



## **Resolution of the 39<sup>th</sup> IAD conference “Living Danube” in Szentendre Hungary**

From 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2012, more than 100 scientists and representatives of the Danube River Basin have met in Szentendre at the 39<sup>th</sup> international IAD conference with the guiding topic “For the living Danube - Integrating human use and ecosystem function for a sustainable development”. There was general agreement that research is the basis for environmentally sound and sustainable decisions by managers and politicians. IAD as a well-established network of experts active since 1956 in the Danube region can gap the bridge from science to the management and implementation, mainly in the responsibility of the ICPDR, where the tools for the implementation of the EU WFD and the new EU Danube Strategy are elaborated. Our interdisciplinary expertise in navigation (ISPA I and II Projects), hydropower (guidelines for hydropower use), hydromorphology (Danube maps on ecological status and contribution to ICPDR expert groups), fish (Danube Sturgeon Task Force, DSTF) broadly supports these activities and plan of measures. While solutions are under development to address current stressors and threats concerning a well-balanced regional development, new challenges are ahead, such as climate change. A major problem in the near future will be the change in the hydrological cycle leading to more frequent extremes such as droughts and floods. In consequence, measures considering water uses for e.g. drinking water supply, irrigation, navigation, agriculture and industry, tourism, fishery and flood protection need an integrative approach.

In the first resolution of IAD dating back to 1966 the major concern was the effect of unbalanced economic development leading to various forms of pollution of aquatic ecosystems. Today as mentioned above multiple stressors in combination with intensely modified aquatic ecosystems under changing environmental condition need to be addressed in our research efforts.

Thus, the General Assembly of IAD adopted the following resolution:

Sustainability, the triplet of ecology, economy and social aspects is still biased towards economy. The IAD is concerned about the economic drive of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and planned development of navigation, hydropower and infrastructure projects in the Danube River Basin. Scientists from various disciplines highlight the importance of a balanced economic development considering in a holistic way all the driving factors and their long term impact on ecological systems and, consequently, on human society.

Under the economic pressure, protected areas and valuable river sections and floodplains, and respective habitats and species of flora and fauna are highly threatened, leading to the decline of services provided by natural ecosystems, which conflicts with the overarching goal of EC towards sustainability. IAD is willing to further contribute to Danube environmental protection by offering continuous scientific support in various ICPDR Expert Groups and the DSTF in particular.

Furthermore, these challenges also emphasize the need to develop the scientific capacity further within the Danube region. IAD fully supports any initiative oriented towards the development of cooperation and capacity building such as new infrastructures in line with focussed research activities addressing the major challenges.

We will also help promoting public awareness and participation to reach the aims of a sustainable development of the Danube region.