

IAS within the Danube Region. Politically independent, it will bring together scientists, authorities and stakeholders. The members aim to support exchange of knowledge as well as to promote the transfer of knowhow and expertise to actors at all administrative levels and between regions in a transnational context. Cooperation with existing European and global IAS networks and organizations will foster the success in order to contribute to a sustainable presence of and to a liveable future in the Danube Region.

A few joint projects in single regions were already developed:

1. Eastern and Southern European Network for Invasive Alien Species – A tool to support the management of alien species in Bulgaria (ESENIAS-TOOLS):

The project is funded by the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area 2009-2014, under the Programme BG03 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and aims at networking and at the development of IAS tools within the frame of ESENIAS to support the management of alien species in Bulgaria and in the overall region, including countries in the Lower and Middle Danube River basin.

2. Pilot-study (data collection) on invasive alien species in the Danube Region with a smartphone application developed by the JRC (Danube-IASapp project):

The purpose of this project is to test the practical use of a smartphone app developed by the European Commission's

Joint Research Centre (JRC) as part of the MYGEOSS project, in order to complement environmental monitoring and early warning of IAS occurrences in the Danube River basin.

At the moment, the main focus of DIAS is to develop and harmonize a common mid- and long-term strategy to improve the situation on IAS. The strategy will provide the goals and objectives, but also possible measures and recommendations on seven key topics. Region specific requirements should be mentioned as well as relevant actors. The seven key topics are: description of IAS in the Danube River Basin (also interactions and impact), species pathways of introduction, the creation of an information system and dissemination of knowledge, the classification of IAS: early warning, risk assessment and prioritisation (like black or alert lists), early detection and rapid eradication of IAS, management of established IAS and finally, awareness raising, communication & political work regarding IAS.

After completion of this strategy in 2017, the future work of the network will be to implement the strategy step by step and to develop a living network throughout the whole Danube River Basin and the adjacent region of the Black Sea. It will develop in a flexible way to cover the heterogeneity of the region (sub-groups lower, middle and upper Danube), the huge variety of aquatic to terrestrial species and the scientific complexity of the topic (division of expert working groups).

There is plenty to do! If you would like to join the network, do not hesitate to contact us.

8th International Symposium on Sturgeons (ISS8)

From September 10-16, 2017, the 8th International Symposium on Sturgeons will be organized in Vienna

ISS8 is organised by the World Sturgeon Conservation Society, the Leibnitz Institute of Freshwater Ecology and Inland Fisheries (Berlin), and the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna. It focuses on the dynamics and the drivers of the decline in sturgeon stocks worldwide, while at the same time transferring the lessons to be learnt from sustainable conservation attempts to make the investment in conservation successful.

ISS8 provides the unique opportunity to bring together sturgeon experts from all over the world to discuss and share their ideas and concepts to further improve the management of sturgeons along with their essential habitats. A second stronghold of the conference will be the aquaculture sector. Europe has a large share in sturgeon farming and caviar production. Traditionally, European traders have been the dominating distributors in caviar trade. Therefore, the European focus on caviar and caviar trade will provide a vital input for the conference topics. Quality control, alternative production methods, market trends and col-

laborative approaches in production and marketing, as well as control and enforcement are among the key issues to be addressed to meet the future challenges in this sector.

The conference will comprise scientific sessions on a variety of topics dealing with the ecology of sturgeons, status assessment and management of populations, aquaculture and human impacts. Specific sessions and workshops are dedicated to juvenile rearing, broodstock management and facilitation of large fish migration. Social events and excursions will be organised before, during and after the conference.

ISS8 intends to increase the interaction between presenters and the auditorium. A main aim is to facilitate and stimulate the discussion beyond cultural boundaries to increase the understanding of motivations and to expand on the applicability of new results under regional specific conditions.

For further details please have a look at the webpage: www.iss8.info/

Abstracts can be submitted by June 30, 2017