

Danube Commission
International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
International Sava River Commission

13th Meeting on the Follow-up of the Joint Statement on Guiding Principles on the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin



Danube Commission
Budapest, 14-15 September 2022



Summary Report 13th Meeting on the Follow-up of the Joint Statement on Guiding Principles on the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin

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1. Welcome and introductory statements

The 13th Follow-up Meeting of the Joint Statement on Inland Waterway Transport and Environmental Sustainability in the Danube Basin was held in a hybrid format with representatives of the Danube Commission (DC), the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), the International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC), representatives of the European Commission, national authorities, transport authorities, environmental authorities, water management authorities and NGOs at the premises of the Danube Commission in Budapest on 14-15 September 2022.

The Danube Commission, the ISRBC and the ICPDR, with the support of the European Commission, national authorities and non-governmental organisations, have pooled their efforts to protect the river environment and improve the sustainable development of inland navigation in the Danube River Basin. To this end, annual follow-up meetings to the Joint Declaration are organised.

The meeting, which was attended by 75 participants (26 in person and 49 online), opened with welcoming speeches by the DC President, Ms Liubov Nepop, the Director General of the DC Secretariat, Mr Manfred Seitz, the ICPDR Executive Secretary, Ms Birgit Vogel, and the ISRBC Executive Secretary, Mr Dragan Zeljko.

The representatives of the European Commission, Mr. Alain Baron, Advisor to the Coordinator for the Rhine-Danube Corridor (DG MOVE), Ms. Luca Farkas (DG MOVE), Ms. Jeanne Boughaba (DG Environment) and Mr. Johan Magnuson (DG REGIO) welcomed the participants to the meeting and presented recent important developments from their areas of responsibility. Their presentations were facilitated by video conferencing. Representatives from DG Clima, Mr András Toth and Mr Gert Van Cappellen, Secretary General of PIANC (The World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure) were present in the room. Representatives of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF-CEE) and the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) actively participated in the meeting. Experts from DC Member States (except Bulgaria and the Republic of Moldova) also participated in the meeting. The sessions were chaired by the facilitators: Mr Seitz (DC), Ms Vogel (ICPDR) and Mr Zeljko (ISRBC).

Ms Liubov Nepop (President of DC) welcomed the participants and opened the 13th Follow-up Meeting. She stressed that the Joint Statement (JS) is an important tool for the sustainable development of the Danube waterway and its navigable tributaries and serves as a platform for the exchange of experiences between countries and stakeholders. After presenting the programme for the next two days of the JS meeting, she pointed out the critical recent circumstances that have affected navigation on the Danube, such as the Covid 19 pandemic and this year's extreme droughts across Europe. The most important issue is the devastating impact of the armed conflict in Ukraine. In this context, she mentioned the "EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes Action Plan" and the excellent cooperation between the European Commission/DG MOVE and the Danube Commission in this field.

Mr Manfred Seitz (DC) also welcomed all participants of the 13th Follow-up meeting and presented the agenda for both days, including the technical details of the meeting.

Ms Birgit Vogel (ICPDR) welcomed the participants on behalf of the ICPDR and expressed her gratitude for the participation of experts from various fields. She pointed out in particular that on the second day of the meeting the topic of adaptation to climate change and ecologically compatible river engineering will be discussed.

Mr. Dragan Zeljko (ISRBC) expressed his appreciation for the great interest in this meeting and emphasised the strong commitment to the principles of the Joint Statement. It is expected that the results of this meeting will influence the improvement of the Joint Statement process.

2. Inland waterways and the environment - Policy developments relevant for the Danube region

Mr Alain Baron, Advisor to the Coordinator of the Rhine-Danube Corridor (DG Move), who spoke on behalf of the European Coordinator for the Rhine-Danube Corridor, Ms Ines Ayala Sender, expressed his satisfaction with the meeting and the focusing on the topic of the climate change adaptation and IWT. He emphasized the support of European measures and policy actions for achieving a sustainable transport system in the Danube region with respect to the environmental needs. To that end, he emphasized the excellent cooperation between DG MOVE, DG REGIO and DG Environment in related activities. He noted that on 29 September 2022, the 17th meeting of the Rhine-Danube Core Network Corridor Forum will take place, where the 5th Rhine-Danube Corridor Work Plan will be presented. He pointed to the successful cooperation with the Danube Commission on the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes to help Ukraine export agricultural products as well as import the goods it needs. In the short term, it is crucial that Ukraine continues to be fully integrated into the global supply chains and agricultural markets. He also presented financing aspects through a variety of EU financial instruments and informed on the progress of the revision process of the TEN-T Regulation.

Ms Luca Farkas, European Commission (DG MOVE), provided a speech on EU IWT policies and the related regulatory framework, including forthcoming developments and the NAIADES III Action Plan, including its main objectives. She noted the preparation process of a study to identify and assess the environmental impacts of port operations of inland ports, of their connecting seaports and other modes (rail, road) for activities linked to inland waterway transport, as well as environmentally friendly and sustainable solutions. Ms Farkas pointed out that around €366 million was allocated to IWT in the 2021 CEF calls (around 20% of the total CEF call 2021 funds). The new CEF Call 2022 was published on the CINEA website on 13 September 2022:

https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/2022-cef-transport-call-info-day-2022-10-05_en

The online info day will take place on 5 October 2022.

Ms Jeanne Boughaba (DG Environment) provided a presentation on the latest developments regarding EU environmental policies relevant for inland navigation, including references to the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the third River Basin Management Plans adopted in 2021, the EU Green Deal and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. Referencing the Water Framework Directive (WFD) document, she informed those present about the activities in the frame of the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS). Concerning the CIS guidelines on sediment, it has been published on the EC website:

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/facts_figures/guidance_docs_en.htm

Finally, she provided the latest information on developments with regard to the status of reporting by the member states according to the third River Basin Management Plan.

Questions and Answers:

Mr Georg Rast (environment expert) asked about the timeframe for the TEN-T revision process.

Mr Alain Baron (DG MOVE) replied that in view of the new situation and the possible extension to the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, a slight prolongation of the TEN-T revision process until September 2023 with effect from 1 January 2024 could be expected.

Ms Irene Lucius (WWF CEE) asked for clarification on whether environmental criteria would be recognised in the CEF 2022 call. Mr Baron affirmed this and stressed the competence of CINEA for this question, and that these criteria exist in the second phase of the evaluation process.

3. EUSDR Action Plan and Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan

Mr Dragan Zeljko (ISRBC) introduced agenda item 3 and welcomed two introductory presentations. Mr Johan Magnusson (DG REGIO) provided a presentation on the EUSDR Action Plan and its impact on PA1a, including status and outlook on EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027 (five policy objectives). He explained that the European Green Deal (EGD) was in the background of the Multiregional Strategies (MRS). The EGD provides a common policy framework and common objectives for the MRS and therefore offers a common vision (within each MRS and also across the four MRS). He sees the implementation of the METEET project and the implementation of the DAVID forms as examples of good practice on the Danube.

Ms Viktoria Weissenburger (EUSDR PA1a Technical Secretariat) informed about the Update 2022 on the Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan (FRMMP) for the Danube and its navigable tributaries. She highlighted the previous results in Update 2021 (FRMMP) which involved topics of the ecological status/potential and ecological compatibility of maintenance measures, as well as transnational and environmental issues. Reference is also made to the Danube River Basin Management Plan (DRBMP) Update 2021.

Questions and Answers:

Mr Volker Husing (BfG) asked about the implementation of Article 4.7 of the WFD for dredging work in the context of fairway maintenance. Ms Weissenburger (BfG) answered that this is not the case in many countries, but they ask about the permitting procedure, which is different in each country.

Mr Robert Rafael (PDI) provided a comment on the good work regarding the FRMMP, but in reality, there are problems as navigation on the Danube was blocked for several weeks in July and August this year, which affected business severely. Better cooperation and coordination between river administrations and a number of practical measures are needed in this regard.

4. Presentation of ongoing & forthcoming waterway infrastructure projects in the Danube countries

Mr Dragan Zeljko (ISRBC) introduced the agenda item and presentations on recent experiences of projects with integrated planning and practical implementation of the Joint Statement. All presentations can be downloaded from the website of the Danube Commission:

<https://www.danubecommission.org/dc/en/2022/09/13/danube-commission-hosts-13th-joint-statement-meeting/>

Improvement of the Danube in Hungary – CEF-Study Section Szob – Southern border

Mr Csaba Bede (OVF) gave a presentation on the Improvement of the Danube in Hungary – CEF-Study Section Szob – Southern border.

Questions and Answers:

Mr Philipp Hingerl (Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, Austria) asked about the project concept with regard to the dredged material. Mr Bede answered that the dredged material would be disposed of in the river bed and used between the groynes.

Mr Ivan Mitrovic (Plovput, Serbia) asked about the transboundary consultations during which the programme and EIA and SEA documents were submitted to the Croatian and Slovakian authorities. He inquired whether the documents were submitted also to the competent authorities in the Republic of Serbia.

Mr Bede answered in the affirmative, but there is no feedback from the Serbian side yet.

Border Section Croatia-Serbia – CEF Study “Preparing FAIRway 2 works in the Rhine Danube Corridor”

Ms Lidija Hubalek (Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure, Republic of Croatia) and Mr Ivan Mitrovic (Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure-Directorate for Inland Waterways-Plovput, Republic of Serbia) provided a presentation on the Border Section Croatia-Serbia – CEF Study "Preparing FAIRway 2 works in the Rhine Danube Corridor".

Questions and Answers:

Ms Hubalek and Mr Mitrovic commented on the question of Ms Seman (WWF CEE) on the monitoring parameters focusing on navigation and bottlenecks. It will be input to the hydraulic and morphological modelling of the common stretch (with a time frame of 12 months).

Development of EIA Study for the Action: Improvement of the Navigability Conditions of the Sava River from rkm. 300 to rkm. 329 (Project Jaruge - Novi Grad)

Ms Duska Kunstek (Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure, Republic of Croatia) informed about the Sava River project – Development of EIA Study for the Action: Improvement of the Navigability Conditions of the Sava River from rkm. 300 to rkm. 329 (Project Jaruge - Novi Grad).

Questions and Answers:

Mr Volker Husing (BfG) asked about the work and effects of the Stakeholder Forum (SF) as well as what was good practice. For example, in the area of sediment management it is expected that this will be taken into account in the implementation of the project. On behalf of the ISRBC which leads the SF, Mr Zeljko explained that three meetings were held so far producing good results and many recommendations.

Ms Ana Maria Seman (WWF CEE) asked about the status of the EIA study in Croatia with regard to the appeal by the Croatian Society for the Protection of Birds and Nature. Ms Kunstek confirmed this and said that the case is still at the Administrative Court in Osijek but this does not stop the project and does not affect the approval process of the EIA study at the moment.

Mr Rast noted that in many projects, such as the example of Hungary, there is no direct connection with the provisions of the WFD or Natura 2000. He did not notice the proposed compensation or mitigation measures in projects and also requirements of other directives. With regard to the project in Croatia, Ms Kunstek disagreed with Mr Rast's remarks and stated that by implementing soft engineering measures, a big step towards improving the ecosystem was being taken. Mr Bede replied that he would give a written answer on this question after the end of the meeting, which would be part of the meeting report.

In the written reply from 2 October 2022, which we transmit in full, Mr Bede made a clear statement on behalf of the OVF:

"The basic assumption is that the river sections cannot be downgraded by the intervention. We have included tributary rehabilitation as a compensatory measure. Also, the cutting of the spurs to create a secondary flow zone.

These interventions are compatible with the Water Framework Directive, where fish can be at a sheltered area between the spur channels in the secondary zone where there is still the river is flowing behind the underwater islands. Submerged weir construction, which was intended to stop the riverbed subsidence and help to retain small flows during low water periods is considered as indirect compensation for the Water Framework Directive. This is because sedimentation also has a negative impact on nature, particularly on coastal and adjacent (wetland) NATURA 2000 zones.

The chevron dam is also an indirect compensatory structure, where a lower velocity zone is expected to be created inside the arch, which could also have a positive effect for fish, in addition to creating a secondary flow zone".

Innovation and modernization of lock chambers to increase the safety and intensity of water transport on the Iron Gate I and II

Mr Ivan Mitrovic (Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure-Directorate for Inland Waterways-Plovput, Republic of Serbia) provided a presentation on the modernization of lock chambers to increase the safety and capacity of water transport at Iron Gate I and II.

Questions and Answers:

In response to a question from Mr Christoph Hackel (Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, Austria) about the reduction in operating time and the time vessels spend in the locks after the rehabilitation, Mr Mitrovic replied that the locking time has been reduced from previously 120 minutes to now 75-90 minutes (two chambers system).

Commenting on the project, Mr Rast noted a significant difference between the value of the project and Plovput's annual budget, as well as the need for adequate payment of people involved in such major projects. Mr Mitrovic informed that in projects like this, Plovput is supporting the Ministry with its expert capacities but the ministry is the beneficiary.

Transnational Waterway Monitoring System - WAMOS 2.0

Ms Susanne Bachl (Viadonau) gave a presentation on the Transnational Waterway Monitoring System - WAMOS 2.0.

5. Implementation issues of the Joint Statement & advisory services

Mr Manfred Seitz (DC) emphasized the main challenges for Danube navigation, to cope with the obvious impact of climate change and that targeted actions are needed on EU and member states level. The blockage of navigation in the Bulgarian sector of the Danube over several weeks in July and August due to lack of fairway maintenance was also mentioned. He advocated for a consistent assessment of the impact of climate change in the Danube Region and a future interdisciplinary RTD project within a suitable EU programme in order to create a scientific basis for climate change mitigation strategies and actions both for inland navigation as well as the river ecosystem.

The three Commissions also have a consent that the Platina Manual as important tool of implementing the principles of the Joint Statement needs to be updated and adjusted to the new policy developments. However, for this update an EU funded project will be needed. A new Manual shall also become an online knowledge management system. Danube Region Programme 2021-2027 could offer an opportunity to

update the Manual, the consultation to assess funding options will continue. The yearly Joint Statement Follow-up meetings shall be continued with the special topics as introduced in 2020. He noted that Day 2 of this meeting focuses on climate change adaptation needs and the related human resource requirements on the side of the waterway administrations. The creation of an international platform for the exchange of knowledge and information among waterway managers and river-engineers could foster the continuous progress and the constant advance of ecologically sound river-engineering in the light of increased climate change mitigation and adaptation needs. Discussing the status of the METEET project after eight workshops organized since 2017, he emphasized that a decision how to continue this important exercise in the best possible way is required. Some options are currently under discussion, the next METEET Steering Committee most likely will come up with decisions by the end of the year.

The presented proposals were largely supported by the results of an online questionnaire (*Annex 3*) that was conducted during this part of the meeting.

Mr Dejan Trifunovic (DC) provided an activity report regarding METEET. METEET workshops/webinars were held in seven countries during the period 2017-2022. The last workshop was held for Ukraine on 25 and 26 November 2021. This workshop was successfully implemented online with 100 participants. In total, as a result of the METEET initiative, we have over 300 experts who have passed this training program. The last METEET Steering Committee meeting was held on 1 February 2022, the meeting planned for 19 May 2022 had to be cancelled by DG Move. He noted that DC Secretariat initially prepared a concept for a special METEET workshop on climate proofing, planned for June or September.

Questions and Answers:

At the end of the first day, Ms Lucius (WWF CEE) commented on the very complex EU policy and regulation in both areas, the impact of climate change and new knowledge, mentioning the potential need for an update of the basic Joint Statement document.

In their responses, Ms Vogel, Mr Seitz, and Mr Zeljko welcomed the initiative in principle, but expressed the need for further considerations which shall be part of consultations among the three Commissions.

6. Special topic: Climate change adaptation and ecologically sound river engineering

Mr Manfred Seitz (DC) started the second day of the meeting by inviting Mr Andras Toth (DG Clima) to present the topic "A new instrument: Technical guidance on climate proofing of infrastructure in the period 2021-2027, Commission Notice C(2021) 5430". He reminded that yearly Joint Statement meetings shall be adapted to special topics of interest (e.g., the 2020 JS meeting on sediment, the 2021 JS meeting on climate change). The current meeting was focused on climate change adaptation and ecologically sound river engineering.

Mr Andras Toth (DG Clima) informed of the new EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change, adopted on 24 February 2021 with the vision that, by 2050, the EU will be a climate-resilient society, fully adapted to the unavoidable impacts of climate change. There is a section on water issues in the Strategy, where it is noted that faster adaptation across all concerned sectors will ensure the availability and sustainability of fresh water. He presented requirements on climate proofing of infrastructure in legislation for various EU-funds in the period 2021-2027. Climate proofing will need to be demonstrated before and during implementation of infrastructure projects, at least for CEF financing over the next years.

https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/default/files/adaptation/what/docs/climate_proofing_guidance_en.pdf.

The climate proofing process is divided into two pillars (mitigation and adaptation) and two phases (screening and detailed analysis). He also explained the carbon footprint methodology for infrastructure projects.

Questions and Answers:

Mr Seitz asked whether the climate proofing requirements would be obligatory for the upcoming 2022 CEF calls, to which Mr Toth replied in the affirmative. Mr Seitz was also interested in the fact that it will be an additional requirement for river administrations in this case and what the added value of this new segment is in relation to the EIA. Mr Toth replied that the climate proofing requirements are obligatory, but the guidelines are not. It is important that future major projects take into account the impact of climate change.

Ms Karin De Schepper (INE) pointed out the importance of the issue and informed that the last communication with CINEA was that the climate proofing requirements in the 2022 CEF calls will be the same as in the 2021 CEF calls. The requirements will change for the CEF 2023 calls and there will be further guidance in due time. She asked about the collaboration between DG Clima and CINEA on this matter and when a specific guidance will be available. Mr Toth replied that in line with his expertise and responsibilities in DG Clima, he did not have any information about the communication with CINEA and that he would provide the answer after the meeting.

On 30 September 2022, after additional consultations within DG Clima and CINEA, Mr Toth provided a written information that for the 2021 and 2022 calls for proposals, the work programme encourages, but does not insist on, climate proofing and that from the 2023 call for proposal onwards, climate proofing becomes a requirement (according to the work programme). The current intention is to launch the 2023 call for proposal in about one year, tentatively in September 2023, with opening of the proposals early 2024. CINEA will soon start the preparation of the 2023 call for proposals. Currently, the intention is that DG Clima will follow up with CINEA during the coming year regarding the integration of climate proofing, and to assess the need and opportunity for potential templates or potential additional guidance.

Ms Seman (WWF CEE) asked about the relevance of the climate proofing document - technical guidance to other major projects under other EU programmes, as well as the relationship of this document to the EIA. Mr Toth replied that the document is also relevant for other EU programmes when it comes to major projects. The climate proofing document has not only a technical meaning but also an impact on the ecosystem. He pointed out the link between the climate proofing document and the EIA through Annex D and with the SEA through Annex E.

The meeting continued with expert presentations on the topic: What are the challenges for future ecologically sound river engineering in relation to climate changes (keynote speeches).

Ms Jan Brooke (PIANC-Permanent Task Group on Climate Change) presented perspectives for enhancing navigation and environmental protection in the scope of the climate change. She explained the main challenges for river engineering in the context of climate change and protection/improvement of ecological status, including the key messages of PIANC WG 176 and the concept of "working with nature objectives": www.pianc.org/publications/envicom/wg178.

She also presented the links to two PIANC publications on climate change adaptation planning and dealing with climate change uncertainty: www.pianc.org/publications/envicom/ptgcc-1

She pointed out that uncertainty about rates of change will increase over the next 10 years and that this will be an issue given the design life of navigation infrastructure. For investments beyond 10 years, sensitivity and tolerance tests to a range of climate change scenarios have to be assessed.

Questions and Answers:

Ms Kunstek as the chairperson of ISRBC, replaced Mr Zeljko, who was justifiably absent, asked about climate change adaptation measures in the field of navigation, particularly from a shallow water perspective. Ms Brooke referred to PIANC WG 176 and a number of parallel measures in the scope of river infrastructure and vessel adaptation. Upon request of Ms Lucius (WWF CEE) she also referred to

many case studies on the PIANC website, especially in the field of Working with Nature (<https://sednet.org/library/>).

Mr Heintz Marc Daniel (ICPR) provided a presentation about the Rhine River perspective regarding climate change as well as how to approach climate change issues at the ICPR (organization issues and measures). The two pillars of the measure are the restoration of near-natural structures and flood retention areas. He pointed to the importance of integrating new knowledge, including faster climate changes, into adaptation strategies.

Questions and Answers:

Mr Toth (DG Clima) asked about the irrigation needs in the Rhine basin and how this will be addressed under the ICPR. Mr Heintz replied that the new Low Water Expert Group will look at water consumption and availability. There is also a corresponding study in the Netherlands in this area.

Mr Helmut Habersack (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna) presented the topic of current status and future requirements in education and training of engineers. He noted several important hydrology and hydraulics topics (annual discharge, annual water temperature, sediment, ecology and water quality and river management). Regarding the current status in education and training of engineers, he noted that there is a long tradition and strong practical experience in hydraulic engineering. He advocated the concept of Integrated Hydraulic Engineering and stated that new approaches are needed in the education of engineers in terms of climate change, as well as monitoring, physical and numerical modelling. In his opinion, this can be facilitated by the future Danube Strategy Flagship Project DREAM (Danube River Research and Management) and the Horizon Europe project DANUBE4all which will start on 1 January 2023.

Roundtable: How to meet the challenges for future ecologically sound river engineering and how can the know-how on ecologically sound river engineering gained and disseminated in an optimal way?

Mr Manfred Seitz (DC) opened the panel discussion by inviting the panellists for their viewpoints.

Mr Alain Baron, Advisor to the Coordinator of the Rhine-Danube Corridor, (DG Move) emphasized that DG Move focuses on the topics of policy/regulation development, cross border cooperation framework and financial measures that support the aforementioned priorities. He introduced a colleague from DG Move Unit B.1 Ms Nevena Gavalyugova-Bolsi who will cooperate with river commissions regarding the JS process. He pointed out the importance of the IWT infrastructure and the future focus on monitoring and coordinating maintenance for all river basins in Europe in order to avoid blocking certain river sectors as happened again in the Danube this summer. He emphasized the importance of the implementation of IWT infrastructure projects and informed about the status of current European directives related to inland water transport, financial programs and new deadlines for the revision of the TEN-T Regulation (most likely published in September 2023 with entry into force from beginning of 2024).

Ms Brooke asked about the involvement of DG Move in the WFD CIS Implementation Strategy, which will be very important. Mr Baron replied that this question is relevant for Unit D.3 of DG Move but the Directorates General of the European Commission cooperate in this area anyways.

Ms Dorothe Herpertz, Federal Institute of Hydrology (BfG), emphasized the importance of ensuring education and training for ensuring “ecologically sound river engineers”. There are different levels of impact and different requirements when it comes to education for all aspects of the complex river system. She noted the Interdisciplinary Studies in Koblenz as an example of good practice. She also focused on the topic of administrative capacities and in that sense stated the importance of the implementation of the WFD, which is the link mechanism between the GNS and GES. She mentioned the current reform of the German IWW, where one out of five sectors will deal with ecological water protection.

Ms Ana Maria Seman (WWF CEE) noted the importance of the first ICPDR Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change in 2012, updated in 2018. It confirmed a decrease in water availability for the southern and eastern parts of the Danube River Basin, leading to more frequent incidences of low water levels in the Lower Danube, as observed this year. She noted climate drivers in the Danube River Basin, and indicated the new climate proofing mechanism that will contribute to climate change protection of major projects. She emphasized importance of the Nature-based solutions-NbS as measures that are inspired and supported by nature, which are cost-effective, simultaneously providing environmental, social and economic benefits and helping build resilience. Such measures include the reconnection of cut-off oxbows and meanders or the breaching of the dyke to reconnect the river with its floodplain habitats. Such restoration measures are also good for fighting riverbed erosion. What this means for navigation has to be investigated in a case-by-case manner. It is encouraging that measures for fleet adaptation and river adaptation can be integrated into EU projects and the effects monitored. She emphasized that the cumulative impacts of both climate change and engineering measures on other objectives – flood management, biodiversity conservation, sediment balance – have to be considered more than in the past and integrated in design, planning (e.g., in the EIAs) and in monitoring frameworks. She noted that it is important to avoid further deterioration of the status of water bodies. It will be also a very complex situation in the future how to achieve the current navigation parameters. It considers the revision of the TEN-T Regulation, which in the draft provides for a more flexible approach regarding the exemption of the navigation parameters in duly justified cases, such as due to potential negative impacts on the environment and biodiversity, to be positive.

Mr Gert Van Cappellen, Secretary General of PIANC (The World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure) provided a statement on importance of integrated approach in ecology and river engineering education. He focused on the question of how to ensure sufficient and well-trained engineers in the waterway administrations and how to organize a waterway administration in order to ensure ecologically sound river engineering know-how and capacity for planning and project implementation. Besides the technical and administrative challenge, there is also an organization challenge in education of river engineers. He believes that the lack of know-how in river administrations cannot be compensated by the work of consultants.

Mr Markus Simoner (Austria Supreme Navigation Authority) noted that the topic of climate change is a critical issue for rivers and emphasized the importance of an integrated way in the education of river engineers. Bearing in mind the significant changes in the past years, he advocated for new thinking, a holistic approach, quick and practical solutions in river engineering. He referred to his great experience gained in the last 20 years with hydrotechnical installations on the Austrian part of the Danube. He advocated flexible hydrotechnical solutions as important part of future rehabilitation measures. He noted changes especially to the sediment deficit in the last twenty years. Therefore, the basic philosophy addressing the problem now is that dredged material has to be dumped upstream so as to remain longer in the free-flowing section.

Questions and Answers:

Mr Husing (BfG) explained the effects of climate change on many areas: transport, agriculture, energy, spatial planning, as well as the fact that the discharge contribution is decreasing. This means that we need integral measures for the entire catchment area.

Ms Lucius (WWF CEE) continued with a question on what is most important for integral solutions and how to reach a quick change in scope of political support and management structures. In the discussion in which participated Ms Herpertz, Ms Brooke, Ms Seman and Mr Simoner, it was assessed that both solutions are important, plus resources, as well as institutional capacities at the national and local level.

8. Summary of the meeting and way forward

Mr Manfred Seitz (DC), Ms Birgit Vogel (ICPDR) and Ms Duska Kunstek (ISRBC) reiterated that all three Commissions are constantly trying to improve all related activities, including adaptation of the agenda of the yearly Joint Statement meetings, referring to recent topics of interest and added value, ensuring sufficient participation from both sectors, navigation and environment, and presenting most up-to-date information from project perspectives.

Ms Birgit Vogel pointed out that the issue of climate change is an important water management topic and a critical issue. The ICPDR will keep this topic high on the agenda of its activities and will continue to develop cooperation with the DC and ISRBC under the Joint Statement process. She highlighted the results of the Joint Statement process achieved so far and the balance between hydro-technical projects and the protection and improvement of the environment.

Ms Duska Kunstek (ISRBC) noted that a number of important topics were raised during the JS meeting. There is a time frame for certain topics and therefore we need to act quickly. A step forward has been made and she expects the future development of topics at the next JS meeting.

Mr Manfred Seitz (DC) closed the meeting by thanking ICPDR and ISRBC for jointly organizing the meeting. He expressed his belief that the Danube should be viewed as a multifunctional resource and ecosystem, with a key role for river administrations in the entire management of the river. He advocated that the three commissions continue their work with new challenges using broad knowledge bases, such as PIANC expertise. The Joint Statement process in the last years has also increased the knowledge base. We need to better share this knowledge and anchor it in respective educational institutions. He underlined that the good discussion among the participants in the two-day meeting contributed to that goal as well. He informed that all presentations, the Summary Report and the related documents would be available via the following link:

<https://www.danubecommission.org/dc/en/2022/09/13/danube-commission-hosts-13th-joint-statement-meeting/>

Finally, it was agreed that the next Joint Statement Meeting would be organized by the ISRBC in Zagreb, 13-14 September 2023. As regards a possible special topic, it was proposed to discuss all aspects of the Sava River within the framework of the Joint Statement process.

13th Meeting on the Follow-up of the

Joint Statement on Guiding Principles on the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin and expert workshop on ecological river engineering (integrated river engineering methods and practices)

Final Agenda

Date: 14-15 September 2022

Hosting location: The Danube Commission (hybrid meeting):

<https://danubecommission.webex.com/danubecommission/j.php?MTID=m0c0790fc1d611b0c7a3807c146a5a002>

The objective of the meeting is to ensure a regular information exchange on the progress in the implementation of the *Joint Statement* and its principles in different navigation projects within the Danube River basin by bringing together representatives from the economic sector (navigation), environment/water concerned River Basin Commissions, national governments, academia and NGOs. The aim of presentations and discussions is to reflect what has happened in the last year and how the process will develop in the future, taking into account recent policy developments relevant for the Danube region. Yearly Joint Statement meetings shall be continued and adapted to special topics of interest (2020 on sediment, 2021 on climate change).

DAY 1 • September 14, 2022

9:30	(Virtual) Check-In	
10:00	Welcome and introductory statements	
	Danube Commission (DC) International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC)	<i>Liubov Nepop, DC</i> <i>Birgit Vogel, ICPDR</i> <i>Dragan Zeljko, ISRBC</i>
10:15	Inland waterways and the environment – Policy developments relevant for the Danube region	<i>Moderator: Birgit Vogel, ICPDR,</i>
	Outlook for Danube River Basin waterways in the context of the Rhine-Danube Corridor development and the aspects of resilience of Danube in a framework of fast changes in the climate conditions and their related consequences on navigation.	<i>Alain Baron, EC/DG Move, Advisor to Rhine-Danube corridor coordinator</i>
	EU IWT policies and related regulatory framework, including forthcoming developments and NAIADES III	<i>Luca Fakas, European Commission DG MOVE</i>
	EU environmental policies and latest developments relevant for waterways, including references to Green Deal and EU Biodiversity Strategy	<i>Jeanne Boughaba, European Commission DG ENV</i>
	Questions & Answers	<i>All participants</i>

11:15	EUSDR Action Plan and Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan	<i>Moderator: Dragan Zeljko, ISRBC</i>
	EUSDR Action Plan and its impact on PA1a , including status and outlook on Structural & Cohesion fund in financial period 2021-2027 Update on the Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan (FRMMP) for the Danube and its navigable tributaries	<i>Johan Magnusson, European Commission DG REGIO</i> <i>Viktoria Weissenburger, EUSDR PA1a Technical Secretariat</i>
12:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
13:00	Presentation of ongoing & forthcoming waterway infrastructure projects in the Danube countries (short overview presentations)	<i>Moderator: Dragan Zeljko, ISRBC</i>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improvement of the Danube in Hungary – CEF-Study Section Szob – Southern border - <i>Anita Reichardt/Bede Csaba</i> 2. Border Section Croatia-Serbia – CEF Study “Preparing FAIRway 2 works in the Rhine Danube Corridor” - <i>Lidija Hubalek/Ivan Mitrovic</i> 3. Development of Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the Action: Improvement of the Navigability Conditions of the Sava River from rkm. 300 to rkm. 329 (Project Jaruge - Novi Grad) - <i>Duska Kunstek</i> 4. Innovation and modernization of lock chambers to increase the safety and intensity of water transport on the Iron Gate I and II - <i>Veljko Kovacevic/Ivan Mitrovic</i> 5. Transnational Waterway Monitoring System - WAMOS 2.0 - <i>Susanne Bachl</i> 	
	Questions & Answers	All participants
15:00	Implementation issues of the Joint Statement & advisory services	<i>Moderator: Manfred Seitz, DC</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity report of METEET (Mixed Environmental Transport External Expert Team) • Key issues and future steps in support of the implementation of the Joint Statement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlook for 2023 	<i>ISRBC, ICPDR and DC</i>
16:00	End of the 1 st day	
18:00	<i>Working dinner (organised by DC)</i>	

final version



Joint Statement on Guiding Principles on the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin

Special topic: Climate change adaptation and Ecologically sound River Engineering

Final Agenda

Date: 15 September 2022

Venue: DC, Budapest, Hungary (hybrid meeting):

<https://danubecommission.webex.com/danubecommission/j.php?MTID=m0c0790fc1d611b0c7a3807c146a5a002>

The objectives of the meeting are to:

- Present the new instrument “Technical guidance on climate proofing of infrastructure”
- Exchange experiences and know-how in ecologically sound river engineering
- Discuss how to integrate ecologically sound river engineering into education and training of current and future engineers
- Investigate measures to ensure adequate resources of waterway administrations for ecologically sound river engineering
- Discuss challenges in coordinating navigation development and environmental protection in the light of climate change
- Discuss the needs and conditions of a future international platform for information and know-how exchange in ecologically sound river engineering (every two/three year a technical workshop on international level)

DAY 2 • September 15, 2022

9:00	Arrival and registration of participants	
9:15	1. Welcome and introduction into Day 2	<i>Manfred Seitz, DC</i>
9:20	2. A new instrument: Technical guidance on climate proofing of infrastructure in the period 2021-2027, Commission Notice C(2021) 5430 Introduction into the objective and application of the technical guidance on climate proofing Questions & Answers	<i>Moderator: Birgit Vogel, ICPDR</i> <i>Andras Toth, EC/DG CLIMA</i>

10:00	<p>3. What are the challenges for future ecologically sound river engineering in relation to climate changes (keynote speeches)</p> <p>Perspectives for enhancing navigation and environmental protection in the scope of climate change</p> <p>Fit for climate change – River Rhine's perspective and measures identified</p> <p>Current status and future requirements in education and training of engineers</p>	<p><i>Moderator: Duska Kunstek, ISRBC</i></p> <p><i>Jan Brooke, PIANC Permanent Task Group on Climate Change</i></p> <p><i>Heinz Marc Daniel, Head of Secretariat, ICPDR</i></p> <p><i>Helmut Habersack, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna</i></p>
11:00	Coffee	
11:15	<p>4. Roundtable: How to meet the challenges for future ecologically sound river engineering and how can the know-how on ecologically sound river engineering gained and disseminated in an optimal way;</p> <p>Issues addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to coordinate navigation development and environmental protection in the light of climate change in the most effective way? • How to ensure education and training of ecologically sound river engineers? • How to ensure sufficient and well-trained engineers in the rows of waterway administrations and how to organise a waterway administration in order to ensure ecologically sound river engineering know how and capacity for planning and project implementation? • How to ensure exchange of know-how and practical experiences in ecologically sound river engineering? 	<p><i>Moderator: Manfred Seitz; DC</i></p> <p><i>Speakers proposed:</i></p> <p><i>Alain Baron, EC/DG Move, Advisor to Rhine-Danube corridor coordinator</i></p> <p><i>Geert Van Cappellen, General Secretary of PIANC</i></p> <p><i>Ana Maria Seman, WWF CEE</i></p> <p><i>Markus Simoner, Austria Supreme Navigation Authority</i></p> <p><i>Dorothe Herpertz, Federal Institute of Hydrology (BfG)</i></p>
12:45	<p>5. Summary of Day 2 and way forward</p> <p>Closing remarks</p>	<p><i>Manfred Seitz, DC</i></p> <p><i>Birgit Vogel, ICPDR</i></p> <p><i>Duska Kunstek, ISRBC</i></p>
13:00	<i>End of the 1st workshop</i>	

final version

Registration List

13th Meeting on the Follow-up of the Joint Statement on Guiding Principles on the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin

14-15 September 2022, Danube Commission, Budapest (Hungary), hybrid meeting

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Addition to the list of participants – 13th Joint Statement Meeting (14-15 September 2022)

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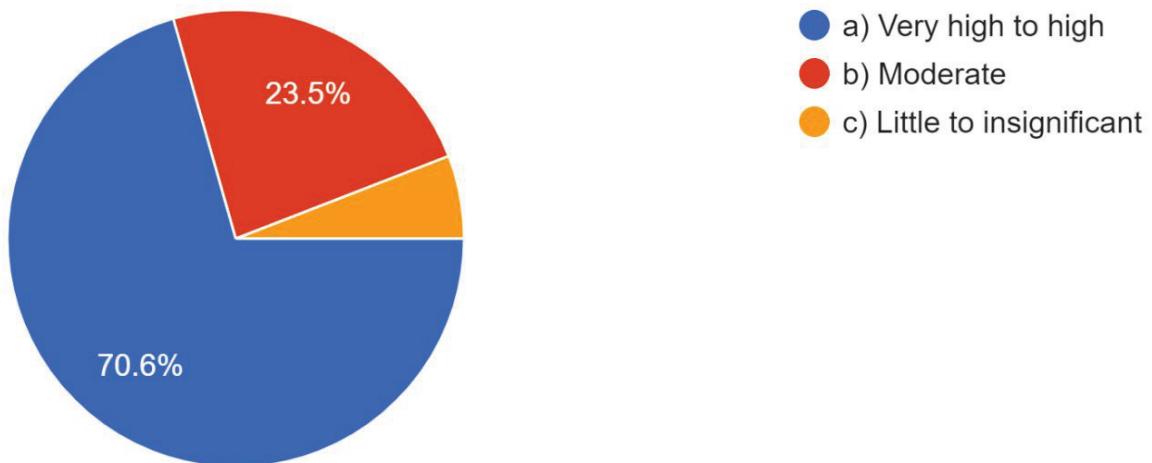
79	Ms.	GAVALYUGOVA-BOLSI Nevena	European Commission Directorate General for Climate Action, Adaptation & Resilience to Climate Change (EC/DG CLIMA)	E-mail: nevena.gavalyugova@ec.europa.eu	On-line
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13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

How do you rate the contribution of the JS to the overall goal?

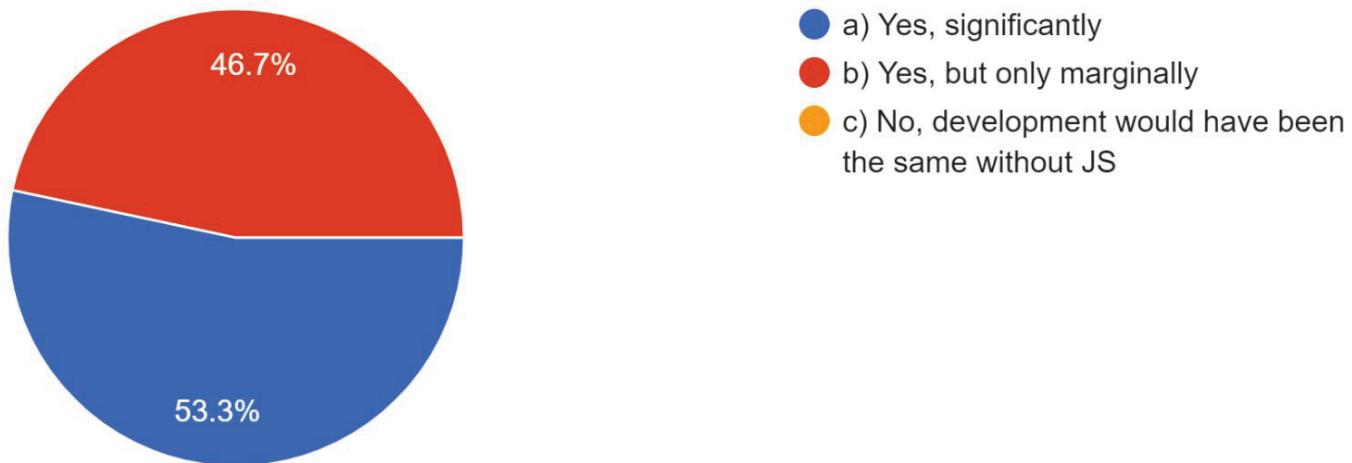
17 responses



13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

Did the application of the JS principles improve the environmental performance of river engineering projects?

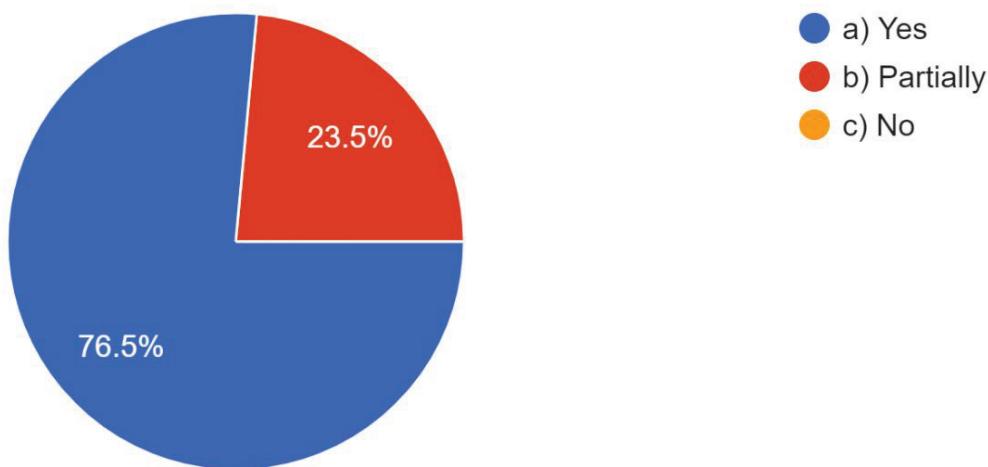
15 responses



13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

Did the application of the JS lead to a better understanding of the needs of the inland navigation sector by the environmental stakeholders?

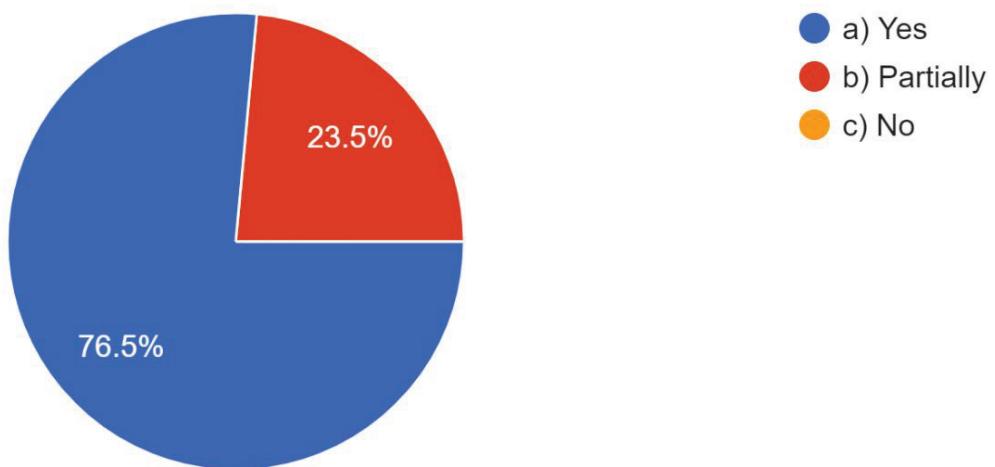
17 responses



13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

Did the application of the JS lead to a better understanding of the environmental concerns by the IWT stakeholders?

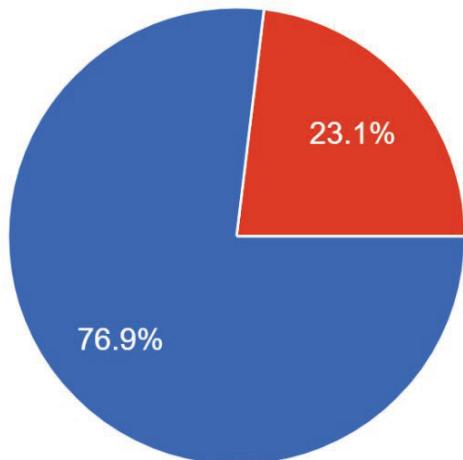
17 responses



13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

How do you assess the impact of current/innovative GNS and GES policies to the JS process?

13 responses

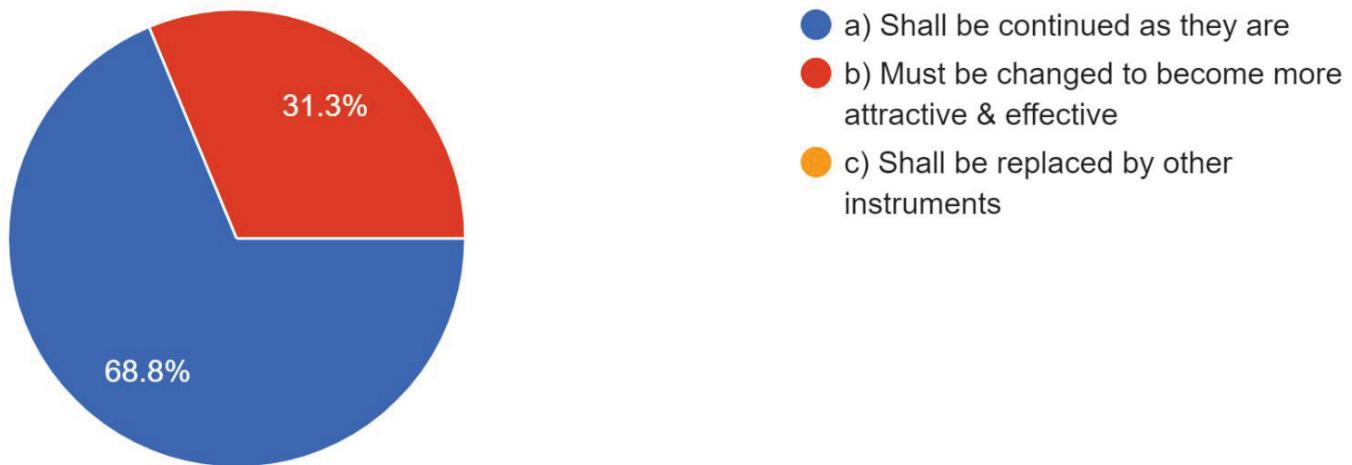


- a) There is direct positive link between GNS/GES policies and JS
- b) There is no sufficient link between GNS/GES policies and JS principles
- c) JS principles are not adequately represented in GNS and GES policies

13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

For the monitoring of the JS process, Annual Follow-up Meetings are organized. How do you assess these meetings?

16 responses



13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

How do you see the need to support the JS process in the framework of new EU period 2021 -2027
(Multiple selection is allowed)

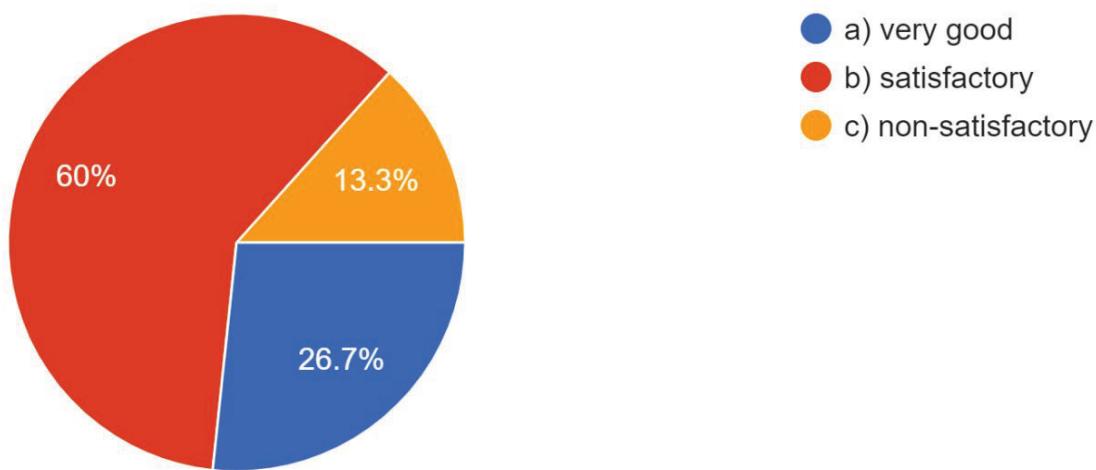
16 responses



13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

How do you rate the level of application of JS principles in the river engineering projects that are being implemented in the Danube countries?

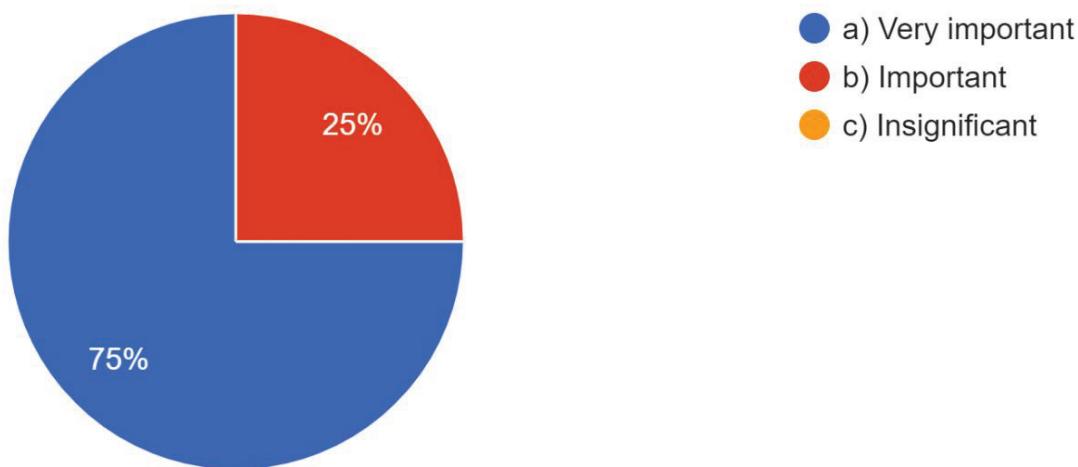
15 responses



13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

How do you assess the concept within the JS process for the exchange of information and knowledge in ecologically sound river engineering (...hop at international level every two/three years)?

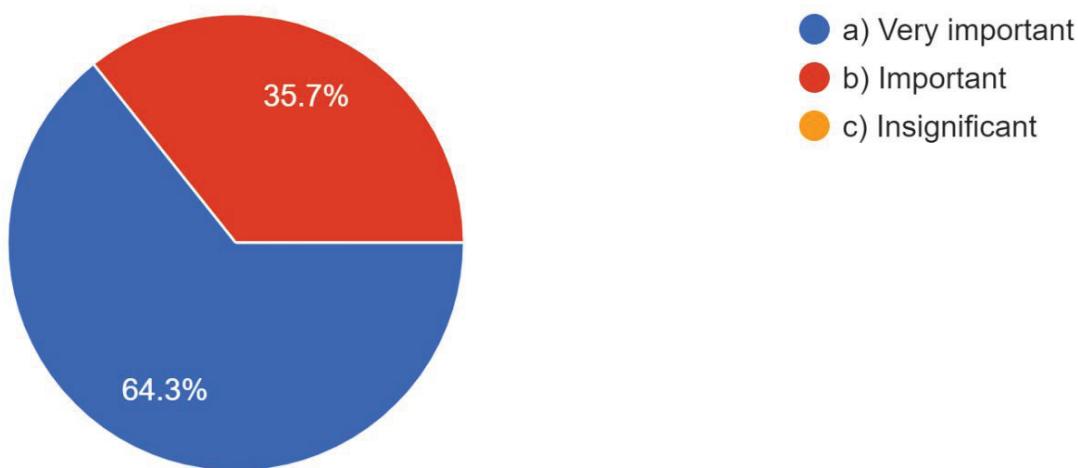
16 responses



13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

METEET was introduced 2016/2017 as new instrument to support the JS process with the execution of specialized expert workshops. How im...u assess METEET activities for the JS process?

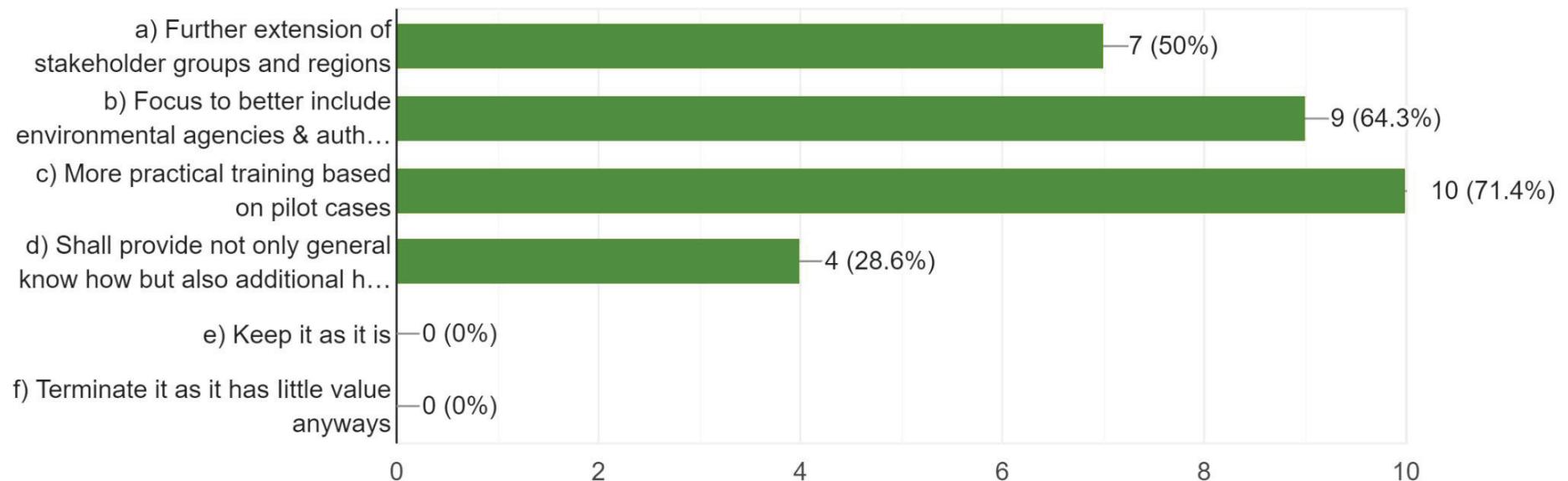
14 responses



13th Joint Statement Meeting
questionnaire

What shall METEET deliver in the future? (Multiple selection is allowed)

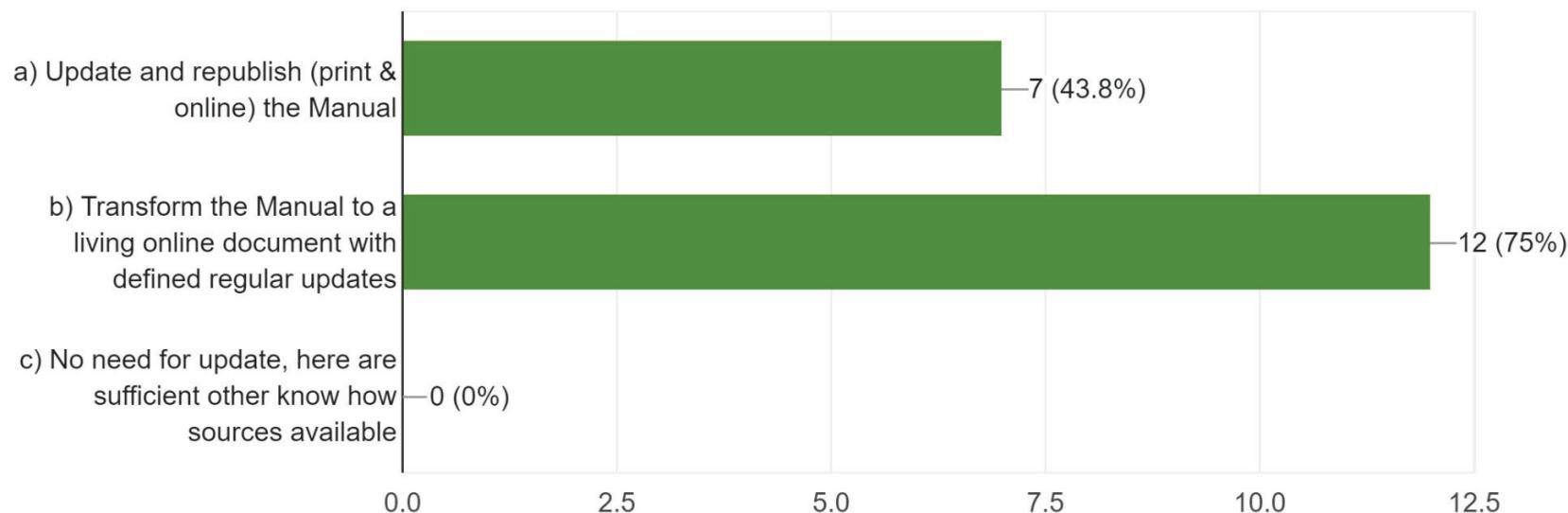
14 responses



13th Joint Statement Meeting questionnaire

The Platina Manual on Good Practice created in 2010 is currently a key information resource for the JS and METEET. How shall the information demand...re be satisfied? (Multiple selection is allowed)

16 responses



**The 13th Joint Statement meeting
Danube Commission, Budapest
14-15 September 2022**

Annex 4 – List of Organization/Authorities involved in the process from 2007

- 1 Croatian Agency for Environment and Nature Protection
- 2 Danube Region Strategy - Water Quality Priority Area, Hungary
- 3 Directorate for Inland Waterways-Plovput, Serbia
- 4 Duna-Ipoly National Park
- 5 Executive Agency for Exploration and Maintenance of the Danube River – EAEMDR
- 6 Executive Agency Maritime Administration, Bulgaria
- 7 Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism, Austria
- 8 German Federal Institute of Hydrology
- 9 JASPERS/EIB, Luxembourg
- 10 Ministry of Agriculture, Hungary
- 11 Ministry of Environment and Forests, Romania
- 12 Ministry of Environment, Slovakia
- 13 Ministry of Interior, Hungary
- 14 Nationalpark Donau-Auen GmbH, Austria
- 15 Tenea d.o.o, Serbia
- 16 Administration of Navigable Canals SH, Romania
- 17 Agency for Inland Waterways, Croatia
- 18 Bavarian Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection, Germany
- 19 BME, Hungary
- 20 Croatian Society for Birds and Nature Protection
- 21 CRUP Zagreb
- 22 Danube Commission (DC)
- 23 Danube Environmental Forum, Germany
- 24 Danube Strategy PAC4, Hungary
- 25 Danube Strategy Point, Austria
- 26 Danube Sturgeon Task Force
- 27 Delta-Pilot, Ukraine
- 28 EAEMDR, Ruse, Bulgaria
- 29 Embassy of the Republic of Serbia, Hungary
- 30 Embassy of Ukraine in Hungary
- 31 ERSTU Duna Regio
- 32 European Commission / DG ENV
- 33 European Commission / DG MOVE
- 34 European Commission / DG REGIO
- 35 European Inland Waterway transport Platform, Belgium
- 36 Expertise en InnovatieCentrum Binnenvaart (EICB), the Netherlands
- 37 Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK), Austria
- 38 Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport, Germany

- 39 Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW), Austria
- 40 General Directorate of Water Management (OVF), Hungary
- 41 Getting to Water/SESYNC, United States
- 42 Hidroing, Croatia
- 43 Hidrokonzalt projektiranje d.o.o., Croatia
- 44 International Association for Danube Research (IAD), Austria
- 45 Inland Navigation Europe (INE), Belgium
- 46 Institut Français, Budapest
- 47 Institut IGH d.d. Zagreb, Croatia
- 48 International Association for the Danube
- 49 International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)
- 50 International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC)
- 51 Interreg-Danube Transnational Programme
- 52 Lower Danube River Administration, Galati, Romania
- 53 Maritime Danube, Ports Administration, Galati, Romania
- 54 Ministry for Innovation and Technology, Budapest, Hungary
- 55 Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Republic of Serbia
- 56 Ministry of Environment and Energy, Croatia
- 57 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Division for the Danube Region Strategy, Hungary
- 58 Ministry of Infrastructure, Ukraine
- 59 Ministry of National Development, Hungary
- 60 Ministry of Technology and Industry, Budapest, Hungary
- 61 Ministry of the sea, transport and infrastructure, Croatia
- 62 Ministry of Transport and Construction, Slovakia
- 63 Ministry of Transport Information Technology and Communications (MTITC), Bulgaria
- 64 Ministry of Transport, Czech Republic
- 65 Ministry of Transport, Romania
- 66 Ministry of Waters and Forests, Romania
- 67 National Institute for Research and Development in Environmental Protection - INCDPM, Romania
- 68 North-Transdanubian Environmental and Water Directorate, Hungary
- 69 Office of the Government of Upper Austria
- 70 PIANC, World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure
- 71 PIM, Serbia
- 72 Expertise en InnovatieCentrum Binnenvaart (EICB), the Netherlands
- 72 Pro Danube International, Austria
- 73 Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)
- 74 Regional Environment Centar, Croatia
- 75 RGO Zagreb
- 76 Rhine-Danube CNC, Brussels, Belgium
- 77 SECI
- 78 Slovak Water Management Enterprise
- 79 State enterprise "Ukrainian Sea Ports Authority"
- 80 State Service for Maritime, Inland Waterway Transport and Shipping of Ukraine (Shipping Administration)
- 81 Tina, Vienna
- 82 Transport Community Secretariat

- 83 University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Austria
- 84 Viadonau, Austria
- 85 Water Research Institute, Slovakia
- 86 Waterborne Transport Development Agency, Slovakia
- 87 Well Consulting, S.R.O., Czech Republic
- 88 Witteveen+Bos, the Netherlands
- 89 WWF Central and Eastern Europe Vienna, Austria
- 90 WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme, Austria
- 91 WWF Germany, WWF Adria, Croatia
- 92 WWF, Hungary



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