

Editorial

Thomas Hein: Institute of Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria, e-mail: thomas.hein@boku.ac.at

Cristina Sandu: Department of Ecology, Taxonomy and Nature Conservation, Institute of Biology Bucharest, Romanian Academy, Romania, e-mail: cristina.sandu@dstf.eu

Dear Readers,

Panta Rei – everything is flowing. Using this famous quote of Heraclitus of Ephesus, we refer to the current changes in the IAD. A strong association is like a dynamic ecosystem and needs to show a certain turnover of members in leading roles. A new team is in place since January 2017, ready to strengthen and develop new valences for the IAD presence in the Danube Region. Based on the vote of the general assembly at the 2016 IAD conference in Sibiu, the new IAD President is Cristina Sandu and the new Vice-president is Thomas Hein. The last years during the presidency of Thomas Hein were characterized by an intense cooperation with the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) in various issues and they were scientifically very active. IAD members led key initiatives in the Danube River Basin, such as the Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF) and the Danube Invasive Alien Species (DIAS) and they were active in several other flagship projects of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (DANUBIUS, DREAM, Danube:Future, etc). As a logic consequence, one of the key IAD members, Cristina Sandu, coordinator of the DSTF and several sturgeon related initiatives, is the new president. She is an expert in aquatic ecology and since 2002 she cooperated intensely with IAD, being appointed in 2009 as IAD representative in the ICPDR River Basin Management Expert Group, where IAD has observer status. Since 2012, she coordinates the DSTF established in the frame of the EUSDR Priority Area 6 (Biodiversity) with the goal to support the revival of the Danube sturgeons and other indigenous fish species in the Danube Region.

Furthermore, also the position of general secretary was renewed earlier than planned as Harald Kutzenberger had to step back due to personal reasons. We thank him for his extremely valuable work during his periods as GS starting in 2007. To mention only a few, he was active in bringing so many scientists from various Danube countries together,



*Cristina Sandu,
IAD president*



*Thomas Hein,
IAD Vice president*

initiated the IAD summer camps and was a key promotor of the Danube Day activities all the past years. We really have to thank Harald for his amazing work especially in public participation groups and appreciate to have him on board as a very active IAD member in future as well. Following a decision of the IAD board, until the next elections planned in 2018, Doru Bănăduc was appointed as the new IAD General Secretary. He carries out his regular activity in “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, and cooperated with IAD for over a decade for the organization of the biannual conferences “Aquatic Biodiversity International Conference”, Sibiu/Romania, while in 2016 he contributed to the organization of the last IAD conference in Sibiu. In collaboration with IAD he also published the Transylvanian Review of Systematical and Ecological Research – The Wetlands Diversity. Doru Bănăduc is an expert in fish ecology and was the head of the Natural History Museum of Sibiu before moving at “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu. We welcome him in the new position and looking forward for a very fruitful cooperation.

Also for the IAD journal – Danube News, a new team of editors was selected after Georg Janauer ended his period. During his time as Danube News Editor, eight great volumes were produced, where a high diversity of topics and information concerning our association was presented. The new team of editors comprises Gertrud Haidvogel and Bernd Cyffka. The environmental historian Gertrud Haidvogel is senior scientist at the Institute of Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management, BOKU Vienna. Together with Martin Schmid she established and coordinates the IAD-expert group “Long-term socio-ecological research and environmental history”. Her research focuses on long-term change of riverine landscapes, with focus on fish and human of rivers and floodplains. She is deputy coordinator of Danube:Future, a flagship project of EU-SDR

PA7, Know-ledge Society. Bernd Cyffka is head of the Floodplain Institute Neuburg/Danube (Aueninstitut Neuburg a.d. Donau) and IAD country representative for Germany. His main research fields are floodplain ecology and restoration, landscape ecology and ecosystem services. Furthermore, he is working on floodplain and river restoration as well as its monitoring and management,

Bernd Cyffka: Applied Physical Geography, Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt and Aueninstitut Neuburg/Donau, Germany, e-mail: bernd.cyffka@ku.de

Gertrud Haidvogel: Institute of Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna (BOKU), Austria, e-mail: gertrud.haidvogel@boku.ac.at

Dear Readers,

After four years of successfully editing the Danube News, Georg Janauer expressed his wish to withdraw from this duty in November 2016. We were very pleased to be appointed as a new team of editors and we are highly motivated to continue with similar commitment. Georg Janauer has prepared us excellently for the new task. He handed over the editorship with thorough instructions and recommendations from his many years of practical experience. We wish him all the best and ample time for his other commitments which he often had to neglect in the last four years in favour of the Danube News.

We look forward to our cooperation with the new presidency and general secretary of the IAD and strive for continuing the Danube News as a journal informing the IAD members and the interested readership outside this organisation about remarkable research and pressing questions related to the ecology of the Danube and the societal and connectional role of this large European river. The joint editorship and our different disciplinary backgrounds enable us to adequately address and consider a wide range of topics which are also reflected by the expert groups of the IAD. The envisaged mix of contributions from the natural and social sciences but also from the humanities will hopefully be appreciated by both authors and readers.

Our first Danube News issue, the 35th since September 1999, consists of three major research articles.

Uli Schwarz from FLUVIUS Floodplain Ecology and River Basin Management shares his experiences on the Save River, its threats and restoration potential with us. The structure of the riparian area is mapped within 40 classes, showing the huge extent of softwood and hardwood forests along this riparian corridor. The hydro-morphological assessment de-

scribes human influence on floodplains, habitats and nature conservation.

We hope that the new coordinating team will play a major role in mobilizing more IAD activities at Danube Basin level and increasing its role in transposing the scientific results into future policy tools of the Danube decision makers.



*Bernd Cyffka,
Danube News Editor*



*Gertrud Haidvogel,
Danube News Editor*

scribes how human activities have altered the natural shape and flow of the river. Further focus is on protected areas and biodiversity, floodplain loss and natural flood mitigation. Main threats come from hydropower, dredging and sediment exploitation. With the goal to achieve good ecological status as defined in the WFD there is also river restoration planned along the Sava River. Its aim is to prevent further deterioration and to improve the hydro-morphological conditions.

Severin Hohensinner from the Institute of Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management, BOKU Vienna, and a team of co-authors from Austrian and German research institutes modelled productivity of the floodplain forests of the Viennese Danube around 1825, thereby illustrating the dominance of softwood communities as a consequence of fluvial dynamics. They compared historical and present timber yields and emphasized the high productivity of natural forest stands and concluded that re-established fluvial dynamics would significantly contribute to renewable energy production and support the legal requirements of European water and nature protection legislation.

Georg Frank describes a new project, which was selected for funding by the Danube Transnational Programme. DANUBE parks Connected aims at conserving the Danube as bio-corridor and to better promoting this function. In his contribution, he describes the envisaged pilot actions. WILD island, Danube Riparian Forest Corridor, Danube Dry Habitat Corridor and Danube Free Sky target major aquatic and floodplain habitats and their specific plant communities as well the migration of birds.

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Hydrological catchment of the River Danube

General Secretary:

International Association for Danube Research (IAD)
 (Internationale Arbeitsgemeinschaft Donauforschung)
 Dr. Doru Bănăduc
 (ad.banaduc@yahoo.com; +40 0722604338)
 Faculty of Sciences, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu
 5-7, Ion Rațiu Street, Sibiu, 550012, Romania

Editors:

Prof. Dr. Bernd Cyffka
 Catholic University of Eichstätt
 bernd.cyffka@ku.de
 Dr. Gertrud Haidvogel
 BOKU Vienna
 gertrud.haidvogel@boku.ac.at

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