



22nd March 2022

Short Notes of 1st Navigation Sector Roundtable

Organizers and chair: WWF Hungary with support of The James Hutton Institute

Results

1. 12 participants representing associations and commissions at EU and international scale - guest speaker from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
2. A questionnaire was distributed among the registered participants before the Round Table to help understanding their perception, knowledge.
3. Main environmental challenges: low river flows, climate change, riverbed degradation, siltation of sediment, flooding (too much water) are all concerns.
4. Main sectoral goal/restoration: Increase the share of navigation in transport is a European goal, and the sector keen to meet EU targets for smart mobility – step change in volume of traffic – so restoration has to ensure traffic can be intensified.
5. Sector's characteristics:
 - Different perspectives – those using the waterways versus those maintaining the infrastructure (channels and banks).
 - Multiple demands: free flowing rivers, increased capacity, year-round navigability.
6. The participants had knowledge on what restoration and Nature based Solution (NbS) means, they were open for further improvement of this knowledge.
7. In the past restoration and navigation were in conflict – this is changing – win-win for sector Currently NBS is no/less risk to inland navigation and fairway maintenance projects if properly planned: integrated sustainable projects, involving stakeholders - common and shared vision.
8. Opportunities: funding, several financial mechanisms are available (see in NAIADES [reports](#) e.g. EU TEN-T, CEF etc.) - barrier is about planning integrated projects, environmental components shall be included, building shared vision.
9. The sector (its EU wide representatives) is keen on transforming/modernizing sectoral policies/procedures; new guidances are needed. Joint statements and their implementation increase the understanding of the two sectors (navigation, restoration) e.g. Joint Statement of International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) and Sava Commission.
10. Cooperation of the navigation sector with partners who push NbS implementation is welcome, and a joint interest is to convince people/communities of the need for restoration of rivers.
11. Keynote speech for presenting examples on Austrian Danube. The keynote speech emphasised the high importance of the integrative approach on the Austrian Danube for good navigational status and good environmental status. To comply with the integrative approach, they apply a comprehensive catalogue of restoration measures like bedload management, sidarm



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reconnection, riverbank restoration, low water regulation, stabilisation of critical scours, and small-scale measures (new landing ports) in the Danube –East of Vienna stretch.

12. Keynote speech for sharing experience from the US. The keynote speaker introduced the Engineering with Nature (EWN) concept's aim and [organisation](#). EWN is an international alignment of natural and engineering processes to efficiently and sustainably deliver economic, environmental and social benefits through collaboration. He emphasized that policies/procedures must be modernized; new guidances are needed e.g. International guidelines on NbS for flood risk management.

How MERLIN can help

- I. Raise awareness of NbS.
- II. Evidence of NbS sustaining fairways for traffic; evidence of NbS for delivering integrated solutions; showcasing results from navigable waterways where restoration was implemented with favourable effects on navigation - Merlin Case Study sites if possible.
- III. Engage other actors –river managers and all who do the restoration, affected local communities, fairway maintenance administration bodies, etc.
- IV. Support/amplify the existing efforts to modernize sector policies and guidance to work with Nature (elaborate which sectoral policies were mentioned during the discussion/if none then specify it during interviews).

Next steps

- RT feedback to sector participants and MERLIN partners.
- Questionnaire – widen the dissemination circle.
- Continue desktop review for analysing the sector.
- Bilateral discussions/ Interviews with Public admin + others.
- Next WP4 meeting – May (Doodle to be sent).
- Round Table 2 (wider audience with national level Stake Holders).
- Any upcoming event in your sector which is relevant to NbS.
- From September on: closer work with Case Studies.

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