

CZECH REPUBLIC: Uniting people in respect and understanding for the Danube and its tributaries

Startling and inspirational environmental films and artworks took centre stage at this year's Czech Danube Day.

The main celebration – *River for Life* – took place in Uherské Hradiště's House of Culture where 300 children joined in a celebration and film festival. Organised by the Ministry of Environment, Morava River Basin Agency, Uherské Hradiště Culture Club and EKOFILM, a selection of fascinating environmental international films were enjoyed by young and old. Film-goers met Hugo, a man enchanted by river creatures, and became enchanted themselves as he revealed the incredibly beautiful world lurking under the surface. A delightful educational film about two children playing by a brook took audiences back to their own childhoods while *ABCDEcology* humorously examined environmental issues. Documentaries addressed water conservation and management; flooding and, in the case of *A River for Life*, questioned the benefits of building a Danube–Odra–Labe canal.

Danube Day was an extravaganza of creativity with a record 550 students from 29 schools entering 250 artworks in this year's Czech *Danube Art Master*. Part of a basin wide competition, the Czech section was run by the Environment Ministry, Union for the Morava River, Ministry of Agriculture and others. Judges faced a tough choice but selected *Endangered Fish* as overall winner, a fabulous and inspired work created purely from material found in and near the river. They particularly appreciated the way the partly submerged stone sculpture reflected the light and shadow of the river and symbolized the limited environment fish live in. The winners from a grammar school in Jihlava received their prize at the *It Also Concerns You* festival in Uherské Hradiště and a touring exhibition included the Environment Ministry and Český Krumlov castle.

Kroměříž was the location for *Let's Support Life in Our Rivers* event. Visitors taking part in river trips, competitions and talks were entertained by traditional cymbalo music on an environmental theme. In a separate event organised by Arnika, a schools water quality lecture

Danube Day: more than just water!

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



tour, web site launch (on water protection) and exhibition took place in Jihlava, Třebíč, Uherské Hradiště, Valašské Meziříčí and Brno.

„By the celebration of the Danube Day we in fact support the life in all European rivers“.

Libor Ambrozek, former Minister of Environment, Czech Republic

Partners

Ministry of Environment • Ministry of Agriculture • Morava River Basin Agency • Union for the Morava River • Uherské Hradiště House of Culture • Children of Earth Brno • Water Management Research Institute TGM (Brno office) • Ecofilm Association • Arnika •

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