

Safeguarding Sturgeons in the Danube Basin

**Project proposal to be submitted to the
2nd call of the DTP**

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Specific shared EUSDR target PA4 and PA6

“Secure viable populations of Danube sturgeon species”

ICPDR Ministerial Declaration 2016

(...) “establish the Danube Sturgeon as the flagship species for the Danube River Basin” (...)

(...) “welcome and support the progress made on sturgeon issues in the framework of the EUSDR, in particular the Program “Sturgeon 2020” elaborated by the Danube Sturgeon Task Force (...) and offer further coordination with the ICPDR in those areas where the ICPDR is holding key competences”

(...)

Sturgeon 2020



Envisaged Specific Objective of the Danube Transnational Program (DTP) – 2.3

Foster the restoration and management of ecological corridors (short title). Strengthen effective approaches to preservation, restoring and management of bio-corridors and wetlands of transnational relevance to contribute to the better conservation status of ecosystems of European relevance.

Overall objective of the project proposal

To establish by 2020, a basin wide partnership and a harmonized approach and significant achievements in support of Danube sturgeons based on the Sturgeon 2020 Program

Build on and link to former and ongoing projects and activities

Specific project objectives

- **Transnational knowledge pool** on Danube Sturgeons based on existing information
- Identified key critical and potential **sturgeon habitats (link to PA 04)**
- Tangible **results and recommendations** formulated for **policy decisions**, RBMPs, nature conservation plans, infrastructure development projects
- Strengthened sturgeon populations by supportive **restocking measures**
- **Transboundary coordinated approaches and actions** to conserve Danube Sturgeons agreed between **key stakeholders** (navigation, hydropower, flood protection, agriculture) by linking available results to sectorial policies and actions
- Contribution to the **implementation of EUSDR** by ensuring linkages between Sturgeon/nature conservation and other sectorial policies.

Envisaged topics

Strengthen Danube Sturgeon Network

- Consolidate and enhance the Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF) as central network for the protection and improvement of Danube sturgeons
- Involve stakeholder groups concerned by activities to safeguard sturgeon populations
- Create an online Danube Sturgeon Knowledge Pool based on existing knowledge on Danube sturgeons and identify status of knowledge in Upper, Middle and Lower Danube



Envisaged topics

Safeguard critical and potential habitats

- Develop a transnational methodology for habitat mapping in the Upper, Middle and Lower Danube and in relevant tributaries
- Perform field surveys in pilot sites identified in a pre-monitoring for both, long-distance migratory and resident sturgeon species
- Cooperation with stakeholders from the navigation and hydropower sectors



Danube Delta National Institute, Tulcea, RO

Envisaged topics

Sturgeon restocking activities

- Prepare future transnational investments in ex-situ facilities
- Prepare future large-scale coordinated restocking programs
- Experimental stocking of Russian sturgeon in the Lower Danube (using suitable habitats as identified by mapping)
- Experimental stocking of sterlet and other species in the Upper and Middle Danube (using suitable habitats as identified by mapping)



Photos: Andras Peteri, HAKI, HU



Envisaged topics

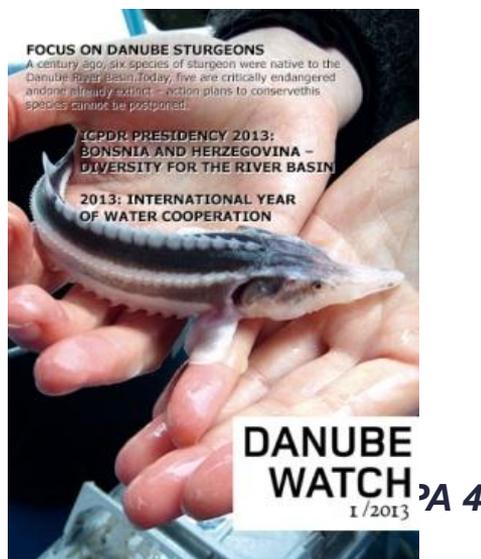
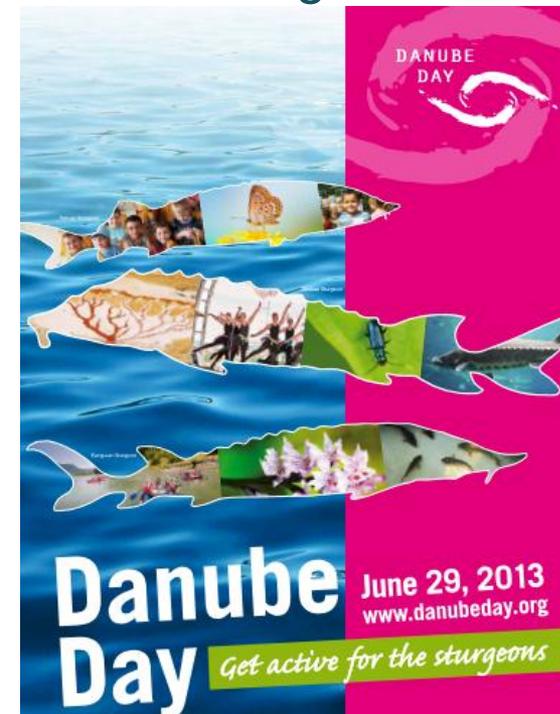
Recommendations for policy makers

- Formulation of concrete recommendations based on the results of compiled existing knowledge (knowledge pool), habitat mapping and experimental restocking
- Promote adjustment of sectorial stakeholder management plans to sturgeon conservation based on the results of the project
- Gain additional political support and harmonization of different stakeholder objectives

Envisaged topics

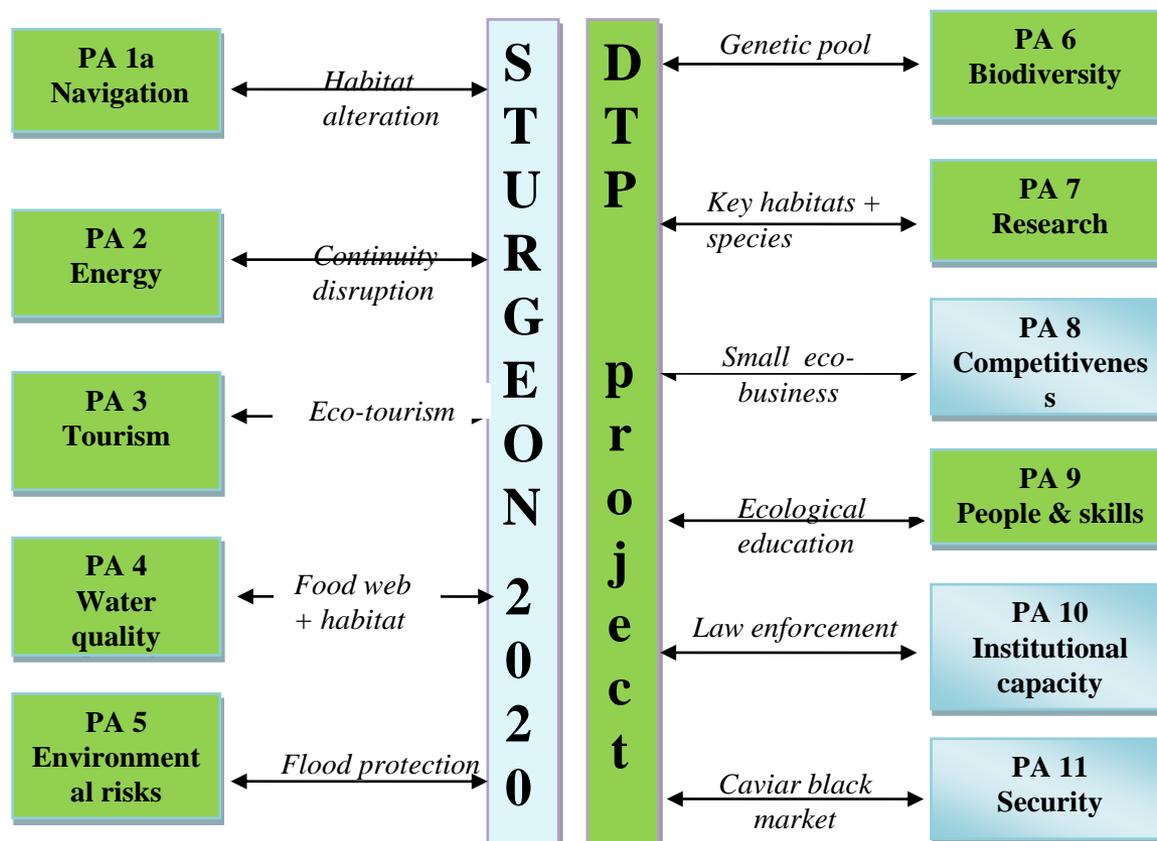
Communication of results and public awareness

- Development of communication tools for different target and stakeholder groups
- Involve and mobilize civil society via media work, meetings, field excursions
- Create educational tools for youth and students including e.g. targeted universities (e.g. water managers, water engineers, ...)



Links to PAs of the EUSDR

- The project requires coordination with several PAs
- Involves DSTF as flagship project of PA6, involves Danube:Future objectives as flagship project of PA 7



Partnership

- Project-coordination: University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna
Project coordinator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Thomas Hein
- Core members of DSTF (from different sectors)
- Further partners from relevant administrations, research, NGOs and key stakeholder groups (e.g. navigation, hydropower, fisheries, tourism, ...) along the whole Danube
- Further associate Strategic Partners for successful implementation



In summary...

- Sturgeons – Flagship species of the Danube River Basin
 - Sturgeon conservation key target for EUSDR (PA4 and PA6)
 - Supported by ICPDR Ministerial Declaration
 - Range of actions required and outlined in “Sturgeon 2020”
 - Elaboration of project proposal for DTP launched by DSTF
 - Addressing key elements of “Sturgeon 2020”
 - Building up basin-wide partnership
 - Link with previous and ongoing projects
 - To be submitted under next call of DTP
- ➔ **Support from EUSDR and PA4 would be highly appreciated!**