

Latest Developments

International River Restoration Workshop



On May 26th-27th, the DANUBEPARKS Project Partners met in Orth/Donau (Donau-Auen National Park, Austria) for discussing the final status of two major documents: The Joint Strategic Paper on Conservation and Navigation, and the Synopsis on River Revitalization Projects along the Danube. Both papers were discussed also in view of follow-up projects and implementation strategies.

The afternoons of the meetings were used for experience exchange on river revitalization: The group visited by boat all revitalization projects directly along the Danube in the National Park, as well as the cross-border revitalization sites at the nearby Morava River.

Boat Tourism Development Workshops



In April and May, we held Workshops and Excursions in Duna-Ipoly National Park (Hungary) and Persina Nature Park (Bulgaria), to discuss and give feedback on newly developed boat excursions of these two partners.

Additionally, the Tourism Strategy for the DANUBEPARKS Network was developed in two workshops at these occasions. The Strategy will be approved during the Steering Committee Meeting in September, together with the Joint Statement on Conservation and Navigation as well as the White-tailed Eagle Action Plan.

Danube Day Activities in the protected areas

Many of the DANUBEPARKS protected areas held some festival, specialized excursion or participated in the national danube day event in their capital. The goal is to raise awareness



for nature protection along the Danube - among others, the issue of dynamic rivers and the Danube-wide monitoring of indicator bird species was transported by all partners.



Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority held the awarding of prizes of the Chance for the Blue Danube Competition and Exhibition in Tulcea.

Persina Nature Park organized a Danube Festival, with focus on the international nature protection within DANUBEPARKS. The festival included presentations of activities, a childrens programme regarding the Danube-wide Monitoring, and some cultural activities.

Duna-Ipoly National Park and BROZ both participated in the national Danube Day events in Budapest respectively Bratislava, with information and childrens programmes.

Donau-Auen National Park held a press excursion as well as a laymens specialized excursion, both focusing on the Danube-wide Monitoring of Little-ringed Plover and Sandmartin.

Upcoming Events

September 4th

[Danube Festival in Austria](#)

Orth/Donau, Donau-Auen National Park

October 18th-19th

[White-tailed Eagle Conference in Hungary](#)

Szekszárd, Duna-Dráva National Park

November 8th

Danube Tourism Conference in Austria

Vienna, Donau-Auen National Park

In cooperation with the Danube Tourism Commission

Sturgeons - Dinosaurs of the Danube in need of protection

Since two years the Danube River Network of Protected Areas is active now in the DANUBEPARKS project to intensify Danube wide cooperation for nature conservation. The network is active in many fields of cooperation, but there is not a single field of nature protection which makes the **need for transnational cooperation** as visible and understandable as the conservation of the **Danube flagship species** like the White-tailed Eagle and the Danube sturgeons.



For the White-tailed Eagle, DANUBEPARKS has elaborated the “Action Plan for the Conservation of the White-tailed Eagle at the Danube”. On October 18th-19th, the [International White-tailed Eagle Conference](#) in Szegszárd (Hungary, Duna-Dráva National Park) will be the opportunity to present this document to the stakeholders and to learn more about the latest results of research and conservation activities for this flagship species. We will inform you in more detail about this in our next newsletter.



For the conservation of the Danube Sturgeons the conservation efforts were intensified in the last months. Definitely, the **International Sturgeon Conference** in the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (March 30th to April 1st) was a milestone in the process for the sturgeon conservation. Experts from all over Europe and North America came together in Tulcea (Romania) to present and discuss various issues and latest aspects in sturgeon conservation.

Taking into consideration two days´ presentations and discussions, a conference resolution has been endorsed as call for the need of intense conservation steps. Most presentations held at the conference are available for [download at the DANUBEPARKS Website](#).



This coming together of international experts on the field of sturgeon conservation has been used to continue with the joint elaboration of a **Danube wide LIFE+ Nature project**. This process was started with bilateral meetings already in 2010 and a first transnational workshop in December 2010 in the Donau-Auen National Park. All the know-how and joint efforts result now in the definition of a joint conservation project. Under the lead of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority, a Danube wide partnership has applied in the LIFE+ fund for the project "**Linking transnational Strategy and Action to Protect and Restore Danube Sturgeon.**"



The project brings together renowned sturgeon research and protection institutions as well as the protected areas along the Danube. It focuses on two major issues for sturgeon protection, that are in the field of competence of the project partners: The protection and restoration of habitats of sturgeons, and the genetic integrity and sound hatchery operations for restocking purposes.

For the conservation of the sturgeons it is not enough to bring together the experts and fish ecologist. A **sensitization of the**



wide public is necessary to promote the fascination of these dinosaurs of the Danube; raised public awareness could contribute to push the conservation efforts forward. Therefore, all the DANUBEPARKS conservation actions have been accompanied by press work and media publications.

The vision behind all these efforts is to conserve the Danube sturgeons and to bring them back to the Upper Danube where nearly all of them are already extinct due to a lack of migration possibilities. This issue should be visualized by the **“migration” of artificial sturgeon statues** from the Danube Delta upstream, passing the dams of the Iron Gates and Gabčíkovo and reaching – like in the past - the spawning areas in the Upper Danube. In nature, unfortunately, this is still a vision, but the Sturgeon migration campaign will bring a sturgeon statue as visual landmark to the Donau-Auen National Park visitor centre in Orth/Donau (Austria) right in time for the [DANUBEPARKS Danube Nature Festival](#) on 4th September.

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