

Regional cooperation as a key to accelerate SDG 6 implementation – The Danube Water Program as lighthouse example to improve water and sanitation services within the Danube region

UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

Event ID: HQ143

Date: Friday 24 March 2023

Time: 8:00 – 9:15

Room: UNHQ Conference Building – ECOSOC

Webpage: <https://www.iawd.at/eng/event/759/details/1/0/0/>

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Organising partners: World Bank, City of Vienna (Vienna Water), International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD), Albanian Water Supply and Sewerage Association (SHUKALB), Association for Water and Environmental Protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Aquasan Network Bosnia and Herzegovina), OECD (Water Governance Initiative)

Lead organisation: Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management, Austria



Background

The Danube Water Program (DWP) is a lighthouse example for regional cooperation in the water sector in the Danube region, which extends into the territories of 19 countries and hosts the most international river basin in the world.

The DWP launched in 2013 is an advisory and capacity building initiative in the water sector that aims at strong utilities, smart policies and sustainable services in the Danube region. It is financed with a 17 million Euro, four-phased contribution by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance and implemented jointly by IAWD (International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River catchment area) and the World Bank.

The DWP brings together regional, national and local stakeholders in the water supply and sanitation sector. The main objectives are:

- to strengthen the water sector tailored to the regional circumstances and at different levels:
 - at political level by creating the policy and regulatory environment that sparks innovation and warrants the sustainable development of the sector
 - at utility level through inclusive education and capacity development and training initiatives
- to foster a common understanding of the state of the water sector by providing the data and knowledge required for a cross-sectoral transformation and supporting water, climate and food security related policy integration
- to overcome languages barriers in the Danube region and
- to harmonise DWP supported analytical and advisory services to national governments with existing investment projects of International Financing Institutions in the region, taking into account externalities and co-benefits

These activities significantly contribute to achieve SDG 6.1 and SDG 6.2 in the DWP target countries and furthermore support the achievement of SDG 6.3 and SDG 6.5 as well as the overall SDG 6 implementation.

A number of potential game changing ideas for the Water Action Agenda identified during the Stakeholder Dialogue of the Preparatory Meeting for the UN 2023 Water Conference are already implemented by the DWP, i.e. in the field of capacity development and governance.

Objective

The aim of this side event is to highlight experiences and best practice examples from two countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina) of the DWP and to present, how these activities contribute to SDG 6 implementation. It will discuss approaches and the lessons learnt for successful regional cooperation to achieve smart policies, strong utilities and sustainable water services in the Danube region and to make them applicable in other regions of the world for green, resilient and inclusive water service delivery.

Related thematic interactive dialogue:

ID 1: Water for Health: Access to WASH, including the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation (SDG 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 17)

Related Water Action:

Accelerate safe, reliable and affordable access to water services for all in the Danube region

[#SDGAction50431](#)

Agenda provided on the following page.

Agenda

Friday 24th March 2023

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Moderator | Mr. Walter Kling (Vienna Water and IAWD) |
| 8:00 – 8:05 | Welcome H.E. Mr. Norbert Totschnig, Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management of Austria |
| 8:05 – 8:15 | Looking back on 30 years of history – How to create a sustainable cooperation on water services in the Danube region Mr. Walter Kling (Vienna Water and IAWD) |
| 8:15 – 8:20 | Danube Water Program – Multi-level interventions to strengthen the water sector in the Danube region Mr. Raimund Mair (World Bank) |
| 08:20 – 08:25 | Danube Water Program – Enhancing capacities for improved service delivery in the Danube region Ms. Katerina Schilling (IAWD) |
| 8:25 – 8:35 | Presentations of good practise examples on strengthening the water sector in <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advancing the Albanian water sector by supporting investments, cooperation and policy: Ms. Elisabeta Poci (Albanian Water Supply and Sewerage Association)• Improving water services through capacity development in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Ms. Vesna Muslic (Aquasan Network Bosnia and Herzegovina) |
| 8:35 – 9:10 | Panel <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lessons learnt from DWP implementation in the Danube region• Messages and recommendations for support of the water sector in other regions to accelerate the achievement of SDG 6 |
| Panellists | Mr. Gustavo Saltiel (World Bank) Ms. Vesna Muslic (Aquasan Network Bosnia and Herzegovina) Ms. Elisabeta Poci (Albanian Water Supply and Sewerage Association) |
| | Interventions from the floor |
| 9:10 – 9:15 | Closing Remarks Ms. Katerina Schilling (IAWD) |
