



# ERS 2016

European River Symposium  
March 2-3 | Vienna

Organized by



Partners





## The World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

WWF implements floodplain and wetland restoration projects in the Danube basin through its Green Heart of Europe initiative across 12 countries in Central and Eastern Europe. WWF supports implementation of the Lower Danube Green Corridor, the Alpine-Carpathian Corridor, the Mura-Drava-Danube Transboundary Biosphere Reserve – ‘Europe’s Amazon’, the March-Thaya trilateral reserve and other Ramsar sites. For more information go to: [www.wwf.org](http://www.wwf.org)



## The Global Water Partnership (GWP)

The Global Water Partnership (GWP) is a global network created in 1996 to foster the implementation of integrated water resources management (IWRM): the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximise economic and social welfare without compromising the sustainability of ecosystems and the environment. For more information go to: [www.gwp.org](http://www.gwp.org)



## INBO

The International Network of Basin Organizations was established during the constitutive assembly in 1994 at Aix-les-Bains, France, with a common goal to implement integrated basin and water resource management all around the World. At present times, many EUROPE-INBO activities, based on peer-to-peer

exchanges, are encompassing aquatic bodies restoration, due to its importance for reaching environmental WFD objectives through river basin management planning, programme of measures implementation, monitoring improvement and adaptation to Climate Changes impacts. For more information go to: [www.inbo-news.org](http://www.inbo-news.org)



## The 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 and freshwater resources in the Danube River Basin. The work of the ICPDR is based on the Danube River Protection Convention, the major legal instrument for cooperation and trans-boundary water management in the Danube River Basin. For more information go to [www.icpdr.org](http://www.icpdr.org)



## The International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR)

For the benefit of the Rhine and of all waters running into the Rhine, the members of the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR), nine states and regions in the Rhine watershed closely co-operate in order to harmonize the many interests of use and protection in the Rhine area. Focal points of work are sustainable development of the Rhine, its alluvial areas and the good state of all waters in the watershed. For more information go to [www.iksr.org](http://www.iksr.org)



## RAMSAR

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The Ramsar Convention is the only global environmental treaty that deals with a particular ecosystem. For more information go to: [www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org)



## Wetlands International

Wetlands International is the only global not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wetlands. In Europe and around the world we are dedicated to maintaining and restoring wetlands—for their environmental values as well as for the services they provide to people. For more information go to: [www.wetlands.org](http://www.wetlands.org)



## City of Vienna

The City of Vienna also plays an important role in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region being a coordinator for the Priority Area 10 (improving institutional capacity and cooperation) and participating in many cross border projects with neighbouring regions and countries.



## viadonau

viadonau was founded by the Austrian Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology. At six service centers and 10 lock's along the 378km stretch of the Austrian Danube viadonau with its 250 employees is managing the waterway and natural habitat. Main target is the development of the natural and economic environment. For more information go to: [www.viadonau.org](http://www.viadonau.org)



## Coca-Cola Europe

With an enduring commitment to building sustainable communities, our Company is focused on initiatives that reduce our environmental footprint, support active, healthy living, create a safe, inclusive work environment for our associates, and enhance the economic development of the communities where we operate.



## European Centre for River Restoration

The ECRR is a European network consisting of national centres and individual members united by their mission to enhance and promote river restoration best practice throughout greater Europe. The ECRR counteracts the threats to natural riverine habitats by fostering the establishment of national river restoration networks, and by disseminating information on river restoration through the website, the newsletter and by organising events like the European River Restoration Conference. For more information go to: [www.ecrr.org](http://www.ecrr.org)

## Foreword



On behalf of the conference organisers, the International Association of Water Supply Companies of the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD) and the International RiverFoundation (IRF), it is our pleasure to welcome you to the European River Symposium

2016. We are ready for an exciting three-day gathering of peers representing this year's theme: Best Practices in River Basin Management, Building Sustainable Partnerships.

This edition of the European River Symposium will be held with a focus on Partnerships for Rivers and Water. The Rivers in Europe, Best Practices in River Management Conference will target actions taken to build positive relationships between key organizations and sectors that influence rivers and water management. This event will build upon the success of the European River Symposium in 2013 and 2014 and the cooperation and partnerships that have been developing between diverse actors in protecting, restoring and better managing rivers and water in Europe. As part of the event the 3rd European Riverprize will be presented during a gala evening in the Vienna City Hall organized and supported by the City of Vienna. We would like to thank greatly all the organisers, panellists, moderators, rappators, presenters and speakers for their support and inspiration in making a professional, interesting and attractive programme as the basis for a successful new edition of the European River Symposium.

Philip Weller

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## JOIN US

### 19<sup>th</sup> International Riversymposium | New Delhi, India

12-14 September 2016

### Great Rivers of the World: Management for Shared Benefits

[riversymposium.com](http://riversymposium.com)



## Lead Organizations



### International Association of Water Supply Companies of the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD)

IAWD is an association of utilities and other stakeholders working in the water sector in the Danube region, which is the source for the water supply of over 80 million people. IAWD's mission is to assist utilities and their staff in their responsibility to provide a secured and well managed urban water cycle and to ensure their customers have access to water that is safe and free from hazards. For this, the water quality of the Danube and its tributaries need to be protected for the present as well as for future generations.

For more information go to: [www.iawd.at](http://www.iawd.at)



### International RiverFoundation (IRF)

IRF works in partnerships around the world to fund and promote the sustainable restoration and management of river basins. IRF rewards and champions best practice in river basin management through the International, Australian and European Riverprizes. From the Danube River in Europe, to the Mekong River in South-East Asia, and the St Johns River in the United States, the IRF has a far reaching network. IRF acts as a catalyst for replication of effective river system management around the world and promotes long term relationships between developed and developing countries around sustainable river system management. IRF provides companies and individuals with the opportunity to be part of the solution and to establish an enduring legacy. For more information go to: [www.riverfoundation.org.au](http://www.riverfoundation.org.au)

## Best Practices in River Basin Management | Building Sustainable Partnerships

The Rivers in Europe, Best Practices in River Basin Management Conference will promote actions to build positive relationships between key organizations and sectors that influence rivers and water management. This event will build upon the success of the European River Symposium in 2013 and 2014 and the cooperation and partnerships that have been developing between diverse actors in protecting, restoring and better managing rivers and water in Europe.



Ben van de Wetering *ICPR*



Kathy Hughes *WWF UK*



Danka Thalmeinerova *GWP*



Tobias Salathe *Ramsar*



Chris Baker *Wetlands International*

## Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016

### 13:30 Registration and coffee

### 14:00 Monitoring the Health of Rivers - Partnerships to Improve Information on Rivers

Hosted by The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River and The International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine River

Moderator Ben Van de Wetering, *Consultant to IRBC*

This event will explore partnerships to support monitoring efforts particularly closer cooperation between water administrations and water utilities. Is it possible to cooperate on monitoring activities? Should there be sharing data or also joint surveys and assessments? For which reasons would cooperation be established: win-win effects, improving public information or saving money? Should this only be for chemical substances or biological elements? Discussion about the different levels of cooperation is needed: at national, regional (river basin), or international level? What makes sense or is the best option?

Presentations and Discussion

- 1 Monitoring of the River Danube and evaluation processes within the ICPDR**  
by Igor Liska, *ICPDR*
- 2 Monitoring of rivers within Water Utility Associations**  
by Walter Kling, *Vienna Waterworks, IAWD*
- 3 Monitoring of the River Rhine and evaluation processes within the ICPR**  
by Anne Schulte-Wülwer-Leidig, *International Commission for Protection of the Rhine (ICPR)*
- 4 Water Utility Association: IAWR**  
by Gerard Stroomberg, *Rhine Waterworks Association*
- 5 Small birds, big impact; Danube-wide monitoring of indicators birds species for river dynamics**  
by Georg Frank, *Danubeparks*

### 15:30 Coffee Break

### 16:00 Women and Water

Hosted by the International River Foundation

Moderator Melanie Ryan, *Ambassador RiverFoundation* and Luc Hoffmann *Institute Fellow's Coordinator*

Panel Presentations and Discussion

The Women in Rivers/Water event is an initiative of the International RiverFoundation. This event provides a forum for delegates to hear different perspectives on the significance of rivers to gender, culture and more. The event will be less formal in structure than a traditional conference session and focuses on strong engagement and interaction between the panel speakers and the audience. The panel speakers are drawn from across different sectors and industries related to water and river management to give a variety of contexts, share personal narratives and discuss and debate issues and topics with the audience.

While this session focuses on gender discussions, the session itself is inclusive and both men and women are welcome to participate in the dialogue.

Gabriela Babiakova, *GWP, Slovakia*

Ann Skinner, *UK Environment Agency, UK*

Verena Winiwarter, *Institute of Social Ecology at the Alpen-Adria University, Austria*

### 17:30 Opening Reception

Open to all participants





## Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016

### 8:30 Registration and coffee

### 9:00 Welcome and Event Opening

By Walter Kling, IAWD / City of Vienna

### 9:15 Key note Opening; State of Rivers in Europe Presentation

Moderator Helmut Habersack, BOKU University

By Pavel Misiga, DG Environment, Head of Unit Water

### 9:45 Lessons in Partnership Building

Moderator Gustav Borchardt *International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine River*

Panel Annukka Lipponen, *UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Water Courses*, Dejan Komatina, *International Commission for the Protection of the Sava River*, Ann Skinner, *Senior Advisor, UK Environmental Agency*

presentation and discussion.

### 10:45 Coffee Break

### 11:15 Advancing Partnerships in River and Water Management Parallel Working Groups

#### 1 Navigation/Tourism/Flood Protection and Nature Protection

Moderator Harald Egerer, *United Nations Environment Programme*

Impulse Statement Gert-Jan Muileman, *viadonau*, *Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH*, Katherine Cross, *IWA*, Alexander Oost, *Uniwold*

Discussants representatives from ICPR, ICPDR, RAMSAR, WWF, IWA

This working group will explore the potential synergy between actions in support of navigation, flood protection, tourism and nature protection.

#### 2 Hydropower and River Management

Moderator Veronika Koller-Kreimel, *Austrian Lebensministerium*

Impulse Statement Irene Lucius, *WWF, DG Environment (tbc)*  
Otto Pirker, *Verbund*, Pavel Misiga, *DG Environment, Head of Unit Water*

Discussants *ICPR (tbc)*

This working group will examine the impacts of hydropower on rivers and the cooperation between hydropower and other interest groups to ensure the protection and/or rehabilitation of rivers influenced by hydropower.

#### 3 Water Utilities and Water Quality and River Management

Moderator Ina Bruening, *IAWR*

Impulse statement Valdimir Tausanovic, *Belgrade Waterworks/IAWD*, Gerard Stroomberg, *Rhine Waterworks Association*

Discussants Janos Feher *GWP*

This working group will look at the role of water utilities in protecting and maintaining good river quality and the importance of good river basin management for water services.

#### 4 Building sustainable partnerships with the private sector to implement the Water Framework Directive

Moderator Kathy Hughes, *WWF*

This session will be a participatory discussion about how to mainstream private sector partnerships and participation within different scenarios of good river management

### 12:45 Lunch

### 13:45 Presentation of Book 'Restoration of Rivers'

by author Dave Tickner, *WWF UK*

### 14:00 Report Back from the Working Groups

Moderator Ben van de Wetering and Rappators Tobias Salathe *Ramsar*, Chris Baker *Wetlands International*, Danka Thalmeinerova *GWP*, Kathy Hughes *WWF*, Melanie Ryan, *IRF*

### 14:30 Building Partnerships for Water and Sustainable Development

Responding to the Report Back; Responses from sectoral representatives

David Michaud *World Bank*, Frederik Pischke *GWP*, Eric Tardieu *INBO*, Hans Peter Hasenbichler, *viadonau*.

### 15:30 Coffee Break

### 16:00 European Riverprize Finalist presentations

Aragon River (Spain), César Pérez Martín, *Director Water Services, Gobierno de Navarra*, Segura River (Spain), Miguel Angel Rodenas, *president of the Segura River Basin Authority*, River Trent (UK), Andrew Hearle, *Initiative Manager, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Central Rivers*

### 16:45 Wrap Plenary Lessons from the Parallel Session on Strengthening Partnership for Rivers and Initiatives to be Taken

Moderator Bart Fokkens, *ECRR*

### 17:15 Close of the Conference

### 18.30 Riverprize Gala

City Hall of Vienna, Friedrich-Schmidt-Platz 1, 1010 Vienna



Christoph Litschauer WWF Austria



Walter Kling IAWD



Bart Fokkens ECRR

The third European Riverprize will be awarded at the Gala Dinner during the European River Symposium 2016 on 3 March in the City Hall of Vienna. This event is traditionally, attended by all of those involved in different areas of river management all over Europe and is a fantastic networking and professional development opportunity. The conference fee includes the admission to the Gala Dinner.

## 2016 European Riverprize Finalists

The Aragon River (Spain), the Segura River (Spain) and the River Trent (UK) have been named as finalists in the 2016 European Riverprize, awarded by the International RiverFoundation (IRF). IRF awards the Riverprize annually to those demonstrating outstanding results in sustainable river management and protection across the European continent. All finalists applied a multi partner approach and have learned from existing best practices, but also created their own."

## Thiess International Riverprize

All Riverprize finalists and winners receive recognition and reward for their achievements, and join an elite group of Riverprize alumni who are supported by the IRF and its global partners to continue their efforts and share their experiences with communities around the world who can benefit from it most. The International RiverFoundation also awards the New Zealand, Australian and North American Riverprizes - as well as the prestigious Thiess International Riverprize - to those who achieve the best outcomes in river and basin management globally. In 2014, the River Rhine received the Thiess International Riverprize after being awarded the inaugural IRF European Riverprize the previous year.



## Programme Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2016

### 8:30 Departure Thematic field excursions

Departure address: Tech Gate, Vienna Wissenschafts- und Technologiepark GmbH, A-1220 Wien, Donau-City-Straße 1  
Meeting point will be at Tech Gate Level 2 - Parking Entrance  
Two optional field excursions offering technical presentations by local experts. Detailed background documentation is provided and field excursions include lunches. Participants are kindly advised to bring appropriate waterproof equipment such as rain coats, umbrellas and shoes that are suitable for walk in wetlands or along fish passages.

### 15:00 Arrival at Tech Gate

Return to Vienna is at Schwedenplatz and at Tech Gate.

The field excursions are organised with the support of Viadonau and Verbund. More information: [www.errconference.eu](http://www.errconference.eu)

### Field trip Wachau: Integrating flood protection, navigation and nature protection

The LIFE projects "Flusslebensraum Mostviertel - Wachau" want to achieve measures that aim for improvement of the river habitats and to make a significant contribution to the conservation of biodiversity while also improving the ecological functioning of this area in accordance to the EU Water Framework Directive. This field trip is organized and prepared by viadonau

**viadonau**

### Field trip: LIFE+ Project Traisen - Maintaining river ecology, hydropower and other river uses

Austria's largest renaturation project is in its construction phase. The estuary of the Traisen river in the area of the Danube power plant of Altenwörth is converted from a regulated river into an ecologically diverse floodplain landscape.

This field trip is organized and prepared by Verbund

**Verbund**



## Aragon River, Spain

Until the twentieth century, the Aragon river, with its tributary Arga, was a meandering river that generated many complex oxbow lakes. However, flood risk in the basin led to the introduction of multiple defensive structures and intensive river dredging in an attempt to mitigate flood effects. Unfortunately, these activities caused a significant reduction in natural habitats along the river and, consequently, biodiversity plummeted.

The Regional Government of Navarra, together with the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, the European Commission through several LIFE + projects and community partners, have spent over a decade working to reverse these impacts and restore habitat for local flora and fauna. The project has been accompanied by a process of social participation in a territory where the high presence of flood risk led to popular support for defence mechanisms.



## Segura River, Spain

1986, Spain became a member of the European Union. This milestone marked an increase in the production of agriculture and canned food and, consequently, a rise in wastewater discharges and lack of water. As a result, the already water-stressed Segura River in Europe's driest basin became an exposed sewer. Between 2001 and 2010, 100 water treatment plants and 350 kilometres of wastewater collection systems were built. In addition, a wastewater reclamation levy was established to finance the operation, maintenance and monitoring of these systems, applying the principle "the polluter pays".

A major breakthrough was achieved in 2003 when the quality of the Segura's water started improving. Since 2010, pollution has been unnoticeable, leading to the recovery of fauna and flora including increased otter population in parts of the river they had once abandoned. Birds now rest at two recovered wetland areas, recognised by the Ramsar Convention, during their migration between Europe and Africa. In addition, around 110 million cubic metres of reclaimed water is reused annually for agriculture in the region.



## Trent River, United Kingdom

Historically, the River Trent was heavily engineered into a single, straight and deep watercourse, leaving a 'fossilised' river bereft of natural features and lacking in quality habitat.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust implemented the Central Rivers Initiative - a multi-partner program with local stakeholders including councils, businesses, universities, consultancies and NGOs - to restore functional habitats along the River Trent, with a recent focus on a six kilometre stretch of the river through the Catton Estate and Croxall Lakes.

Works included increasing the channel width to allow shallows to form, re-grading banks, lowering the floodplain, adding gravels, re-connecting backwaters, introducing large woody debris, forming islands using living willow root wads, and wider woodland planting. These exhaustive works have resulted in a major increase in in-channel and floodplain habitat diversity and availability, and an increase in species within these habitats.





# General Information

## European River Symposium 2016

### Dates and venue opening hours

Wednesday, 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2016	13:00 - 19:30
Thursday, 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2016	08:00 - 17:00
Friday, 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2016	08.30 - 15.00
Optional field excursions	

### Venue address Tech Gate Vienna

Wissenschafts- und Technologiepark  
A-1220 Wien, Donau-City-Straße 1

### Public transportation

#### UNDERGROUND (U-BAHN)

U1-Station Kaisermühlen - Vienna International Centre, Schüttaustraße exit. You will reach us in less than two minutes via the footway. The subway line U1 connects Tech Gate Vienna with Vienna's historic city centre. It is only 8 minutes to Vienna city centre (U1 station Stephansplatz), ten minutes to the City Airport Train connection (CAT) to Vienna-Schwechat Airport (U3 station Landstraße).

#### BUS

The following buses have stations in close proximity to Tech Gate Vienna (at the U1 station Kaisermühlen-Vienna International Centre): 20B, 90A, 91A, 92A, Airport Bus

#### RAIL

From the Hauptbahnhof take U-Bahn Line U1 in the Leopoldau direction. Alight at Kaisermühlen - Vienna International Centre Station. Take the Schüttaustraße exit.  
At the Westbahnhof take U-Bahn Line U3 towards Simmering. At Stephansplatz change to Line U1 in the Leopoldau direction. Alight at Kaisermühlen - Vienna International Centre Station. Take the Schüttaustraße exit.

### Registration desk

The conference registration desk is located in the entrance lobby of Tech Gate Vienna. You can also come here to collect your conference material and ask for information.

### Fees

Conference Participation Fee is €150  
Conference registration includes the European River *prize* Gala  
An additional thematic field trip excursion is €75  
All fees include 20% VAT

### Language

English

### Parking

Tech Gate Vienna has a car park. If needed you can obtain a free parking ticket at the conference registration desk.

### Internet access



WiFi is available at the conference venue. You will be provided with the access code at the registration desk.

### Stay Connected



Throughout the conference we will be providing updates from all sessions via Twitter. Stay connected and follow: #ERSymposium2016

[www.errconference.eu](http://www.errconference.eu)

production: Xander de Bruine, Project Platforms

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