)
Note	Letter of Recommendation was issued in April 2014. Steering group proposed to project coordinators to widen project area by including more stakeholders from the Danube area (for example ornithological societies from other Danube countries).

Project	Attractive Danube – Improving Capacities for Enhancing Territorial Attractiveness of the Danube Region
Action(s) related	n/a
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: Geodetic Institute Slovenia (Lead beneficiary); URBASOFIA, Town and regional planning company; Bulgaria Economic Forum; Institute for Spatial Planning of the Koprivnica-Križevci County; CENIA, Czech Environmental Information Agency; Lechner Non-profit Ltd.; First Hungarian Responsible Innovation Association; Technical University of Kosice; aiforia GmbH; Federal Ministry of Physical Planning; Institute for Strategic Studies and Prognoses; Institute of Architecture and Urban & Spatial Planning of Serbia – Associated partners: The City of Đurđevac; Ervet - Emilia-Romagna economic valorization of territory; Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia; Ministry of Infrastructure; Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning; Košice Self-governing Region; EU Strategy for the Danube Region Priority Area10 Institutional Capacity and Cooperation

Project	Attractive Danube – Improving Capacities for Enhancing Territorial Attractiveness of the Danube Region (continued)
Countries involved	AT, BA, BG, CZ, DE, HU, HR, IT, ME, RO, RS, SK, SI
Description	<p>Each territory has its own set of specific capitals and assets which can make it competitive in comparison to other territories. Through good governance, policies can create conditions for maximising the potentials of territorial assets and capitals for development, thus increasing the attractiveness of territories for its residents, visitors and businesses. The main project objective is to strengthen multilevel and transnational governance and institutional capacities of policy planners involved in territorial development by establishing a permanent common transnational platform for monitoring territorial attractiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – DEVELOPMENT: Strengthening the influence on territorial development, regional development, business and tourism by setting up the capacity building activities and participation processes of relevant stakeholders. – GOVERNANCE: Strengthen multilevel and transnational governance by adopting an evidence based approach via the use of an information platform created for better decision making. – ATTRACTIVENESS: Identifying territorial development potentials and indicators addressing, environmental, economic, governance and social challenges. – PARTICIPATORY PLANNING: Improve and strengthen the multilevel, cross-sectoral participatory territorial development planning, involving policy planners, civil society, businesses and academia. This will be ensured by stakeholder participation processes in 11 partner countries aimed to establish 11 national territorial attractiveness monitoring platforms and a common transnational one.
Status	01/2017 - 06/2019
Funding	PA 10, ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/attractive-danube – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)
Note	Project is related to the PA 10 <i>To step up institutional capacity and cooperation</i> .

Project	Be-Natur
Action(s) related	A2: To manage Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas effectively
Responsible actor(s)	WWF Austria (Lead partner), EuroNatur (AT)
Countries involved	AT, BG, HU, RO, RS, as well as GR, IT
Description	<p>BE-NATUR aims at favouring the better management and implementation of Nature 2000 sites in the SEE eco-regions, focussing in particular on wetlands (rivers, lakes, coastal shores).</p> <p>The exchange of knowledge and best practices within the consortium will be the basis for the definition of a Transnational Joint Strategy for the better management and improvement of Natura 2000 network, and the definition of Joint Transnational Action Plans for the conservation of species and habitats common to the PP areas, to concretely implement the EU legislative framework. Some of the activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Network Countryside Conference of Protected Areas 2012 in Klagenfurt (23th February 2012) – Project presentation at International Po Delta Birdwatching Fair 2012 (27th April 2012) – NATURA 2000 & Rural Development - The EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 (18-19 June 2012) – BE-NATUR Press Conference and Coordination Meeting in Vienna (13-15 September 2012) – Two dissemination workshops organized by the Veneto Region to present the results of the BE-NATUR PROJECT (25 - 31 October 2013)

Project	Be-Natur (continued)
Description (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ROUND TABLE "<i>Better management of Natura 2000 sites: challenges and chances for the future</i>" (12th November 2013) – Final dissemination workshop in Ravenna on 28th January 2014
Status	Completed, 01/2011 - 01/2014
Funding	ERDF i IPA - Interreg IVB South East Europe Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – IR (2011 – 2012); – http://www.be-natur.it/project_description.html
Note	To a certain extent, project is connected to one of the project examples listed in the Action plan (<i>To complete the Lower Danube Green Corridor</i>), related to Action 5. It has not been “approved” by Steering Group, as there was no issue to approve yet.

Project	ConnectGREEN - Restoring and managing ecological corridors in mountains as the green infrastructure in the Danube basin
Action(s) related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A1: To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity – A5: To develop green infrastructure in order to connect different bio-geographic regions and habitats – A9: To prepare and implement transnational spatial planning and development policies for functional geographical areas (river basins, mountain ranges etc.)
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: WWF DCP Romania (Lead partner); WWF International Danube-Carpathian Programme; Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic; Silva Tarouca Research Institute for Landscape and Ornamental Gardening (CZ); Szent Istvan University (HU); National Institute for Research and Development in Constructions, Urban Planning and Sustainable Spatial Development; Piatra Craiului National Park Administration (RO); Slovak Environment Agency; The State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic; Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava - SPECTRA Centre of Excellence of EU; CEEweb for biodiversity (HU); Institute of Architecture and Urban & Spatial Planning of Serbia; National Park Djerdap (RS); Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic; Ministry of Regional Development of the Czech Republic; Bükk National Park Directorate (HU); Ministry of Environment of Romania; Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia; Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic; Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resource of Ukraine – Associated partners: Danubeparks - Danube River Network of Protected Areas; Alpine Network of Protected Areas – ALPARC; Parks Dinarides – Network of protected areas of Dinarides
Countries involved	CZ, HU, RO, RS, SK, UA
Description	In order to cope with the fast and increasing habitat fragmentation in the Danube region. ConnectGREEN aims at improving the ecological connectivity between natural habitats, especially between Natura 2000 sites and other protected area categories in the Carpathian ecoregion of transnational relevance. As a first step, the project will develop a Carpathian-wide methodology and based on this it will identify core areas and ecological corridors used by large carnivores as umbrella species. Existing tools, instruments and frameworks will be explored and assessed to find ways together with spatial planners to legally and/ or effectively foster the connectivity approach in practice. At the level of 4 transnationally relevant pilot sites, the ecological corridors will be identified in more detail by using the above mentioned methodology. Physical barriers and other threats will be identified in these areas and integrated together with other spatial data categories into the Carpathian Countries Integrated Biodiversity Information System (CCIBIS).

Project	ConnectGREEN - Restoring and managing ecological corridors in mountains as the green infrastructure in the Danube basin (continued)
Description (continued)	Specific management and restoration measures will be developed in a participative way with key stakeholders (conservationists, spatial planners, authorities, hunters, foresters, etc.) for safeguarding the ecological connectivity in each pilot site. The Decision Support Tool (DST), created by the spatial planners (and included in CCIBIS) will support this process by overlapping and analysing a broad range of spatial data and various individual scenarios. A Strategy will be developed based on the methodology and the project's findings on identifying, preserving, and managing ecological corridors focusing on large carnivores movement needs in the region. It will be enforced by the parties to the Carpathian Convention with the support of relevant ASPs. A capacity building programme will be set up for conservationists and spatial planners to contribute to this endeavour and ensure durable outcomes.
Status	06/2018 – 05/2021
Funding	ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/CONNECTGREEN/partners – https://www.keep.eu/project/20196/restoring-and-managing-ecological-corridors-in-mountains-as-the-green-infrastructure-in-the-danube-basin
Project	CONSPIRO
Action(s) related	A13: To decrease air pollutants
Responsible actor(s)	Science In Ltd. (SZ; Leader), Helmholtz Zentrum Munchen-German Research Center for Environmental Health; National Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology, Bulgarian Academy of Science; Department of Environmental Engineering, Health and Safety, University of Novi Sad
Countries involved	CZ, DE, BG, RS
Description	Implementation of the project includes: (1) measurement campaign with low cost sensors for assessment of levels and impacts on health; (2) exchange and dissemination of best practices (e.g. stove operation and maintenance); (3) educational initiatives involving schools and civil society. In the course of the DSPF project, the future project will be developed - concrete concept will be elaborated, a partnership established and a study on existing approaches conducted.
Status	Ended on 31/12/2018
Funding	DSPF and project partners contributions
Link / Source	TFAQ Work Plan 2018
Note	The end of TFAQ activity planned under this project (A preliminary study on measurements in 5 locations) should have ended on 31/12/2018. The end of TFAQ activity „Communication“ under this project should have ended on 31/12/2018.

Project CROWDSTREAM CROWDfunding to mainSTREAM innovation	
Action(s) related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A14: To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development – A16: To build capacities of local authorities in the environment-related matters
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: Agency for European Intergration and Economic Development (Lead beneficiary); Agency for European Intergration and Economic Development; South Bohemian Agency for Support to Innovative Enterprising; ConPlusUltra Ltd.; Pannon Business Network Association; DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ZAGREB - TPZ Ltd.; Union of Bulgarian Black Sea Local Authorities; Styrian Technology Park; Technical University of Kosice, Faculty of Economics; Innovation and entrepreneurship center TEHNOLOGIS; UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE – Associated partners: European Crowdfunding Network; Institute for International Business - Vienna University of Economics and Business; Priorita Area 10 of the EUSDR - City of Vienna; Regional Innovation Agency Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur; Lapland University of Applied Science; Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development - Serbia
Countries involved	AT, BG, CZ, HU, HR, ME, RS, SK, SI together with BE, FR, FI
Description	<p>The CrowdStream project will initiate a change in the financing market. Due to quality labelling and capacity building activities there will be a major shift from donation based to equity based crowdfunding.</p> <p>The main project result will be an improved cooperation between business-support-organisations and enterprises to guarantee a qualitative access to crowdfunding. Therefore CrowdStream will develop with the proper frame to establish crowdfunding as an enabler for the implementation of regional innovative projects by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – developing joint quality criteria for all kinds of crowdfunding platforms; – identifying the legal framework for cross border crowdfunding; – stimulating the collaboration of relevant actors (crowdfunding platforms, regions, regional innovation agencies, public innovation funds, creative industry, media-universities, business incubators, businesses (especially SMEs), social media and the financial industries) – providing trainings on CF for the public/private sector; – raising awareness about CF as alternative financing tool in providing relevant information; – initiating roadmapping process to roll-out innovative financing solutions for innovation in the DANUBE region; – acting as multiplier/disseminator.
Status	12/2016 - 05/2019
Funding	PA 10, ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/crowdstream – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)
Note	– Project is related to the PA 10 <i>To step up institutional capacity and cooperation</i> .

Project	DANUBE GEOTOUR - Valorisation of geoheritage for sustainable and innovative tourism development of Danube Geoparks
Action(s) related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A14: To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development – A16: To build capacities of local authorities in the environment-related matters
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: Idrija Heritage Centre (lead beneficiary); Styrian Eisenwurzen; Public Institution "Nature Park Papuk"; ARGE Geopark Karavanks; Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation; Bakony & Balaton Regional Tourism Nonprofit Ltd.; University of Bucharest; University of Presov; Balaton-felvidéki National Park Directorate; Vodní Zdroje Chrudim, Ltd.; Public Enterprise National Park Djerdap – Associated partners: Humanopolis Ltd / Rokua Geopark; Naturtejo – Tourism Company; Global Geoparks Network
Countries involved	AT, CZ, HU, HR, RO, RS, SI
Description	The 8 participating Geoparks are rich in geo-heritage and represent unique areas in the Danube region. Their sustainable tourism development however lags behind quality standards of top European Geoparks. This project faces a challenge recognized by all partners: the sustainable use of the exceptional wealth of Geopark natural resources and heritage through sustainable tourism development that avoids the negative environmental impacts. The main project result will be joint Danube GeoTour designed to strengthen cooperation between the regions' Geoparks and act as an innovative tourism product to accelerate visibility and tourist visits in the geoparks. Common strategy for sustainable management of tourism pressures will form the basis for creating innovative geoproducts. Sharing experiences, testing pilot geotourism products and new interpretative approaches should increase local inhabitants' engagement, Geopark management capacities and lower the quality gap between Danube and other European Geoparks.
Status	01/2017 - 06/2019
Funding	ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/danube-geotour – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)
Note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Projects contributes to achieving the objectives of PA3 <i>To promote culture and tourism, people to people contacts</i>, PA 6 <i>To preserve biodiversity, landscape and quality of air and soils</i> and PA10 <i>To step un institutional capacity and cooperation</i>.

Project	DanubeSTREAM - Smart, Integrated and Harmonised Waterway Management
Action(s) related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A1: To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: Austrian Waterway Company (Lead partner); Slovak Water Management Enterprise, state enterprise; General Directorate of Water Management (HU); National Association of Radio Distress-signalling and Infocommunications (HU); River Administration of the Lower Danube – Galati (RO); Administration of Navigable Canals SH (RO); Executive agency for exploration and maintenance of the Danube River (BG); Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure (HR); Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure – Directorate for Inland Waterways (RS) – Associated partners: German Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure; Danube Commission; International Sava River Basin Commission; DANUBEPARKS – Danube River Network of Protected Areas
Countries involved	AT, BG, DE, HR, HU, RS, RO, SK

Project	DanubeSTREAM - Smart, Integrated and Harmonised Waterway Management (continued)
Description	<p>As an environmentally-friendly and safe transport mode, inland waterway transport (IWT) is an important enabler for economic growth and competitiveness in the Danube Region. The objective of the project is to establish and maintain an efficient and environmentally friendly transportation network (Danube and its navigable tributaries) by further developing effective waterway infrastructure management. In addition to consolidating common standards and tools, the project's results and outputs include user oriented information services. These enable rapid information transfer on the quality of the waterway's infrastructure. On the strategic level, cooperation with stakeholders (ecology, navigation) and coordination with political level (EUSDR) are project activities. The project will consolidate the quality of waterway infrastructure and waterway maintenance, resulting in a higher utilization of waterway transport in the region. The project has many innovative elements which are part of future technologies and services (i.e. inland waterway infrastructure improvement pilots). Moreover, Danube STREAM efficiently capitalises on previous project results (i.e. SEE project NEWADA duo) to build on existing knowledge and to deploy results closely together with targeted users of the Danube waterway.</p> <p>Specific Objectives: (1) Support environmentally-friendly and safe transport systems and balanced accessibility of urban and rural areas; (2) Improve planning, coordination and practical solutions for an environmentally-friendly, low-carbon and safer transport network and services in the programme area contributing to a balanced accessibility of urban and rural areas.</p>
Status	01/2017 – 09/2019
Funding	ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	– http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/danube-stream

Project	Dare to Connect (D2C) - Supporting Danube Region's ecological Connectivity by linking Natura 2000 areas along the Green Belt
Action(s) related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A1: To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity – A2: To manage Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas effectively – A5: To develop green infrastructure in order to connect different bio-geographic regions and habitats – A16: To build capacities of local authorities in the environment-related matters
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: Bavarian branch of BUND, Friends of the Earth Germany, BUND Project Office Green Belt (Lead partner); Ametyst Non-governmental organization (CZ); Environment Agency Austria; University of Vienna, Division of Conservation Biology, Vegetation Ecology and Landscape Ecology (AT); Órség National Park Directorate (HU); Duna-Drava National Park Directorate (HU); N.F.A. Romsilva - Iron Gates Nature Park Administration R.A. (RO); Public institution for management of protected parts of nature and ecological network in Virovitica Podravina County (HR); Ekopolis Foundation (SK); State Nature Conservancy of Slovak Republic (SK); Public Enterprise National Park Djerdap (RS) – Associated partners: Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure (DE); German Federal Agency for Nature Protection; Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection (DE); Regional Administration of Lower Bavaria (DE); Sumava National Park (CZ); Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic; EuroNatur Foundation; Ministry of Environment and Water (BG); Nature Park Goricko (SI); Croatian Agency for Environment and Nature (HR); Municipality of Kölked (HU); Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management; Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic; Ministry of Agriculture Hungary

Project	Dare to Connect (D2C) - Supporting Danube Region's ecological Connectivity by linking Natura 2000 areas along the Green Belt (continued)
Countries involved	AT, BG, CZ, DE, HR, HU, RS, SI, SK
Description	<p>The main objective of the „DaRe to Connect (D2C)“ project is the implementation of the EU Danube Strategy by further transnational development of the connectivity of the Green Belt as backbone of EU Green infrastructure (EU GI) by maintaining and enhancing ecosystems and their services. The project defines feasible ecological corridors between Natura 2000 areas on transnational and macro-regional level by innovative GIS and remote sensing approaches, partly based on newly available EU-Copernicus (Sentinel) data. Then, the project will provide concrete guidance and recommendations on planning and establishment of transnational ecological corridors connecting Natura 2000 areas on local and regional level, derived from pilot actions.</p> <p>Results will be mainstreamed via a transnational strategic vision "Green Belt in the Danube Region 2030" to be endorsed by national political stakeholders. The improvement of capacities of responsible public bodies and NGOs will lead to better understanding as well as to an improved knowledge exchange and cooperation. PR-work and events will give local/regional people and politicians an understanding of how connectivity and ESS can contribute to human wellbeing. Project participation and learning interaction will enhance individual capacities of the project partners' staff and other involved institutions to further develop the European Green Belt in the DTP area.</p>
Status	06/2018 – 05/2021
Funding	ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	– http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/d2c

Project	Priority Area: 06 Biodiversity, Landscapes, Quality of Air and Soils (DTP-PAC1-PA6)
Action(s) related	– all actions
Responsible actor(s)	– Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection (Lead partner, DE); Ministry of Environment and Energy (HR)
Countries involved	DE, HR
Description	<p>The objective of the project is to increase the stability and efficiency of governance of PA 06. This will be reached through enhancement of operational capacity and by strengthening the ownership of PA 06 and the EUSDR at the level of its Steering Group (SG) and Tasks Forces (TF), further to create synergies with other EUSDR implementing bodies and relevant institutional actors in Danube policy. The expected change from the implementation of this project is an improved coordination and implementation of the strategy in PA 06. It shall mark a considerable perpetuation, stabilization and improvement of the experiences made in the implementation of PA 06 so far. Work Packages and Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <u>WP1 Management, Publicity and Communication of the PA</u> is dedicated to manage the implementation of PA 06 on daily basis and includes the facilitation of Steering Group meetings and attendance of PACs at other relevant meetings. – <u>WP2 Policy Development of the PA</u> includes developing Policy Document Fostering Ecological Connectivity, Policy Report Ecosystem Services in the Danube Region and thematic study Opportunities and proposals for a revised roadmap.

Project	Priority Area: 06 Biodiversity, Landscapes, Quality of Air and Soils (DTP-PAC1-PA6) (continued)
Description	– <u>WP3 Cooperation and Coordination of the PA.</u> This WP is dedicated to improve the coordination, cooperation and correlation of PA 06 with other Priority Areas in order to better identify and make use of synergies but also to detect potential conflict of individual targets and actions of Priority Areas (e.g. economical development and nature protection) at an early stage and to develop joint solutions. The organization of Task Force meetings which are directly connected to PA 06 are one of the core activities of this WP and also of the PA 06 approach to involve stakeholders, net-works and platforms.
Status	01/2017 – 12/2019
Funding	Interreg Danube Transnational Programme (ERDF)
Link / Source	– https://www.danube-nature.eu/06-biodiversity-landscapes-quality-of-air-and-soils – https://www.keep.eu/project/19192/priority-area-06-biodiversity-landscapes-quality-of-air-and-soils

Project	DUNAVISION (Donauwandel 2013 (Danube Learning Journey))
Action(s) related	A14: To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development
Responsible actor(s)	–
Countries involved	All Danube Region countries
Description	<p>The project focuses on developing activities in the field of eco-social innovations. One main activity is a “Danube Learning Journey” which is foreseen for 2013. The purpose is to bring people together to discuss and develop ideas, measures and projects for a sustainable development, specifically to create new green jobs in the Danube Region.</p> <p>Background is to provide incubators and “think tanks” during the Danube Journey which creates information and awareness and combines biodiversity and nature protection with smart economic growth. It is expected that the described learning journey marks the start of further concrete activities and long-term networks to reach the aim of awareness raising, identification with the Danube region, sustainable development and green jobs.</p>
Status	Completed (03/2013 - 09/2013)
Funding	ERDF
Link / Source	– Annex 2 of the IR (2012 - 2013) – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018) – https://www.peopleandskills-danuberegion.eu/dunavision-donauwandel-project-due-to-start/
Note	– IR (2012 - 2013): Letter of Acknowledgment was issued in January 2013 by the SG. Project is also related to the PA 9 <i>To Invest in People and Skills</i> .

Project	DUNNOCK (Danube Network for Enhancing Communication, Knowledge and Innovation on the Environment)
Action(s) related	A9: To prepare and implement transnational spatial planning and development policies for functional geographical areas (river basins, mountain ranges etc.)
Responsible actor(s)	–
Countries involved	AT, BG, CZ, DE, HU, HR, MD, RO, RS, SK, SI, UA
Description	DUNNOCK, covering twelve of the fourteen countries aims at enhancing coordination and communication among them and may therefore lead to improved use of existing networking and cooperation options. This may further enhance the transfer of scientific knowledge to policy and practice, extend the ways of the research funding, and to make research more attractive for potential donors. Lessons learned from established science-policy interfaces in the environmental sector may provide the basis for linking societal actors with environmental decision making. These links may improve understanding of the way in which information and knowledge on environment influence the decision making processes and the way how research results are fed into policy.
Status	Unknown
Funding	FP7
Link / Source	– Annex 2 of the IR (2012 - 2013) – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)
Note	– IR (2012 - 2013): Letter of Acknowledgment was issued in March 2013 by the SG.

Project	ECO KARST Ecosystem services of karst protected areas – driving force of local sustainable development
Action(s) related	– A14: To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development – A16: To build capacities of local authorities in the environment-related matters
Responsible actor(s)	– Partners: Slovenian Forest Service (Lead beneficiary); Notranjska Regional Park; Public Institution „Nature Park Žumberak - Samoborsko gorje“; Kalkalpen National Park; Global Nature Fund – International Foundation for Environment and Nature; Bükk National Park Directorate; Centre for Ecological Research, Hungarian Academy of Sciences; RNP Romsilva - Apuseni Nature Park Administration R.A.; Parks Dinarides – Network of Protected Areas of Dinarides; Cantonal Public Institution for the Protected Natural Areas Sarajevo; Public utility „National park Tara“; CENER 21 - Center for Energy, Environment and Resources – Associated partners: Republic of Slovenia, Ministrstvo za kmetijstvo, gozdarstvo in prehrano; Bihor County Council; Canton Sarajevo – Ministry of Physical Planning, Constructions and Environmental Protection; Alpine Association of Slovenia
Countries involved	AT, BA, DE, HU, HR, ME, RO, RS, SI
Description	The ECO KARST project aims to contribute to the protection and sustainable development of karst bio-regions in the Danube region based on their valued Ecosystem services. The project addresses 7 nature protected karst areas in 7 different countries with common features and similar problems and it builds on the opportunity to use the natural heritage of 7 protected areas as an economic development factor. By supporting development based on a sustainable management and awareness of the vulnerability of karst ecosystems, the project will increase pro-biodiversity business (PBB) opportunities.

Project	ECO KARST Ecosystem services of karst protected areas – driving force of local sustainable development (continued)
Description (continued)	Moreover, it will involve various public and private actors into capacity building, networking and know-how transfer. Seven local action plans and one common strategy for karst nature protected areas will be developed by local participatory Ecosystem valorisations. This will upgrade nature conservation and facilitate pro-biodiversity business in the Danube region. Pro-biodiversity business models for entrepreneurs in the pilot areas will be developed and best PBB ideas will be widely promoted. Local and transnational networks for experience sharing and promotion will be established. Resulting guidance on how to introduce Ecosystem services and Pro-biodiversity business will serve as a toolkit for the entire Danube and Dinaric region.
Status	01/2017 - 06/2019
Funding	ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/eco-karst – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)

Project	ELEDAN - Developing an E-learning tool for Environmental Education for Primary and Secondary School in the Lower Danube Region
Action(s) related	A15: To educate children and young people
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ICRO - Inštitut za celostni razvoj in okolje / IIDE -Institute for Integral Development and Environment (Lead partner, SI); Institute of Biology Bucharest (RO), IMSI, University of Belgrade (RS); Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Science (BG)
Countries involved	BG, RO, RS, SI
Description	ELEDAN targets better environmental education in the Lower Danube Region. The project develops innovative e-learning tools for children (6- 15 years) and training materials to be used by school teachers. This way, ELEDAN raises awareness for the importance of the aquatic ecosystems and contributes to the future protection of biodiversity in the region.
Status	Completed, 01/2018 12/2018
Funding	Danube Strategic Project Fund (DSPF)
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – https://www.danube-capacitycooperation.eu/uploads/files/DSPF_Kick-Off_project_posters_05_ECVII_PA06_ELEDAN.pdf – http://www.imsi.bg.ac.rs/projekat_abstrakt/?id_projekti=110&lang=en

Project	ESENIAS-TOOLS project: East and South European Network for Invasive Alien Species – A tool to support the management of alien species in Bulgaria
Action(s) related	A6: To reduce the spread of invasive alien species (IAS)
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TF: DIAS – Partners: Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IBER-BAS; BG - Project Promoter); Executive Environment Agency, Ministry of Environment and Water (BG); National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BG); Institute of Oceanology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BG); Hellenic Centre for Marine Research (GR); Croatian Agency for Environment and Nature (HR); University of Novi Sad Faculty of Sciences (RS); “Ovidius” University of Constanta (RO); Duzce University (TR); Reykjavik University (IC); Hydrobiological Institute Ohrid (HIO) (MK)
Countries involved	BG, HR, RO, RS together with GR, MK, TR, IC
Description	<p>Work on the project was organised in 10 working groups and 4 bilateral case studies (BG – IT, IC– BG, MK– BG, and RO– BG). It included creation of a database, field surveys, laboratory work, short and study visits, organisation and participation in workshops and training courses, data processing and analysis, preparation of IAS factsheets and publications.</p> <p>The main outcomes of the ESENIAS-TOOLS project and the partnership developed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – adoption of joint standardised and harmonised methods for data collection, analysis, database use, dissemination and further outreach; – creation of a technical infrastructure for the network, including a geo-referenced database; – collection of data on alien species (marine, freshwater and terrestrial plants, fungi and animals) from the ESENIAS countries; – compilation of common lists of alien species and priority species for the ESENIAS region and for Bulgaria; – strengthening and extending the collaboration within the ESENIAS, e.g. three new member countries (SI, HU and UA) joined ESENIAS; exchanging and sharing of information, networking and development of cooperation with other organisations, institutions and networks. <p>Moreover, a permanent exhibition on Invasive Alien Species was organised in January 2017 as part of the ESENIAS-TOOLS project.</p>
Status	Completed, 06/2015 – 04/2017
Funding	EEA Grants
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – https://eeagrants.org/project-portal/project/BG03-0015 – http://www.esenias.org

Project	Establishment of the National Monitoring System for Invasive Alien Species in Croatia
Action(s) related	A6: To reduce the spread of invasive alien species (IAS)
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TF: DIAS – Ministry of Environmental Protection and Energy and Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund (HR; coordinator); Croatian Agency for the Environment and Nature (HR, participant)
Countries involved	HR

Project	Establishment of the National Monitoring System for Invasive Alien Species in Croatia (continued)
Description	Project aims to increase the knowledge about IAS in Croatia through literature review, data analysis, field survey at the national level, and the establishment of monitoring and citizen science programs. Collected data will be used for the IAS status assessment in HR and establishment of the national Monitoring System for IAS. All collected data (incl. species' distribution maps) will be publicly available through the IAS information system, planned as a part of the Croatian Nature Protection Information System. Furthermore, projects aims to raise the public awareness on IAS in order to prevent their further spread and introduction of new alien species.
Status	2017 – 2020
Funding	EU Cohesion Fund in the framework of Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014–2020
Link / Source	– http://www.haop.hr/hr/kk065101-uspostava-nacionalnog-sustava-za-pracenje-invazivnih-stranih-vrsta/kk065101-uspostava

Project	Ex-situ survey to preserve sturgeon genetic diversity in the Middle and Lower Danube (STURGENE)
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TF: DSTF – Partners: International Association for Danube Research (Leading partner), University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Institute for Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management (AT); International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR); Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IBER-BAS; BG); Institute for Multidisciplinary Research, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences (RS); Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development, Sturgeon Conservation Group (RO)
Countries involved	BG, RO, RS, UA
Description	<p>Project objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Obtain an overview of existing ex-situ facilities in Middle and Lower Danube area – Acquire support of local stakeholders and fishery authority for sturgeon conservation – Develop a roadmap for future actions in ex-situ conservation <p>Project Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A1. Explore ex-situ opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An inventory of existing facilities, of existing brood stock and expertise ▪ Field surveys in selected hatcheries and direct discussions of an experienced expert with hatchery stakeholders in Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine ▪ A workshop with national stakeholders will be organized by the project partners in RS, BG, RO, UA to exchange ideas and increase local support for sturgeon conservation – A2. Mobilize political support for ex-situ conservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The results of the field visits will be discussed with the DSTF experts and a roadmap for further actions will be elaborated. ▪ This roadmap, together with DSTF recommendations, will be disseminated during a high-level event to raise the support of the decision makers. ▪ Further dissemination activities are planned until project completion via websites and newsletters of partner organizations, being addressed to the wide public and local stakeholders.

Project	Ex-situ survey to preserve sturgeon genetic diversity in the Middle and Lower Danube (STURGENE) (continued)
Status	Completed, 04/2015 – 03/2016
Funding	START funding
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – IR (2015 - 2016) – https://www.keep.eu/project/17610/ex-situ-survey-to-preserve-sturgeon-genetic-diversity-in-the-middle-and-lower-danube

Project	Fish: joint basin – joint solutions
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	NGO FORZA (UA)
Countries involved	SK, UA
Description	<p>Project focused on four endangered fish species in the Tisa River Basin - starlet, Danube salmon, brown trout and European grayling. It direct contribution to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development was planned through joint development and implementation of innovative methodologies and tools to restore natural populations of valuable fish species. Among other activities, an international fish reproduction centre of rare and endangered fish species was planned to secure conservation of ichthyofauna diversity.</p> <p>The geographic focus of project activities was on the Tisa River Basin, one of the biggest tributary to the Danube that covers five countries - UA, RO, SK and RS. The project activities were planned in Zakarpatska oblast (UA) and Košický and Prešovský kraj (SK). Transferability of planned activities and results to other regions in the Tisa River Basin were expected, mainly through establishment of the international fish reproduction centre.</p>
Status	2013 - Project was not awarded grant (not approved for financing).
Funding	ERDF, ENPI
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018) – Annex 2 of the IR (2011 – 2012)

Project	Green Danube Network and Bavarian Network
Action(s) related	A14: To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development
Responsible actor(s)	NGOs from Bavaria, Austria and Hungary
Countries involved	AT, DE, HU
Description	<p>The need for international and transnational network of NGOs in the Danube Region as a prerequisite for further joint activities was also confirmed in meetings with other relevant NGOs and organisations working in the field of environment, such as Bund Naturschutz Bayern, Auenzentrum Neuburg a.d. Donau and City of Ingolstadt. As a consequence the project proposal Green Danube Network was developed by NGOs from Bavaria, Austria and Hungary aiming at building an environmental network of up to 109 environmental NGOs from 21 European states, among them all states along the Danube. Thus created network would serve as a platform for future activities and to highlight the importance of the ecological status of the Danube specifically in the framework of the EUSDR. Furthermore it would develop project ideas and provide environmental expertise for a cross-sectoral and holistic implementation of the EUSDR.</p>

Project	Green Danube Network and Bavarian Network (continued)
Status	Never started; in 2015 it was suggested that milestone n°6.144 might be linked to PA 6 stakeholder network
Funding	ERDF
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018) – Annex 2 of the IR (2011 – 2012)

Project	Haus am Strom
Action(s) related	A15: To educate children and young people
Responsible actor(s)	– Haus am Strom GmbH (Lead beneficiary)
Countries involved	AT, DE
Description	In the exhibition of the Haus am Strom important themes of the EUSDR are communicated: Biodiversity, energy, water. For example, large European protected areas along the Danube are presented or the subject of the European sturgeons in the Danube. These contents are arranged in didactical and pedagogical way - the visit of the exhibition becomes an experience and percipience becomes learning. Awareness for biodiversity along the hole European Danube is created by the exhibition of the Haus am Strom.
Status	Completed before reporting period - Annex 2 of the IR (2012 - 2013)
Funding	ERDF and Allianz Umweltstiftung
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – https://www.hausamstrom.de/en/home-2 – Annex 2 of the IR (2012 - 2013) – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)
Note	IR (2012 - 2013): Letter of Acknowledgment was issued in March 2013 by the SG to the project Haus am Strom and their activities on educating children and young people on biodiversity and nature protection (http://www.hausamstrom.de/)

Project	JRC PROJECT MARREF Macro-regions and regions of the future: mainstreaming sustainable regional and neighbourhood policy" (WPs Environmental and Connectivity)
Action(s) related	A13: To decrease air pollutants
Responsible actor(s)	JRC, lead by Julian Wilson
Countries involved	All Danube Region Countries are beneficiaries
Description	In the framework of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR), biomass burning for heat production in households has emerged as a major issue where a better balance between "decarbonisation" benefits and negative impacts on air quality, the environment and human health is needed. Developed Report provides a synthesis of the current knowledge, leading the reader from problem formulation, to impact analysis and suggested solutions, both from the technical and regulatory points of view.
Status	Ended 31/12/2018
Funding	JRC INSTITUTIONAL BUDGET

Project	JRC PROJECT MARREF Macro-regions and regions of the future: mainstreaming sustainable regional and neighbourhood policy" (WPs Environmental and Connectivity) (continued)
Link / Source	TFAQ Work Plan 2018
Note	<p>The end of TFAQ activity planned under this project (Drafting a scientific publication on the source of air pollution in the Danube region extended to the Western Balkans with a focus on the sustainable use of biomass in the residential sector)) should have ended on 15/12/2018. Funded by DSPF.</p> <p>The end of TFAQ activity under this project (Status of the PA 6 action plan on air quality – Preparation of a JRC Science for Policy report about the work carried out under the TFAQ in support to the EUSDR PA 6 targets and actions in the field of air quality and to the implementation of the air quality legislation) should have ended on 15/11/2018.</p>
Project	LENA – Local Economy and Nature Conservation in the Danube Region
Action(s) related	A14: To raise awareness of the general public, by acknowledging and promoting the potentials of natural assets as drivers of sustainable regional development
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme Bulgaria (lead beneficiary); Belene Municipality; Ivanovo Municipality; Vukovar-Srijem County; WWF - Hungary; Donaubüro gemeinnützige GmbH; City of Tuttlingen; Romsilva National Forest Administration - Comana Nature Park Administration; Giurgiu County Council – GCC; WWF - Danube-Carpathian Programme Romania; BSC, Business Support Centre Ltd, Kranj, Regional Development Agency of Gorenjska; West Pannon Regional and Economic Development Public Nonprofit Ltd.; GMO FREE-Danube Soya – Associated partners: DANUBEPARKS; Provincial Secretariat for Urban Planning, Construction and Environmental Protection Vojvodina; Association of Hungarian Nature Parks; Centre for Regional Studies, a non-governmental & non-profit organisation
Countries involved	BG, DE, HU, HR, RO, RS, SI
Description	<p>LENA- Local Economy and Nature Conservation in the Danube Region is connecting nature and people for well-being and prosperity across 7 Danube countries and 11 protected areas. The project aims to share know-how and experience for sustainable economic development in protected areas through enhancing: sustainable income generation from wild plants; fishing-based livelihoods; added value sustainable agriculture; regional tourism marketing; training Danube tourist guides across borders; sharing know-how on e-mobility.</p> <p>The project covers approximately half a million people, most of them living in communities with low economic status, struggling with out-migration and ageing population. It is focused on creating shared know-how and shaping policies on effective sustainable use approaches for protected areas through development of 4 guidance documents and policy recommendations aiming to ensure that the multiple benefits of protected areas are acknowledged, realized and preserved for the future. Partners include experts in local economic development, experts in nature protection and green solutions, local authorities and protected area managers from Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Germany, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia.</p>
Status	01/2017 - 06/2019
Funding	ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/lena – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)

Project	LIFE BeeSandFish - Restoration of nesting and feeding habitats of Sand Martin, Kingfisher and European Bee-eater in Danube-Morava region
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	BROZ Association (SK), Trout Circle Association (SK)
Countries involved	SK
Description	<p>Project is focused on restoration of nesting and feeding habitats of three endangered bird species: European Bee-eater, Kingfisher and Sand Martin. A common feature of the ecology of these species is the use of natural riverbanks and walls for nesting. Project activities are linked with Natura 2000 sites around the rivers Danube and Morava. Implementation of restoration measures as re-establishing a water regime of particular river branches or the whole river branch system of Danube, restoration of vertical riverbanks, wetlands and also reintroducing grazing livestock along the river will create suitable living conditions for these interesting bird species.</p> <p>The project's main objective is to improve the conservation status and population characteristics of target bird species by restoring their habitats. The conservation actions, including suitable restoration management, will lead to active nature protection and promotion of natural values in the region. The project actions will be implemented in six Natura 2000 network sites in the Danube-Morava region, five in Slovakia and one in Hungary. The project expects to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Restoration of steep nesting sites (river banks, terrestrial walls) over at least 1 790 metres; – Protection of steep nesting sites (river banks, terrestrial walls) at a minimum of 15 localities through the removal of illegal landfills, fencing, closing of access roads, installation of signs, reduction of human disturbance, camera security control and monitoring, as well as regulation of seasonal sand and gravel); – Restoration of water and wetland habitats on a minimum of eight areas (three river branches - 3 600 m in total - and five wetlands over an area of 13.2 ha); – Restoration of forest habitats in a minimum of 30 localities (by planting 20 000 native trees and marking for protection from logging of at least, 1 500 old and valuable trees); – Restoration of grasslands by the introduction of grazing on at least five localities covering a total area of 95 ha; <p>Maintenance of restored grasslands as meadows by mowing on at least 3 localities (25 ha).</p>
Status	01/2014 – 03/2019
Funding	LIFE+ programme
Link / Source	https://broz.sk/projekty/conservation-of-sand-martin-kingfisher-and-european-bee-eater-in-danube-morava-region/?lang=en

Project	LIFE project „Joint actions to raise awareness on overexploitation of Danube sturgeons in Romania and Bulgaria“
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	WWF Austria, WWF Bulgaria, WWF Romania
Countries involved	AT, BG, RO
Description	<p>Project aimed to tackle overfishing, the main threat to the survival of Danube sturgeons. It set out to stop the overexploitation of the critically endangered Danube sturgeons in Bulgaria and Romania and to secure the long term survival of these species with their high natural and economic value. The project represented a major contribution to European biodiversity protection.</p>

Project	LIFE project „Joint actions to raise awareness on overexploitation of Danube sturgeons in Romania and Bulgaria“ (continued)
Description (continued)	<p>Selected project objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – By June 2013, Sturgeon Advocates are established in both countries and are recognized as liaison persons and information sources regarding sturgeon issues by at least 300 fishermen in 15 targeted villages. – By October 2014, at least 150 targeted fishermen are aware of alternatives to substitute income from illegal sturgeon fishing and are thus enabled to dispense with poaching activities, which will crucially add to stopping the decline of wild sturgeons. – By May 2015, at least 50 relevant companies in other EU countries have been contacted and are provided with information to increase their awareness and make sure that illegal caviar will not get on the EU market and that this negative impact on wild sturgeon populations will be stopped. – By December 2013, 2 workshops (for at least 100 officials in total) and 4 special sessions providing training on the job (for at least 10 officials each) are held for competent enforcement authorities in Bulgaria and Romania. – By the end of the project, first time seizures of illegal sturgeon caviar in Bulgaria and Romania and imposed sanctions to deter further poaching and illegal trade show higher enforcement effectiveness and improved conservation of wild sturgeons. – By April 2015, a joint declaration is signed by at least 7 high level decision makers from Danube States, expressing clear political support for the protection of sturgeons and for stronger enforcement of national and EU policy and regulations to stop overexploitation.
Status	Completed, 07/2012 – 09/2015
Funding	LIFE programme
Link / Source	http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=4340&docType=pdf

Project	MEASURES: Managing and restoring aquatic Ecological corridors for migratory fish species in the danube RivEr baSin
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	Lead partner: University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (AT)
Countries involved	AT, BG, DE, HR, HU, RO, RS, SI, SK, UA
Description	<p>Specific objective is to foster the restoration and management of ecological corridors through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – mapping and identification of key habitats by developing and testing a methodology for migratory fish habitat mapping; – developing a harmonized strategy for restoring green corridors and supporting implementation in future management plans; – restocking of two native species to conserve their genetic pool in HU and RO, – establishment of a network for concerted repopulation of the target species and elaboration of a manual for the operation of broodstock facilities that will provide the offspring needed for the re-population; – the implementation of the MEASURES Information System that will facilitate the access of experts, decision-makers and the general public to the relevant information available.
Status	06/2018 – 05/2021
Funding	ERDF, IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/measures

Project	Pilot-study (data collection) on invasive alien species in the Danube Region with a smartphone application developed by the JRC (Danube-IASapp project)
Action(s) related	A6: To reduce the spread of invasive alien species (IAS)
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TF: DIAS – Partners: Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IBER-BAS; project coordinator, BG); 'Ovidius' University of Constanta (RO), Institute for Biological Research 'Siniša Stanković', University of Belgrade (RS)
Countries involved	BG, RO, RS
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The aim of the project was to test the practical use of the smartphone application 'Invasive Alien Species Europe' developed by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) in the Lower Danube River basin (BG, RO, RS). Eleven information and field testing campaigns with the participation of 235 stakeholders were organised during the project. Nine IAS of EU concern and 37 sightings were recorded with the app.
Status	Completed, 2016 - 2017
Funding	European Commission
Link / Source	http://www.esenias.org/files/DIASdiplan2018.pdf

Project	Potential threats to environmental and economic sustainability in the Danube and Black Sea Region: Danube River as invasive alien species corridor (Danube – IAS Corridor)
Action(s) related	A6: To reduce the spread of invasive alien species (IAS)
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TF: DIAS – Coordinator: Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IBER-BAS; BG)
Countries involved	All DIAS countries (AT, BA, BG, CZ, DE, HR, HU, MD, ME, RO, RS, SI, SK, TR and UA)
Description	<p>The main aim of this project is to analyse the role of IAS (occurrence, pathways of introduction and spread, impact, measures) for the sustainable development in the Danube and Black Sea Region (in environmental and economic aspects).</p> <p>A pilot study includes monitoring of aquatic IAS in the Lower Danube River – the Bulgarian sector. This is the first step of a regular monitoring, risk assessment and management of the IAS of EU and regional concern, and contribution to the development of the DIAS strategy and work plan and regional sustainable development plans.</p>
Status	2012 - ongoing
Funding	Within the frames of IAD, ESENIAS, DIAS and PA 6 EUSDR
Link / Source	http://www.esenias.org/files/DIASdiplan2018.pdf
Note	To a certain extent, project is connected to the one of the project examples listed in the Action plan (<i>To restore the natural environment, wildlife and vegetation along the Danube</i>), related to Action 3.

Project	Project - Bee=Biodiversity(B=B)
Action(s) related	A7: To decrease the input of pesticides into the environment of the Danube Region
Responsible actor(s)	VELES' VISION
Countries involved	EU accession countries in the Danube Region - RS, ME and BA
Description	<p>The project addressed the pollination crisis (scientific term is Colony Collapse Disorder - CCD), which directly threatens the biodiversity. The START project intended to raise public awareness by presenting confirmed facts to the public and relevant decision-makers in the EU accession countries in the Danube Region - Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia & Herzegovina.</p> <p>Expected Results: To improve the protection of the bees, a coordinated action among states is necessary. One important step in this process is thus, to raise awareness among the population - with the long term goal of banning the pesticides completely. The START project gave all involved parties an opportunity to stop the most eminent dangers for bees and, therefore, for the biodiversity in the involved countries.</p>
Status	Completed, 03/2015 - 12/2015
Funding	START funding
Link / Source	https://www.keep.eu/project/17611/bee-biodiversity?ss=a8f1c1714c4c63f1326d357d96fe9e75&espon=

Project	RAMSAR ECO SKAT
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	Weinviertel Management (Lead partner), State Nature Conservation of the Slovak Republic, Department CHKO Záhorie, DAPHNE - Institute of Applied Ecology, Environmental Association WWF Austria, RPS - Raptor Protection of Slovakia
Countries involved	AT, SK / Morava - Thaya Floodplains
Description	<p>According to a study conducted by the World Conservation Union in 2007, the biodiversity of the Green Belt is greatest in the Morava-Thaya floodplains. This endangered biodiversity is to be preserved and conformed to the economic interests of this region by strategies of the regional development. The objectives of the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preservation of the biodiversity in the Morava- Thaya floodplains by means of a management in terms of the Ramsar convention ("wise use principle"); – Developing a bilateral protection concept and organizing cross border activities while respecting the protective guidelines; – Establishing and accordingly intensifying of communication structures between regional and local bodies, land users, NGO's and regional development units to strengthen the cross border cooperation, as well as securing the organisation of the Ramsar management; – Informing and thus raising awareness amongst the population and upgrading offers for visitors
Status	Completed, 01/2010 - 09/2012
Funding	ERDF - Interreg IVA SK - AT Programme
Link / Source	http://www.march-thaya-auen.at/projekte/ramsar-skat/

Project	RARE - Changing Discourses, Changing Practices: The Roma as Human Resource
Action(s) related	unknown
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Partners: Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta (Lead beneficiary); City of Pécs, Urban Development Company; Impreuna Agency for Community Development Foundation; Municipality of Sfantu Gheorge; Department for Interethnic Relations - General Secretariat of the Government; AMALIPE Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance; ETP Slovakia – Centre for Sustainable Development; People in Tatra, n.o.; Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences, Slovak Academy of Sciences; Institute of Social Innovations; Standing Conference of the Roma Associations of the Citizens – the League of Roma; Roma Inclusion Office; Know How Centre – Associated partners: Ministry of Human Resources – Deputy State Secretariat for Social Inclusion; The Order of Malta Relief Organisation in Romania – Branch Sf.Gheorghe; Malteser Charity Organization in Beregovo Region; Roma National Center; Municipality of Lyaskovets; Social Innovation and Enterprises Cluster; Labour Office Kezmarok; Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Pécs-Baranya
Countries involved	BG, CZ, HU, MD, RO, RS, SK, UA
Description	<p>Most of the estimated 5,2 M Roma people living in the Danube Region today still face intolerance, discrimination and exclusion from the labour market. Therefore, RARE aims to enhance the capacities of and cooperation among actors having a stake in the labour market participation of the Roma in order to better exploit their economic potential.</p> <p>RARE Partners will define the prerequisites of effective institutional cooperation, elaborate and test innovative intervention models for labour market inclusion and will develop convincing economic argumentation for such interventions. The leveraging of know-how acquired in RARE will be facilitated by persuasive and easily digestible presentation of knowledge facilitated through sensitisation activities and transnational and national networks of stakeholders.</p>
Status	01/2017 - 06/2019
Funding	PA 10, ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/rare – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)
Note	– Project is related to the PA 10 <i>To step up institutional capacity and cooperation</i> .

Project	Restoring fish migration routes in the Danube River Basin (Feasibility study on Iron Gate dams commissioned to explore joint solutions)
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TF: DSTF – ICPDR will coordinate and implement the activities jointly with the Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development (DDNI) and the Jaroslav Černi Institute for Water Resources Development (JCI)
Countries involved	RO, RS
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The signature of the agreement between the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) and DG REGIO enabled the launch of a feasibility study, in order to identify ways forward in the preservation of fish stocks at the Romanian-Serbian border. – This action is an important step in the context of efforts aiming to save the Danube sturgeons from extinction, which is a central objective of the EU Strategy for the Danube River.

Project	Restoring fish migration routes in the Danube River Basin (Feasibility study on Iron Gate dams commissioned to explore joint solutions) (continued)
Description (continued)	– Faced with the issues of biodiversity loss and habitats degradation, stakeholders and international experts have therefore joined efforts to raise awareness on the need for ambitious fish conservation measures. In this respect, the 2020 target of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, the EU Water Framework Directive, the EU Habitats Directive as well as the Bern Convention, provide a framework conducive to the development of specific conservation measures.
Status	– 1 st phase: 2011-2016 – 2 nd phase: foreseen to finish in 2020 – 3 rd phase: 2021 – 2023 – 4 th phase: 2024 and onwards
Funding	European Commission
Link / Source	https://www.icpdr.org/main/restoring-fish-migration-routes-danube-river-basin-feasibility-study-iron-gate-dams-commissioned
Note	In line with the terms of reference of the feasibility study, the ICPDR will coordinate and implement the activities jointly with the Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development (DDNI) and the Jaroslav Černí Institute for Water Resources Development (JCI). The study's overall general objective is to map out solutions for achieving the EUSDR PAs 4 and 6, as well as the ICPDR Sturgeon Strategy.

Project	R-PAS (Ragweed Pollen Alarm System for the Danube region)
Action(s) related	A6: To reduce the spread of invasive alien species (IAS)
Responsible actor(s)	– Aerobiology and Pollen Information Research Unit; Department of Otorhinolaryngology, Medical University of Vienna (AT); European Aeroallergen Network (AT); Hungarian Aerobiological Network of National Public Health and Medical Officer Service (HU); Institute of Public Health, Osijek (HR); Institute of Public Health of Ljubljana (SI); Institute of Public Health "Sveti Rok", Service for Health Ecology, Virovitica (HR); Laboratory for Palynology, Faculty of Sciences, University of Novi Sad (RS); Laboratory for Aerobiology, Dr Andrija Stampar Institute of Public Health, Zagreb (HR); Medical University of Sofia (BG)
Countries involved	AT, BG, HR, HU, RS, SI
Description	<p>Common ragweed is widespread in central-eastern Europe. Almost 60% of allergic patients in Hungary suffer from ragweed pollen allergy. It is very important that patients and medical experts are informed about the airborne pollen concentration to support better prevention and care. Ragweed finds its optimal living conditions in the Pannonian climatic region (this covers an area including eastern AT, northern BA, northern HR, western HU, north-western RS, western SK and northern SI).</p> <p>R-PAS is based on daily pollen measurements carried out using standardized methodology by the contributing monitoring stations. Maps indicate the spatial distribution of each week's average airborne pollen concentration categories (grains/m³). The maps are updated weekly on the websites of the contributing countries in English and in the national languages. Special advice for personal risk reduction is given according to the different concentration categories. A plan is in place to issue invitations to join the system, over a period of time, to monitoring stations in the Carpathian Basin, the Danube Region and finally the European Region.</p>
Status	2014 - ongoing
Funding	unknown (tbd)

Project	R-PAS (Ragweed Pollen Alarm System for the Danube region)
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018) – Annex of the IR (2013 – 2014)
Note	– Project has got the Letter of Recommendation issued in April, 2014.

Project	SAVA TIES - Preserving Sava River Basin Habitats through Transnational Management of Invasive Alien Species
Action(s) related	A6: To reduce the spread of invasive alien species (IAS)
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TF: DIAS – EuroNatur Foundation (Lead partner, DE); Lonjsko Polje Nature Park Public Institution (HR); Public Institution Green Ring (HR); Public Institution Ljubljansko barje Nature Park (SI); Public Company National Park "Una" LLC Bihać (BA); Center for Environment (BA); Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province (RS), Public Enterprise "Vojvodinašume" (RS); Nature Conservation Movement Sremska Mitrovica (RS) – Associated partners: Notranjska regional park (SI), Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia, Institute for Agriculture and Forestry Ljubljana (SI), Croatian Agency for the Environment and Nature (HR), Hunting society "Patka" (HR), International Sava River Basin Commission (HR), International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (AT), DANUBEPARKS (AT), Public Water Management Company "Vode Vojvodine" (RS), Provincial Secretariat for Urban Planning and Environmental Protection (RS), Agriculture Rural Development and Environmental Action AREA (BA), Institute for the Protection of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage (BA), Ministry of Environment and Energy (HR)
Countries involved	AT, BA, DE, HR, RS, SI
Description	The main goal is to find an effective solution for permanent eradication of invasive alien plants, to reduce habitat fragmentation and improve the connectivity of the transnational ecological corridor. As part of the project, different methods of effectively removing or eradication of IAS plants such as Japanese knotweed, False indigo bush, and Tree of heaven will be tested on seven pilot areas in four countries.
Description (continued)	<p>Project activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Strengthening SavaParks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment of cross-sectoral stakeholder committees; trainings and study visits for the transfer of good practice on IAS management from other areas; preparation of the SavaParks network after-project Roadmap; establishing Online Services to improve the IAS management – Transnational Invasive Alien Species Management Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of protocols for IAS mapping and monitoring; mapping of IAS in the RS; preparation of a study on land-use practices and a risk assessment study for key IAS along the RS; pilot Implementation; planning and implementation of measures for the eradication of IAS in pilot areas along the RS – Policy Uptake <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparation of policy recommendations to include in strategic documents; trainings on the use of Strategic Framework for IAS management; policy impact actions – Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project promotion and IAS topic education; Communication strategy preparation; public awareness raising –SAVA TIES - kick-off event and 2nd steering committee meeting announcement (Sept 2018); report on Training on Stakeholder Engagement
Status	06/2018 – 05/2021

Project	SAVA TIES - Preserving Sava River Basin Habitats through Transnational Management of Invasive Alien Species
Funding	ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/sava-ties
Note	To a certain extent, project is connected to the one of the project examples listed in the Action plan (<i>To restore the natural environment, wildlife and vegetation along the Danube</i>), related to Action 3.

Project	SEERiver- Sustainable Integrated Management of International River Corridors in SEE Countries
Action(s) related	A16: To build capacities of local authorities in the environment-related matters
Responsible actor(s)	Institute for Water of the Republic of Slovenia (Lead partner, SI); Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation (SI); Soča Valley Development Centre (SI); Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (AT); Regional Government of Carinthia (AT); National Institute for Environment (HU); South-Transdanubian Water Management Directorate (HU); Autonomous Province of Bolzano - South Tyrol (IT); Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute (SK); National Administration “Romanian Waters” (RO); Hydro Engineering Institute Sarajevo (BA); Institute for Spatial Planning of the Koprivnica-Križevci County (HR); State Institute for Nature Protection (HR); HRVATSKE VODE, Legal entity for water management (HR); Geological Survey of Albania (AL); World Wide Fund for Nature Austria (AT); Jaroslav Cerni Institute for the Development of Water Resources (RS)
Countries involved	AT, BA, HR, HU, MD, ME, RO, SI, SK, UA, and AL, GR, IT
Description	<p>SEE River Project intends to reach a common agreement on river corridor management, i.e. harmonisation of both development and conservation interests through close international cooperation of wide range of experts, but also active involvement of local stakeholders and national or regional authorities. The project is introducing a new approach to river and land management by focusing on the river corridor, as local river area where most pressures occur, and will result in the SEE River Toolkit, a generally applicable and innovative model and guidance on how to reach future sustainable use of river corridors by taking into account and harmonizing different stakeholder interests. To develop and implement the SEE River Toolkit, project research, field work and active involvement of stakeholders will be performed in river corridors of 6 SEE rivers: Drava, Bodrog, Neretva, Prut, Soča and Vjosa. Some activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SEE River Project Holds First Transnational Workshop (Jan 2013) – First stakeholders workshop for Drava River corridor in Austria (Oct 2013) – Experience-sharing of River Catchment Managers (Nov 2013) – SEE River Stream: Newsletter No.2 published! (Dec 2013) – New measures for the Drava - stakeholder workshops at the Drava in Möllbrücke (Mar 2014) – SEE River Project presented at the celebration of The World Water Day in BiH (Mar 2014) – Capacity Building Seminar in Albania: “Toolkit on sustainable management of river corridors to support all stakeholders” (Oct 2014) – SEE River after SEE River (Nov 2014)
Status	Completed, 10/2012 - 09/2014
Funding	ERDF and IPA - Transnational Cooperation Programme South-East Europe
Link / Source	http://www.see-river.net/
Note	To a certain extent, project is connected to the one of the project examples listed in the Action plan (<i>To complete the Lower Danube Green Corridor</i>), related to Action 5.

Project	SMIWASTRES ("Transfrontier collaboration for establishment of efficient System for Municipal and Industrial Waste Treatment on the basis of their Sorting")
Action(s) related	A10 To ensure appropriate treatment of solid waste (milestone n°6.101 SMIWASTRES)
Responsible actor(s)	Department of Housing & Communal Service of Chernivtsi Regional State Administration (Lead partner, UA); Centre "EcoResource" (UA)
Countries involved	RO, UA, MD
Description	Project focuses on measures to minimise industrial, municipality and rural waste which in turn shall improve environmental, economic and social issues in EUSDR area. The geographic focus of project activities is on the Romanian - Ukraine and Moldavian bordering region and river basin. Single activities encompass (1) the elaboration of a common platform for current and future waste treatment systems; (2) joint development of a Waste Collection-Sorting-Processing-Disposal cycle; (3) guidelines and recommendations for policy level. The objectives of the project foresee practice-based best practice examples for the entire waste treatment cycle and their dissemination, qualification measures for staff, joint legal framework.
Status	The project has been cancelled since it was not approved for funding by the European Neighbourhood & Partnership Instrument (ENPI) Joint Operational Program.
Funding	ERDF, ENPI
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018) – Annex 2 of the IR (2011 – 2012) – Annex 2 of the IR (2012 – 2013)
Note	<p>In 2012 Letter of Recommendation was issued by PA 6 Steering Group and application was submitted to ENPI Joint Operational Program "Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova" 2007-2014., but the project has not been approved by the Program for funding.</p> <p>In 2014 the project (that is milestone n°6.101) was excluded from the following reports.</p>

Project	Sturgeon 2020
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	TF: DSTF
Countries involved	AT, DE, HU, RO, RS
Description	The Program "STURGEON 2020" was launched as a response to one of the EUSDR PA 6 targets: <i>To secure viable populations of Danube sturgeon species and other indigenous fish species by 2020</i> . Sturgeon experts will steer urgent conservation measures concerning recovery of stocks, restoration of habitats, ensuring migration and rearing of sturgeons in hatcheries. Targeted communication activities will increase awareness of sturgeons and threats to their survival among relevant stakeholders and the public. Project also predicted the facilitation of further networking to other networks and actors, participation at Project Meetings and Public Events and strengthening links to policy level.
Status	2014 - 2020
Funding	ERDF, IPA
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018) – Annex 2 of the IR (2011 – 2012) – Annex 2 of the IR (2012 – 2013)

Project	Sturgeon 2020 (continued)
Note	Project is directly related to EUSDR PA 6 target 3: <i>To secure viable populations of Danube sturgeon species and other indigenous fish species by 2020.</i>
Project	Sustainable protection of lower Danube sturgeons by preventing and counteracting poaching and illegal wildlife trade (LIFE for Danube Sturgeons)
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TF:DTSF – WWF in Austria (Project coordinator); Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (RO); Leibniz-Institut für Zoo- und Wildtierforschung (DE); World Organization for Nature (RS); WWF-DCP-Bulgaria; WWF-DCP-Romania; WWF International Danube-Carpathian Programme (UA)
Countries involved	AT, DE, RS, BG, RO, UA
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “LIFE FOR DANUBE STURGEONS” aims to stop the threat to highly endangered sturgeons in the Lower Danube and north-western Black Sea region caused by illegal fishing and trade. The project’s planned activities intend to achieve significant improvement in sturgeon species status. – This is pursued by improving enforcement of laws and regulations through the following activities: – National workshops to facilitate networking and exchange of experiences of all national agencies responsible for implementing regulations concerning sturgeon fishing, aquaculture and trade; – Discussions of problems and best practice approaches to enhance law enforcement and investigation processes; – Invitation for participation of prosecution and judicial authorities to strengthen the essential cooperation of the entire enforcement chain; – A regional workshop with agencies from neighbouring countries to foster the crucial cross-border coordination and collaboration; – Specific training courses, study visits, targeted information packages and newsletters to respond to the needs of individual authorities and enhance expertise and practical skills of officials.
Status	10/2016 – 12/2020
Funding	LIFE programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=5818&docType=pdf – https://danube-sturgeons.org/the-project/
Note	The project aims to contribute to halting and reversing losses in the EU and worldwide, specifically adding to the EUSDR, as well as to the program for the protection of Danube sturgeons “Sturgeon 2020” in the following sections (1) Capacity building and law enforcement; (2) Socio-economic measures in support of sturgeon conservation; and (3) Raising public awareness.

Project	TRANSGREEN - Integrated Transport and Green Infrastructure Planning in the Danube-Carpathian Region for the Benefit of People and Nature
Action(s) related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A1: To contribute to the 2050 EU vision and 2020 EU target for biodiversity – A5: To develop green infrastructure in order to connect different bio-geographic regions and habitats – A9: To prepare and implement transnational spatial planning and development policies for functional geographical areas (river basins, mountain ranges etc.)
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WWF International Danube-Carpathian Programme (Lead partner); Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (withdrawn); Friends of the Earth Czech Republic, branch Olomouc; Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic; Transport Research Centre (CZ); CEEweb for Biodiversity; Association "Milvus Group" (RO); WWF Danube Carpathian Programme, Romania; National Motorway Company (SK); The State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic; SPECTRA Centre of Excellence of EU – Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava – Associated partners: Austrian Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology; Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic; National Infrastructure Developing Private Company Limited (HU); Polish Ministry of Infrastructure and Construction (PL); Romanian Ministry of the Environment; Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Infrastructure; Transcarpathian Regional State Administration - Department of Ecology and Natural Resources; Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine; Romanian Ministry of Transport
Countries involved	AT, CZ, HU, SI, SK, PL, RO, UA
Description	<p>TRANSGREEN aims to contribute to safer and environmentally-friendly road and rail networks in mountainous regions of the Danube Basin with a special focus on the Carpathian Mountains. It will do so by improving planning frameworks and developing concrete environmentally-friendly and safe road and rail transport solutions taking into account elements of Green Infrastructure, in particular ecological corridors.</p> <p>An interdisciplinary partnership comprised of planners, economists, engineers, and ecologists will integrate and apply their specific knowledge across the region and cooperate on developing Guidelines on integrated transport infrastructure planning, construction, management and monitoring, taking into account aspects of road safety and biodiversity conservation. Partners will also collaborate on the production of ready-to-use methodologies for stakeholder participation processes, training modules on Environmental Impact Assessment with a focus on ecological corridors, and Catalogues of measures for each of the four pilot sites located in Beskydy (CZ-SK), Miskolc-Kosice-Uzhgorod (HU-SK-UA), Tirgu Mures-Iasi and Arad(Radna)-Deva (RO).</p>
Status	Completed, 01/2017 – 06/2019
Funding	ERDF and IPA – Danube Transnational Programme
Link / Source	– http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/transgreen

Project	UNDP/GEF Tisza MSP project “Integrating multiple benefits of wetlands and floodplains into improved trans-boundary management for the Tisza River Basin”
Action(s) related	A10 To ensure appropriate treatment of solid waste (milestone n°6.103 <i>Identify, agree on, design and implement the projects at the Upper Tisza Region floodplains</i>)
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lead Partner: UNDP/GEF Tisza (Project Management Unit, Project Steering Group), The ICPDR Tisza Group – Partner Organisations: UNDP, ICPDR, European Union, UNEP
Countries involved	HU, RO, RS, SK, UA

Project	UNDP/GEF Tisza MSP project “Integrating multiple benefits of wetlands and floodplains into improved trans-boundary management for the Tisza River Basin” (continued)
Description	<p>The project focused on the development of strategies and implementation of demo project to test the multiple environmental benefits of wetlands to mitigate impacts of floods/droughts and help to reduce nutrient pollution. The MSP will implement 2 key components resulting in the following expected outcomes:</p> <p>(1) The adoption of policies and legislation (zoning, land use, etc.) within the countries of the Tisza River Basin that promote the optimal use of wetlands / floodplains and other habitat for flood mitigation, nutrient retention, biodiversity enhancement and social amenity value consistent with the EU WFD and IWRM. Activities related to Component 1 (Towards ITRMB Plan):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Integration of water quality, water quantity, land use, and biodiversity objectives within integrated water resources/RBM under the legal umbrella of the EU and ICPDR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of strategies for reducing pollution in the Tisza River Basin; ▪ Development of a flood and drought mitigation strategy; ▪ Combination of Tisza River Basin Strategies into an IRBMP; ▪ Dissemination and replication strategy for Component 1 <p>(2) Demonstrations of effective floodplain management strategies including the adaptation to increased flood events as a consequence of fluctuating flow regime for nutrient retention, habitat restoration, and flood management implemented at local level. These outcomes and project outputs of actual hectares of wetlands reconnected/restored/conserved encourage the replication of these GEF-funded pilots as new approaches on the use of wetlands with their multiple environmental benefits throughout the region and with potential for global dissemination. Activities related to Component 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implementation of IWRM principles through the testing of new approaches on wetland and floodplain management through community-based demonstration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of potential demonstration projects; ▪ Agreement via stakeholder workshop on priority projects to be implemented; ▪ Implementation of demonstration projects (“Selected Measures Towards integrated Land and Water Management in Upper Tisza, Ukraine”; “Making Space for Water in the Bodrog River basin”; “Integrated land development program to improve land use and water management efficiency in the Tisza basin”); ▪ Feedback and presentation of results – final stakeholder workshop; – Development of a replication strategy for Component 2 <p>Two main objectives of the MSP; (1) to integrate water quality, water quantity, land use, and biodiversity objectives within integrated water resources/river basin management (IWRM/RBM) under the legal umbrella of the EU and ICPDR, and; (2) implementation of IWRM principles through the testing of new approaches on wetland and floodplain management through community-based demonstration. The community-level pilot activities link to the development and implementation of an agreed RBMP following the principles of IWRM and tested at the regional/local level under the governance arrangements established for management of the Tisza River Basin. The integration of water quality and quantity management is considered to be a significantly innovative approach in the basin and the results of this will be utilised elsewhere in the Danube River Basin through catalytic policies and actions of the ICPDR.</p>
Status	Completed, 2009 - 2011
Funding	UNDP/GEF Trust Fund
Link / Source	https://www.icpdr.org/main/activities-projects/undpgef-tisza-msp
Note	Activities by ICPDR Tisza Group on the Integrated Tisza River Basin Management Plan (ITRBMP) are followed by the EUSDR PACs and Steering Group.

Project	Untere March-Auen - Restoration of the Lower Morava floodplains
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners: via donau (AT); Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH (AT); Umweltverband WWF (AT); Niederösterreichischer (AT); Landesfischereiverband (AT) Project supporters: European Union, Regional Government of Lower Austria, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (AT)
Countries involved	AT
Description	<p>Within the EC supported Life+ project “Restoration of the Lower Morava Floodplains” ambitious restoration measures will be implemented between 2011 and 2019. The aim of the project is to extensively restore near-natural river dynamics in the Lower Morava floodplains, as well as to foster land-use practices, which preserve biodiversity and to specifically preserve endangered species and types of habitats. Expected results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By reestablishing the characteristic island landscape in the Morava confluence area altogether 6 km of river branches will be revitalized and 4 artificially cut off branches will be reconnected. This will benefit the fish fauna as well as aquatic birds. The improvement of hinterland crosslinking during floods by removing transverse barriers especially benefits endangered floodplain forest habitats and amphibians. From the protection of 15 relictary floodplain water bodies with episodic stream flow in the outer floodplains benefits amphibians, crustaceans (e.g. Triops) and aquatic birds. <p>All in all there are measures of conservation and re-dynamisation on an area of about 200 ha. That benefits at least 7 pan-European endangered habitats, 11 species of the EC Habitats Directive and 15 species of the Birds Directive.</p>
Status	10/2011 – 10/2019
Funding	LIFE+ programme
Link / Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=4070&docType=pdf http://www.life-march.at/ IR (2013 – 2014)
Note	To a certain extent, project is connected to the one of the project examples listed in the Action plan (<i>To restore the natural environment, wildlife and vegetation along the Danube</i>), related to Action 3.

Project	Wetland restoration in the Mura-Drava-Danube area
Action(s) related	A3: To protect and restore most valuable ecosystems and endangered species
Responsible actor(s)	WWF Croatia & WWF Serbia, together with Nature Park Kopački rit, Hrvatsko društvo za zaštitu ptica, Vojvodinašume
Countries involved	HR, RS
Description	<p>Project will undertake practical wetland restoration in the Drava-Danube confluence area. Restoration will take place in two places: in the Štrbac area of Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve (Serbia) and in the Podunavlje fishponds in Kopački Rit Nature Park (Croatia). Some activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the project implementation WWF established many partnerships, with responsible institutions and organizations of Croatia and Serbia.

Project	Wetland restoration in the Mura-Drava-Danube area (continued)
Description (continued)	<p>– The restoration in Kopacki Rit took place at the Podunavlje fish ponds near the village of Kopacevo in the Baranj a region of Croatia. The fish ponds have been abandoned and the extensive fish production stopped, which resulted in the alteration/loss of the main ecological functions and values of the wetland. This has negatively impacted the biodiversity since the area serves as a feeding, resting and breeding site for rare and threatened species.</p> <p>MAIN BENEFITS: 8550 ML/year water replenished; habitats improved for flora and fauna, particularly resting and feeding places of migratory birds, fish spawning sites; restored ponds will be used as commercial fish ponds; bird watching and ecotourism; flood prevention</p>
Status	Completed, 01/2011 - 12/2012
Funding	Funded by Coca-cola company
Link / Source	<p>– Annex 6 of the Developing study: exploiting funding opportunities (2018)</p> <p>– Annex 2 of the IR (2011 – 2012)</p> <p>– http://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/letak_eng.pdf</p>

9.5 Revised Action Plan

T1: Improve management of ecological networks and protected areas through transnational cooperation and capacity building.

DESCRIPTION: Activities related to the management of ecological networks and protected areas (PA) are part of the national obligations. The EUSDR could help ensure consistency and sustainability in monitoring, reporting, generating and further use of collected data, as well as facilitate harmonized management of boundary sites. To achieve significant progress, by the end of 2030 following milestones should be reached: established 5-country UNESCO Biosphere Reserve "Mura-Drava-Danube"; established transnational cooperation or harmonized management plans on the boundary rivers; strengthened knowledge transfer between national authorities responsible for PA management; strengthened cooperation (knowledge transfer) between scientific community and stakeholders. Other monitoring tools: no. of organized events no. of meetings of relevant authorities.

Action 1: Establish transnational cooperation and harmonization of the strategic management documents between protected areas on river systems in the Danube basin.

DESCRIPTION: Due to different customs and/or legislation, management of Natura 2000 and other protected areas located on boundary rivers of the Danube basin could present a challenge. Transnational cooperation and harmonization of the strategic planning documents (e.g. Natura 2000 management plans, management plans of protected areas, Masterplan) will help ensure consistency and sustainability in implementation of conservation measures and, in the end, contribute to better nature protection of these areas.

Activity 1.1: Establish the 5-country UNESCO Biosphere Reserve "Mura-Drava-Danube" (TBR MDD) with effective management aiming at natural dynamic processes of Mura, Drava and Danube rivers

DESCRIPTION: Planned 5-country UNESCO Biosphere Reserve "Mura-Drava-Danube" (TBR MDD) will restore, conserve and improve the Mura-Drava-Danube ecological corridor. A transboundary management structure includes representatives from the 5 countries - Austria, Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia and Serbia. Some of the main objectives are effective implementation of transboundary nature protection, river restoration and sustainable regional development projects within the TBR MDD, formulation of joint strategies and positions and experience exchange among the Biosphere Reserve Management institutions as well as involved bodies (e.g. Protected Areas, Municipalities).

LEAD: WWF (WWF Austria with WWF Adria and WWF CEE).

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: established 5-country UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and developed management plan

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of meetings of interested parties and/or signing of other documents (conclusions, agreements)

Activity 1.2: Strengthen the participatory cross-border management (RO-UA-MO) of the Danube Delta promoting sustainable development and biodiversity conservation

DESCRIPTION: The Danube Delta (RO-UA) and the Lower Prut (MO) Biosphere Reserves were established to protect exceptional biodiversity and valuable deltaic ecosystems. The Danube Delta (RO) is also listed as the UNESCO World Heritage site. However, the pressure from development, dam-building, irrigation and drainage, canalisation, artificial flood protection and pollution, especially from upstream, continue to threaten the integrity of these ecosystems. Participatory cross-border management of these protected natural areas (including relevant actors from all three countries) would help to foster both sustainable development and biodiversity conservation.

LEAD: Romanian Ministry of Environment and relevant ministries from the other countries, WWF Co-leadership

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: cross-border MP or joint action plan

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: other documents developed to establish cooperation, no. of meetings of interested parties

Activity 1.3: Establish cooperation and harmonization of the management plans between protected areas on transboundary Western Balkan rivers of the Danube basin (e.g. River Sava, River Drava, River Una, River Morava)

DESCRIPTION: Due to different customs and/or legislation, management of Natura 2000 and other protected areas located on transboundary rivers of the Danube basin still presents a challenge. In the last few years, efforts were heavily focused on Mura-Drava-Danube corridor. However, strengthened cooperation and harmonization of the management plans between protected areas on other transboundary rivers of the Danube basin (e.g. River Sava, River Drava, River Una, River Morava) could considerably contribute to ecosystem restoration and/or conservation in the Danube Region.

LEAD: WWF Adria, Danube Region Countries

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: harmonized management plans between protected areas on boundary rivers of the Danube basin

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: other documents developed to establish cooperation, no. of meetings of interested parties

Activity 1.4: Develop (in a participatory manner) a Danube Masterplan for the Conservation and Restoration of Biodiversity Values for mainstreaming into inland navigation programmes and integration with the navigation Master Plan for the Danube (Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan for the Danube and its navigable tributaries)

DESCRIPTION: Participatory development of the *Masterplan Bavarian Danube* was recognized as a great example of stakeholder cooperation. This activity aims to transfer both the approach and accumulated knowledge to other parts of the Danube Region in the form of *Danube Masterplan for the Conservation and Restoration of Biodiversity Values*. New Masterplan should focus on the identification of biodiversity hotspots, priority restoration sites and measures for mainstreaming the biodiversity values into inland navigation programmes and integration with the navigation Master Plan (cooperation with PA 1A).

LEAD: National authorities from (min) two DRC, WWF co-lead

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: developed Danube Masterplan for the Conservation and Restoration of Biodiversity Values; identified measures for mainstreaming it into inland navigation programmes and integration with the navigation Master Plan

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of meetings of interested parties, concept note on the development

Action 2: Build capacities of national and local authorities, non-governmental organizations, expert and scientific community in the environment related matters.

DESCRIPTION: Successful nature protection depends on well informed authorities, strong non-governmental organizations and involved expert and scientific community. The EUSDR provides a perfect platform to ensure multiplication and the sustainability of capacity building activities, such as those aiming to strengthen the knowledge transfer between national authorities; scientific community and different stakeholders (e.g. DANUBEPARKs); and managers of protected areas, Natura 2000 and Emerald Network sites.

Activity 2.1: Strengthen horizontal knowledge transfer and access to environmental data between national authorities responsible for nature conservation (especially those of neighbouring countries)

DESCRIPTION: There is still a need to strengthen horizontal knowledge transfer between national authorities (especially those of neighbouring countries) in the environment-related matters - e.g. use of Strategic Environmental Assessments for decision making, integration of the blue-green infrastructure into planning documents, supporting sustainable use of protected areas in order to increase support and feeling of ownership of local people, etc. The EUSDR provides a perfect platform to ensure visibility, multiplication and the sustainability of capacity building activities aiming to strengthen the horizontal knowledge transfer between national authorities.

LEAD: National authorities, WWF

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: events (workshop, conference); report on best practices (case studies)

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of organized workshops/study tours

Activity 2.2: Strengthen cooperation and knowledge transfer between scientific community and different stakeholders

DESCRIPTION: In order to promote certain conservation measures further expert and/or scientific research (proof) is needed. At the same time, some of the conservation measures or activities suggested in the action and management plans, that are developed by expert and/or scientific community, could be improved (made more sustainable) by the input of different stakeholders. The EUSDR provides a perfect platform to ensure visibility, multiplication and the sustainability of activities aiming to strengthen the cooperation and knowledge transfer between scientific community and different stakeholders.

LEAD: Task Forces of PA 6

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: events (workshop, round table, conference); gap analysis and report on the need for scientific basis for management measures development; compilation of best practices

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of organized workshops/study tours

Activity 2.3: Facilitate experience exchange of participatory management of Emerald Network sites aiming to restore and/or maintain conservation values while fostering benefits for local people

DESCRIPTION: Participatory management of Emerald Network sites would help to restore and/or maintain conservation values of these sites, while fostering benefits for local people. The EUSDR provides a perfect platform to ensure visibility, multiplication and the sustainability of activities aiming to facilitate experience exchange of participatory management.

LEAD: DANUBEPARKs, Carpathian Convention

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: events (workshop, conference); web page (section on existing web platform) dedicated to experience (resource) exchange on participatory management of Emerald Network sites aiming to combine nature protection and fostering benefits for local people

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of organized workshops/study tours

T2: Strengthen the efforts to halt the deterioration in the status of species (e.g. Danube sturgeon species) and habitats occurring in the Danube region and covered by EU nature legislation.

DESCRIPTION: The EUSDR could help ensuring harmonized development and implementation of species action plans and management plans; long-term sustainability of conservation measures, monitoring and awareness raising activities. To achieve significant progress, by the end of 2030 certain milestones should be reached: 1) implemented Pan-European action plan for sturgeon conservation; 2) established cross-border monitoring and management of large carnivores; 3) identified obligatory dissemination and awareness raising activities for PA 6 projects; 4) dedicated section on a web platform for PA 6 resources resulted from dissemination and awareness raising activities. Other monitoring tools: no. of organized workshops (conferences); no. of meetings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities).

Action 3: Develop and/or implement conservation action plans and/or management plans for endangered umbrella species of the Danube region.

DESCRIPTION: The umbrella species (or flagship species) have complex demands on their habitats. Therefore, preserving (the dynamics of) their key habitats contributes to the protection of many other species. Additionally, these species are usually attractive and fascinating plants or, more often, animals, which is why they are also well-suited to demonstrating to the public the need to preserve their habitats and raise awareness about anthropogenic impact on ecosystems.

Activity 3.1: Implement the Danube-related measures from the Pan-European action plan for sturgeon conservation

DESCRIPTION: Sturgeons play an important ecological role as indicators of healthy ecosystems. In Europe, the highest number of species can be found in the Danube Region, where 3 species live mostly in the Black Sea, migrating up the Danube to spawn. The Danube River Basin preserves some of the most important wild sturgeon populations and functional habitats in the world today. Implementation of the Danube-related measures from the Pan-European action plan for sturgeon conservation will contribute to their protection and protection of other freshwater species and their habitats.

LEAD: DSTF
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: enforced sturgeon catch moratoriums/ restrictions across borders, governance and funding framework for ex-situ conservation measures; mapped habitats and measures for conservation and/or restoration of their habitats taken; harmonised monitoring programmes
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of organized workshops/stakeholder meetings

Activity 3.2: Establish science-based cross-border monitoring and management of large carnivores

DESCRIPTION: As a consequence of human activity large carnivores have all suffered a significant decline in both numbers and the distribution. However, increases in their prey and forest cover, together with favourable legislation in the last few decades, resulted in a positive response. At the same time, with most populations stabilizing or increasing again, conflicts with various stakeholders are also increasing. Established science-based cross-border monitoring and management of large carnivores in the Danube Region could help preserve key habitats of these umbrella species and coordinate implementation of measures for preventing and tackling illegal killings.

LEAD: Carpathian Convention and WWF
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: developed cross-border monitoring and management plans for large carnivores
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of organized workshops/ stakeholder meetings (esp. between enforcement agencies and nature conservation institutions)

Activity 3.3: Identify further endangered habitats and endangered umbrella species of the Danube region and assess the need for development and/or implementation of their conservation action plans and/or management plans

DESCRIPTION: Identification of other endangered umbrella species facing critical threats in the Danube region, as well as the assessment on the need for development and/or harmonized implementation of their conservation action plans (and/or management plans) could considerably contribute to ecosystem restoration and/or conservation in the Danube Region.

LEAD: SG PA 6
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: list of endangered umbrella species of the Danube region; report on the need for development and/or implementation of their conservation action plans and/or management plans
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of meetings of interested parties, no. of action plans

T3: Reduce the introductions and spread of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in the Danube Region.

DESCRIPTION: Invasive alien species (IAS) are considered as one of the major drivers of biodiversity loss, with a potential negative impact on economy and human health. In line with Danube Region IAS Strategy that defines priorities, to achieve significant progress by the end of 2030 following milestones should be reached: 1) collected and analysed data about alien species in the Region (distribution, pathways, impact); 2) identified IAS of particular concern in the Region; 3) established early warning and rapid response system, 4) developed action plan(s) for the priority pathways at regional level; 5) developed transboundary eradication plans; 6) raised awareness and established cooperation between all interested parties; 7) developed codes of conduct in compliance with the national rules of the Danube countries. Other monitoring tools: no. of organized meetings and no. of meetings with relevant actors.

Action 4: Promote research to develop and apply the most appropriate methods for prevention and control of IAS and for management of the priority pathways in line with the DIAS Strategy and IAS Regulation (EU) 1143/2014.

DESCRIPTION: In order to develop and apply the most appropriate methods for prevention and control of IAS and management of their priority pathways in the Danube Region, further research is needed. List of IAS of particular concern in the Region could help to ensure more targeted use of the EU resources. Early detection and warning system, transboundary action and/or eradication plans and collaboration of all relevant sectors could ensure both pooling the resources and sustainability of applied measures.

Activity 4.1: Collect and analyse data about alien species in the Danube Region

DESCRIPTION: Collected data would help assess the impact of IAS on the ecosystems, human health, security and economy in the Danube region, but also identify appropriate ways to prevent their introduction and control the spread of established introduction.

LEAD: DIAS
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: collected and analysed data on IAS of the Danube Region, regarding 1) IAS biology, ecology and suitable habitats; 2) impact of IAS on biodiversity and ecosystem services, human health, security and economy; 3) current and future IAS distribution, 4) pathways of introduction and spread; list of IAS of particular concern in the Danube Region
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of data sources (papers, studies, databases) analysed; no. of conducted researches; no. of species assessed

Activity 4.2: Develop an early warning and rapid response system, action plan(s) for the priority pathways at regional level and transboundary eradication plans for invasive species

DESCRIPTION: Development of early warning and rapid response system and action plan(s) for the priority pathways (at regional level) will contribute to more successful prevention of introductions and control of spread of IAS in the Danube region. Transboundary eradication plans could help ensure both pooling the resources and sustainability of applied measures. Apart from eradication measures, in order to be (more) successful, eradication plans should also include appropriate measures for restoration of the invaded ecosystems.

LEAD: DIAS
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: developed 1) early warning and rapid response system; 2) action plan(s) for the priority pathways at regional level; 3) transboundary eradication plans (incl. measures for restoration of invaded ecosystems).
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of organized meetings with relevant actors

Activity 4.3: Strengthen cooperation and knowledge transfer between all interested parties (involved sectors)

DESCRIPTION: Prevention of IAS introduction and management of established populations require coordinated cooperation of all relevant stakeholders (sectors), i.e. PAs. Strengthening the role of DIAS as a coordinator among all relevant actors in the Danube Region would help to ensure consistency and sustainability of planned actions, avoidance of work duplication, more targeted use of EU resources and pooling the available national resources.

LEAD: DIAS
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: 1) identified good practices; 2) developed codes of conduct regarding the of IAS introduction and management of established populations; 3) developed information system and tools to raise awareness and improve communication about IAS in the Region; 4) established collaboration with other networks (ESENias, EASIN) towards implementation of the DIAS strategy and action plan.
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of organized meetings within DIAS; no. of meetings with relevant actors; no. of prepared promotional materials

T4: Maintain and restore Green and Blue Infrastructure elements through integrated spatial development and conservation planning.

DESCRIPTION: A network of healthy ecosystems often provides cost-effective alternatives to traditional 'grey' infrastructure and offers many other benefits for both people and biodiversity. As a network of (semi-)natural areas, Green and Blue Infrastructure provides environmental, economic and social benefits through nature-based solutions. To achieve significant progress, by the end of 2030 following milestones should be reached: 1) developed common approach to define and determine ecological corridors for key target species on land; 2) established network of linked protected areas and policy stakeholders; 3) implemented pilot actions towards closing gaps of ecological corridors; 4) established cooperation between the MRS approaches in establishing ecological connectivity and GBI. Other monitoring tools: no. of meetings with relevant actors.

Action 5: Anchoring the concept of EU green infrastructure in the Danube region.

DESCRIPTION: Green Infrastructure (GI) refers both to the concept and to structures in the landscape. It is a strategically planned network of (semi-)natural areas with other environmental features, designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services. Since ecological connectivity is vital to reduce the biodiversity loss and to preserve ecosystem services, individual GI elements have to be connected by natural or artificial connectivity features or by sustainable use/ecosystem service areas.

Activity 5.1: Development of a common approach to define and determine ecological corridors for key target species on land and improve the communication, knowledge and data sharing between Environmental, Transport and Spatial planning sectors on spatial integration of green and blue infrastructure.

DESCRIPTION: Developed harmonized approaches and tools for macroregional planning of corridors will help prepare the ground for transboundary implementation of green infrastructure and/or ecological corridors based on sound data and information. Moreover, it will contribute to the improvement of terrestrial connectivity and intersectoral cooperation.

LEAD: DANUBEPARKs, Carpathian Convention, WWF
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: established transnational working group and communication platform; adapted toolbox for identification of corridors and WebGIS tool for future use; technical handbook on ecological connectivity in the DRB; harmonized dataset and ecological connectivity map for the EUSDR; selected pilot regions
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no of meetings with relevant actors; other documents (agreements, conclusions, reports).

Activity 5.2: Establish a network of linked protected areas and policy stakeholders to enhance ecological connectivity outside protected areas

DESCRIPTION: Since connectivity topics need an intersectoral environment, a platform which includes all relevant stakeholders is considered vital for awareness raising, knowledge sharing and the long-term work on ecological connectivity in DRB. Pilot measures will further contribute to the improvement of integration of connectivity issues into spatial planning.

LEAD: DANUBEPARKs (for Danube), Carpathian Convention, WWF (for terrestrial PAs and corridors)
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: established pilot regions; stakeholder platform; map of green and blue (GB) corridors consolidated with stakeholders; technical manual on GB corridor identification methodology; technical report describing the corridor; technical report on corridors and spatial planning; catalogue of incentives, instruments and measures to implement GB corridors; implemented and evaluated 1-2 pilot measures; policy recommendations for DRB countries.
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of meetings with relevant actors; other documents (e.g. agreements).

Activity 5.3: Pilot actions towards closing gaps of ecological corridors

DESCRIPTION: Activity aims to promote particularly successful solutions that already exist, but are not recognized by decision-makers and planners. Key objectives include: demonstration sites for communication and awareness raising (knowledge sharing amongst policy, science and practitioners), but also physical improvement of corridors.

LEAD: DANUBEPARKs (for Danube), Carpathian Convention, WWF (for terrestrial PAs and corridors)
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: prepared Catalogue of connectivity solutions applicable for the Danube River Basin (incl. land, water and air solutions); established pilot regions; 3 pilot measures per pilot region implemented and evaluated; functional platform on solutions; published leaflets/manuals for target groups; macro-regional stakeholder platform institutionalized and functional
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no of meetings with relevant actors; other documents (agreements, conclusions, reports)

Activity 5.4: Stimulate the ecological restoration of wetlands along Danube region (particularly in the Danube delta).¹

DESCRIPTION: Halt wetland losses and promote the restoration of degraded wetlands along Danube region (with a particular attention to the Danube delta), both for its role in biodiversity conservation and animals' migration, and for the relevance of these environments in pollution prevention and carbon dioxide sequestration.

LEAD: DANUBEPARKs, DRC co-lead

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: promoted role of wetlands as Nature-based Solutions for climate change adaptation (e.g. flood mitigation, carbon dioxide sequestration) and pollution prevention; prepared programme of incentives, instruments and measures to stimulate wetland restoration; prepared Restoration Plan for the Danube delta

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no of meetings with relevant actors; no of publications (case studies, reports, brochures); other documents (agreements, conclusions, reports)

Action 6: Promote ecological connectivity through cooperation between Macro-regional strategies (MRS).

DESCRIPTION: The ecological connectivity was recognized as an area/topic of interest of all MRS that should be more explored in terms of collaboration and strengthening. Therefore, PACs of the EUSDR PA 6 started the initiative of MRS collaboration aiming to establish more systematic sectoral exchange between PAs. Main focus is on exploring ways for enhancing synergies and avoidance of duplication in terms of actions and funding, while increasing the efficiency of limited national (governmental) capacities.

Activity 6.1: Establish the cooperation between the MRS approaches in establishing ecological connectivity and GI.

DESCRIPTION: In order to establish functional macro-regional ecological corridors and green infrastructure network, it is vital to establish strong cooperation between the MRS approaches. MRS cooperation will help to enhance synergies and to avoid the duplication of both actions and funding, while increasing the efficiency of limited national (Governmental) capacities.

LEAD: PAC

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: MRS meetings

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: TBD

¹ Activity 5.4. was first proposed as an Action 10 by the DG Regio, during the second stage of the consultation phase (in 2019). At the time of writing, authors of this Report proposed to include it in the revised Action Plan as an Activity 5.4 and it was treated as such in the rest of the document. However, the final decision of its inclusion and its status in the revised Action Plan will be made at a later date by the SG.

T5: Improve and/or maintain the soil quality in the Danube Region.

DESCRIPTION: Urban sprawl, climate change, deforestation and emissions of pollution generated by human activities (i.e. waste disposal, agriculture, transportation, etc.), have major impact on quality of soils and soil-related ecosystem services. It is important therefore to improve and/or maintain the quality of soils in the Danube Region. To achieve significant progress regarding soil quality, by the end of 2030 following milestones should be reached: 1) identified locations with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains; 2) prepared remediation plans; 3) prepared risk management plans in the case of environmental accidents; 4) developed harmonised Soil maps of the Danube region; 5) report on production potential of agricultural areas and application of appropriate agro-ecological measures; 6) identified appropriate measures for climate change adaptation.

Action 7: Enhance and/or maintain soil-related ecosystem services (ES).

DESCRIPTION: Multi-functionality of soils represents the basis for many ecosystem services (ES). Since negative impacts on soil quality can result in indirect impacts on ecosystems and human welfare, it is essential to enhance and/or maintain soil-related ES. Therefore, DRC should develop harmonized soil map(s), carry out research and propose solutions for mitigating threats and pressures (agriculture, climate change, urban sprawl etc.) and promote dissemination and knowledge exchange by different networks.

Activity 7.1: Develop harmonized Soil Maps for the Danube region

DESCRIPTION: Activity includes preparation of data harmonization and definition of scales and data formats in addition to numerous other activities (e.g. scientific workshops and collaboration on soil research). Soil maps will be implemented in the entire Danube region. Apart from representing the basis for scientific and expert research, soil maps and related soil information will be used on local and regional level for awareness raising activities (targeting both the general public and school children).

LEAD: SONDAR
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: guidelines for developing harmonized soil map; developed soil maps for Danube Region Countries
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: percentage of area covered by the map

Activity 7.2: Strengthen the implementation of shelter belts as biotope network systems

DESCRIPTION: Shelterbelts produce a variety of environment benefits and important component in sustainable land use management. They can protect crop fields by reducing wind erosion, improving crop water use and increasing crop yields and economic returns. They also can protect livestock from harsh winter conditions, reducing animal stress and improving animal health. They reduce air exchange rates by reduces heating and cooling costs. Danube Region Countries should develop guidelines on using shelterbelts and multifunctional hedges to create biotope network systems in the agricultural landscape on local and regional level.

LEAD: SONDAR
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: list of key elements of shelter belts; report on the role of shelter belts in improving soil protection against erosion by wind and water, mitigating climate change and improving biodiversity and microclimate; developed guidelines
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no of workshops/conferences; meetings with relevant actors

Activity 7.3: Research on production potential of agricultural areas and application of appropriate agroecological measures

DESCRIPTION: Activity includes 1) mapping the most productive soils in the Region; 2) development of different concepts and strengthening the effort to protect high productive soils against other interests (e.g. soil sealing); and 3) development of more specific agri-environmental measures on regional and /or local level that could be implemented to particular farming systems and specific environmental conditions in the Danube Region.

LEAD: SONDAR
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: maps of the most productive soils in the Region; report on production potential of agricultural areas in the Danube Region; report on different concepts for protection of high productive soils; recommendations of appropriate agro-ecological measures
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of research proposals (projects); no of workshops/conferences; meetings with relevant actors

Activity 7.4: Research on appropriate measures for climate change mitigation and/or adaptation

DESCRIPTION: Sequestering carbon in soil is a natural way of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere with fewer impacts on land and water, less need for energy, and lower costs. Better land management and agricultural practices in the Region could enhance the ability of soils to store carbon and help dealing with global warming, while implementation of climate resilient green infrastructure (e.g. planted trees and hedges in (sub)urban areas) could help to enhance and/or maintain soil-related ecosystem services. Further research is needed to determinate measures that can ensure proper soil protection and land management in face of a changing climate, together with the knowledge exchange on a regional level.

LEAD: SONDAR
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: report on the main threats of climate change to the soil quality in the Danube Region; recommendations of appropriate measures for climate change adaptation
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no of workshops / meetings with actors from relevant sectors

Action 8: Identify locations with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains and prepare a remediation plan and a risk management plan in the case of environmental accidents.

DESCRIPTION: Sites with remains of obsolete pesticides and similar chemicals (OPC) could pose a serious threat to human health and the environment. Danube Region Countries should identify these sites, prepare risk management plans (incl. intervention activities) and remediation plans in order to minimize the risk that OPC pose and to restore ecosystems. MRS approach would help to ensure a cross-border collaboration, stakeholder involvement, knowledge exchange and targeted use of EU funding streams.

Activity 8.1: Identify locations with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains

DESCRIPTION: Within this activity, list of identified locations will be prepared together with priority status and overview of location status that will be used for preparation of more detailed Remediation plans (RPs).

LEAD: TFPC

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: locations contaminated with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains per Danube Region Country mapped in GIS

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors; collected data on the locations contaminated with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains

Activity 8.2: Prepare risk management plans in the case of environmental accidents

DESCRIPTION: Risk management plans (RMPs) will address effective management systems on both national and regional level, including the best available techniques to prevent, control and mitigate environmental accidents.

LEAD: TFPC

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: developed intervention plan on the national and regional level and risk management plan including an environmental risk assessment per priority location

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no of workshops / meetings with relevant actors; recommendations for the development of the risk management plan

Activity 8.3: Prepare remediation plans

DESCRIPTION: Prepared Remediation plans (RPs) should 1) summarize all data on the detected contaminants; 2) identify contaminants of concern and all the media affected (soil, water, air); 3) evaluate remedial options and describe methods used for selection of the preferable remedial strategy; 4) describe selected clean-up methods, their technical feasibility and implementation plan; 5) discuss control measures to minimize fugitive air emissions, surface water control, worker health and safety; 6) provide the information on the fate of residual contaminants, remedial verification and long-term environmental monitoring plans for sites of concern.

LEAD: TFPC

TIMELINE: end of 2030

MILESTONES: list of prioritized locations contaminated with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains; risk management plans including remediation plans per priority location

OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no of workshops / meetings with relevant actors; recommendations for development of the remediation plan

T6: Decrease air pollution in the Danube Region.

DESCRIPTION: Air quality in the EUSDR is still a serious problem - main problems refer to exceedances of PM10 and precursor gases (NO₂ and SO₂), but geographical distribution differs according to pollutant. PM10 and PM2.5 hotspots are in the SE EUSDR, with a second hot-spot in southern Poland that influences the northern EUSDR border. SO₂ is present in higher levels in east of the Region, while NO₂ occurs in urban areas throughout the Danube basin. To achieve significant progress, by the end of 2030 following milestones should be reached: 1) enhanced monitoring network on air pollutants in the Region; 2) report on air quality in the Region; 3) strengthened capacities of national and local authorities, NGOs, expert and scientific communities; 4) established transnational cooperation and 5) developed regional Air Protection Programme. Other monitoring tools: no. of additional monitoring stations; system upgrade; no. of workshops/ meetings.

Action 9: Take measures to gradually reduce the pollution, along the limit values for certain pollutants.

DESCRIPTION: Enhanced and optimised air quality monitoring network and reports on air quality (based on measured and modelled data) would help tailor appropriate air quality enhancement measures. Moreover, Air Protection Programme for the Danube region should be developed, aiming to develop and disseminate appropriate tools for air quality assessment and management, while taking into account institutional knowledge and capacity gaps, need for coordinated and harmonised actions and sectoral collaboration.

Activity 9.1: Upgrade and further development of the monitoring network on air pollutants based on JRC air quality studies

DESCRIPTION: Air quality monitoring network should be enhanced and optimised in Danube region, especially in area where no data is available.

LEAD: TFAQ
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: additional monitoring stations established, systems upgraded (new technologies used)
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no of workshops / meetings with relevant actors

Activity 9.2: Report on air quality in the Danube Region

DESCRIPTION: Reports on air quality on at least two-years basis, based on measured and modelled data, as a base for tailoring appropriate air quality enhancement measures.

LEAD: TFAQ
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: collected the data on air quality monitoring, JRC and local experts modelling studies
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no of data sources consulted

Activity 9.3: Develop Air Protection Programme for the Danube Region

DESCRIPTION: Air Protection Programme for the Danube region should be developed in order to reduce air quality pollution (harmonised with national programmes). It should take into account institutional knowledge and capacity gaps, need for coordinated and harmonised actions, sectoral collaboration, as well as aim to develop and disseminate appropriate tools for air quality assessment and management, and propose actions to reduce air quality.

LEAD: TFAQ
TIMELINE: end of 2030
MILESTONES: identified institutional capacity gaps; identified measures and instruments to gradually reduce the pollution; developed Air Protection Programme
OTHER MONITORING TOOLS: no of workshops / meetings with relevant actors; stashed expert group for Air Quality improvement programme; developed Programme

9.6 Roadmap towards 2030

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 1					
<i>EUSDR Target to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Improve management of ecological networks and protected areas through transnational cooperation and capacity building</i>			
<i>EUSDR Action to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Establish transnational cooperation and harmonization of the strategic management documents between protected areas on river systems in the Danube basin.</i>		<i>Action deadline (year)</i>	2030
DEFINED MILESTONES:		Key steps	Planned deadline	Responsible actors	Other monitoring tools
M1.1	Established 5-country UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and developed management plan	KS1.1.1. Signed agreement on the establishment of the 5-country unesco biosphere reserve	2023	WWF (WWF Austria with WWF Adria and WWF CEE)	no. of meetings of interested parties and/or signing of other documents (conclusions, agreements)
		KS1.1.2. Developed management plan	2027		
M1.2	Established transnational cooperation or harmonized management plans on the boundary rivers	KS1.2.1. Developed cross-border mp or joint action plan of the danube delta (RO-UA-MO)	2025	Romanian Ministry of Environment and relevant ministries from the other countries, WWF Co-leadership	other documents developed to establish cooperation, no. of meetings of interested parties
		KS1.2.2. Harmonized management plans between protected areas on transboundary western balkan rivers of the danube basin (e.g. River sava, river Drava, river Una, river Morava)	two by 2025; other two by 2030	WWF Adria, Danube Region Countries	
M1.3	Developed Danube Masterplan for the Conservation and Restoration of Biodiversity Values and mainstreamed into sectoral documents of inland navigation sector	KS1.3.1. Developed danube masterplan for the conservation and restoration of biodiversity values	2025	National authorities from (min) two DRC, WWF co-lead	no. of meetings of interested parties, concept note on the development
		KS1.3.2. Identified measures for mainstreaming it into inland navigation programmes and integration with the navigation master plan	2027		
		KS1.3.3. Integration with the navigation master plan	2030		

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 2

<i>EUSDR Target to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Improve management of ecological networks and protected areas through transnational cooperation and capacity building</i>			
<i>EUSDR Action to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Build capacities of national and local authorities, non-governmental organizations, expert and scientific community in the environment related matters.</i>	<i>Action deadline (year)</i>	2030	
DEFINED MILESTONES:		Key steps	Planned deadline	Responsible actors	Other monitoring tools
M2.1	Strengthened knowledge transfer between national authorities responsible for PA management	KS2.1.1. Strengthened horizontal knowledge transfer	2025	National authorities, WWF	no. of organized events (workshop, conference); report on best practices (case studies)
		KS2.1.2. Strengthened access to environmental data between national authorities responsible for nature conservation (especially those of neighbouring countries)	2030		established shared databases and/or data exchange; no. of organized events, no. of meetings of relevant authorities
M2.2	Strengthened cooperation (knowledge transfer) between scientific community and different stakeholders	KS2.2.1. Gap analysis and report on the need for scientific basis for management measures development	2023	Task Forces of PA 6	no. of meetings; progress report
		KS2.2.2. Compilation of best practices	2025		no. of organized events (workshop, conference, study tours); reports on best practices (case studies; newsletters, brochures etc.)
M2.3	Facilitated experience exchange of participatory management of Emerald Network sites aiming to restore and/or maintain conservation values while fostering benefits for local people	KS2.3.1. Collected material on existing participatory management of Emerald Network sites	2023	DANUBEPARKs, Carpathian Convention	no. of established contacts; no. of meetings of relevant authorities
		KS2.3.2. Developed web page (section on existing web platform) dedicated to the topic	2025		no. of meetings; progress report
		KS2.3.3. Organised events for experience exchange (conferences, workshops and/or study tours)	One event in 2021, 2023, 2025, 2027 and in 2029		

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 3

<i>EUSDR Target to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Strengthen the efforts to halt the deterioration in the status of species (e.g. Danube sturgeon species) and habitats occurring in the Danube region and covered by EU nature legislation.</i>			
<i>EUSDR Action to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Develop and/or implement conservation action plans and/or management plans for endangered umbrella species of the Danube region.</i>		<i>Action deadline (year)</i>	2030
DEFINED MILESTONES:		Key steps	Planned deadline	Responsible actors	Other monitoring tools
M3.1	Implemented Pan-European action plan for sturgeon conservation	KS3.1.1. Mapped key habitats for sturgeon conservation and prioritised on their need for conservation and/or restoration	2023	DSTF	no. of meetings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities); progress report
		KS3.1.2. Governance and funding framework for ex-situ conservation measures	2023		progress report
		KS3.1.3. Enforced sturgeon catch moratoriums or restrictions across borders	2025		no. of established contacts; no. of meetings of relevant authorities
		KS3.1.4. Harmonised monitoring programmes	2025		no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities); progress report
		KS3.1.5. Implemented measures for conservation and/or restoration of the key habitats	2027		implementation results; progress report
		KS3.1.6. Report on the implementation of (1) conservation and/or restoration measures for the key habitats; and (2) ex-situ conservation measures	2030		
M3.2	Established cross-border monitoring and management of large carnivores	KS3.2.1. Developed cross-border monitoring	2023	Carpathian Convention and WWF	no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities); progress report
		KS3.2.2. Developed cross-border management plans	2025		implementation results; progress report
		KS3.2.3. Report on the implementation of the cross-border management plans	2030		

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 3 (continued)

DEFINED MILESTONES:		Key steps	Planned deadline	Responsible actors	Other monitoring tools
M3.3	Identified further endangered habitats and endangered umbrella species of the Danube region and assessed the need for development and/or implementation of their conservation action plans and/or management plans	KS3.3.1. List of endangered umbrella species and endangered habitats of the Danube region	2023	SG PA 6	no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities); no. of action plans; progress report
		KS3.3.2. Report on the need for development and/or implementation of the conservation action plans and/or management plans for selected key species and/or habitats	2025		
		KS3.3.3. Governance and funding framework for preparation and implementation of their conservation action plans and/or management plans for selected key species and/or habitats	2027		no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities); progress report
M3.4	Identified obligatory dissemination and awareness raising activities for PA 6 projects	KS3.4.1. Agreement on obligatory dissemination and awareness raising activities for PA 6 and PA 6 linked projects	2020	SG PA 6	no. of meetings (discussions)
		KS3.4.2. Integration of selected activities in criteria of relevant funding programmes	2020		no. meetings with relevant actors; no. of funding programmes where selected activities were integrated as criteria / obligatory; progress report
M3.5	Dedicated section on a web platform for PA 6 resources resulted from dissemination and awareness raising activities	KS3.5.1. Collected material on dissemination and awareness raising activities resulted from PA 6 projects and TF activities	2022	SG PA 6	no. of contacted lead partners; progress report
		KS3.5.2. Developed web page (section on existing web platform) dedicated to the topic	2023		progress report

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 4

<i>EUSDR Target to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Reduce the introductions and spread of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in the Danube Region.</i>			
<i>EUSDR Action to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Promote research to develop and apply the most appropriate methods for prevention and control of IAS and for management of the priority pathways in line with the DIAS Strategy and IAS Regulation (EU) 1143/2014.</i>		<i>Action deadline (year)</i>	2030
DEFINED MILESTONES:		Key steps	Planned deadline	Responsible actors	Other monitoring tools
M4.1	Collected and analysed data about alien species in the Region (distribution, pathways, impact)	KS4.1.1. Collected and analysed data on IAS biology, ecology and suitable habitats in the Region	2022	DIAS	no. of data sources (papers, studies, databases) analysed; no. of conducted researches; no. of species assessed; no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities); progress report
		KS4.1.2. Collected and analysed data on impact of IAS on biodiversity and ecosystem services, human health, security and economy in the Region	2022		
		KS4.1.3. Collected and analysed data on pathways of introduction and spread in the Region	2022		
		KS4.1.4. Collected and analysed data on current and future IAS distribution in the Region	2023		
		KS4.1.5. Developed the list of IAS of particular concern in the Danube Region	2023		
M4.2	Strengthened regional cooperation on prevention of IAS spread and their eradication	KS4.2.1. Designed early warning and rapid response system	2024	DIAS	no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities); progress report
		KS4.2.2. Developed action plan(s) for the priority pathways at regional level (incl. monitoring indicators)	2025		
		KS4.2.3. Developed transboundary eradication plans (incl. measures for restoration of invaded ecosystems and monitoring indicators)	2025		
		KS4.2.4. Fully implemented early warning and rapid response system in the Danube Region	2026		
		KS4.2.5. Report on the implementation of the action plan(s) and transboundary eradication plans (incl. the revision of the IAS list, actions and measures implemented)	2030		

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 4 (continued)

DEFINED MILESTONES:		Key steps	Planned deadline	Responsible actors	Other monitoring tools
M4.3	Strengthened cooperation and knowledge transfer between all interested parties (involved sectors)	KS4.3.1. Identified good practices and shared among the interested parties (involved sectors) via report/brochures	2022	DIAS	no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors; progress report
		KS4.3.2. Actively engaged interested parties (involved sectors)	2023		no. of established contacts; no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities); progress report
		KS4.3.3. Established collaboration with other networks (ESENIA, EASIN) towards implementation of the DIAS strategy and action plan	2023		
		KS4.3.4. Developed information system and tools to raise awareness and improve communication about IAS in the Region	2024		
		KS4.3.5. Developed codes of conduct regarding the of IAS introduction and management of established populations	2025		no. of meetings; progress report
		KS4.3.6. Gap analysis and report on the need for the materials, workshops and/or trainings of interested parties (different stakeholders)	2025		
		KS4.3.7. Established horizontal knowledge exchange among all interested parties (involved sectors)	2026		no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities); progress report
		KS4.3.8. Developed needed materials, organised workshops and/or trainings for interested parties (different stakeholders)	First batch by 2024, revise (if needed) by 2026, 2028 and 2030		no. of developed materials; no. of workshops / trainings with relevant actors (stakeholders, authorities); progress report

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 5

<i>EUSDR Target to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Maintain and restore Green and Blue Infrastructure elements through integrated spatial development and conservation planning.</i>			
<i>EUSDR Action to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Anchoring the concept of EU green infrastructure in the Danube region.</i>		<i>Action deadline (year)</i>	<i>2030</i>
DEFINED MILESTONES:		Key steps	Planned deadline	Responsible actors	Other monitoring tools
M5.1	Developed a common approach to define and determine ecological corridors for key target species on land and improve the communication, knowledge and data sharing between Environmental, Transport and Spatial planning sectors on spatial integration of green and blue infrastructure	KS5.1.1. Established transnational working group and communication platform	2022	DANUBEPARKs, Carpathian Convention, WWF	no. of meetings with relevant actors; other documents (agreements, conclusions, reports); progress report
		KS5.1.2. Adapted toolbox for identification of corridors and WebGis tool for future use	2022		
		KS5.1.3. Developed technical handbook on ecological connectivity in the DRB	2025		
		KS5.1.4. Harmonized dataset and ecological connectivity map for the EUSDR	2025		
		KS5.1.5. Selected pilot regions	2025		
M5.2	Established a network of linked protected areas and policy stakeholders to enhance ecological connectivity outside protected areas	KS5.2.1. Built stakeholder platform	2022	DANUBEPARKs (for Danube), Carpathian Convention, WWF (for terrestrial PAs and corridors)	no. of meetings with relevant actors; other documents (e.g. agreements); progress report
		KS5.2.2. Established pilot regions	2025		
		KS5.2.3. Prepared technical manuals and reports on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GB corridor identification methodology - describing the established corridor - corridors and spatial planning 	2025		
		KS5.2.4. Map of green and blue (GB) corridors prepared and consolidated with stakeholders	2027		
		KS5.2.5. Implemented and evaluated 1-2 pilot measures	2027		
		KS5.2.6. Developed policy recommendations for DRB countries	2030		

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 5 (continued)

M5.3	Implemented pilot actions towards closing gaps of ecological corridors	KS5.3.1. Prepared Catalogue of connectivity solutions applicable for the Danube River Basin (incl. land, water and air solutions)	2025	DANUBEPARKs (for Danube), Carpathian Convention, WWF (for terrestrial PAs and corridors)	no. of meetings with relevant actors; other documents (e.g. agreements); progress report
		KS5.3.2. Published leaflets/manuals for target groups	2025		
		KS5.3.3. Established pilot regions	2027		
		KS5.3.4. Macro-regional stakeholder platform institutionalized and functional	2027		
		KS5.3.5. Three pilot measures per pilot region implemented and evaluated	2030		
M5.4	Stimulate the ecological restoration of wetlands along Danube region (particularly in the Danube delta).	KS5.4.1. Promoted role of wetlands as Nature-based Solutions for climate change adaptation (e.g. flood mitigation, carbon dioxide sequestration) and pollution prevention through at least one publication (report on case studies, brochures etc.).	2021	DANUBEPARKs, DRC co-lead	no. of meetings with relevant actors; other documents (agreements, conclusions, reports); progress report
		KS5.4.2. Prepared programme of incentives, instruments and measures to stimulate wetland restoration.	2023		
		KS5.4.3. Prepared Restoration Plan for the Danube delta.	2025		
		KS5.4.4. Implemented Restoration Plan for the Danube delta.	2030		

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 6					
<i>EUSDR Target to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Maintain and restore Green and Blue Infrastructure elements through integrated spatial development and conservation planning.</i>			
<i>EUSDR Action to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Promote ecological connectivity through cooperation between Macro-regional strategies (MRS).</i>		<i>Action deadline (year)</i>	2030
DEFINED MILESTONES:		<i>Key steps</i>	<i>Planned deadline</i>	<i>Responsible actors</i>	<i>Other monitoring tools</i>
M6.1	Established cooperation between the MRS approaches in establishing ecological connectivity and GI	KS6.1.1. Defined plan for the MRS meetings	2021	PAC	to be defined
		KS6.1.2. Defined activity plan on the MRS scale	2025		

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 7

<i>EUSDR Target to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Improve and/or maintain the soil quality in the Danube Region.</i>			
<i>EUSDR Action to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Enhance and/or maintain soil-related ecosystem services (ES).</i>		<i>Action deadline (year)</i>	2030
DEFINED MILESTONES:		Key steps	Planned deadline	Responsible actors	Other monitoring tools
M7.1	Developed harmonized Soil Maps for the Danube region	KS7.1.1. Prepared guidelines for developing harmonized soil map	2022	SONDAR	no. of workshops/conferences; meetings with relevant actors; progress report
		KS7.1.2. Developed soil maps for Danube Region Countries	2027		percentage of area covered by the map; progress report
M7.2	Strengthened the implementation of shelter belts as biotope network systems	KS7.2.1. Prepared list of key elements of shelter belts	2022	SONDAR	no. of workshops/conferences; meetings with relevant actors; progress report
		KS7.2.2. Reports on the role of shelter belts in improving soil protection, mitigating climate change and improving biodiversity and microclimate	2025		
		KS7.2.3. Developed guidelines	2027		
M7.3	Researched production potential of agricultural areas and application of appropriate agroecological measures	KS7.3.1. Developed maps of the most productive soils in the Region	2025	SONDAR	no. of research proposals (projects); no of workshops/conferences; meetings with relevant actors; progress report
		KS7.3.2. Report on different concepts and strengthening the effort to protect high productive soils against other interests (e.g. soil sealing)	2025		
		KS7.3.3. Report on more specific agri-environmental measures on regional and /or local level	2027		
M7.4	Researched appropriate measures for climate change mitigation and/or adaptation	KS7.4.1. Report on the main threats of climate change to the soil quality in the Danube Region	2022	SONDAR	no. of workshops / meetings with actors from relevant sectors; progress report
		KS7.4.2. Developed recommendations on appropriate measures for climate change adaptation	2025		

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 8

<i>EUSDR Target to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Improve and/or maintain the soil quality in the Danube Region.</i>			
<i>EUSDR Action to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Identify locations with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains and prepare a remediation plan and a risk management plan in the case of environmental accidents.</i>	<i>Action deadline (year)</i>	2030	
DEFINED MILESTONES:		Key steps	Planned deadline	Responsible actors	Other monitoring tools
M8.1	Identified locations with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains	KS8.1.1. Mapped (in GIS) locations contaminated with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains per Danube Region Country	2022	TFPC	no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors; collected data on the locations contaminated with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains; progress report
		KS8.1.2. Defined priority locations with with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains	2025		
M8.2	Prepared risk management plans in the case of environmental accidents	KS8.2.1. Developed intervention plan on the national and regional level and	2025	TFPC	no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors; recommendations for the development of the risk management plan; progress report
		KS8.2.2. Developed risk management plan including an environmental risk assessment per priority location	2027		
M8.3	Prepared remediation plans	KS8.3.1. Prepared list of prioritized locations contaminated with obsolete pesticide and similar chemical remains;	2022	TFPC	no. of workshops / meetings with relevant actors; recommendations for the development of the remediation plan; progress report
		KS8.3.2. Prepared risk management plans including remediation plans per priority location	2027		

ROADMAP FOR ACTION 9

<i>EUSDR Target to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Decrease air pollution in the Danube Region.</i>			
<i>EUSDR Action to which the Roadmap is related</i>		<i>Take measures to gradually reduce the pollution, along the limit values for certain pollutants.</i>	<i>Action deadline (year)</i>	<i>2030</i>	
DEFINED MILESTONES:		Key steps	Planned deadline	Responsible actors	Other monitoring tools
M9.1	Upgraded monitoring system	KS9.1.1. Analysis of current air quality monitoring networks gaps (transregional approach)	2020	TFAQ	no. of workshops/meeting with relevant actors; progress report
		KS9.1.2. Monitoring system upgrade proposed; data collected	2021		
M9.2	Monitoring data and modeling studies	KS9.2.1. Transregional air quality analyses updated targeting measures	2022	TFAQ	no. of data sources consulted; progress report
		KS9.2.2. Identification of main sources and measures in the Danube region	2022		
M9.3	Developed and implemented Danube Air Protection Programme	KS9.3.1. Identified institutional capacity gaps	2023	TFAQ, Regional and local authorities	no. of workshops/meetings with relevant actors, established expert group for Air Quality improvement; no. of measures implemented; progress report
		KS9.3.2. Identified harmonised measures and instruments to reduce the pollution/enhance air quality	2025		
		KS9.3.3. Air Protection Programme for the Danube region finished	2025		
		KS9.3.4. Measures implemented	2030		

9.7 Reporting template (L2 to L1)

The purpose of this Progress report is to provide concise, updated and clear reporting on what tasks (works, initiatives, events, etc.) were undertaken by the L2 (TFs and Danube Region Countries) in order to fulfil the milestones (i.e. implement each of the actions) during the reporting period. In order to harmonize the answers and simplify the future use and summarization of a number of progress reports, instructions for filling in the report are incorporated in the template in italic, while square brackets indicate what should be written in the certain cell and in what order. At the same time, additional rows should be added if needed, while the unnecessary content (rows) should be removed before sending the report to the SG. Summarized conclusions and/or contribution to the corresponding key step (or milestone or action) shouldn't be longer than two sentences.

Progress report				
Author		[Surname, Name]; [Corresponding TF / DRC];		Contact information [mail adress]; [phone number]
Date		dd.mm.yyyy.		Reporting period [mm.yyyy] - [mm.yyyy]
Targets		[T1, T2, T3, T4, T5 and/or T6]		Actions [A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8 and/or A9]
Tasks carried out by the TF (DRC) during the reporting period				
Corresponding key step(s) / milestone(s) / action(s)			Date	Task description (if the K, M or A can be considered completed, please state it clearly below)
A	M	KS		
e.g. A1	e.g. M1.2	e.g. K1.2.1	[dd.mm.yyyy.] – [dd.mm.yyyy.]	<u>For Symposiums/Conferences/Workshops/Study Tours please enter:</u> [Name of the event] ([Venue]) – [Role (e.g. speaker / oral presentation / poster presentation / participant)]: [Title of the presentation (if applicable)]; [Link (if applicable)] and/or [summarized conclusions and/or contribution to the corresponding key step (or milestone or action)]
...	<u>For (stakeholder) meetings please enter:</u> [Venue] - [Meeting Parties]; [summarized conclusions and/or contribution to the corresponding key step (or milestone or action)]
...	<u>For signed agreements (collaborations) please enter:</u> [Signing Parties] ([Venue]) - [Title of the document signed]; [summarized conclusions and/or contribution to the corresponding key step (or milestone or action)]
...	<u>For (published) publications (e.g. Action or Management plans, Reports, Guidelines, various brochures) please enter:</u> [Title of the publication]; [Publisher]; [Link (if applicable)]
...	<u>For established platforms / databases / web pages please enter:</u> [Name]; [Publisher(s)]; [Link (if applicable)]
...	<u>For developed maps please enter:</u> [Title of the map]; [Publisher]; [Area (countries) covered]; [Link (if applicable)]

Corresponding key step(s) / milestone(s) / action(s)			Date	Task description (if the K, M or A can be considered completed, please state it clearly below)
A	M	KS		
...	<u>For other tasks please enter:</u> [Venue (if applicable)] – [Involved Parties]; [Short description and/or contribution to the corresponding key step (or milestone or action)]
...
Conclusions on challenges and opportunities				
Corresponding key step(s) / milestone(s) / action(s)			Recognized challenges	Recognized opportunities
A	M	KS		
e.g. A1	e.g. M1.2	e.g. K1.2.1		
...		
Tasks planned for the next period				
Corresponding key step(s) / milestone(s) / action(s)			Date	Task description
A	M	KS		
e.g. A1	e.g. M1.2	e.g. K1.2.1	[dd.mm.yyyy.] – [dd.mm.yyyy.]	<u>For Symposiums/Conferences/Workshops/Stufdy Tours please enter:</u> [Name of the event] ([Venue]) – [Role (e.g. speaker / oral presentation / poster presentation / participant)]
...	<u>For (stakeholder) meetings please enter:</u> [Venue] – [Meeting Parties]
...	<u>For agreements (collaborations) to be signed please enter:</u> [Signing Parties] ([Venue]) – [Title of the document to be signed]
...	<u>For publications (e.g. Action or Manaqement plans, Reports, Guidelines, various brochures) please enter:</u> [Title of the publication to be published]; [Publisher]
...	<u>For platforms / databases / web pages please enter:</u> [Name]; [Publisher(s)]
...	<u>For maps please enter:</u> [Title of the map]; [Publisher]; [Area to be covered]
...	<u>For other tasks please enter:</u> [Venue (if applicable)] – [Involved Parties]
...
Accompanying Annexes				
Minutes / conclusions of following TF meetings				
Annex 1.			[Venue] [(Date)]; [Meeting Parties]	
...			...	

Signed agreements on newly established cooperations and partnerships	
Annex [no.]	[Venue] [(Date)]; [Title of the document signed]
...	...
Published TF publications and other deliverables (<i>a list with the links to the published content or the said content should be attached</i>)	
Annex [no.]	[Name of the document - a list of published TF publications and other deliverables (Plans, Guidelines, Reports, Brochures, Conference presentations and posters etc.) with a link to the published content]
Annex [no.]	[Title of the attached publication or other deliverables, where link is not available]
...	...
Information about TF and TF-related projects (esp. those funded through the EUSDR; received from project coordinators)	
Annex [no.]	[Title of the report with collected data]
...	...



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