

HUNGARY

Hungary's actions highlighted the Danube as an international asset: for plants, animals, and of course, people. Miklos Persanyi and Sulfina Barbu, Ministers from Hungary and Romania, met in Budapest for a **ministerial meeting** focussed on Danube Day. The **ICPDR Stakeholder Conference**, the first of three trans-boundary conferences in Hungary, was the key international event of Danube Day 2005. **Baja's 2nd International Conference on the Central Danube Floodplains** (run by BITE-Baja) involved 50 government and civil society officials from Hungary, Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro. International collaboration was also the theme of a **Győr conference**, looking at rehabilitation and development projects, led by the North Transdanubian Environment Protection and Water Directorate. 70 decision-makers and stakeholders from Győr, Vienna and Bavaria took part.

There was also plenty of room for celebration: BITE Baja Youth Nature Protection Society and Plavi Dunav Ecological Movement of Apatin took an alternative, fun approach to raising awareness of Danube issues, organising an extraordinary three-day **Waters Unite canoe tour from Baja to Bezdan**, Serbia. Adventure seekers made local history by rowing on the Ferenc channel previously out of bounds due to strict border controls. To mark the occasion, a temporary border crossing was set up and the re-entering of the international team into Hungary was a momentous occasion for the inhabitants of this trans-boundary region. This action will act as a catalyst for future joint nature protection efforts.

A symbolic tribute to the Danube entitled **Blue Danube Solidarity**, organised by the Ministry of Environment and Water and Coca-Cola saw the distribution of thousands of blue bracelets to remind people that all Danube nations are united on Danube Day. The bracelets were also given to staff working in 10 top companies targeted by a WWF Hungary initiative. Workers were asked to **'work for the Danube'** for the day and donate to WWF's Danube programme. The aim was to highlight potential threats to the rivers' environment arising from plans for a navigable "highway" from the North Sea to the Black Sea. In Győr, 300 residents enjoyed an **open-air public festival** on the Mosoni-Danube.

Danube Day: more than just water!

For general information view www.danubeday.org or email: jasmine.bachmann@unvienna.org.

With so many activities and the support of a major media campaign, Hungary's Danube Day made a huge splash!

Danube Day Highlights:

- 3 key international conferences in Budapest, Baja and Győr focussed attention on trans-boundary cooperation.
- Hungarian and Romanian Environment Ministers' ministerial meeting and joint sounding of the GWP *Greet the Danube* horn blast.
- Messages from both ministers in newspaper supplement for Danube Day.
- Danube Day VIP Reception at the Hungarian Parliament hosted by the Speaker of the Parliament.
- *Danube Boulevard* initiative saw 7 museums offer free entry to Danube exhibitions.
- *Blue Danube* ship exhibited Danube films and maps.
- *Waters Unite* canoe tour symbolised a new commitment to work together across national borders on the Hungarian-Serbian border.
- Screening of films on the Danube and 'green' consciousness topped an evening of entertainment at the Mosoni-Danube at Győr.
- *Blue Danube Solidarity* linked people together across the region.
- Staff from large corporations donated money to Danube Day.
- DEF's Danube Photo and *Art Master* competitions linked art and the environment.

"It gives us hope that people living *in* the basin are ready to act for the basin as well – and not only on Danube Days."

István Óri, State Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Water, and ICPDR President 2005

Danube Day Partners:

Ministry of Environment and Water • Danube Environmental Forum– Hungary (BITE-Baja) • North Transdanubian Environmental Protection and Water Directorate • International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River • Lower Danube Valley Water Authority • Hungarian Hydrological Society • Regional Environmental Center • Regional Environmental Center Hungary • Coca-Cola Hungary • Baja town • Eötvös József College Technical Faculty • Bartos Nándor • Bela the IIIrd secondary

Danube Day: more than just water!

For general information view www.danubeday.org or email: jasmine.bachmann@unvienna.org.

school, Baja • *Plavi Dunav* Ecological Movement of Apatin (Serbia & Montenegro) • *Baracka* Ecological Classroom • Danube Drava National Park Directorate • Meander Group, Kaposvár • MAKK (Magyar Környezetgazdálkodási Intézet) • Global Water Partnership Hungary • WWF Hungary & WWF Danube Carpathian Programme • *Propeler* (Serbia and Montenegro) • Cities of Győr and Budapest • Vienna Water Management Department - MA45 (Austria) • Bavarian Water management Agency (Germany) • Fertő-Hanság National Park • ÁNTSZ • ÉDUVÍZ • Keret Association • Rábatext Angling Association • TRIVENT • Vituki Consult Rt • Customs Office and Border Station in Hercegszántó and Backi Breg • Danube Museum Esztergom • Civil Society Development Foundation Hungary • Bakonyi Power Plant • Canon Hungary • Cognative • Dunapack • Holcim • az Ökopannon PC • Saatchi & Saatchi • Pannon Power • Procter & Gamble • DRV • Unilever Hungary • OBI Hungary Franchise Centre • media partners.

Danube Day: more than just water!

For general information view www.danubeday.org or email: jasmine.bachmann@unvienna.org.