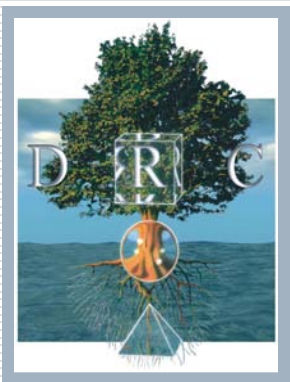


# Natural heritage conservation and restauration as the bonding factor for The River Danube Basin Universities



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Faculty of Sciences  
University of Novi Sad  
Serbia



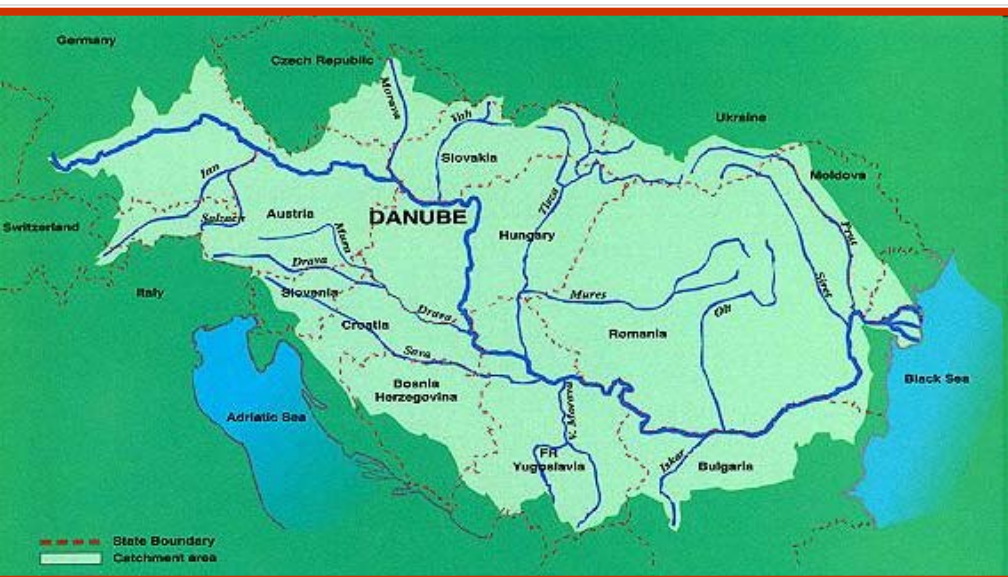
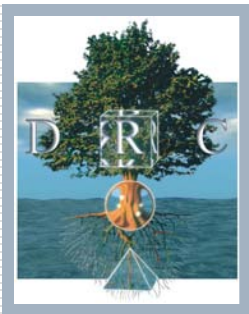
# Geography

Flows through ten countries: Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, and Ukraine.



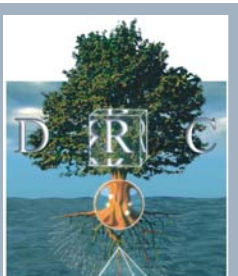
The Danube is a symbol for the future international understanding and support in Europe. A new organizational structure is creating a development area of local and regional partnership from the Black Forest to the Black Sea

Collaboration between regions, cities and consequently, universities generates the new European Danube region



- Danube catchment area: 19 states, more than 100 million inhabitants
- Great cultural and political variety
- Political initiatives from some Member States, regions: more strong consideration is expected on European level, support the development of an EU strategy for the Danube Region,

Watershed Area	817,000	km <sup>2</sup>	
Headwaters: Black Forest	1,078	MSL	
Romania	28.90%	Ukraine	3.80%
Hungary	11.70%	Czech Republic	2.60%
Austria	10.30%	Slovenia	2.20%
Serbia	9.80%	Montenegro	1.80%
		Moldova	1.70%
Germany	7.50%	Switzerland	0.32%
Slovakia	5.80%	Italy	0.15%
Bulgaria	5.20%	Poland	0.09%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4.80%	Albania	0.03%
Croatia	4.50%	Macedonia	0.01%



## "The Danube as sine qua non Europas"



"The Danube as sine qua non Europas" the Hungarian writer Péter Esterházy's statement is not only a historical truth, but also reflect the current political development: with Romania and Bulgaria, six Danube countries have joined the EU since 2007, and Croatia and Serbia also see their future in the European Community.

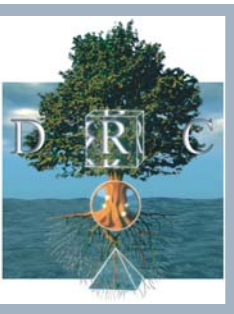
This creates a new European axis from the Black Forest to the Black Sea, uniting many diverse peoples, cultures, economies and environmental (ecological) entities

### EU Member States:

Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania

### Non-EU-member States:

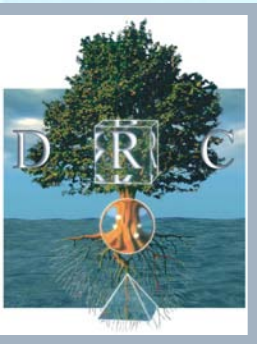
Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine (Italy and Ukraine do not participate with their whole territory)



## European Union Membership

Year	Country
1951	Belgium, France, <u>West Germany</u> , <i>Italy</i> , Luxembourg, The Netherlands (founding members)
1973	Denmark, Ireland, United Kingdom
1981	Greece
1986	Portugal, Spain
1990	<u>East Germany reunites with West Germany</u> and becomes part of the EU
1995	<u>Austria</u> , Finland, Sweden
2004	Cyprus, <i>Czech Republic</i> , Estonia, <u>Hungary</u> , Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, <i>Poland</i> , <u>Slovakia</u> , <i>Slovenia</i>
2005	Accession of <u>Bulgaria</u> and <u>Romania</u> Screening of <u>Croatia</u>
2007	Membership of <u>Bulgaria</u> and <u>Romania</u>
2012-2014	Membership of <u>Croatia</u> , <u>Serbia</u> , <u>Montenegro</u> , <u>Macedonia</u> and <u>Bosnia and Herzegovina</u>

**Underlined states are riparian states. Italicized states are Danube basin states.**

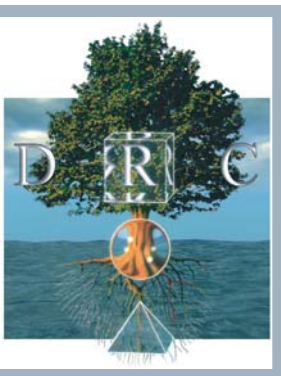


## Universities link the Region



The Europe of the future is a Europe of cities and regions. Nothing embodies this principle of European constitutional politics better than ever-closed cooperation and partnership of our cities and regions along the Danube, often realised through the cooperation between our **universities**. Joint projects in science, education, environmental issues and ecology, besides culture and business, have been, and are being established, and firm structures that connect our universities are being created





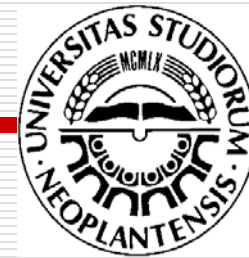
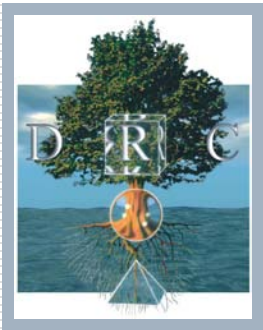
The next step

The next step is to give the **growing regional interuniversity cooperation** in the field of natural heritage protection and conservation along the Danube a solid organisational structure.

Therefore, besides others (European University Association, Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe, Council of Danube Cities and Regions (EUA, UNICA, CDCR))

**The Danube Rectors' Conference** should be also a powerful voice at European institutions to establishing an integrated **European Danube Region**



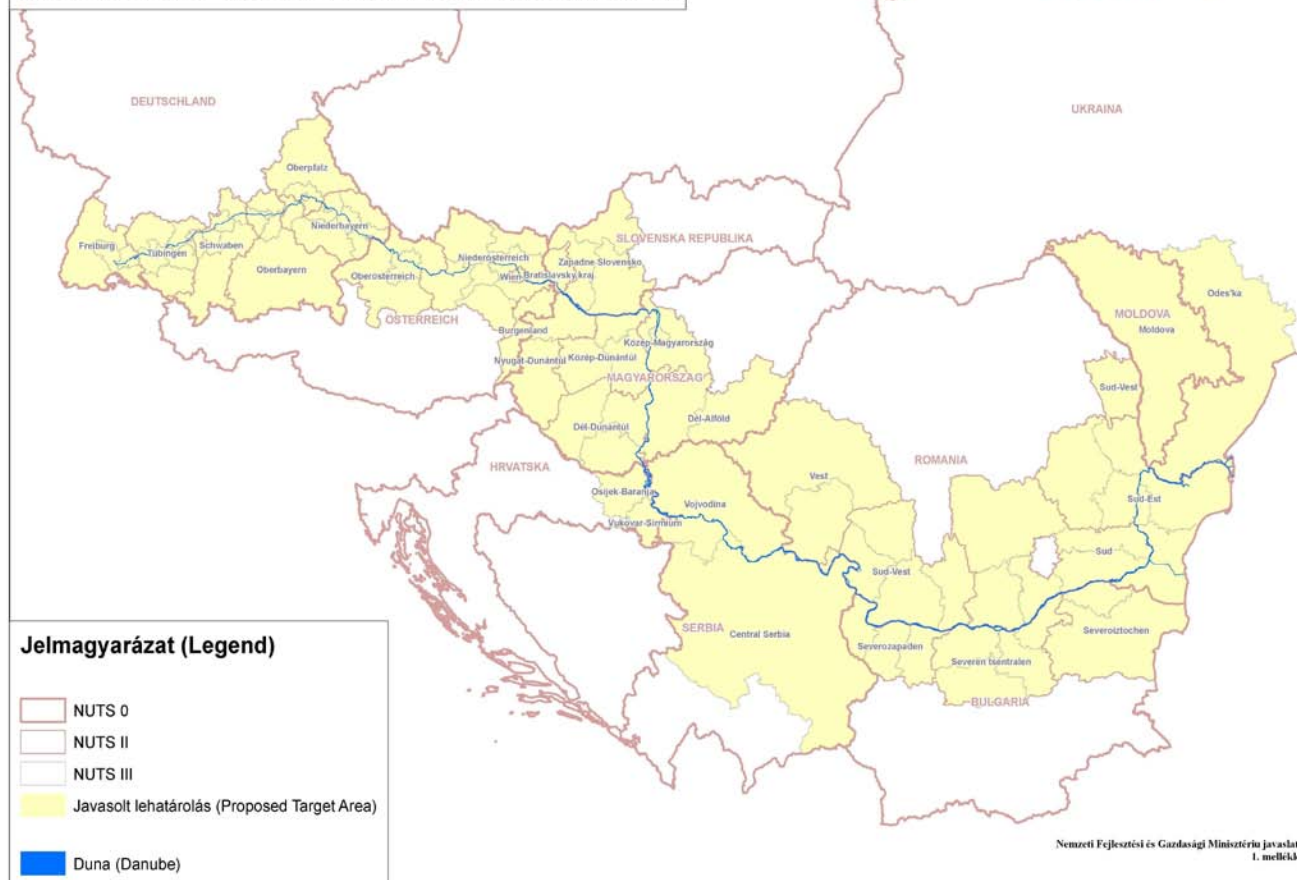


**Some other European institutions are to be consulted too:**

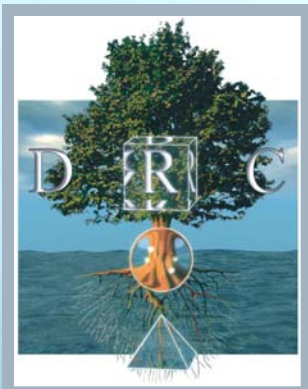
**Danube International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR);**  
**International Association for the Danube Research (IAD);**  
**Danube Tourist Commission (DTC);**  
**Corridor VII Steering Committee (C-VII-SC);**  
**SECI – Partnership for Improvement of Danube Infrastructure and Navigation (PIDIN)**

**etc**

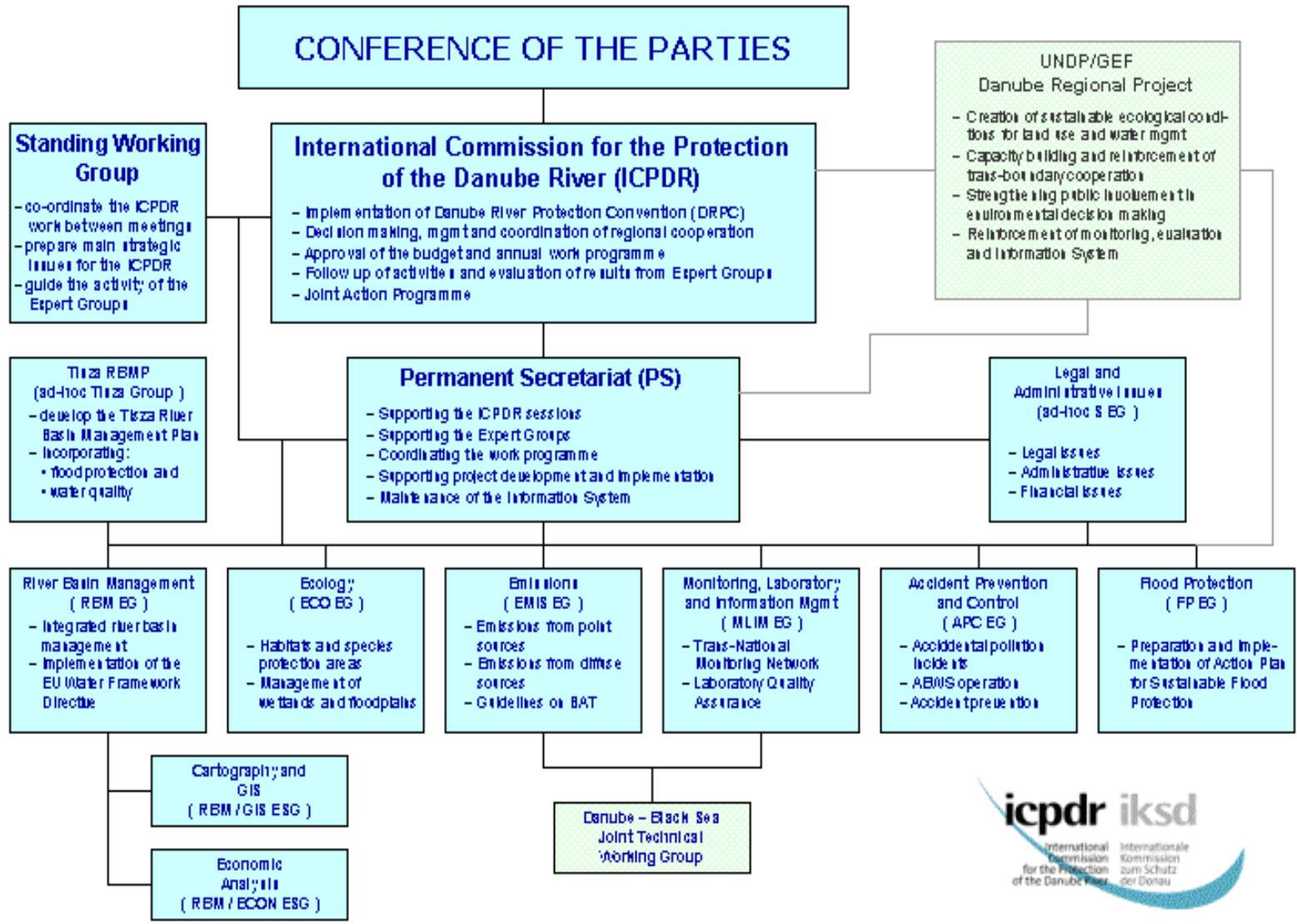
**DUNA MENTI RÉGIÓK (JAVASOLT LEHATÁROLÁSA)**  
**REGIONS ALONG THE DANUBE (PROPOSED TARGET AREA)**

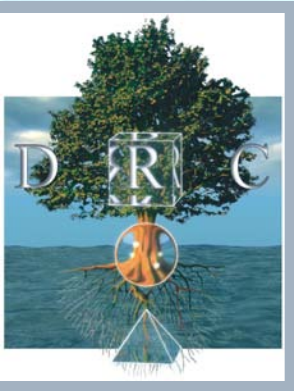






## Organisational Structure under the Danube River Protection Convention

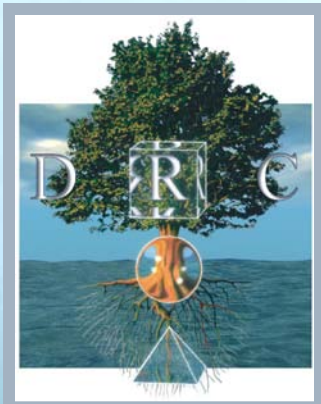




## Universities linking the Danube Region



- Council of the Danube Cities was founded on 11 June 2009 in Budapest and 8 days later this Council instructed the EU Commission to develop a “Danube Strategy” by the end of 2010.
- This EU decision has spurred on an ambitious project: the creation of a common, politically, economically, and culturally (**ecologically, enviromentally**) linked development area along the Danube, a European Danube Region.
- Since The DRC Network is concerned with the development, strategic challenges and roles of **universities** at the regional and local level, its activities are especially focused at cross-border networking.
- **In the frame of final declaration of our Danube Rectors’ Conference the necessity of including a common ecological and environmental issues into the “Danube Strategy” and their importance in the development of functional and harmonious European Danube Region should be stressed**



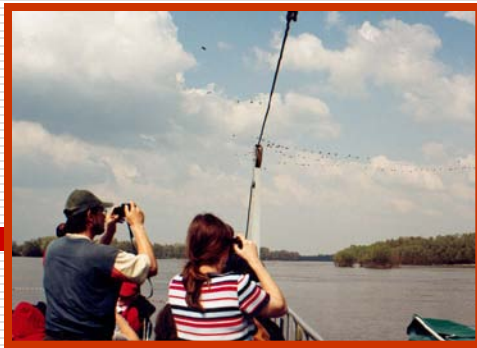
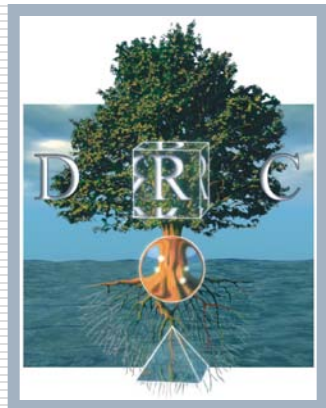
## Crossdanube regions



So far - 21 Crossdanube regions have been identified in the project DONAUREGIONEN+ project, as ARGE (cross-border) subregions, downstream of Wien and Bratislava

(1st Workshop - of the DONAUREGIONEN+ project – Introductory and methodology workshop – 15th and 16th July 2009 Senec, Slovak Republic)

- **Slovakia-Hungary** : Bratislava–Moson, Dunajská Streda-Győr, Nové Zámky-Komárom, Štúrovo-Esztergom-Visegrad, Pest, Szekesfehervar-Kecskemet
- **Hungary-Croatia-Serbia**: Paks-Szekszard-Pecs-Baja-Osijek-Sombor, Vukovar-Novi Sad, Belgrade-Pančevo, Smederevo-Moldova Nuova
- **Serbia-Romania-Bulgaria**: Drobeta Tumu Severin-Donji Milanovac, Vidin-Calafat, Kozloduj, Tumu Magurele-Svishtov
- **Romania-Bulgaria**: Bucuresti-Giurgiu-Ruse-Razgrad, Silistra-Calarasi, Czarna Voda-Constanca
- **Romania-Moldova-Ukraina**: Galati-Braila, Tulcea-Izmail, subregion MD/UA, subregion UA/Odessa

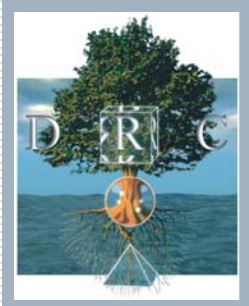


One of the most important challenges that all **universities** face is the cooperation and partnership with their own environment.

Many **university** networks such as **European University Association, Network of universities from the Capitals of Europe, Danube Rectors' Conference (EUA, UNICA, DRC)** are concerned how to achieve better scientific and professional cooperation and stronger financial support to **universities** from the local environment, because **universities** significantly contribute to their cities and regions.

**Universities** are a source of human resources, knowledge, education and outreach activities. It would be **appropriate for the networking to define their roles and levels of actions in this respect more clearly.**





cooperation between cities and their universities

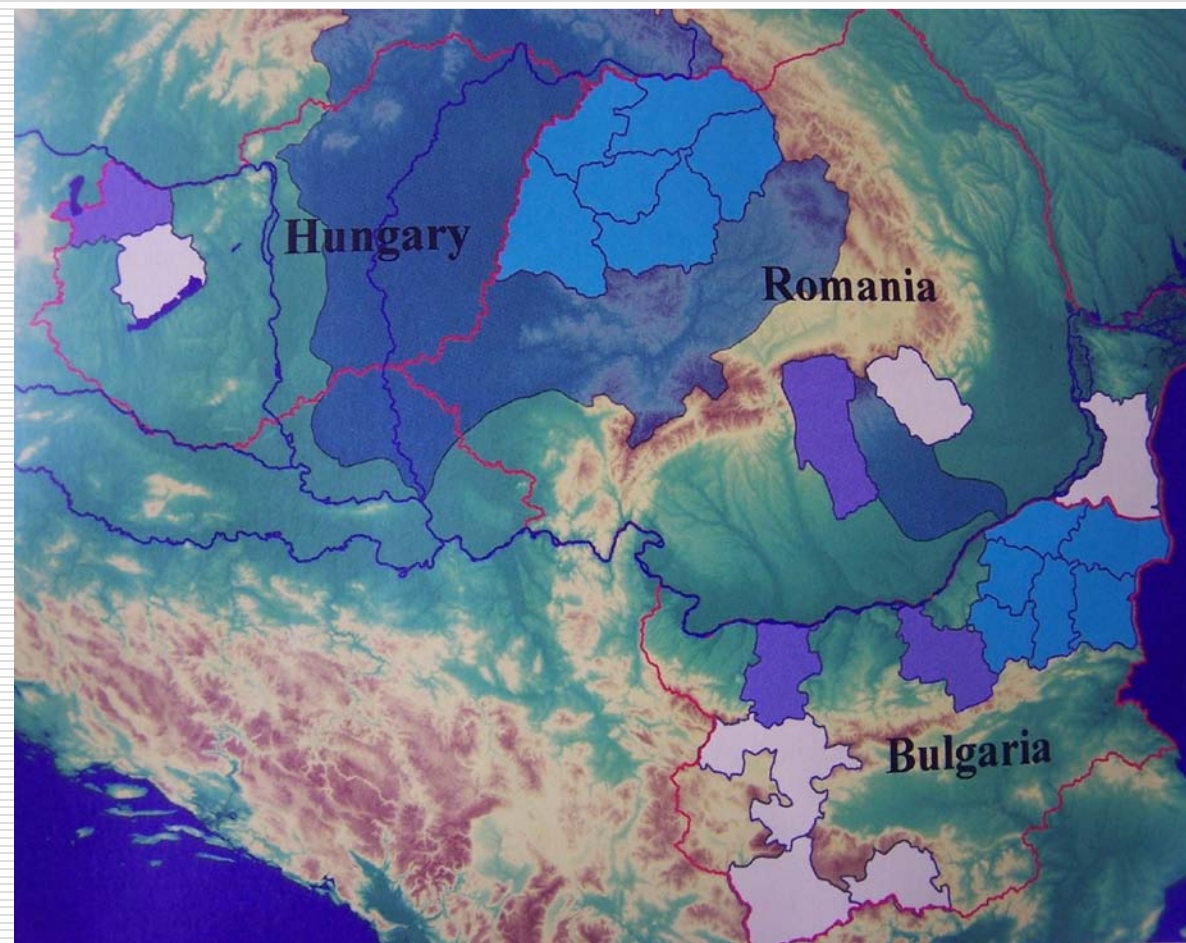
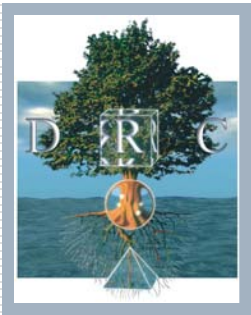


Taking this into account the aim of next Conference planned within those networks, with your permission, should be

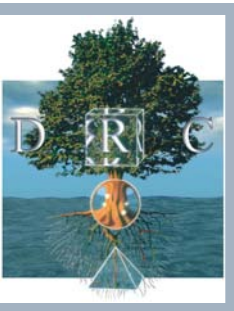
- to enhance the perception of **universities** in their environment to learn from case-studies how to promote cooperation between cities and their **universities** to acquire knowledge about types of possible cooperation and transfer of knowledge from already existing ones.

**The next Conference programme should include plenary sessions and workshops. Several capital cities (Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest, Belgrade) and their universities should be invited to present their policy on the regional cooperation and their views on the role of universities in the development of their cities and the region - and case studies of their good practice and successful solutions.**

**Several other towns which are not capital cities (Linz, Cluj, Maribor, Pecs, Novi Sad) and their universities should also be invited to present their views and case studies. The Conference should end with the recommendations for the cities and universities in the region how to improve regional cooperation, especially in the field of environmental (ecological) issues.**



Good example of state institutional support is the recent financial support of the **Government of Autonomous Province of Vojvodina** to the scientific projects with crossborder themes, or solving crossborder problems and issues (with regions in Hungary, Croatia, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina)



Cooperation is the key:

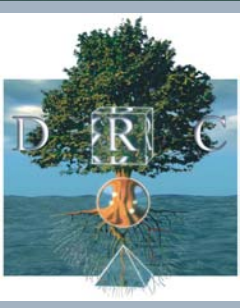
**“The basic principles of our common development are democracy, tolerance, humanism, sustainable development, religious freedom and opposing nationalism and extremism”. Only through these values is a European identity possible. And where else can a European identity develop if not along the Danube.**



The enlargement of the European Union has created a new framework for political, societal and scientific cooperation along the Danube. The dynamic economic development and the subsequent massive increase in traffic along the Danube corridor are exerting pressure on the last remaining natural wetlands and river stretches.

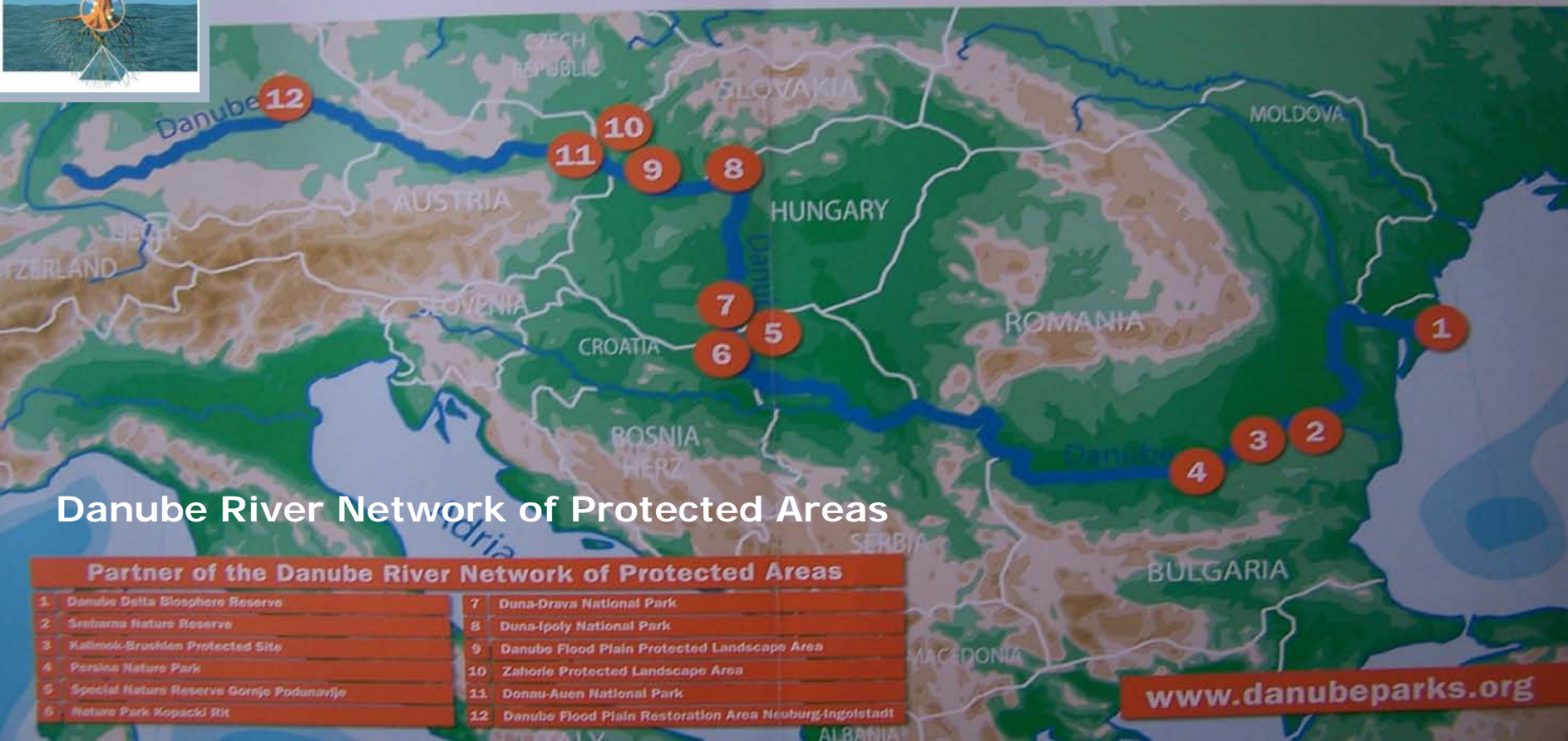
At the same time, EU directives like NATURA 2000 (e.g. habitat directive and bird directive) and Water Framework Directive provide common regulative policies for enhanced nature conservation at a transnational level.

The preservation of our shared natural heritage on the Danube is common European task, now more than ever.



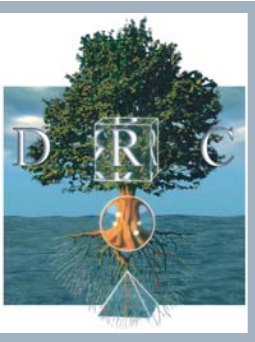
# DANUBE PARKS

network of protected areas



An additional priority for project partners is the development of nature tourism in the Protected Areas. The realisation of joint visitor concepts within the framework of DANUBE PARKS should help to strengthen each individual area administration and serve to anchor the protected area more firmly in its own region, of course all above mentioned supported by the expert's from universities or interuniversity research and supervision





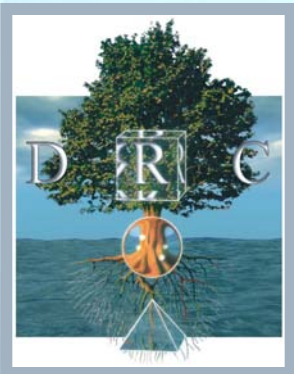
Network of protected areas within the Danube River Basin expands cooperation, coordination and consultation and strengthens links between 12 national parks and protected areas in 8 Danube countries



Again universities are the main scientific base for Danube Basin research

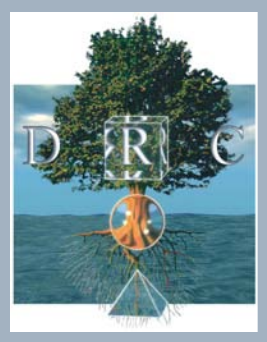
## Protecting the joint heritage of Europe

A new network of national parks, biosphere reserves, special protected areas, special zoological reserves and protected landscape areas is providing a new quality in conservation through international cooperation.



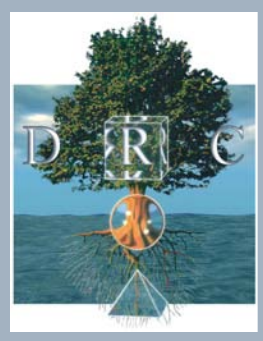
## Universities speaking with one voice on important issues

- Especially important is the exchange of ideas and experiences among the Protected Areas, what can be achieved through the interuniversity cooperation.
- We all are facing similar problems and can thus learn from each other.
- We should particularly pay attention about developing and implementing joint activities and ideas for our common natural heritage conservation and restoration as the most important bonding factor of the Danube Basin universities



**Universities speaking universal scientific language should learn others to speak with one voice on important issues**

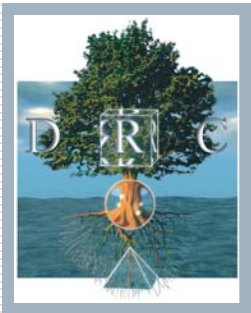
- At the same time, collaboration at a transnational level should expand the horizons of each individual protected area regarding management task and cement their role in conservation tasks at a national level.
- **Since speaking universal scientific language Danube universities should enable the Danube Network Protected Areas, as well as all other entities of our common natural heritage, to speak with one voice on behalf of the shared natural heritage of the European Danube region.**



**Universities speaking universal scientific language should learn others to speak with one voice on important issues**

**Signing of the Declaration of this Conference should guarantee an ongoing collaboration of universities along the Danube (considering the whole Danube River catchment area) and wider, with all universities dealing with the Danube issues, as well as realisation of transnational projects addressing diverse protection and conservation issues.**

**A budget of €2.7M will support this pilot project over the next three years. Our universities should not miss such an opportunity ([www.danubepark.org](http://www.danubepark.org))**

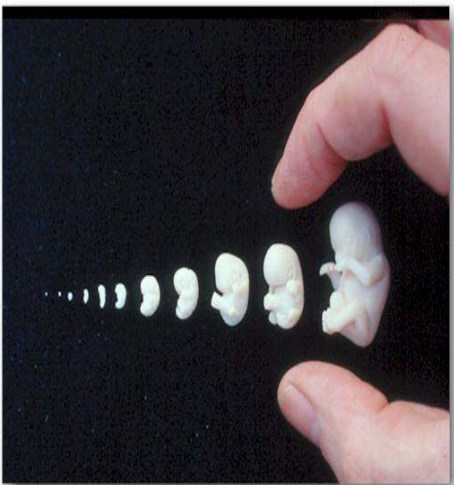


## EDUCATION



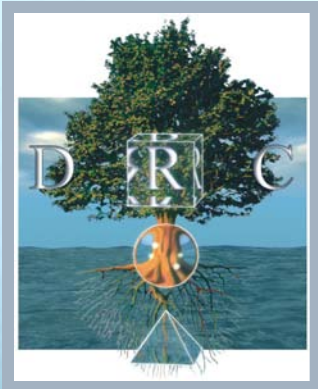
At the end, but maybe the most important, the educational role of our universities should be underlined here again, even though this issue will be elaborated during this Conference elsewhere.

If not proposed elsewhere, let us think about possibilities of organizing joint studies concerning the Danube River Basin issues, with subjects from economy to the environmental studies, ecology and sustainable development of the Danube area.

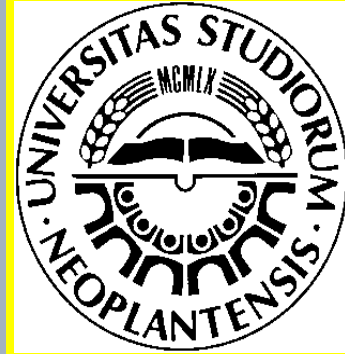


Having experiences in this organization, we would dare to propose

- joint (multinational) master studies;
- joint (multinational) doctoral studies, as well as
- joint postdoctoral programmes.

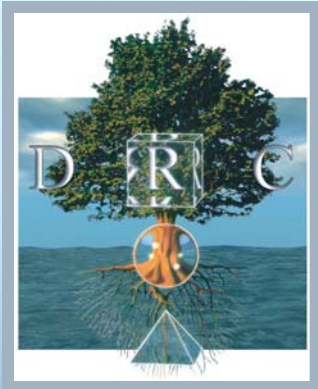


## Natural heritage conservation and restauration as the bonding factor for The River Danube Basin Universities Concluding remarks

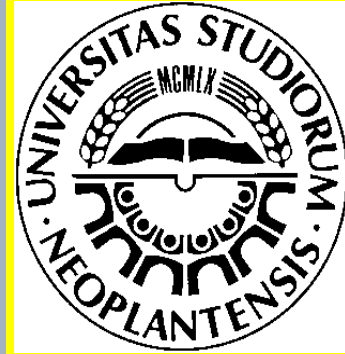


### 1. Strengthening the organizational structure of DRC and increasing of its influence:

The DRC should not stay aside of creation of Danube Strategy (and other European strategic documents), but through its activity become a strong and influential organization, taking responsibility for the future in all environmental and ecological issues in the Danube River catchement area and in Europe as a whole. As the first step towards the fulfilling this goal In the frame of final Declaration of this Danube Rectors' Conference the necessity of including the **ECOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES** into the "Danube Strategy" as a separate topics, and their importance in the development of functional and harmonious European Danube Region should be stressed

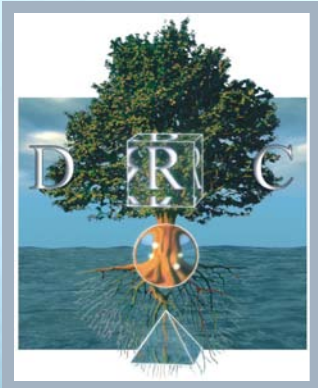


**Natural heritage conservation and  
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**Concluding remarks**

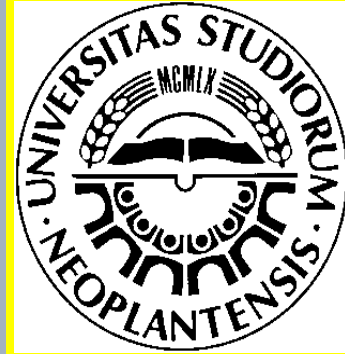


2. International interuniversity research as a sharing experiences in

- Conservation, restauration and maitenance of protected areas, as well as potential and actual water resources protection, sustainable land-use measures, landscape quality protection; generally: natural heritage protection, sustainable use and development (eco-turism, transport, navigation, afforestation, irrigation, soil and water purrification and remediation etc. etc.)
- Environmental (ecological) risk prediction, prevention and monitoring of floods, fire, earthquake, droughts, epizootia, etc.
- Elaboration of proposals for establishing and (re)constructing of new protected areas (refforestation, rewatering, reintroducing of species etc.)



**Natural heritage conservation and  
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**Concluding remarks**



3. International interuniversity education:

- joint (international, multinational) master studies;
- joint (international, multinational) doctoral studies,
- joint postdoctoral (multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary) programmes.
- (training programmes, educational courses, scientific and experts' meetings etc.)





Thank you for your attention