

Minutes

1st (kick-off) Meeting of the Steering Group of EUDRS PA 5

Budapest, 09 June 2011

Present: See the attached List of Participants (Annex 1)

In the name of the Hungarian Ministry of Regional Development, Mr László Kóthay welcomed the members, observers and guests of the Steering Group (SG).

Before the official start of the meeting

All participants at the meeting introduced themselves.

Mr Olivier Baudalet explained the role of the actors in the EU Danube Region Strategy (DRS). He emphasised that the EU Commission will help, facilitate the work of the Priority Area Coordinators (PAC) by providing technical assistance and a WEB platform, but the ownership of the DRS is in the hand of the 14 Danubian countries. He also underlined that ICPDR has got a mandate from the Contracting Parties to coordinate water related trans-boundary issues in the Danube Basin so it should be an observer in the SG. The role of the ICPDR is different depending on types of actions, i.e. there are actions where it is mentioned as a project leader, actions where it has a role, and ones in which it does not have any role. Responsibilities have to be given in the best place. As for the immediate tasks of the SG, he mentioned that:

- existing (already up and running) projects that support DRS should be identified,
- the SG should meet at least once a year,
- one seminar with stakeholders should be organised once a year,
- new targets shall be set till the end of June,
- the actions have to be broken down to operational steps with responsible persons and deadlines and the first yearly report has to be prepared in summer 2012. Until then the following shall be achieved: each action has milestones with deadlines/responsible, 3 new projects with Lead Partners are identified, as well as 10 existing projects, SG meets 2/3 times by June; one seminar for stakeholders is organized; a web-site is in place;

The financing of the DRS projects can be done using the remaining budget of the different EU programmes. The potential DRS projects should seek Letter of Support from the SG. The DG Regio will ask the programmes to give priority to these project proposals.

Mr Karl Schweiger underlined there is a lot of overlapping with the activity of the ICPDR.

As an answer to the questions raised by **Mr Micun Stanic** it was clarified that if a target is adopted by the SG and approved by the High Level Group (HLG) then it will be obligatory for the Member States

(MS). It is the HLG that decides on targets on the proposal of the SG. DG Climate will be invited based on the issues discussed.

Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved with the changes. The final agenda is to be found in Annex 2)

Presentation of PA5

Mr Péter Bakonyi presented the position of PA5 within the DRS, the tasks of the SG and the objectives and targets of PA5 (the presentation can be found in Annex 3).

Discussion of the Rules of Procedures of the Steering Group

Ms Petra Szávics presented the main parts of the Rules of Procedure that was distributed to the members of SG prior to the meeting, highlighting the open questions (the presentation can be found in Annex 4) . The interventions, received from all members present, as well as, ICPDR Secretariat after discussions were incorporated into the text.

The major interventions are:

- DG Climate will be invited based on issues discussed;
- the ICPDR Secretariat will be permanent observer;
- if advisors are invited the PAC should be notified prior to the meeting;
- the deadline to send out documents is 15 working days;
- the invitation to the meeting should be sent out one month ahead;
- the discussion after the meeting should correspond to the topics discussed at the meeting;
- ideally the dates of the meeting should be pre-set.

Discussion on the Implementation Plan

Ms Petra Szávics presented the main points of the Implementation Framework (presentation is to be found in Annex 4). The proposed deadlines of the general implementation process have been modified to speed up the process.

The target set in the Action Plan was approved. Also, out of the two new targets proposed by Romania, the SG approved one more, this being related to the Accident Risk Spots inventory of ICPDR. The members of the SG are asked to propose further targets for PA5 before the end of June.

Mr Olivier Baudalet reminded the SG that the stakeholder meeting should be before the Annual Reporting.

The members of the SG are asked to identify already running projects that can be DRS flagship project candidates. Special attention should be paid to the example projects mentioned in the Action Plan.

Discussion on the Role of ICPDR

Mr Phillip Weller informed the SG that an agreement would be signed by the Hungarian Presidency and the ICPDR Executive Secretary on the role of ICPDR in the work of PA4 and PA5. The agreement is in line with the discussion at the PA 5 SG Meeting that is:

- the ICPDR Secretariat will be a permanent observer in PA4 and PA5 SG;
- the SGs and the ICPDR Secretariat will agree on the technicalities of the cooperation.

The agreement is subject to approval of the Heads of Delegations in ICPDR.

As for the details of the role of ICPDR, Mr Weller emphasised that the Flood Protection Expert Group (FP EG) and the Accident Prevention Group (ACP) of ICPDR should be the basic pillars of cooperation. He also suggested that the SG Meeting could be held back-to-back with the meetings of the Heads of Delegations of ICPDR (e.g. Standing Working Group Meeting in June and the Ordinary Meeting in December). Further the ICPDRS Secretariat and the PACs should meet informally more frequently. PACs formulated that there might be practical problems in organizing back-to-back meetings since the decision-making deadlines of the EUSDR do not correspond with the two dates mentioned, as well as there might be problems with the administrative and organizational issues.

The SG will rely on the work of the FP EG and ACP and will further elaborate on the feasibility of the other suggestions.

The meeting was closed on time.