



Austrian Presidency
of the EU Strategy
for the Danube Region

IMPACT STORY

**ICPDR - The International
Commission for the Protection
of the Danube River:
30 Years of Action for a Cleaner,
Healthier and Safer Danube**





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BACKGROUND

The Danube River Basin, spanning **801,463 km² across 19 countries**, with **79 million people** calling it their home, is Europe's most international river system, rich in ecosystems, landscapes, and cultural history.

In 1994, Danube countries and the EU signed the **Danube River Protection Convention**, creating the ICPDR, which today is the largest international body of river basin experts in Europe. Together, they aim to protect and manage the river sustainably, uniting EU and non-EU nations under the Water Framework and Floods Directives. The ICPDR coordinates efforts to safeguard this vital natural and cultural heritage, ensuring a cleaner, healthier and safer Danube for generations to come.

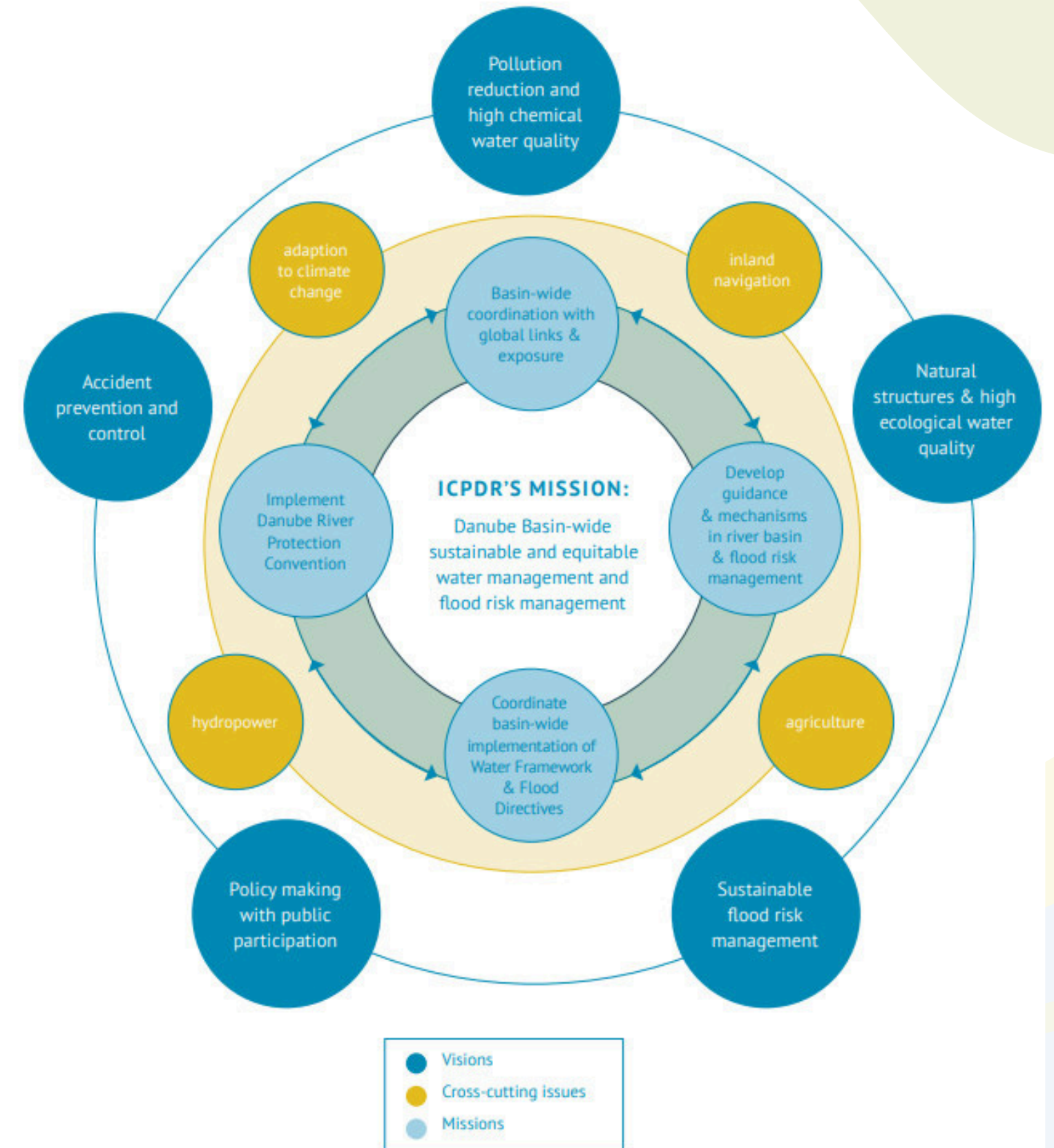


ICPDR Vision & Mission

ABOUT

The ongoing goal of the ICPDR is to implement the **Danube River Protection Convention** and make it a living tool to coordinate sustainable and equitable water management, including conservation, improvement and rational use of waters for the benefit of the Danube River Basin's countries and its people. One of the main benefits provided by the ICPDR is the ability to help national decision-makers balance the competing needs and uses of the Danube River.

Since the ICPDR was established in 1998 it has provided a platform for countries to assess the health of the river and develop **basin-wide plans to address priority issues** such as pollution, hydropower, navigation and adaptation to climate change. By bringing together representatives from the highest ministerial levels, technical experts, members of civil society and the scientific community, the ICPDR has contributed significantly towards improvements in the state of water bodies in the Danube River Basin.





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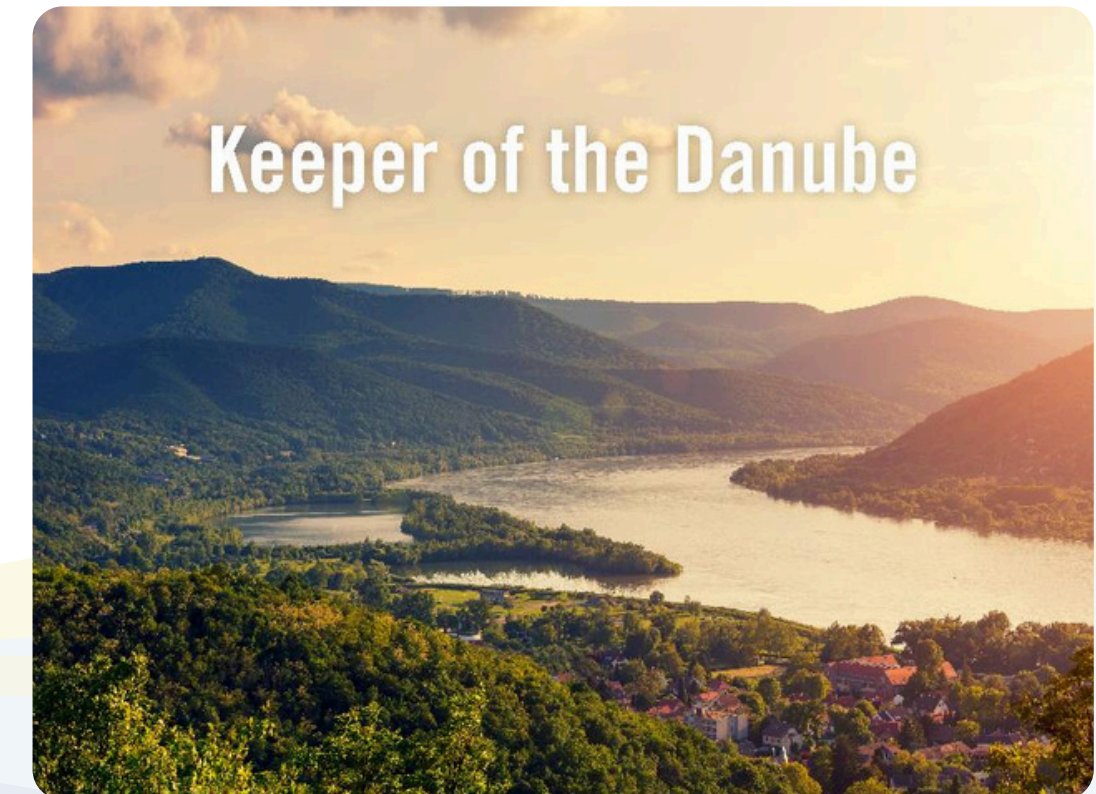
The Danube River Basin exemplifies the enduring bond between **nature and culture**. Its beauty, diversity, and historical significance make it a unique part of our planet, deserving of our collective efforts for conservation and appreciation. As we face 21st-century challenges, the Danube symbolizes the importance of protecting our natural and cultural heritage through **responsible management and international cooperation**. Its ongoing goal is to implement the Danube River Protection Convention and make it a living tool to coordinate sustainable and equitable water management. At the heart of the ICPDR's mission lies a vision for a Danube River that is clean, healthy, and safe - a river that all citizens can enjoy and take pride in.

- **Cleaner waters** through reduced pollution from urban, industrial, and agricultural sources.
- **Healthier waters** by fostering vibrant ecosystems for aquatic flora and fauna.
- **Safer waters** by mitigating the risks and impacts of floods.

The ICPDR continues to serve as a **vital learning hub** and platform for the exchange of experiences and innovation between countries facing vastly different economic and environmental challenges. It also continues to pioneer inter-sectoral cooperation and structured dialogue across the different users of the Danube's water resources from navigation and water supply to hydropower and sanitation.



Alex Höbart



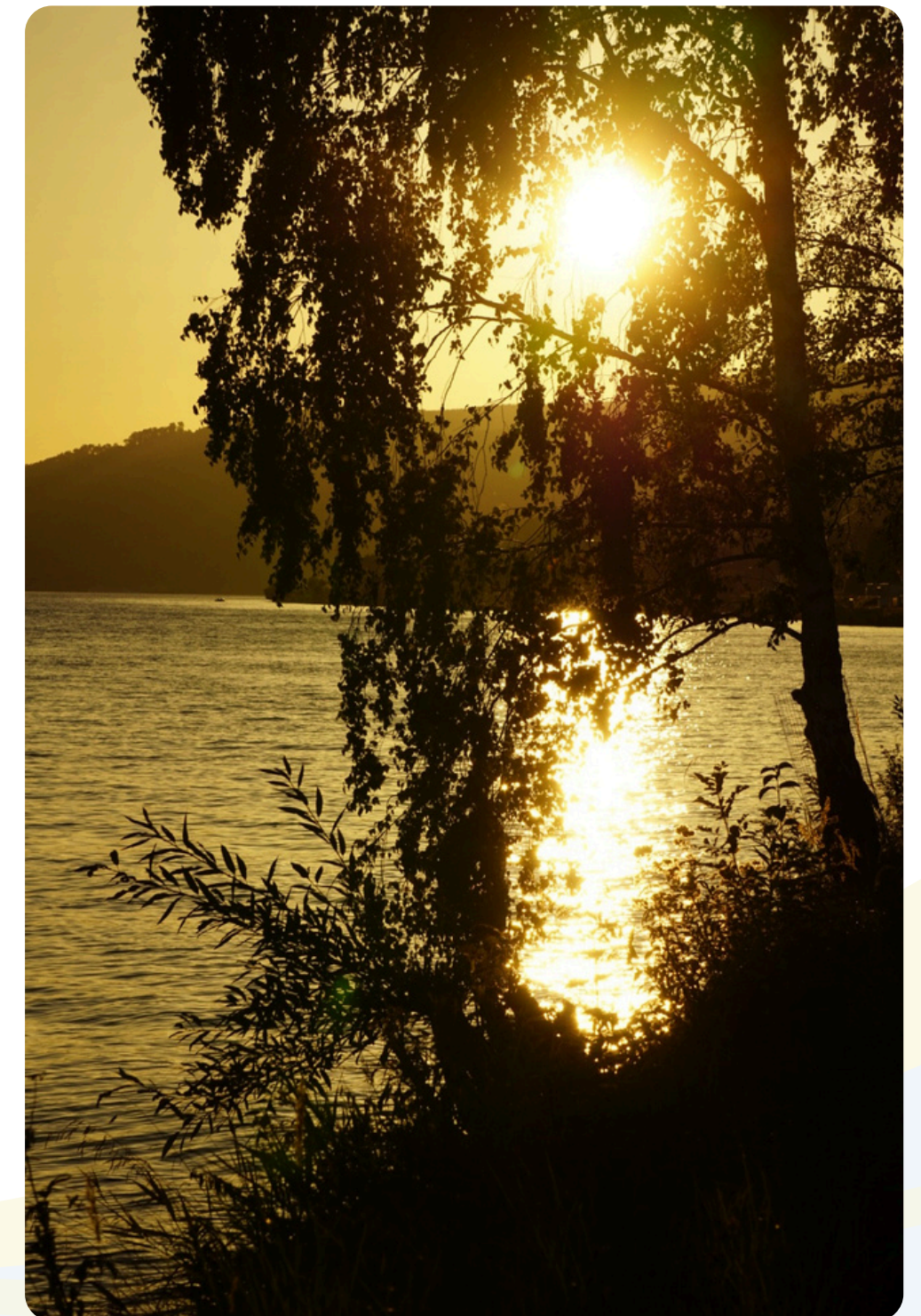


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CONNECTION WITH THE DANUBE REGION

The ICPDR stands as a beacon of **effective transboundary water governance** with a commitment to cooperation and public participation solidifying its position as a champion of rivers, vital natural resources, historically focal points of transboundary governance. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, the ICPDR fosters dialogue and consensus-building, steering away from conflicts and towards shared solutions.

The ICPDR's commitment to **collaboration across the Danube River Basin** is amplified through its partnership with the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR). The EUSDR strengthens cooperative frameworks and supports existing institutions that help Member States to implement EU legislation. Close cooperation with the ICPDR with its experience and mandate in water management is therefore very important. The ICPDR and EUSDR **coordinate their activities to utilise synergies**. Together, they strengthen efforts to address regional challenges through public participation, stakeholder engagement, and coordinated action. The **EUSDR's Action Plan** targeting 11 Priority Areas, including Water Quality (PA 4) and Environmental Risks (PA 5), aligns closely with ICPDR's work in water management and policy. This cooperation boosts updating and implementation of the Danube River Basin Management Plan and the Flood Risk Management Plan, ensuring sustainable water management and environmental resilience.





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More information about the ICPDR

<https://www.icpdr.org/>

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ICPDR IKSD

International Commission
for the Protection
of the Danube River

Internationale Kommission
zum Schutz der Donau