



ROMANIA: TURNING UP THE HEAT ON ACTION FOR THE DANUBE

This year the Danube Day celebrations in Romania were planned on a large scale and they did not disappoint! As President of the ICPDR this year, Romania brought a huge energy and creativity to the celebrations, supplementing the overall ICPDR theme of celebrating Danube cultures with a reminder of the importance of the river's ecosystem and water quality, and an ambitious aim: "May the filth be washed away!" The celebrations took place over the two weeks before June 29 in temperatures of more than 40°C but hundreds still turned out to celebrate the Danube and its life-giving waters.

The celebrations kicked off with a weekend of "Fish and Culture" in Tulcea on June 3 to mark the launch of an International Friends of Nature (IFN) project in the Danube Delta, which IFN has proclaimed as "Landscape of the Year 2007-2009". There were a variety of different ethnic fish dishes available, over a dozen folk dance ensembles, and participants helped create a huge collaborative fish sculpture.

Another highlight of the fortnight's events was the "Danube Caravan 2007", an educational project which travelled all along the bank of the Danube, stopping in seven riverside towns and the Iron Gates Nature Reserve. More than 500 school children joined in the caravan activities run by experts from National Administration "Apele Romane" which raised awareness about water quality and biodiversity in the river. Massive media interest spread the message even further across the country, and a short edited film of the Danube Caravan events was broadcast during the official events in Bucharest.

In Bucharest, Danube Day started with a symbolic water filtration event attended by the Romanian government ministers and representatives of other Danube countries, ICPDR, Coca-Cola and environmental NGOs. River water collected in every country the Danube flows through was passed through a special filtration system and poured into a large scale aquarium, into which native Danube fish and plants were then introduced. This symbolic event represented the long cleaning process of the Danube's water, so important to maintaining the health of the river's environment and biodiversity. The accompanying press conference focused strongly on this aspect of water quality, as well as launching the Danube Box in Romania, which will help open the eyes of a new generation of Romanian children to the beauty and value of the river and the environment it sustains. The festivities continued in Tulcea in the afternoon, with open-air events and exhibitions, and the prize-giving for Romania's Danube Art Master competition led by Eco Counselling Centre Galati, as focal point within the Danube Environmental Forum'. This was won by Dima Alexandru, from the Art Club of the Cultural Centre of the Lower Danube in Galati, for a beautiful piece of art entitled "Water Lilies".

But it was not just the big official events that made Danube Day 2007 the best ever. There were also many activities and riverside celebrations all along the banks of the Danube, with local government and NGOs coming together to provide exhibitions, boat trips, competitions and activities, film shows, music and dance, bringing people from across the region to the river banks to celebrate their river and their culture. A whole raft of exciting and awareness-raising events took place in the regions of Dobrogea-Litoral, Buzau-Ialomita, Siret, Caras-Severin, Teleorman, Calarasi, Mehedinti, Mures, Somes-Tisa, Crisuri, Galati and Dolj. In Bucharest, the International Association for Danube Research (IAD) held a workshop on June 27 at the Romanian Academy Institute of Biology, on Danube research to introduce the national IAD committee in Romania to the scientific society. At 3pm the same day, despite temperatures of 46°C, they ran a public event at Lacul Morii, an artificial lake in the center of Bucharest, where interested visitors could "get in touch with aquatic biodiversity".

**"I salute the celebration of the Danube Day ...
Let us make the Danube a bridge to the future!"**

Attila Korodi, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development

ORGANISERS AND PARTNERS

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development • Ministry of Foreign Affairs • National Administration Apele Romane • Water Directorates of Prut, Crisuri, Siret, Arges-Vedea, Olt, Banat, Jiu, Buzau-Ialomita, Dobrogea-Litoral, Somes-Tisa, Mures • Water Management Systems of Tulcea, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Olt, Caras-Severin, Mehedinti, Calarasi, Galati, Tulcea, Satu Mare, Salaj • Directorate for Sports, Calarasi County • Save the Danube and the Delta Association – Catavencu Academy • Eco Counselling Centre Galati • County Council of Tulcea, Teleorman • Institute for Danube Delta Research & Development • Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve • Global Water Partnership Romania • International Association for Danube Research (IAD) • IAD-ENVIRES Romania • Prefecture of Tulcea, Dolj County, Calarasi County, Braila County, Teleorman County, Caras-Severin County • Centre for Environmentally Sustainable Economic Policy • Eco-School Catamarasti-Dela, Botosani County • Uniunea Artistilor Plastici – Filiala Tulcea • "George Enescu" Arts High-school • School Inspectorate of Tulcea County, Calarasi County, Maramures County, Teleorman County • Braila County Environmental Protection Agency • Delta Club Romania • Environmental Protection Agency of Caras-Severin County, Teleorman County, Calarasi County • Environmental National Guard • International Friends of Nature • Friends of Nature Romania • GTZ Romania • Moldova Noua City Hall • Braila County Schools Inspectorate • Braila Museum • Mare Nostrum • Club Femina Association • Museum of the Iron Gates Region • Calafat Arts Museum • Iron Gates Natural Park • City Halls of Tulcea, Socol, Tulcea, Coronini, Rast, Dabuleni, Bistrita, Zimnicea and Calafat • Turnu Magurele and Zimnicea Local Councils • Cotidianul • Romanian National Radio Broadcast • Romanian National Television • Realitatea TV • Antena 3 TV • PRO TV • Money Channel TV • N 24 TV • Rompress Press Agency • Mediafax Press Agency • NewsIn Press Agency • Adevarul • Gardianul • Gandul • Jurnalul Național • Ziarul • Atac • Green Report • B24 Fun • Coca-Cola Romania • local schools and high-schools.