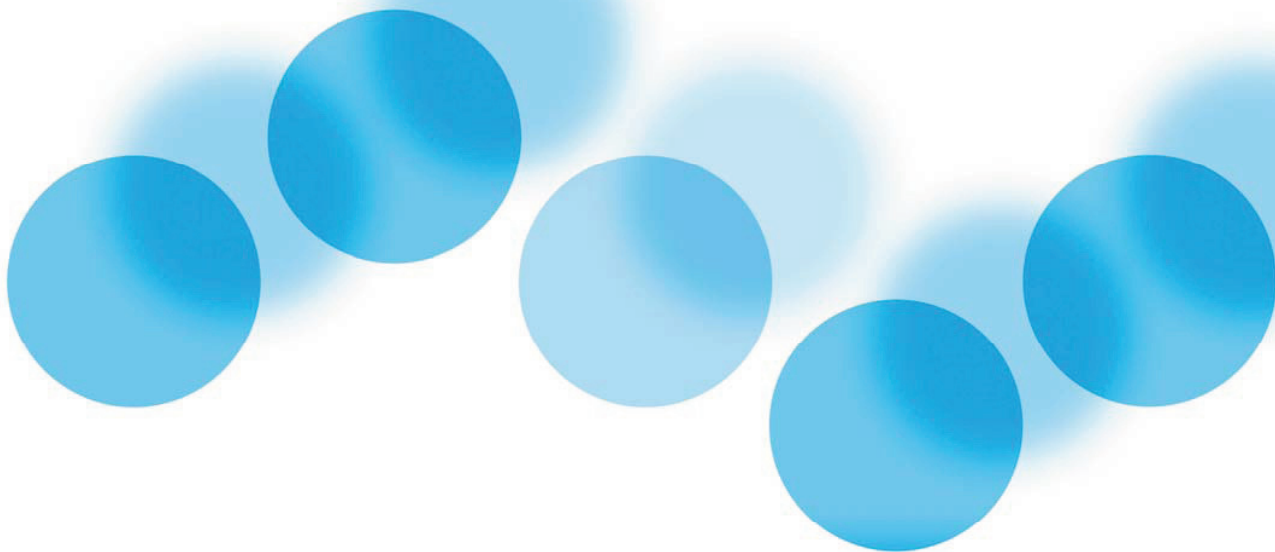




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NGO SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME 2005-2007

NGO Feed-back and Project Assessment
Missions – Autumn 2006



WORKING FOR THE DANUBE AND ITS PEOPLE

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1. Introduction

Objective of this assessment is

- to gain information and a feed-back from NGOs on the progress and – if available – results of their projects,
- to assess if and how these projects effectively (i.e. cost-efficiently, sustainably) contribute to the reduction of nutrient and toxic pollution of Danube basin waters. This refers to typical pollution problems (e.g. from agriculture) and model-like pollution prevention and remediation measures (lessons for DRP), and
- to identify success stories attractive to be communicated by DRP.

Assessment topics were:

- Presentation and explanation of the **NGO projects** (objectives, progress of activities) and check of NGO action quality (scientific, preparatory work, efficiency to reach target groups etc.) and their environmental relevance in relation to the DRP key issues.
- **Implementation** of the projects by the NGO: solving of local execution problems, cooperation with key stakeholders (polluter, authorities, media), link to (information from) DRP, ICPDR, national government and DEF (homepages and contacts).
- Evaluation of the **environment benefit** of the NGO actions (water body deterioration). Visible and/or measurable impact, multiplication by others/change of practises.
- Evaluation of the **institutional benefit** of the grant(s) for the NGO (its capacity building, positioning as a key stakeholder).
- Experience with the **REC grant selection and project administration process** (NGO input needed to win the grant, REC guidance during execution, administration and – if possible to answer – finalisation).
- **Communication** (whom, how) of the project and outputs so far / up to end of project.
- **Promotion of the DRP** logo in the project; **Attractiveness** of the granted project for communication to external audiences by DRP et al. (e.g. articles in DRP publications).

Mission methodology was a meeting with the competent NGO manager (in their office or a central town or at REC office) of ca. 2 hours – and, in a few cases, also a field visit - to assess the topics listed before. The local REC offices were always pre-informed and in many cases facilitated the arranging of these meetings.

Out of the 62 projects granted via the REC in late 2005 (with NGO activities to be completed by the end of 2006/early 2007), DRP delegates visited a varying number of NGOs in the Danube basin in autumn 2006.

Country-wise, the DRP region was covered as follows:

Country	Number of <i>granted</i> NGO projects	No. of <i>assessed</i> NGO projects	% of granted projects assessed
Czech Republic	5	3	65%
Slovak Republic	6	4	75%
Hungary	11	3	27%
Slovenia	4	4	100%
Croatia	4	4	100%
Bosnia & Hercegovina	6	2	33%
Serbia	5	0	0%
Bulgaria	7	6	86%
Romania	5	4	80%
Moldova	4	4	100%
Regional NGO Projects (number of NGOs involved)	5 (14)	5 (9)	100% (64%)
Total	57 natl. & 5 regional	34 natl. & 5 regl.	60% and 100%

In addition, one NGO project from DRP Round 1 (building of a small WWTP in a rural area in eastern Slovakia) was re-assessed, as it received – due to its model character - additional funds and an extension of the project period until 2006. Results are given in **Annex III**.

At the start of the assessment, it was agreed with the DRP office that not all but a substantial number of projects should be assessed. The selection, which NGO projects were eventually assessed, was based on both

- **importance/relevance** of activities in relation to DRP key issues (preference on nutrient reduction and concrete field projects),
- priority for **large grants**, which theoretically can result in more important outputs (i.e. all regional and the biggest national projects were assessed), and
- **time- and cost-efficient arrangement of meetings** (i.e. no long travel needed for each meeting; easy link to another mission in that country/region).

As a result, 39 NGO projects, covering all DRB countries except for Serbia could be assessed, including all 5 regional projects and 60% of the nationally granted projects. The selection is therefore rated as more than representative for all granted projects.

2. General Findings of the Missions 2006

The missions conducted by the DRP consultants came to the following general results:

High quality of NGO projects

Even more than in Round 1, the work of NGOs and the use of UNDP/GEF DRP grant money was found in the overwhelming number of projects as very good: Even though the individual funds were very small (USD 3,000 – 15,000 for national grants), NGOs conducted impressive activities and much contributed to a multiple raising of environment awareness among local people, local and national authorities and stakeholders from agriculture, municipalities and industry.

Good grant administration by REC

Nearly all NGOs interviewed stated that the support the REC offices provided during grant application and execution was very good, compared to other donor programmes. No NGO complained or criticised this process as too difficult or too bureaucratic.

National NGO Projects					
Country / NGO Name	Project Title and subject	Budget USD	Overall quality of project (very good, good, average)	Consultant comment Rating of environmental relevance to DRP issues (very high, high, average, no)	Attractive for Communi-catio
BG - European Environmental Festival Foundation	Competition for Movies & Documentaries about Danube Basin Pollution	5,000	Very good: Young NGO with amazing success. Creative event with multiple activities addressing film makers, kids and environment experts	High: Promotes and supports environment films as important education and awareness tools	Yes
BG - Bulgarian Bio-diversity Foundation	More Space for Rivers and Safety for People	5,100	Very good: NGO addressed a weak sector in water management and introduced new techniques in flood management.	Very high: Integrated flood management, making use of natural retention areas	Yes!
BG - "World for All" Association, Silistra	To Stop Danube River Nutrient Pollution	5,700	Good: A very simple project, not too ambitious with achievable objectives in the limited time available. Easily replicable by other local NGOs.	Average: Monitoring of water quality added little value to existing data available, but was a useful tool for raising public attention and local awareness	Yes – interesting example of local awareness-raising project
BiH – CESD Sarajevo	Cleaner production in food industry	5,200	Good: Simple activity producing "souvernirs" to sustain multiple effects over time.	High: Upgraded pollution awareness of industry	Yes!
BiH – NERDA / Ekopot / Radio Kameleon	Save the Spreca river (Sava river basin)	13,400	Very good: The REC-induced cooperation of 3 different partners assured good and multiple stakeholder awareness	At short term and large scale no relevance, at local scale extremely important to address pollution problems	Yes!
HU - HOLOCEN	Sajó-Hernád Rivers Flood and Water Pollution Priorities	5,580	Average: Apparently good start to identify local environment problems and foster stakeholder cooperation, no real effects	Average: Typical mix of land use problems	No
HU - Tavirozsa Association	Szódraókos Creek Program - Phase 2	4,651	Very good: Excellent actions taken and well-managed by local NGO that knows the issues	Very high: Direct relation to reducing nutrient pollution through improving wetlands	Yes!
HU - Clean Air Working Group	Chemical Reduction and Pollution Prevention Campaign	5,581	Average: Little success with farmers as NGO very new to this issue.	Average: Little success with agro-chemicals, more on household bug killers.	No