

Joint Communiqué of the Danube countries on Danube-wide cooperation

The Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria,

The Ambassador of the Republic of Croatia,

The Ambassador of the Republic of the Federal Republic of Germany,

The Ambassador of Hungary,

The Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova,

The Ambassador of Romania,

The Ambassador of the Slovak Republic,

The Ambassador of Ukraine,

as well as the

Austrian Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK)

and the

Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism (BMLRT).

Representing the majority of Danube countries, and covering the project area of the transnational LIFE WILDisland project;

Considering the outstanding importance of the Danube River for the identity of the Danube macro-region and of Central and South-East Europe and recognizing its diversity of people, landscapes, cultures, fauna and flora;

Recognizing the willingness to further strengthen the Danube-wide cooperation across all borders and countries in order to achieve the objectives of the EU policies targeting the Danube as the world's most exemplary international river; highlighting in this regard the Danube Declaration adopted at the Ministerial Meeting of the International Commission of the Danube River (ICPDR) on 8 February 2022;

Acknowledging that the ecosystem services provided by the Danube River for more than 79 Million citizens, including healthy biodiversity, drinking water, environmentally sound navigation, sustainable energy, forestry, as well as socio-economic goods and services; deserve a holistic approach as promoted by the EU Strategy for the Danube Region;

Reaffirming our commitment to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and the new EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, while at the same time contributing to Climate action at the heart of the European Green Deal;

Underlining the outstanding value of the natural Danube islands as stepping stones along the Danube Habitat Corridor, and the need for the preservation of the unique and distinctive fauna and flora of the Danube River.

1. Highlight the importance of cooperation, both bilaterally and multilaterally, aiming to strengthen the Danube River as a vital lifeline for Europe, in line with the efforts of the ICPDR and relevant EUSDR priority areas.
2. Support Danube-wide initiatives like the LIFE WILDisland Project as a platform for Danube-wide cooperation, bringing together the Danube countries as well as key stakeholders from different sectors, such as nature conservation, transportation, energy, and forestry.
3. Stress that transnational projects and initiatives like the LIFE WILDisland Project can significantly contribute to strengthening the Danube River as an ecological corridor connecting more bio-geographic regions than any other corridor in Europe, and act as best practice examples for the establishment of European Green and Blue Infrastructure, as already confirmed by the EU Nature Directors.
4. Welcome the preparation of the Danube Wild Island Ramsar Regional Initiative by DANUBEPARKS – The Danube River Network of Protected Areas, as a practical means to implement Article 5 of the Convention on Wetlands, encouraging countries to cooperate along transboundary rivers and other wetlands for the sustainable development of the last remaining natural and near-natural Danube islands. These last remnants of wilderness represent a unique natural heritage, fully worth of all efforts of its protection, in line with the objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030.

Done on 10th Mai 2022 in Vienna, Austria



The Diplomatic Envoy of the Republic of Bulgaria, **Ms. Albena Getova**



The Ambassador of the Republic of Croatia, **Mr. Daniel Glunčić**



The Deputy Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, **Mr. Rainer Rudolph**



The Ambassador of Hungary, **Mr. Andor Nagy**



The Charge d'Affaires a.i. of the Republic of Moldova, **Ms. Dorina Roman**



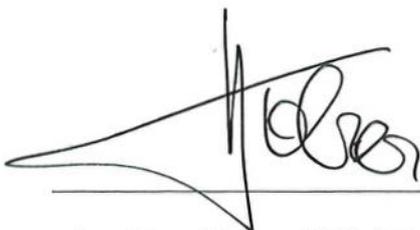
The Ambassador of Romania, **Mr. Emilian Horatiu Hurezeanu**



The Ambassador of the Slovak Republic, **Mr. Peter Mišík**



The Ambassador of Ukraine, **Mr. Vasyl Khymynets**



Austrian Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK)
For the Minister: **Mr. Christian Holzer**



Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism (BMLRT)
For the Minister: **Mr. Günter Liebel**