

3rd Austrian National Participation Day of the European Strategy for the Danube Region Waters 2040: Climate Change and Resilient Water Management in the Danube

Gertrud Haidvogl, Thomas Hein

Institute of Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna, Austria, email: Gertrud.haidvogl@boku.ac.at; Thomas.hein@boku.ac.at

'On Tuesday, April 9, 2024, the 3rd Austrian National Participation Day was organised at the River Lab, Institute of Hydraulic Engineering and River Research (IWA), BOKU University. It was dedicated to the topic 'Waters 2040: Climate Change and Resilient Water Management in the Danube Catchment'.

The National Participation Day was organised by Foster Europe Foundation for Strong European Regions, in collaboration with the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, the BOKU Doctoral School HR21, the International Association of Danube Research (IAD), the Danube Civil Society Forum and the EUSDR Priority Area 10 – Institutional Capacity and Cooperation, under the auspices of the Austrian EUSDR Presidency 2024.

The event, which was attended by experts from 21 nations, started with a keynote speech by Leonore Gewessler, the Austrian Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Mobility, Innovation and Technology. Minister Gewessler emphasized the need to tackle water management challenges related to the climate crisis and its effects in the Danube Region.

She highlighted the role of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) as an important frame for cooperation and cross-sectoral exchange and the need to involve the young generation and the civil society.

National Participation Days in the Danube Region Strategy participating countries are organized regularly. They aim at strengthening trust between public authorities and civil society towards better cooperation for the well-being of people living in the Danube Region. During the Austrian National Participation Day crucial aspects of water management were explored, including cross-priority areas discussions on floods and droughts and their effects on inland water transportation, sustainable energy, water quality, environmental risks, biodiversity, ecosystems, collaboration among relevant institutions, and engagement of citizens. Three key topics relevant to future sustainable water management provided the frame for input presentations and discussions.

- Extreme Hazard and Climate Change
- Biodiversity Crisis & Challenges in Water Quality
- Energy & Transport

PhD students of the BOKU Doctoral School Human Rivers in the 21st Century presented their innovative and highly pertinent research in all three topics and during poster shows during the breaks. Prof. Carmen Postolache, University of



Pressing topics of the Danube's Future were discussed in four world cafes. © Foster Europe

Bucharest and IAD-Expert Group Leader for Water Quality, gave a talk on challenges in Danube Water quality. In the four World Cafes organised in the afternoon 'Co-creation, Co-design and Citizen Science' was another subject of exchange.

As a result of the Participation Day, recommendations on each key area included in the agenda were summarized. This

document will be forwarded to representatives of the EUSDR, e.g., during the Annual Forum in June 2024 and on other occasions. The document and further information can be accessed here:

<https://danubestrategy.eu/events/3rd-npd-austria-waters2040>

International Symposium „Deltas & Wetlands” at DDNI, Tulcea, May 2024

Bernd Cyffka¹, Edward Bratfanof²

¹ Applied Physical Geography, CU Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Floodplain Institute Neuburg-Ingolstadt, Germany, email: bernd.cyffka@ku.de

² Danube Delta Technological Information Center, Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development, Tulcea, Romania, email: edward.bratfanof@ddni.ro

The 'Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development' organized in Tulcea, between May 13 - 17, 2024, the 31st edition of the 'Deltas & Wetlands' International Symposium (<https://ddni.ro/wps/deltaswetlands-31-symposium-2024/>). The event was attended by approx. 200 representatives from 20 countries. It took place under the patronage of IAD (International Association for Danube Research), BENA (Balkan Environment Association), with the support of the Tulcea County Council and the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority.

The Symposium included four sections, covering several research fields: biodiversity and nature conservation, environmental factors, anthropogenic impact, new research approaches regarding climate change in the European Green Deal Challenges, natural and socio-economic resources, GIS & modelling systems.

Honorary plaques with the title 'Researchers Emeritus' were awarded to Nicolae PANIN and Dan BĂLTEANU. Stoica Preda GODEANU presented the book 'The eight layers of our planet', in the process of release.

The Symposium brought together specialists and researchers, among them Andreea STRACHINESCU, Head of unit - DG MARE, Ming JIANG, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Ulrike LEIS, Deputy Director - Project Finance Program European Climate Initiative (EUKI), Delia DIMITRIU, Climate Impact Director – Smarter Mobility Solutions, Nick NELSON – Inter-Fluve from the United States as well as the IAD members Katrin TEUBNER (General Secretary) and Bernd CYFFKA (President).

Two Living Labs were held within the EcoDaLLi project, the main objective of which was to coagulate the governance structures of the Danube in terms of innovative solutions for the ecological restoration, protection and conservation of the Danube basin and the Danube Delta.

Topics of the presentations addressed the pillars of the Danube Delta Decarbonisation Strategy developed by the 3D Initiative



View of the auditorium. © Edward Bratfanof