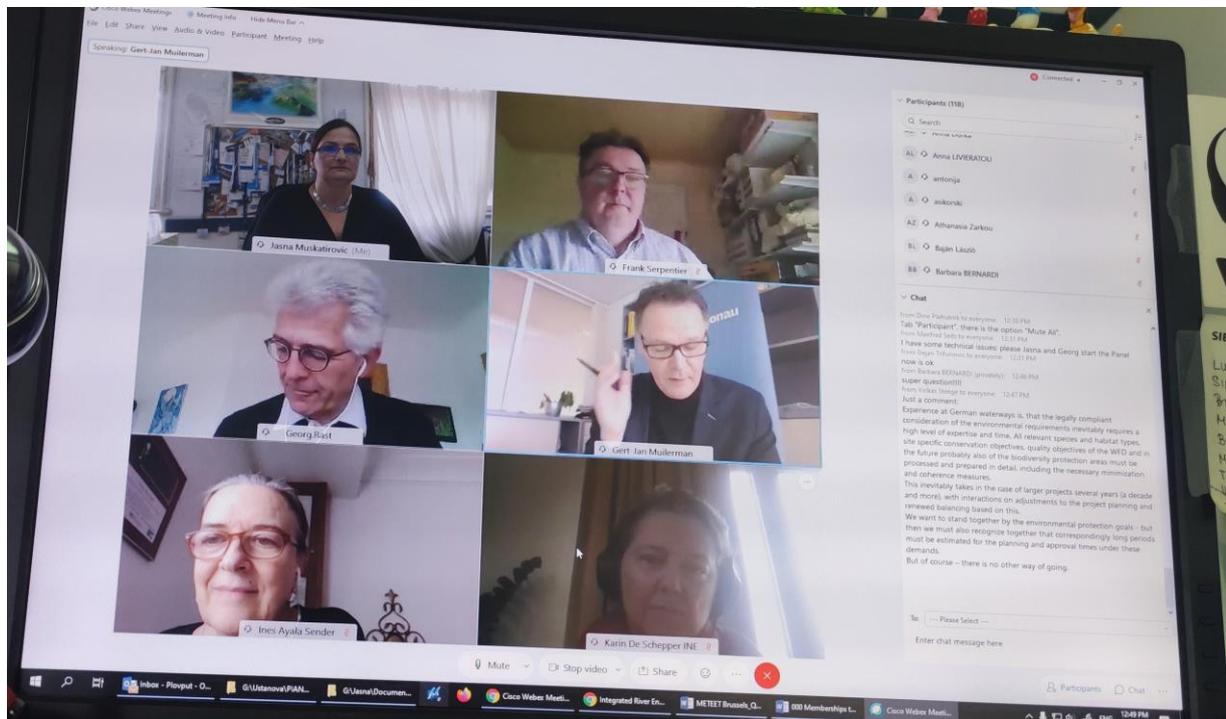




Mixed Environment Transport External Expert Team (METEET) on Integrated Planning of Inland Waterways Transport Projects

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Flash Report on METEET Brussels





On 16 March 2021, the European Commission (DG MOVE, DG ENV and INEA) and the Danube Commission in cooperation with other stakeholders, organized the online (WebEx platform) METEET workshop on environmental legislation requirements and inland waterway navigation projects. The workshop was attended by 138 participants from 18 European countries and a large number of institutions. The workshop was moderated by Ms Désirée Oen (DG MOVE). Introductory and concluding words were given by the new coordinator of the Rhine-Danube corridor, Ms Inés Ayala Sender.

The aim of the workshop was to raise awareness of the EU environmental legislation that applies to navigation projects and to identify the key factors for creating win-win solutions for rivers ecosystems and inland navigation.

Various presentations by DG ENV representatives increased the insights into EU policies and the complex legal details in the field of environmental protection and were combined with interactive reflections and clarifications on practical applications.

The benefits of integrative and multi-disciplinary planning were presented with examples from a successful IWT project in Austria and from a cross-border project between France and Belgium, as well as experiences in the implementation of a complex highway project in Romania crossing NATURA 2000 areas.

Presentation of lessons learned in the context of previous METEET trainings was provided by Mr Manfred Seitz, General Director of the Secretariat of the Danube Commission. It was emphasized that the METEET workshops/webinars held so far in six countries during the period 2017-2020 represent a good starting point for stakeholders (from both transport-IWT and environmental sector) to understand the complexity of planning of river works and the necessity for a good understanding of responsibilities of the different stakeholders.

Within the agenda, as a point 6., panel discussion was held, and moderated by two METEET trainers, Jasna Muskatirovic and Georg Rast.

Invited panellists were:

- Karin De Schepper, Director INE
- Gert-Jan Muilerman, PA1a co-coordinator, via donau
- Frank Serpentier, Project Leader, De Vlaamse Waterweg

Moderators prepared questions in advance, in coordination with the Danube Commission, and distributed them to panellists before the workshop.

Panel was planned in a way that each panellist receives 2 questions, with one “reserve” question for each, in case that there is no questions from the audience.

Questions were the following:

Karin De Schepper – Inland Navigation Europe - INE

1. As INE works with public waterway managers, in multiple areas, what can you tell us about coherence of EU legislation between environmental and inland waterway sectors
2. How do you see the capacity and available resources in the public sector to manage, coordinate and implement integrative projects?





- 3.(RESERVE) – What might be the influence of future EU taxonomy regulations on integrative projects in the field of inland waterway transport sector?

Gert-Jan Mulerman – PA1a

- 1.As a Priority 1a coordinator, what are your experiences with integration of environmental policies in inland navigation projects in the Danube Region?
- 2.What do you think, what made successful projects successful?
- 3.(RESERVE) – How do you see role of stakeholders forum in successful execution of the project

Frank Serpentier – De Vlaamse Waterweg

- 1.You were a project leader for very complex cross-border project, what can you tell us about lessons learnt on growing complexity of projects in a cross-border context?
- 2.What is your experience on integration of permitting procedures, what would be your recommendations for the future?
- 3.(RESERVE) – What are your thoughts on execution of long lasting projects, from planning to implementation, in view of time limited funding periods (multi-annual financing periods), and new requirements that might evolve along the way (climate proofing, for example)

During the final panel discussion, renowned representatives of the IWT sector concluded that key factors for a successful integration of environmental policies and requirements in inland navigation projects are the following: the coherence of EU legislation between environmental and inland waterway sectors, the capacity and resources available in the public sector to manage, coordinate and implement integrative projects, the importance of the role of the Stakeholders Forum for successful project implementation, and the integration of permitting procedures (infrastructure, environment) in a single procedure ('one-stop shop'), especially for cross-border projects.

After the discussion, there were only 2 questions from the audience, one from Volker Steege (Federal Ministry of Transport, Germany), and other from Jeanne Boughaba (DG ENV, C1).

Presentations are given at the link:

<https://www.danubecommission.org/dc/en/2021/03/17/meteet-workshop-on-environmental-legislation-requirements-and-inland-waterway-navigation-projects-took-place-on-march-16-2021/>

