



# **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT IN THE DANUBE REGION**

**FEBRUARY 3, 2022**

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## II. CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

- Objective:** Enhancing financial sustainability of wastewater services in the Danube region, by providing interested and committed government and utility representatives with the appropriate knowledge, exposure and expertise to support the sustainable modernization efforts in the wastewater management sector.
- Context:** For most of the countries in the Danube River Basin, managing wastewater remains an important challenge to reach water resources protection targets and in the context of their EU accession and harmonization process. The EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD) mandates significantly higher levels of collection and treatment than it is currently the case, and the new infrastructure that is being built or needs to be built for compliance creates financial and technical strains for utilities and service providers in the region. Building upon previous work on this topic by the World Bank under the Danube Water Program and ICPDR, the aim of the event is to provide a regional knowledge exchange opportunity on the topic relevant to the regional community of knowledge in wastewater management and implications for necessary actions to reach and maintain UWWTD compliance and financial sustainability.
- Topic:** Based on the review of previous/existing wastewater management activities and demand expressed by experts from the Danube countries, there is a knowledge gap and need for better understanding of the importance of financial sustainability of operation and maintenance of wastewater services. The activity will include the preparation and delivery of a dedicated workshop, that will be used for presenting recent papers/studies/projects that are relevant for the issue prepared by the World Bank, Danube Water Program, ICPDR, OECD and others, in the form of a knowledge dissemination event.
- Format:** Due to the impact of Covid-19 on travel and the ability to hold physical meetings, it was decided that the workshop will be delivered in on-line (virtual) format, as a one-day event. A short summary paper will be prepared by a consultant and published together with the presentations after the workshop.
- Participants:** The event will primarily focus on professionals from technical management level and senior technical staff from national and local governments, and utilities.

### III. SESSION OVERVIEW

February 3, 2022	
10:00	<b>Welcome and introduction</b>
10:15	<b>Session 1: Setting the scene – considerations for sustainable financing of wastewater services</b> International organizations involved in this field will present their views and experiences, based on findings of existing advisory and analytical works or studies prepared on the topic of wastewater management financing and financial sustainability.
11:30	<i>Break</i>
11:45	<b>Session 2: Towards achieving sustainable wastewater management at policy level</b> Experiences from individual countries will be presented, including policy and regulatory-related challenges, including the development of national strategies, tariff setting, financial sustainability, service affordability, etc.
13:00	<i>Break</i>
14:00	<b>Session 3: Examples of good practices in the development of sustainable wastewater services</b> Representatives from individual institutions, utilities or consultants will present their experience in achieving sustainable financing of wastewater services, while focusing on CBA, selection of the right technology, business and investment planning, operating models, etc.
15:30	<b>Session 4: Key messages and Closing</b>
16:00	<i>End of Workshop</i>

## IV. THE ORGANIZERS

### 1. World Bank Danube Water Program

The World Bank / IAWD Danube Water Program supports **smart policies, strong utilities and sustainable water and wastewater services** in the Danube region by partnering with regional, national and local stakeholders, promoting an informed policy dialogue around the sector's challenges and strengthening the technical and managerial capacity of the sector's utilities and institutions.

Governments and water professionals in the Danube region face a double challenge of meeting their citizens' demand for universal, good quality, efficient, and financially sound or - in one word - sustainable water and wastewater services, while catching up to the environmental requirements of the European Union *acquis communautaire*. To address this double challenge, the World Bank and the International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD) have partnered in the frame of the Danube Water Program, with financing from the Government of Austria.

#### What has the Program achieved?

The Danube Water Program was formally launched in May 2013 in partnership with line ministries, regulators, waterworks associations, and local government representatives of more than a dozen countries in South-East Europe. Since the launch of the Program, knowledge exchanges among more than a thousand sector professionals and policy makers in the region and beyond has taken place. In 2015 a State of the Sector report was launched (SoS 2015), and updated in 2018 (SoS 2018), which are flagship products of the Danube Water Program, next to additional analytical pieces exploring status and trends in wastewater management, rural water supply and sanitation and agglomeration of utilities. Capacity building programs benefiting over 170 utilities have been undertaken under the region wide Danube Learning Partnership (D-LeaP) involving cooperation with all the national water utility associations. Numerous local initiatives worth more than € 1,000,000 through competitive grants have been supported.

[www.danube-water-program.org](http://www.danube-water-program.org)

[www.iawd.at](http://www.iawd.at)

### 2. International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)

The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) works to ensure the sustainable and equitable use of waters in the Danube River Basin. The work of the ICPDR is based on the Danube River Protection Convention (DRPC), the major legal instrument for cooperation and transboundary water management in the Danube River Basin.

The ICPDR addresses the entire Danube River Basin, comprising 19 countries, making it the most international river basin in the world. Including more than 300 tributaries and connected groundwater resources too, this makes the ICPDR one of the largest and most active international river basin management commissions in the world.

In 2000, the ICPDR contracting parties nominated the ICPDR as the platform for the implementation of all transboundary aspects of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and development of the International Danube River Basin Management Plans.

#### The goals of the ICPDR

Three key elements of the ICPDR's management plans provide the three pillars of action that are needed for the Danube to achieve: i) a Cleaner Danube – this means reducing pollution from settlements, industry and agriculture; ii) a Healthier Danube – this means protecting rivers as ecosystems that provide a living environment for aquatic animals and plants, as well as services for people such as drinking water and recreation; and iii) a Safer Danube – this means a safer environment for people to live without the fear of major flood damage.

[www.icpdr.org](http://www.icpdr.org)

## V. SESSION DETAILS

### 1. Setting the Scene – Considerations for sustainable financing of wastewater services

**Time:** 10:00 to 11:30  
**Location:** [Zoom](#)  
**Chairs:** Mr. Raimund Mair, World Bank

#### Context and objective

International organizations involved in this field will present their views and experiences, based on findings of existing advisory and analytical works or studies prepared on the topic of wastewater management financing and financial sustainability.

#### Session structure

Time		Content	Speaker
10:00	10'	<b>Welcome</b> and introduction to the event	<b>Mr. Raimund Mair</b> , Senior Water Resource Management Specialist, World Bank, Austria, and <b>Mr. Adam Kovacs</b> , Technical Expert on Pollution Control, ICPDR
10:10	20'	<b>Framing the issue</b> - presentation on financial sustainability of WWM in the Danube region	<b>Mr. Rado Rusev</b> , Expert Consultant, World Bank
10:30	15'	<b>OECD study on financing the WSS sector</b>	<b>Mr. Xavier Leflaine</b> , OECD, Environment Directorate
10:45	15'	<b>Financial challenges and funding instruments in WWT in the Danube region</b>	<b>Mr. Balazs Horvath</b> , EUSDR Priority Area 4
11:00	30'	<b>Discussion</b>	Moderated by <b>Mr. Raimund Mair</b>
11:30		<b>End of session</b>	

## 2. Towards achieving sustainable wastewater management at policy level

**Time:** 11:45 – 13:00

**Location:** [Zoom](#)

**Chair:** Mr. Adam Kovacs, ICPDR

### Context and objective

Experiences from individual countries will be presented, including policy and regulatory-related challenges, including the development of national strategies, tariff setting, financial sustainability, service affordability, etc.

### Session structure

Time		Content	Speaker
11:45	5'	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Mr. Adam Kovacs</b> , Technical Expert on Pollution Control, ICPDR
11:50	15'	<b>Regulators approach to securing suitability of service provision</b>	<b>Mr. Christian Minelli</b> , Head of WAREG Secretariat
12:05	15'	<b>WSS service organization and regionalization – Hungary experience</b>	<b>Mr. Gabor Kisvardai</b> , Head of Secretariat, Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority
12:20	15'	<b>Challenges of UWWTB policy – Romania experience</b>	<b>Mr. Ivaylo Hristov Kolev</b> , Senior Water Supply and Sanitation Specialist, World Bank
12:35	25'	<b>Discussion</b>	Moderated by <b>Mr. Adam Kovacs</b>
13:00		<b>End of Session</b>	

### 3. Good practices in the development of sustainable wastewater services

**Time:** 14:00 – 15:30

**Location:** [Zoom](#)

**Chair:** Mr. Stjepan Gabric, World Bank

#### Context and objective

Representatives from individual institutions, utilities or consultants will present their experience in achieving sustainable financing of wastewater services, while focusing on CBA, selection of the right technology, business and investment planning, operating models, etc.

#### Session structure

Time		Content	Speaker
14:00	5'	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Mr. Stjepan Gabric</b> , Senior Water Supply and Sanitation Specialist, World Bank
14:05	15'	<b>Experience in developing sustainable wastewater services</b> from consultants	<b>Mr. Jesper Karup Pedersen</b> , Senior Economist, PhD, Policy, Planning and Infrastructure Development, COWI
14:20	15'	<b>EU approach</b> and experience in evaluation (CBA) and ensuring sustainability of EU financed WSS services	<b>Mr. David Tagg</b> , water financial expert, JASPERS
14:35	15'	<b>Private sector examples</b> of good practices in development of sustainable wastewater services	<b>Mr. Benoit Samanos</b> , Business Development Director (Central Europe) SUEZ
14:50	10'	<b>Achieving and maintaining financial sustainability of water utilities</b> in Danube region, training tools and experience	<b>Ms. Ines Delić</b> , Program Coordinator, Aquasan (BiH)
15:00	10'	<b>Utility experience</b> in achieving sustainability of wastewater management – operator point of view	<b>Mr. Teodor Popa</b> , Financial Manager of APA Brasov (Romania)
15:10	20'	<b>Discussion</b>	Moderated by <b>Mr. Stjepan Gabric</b>
15:30		<b>End of Session</b>	

## 4. Key messages and Closing

**Time:** 15:30 to 16:00

**Location:** [Zoom](#)

**Chair:** Mr. Raimund Mair, World Bank; and Mr. Adam Kovacs, ICPDR

### Context and objective

Summary and conclusions and identification of potential future activities, as well as closing remarks.

Time		Content	Speaker
15:30	5'	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Mr. Stjepan Gabric</b> , Senior Water Supply and Sanitation Specialist, World Bank
15:35	15'	<b>Summary and Conclusions</b>	<b>Mr. Rado Rusev</b> , Expert Consultant, World Bank
15:50	10'	<b>Closing Words</b>	<b>Mr. Raimund Mair</b> , Senior Water Resources Specialist, World Bank; and <b>Mr. Adam Kovacs</b> , Technical Expert on Pollution Control, ICPDR
16:00		<b>End of Workshop</b>	

## VI. WORKSHOP SUPPORTERS

The organization of the 2022 Financial sustainability of wastewater management in Danube region Workshop has been made possible through institutional support from:

-  **Federal Ministry  
Republic of Austria  
Finance**

## VII. LOGISTICAL DETAILS

### Registration

Please register yourself to participate in the 2022 *Financial sustainability of wastewater management in Danube region Workshop* using the [Registration link](#). As soon as you have registered, you will receive a link via email to join the event.

### Zoom

The 2022 *Financial sustainability of wastewater management in Danube region Workshop* will be brought to you by the Zoom webinar tool. We recommend downloading the Zoom App (for PC and mobile devices) [here](#).

### GDPR Disclaimer

The event will be fully recorded. We reserve the right to use the recording for publication on our websites (iawd.at, danube-water-program.org, d-leap.org, worldbank.org), and social media channels. By participating in the event, you agree to the disclaimer above.

For further information, please download the data privacy statement of IAWD on our website: [www.iawd.at](http://www.iawd.at)

### Event Page

For more information about the workshop, check out the [event page here](#).

### Contacts

In case of any questions with regard to logistics of your participation, please contact the organizers via email:

- ▶ World Bank: Kathia Havens: [khavens@worldbank.org](mailto:khavens@worldbank.org)