

AS TIME FLOWS BY 1993 - 2023

30
1993
2023



International Association
of Water Service Companies
in the Danube River
Catchment Area

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„WHAT A RIDE!“



Walter Kling
IAWD President

30 years ago, we started reaching out across the region, to countries that had lived a very separated life for decades, and to colleagues we had never met. The tools we now routinely use to connect weren't available back then. The internet was in its infancy. Video conferences were science fiction. E-mail was a hobby for rocket scientists.

Still, we succeeded in getting together, driven by a shared vision for the planet's most international river basin - to build a thriving community of water professionals that cooperate and share their knowledge to protect treasured natural resources, improve utility performance, and provide altogether 80 million people with healthy drinking water.

This is no small feat, but even more remarkable is the fact that IAWD kept going and kept growing for three solid decades that were marked by breathtaking technical progress, tumultuous political change, fearsome crises and rapid change in every dimension.

The first word that comes to mind is “Wow!”, but the appropriate one is “Thank you!”

It is indeed time to thank literally thousands of people who came on board and joined our effort. This goes out to everybody in our member community. To everybody who served on our board and in our committees, to our secretariat. And, finally, to our partners in business, academia, the donor and IFI community and governments. Thank you, everybody, and let us be proud of what we have achieved.

It is good to look back occasionally because it gives you a solid sense of direction. But now let us look forward. We are in stormy waters, and more of that is ahead. But we are all together in a boat that has proven its resilience, and we are a team that has shown its capability to support each other.

Which is reason enough to look forward to the next three decades and their challenges. I am confident that the IAWD family will live up to them all.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 30 YEARS

STARTING THE FLOW

IAWD – born on 28 October 1993
in Vienna, Austria.

RIVER UNDER REVIEW

IAWD kicks off long-term Danube
water quality monitoring.

GOING PLACES

IAWD introduced at
international Conferences in
Stockholm and Hongkong.

REACHING OUT

3rd Danube study trip of IAWD
Technical-Scientific Advisory
Board to Romania.

HELPING HANDS

IAWD supports ARA and individual waterworks,
loaning out monitoring equipment after a
cyanide spill into the Theiss and the Danube.

GETTING TOGETHER

IAWD Symposium on Surface
and Groundwater Quality in
Siofok, Hungary.

WRAPPING UP

IAWD completes the first
Danube region Water Tariff
Study, financed by UNOPS.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

430 participants
celebrate 10 years IAWD
at an International
Symposium in Vienna.

STRONGER TOGETHER

IAWD and IAWR publish the
European Groundwater
Memorandum.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Vladimir Tausanovic
takes over the
presidency of IAWD
from Hans Sailer.

TALKING FUTURE

IAWD and IAWR host
a Symposium on the
“Implementation of the
EU Water Framework
Directive” in Vienna.

WATER WORLD

IAWD and IWA host
the World Water
Congress in Vienna.

1993

1994

1995

1999

2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

2008

2009



SMART SUPPORT

IAWD installs an advisory committee for promotion of Karst Research and Management of Protection Zones and Resources.

UNDER THE UMBRELLA

Successful bid to join the EU Project "Uganda Water Umbrella Partnership Project".

PARTNERSHIP FOR PROGRESS

IAWD and the World Bank sign the contract for the "Danube Region Water Supply and Wastewater Sector Capacity Building Program", financed by the Austrian government.

PROGRAM FOR SUCCESS

Kick-off for the Danube Water Program, initially scheduled for three years, but now a success story spanning a full decade.

GOING LOCAL

Memorandum of Understanding between IAWD and NALAS, the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of Southeast Europe.

BIG LEAP

Launch of the D-LeaP, the Danube Learning Partnership.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

IAWD Wastewater Management Workshop in Bucharest.

BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS

First meeting of the newly launched Utility Benchmarking Program Danube Hub in Montenegro.

NEXT GENERATION

The Danube Water Conference features the third Young Water Professionals Workshop.

FACING THE EMERGENCY

Reacting to global shutdowns due to the Covid-19 emergency, IAWD and DWP go digital, launching a webinar series to share relevant information with water service companies and holding the first Virtual Danube Water Forum.

TOWARDS EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

IAWD joins the Equal Aqua Initiative.

GLOBAL THINKING, REGIONAL MEETING

The Danube Water Forum meets live – in Tirana, Albania.

CELEBRATION TIME

A Memorable Danube Water Conference in Vienna celebrates 30 years of IAWD and 10 years of DWP.

2010

2011

2012

2013

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

2022

2023



IAWD MEMBERS

- Members (utilities, associations, institutions)
- Founding members

Water Supply St.Moritz

St.Moritz, Switzerland

FOUNDED: 1803

PROVIDED SERVICES: **Water supply** SUPPLIED PEOPLE: **5000 - 25000**
variations due to tourism

URBAN/RURAL SHARE: **Urban 0%** **Rural 100%**
except for main touristic season

EMPLOYEES: 4

St. Moritz was one of the founding members 30 years ago. Its president at that time, Corado Giavanoli, had the idea of an organization that works for the quality and quantity of water supplies. Therefore, the municipality supported IAWD in order to provide water supply and sanitation services to as many residents of the Danube region as possible, as the municipality of St. Moritz has been able to offer to its residents and guests.

Water Works Association for the Triesting valley and the Southern Railway region

Bad Vöslau, Lower Austria

FOUNDED: 1929

PROVIDED SERVICES: **Water supply** SUPPLIED PEOPLE: **180,000**

URBAN/RURAL SHARE: **Urban 0%** **Rural 100%**

EMPLOYEES: 128

The reason for joining the IAWD was the national and international exchange of experiences between the members on the subject of water. The common focus is on the Danube river and the associated groundwater resources.

Vienna Water

Vienna, Austria

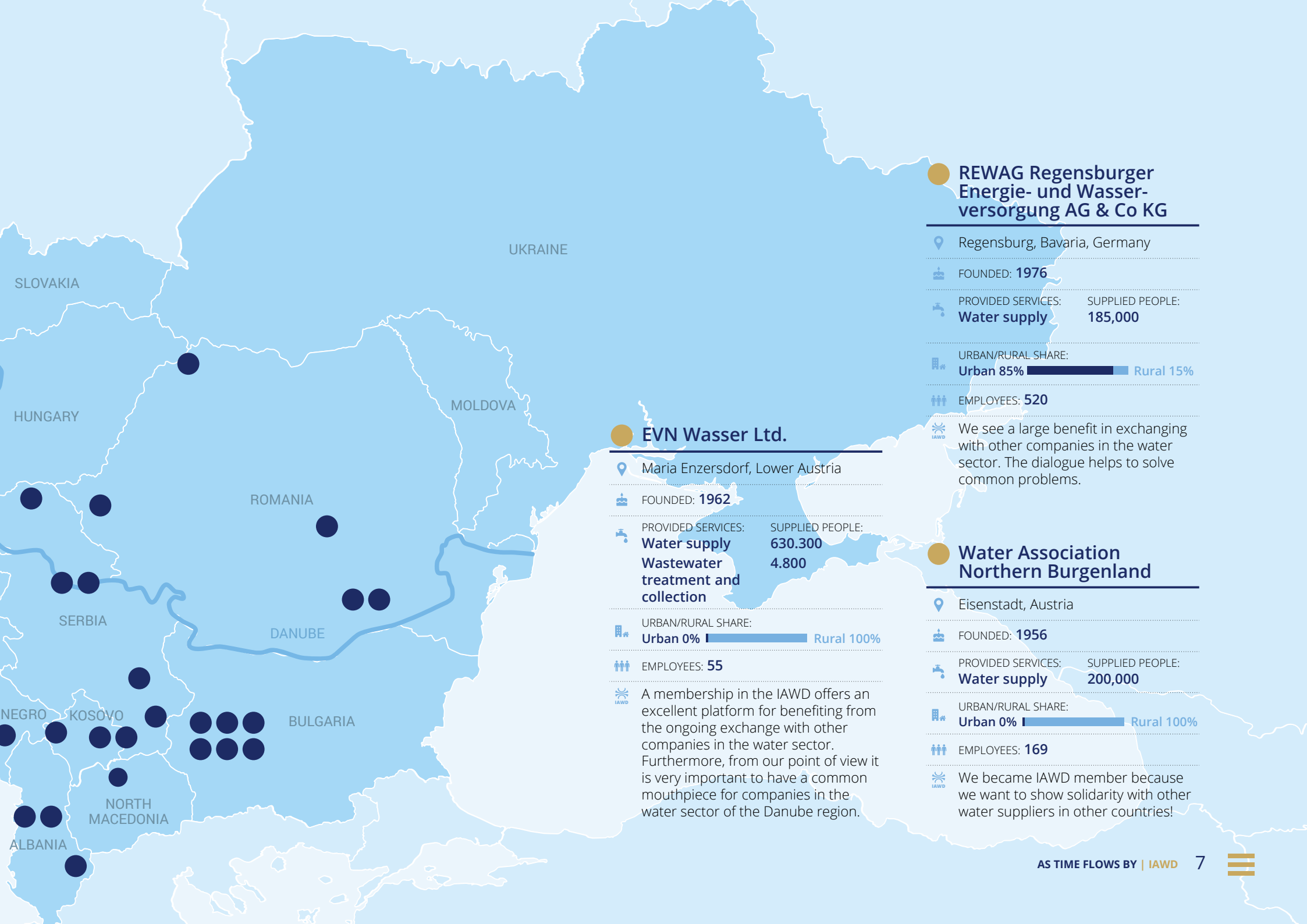
FOUNDED: 1873

PROVIDED SERVICES: **Water supply** SUPPLIED PEOPLE: **1.9 million**

URBAN/RURAL SHARE: **Urban 100%** **Rural 0%**

EMPLOYEES: 570

Vienna Water is one of the founding members, committed to support the cooperation with neighboring countries in the Danube region. This vision became reality with IAWD.



REWAG Regensburger Energie- und Wasserversorgung AG & Co KG

Regensburg, Bavaria, Germany

FOUNDED: 1976

PROVIDED SERVICES: Water supply **SUPPLIED PEOPLE:** 185,000

URBAN/RURAL SHARE: Urban 85% **Rural 15%**

EMPLOYEES: 520

IAWD We see a large benefit in exchanging with other companies in the water sector. The dialogue helps to solve common problems.

EVN Wasser Ltd.

Maria Enzersdorf, Lower Austria

FOUNDED: 1962

PROVIDED SERVICES: Water supply, Wastewater treatment and collection **SUPPLIED PEOPLE:** 630.300, 4.800

URBAN/RURAL SHARE: Urban 0% **Rural 100%**

EMPLOYEES: 55

IAWD A membership in the IAWD offers an excellent platform for benefiting from the ongoing exchange with other companies in the water sector. Furthermore, from our point of view it is very important to have a common mouthpiece for companies in the water sector of the Danube region.

Water Association Northern Burgenland

Eisenstadt, Austria

FOUNDED: 1956

PROVIDED SERVICES: Water supply **SUPPLIED PEOPLE:** 200,000

URBAN/RURAL SHARE: Urban 0% **Rural 100%**

EMPLOYEES: 169

IAWD We became IAWD member because we want to show solidarity with other water suppliers in other countries!

AS TIME FLOWS BY

1993

A BIG IDEA

After the fall of the Iron Curtain Europe, nations, economies and industries face a wealth of new, surprising chances. At the City of Vienna, an idea gathers shape: a platform for cooperation, mutual support and knowledge exchange, helping water and wastewater utilities everywhere in the Danube region to improve services and infrastructures – an International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area. IAWD - an idea whose time has come.

1994

GATHERING EXPERTISE

The IAWD Board establishes a Technical-Scientific Advisory Board of experts tasked with recording the water quality of the Danube and its tributaries and issuing the results in yearly reports. The 1994 report draws on previously existing data, mostly contributed by IAD, the International Association for Danube Research, but extensive questionnaires go out to utilities everywhere in the region to compile an up-to-date water quality profile for the second issue in 1995.

1995

MAKING FRIENDS

IAWD has now 30 full members, 4 associate members and 3 supporting members, covering an area inhabited by 21 million people, a quarter of the region's population. Efforts to reach out to former Eastern Bloc countries are ongoing, but political and economic change happens at vastly different speeds, and utility companies are in poor economic shape, sometimes unable to cover even a relatively moderate membership fee. But IAWD gains traction. Membership applications keep coming in encouraging numbers.



FOUNDING MEETING OF IAWD IN THE VIENNA CITY HALL (1993)



INITIATOR AND FIRST IAWD PRESIDENT DIPL.-ING. PETER SUCHOMEL



IAWD TECHNICAL-SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON THE DANUBE (1994)

1996

FINDING A VOICE

Invisibility is a main problem of the water sector everywhere. Networks hidden underground distribute a product that is vital, yet taken for granted as long as it comes out of the tap in sufficient quantity and quality - even by decisionmakers on all levels of government. Acknowledging the importance of communication and promotion of the water sector, IAWD sits down with the IWA in a workshop on "Water Supply and Communication: National and international cooperation". It starts efforts that are still ongoing today.

1997

TAKING STOCK

In April 1997, the IAWD Technical-Scientific Advisory Board initiates a wide-ranging survey to gain insight into the work and struggles of IAWD utility members and other utilities in the region. A questionnaire explores the operating and performance data of water companies in the region, and also inquires which problems and questions IAWD should treat to best serve its member companies. This first survey of its kind lays the groundwork for a future expansion of IAWD's activities and services.

1998

BUSINESS AS USUAL

No big conferences. No spectacular innovations. And, gladly, no disasters to report. IAWD engages in unspectacular daily business, adding members slowly, but steadily expanding the network.



DRINKING WATER SYMPOSIUM IN OPATIJA (2002)

1999

COMPETENCE IN HIGH DEMAND

Member survey data and personal contacts reveal growing demand for know-how transfer, especially with a focus on management questions - unsurprisingly, because the transition to market economy conditions and EU accession processes expose a formerly protected sector to competition and challenges on many levels. IAWD reacts by installing a special Economic-Maintenance Advisory Board, taking a first tentative step towards today's wide range of capacity building and knowledge transfer activities under D-LeaP.

2000

MONEY TALKS

IAWD member Vienna Water hosts a kick-off workshop for the study project "Tariff Development for Drinking Water and Wastewater – Actual State and Expected State for the Reform Countries of the Danube Catchment Area". This study will lay the groundwork for measures and initiatives to improve the financial performance of struggling utilities in many countries of the region, making the sector fit for future investments.

2001

VOICE OF THE SECTOR

Pursuing its primary objective to make sure that water supply companies in the Danube catchment area will always be able to produce sufficient quantities of quality drinking water, the IAWD publishes the Danube Memorandum, calling for measures to protect water resources, a prioritization of drinking water production over all other forms of water use, extensive wastewater purification, water monitoring, and wastewater emissions charges calculated according to the "polluter pays" principle.

2002

GOING PLACES

Conferences as knowledge sharing platforms figure prominently in the IAWD toolbox. This year, the region's water sector gathers in Opatija, Croatia, for the IAWD symposium "Public Drinking Water Supply in the Danube River Catchment Area". IAWD presents its tariff study, followed by sessions on a wide range of themes, from preventive resource protection to water price calculation and efficient network management, and, last but not least, benchmarking – a theme, which is about to become a mainstay of IAWD's activities.



2003

TURNING TEN

It's the United Nations' International Year of Freshwater. IAWD marks its 10th birthday with a Symposium "Water in the Danube Region". 430 delegates gather at Vienna City Hall to take stock of the status quo and discuss future strategies. The event's success gives the organizers confidence to tackle a hugely important future task: During the March 2003 World Water Forum in Kyoto and Osaka, Vienna had made a successful bid to hold the IWA World Water Congress 2008. This would turn out to be a milestone for IAWD and the region, propelling our community and activities into international spotlight.



IAWD SYMPOSIUM THEMED WATER IN THE DANUBE REGION (2003)

2004

REACHING OUT

The European Union takes a big leap. The accession of 10 new countries, creates a new landscape in which IAWD can thrive, reaching out in all directions, appearing at the EXPO APA regional forum in Bucharest, and joining sister organization IAWR, the International Association of Waterworks in the Rhine Basin, in issuing the European Groundwater Memorandum, to secure the quality and quantity of drinking water for future generations.

2005

PARTNERS FOR WATER SAFETY

In late October, IAWD and IAWR organize a Symposium in Vienna. Representatives of waterworks in the catchment areas of the Danube, Elbe, Maas, Rhein and Ruhr discuss the European Water Framework Directive, eventually issuing a set of demands with focus on the inclusion of human needs in addition to the ecological criteria in the set of water management aims, and calling for the participation of organizations that supply drinking water in the implementation process of the water framework directive.

2006

AFTER THE FLOOD IS BEFORE THE FLOOD

In the face of over 100 major floods that have hit Europe since 1998, the EU Commission publishes a Directive on the Assessment and Management of Floods. In a joint statement, IAWD and IAWR welcome the initiative, expressing their willingness to participate actively and constructively in this process. They call for comprehensive river-oriented and water management concepts and a special focus on possible flood-related hazards to drinking water production and on hazards caused by pollutant mobilization from dumps, landfills or industrial sites.

2007

GROWING NETWORK

Bulgaria and Romania join the EU and IAWD's network grows. The conference "Groundwater Management in the Danube River Basin and Other Large River Basins" is held in Belgrade, Serbia. Supported by IAWD, IWA, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River ICPDR, UNESCO, the Serbian Government and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Conference aims at improving groundwater management, promoting the creation of an integrated groundwater agenda.

2008

A MOST IMPORTANT MEETING

IAWD celebrates its 15th birthday by hosting its biggest, most important event yet: After two years of preparations, the IWA World Water Congress 2008 takes place in Vienna, shining a bright spotlight on the Danube region and its water sector. Several countries of the region take the opportunity to showcase their national activities. Overall, the IWA World Water Congress is a resounding success that draws the attention of important future networking partners.

2009

CHANGING OF THE GUARDS

After many years of dedicated service und successful work, IAWD President Dipl.-Ing. Hans Sailer retires, and Dipl.-Ing. Vladimir Tausanovic takes the reins of an organization that has grown to serious impact and international recognition - recognition that becomes highly visible when, at the World Water Congress 2009 in Montreal, IAWD Secretary General Walter Kling is elected Vice President of the International Water Association.



GALA DINNER FOR THE IWA WORLD WATER CONGRESS IN VIENNA BY INVITATION OF THE CITY OF VIENNA (2008)

2010

A CHILLING REMINDER

On 4th October 2010, the dam of a storage basin filled with 20-30 million tons of bauxite processing sludge collapses near Kolontar, Hungary. Some 750,000 tonnes of sludge flood the surrounding communities, injuring 150 persons, killing nine, and heavily polluting the receiving creeks Torna and Marcal. This “Red Sludge Disaster” is a grim reminder of the vulnerability of water resources, the importance of prevention, risk management, emergency planning – and of bodies like ICPDR and IAWD that engage in water protection.

2011

SILENT MILESTONES

IAWD’s work has drawn the attention of EU institutions, leading to an invitation to participate in a Capacity Development Partnership. IAWD submits a “Uganda Water Umbrella Partnership Project” for improving water supply in small towns and rural growth centers. At the same time, IAWD works with the World Bank, designing a capacity development program for the region. What is initially a “Water Academy for Eastern and Southeastern Europe” will eventually become known as the Danube Water Program.



2012

NOT THE END OF THE WORLD

Due to an erroneous interpretation of an ancient Maya calendar, many people expect the world, or at least human civilization, to end on 21st December of the year. Not given to that kind of pessimism, IAWD hosts the IWA Utility Management Conference in Vienna. 120 participants from 18 nations discuss risk- and crisis-management cases and utility management in times of a sluggish economy. Those who were there enjoy their time and promise to be back next year – provided the word is still standing.



RED SLUDGE CATASTROPHE IN HUNGARY (2010)



2013

A BIG BANG

Having secured funding from the Austrian Government, IAWD in partnership with the World Bank launches the Danube Water Program to support smart policies, strong utilities, and sustainable services in the water supply and wastewater sector of the Danube region, offering policy support and capacity development in eleven target countries. Initially scheduled for only three years, the program exceeds all expectations. At the time of writing, it is still going strong, having seen three extensions.

2014

A HISTORICAL DISASTER

Huge amounts of rain create disastrous floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia. Broken dikes, landslides and floods kill 100 people and cause damage in the four billion Euro region, proving widespread shortcomings in preparation and prevention and the necessity of holistic flood protection planning. On a happier note, IAWD hosts the IWA Water Loss Conference in Vienna and launches the Danubis.org performance indicator database including data from more than 600 utilities in 15 countries.

2015

THE VOICE OF THE DANUBE

The IAWD General Assembly adopts a revised mission statement that mirrors its importance as a platform for cooperation across borders and sectors. By strengthening communication efforts, IAWD aims to act as the “Voice of the Danube” in the field of water management. More than in the past this involves partnering with institutions active outside the field of water supply to broaden IAWD’s network.

2016

“AND THE WINNER IS...”

The prestigious European Riverprize 2016 goes to the Segura River Restoration Project in Spain. The award ceremony is held at Vienna City Hall, with support from IAWD, in the context of the European River Symposium, a three-day event with focus on all things related to river management. One month later, IAWD signs a MoU with NALAS, the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe.



EUROPEAN RIVERPRIZE AWARDED IN VIENNA (2016)

2017

A BIG LEAP

Two years spent defining common ground and interests between Danube region national water utility associations bear fruit. During the October 2016 Roundtable of Water Utility Associations, D-LeaP, the Danube Learning Partnership, is officially inaugurated. In May 2017, ten water utility association representatives gather in the first D-LeaP Committee Council meeting, finalize the Governance Documents and elect chair and vice chair. The beginning of a long, spectacular success story.

2018

MEET THE NEXT GENERATION

During the 2018 Danube Water Conference, IAWD and the Danube Water Program organize a Danube Regional Young Water Professionals (YWP) Workshop, inviting fourteen participants representing 11 countries to explore the opportunities and challenges involved in creating national YWP chapters and the potential supporting roles of organizations such as IAWD and IWA. This is the second meeting of its kind, and a direct result of a recently signed Memorandum of Understanding with the International Water Association.



SIGNING OF MOU WITH IWA (2017)

2019

GLOBAL WATER PARTNERS

IAWD and GWP CEE, the Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern Europe sign a Memorandum of Understanding about mutually beneficial experience and knowledge sharing. The missions of GWP CEE and IAWD are complementary, with GWP CEE focusing on advocacy for integrated water resources management and IAWD on sustainable development of water supply and sanitation services, and both organizations share a strong commitment to support Young Water Professionals. Joining forces is an obvious choice.

2020

VOICE OF THE DANUBE ONLINE

IAWD takes a long hard look at its web landscape and decides to create a new Voice of the Danube web. It delivers the content of formerly four webs in one clear structure, providing everything from latest news to vital services. The timing is perfect, because short before the launch, Covid-19 brings travel, conferences and congresses to a screeching halt and creates exploding demand for digital communication. IAWD goes digital and even holds the first Danube Water Forum in the virtual space.



UTILITY MANAGEMENT TRAINING (UMT) IN ALBANIA (2022)

2021

VIRTUAL SUCCESS STORIES

The world is in the grip of the pandemic. IAWD jointly with the World Bank holds a virtual Danube Water Conference and launches the KnowNow Webinar series, a success that will outlast the crisis. Also virtual is the kickoff of D-LeaP's brand-new Utility Management Training, a Master class in Water Supply and Sanitation Management for utilities in the Danube region. Twenty participants from seven countries join the program, which aims to provide current and future water service sector managers with a set of advanced tools and techniques to support educated decision-making.

2022

NEW NORMAL? NO NORMAL?

Before the world has even recovered from Covid-19, Russia invades Ukraine and war starts in the heart of Europe. Ukraine is part of the IAWD family, with a lively, successful Utility Benchmarking Program Hub managed by the Danube Water Center. Led by the Bavarian Technology Transfer Water Network, supported by IAWD/UBP, and organized by the UBP Hub coordinator Viktoria Iskova, a spontaneous relief effort gathers 200 devices - power generators, mobile heaters, VHF radios, flashlights and lighting and delivers them to war-hit utilities in Ukraine.

2023

UN-BELIEVEABLE

IAWD takes the stage in New York at a side event to the UN Water Conference 2023, introducing a worldwide audience to the history, approaches and successes of the Danube Water Program (DWP). Norbert Totschnig, Austrian Federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Management opens the session, and Gustavo Saltiel, Global Water Supply and Sanitation Lead at the World Bank does the wrap-up, calling the DWP exemplary for bringing countries together to cooperate in managing environment, water and sanitation. An UN-believable experience!



30 YEARS OF IAWD AND 10 YEARS OF DWP BIRTHDAY CAKE (2023)

LOOKING FORWARD

The Danube Water family has come a long way, and, all things considered, we are in good shape.

We have built a smoothly working platform for communication, cooperation and mutual support across borders, cultures and national economies. A community that shares knowledge and the common goal of getting better and better in delivering vital services.

More than ever imagined at the foundation of IAWD three decades ago has been reached. So, what now?

Around IAWD's 30th Birthday, the Board convened for a one-day retreat, taking stock, looking ahead, and discussing the future of the community.

There was broad consensus about where the association is headed: IAWD wants to be an internationally recognized, financially viable organization with an engaged, diverse, vibrant membership base – the place that water sector stakeholders in the Danube region and beyond turn to for expertise, networking, and advice: A strong voice for the region and an active contributor to all efforts to reach Sustainable Development Goal 6 – water for all.

But to really get there will take a healthy amount of strategic thinking. There is a lively, ongoing discussion about ways to expand the membership base, future funding and financing, building and maintaining partnerships, and the structure of the IAWD governance, not the least because in the foreseeable future, the vastly successful Danube Water Program will see its completion, and its phasing out will impact all the above-mentioned considerations.

But this is just one more turning point in a success story rich in turning points. IAWD will keep going and will keep growing.



A WORD FROM THE BOARD



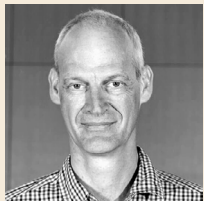
„Managing a utility without consistent performance data is like driving a car in dense fog. Installing the Danube Learning Partnership with its focus on data gathering, performance indicators and capacity building may be the most important IAWD initiative.“

WOLF GRUBER



„Water and wastewater treatment are important, but only people can really make a difference. Utilities everywhere wrestle with hiring challenges. That makes the Utility Management Training so important, and it would not exist if it wasn't for IAWD. “

GYÖRGY SUGAR



„Is it really thirty years now? What started out as a small community with a big vision back then has taken us to many places, even to the UN Headquarter in New York just this year. We have come a long way.“

GOTTFRIED BLASER



„IAWD has long established itself as the place to go to in search of a wide-reaching, competent and helpful platform for exchange and communication between water professionals everywhere in the region. Which is now more important than ever!“

ROBERT GREB



„Artificial intelligence running utilities. Wastewater treatment plants providing energy for communities. Satellite data feeding 30-day weather, drought and flood predictions. An exciting future is already here, and I am confident IAWD projects will help us make the most of it.“

RAIMUND PASCHINGER



„The Danube is the world's most international river basin, and IAWD has shouldered the task of bringing all the different cultures, languages, economies and political systems of the region together to cooperate in a meaningful way towards a bright future for the water service sector. Happy Birthday, IAWD!“

MIRAN JUG



„The Danube Water Program. The Danube Water Conference. The Danube Water Forum. D-LeaP. UMT. – Just to name a few things that we have come to take for granted like the water coming out of a tap. But there is a huge amount of strategic thinking and personal effort behind every single IAWD achievement. Let's be grateful and proud.“

LYUBOMIR FILIPOV



“Careers in the water sector are not an obvious choice, entering can prove difficult, and career paths are not always transparent. Yet this is a sector where young people find occupations with real purpose. A chance to make a real difference. Supporting Young Water Professionals has always been at the core of IAWD's work and that will remain the same in the future.“

FILIP WANNER



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