

DECLARATION OF VIENNA

Agreement on future co-operation and joint activities of DANUBEPARKS - Danube River Network of Protected Areas

Signed on 9th June 2009, Vienna, Austria

The challenge

The Danube is ONE interrelated and interdependent ecosystem. Danube Protected Areas represent unique natural areas with ecological, scenic scientific and cultural significance of international importance playing a key role for the conservation of the Natural heritage.

Today an intensified cooperation of Protected Areas along the Danube corridor is needed to face actual challenges:

- Dynamic economic development imposes increasing pressure on the natural heritage.
- Ongoing habitat fragmentation and lacking strategies for habitat connectivity threatens coherence of PA and NATURA 2000 network.
- Common European objectives defined by Water Framework Directive are still waiting for full implementation in most of the Danube countries.
- The deep impact of hydro morphological alterations in the past has been aggravated and requires coordinated counter active measures.
- Navigation projects in line with the designation of the Danube as Pan-European Transport Corridor VII put new pressure on the river ecosystem.
- Migration processes caused by climate change emphasize the importance of Danube river as ecological corridor connecting different bio-geographic regions and the role of PA as stepping stones.
- Danube PA and Danube fluvial regions lack a common corporate identity as a unique European natural heritage. They need a joint voice on European and international level.

The answer: A new Danube River Network of Protected Areas

Following the appeal launched by the “Declaration of Tulcea” (April 2007) the undersigned representatives of the 12 Protected Areas of 8 Danube countries agree on the

**establishment of a Danube River Network of Protected Areas
as a platform for continuous transnational co-operation of Danube Protected Areas
to develop and implement joint conservation strategies,
coherent management practice
and a common corporate identity of Danube River PA.**

The establishment of the Network and its activities are enabled by the correspondent transnational project DANUBEPARKS in the ETC South East Europe Programme (SEE). DANUBEPARKS has been created to foster conservation agendas on transnational level and to raise the capacity of single PA by the development and implementation of transnational strategies and activities focussing on the following work packages:

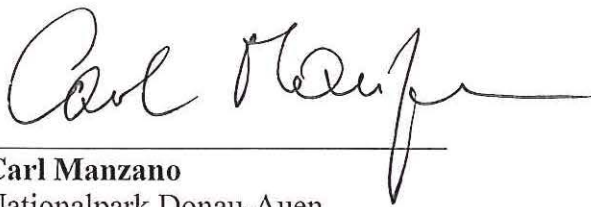
1. Improvement of river morphology and river revitalization
2. Floodplain management and habitat network
3. Conservation activities for Danube flagship species
4. Implementation of NATURA 2000 & transnational monitoring
5. Danube nature tourism
6. Communication and dissemination.

The undersigned will actively participate in the project following their commitments laid down in the project proposal and the individual partnership agreements. A central DANUBEPARKS office will be established by the lead partner Donau-Auen National Park. Project partners will ensure sufficient management resources for the successful project implementation. Network partners not funded by ERDF will participate according to their financial possibilities.

To guarantee active participation of all PA and know-how transfer within DANUBEPARKS standing task forces will be established to work on each work packages. A Steering Committee involving representatives of all PA will be established. Internal and external communication tools will be established to guarantee active participation and involvement of local, national and international stakeholders including the involvement of relevant stakeholders as observer partners.

To establish DANUBEPARKS as a predominant and durable key player for transnational conservation efforts, the generation of long-term transnational follow-up projects will be aspired. Additionally, the comprehension of DANUBEPARKS in international institutions and regulations like ICPDR and the Danube Convention should be realized.

Today the partnership of DANUBEPARKS includes 12 Protected Areas from 8 Danube countries. For the future more PA partners along the Danube River and its main tributaries are invited to join the Network.



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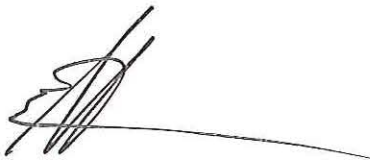
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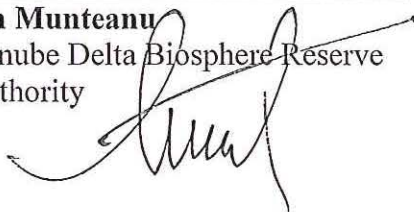


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