

“Biodiversity conservation, ecological and environmental quality”

Common declaration

Starting from the conclusions of the final report of EUSDR Operational Evaluation from June 2019;

Considering the directions pointed out in the Consolidated Input Document of the Danube Countries for the Revision of the EUSDR Action Plan from 11th of July 2019;

Acknowledging the importance of interlinked projects in outreaching strategies on safeguarding biodiversity, habitats and the link to ecosystem services

Recognizing that efficient strategies implementation are possible only with active, constant and on regular basis involvement of stakeholders;

Emphasizing that trans-boundary collaboration is the key factor for consolidating sound solutions of the current and future issues on biodiversity conservation, habitats and environmental quality;

Aware that only an appropriate and reliable financial support is making effective the implementation of any type of efficient strategy;

Stressing that political commitment is fundamental in ensuring a successful implementation of any measure regarding biodiversity conservation and environmental quality so that the structure and function of the ecosystems and the services they provide to mankind are secured;

The following statement/ declaration on “Biodiversity conservation, ecological and environmental quality” is issued:

- It should be achieved the concerted support of the existing distributed research infrastructures for the integration of transnational and interregional issues, relevant to biodiversity restoring and conservation, climate change impact (both adaptation and mitigation), ecological and environmental quality and the provision of ecosystem services.
- It is necessary to break current borders of communication channels between academic community and local, regional and central administrations in order to increase the awareness on steps to be followed to improve the European effort towards adaptation and mitigation to climate change strategies. In this respect, campaigns including the young generation will be a valuable catalyst for educating new mentalities and communities engaged with biodiversity conservation, habitats and environmental quality;
- A set of effective measures and tools, supported by the reliable results of research projects, should be proposed to decision centers from the whole macro-region and should be supported by coherent legal and financing instruments using not only RTD funds, but even alternative investments. The policy makers in the selected regions, as well as those at European level should be informed and involved in such decisions. Collaborative projects aiming to implement the measures, based on green technologies and targeting a widening of labor market and creating new jobs should be promoted under an inter-regional umbrella toward potential alternative investors: EIB, EBRD etc. Strategic actions from the EUSDR Action Plan July 2019 as detailed for each Priority Area are a promising starting point;
- There is a clear and urgent need of increasing the efforts to synchronize common or similar concepts of Research and Innovation strategy for Smart Specialisation Strategy (RIS 3) and Danube Region Strategy and revised targets, actions and projects for the EUSDR. Action plan 2019 might provide the basis for sustainable development.
- The Lower Danube Region has a huge potential for cooperation in the field of Scientific Research & Innovation. It includes some unique river free flow stretches, islands and well-preserved wetlands, many species of fauna and flora but, there are also many challenges for unlocking the sustainable development of the communities from the region, a proper connectivity with the hinterland, appropriate drainage of nutrients, sustainable transport on the Danube Green Corridor and many other. In this respect, the region is a good candidate to be considered a focus region for the Mission on Oceans, Seas and Inland Waters under the Horizon Europe program.