

## Joint Declaration

**by the country representatives responsible for the coordination of the Pillar ‘Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region’**  
in the

- Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Public Health,
- Croatian Ministry of Culture,
- Romanian Ministry of Environment and Forests,
- Slovakian Ministry of the Environment,
- Hungarian Ministry of Rural Development,

within the scope of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region.



---

The Danube Region is one of the most outstanding natural areas in Europe, but simultaneously finds itself in processes of dynamic change. This Greater European Area is developing into an integrated Europe under the guiding principle of sustainability and requires that particular attention is paid to environmental issues. The Action Plan approved on April 13, 2011 by the General Affairs Council also contains important measures on the management of the risks, to which the environment is exposed.

### **We are aware**

that the Danube Region has a rich and unique flora and fauna, while at the same time also being exposed to growing pressure from human activity. Cross-border protection and the use of the environmental resources of the Danube Region pose the need and create the possibility for reciprocal coordination of national and regional priorities in the environmental sector. Through close collaboration, our findings and experience in protecting the environment can be used for the benefit of the entire Danube Region.

### **We consider it necessary**

to support the environmental concerns through our involvement as coordinators in the following Priority Areas

- **restoration and maintenance of the quality of waters,**  
coordinated by the Hungarian Ministry of Rural Development  
and the Slovakian Ministry of the Environment,
- **management of environmental risks,**  
coordinated by the Hungarian Ministry of Rural Development  
and the Romanian Ministry of Environment and Forests,
- **preservation of biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils,**  
coordinated by the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment  
and Public Health and the Croatian Ministry of Culture.

Furthermore, we encourage the achievement of the above-mentioned environmental approaches in line with the environmental legislation in all other pillars of the macro-regional Danube Strategy as well.

---

**We consider**

the targets proposed in the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region to be an important basis for effective environmental protection in the Danube Region. In this respect, we view the European Danube Strategy as a dynamic approach, enabling the continuous development of joint targets and actions as well as their adaptation to new requirements.

**We stand up for**

smoothly coordinating the targets and actions from our respective sphere of responsibility as coordinating countries of the Pillar 'Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region'. In particular, we draw attention to the need to keep each other informed of our experiences and to assist with the preservation and further development of our environment by means of reciprocal contacts.

**We hold the view**

that the Pillar 'Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region' has an exceptional importance within the scope of the European Danube Strategy and therefore has to be treated with the same priority as the other pillars of the Danube Strategy.

**We support**

among others the development and implementation of joint projects, which serve the purpose of implementing the Danube Strategy in the field of the Pillar 'Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region'.

**We consider it necessary**

that all available and adequate funding instruments are be used according to the financial possibilities of the countries for the purpose of timely implementation of the Danube Strategy in a goal-oriented manner and for the benefit of the Danube Region as a whole.

---

**We adopt the view**

that integration of existing organisations and networks on local, regional, state and international level is necessary for the further development of the targets and actions in the interest of broadly anchoring the Danube Strategy and promoting an integrative approach. In this respect, we are open to intensively furnishing information to all interested stakeholders and involving the relevant actors with regard to proposals from the regions concerned.

**We seek**

that the implementation of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region and the Pillar 'Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region' together with all interested stakeholders is to be taken as an example for other regions of Europe. In this respect, we are glad to share our experiences with other regions and open to learn their suggestions.

**We appeal to**

the European Commission to assist us in performing our tasks in the long term, duly respecting the principle of subsidiarity.

Niederaltteich, May 26, 2011



**Dr. Markus Söder MdL**

Bavarian State Minister of the Environment and Public Health



**Zoran Šikić**

State Secretary for Nature Conservation in the Croatian Ministry of Culture



**Marin Anton**

State Secretary in the Romanian Ministry of Environment and Forests



**František Zemanovič**

Consul General of the Slovak Republic



**Dr. István Kling**

Deputy State Secretary in the Hungarian Ministry of Rural Development