

ANNEX 12 Evaluation of the UNDP/GEF Pollution Reduction Programme

Annex 12.1 Terminal Evaluation

Annex 12.2 Terminal Report

United Nations Development Program - Global Environment Facility
United Nation Office for Project Services

Developing the Danube River Basin Pollution Reduction Program
RER/96/G31

Terminal Evaluation

An der schönen blauen Donau.
(On the Beautiful Blue Danube.)

Introduction. **Waltz.** JOHANN STRAUSS. Op. 314.
Andantino.

Piano.

The image shows a musical score for the piano piece 'An der schönen blauen Donau' (The Beautiful Blue Danube) by Johann Strauss, Op. 314. The score is presented on three systems of staves. The first system begins with an 'Introduction. Andantino.' section, marked 'Piano.' and 'pp'. The second system is labeled 'Waltz.' and features a 3/4 time signature. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'pp' and 'p'. There are also some asterisks and other symbols scattered throughout the score.

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JUNE 1999

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The consultation mission gratefully acknowledges Mr. R. Aertgeerts, from the UNOPS, Mr. A. Hudson, from the UNDP/GEF, and Ms. T. Akhtar from RBEC-UNDP for their comments during the briefing sessions before and after our time in the field. The Project Manager, Mr. J. Bendow, and his team provided the mission with all of the necessary documentation, information, and technical support. They were always available to discuss the Project and the issues relative to its evaluation. Finally, we are greatly indebted to Mr. I. Schuets-Mueller, the Chief of UNOPS/ENVP, and Mr. W. Stalzer, the President of ICPDR, for the time they devoted to discussing regional implications of national pollution reduction policies and the role of international cooperation in regional programmes.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BOD	Biological Oxygen Demand
COD	Chemical Oxygen Demand
DANIS	Danube Information System
DANUBIS	ICPDR Information System
DEF	Danube Environmental Forum
DEFF	Danube Environmental Financing Facility
DPRP	Danube Pollution Reduction Program
DRPC	Danube River Protection Convention
DWQM	Danube Water Quality Model
EC	European Commission
EMIS	Emission Expert Group
ENVP	Division for Environmental Programmes
EPDRB	Environmental Program for the Danube River Basin
EU	European Union
FGG	Finanzierungs Garantie Gesellschaft
GEF	Global Environment Facility
Hot Spot	A local land or water area, which is subject to excessive pollution, and which requires specific actions to prevent or reduce degradation caused by pollutants
ICPBS	International Commission for Protection of the Black Sea
ICPDR	International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
IFI	International Financing Institution
ISEP	International Society for Environmental Protection
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
N	Nitrogen
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
P	Phosphorus
PAG	Project Appraisal Group
PCU	Danube Program Co-ordination Unit
Phare	Poland, Hungary: Aid for Reconstruction and Economy; Program of assistance for economic restructuring in the countries of central and Eastern Europe
PIF	Project Implementation Facility
PMTF	Project Management Task Force
PPC	Project Preparation Committee
PRP	Pollution Reduction Program
RBEC	Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS
REC	Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
TA	Transboundary Analysis
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
TF	Task Force
TOPP	Target Oriented Program Planning
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

SUMMARY

The “Developing the Danube River Basin Pollution Reduction Programme” project RER/96/G31 represents the Global Environment Facility (GEF)’s contribution to the second phase of an Environmental Programme for the Danube River Basin (EPDRB), created in 1992. The project was a continuation of two previous GEF projects that assisted the EPDRB. All three projects helped the EPDRB to prepare a Strategic Action Plan (SAP), and develop a Danube Water Quality Model (DWQM). They helped, as well, in creating public awareness, and contributed to several other areas, including knowledge base building, information exchange and transboundary water pollution understanding. Beyond these actions, they also showed preoccupation with Black Sea marine ecosystem degradation.

There were eleven countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, Ukraine, and the Federal Yugoslav Republic) that benefited directly from the present project activities while two others (Austria and Germany) collaborated closely. The International Commission for the Protection of Danube River (ICPDR) was a regional partner of the project. The project came in at a cost of \$3.9 million with its activities implemented between December 1996 and June 1999. (Four minor activities will continue until December 1999).

The project’s overall long-term objective was to stimulate sustainable, institutional and financial arrangements for effective environmental management of the Danube River Basin. The immediate goal was to prepare for funding pollution prevention and reduction activities required to both restore the Danube River basin and protect the Black Sea environment. This immediate goal was composed of four objectives:

1. Complete the knowledge base for priority pollution loads and priority environmental issues in the Danube River basin;
2. Review policy for protection (especially nature protection) of the Danube basin and Black Sea;
3. Increase public awareness and participation;
4. Develop financing for the pollution reduction programme under the Danube Strategic Action Plan.

The project fits into regional and national plans of the Danube River basin countries, into the GEF priorities, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) areas of concentration. The Project Document clearly designs beneficiaries, contains implementation plan, and corresponding financial provision. Under the project dynamic leadership, and strong support of the backstopping agencies: the UNDP/GEF and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the project successfully implemented and realized all activities, and delivered all outputs. The data needed to the output production were collected and provided by national teams. The project prepared framework and methodology for data collection. The methods were discussed in more than 35 meetings and workshops.

There was, however, great differences among the countries of the region in levels of their economical, technological and knowledge skills. Because of that, the data national teams provides were not all of the same quality and precision.

The project successfully completed the knowledge base for priority-settings. It updated national reviews of Danube pollution, and prepared a list of 421 priority pollution reduction projects. It improved the DWQM model and used it to simulate the nitrogen and phosphorus pollution of the Danube with and without the projects. However, since the data used in description of the regional priorities and in modeling were of unequal quality, the regional results have to be taken with precaution. To overcome the data inaccuracies and approximations, the project developed a database that will in the future allow for more accurate diagnoses of pollution sources as well as more efficient cost evaluation.

The reviews by national teams that contributed to formulation of the regional Danube basin and Black Sea protection policies, and updating the SAP did not yet produced a global political or strategic approach to a regional pollution reduction. The updated SAP gives to the policy and strategies too narrow a meaning.

The project successfully planned and organized the public awareness programme of pollution reduction activities. However, the project's tight schedule and the NGO's ineffectiveness in promoting the programme, hampered the public awareness campaign. The impact of this campaign is yet unknown.

On the basis of the national reports, the project developed a portfolio of 421 priority pollution reduction investments. For each investment the project proposed a baseline and the incremental costs. For some of these investments, the costs were estimated according to the best available information.

The project proposed to ICPDR the establishment of a Project Appraisal Group (PAG) that would advise the ICPDR, the country, and the donors about conformity of the project with ICPDR standards. It also proposed the creation of a Project Implementation Facility (PIF) that would support the ICPDR in regional investment programme, assist member countries in project preparation, and monitor the results. The ICPDR endorsed the project results, in particular, the updated SAP, the PAG, and the PIF. By the end of this year, the ICPDR will present the proposals of SAP, PAG, and PIF to the ministries of the member countries for approval.

All project activities were deeply imbedded in the GEF priorities, however, To fully satisfy the GEF requirements, some outputs need to be improved; the SAP will require further developments. Nonetheless, the project fully justifies the GEF support.

The project's achievements were highly praised by the ICPDR. Especially appreciated were the following participation methods the project employed: participating planning, logical approach, and consultative and iterative planning process of the SAP revision. The project management paid close attention to strengthening cooperation among various sectors – the government decision makers, the administrative delegates, and the private-sector representatives.

The project final results will likely remain sustainable. In particular, the principal objective will probably be pursued well after the end of the project. Moreover, the method used to gather data as well as the regional standardization of the collection procedure contributed to growth in national capacity and reinforcement of regional cooperation.

To increase the impact of the current project, the mission recommends:

- 1.1 To the project management and the UNDP/GEF** to finance a critical review of the project's documentation. It is recommended they should also finance an evaluation of each country's progress in water pollution reduction, including public participation and policy issues as they were outlined in the previous Project Documents. This review should be organized and completed before the next phase of financing. This critical review should be professionally edited, published, and widely distributed.
- 1.2 To the project management**, to edit the existent technical materials according to the UNDP standards. The project should pay close attention to rhetoric (clarity, organization, consistent and critical arguments) and to the internal coherence of the documents
- 1.3 To the project management**, to include, in the final report, an exhaustive evaluation of all achievements and difficulties.
- 1.4 To ICPDR**, to collect and disseminate information produced by the project and the national teams; organize training, demonstrations, and transfer knowledge and technologies to the countries; this would include the DWQM, standardized data collection methods and analytical procedures. Continue to edit and distribute the Danube Watch, and to update regularly the DANUBIS web site.

To implement regional assistance for future water pollution reduction plans in the Danube River basin, and in addition to the activities and objectives specified in the past GEF projects, the mission recommends to the UNDP/GEF to include into the project programme the following issues:

Supply management:

- 2.1 The regional organizations and the regional assistance projects should develop consistent criteria for evaluating and monitoring water development investments. These criteria should take into account all direct and indirect costs, as well as the potential risks and impacts.

Municipal and industrial programmes:

- 2.2 The efforts to control pollution should be both site-specific and consistent with water basin requirements.

Agricultural practices:

- 2.3 The regional projects should support tests and dissemination of sound agricultural practices, and support national awareness campaigns.

Safety of abandoned industry and mine wastes:

- 2.4 The regional project should investigate the pollution from abandoned industry and mine wastes, and help countries to find funding to ensure the environmental safety of this waste.

Toxic and persistent contaminants:

- 2.5 The regional project should promote a sense of cooperation among the affected countries to research the best control measures and control policy.

Atmospheric pollution:

- 2.6 The regional project should collaborate with the other regional organizations involved in monitoring and reduction of air pollution. It should support national efforts toward atmospheric pollution.

Regional policy instruments:

- 2.7 A mandate should be given to regional project to support the regional and international organizations evaluating and applying regional policy tools. This support could cover such areas as evaluating future projects priorities (according to GEF standards), establishing baseline and incremental costs, or investing in a country that is complying with regional standards.

Integrate technical, economic, political, and social dimensions:

- 2.8 A holistic approach needs to be adopted to get to the bottom of the problem. The regional projects should consider a long list of activities: data collection and dissemination, training and demonstrations, research, norms and legislation standardization, and public participation promotion. These elements need to be looked at in the context of supply and demand of each country's water and macroeconomic policy.

Country's contribution to regional efforts:

- 2.9 The regional project should prepare periodically a ledger of regional expenses and gains and inform the countries about advantages of adhering to a specific cooperative programme. This balance will help to mobilize national efforts for a particular programme, and decide on the amount a country may contribute to the regional effort.

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INTRODUCTION

Project evaluation aims to assess its relevance, performance, and success (Annex I). In principle, every significant UNDP-sponsored project is subject to evaluation. The evaluation of the important UNDP/GEF project “Developing the Danube River Basin Pollution Reduction Programme (RER/96/G31) took place between June 8th and June 21st, 1999 (Annex II). Four consultants contributed to the evaluation. They were:

- Team leader, Stanislaw Manikowski;
- Public awareness specialist, Ester Park;
- Financial specialist, Friedrich Schwaiger; and
- Transboundary pollution assessment specialist, François Van Hoof.

During the evaluation process, the mission met with several stakeholders (Annex III). It encountered the UNOPS and GEF officers who provided technical backstopping and administrative support for the project, the ICPDR officials, the beneficiary country representatives, and the project team. The mission visited Vienna project management headquarters, and offices of major technical contributors in Frankfurt, Munich, Delft and Budapest. Briefing and debriefing of the mission took place in UN offices in New York.

The evaluation referred to the procedures described in the Terms of Reference provided by the UNOPS (Annex D), and the guidelines for project evaluation by the UNDP Central Evaluation Office. The present report describes findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the mission. The report is organized so as to reflect UNOPS’ concerns in regard to the Terms of Reference.

1 PROJECT DESIGN

The design of the present project RER/96/G31 (the Project) follows guidelines of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) sponsored projects. It represents the GEF's contribution to phase two of an Environmental Programme for the Danube River Basin (EPDRB)¹, created in 1992. The Project was a continuation of two previous GEF projects (RER/91/G/31 and RER/95/G45) that assisted the EPDRB in building a framework for a long-term solution of pollution problem in the Danube River.

During the first phase of the framework building, between 1992 and 1996, both the EPDRB and the GEF assistance projects concentrated their efforts on such priorities as:

- Building regional cooperation for water management;
- Evaluating and defining environmental problems;
- Establishing a basin-wide water quality monitoring strategy; and
- Establishing a warning system for accidental pollution.

The first-phase GEF assistance projects contributed to:

- Strengthening of national and regional institutions;
- Increasing awareness that agriculture be integrated into environmental policies;
- Addressing human health issues related to cross-border (transboundary) pollution;
- Improving the knowledge base and exchange of information;
- Promoting investment;
- Supporting public participation;
- Developing the Danube Water Quality Model (DWQM); and
- Drafting the Strategic Action Plan (SAP).

The Project Document of September 1997, stated the objectives of the present project (Project Document [15], 11 and 12):

The overall long-term goal of the new GEF project is to stimulate sustainable, institutional and financial arrangements for effective environmental management of the Danube River basin, in accordance with the International Strategy of GEF Operational Strategy and the International Water Operational Programme No 8.

The immediate goal of the Project was (ibid., 12): "... to prepare for funding pollution prevention and reduction activities required to both restore Danube River basin and to protect the Black Sea environment." Four intermediate objectives should help to achieve this goal:

1. Complete the knowledge base for priority pollution loads and priority environmental issues in the Danube River basin;
2. Review policy for protection (especially nature protection) of the Danube basin and Black Sea;
3. Increase public awareness and participation; and
4. Develop financing of the pollution reduction programme under the Danube Strategic Action Plan.

¹ The EPDRB aimed at establishing an operational basis for the integrated management of Danube River Basin environment.

The Project's objectives were approved by senior officials of eleven Danube River basin countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine, and The Federal Yugoslav Republic) who, in July 1996, attended the EPDRB Task Force and International Commission meeting in Vienna.

The United Nations Development Programme and the GEF (UNDP/GEF) contributed \$3.9 million to the Project. The Danube basin countries provided national personnel, salaries and appropriate allowances, offices, and training facilities.

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) was designated as the Executing Agency.

The Project was to be implemented over a period of 16 months, beginning August 1997.

The Project fits well into the GEF priorities (the eight International Water Operational Programme and important transboundary concerns), and UNDP area of concentration (environmental problems and natural resources management). The Project Document clearly set out the problems that needed to be solved, and it correctly outlined the Project execution strategy. The intended regional and national users were properly identified. Capacity building within the countries was part of the Project design. The Project Document contained a clearly laid out logical framework, stated the outputs in verifiable terms, and included a work plan.

In summary, the Project Document analysis shows that the Project fits into regional and national plans, and into the GEF and UNDP areas of concentration. The objectives, outputs and activities are clear. The Project Document contains an implementation plan and specifies adequate financial provisions. The beneficiaries are correctly identified.

2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The present section assesses the Project's general implementation, its management, monitoring, and backstopping, all with regard to the quality and timeliness of activities and outputs. The section contains, as well, an evaluation of how adequately management arrangements were made. Finally, some light will be shed on what environmental changes were brought on by the Project. The elements discussed in this section constitute the rationale for the GEF support, particularly in the areas of regional cooperation, policy development, and public participation.

2.1 General Implementation

The Project was scheduled to start its activities in August 1997. However, since the document was signed in September 1997 and the personnel recruited in autumn 1997, the Project's implementation was delayed until December of the same year. Most of the Project's 29 activities ended in May and early June, 1999 (Figure 1). The Project was operational for 19 months instead of the 16 originally scheduled by the Project Document. It completed almost all intended activities and delivered all important outputs. Four activities are yet to be completed:

- The community-based projects will last until September;
- The Danube Internet network will be established by December;
- The ministerial conference to revise and probably adopt the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) is scheduled for the end of this year; and
- The fund-raising conference will take place by the end of 1999 or the beginning of 2000.

The allocated budget covered adequately all Project expenses.

The Project management efficiently and dynamically mobilized the region's 13 countries (11 signatory countries plus Austria and Germany). This task was arduous since the countries are at the beginning of their environmental cooperation. Moreover, language barriers, economic differences, and open hostilities in one part of the region sometimes hampered collaboration. Nevertheless, the skill and persistence of the Project team did mobilize the countries toward closer and more effective collaboration.

The ICPDR (International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River), was the Project's regional counterpart. The Project closely collaborated with the ICPDR: all the Project staff, national collaborators, and national experts regularly participated in the ICPDR meetings.

Overall, the Project was very well implemented on a regional level and in the countries themselves. While experience from the previous regional projects helps, it is still quite a challenge to successfully complete a Project of such a dimension in so short time. It all requires good managerial skill from the staff as well as unwavering support from the Executing Agency.

2.2 Management, Monitoring, and Backstopping

The Project management was located in the UNDP Vienna Office and benefited from the Vienna Office administrative support. According to the management, the Office support was helpful because it freed up the Project from the every-day administrative work and allowed staff to focus on technical issues. The monitoring of the Project's progress and the additional administrative support was in the hands of the UNOPS. The UNDP/GEF Office in New York took care of technical back-stopping. *All administrative supports, monitoring, and technical back-stopping were judged by the Project management as not only sufficient but very helpful in implementing Project activities.*

2.3 Changes in the Project's Environment

The Project activities spanned a period of less than two years. This is a relatively short time for detecting any noticeable changes of attitude on a national or regional scale. However, that period coincided with emerging of a strong, general, political and ethical trend in the region, and a collective set of goals: improvement of the environment, pollution reduction and Danube basin and Black Sea protection. The Project itself helped to reinforce this trend, by organizing more than 35 meetings and workshops, and making the regional and transboundary issues of Danube protection more specific and easier to visualize. Thanks to the Project, the most important river polluters were identified [3] and the river's pollution become something more than just an impersonal and vague problem.

The Project has benefited from this impetus as well. According to comments of country representatives the mission met (see Annex II for a list), the national collaborators were enthusiastic about the Project and devoted themselves to realizing their assigned tasks. The results were considered "essential" by the countries' representatives.

In conclusion, the Project worked in a climate favorable to realization of its assignments. The presence of the Project contributed even further to the creation, among the Danube basin countries, of positive attitudes towards pollution reduction. The Project implementation fully justifies the GEF support.

3 PROJECT IMPACT

This section reviews the Project's achievements measured against its goals, outputs, and activities. It will be arranged according to the following outline: (1) Complete priority-setting; (2) Review policy for nature protection of the Danube Basin and Black Sea; (3) increase public awareness and participation; (4) Develop financing for a pollution reduction programme within the Danube Strategic Action Plan.

3.1 Complete the Knowledge Base for the Priority-Settings

The Project Document allocated 42% of the Project's budget toward the completion of the knowledge base for priority-settings.

To complete the knowledge base for the priority-settings, the Project should have updated national reviews, and analyzed the national action plans. This should have been achieved by using a common format. The national reviews should be completed with the transboundary diagnostic analysis.

3.1.1 Update National Reviews and Analyze National Actions Plans Using a Common Format

In 11 of the 13 Danube basin countries (all but Austria and Germany), the Project, effectively using national expertise, organized and updated national reviews². The national reviews teams received from the Project a thorough training in data collection and reporting. As a result, the reviews were based on common sampling methodology and common reporting procedures. Despite of this, the data included in the national reviews were of unequal quality, due to the differences in laboratory capacity and national staff training among member countries³.

The updated reviews focused on priority pollutants and on sectors that contributed to Danube pollution. The reviews have helped the pollution impact analysis, and the cost analysis of pollution reduction projects.

3.1.2 Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis

The Project improved on an existing Danube Water Quality Model (DWQM), and used it to forecast the nitrogen and phosphorus pollution of the Danube⁴. The Project also financed a study of wetlands and floodplain areas of the river⁵. The results of national updated reviews, the model, and the studies were used for transboundary analysis. As in the national reviews, the transboundary analysis, which represents for the moment the best global image of pollution in the Danube basin, also suffered the burden of an uneven quality of data. It should be mentioned, however, that this shortage could not have been corrected within the short life of the Project⁶.

The updated national reviews, the analysis of national plans and the transboundary SWQM are outstanding and lasting achievements of the project. To fully exploit the potential created by the Project, the member countries should well appropriate the model and agree on a timetable for input data improvement. To facilitate assimilation by those who have benefited from the Project's achievements, the reports describing the DWQM, transboundary analysis [4 and 20] and other main Project's reports [1, 3 to 8, 16, and 17] dealing with the transboundary problems should be edited in such a way that the users can easily see the progress from the data collecting to the fully developed transboundary diagnostic.

² Annex V, 1.1.1; VI, 1.1.1, and 1.1.2; VII, 6.1.

³ Annex VII, 6.1.

⁴ Annex V, 1.2.2; VI, 1.2.1, 1.2.2., and 1.2.3, page 3; and VIII, 6.2.

⁵ Annex V, 1.2.3; VI, 1.2.3, and 1.2.5, page 3; and VIII, 6.3.

⁶ Annex VII, 6.2, and 6.3.

3.2 Review Policy for Protection of the Danube Basin and the Black Sea

The policy review received 5% of the Project's budget. As in previous activities, the policy review was organized entirely by national experts, in consultation with national authorities. The Project's regional experts collated that information and integrated it into the main document, the updated Strategic Action Plan (SAP)⁷.

It should be noted that the national environment policy has some specific mandates. It is concerned with achieving the most cost-effective pollution reduction; an equitable distribution of the pollution reduction burden; and an acceptable and just distribution of charges for pollution emission. It attempts to enforce the policy at the lowest cost. It takes into account the ethical, moral, and traditional issues. The national strategy (the actual implementing of the policy) describes the standards set down and the incentives employed to achieve the policy. The regional policy is distinct from the national one. The regional policy is a sum of sovereign national policies that specifically concern the region. A regional organization or a regional project may reinforce the will of the countries for adherence to a given regional treaty.

The analysis of the policy description contained in the SAP, as well as in the meeting records and technical documents produced by the Project [1 and 16], shows that the country delegates are still at the initial stages of defining regional policies with respect to the Danube basin and the Black Sea protection⁸.

It is important to analyze exhaustively the pollution reduction approaches when embarking upon the regional pollution reduction project. Analyzing national and regional policies, national policy instruments, and possible international pressures could best indicate to project management and to donors how to allocate regional resources, and how to help countries stick to their regional agreements.

3.3 Increase Public Awareness and Participation

According to the Project Document [16, page 24], "Wide public participation in the Project is an essential requirement for development of sustainable policies in Danube Basin ." Through the activities and outputs developed under the objective " increase public awareness and participation", the Project would have to increase the importance of pollution reduction in the public's mind. It would also have to reinforce public participation in designing of regional and national policies and to improve coordination and exchange of information.

The Project invested about 23% of its budget to make this all possible.

3.3.1 Raise the Public Awareness of Pollution Reduction Activities

Early on, the Project saw that through training, workshops, discussions and consultations, it will set up ways for the public to be involved, and it will raise public awareness. The public involvement activities were held with the participation of technicians, national government administrators, public, and NGOs. The NGOs⁹, and one of their regional bodies, the Danube Environmental Forum (DEF), became the Project's principal proponents in raising public awareness. The Project efforts were well planned, well organized and worked well with the Project Document programme. However, the tight schedule and the NGO's¹⁰ ineffectiveness in promoting the Project, hampered public awareness campaigns.

The Project was also responsible for financing five community-based project grants that totaled \$200,000. At this point, it is yet to measure the impact the investment had on the awareness of Danube basin citizens.

⁷ Annex V, 2.1.1 to 2.1.5; VI. 2.1.1. to 2.1.5.

⁸ Annex VI, pages 5 to 11.

⁹ Annex V, 3.1.1 to 3.1.5; VI, 3.1.1 to 3.1.5; and VIII.

¹⁰ Annex V, 3.2.1 and 3.2.2; VI 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, page 14; and VIII.

3.3.2 Improve Coordination and Information Exchange

The Project financed three editions of a periodical called Danube Watch, devoted to Danube pollution issues, and it plans to finance two more editions. The Project also developed and improved an information web site, called DANIS (transformed into DANUBIS).

In a final analysis of section 3.3 we can observe that the weakness of DEF was a major obstacle in efficient implementation of the public awareness programme. While weak, NGOs for now are convenient partners for many UNDP projects, even though, they may not, in the context of Central European traditions, be the best intermediaries for a project and a group of citizens. These countries' traditional institutions such as the church, older universities, mainstream media, and high-profile individuals may be better at influencing public opinion. The NGOs are still new on the scene, and their position may be looked upon in the public eye with some trepidation. In consequence, replacing the NGOs with another structure may give better results in public awareness raising.

A well targeted public awareness campaign is vital for any environmental programme. It helps decision makers appraise the breadth and strength of public attitudes. It may provide information that otherwise would be unavailable and also can generate a dialog for the project. Open debate is the first step to improving mutual understanding, promoting compromise, enhancing credibility, and making better final decisions.

Increase in public awareness should be carefully monitored through the appropriate tools. Such monitoring can demonstrate the changes in public opinion over environmental matters more objectively than the progress reports. It may also help the Project evaluate how well the message is being transmitted and then adjust its own working programme, thus making it more efficient.

To sum up, the Project planned and launched a systematic and well organized set of activities aiming at raising public awareness and public participation in designing environmental projects. The ultimate results of these activities are not yet known in detail. Since raising public awareness has long been the GEF project's goal, efforts in this area should be carefully evaluated before further investment takes places.

3.4 Develop the Financing of the Pollution Reduction Programme Within the Danube Strategic Action Plan

The Project should have developed under this objective a portfolio of Danube Basin projects and proposed a mechanism that could provide sustainable financial support for Danube Basin pollution reduction. It should also finalize and come to an agreement on how to go about adopting a revised Strategic Action Plan.

3.4.1 Portfolio of Danube Basin Projects

The present Project developed a portfolio of 421 projects worth \$5.5 billion, including documentation for priority hotspots and wetland projects for investment consideration. The projects' costs were estimated according to the best available information, and the degree of priority for the project was duly documented¹¹. However, since the countries' inputs differ in quality and precision, and the ongoing national research is adding new information, the portfolio should therefore be periodically updated. The Project has prepared a database that will easily integrate the updated information [9].

National experts and consultants gathered all the information needed to the portfolio preparation, and later, along with interested industries and public, agreed on the portfolio project's priorities. The projects were then reviewed on a governmental level before being put on a regional priority list. The portfolio results from a national effort and represents what is probably an exhaustive list of Danube pollution priorities.

¹¹ Annex V, 4.1.1 to 4.1.3; VI, 4.1.1 to 4.1.3; and IX

The portfolio deals, however, with only half of all pollutants in the area. The other half originate from the so called “non point” pollution sources, such as agriculture or storm water that periodically flushes in from cities and villages¹². The Project is aware of these pollutants but did not (and could not, given its workload) develop a strategy that takes into account these factors.

3.4.2 Mechanism for Sustainable Financial Support

The Project Document favored establishing a fund that would support priority investments for the whole Danube Basin or Black Sea. The Project Document [15, pages 23, 29, and 33] required a feasibility study for such a fund and demanded that the Project direction prepare structures and rules for this type of regional financing.

As a result of a feasibility study [9] and preliminary discussions with regional partners, the Project put forward two proposals to ICPDR: (1) establishment of a Project Appraisal Group (PAG) that would assess the projects and, if they conformed to the ICPDR standard, recommend them to donors; and (2) creation of a Project Implementation Facility (PIF) that would support the ICPDR in several areas including regional investments programmes that would assist member countries in both project preparation, and results monitoring. The estimate cost of PIF for 3 to 4 years was US\$ 2.3 million.

The ICPDR endorsed the PAG and PIF proposals and expects that PIF may be financed by UNDP/GEF.

Although the Project’s proposal of establishing PAG and creating PIF is in line with the Project Document requirements and the ICPDR programme, it should be noted that it is not known as to what extent donors and the financing institutions will use the PAG and PIF facilities in selecting projects for financing. On the other hand, it cannot be taken for granted that the governments will address their financing requests through the ICPDR. Without the donor’s support of PAG and PIF and the governmental recognition of them, both facilities may remain simply an administrative entity.

3.4.3 Adopting a Revised SAP

The revised SAP and the list of priority projects were discussed at a regional workshop in May, 1999 and presented in the ICPDR Steering Group in June. It will be proposed for adoption in a conference of the involved technical ministries, scheduled for either the end of this year or the beginning of next¹³.

The portfolio of the Danube basin pollution reduction investments, the proposal of implementation of PAG and PIF, the SAP revision process are the Project’s outstanding achievements.

3.5 Project Effectiveness in Realizing Its Objectives

The Project was effective in identifying national pollution sources and in preparing proposals for pollution reduction¹⁴. It appropriately implicated the national expertise and the national administration in all steps of the Project objectives realization. The results of these efforts, achieved in such a tight schedule, requires, nevertheless, further improvements. The accuracy of the DWQM should be increased¹⁵. National policies, as well as strategies for national policy implementation and regional approaches to pollution reduction need yet to be described and analyzed¹⁶. The effectiveness of the public awareness campaigns is impossible to assess at this

¹² Annex VI, 1.2.2.

¹³ Annex V, 4.3.2 and 4.3.3; and VI, 4.3.2 and 4.3.3.

¹⁴ Annex VII, 6.9.

¹⁵ Annex VII, 6.2 and 6.3.

¹⁶ Annex VI, 2.

point, since the campaigns' impact has not yet been evaluated¹⁷. The written documents produced by the Project that transmit the results would have better served the interested users if they unequivocally stated their objectives and working hypothesis. It would also have been helpful if within these documents the conclusions were clearly stated and supported by evidence.

3.5.1 Project's Actions and Results in Light of Existing GEF Guidelines

The Project's actions were in line with GEF priorities. The pollution reduction projects portfolio is definitely the most outstanding achievement and it represents a great step forward in identification of pollution reduction activities¹⁸. Another great success of the Project is the fact that high levels of government have endorsed the SAP¹⁹. The use of the DWQM and all efforts at attaining reliable data production may provide an excellent tool to transboundary pollution monitoring. Finally, the Project's efforts to assume financing for priority pollution reduction investments²⁰ is one more example of successful GEF programme activity. Still, the SAP will require further improvements, especially in the baseline calculation²¹. (The GEF considers the well-defined baselines as a key element of the SAP.) Realizing these improvements is in fact independent of the project since it requires better data inputs from the countries. The GEF requires, as well, that the SAP contains an examination of national economic development plans and sector economic policies. This will better define feasible environmental plans. The sections of the SAP dealing with these issues are not yet completed.

3.6 Sustainability of the Programme

The Project's main results point to a continued sustainability.

The Project's results benefit the national ministries responsible for Danube pollution, the national industries and the Danube basin countries' people. It bodes well that these countries feel a strong motivation to clean up their environment and that the pressure for a clean environment is growing. The Project results, especially the register of hot-spots and priority pollution reduction projects, should make for a lasting contribution to Danube pollution reduction.

On a regional level, sustainability of the Project's results and, to a larger extent, the Danube River Protection Programme, was boosted recently after the signing of the DRPC Convention by 12 Danube Basin countries (all except Yugoslavia) and its ratification by 11 (all except Ukraine and Yugoslavia).

¹⁷ Annex VI, 3.

¹⁸ Annex VI, 1.1 and 1.2; and VII.

¹⁹ Annex VI, 4.2; and IX.

²⁰ Annex VI, 4.1 and 4.2; and VII.

²¹ For the standards description see WWW site gefweb.org/public/opstrat/ch4.htm, pages 6 to 8.

4 GENERAL IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

This section will look at the Project's general impact on the countries involved and on the international organizations. This evaluation is based on eight criteria: (1) Awareness of the Project's outputs by the participating countries; (2) Degree of ownership and commitment felt by the participating countries towards the Project; (3) The extent to which policy and strategies of the countries are affected; (4) Technical and managerial cooperation among the countries; (5) Cooperation within agencies and ministries of each country; (6) Cooperation among international organizations; (7) Cooperation among the different sectors, specifically the non-governmental and private sectors; (8) The Project's long term sustainability.

4.1 Awareness Among Participating Countries of the Project's Outputs

The Project systematically built up an awareness campaign of its activities and outputs. The national workshops received attention in the media; the Project has trained national teams and working groups of citizens and institutions concerned with identifying pollution problems. Three issues of the periodical "Danube Watch" were devoted to information on Project activities and their outputs. Two additional issues will cover the SAP and the projects included in Pollution Reduction Programme (PRP) [4]. All of the Project's results can be seen by going to the DANUBIS web site.

The Project's achievements were highly praised by the ICPDR Steering Group meeting in June 1999. Especially appreciated and recognized were the various methods used: participatory planning, logical approach, and consultative and iterative planning process.

The Project's high profile and its usefulness served the UNDP/GEF well. In June 1999, the ICPDR Steering Group expressed its appreciation and gratitude for UNDP/GEF's support, conceptual guidance, and coordination in fulfilling the Danube pollution reduction programme.

Finally, encouraged by such a constructive collaboration, the Steering Group invited GEF to build a partnership to help implement the PRP.

It should be noted, however, that there was no independent assessment on how the Project was perceived nor was there a study to gauge awareness of the Project's output among the citizens in Danube region countries.

4.2 Degree of Ownership and Commitment of the Project Among Participating Countries

The countries participated in all the Project's efforts that had been scheduled in the Project Document. All the information the Project needed to design regional programmes was collected by national teams, lead by ministry-designed experts. The Project team itself provided the national teams with data collection methodologies and funds for implementation. It may be presumed that, the data collected, the working methodology, and regional cooperation are all lasting legacies of the Project owned now by the countries' Ministries of Environment or Water. On a regional level, the Project had been working in close collaboration and frequently consulting with ICPDR. The ICPDR appreciated the outputs from the Project and is seriously looking at their implementation.

The fact that both the countries' technical ministries and the ICPDR own the Project should not raise any concerns. Nevertheless, the endorsement by other ministries and governments of the Project proposals, especially those concerning pollution reduction investments, pollution limitations, and wetland restoration cannot be seen as a *fait accompli*. Judging by the documents available in the Project files, this endorsement is yet to be a reality. The respective governments will most likely endorse the proposals once they have added their own studies. Several elements will probably need to be completed before the pollution reduction investment are made: a more detailed financial analysis, alternative considerations, impact studies, and some type of public opinion study. In the government's eyes, the Project proposals included in the PRP may be perceived, not as final products ready to be financed, but as reliable indicators of important pollution problems.

4.3 Impact on National Policies and Strategies

The documents produced by the Project devote too small a space to political and strategic considerations. Since policy is very important in designing sustainable and publicly acceptable projects, a wide and detailed approach for policy issues clarification needs to be developed in the future.

The Project's positive impact on country policies probably results from having the pollution issues better documented than in any other previous analyses. Showing the Danube pollution in all its severity provides solid arguments for the environmental lobby.

4.4 Technical and Managerial Cooperation Among Countries

There was good technical cooperation among countries, particularly reinforced through joint efforts in identifying pollution problems. Cooperation among countries is necessary for the purpose of reducing transboundary pollution; the donor's funding being subject to regional scrutiny. Managerial cooperation also stood out as it increased the skills of the various national experts. Much was garnered, as well, in the area of project development, and institutional and private donor relations.

4.5 Interagency and Inter Ministerial Cooperation

The Project-financed workshops were attended by representatives of various ministries and national agencies. However, it is not currently known as to what extent this participation will be responsible in furthering cooperation.

4.6 Cooperation among International Organizations

The Project cooperated closely and successfully with the key international organizations involved in the regional Danube River pollution reduction programme: Phare, GEF, Danube Task Force (became PTF), and ICPBS. The cooperation bore positive results through joint meetings and mutual (and alternative) financing of meetings and activities.

4.7 Cooperation Among all Sectors, Including Non-Governmental and Private Sectors

The Project management paid close attention to strengthening cooperation among the various sectors: the government decision makers, the governmental administrative delegates, and the private sector representatives. For this purpose the Project organized numerous meetings and workshops attended by them. However, no study has been done on the collaboration's impact on pollution reduction practices among Danube basin countries.

4.8 Long-Term Sustainability of the Project Impact

The Project's activities and outputs affected many institutions and organizations. Their long-term effects will vary depending on the lasting impressions and continued interests of the recipients. It is too early to assess the sustainability of the Project, however, the available information, namely the meetings with the countries' delegates, gives us a sense there has been an increase in the awareness of pollution reduction necessity in the Danube.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions will be grouped under four headings: general conclusions stemming from an overall evaluation of the Project; conclusions related to the Project design; conclusions related to assessment of the Project's general implementation in terms of human and financial resources; and finally, a review of the Project's results measured against its initial objectives and actions.

5.1 General Conclusions

The Project was designed as a UNDP/GEF contribution for reducing pollution in the Danube River Basin and for eventually lessening pollution in the Black Sea. The Project's specific mandate was to have a strong effect on transboundary pollution. It was, therefore, part of the ICPDR (a regional organization mandated to co-ordinate the national programmes in Danube pollution reduction) effort. All Danube basin countries were involved in the Project's activities. The immediate goal, as described in the Project Document, was to: "prepare for funding pollution prevention and reduction activities required to both restore the Danube River basin and to protect the Black Sea." To reach this goal, the Project had to put together a list of the main sources of pollution, review countries' Danube basin protection policies, increase public awareness and participation, and develop financing for pollution reduction programmes.

Overall achievement. The Project identified 421 of the most important pollution reduction investments and ranked them according to the amount of pollution that each respective investment could reduce. Collectively, these projects encompass all of the main sources of pollution in the basin. The Project evaluated their costs according to the best available knowledge and prepared the project documents. The Project management should be praised for this achievement that directly and successfully addressed the principal goal of the Project.

Sustainability. The pollution reduction projects were brought to fore by the efforts of several groups of participants. National experts, administrative agents, national industry representatives, NGOs and members of the private sector all contributed to execute the Project. In each country, national teams prepared lists of pollution sources, evaluated their importance, and incorporated them into their national environmental plans. As a result, the Project's effort will likely be continued well after its end. Moreover, the method used to gather data, as well as the regional standardization of the collection procedure, contributed to a growth of national capacity in environmental management and reinforcement of regional cooperation.

Data quality improvement. The pollution reduction projects were identified over a very short period of time, encompassing 11 countries with varying economic levels and environmental standards. Consequently, the collected data contain numerous inaccuracies and approximations. To overcome these limitations, the Project developed a database to allow for more accurate diagnoses of pollution sources, as well as more precise cost evaluation.

Limitations. These vital achievements, completed in less than one year (excluding training and final data elaboration), was done at the expense of other Project's goals. As a result, the global image of Danube basin pollution strategy is strongly biased towards point pollutants. The diffuse sources that contribute to more than half of all pollution are not in the Project's priority list.

ICPDR, UNDP, and DEF concerns. The ICPDR, a regional organization that voices the need for transboundary pollution reduction in the Danube River basin, was the principal beneficiary of the Project. Many of the Project's activities coincided with the technical objectives of the ICPDR. The most important was the improvement of the outdated SAP, originally prepared in 1994. The UNDP/GEF was interested in the formulation of pollution reduction activities, so as to sort out national and regional (transboundary) costs and benefits. The endorsement of the SAP at high levels of government was equally important for the UNDP/GEF.

The Project drafted a new version of the SAP. The road to improvement of the SAP involved a series of consultations with the national teams and discussions in the technical meetings of the ICPDR. The new SAP was finally adopted at a recent ICPDR meeting in June, 1999. The next step is for the ICPDR to present the SAP to the concerned ministries at the meeting of the Danube basin member countries at the end of this year.

The Project Document insisted that the Project management develop financing for a pollution reduction programme. The realization of this objective was an arduous task, since the Project management is not an ideal intermediary for national and international financing institutions, nor for donors. The Project, however, developed an original financing proposal. It was accepted by the ICPDR and will probably be accepted in the future when the ministries of the member countries meet.

Technology transfer. The Project has satisfied an important UNDP requirement concerning technology transfer and training of national agents. The Project management adequately adopted a standard for the training of national personnel who collect and analyze pollution data. All subsequent steps regarding the treatment of information and the elaboration of result were discussed in international and national workshops. The timeliness of this realization as it relates to national activities attests to the effectiveness of the expertise and the transfer of responsibility from the Project to the national teams.

Link with the past two GEF projects. Before the implementation of the Project, there were two other GEF projects that aimed over six years to improve water pollution in the Danube basin and assist the ICPDR. They helped to prepare the first SAP, as well as develop the DWQM model, gather a list of hot spots, finance public awareness campaigns, edit the Danube Watch, and distribute small grants for pollution reduction programmes. Yet, the documentation of the present Project make no references to past achievements. It is unclear as to what extent the present Project made use of them and what lessons it learned from the past projects.

5.2 Relevance of the Project Design

The Project was a continuation of two previous GEF projects that assisted EPDRB in searching for a long-term solution to the pollution problem in the Danube basin. All three projects concentrated their efforts on building regional cooperation, evaluating and identifying pollution problems, establishing and developing basin-wide pollution monitoring, supporting public participation and developing SAP.

The Project Document adequately covered the most important regional pollution reduction issues, namely:

Completing the knowledge base for priority pollution loads and priority environmental issues in the Danube River basin;

- Reviewing policy for protection (especially natural habitat protection) of the Danube Basin and Black Sea;
- Increasing public awareness and participation;
- Developing the financing for a pollution reduction programme under the Danube Strategic Action Plan.

All these issues are relevant to the GEF priorities, and UNDP area of concentration.

All initial objectives were achieved. Some of them, however, still require more action. The next step in the regional cooperation, therefore, should be to assure the full realization of those partially attained objectives, and attainment of new goals that will emerge. These goals are outlined in more detail under Section 6: Recommendations.

5.3 Human and Financial Resources Use and Backstopping

In practice, the Project completed all its intended activities. This was realized thanks to efficiency and dynamism of the Project management, and strong motivation of the national teams. The UNDO Vienna Office administration support, the administrative backstopping from the UNOPS, and the technical support from the GEF all contributed to the Project's success. The Project funding adequately covered all activities.

Though the Project realized all its activities, the quality of the results was unequal. The next section will review those results.

5.4 Project Results

The Project's main objective was to stimulate sustainable, institutional and financial arrangements for effective management of the Danube River basin, in accordance with the International Water Strategy of GEF Operational Strategy and the International Water Operational Programme No 8.

The immediate goal of the Project was to prepare for funding pollution prevention and reduction activities required to both restore the Danube River basin and to protect the Black Sea environment.

This goal was composed of four objectives:

- Complete the knowledge base for priority pollution loads and priority environmental issues in the Danube River basin;
- Review policy for protection (especially nature protection) of the Danube basin and Black Sea;
- Increase public awareness and participation;
- Develop the financing of the pollution reduction programme under the Danube Strategic Action Plan.

In this section we will review the degree of achievement of each of the four specific objectives. Then, we will assess how well the Project contributed to the immediate goal, and finally, look at the long-term goal of the Project.

Complete the Knowledge Base for Priority Pollution Loads and Priority Environmental Issues in the Danube River Basin

The Project completed the knowledge base for priority pollution loads and priority environmental issues by updating the national reviews. The updated reviews provide the best available set of data needed for both pollution impact and cost analysis of pollution reduction projects. The Project improved the DWQM and produced transboundary analysis, evaluated wetland and floodplain restoration, and analyzed the social impact of pollution. The national reviews differ in quality due to the differences among the countries in data collection standards and laboratory facilities. They focused strongly on pollutant concentration. Pollutant load was seldom mentioned.

On the downside, their analysis and conclusions carry the burden of insufficient data on which they had been build. Globally, however, the updated national reviews, and the very specific and detailed national action plans that resulted from this activity are outstanding and will remain lasting achievements of the Project.

Review Policy for Protection (Especially Nature Protection) of the Danube Basin and Black Sea

The proceedings from the ICPDR and ICPBS meetings and the analyses of the Project's reports show that the country's delegates are at the initial stages of defining the environmental policy concept. The 1999 updated SAP describes in details the point pollution reduction projects and evaluates their costs. It does not describe and analyze adequately the national policies and strategies.

Increase Public Awareness and Participation

The Project has planned and realized a systematic and well-organized set of activities that aimed at raising public awareness and eliciting participation when designing environmental projects. Since raising public awareness has long been the GEF Danube basin projects' goal, efforts in this area should be carefully evaluated before any new public awareness activities are launched. Since they are so strongly tied to the NGOs, and in particular to the DEF, the awareness programme needs these institutions to stay cohesive.

Develop the Financing of the Pollution Reduction Programme Under the Danube Strategic Action Plan

Development of the pollution reduction programme and its financing proposals was completed by:

- A portfolio of 421 projects evaluated at \$5.5 billion ranked according to investment cost effectiveness;
- Proposal of funding for regional activities;
- Revision of the Strategic Action Plan so as to include the newly identified projects.

The entire responsibility for realizing objectives was in the hands of national experts and was based on national consultations. Unfortunately, that means, the results reflect national preoccupations and priorities. Even the data quality weaknesses have important political and technical significance. They force one to realize where improvements need to be made and will hopefully motivate the countries to attain similar technical standards.

The immediate goal: prepare for funding pollution prevention and reduction activities

The Project prepared, as it was requested by the Project Document, a list of prioritized pollution reduction projects for co-financing by national and international sources.

The Project proposed to the ICPDR the establishment of a PAG to appraise newly submitted projects, and the creation of a PIF to support the regional investment programmes. The ICPDR endorsed the PAG and PIF proposals.

Overall Long-Term Goal: Stimulate Sustainable, Institutional, and Financial Arrangements for Effective Environmental Management of the Danube River Basin

The Project activities helped to stimulate sustainable, institutional and financial arrangements. The Project implicated fully the national ministry-designed experts, and trained them in data collection, environmental assessment, and regional cooperation. These specialists probably will remain important agents, voicing the idea of regional co-operation among national administrations. On the regional level, the Project has been working in close collaboration with the ICPDR, who become a custodian of all three past UNDP/GEF projects. The role of the ICPDR will be reinforced as well by the expected national project support through PAG and PIF. Both the national administrations and the regional ICPDR will be significantly strengthened as a result of the Project activities.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Now that project is complete, further actions need to be taken to sustain the Project's results in the region. These actions, along the lines of GEF goals, will concentrate on two areas: actions to be taken to increase the impact of the Project results, and suggestions for future regional efforts to reduce pollution in the Danube River basin.

6.1 Actions to be Taken to Increase the Impact of the Current Project

All three UNDP/GEF projects that helped develop pollution reduction in the Danube have left a very important legacy on the countries of the region, the ICPDR and the GEF. There is now abundant technical documentation, increased national capacities, and strengthened regional cooperation, as a result of these undertakings. The value of this legacy, once the Project ceases its activities, is less certain. Soon, the technical reports, which have been widely distributed, will no longer be available. The trained national personnel will probably be assigned to other tasks. The institutions involved in the Project's programme will implement other projects. It is therefore important to reflect on and learn from the Project's achievements, and widely distribute conclusions based on this reflection. This Project should be given a special consideration upon its completion because the regional cooperation in the Danube basin is more advanced than other GEF-sponsored river basin collaborations. More importantly, there is a strong expectation from the Danube basin countries and the regionally-based ICPDR, that the GEF assistance will continue. The evaluation mission supports these expectations.

The mission recommends to the Project and UNDP/GEF

- 1.1 In order to increase the Project's impact, the Project management and UNDP/GEF finance a critical review of the Project's achievements. They may also finance an evaluation of each country's progress in water pollution reduction, including public participation and policy issues as they were outlined in the previous Project Documents. Such a review should be organized and terminated before the Project's next phase of financing. The critical review should be professionally edited, published, and widely distributed.

The Project plans to publish two editions of the Danube Watch and to post the Project findings in the DANUBIS web site. The mission supports these initiatives and recommends to the Project to

- 1.2 Edit the existing technical materials according to the UNDP standards; pay close attention to rhetoric (clarity, organization, consistent and critical argumentation), and to the internal coherence of the documents.

Finally, the Project itself did not yet evaluated its achievements with respect to the Project Document requirements. This evaluation would have dealt with the GEF guidelines, UNOPS management services, the ICPDR support, regional cooperation, national collaboration, and the countries' expectations. Such an evaluation may be valuable for the Project's successors because it offers up the Project's results. The mission recommends to the Project

- 1.3 Include, in the final report, an exhaustive and critical evaluation of its achievements and difficulties.

The ICPDR is the regional organization that will benefit directly from the Project outputs. Therefore, the ICPDR should take steps necessary to safeguard the produced documents, databases, and models. The ICPDR should also take all steps needed to assure transfer of outputs and technologies from the Project to the beneficiary countries. The ICPDR should also ensure the necessary arrangements for regularly updating the database, running the models, and actualizing the financial and technical parameters of the priority projects. To this effect, the ICPDR should

- 1.4 Collect and disseminate information produced by the Project and national teams; organize training and demonstrations; transfer to countries the Project's knowledge and technologies including DWQM; standardize data collection methods and analytical procedures; continue to edit and distribute the Danube Watch; and update regularly the DANUBIS web site.