



FACTSHEET

2012

Conservation

The Lower Danube Green Corridor



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The most ambitious wetland protection and restoration initiative in Europe

In 2000, the governments of Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine pledged to work together to establish a green corridor along the entire length of the Lower Danube River.

The Lower Danube Green Corridor Declaration, recognized the need and responsibility of the four governments to protect and manage in a sustainable way one of the most outstanding biodiversity regions in the world.

The Lower Danube Green Corridor was created along the river's final 1,000 km, covering an area of 11,574 km².

The agreement commits Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Ukraine to preserve a total of 935,000 ha, including enhanced protection for 775,000 ha of existing protected areas, and new protection for another 160,000 ha, and to restore 224,000 ha of former wetland areas. The four countries also pledged to promote sustainable development along the Lower Danube.

About the Lower Danube

After squeezing through the Iron Gates gorge and dams between Serbia and Romania, the Danube flows free for 1,000 kilometers through Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova and Ukraine before emptying into the Black Sea. The Lower Danube is one of the last free-flowing stretches of river in Europe.

Dependent on this part of the river are not only some of Europe's greatest natural treasures, but also the 29 million people who live in the Lower Danube River basin – people who directly benefit from the many services that the river provides, from drinking water to natural resources and recreation.

€500

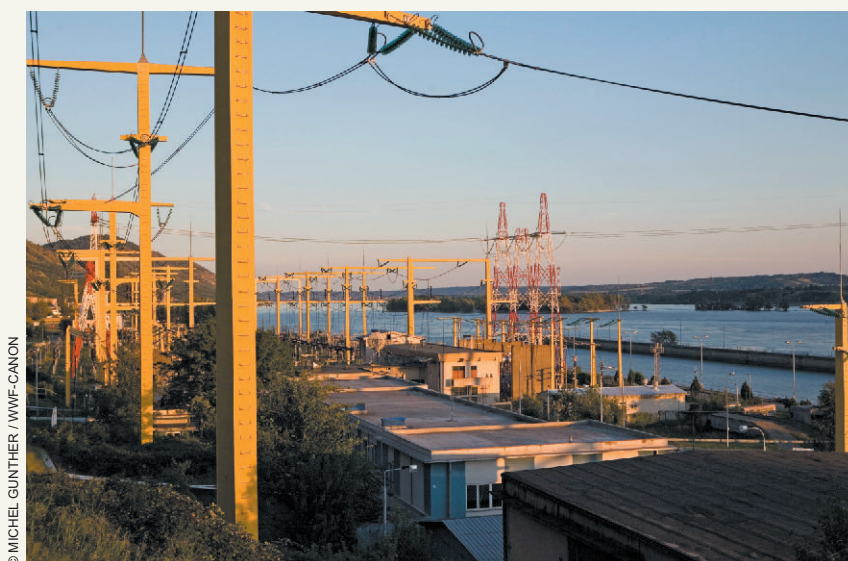
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THE VALUE OF DANUBE
FLOODPLAINS

The price to pay for canalizing the river will be too high

WWF analyses show that further diking and dredging would lead to incision of the river bed and sinking of the ground water that is connected with it, drying out of wells and riparian wetlands. Worryingly, in the new European strategies the name of the Danube is often replaced simply with the phrase “part of Corridor VII” of the trans-European transport network, and the whole Lower Danube is referred to as “a navigation bottleneck that is to be improved”.

A way forward – the Joint Statement on Navigation

In 2007, a dialogue process led by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, the Sava and Danube River Commissions brought together navigation and environmental interests to agree a way forward for developing navigation while safeguarding environmental and other values. The resulting "Joint Statement on Inland Navigation and Environmental Sustainability in the Danube River Basin", which has been agreed by the Danube countries and key stakeholders, sets out key principles to guide further navigation development, including integrated planning involving environmental and other interests in project development from the beginning. The principles, which support implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive, are now being applied to navigation development on the section between Vienna and Bratislava.



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