Transboundary and International Cooperation in the Danube River Basin

Birgit Vogel
Executive Secretary
ICPDR

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The Danube River Basin

- 800,000 km²
- 10% of surface Continental Europe
- 19 countries
- 79 million people
- Role model in transboundary cooperation
Historical Transformation / Danube as Connector

**Early Agreements:** Focus on trade and navigation
**Later agreements:** Focus on cooperation and water quality

1985 / Bucharest Declaration:
- Water monitoring, resources conservation & rational use
- Prevention and control of Danube pollution
- Integration into national law
- Potential objective: Stepwise development towards Danube Convention

1989 / Fall of the Iron Curtain: **Geo-political transformation**
- New frontiers through Europe
- Bringing Danube Basin countries closer together
- Basis of a new cooperation basis

Source: [www.worldatlas.com/geography/iron-curtain.html](http://www.worldatlas.com/geography/iron-curtain.html)
Historical Transformation / Danube as Connector

1991 - Environmental Programme for the Danube River
Interim Task Force to develop Strategic Action Plan
  • From planning to implementation
  • Addressing environmental threats with action
  • Danube countries, EC, Banks, UNDP, UNEP, NGOs
  • Coordination Unit in Vienna

Danube River Protection Convention
  • signed 29 June 1994, Sofia (Bulgaria)
  • enforced in October 1998
1998/99 ICPDR established / ICPDR Secretariat in place

15 Contracting Parties
High diversity: 9 EU Member States – 5 Non EU MS; 24 Observers

- Protection of water & ecological resources
- Sustainable & equitable use of water
- Reduce nutrients & hazardous substances
- Manage floods & ice hazards
Challenges and Activities

**Joint** identification and tackling / Sharing Information

- Transnational Monitoring
- Climate Change Strategy
- Greener Navigation
- Tailings Management
- Stakeholder Involvement/
  Public Participation
- Joint Danube Survey
- Accident Warning System
- Sustainable Hydropower
- Sustainable Agriculture
Transforming National RBM Approaches into Basin-Wide Ones

2021 / 3rd Edition

Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

Drought/Water Resilience - emerging topics

2021 / 2nd Edition

Commitments for Action - Many achievements

Danube Declaration 2022

On 8 February 2022, in Vienna, the ICPDR convened its 4th Ministerial Meeting of Ministers and high-level representatives responsible for water management from the 11 Danube River Basin countries, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia, as well as the European Commission.

This Ministerial Meeting endorsed two essential plans for the Danube: the updated Danube River Basin Management Plan and Danube Flood Risk Management Plan. The meeting also adopted the 2022 Danube Declaration, which makes the highest level of commitment for the ICPDR concerning its future work to address the Danube Basin's shared challenges.
ICPDR International Cooperation

Exchange between RBOs is essential to share experience and learn from each other

ICPDR exchanges with other RBOs on a regular level:

- **Special budget** fund allocated (Thiess River Prize to ICPDR, 2007)
- **Session** at the International River Symposium (Vienna, 2022) and **roundtable discussion** at the ICPDR Secretariat:
  - Mekong Commission, National Mission for Clean Ganga, ORASECOM, OKACOM
- **Study visits** of RBOs / water authorities to ICPDR
- Revision **institutional set-up** of the National Mission for Clean Ganga: Danube cooperation mechanism as key example
  - In the frame of the GIZ Support for Ganga Rejuvenation Programme and the India-EU Water Partnership
Support of ICPDR to the ORASECOM:

- **Orange-Senqu River Learning Box** (based on ICPDR Danube Box)
- **Joint Water Resources Quality Survey** (based on ICPDR JDS)
  - ORASECOM Joint Basin Survey (2010): first shared data on water quality
  - ICPDR supported planning the event and shared know-how
  - The Orange-Senqu River Commission’s team of water resources quality joined the national teams during JDS3 and JDS4 sampling