

## Workshop on Sludge management in the Danube Region for a greener EU

### Outline

Recognizing the development of waste water treatment in the Danube Region and consequently the growing need for sewage sludge treatment and recovery, the [EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Priority Area Water Quality](#) (EUSDR PA4), supported by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade initiated in 2020 the elaboration of a preparatory [study](#) on sewage sludge treatment and recovery in the Danube Region.

The study was carried out by TRENECON Consulting and Planning Ltd, finalized in March 2021 and its content was consulted with countries of the Danube Region within the framework of the Steering Group of EUSDR PA4. In the study, an overview is provided on the information available on the Danube countries' sludge management, the best practices and difficulties and the study provides recommendations for future steps to be taken.

The situation is varying across the Danube Region. In some countries advanced waste water treatment and sludge management practices exist while in others still the establishment of the waste water treatment facilities is the main challenge. Whereas some countries have specific sludge management and recovery strategies, others manage sludge in line with the criteria set out in their water and sewage management strategies. There are differences in the administrative backgrounds, the focus and the applied techniques however common points in management exist and common targets are derived from the EC legislation and strategies. Regardless of the embeddedness of countries actions into EU legislation, sludge can be considered an important resource and, at the same time, a risk for the environment in all EUSDR countries concerning soil and water quality as well as human health.

Considering the [European Green Deal](#), the issue of sludge is specifically important as it has high energy content and contains several materials, notably phosphorus, that are important input materials for the chemical industry and agriculture.

In light of the conclusions from the above sludge management study, the EUSDR Priority Area Water Quality with cooperation of the International Commission of the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), the Danube Water Programme (DWP) and the International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC) [call for a stakeholder workshop on Sludge management in the Danube Region for a greener EU](#) on 10 June 2021.

### Objectives

The main aim of the workshop is to discuss the situation of sewage sludge management in the Danube Region. It will set the scene on the situation and trends and raise awareness on this important but so far relatively neglected topic. It will give a policy context in order to boost knowledge exchange especially in light of the ongoing review of the 86/278/EEC Sewage Sludge Directive. The workshop will also go into the technological context to give up-to-date information on the new trends in the related technologies by assisting to establish common understanding and knowledge development for long-term planning of sludge management in the Danube Region countries. The workshop is planning to kick-off the discussion on sewage sludge management in the Danube Region and pave the way towards more in-depth policy and technological dialogue on this issue.

Primary target group for the event is national sewage sludge experts and interested stakeholders in the Danube Region and in Europe, policy makers, water and sludge managers and thematic coordinators.

The workshop, planned to be held in a virtual format, would feature presentations and roundtable discussion about policy and technological contexts of sewage sludge management in the Danube Region and its countries; on EU legislation in light of the current revision process, operationalising Circular Economy for sewage sludge management (including recovery and reuse of resources/water/energy).

Invited speakers would include experts from EC DG ENV, JRC, ICPDR, ISRBC, DWP, EUSDR, EUSBR, GWP. *The event received approval to be a Green Week 2021 Partner event.*



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