



Danube Day 2009 in Germany

Ships ahoy for the Danube

Germany celebrated Danube Day at the eastern and western ends of the German Danube. Events took place in both Danube federal states: Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg and good media coverage on regional radio stations, newspapers and internet TV ensured a large audience heard the Danube day message.

It was "ships ahoy" for **Bavaria's celebrations** with a boat trip down the Danube followed by the culmination of the **Danube Art Master** competition at the Weltenburg monastery, near Kelheim. Situated on the banks of the Danube, the monastery provided a beautiful setting for the final of the national art contest. Following the river trip, 80 children marched up the hill to the monastery carrying the Danube Day banner to find out who had won the overall title. Bavarian Environment Minister, Dr. Markus Söder, joined by local politicians, authority officials and NGO representatives, announced the winners of the competition that had seen pupils from southern Germany create artworks inspired by their river. The best artists will go on to compete in the international stage of the competition against winners from 13 other Danube countries. In the afternoon, children and politicians alike had great fun joining in water games and giant Danube puzzles.

During the celebration, Dr. Söder stressed the importance of the protection of the Danube river system and went on to launch a new **touring Danube multi-media exhibition**, designed to highlight key Danube Day messages: the international nature of the river basin, cross-border cooperation, the region's magnificent landscapes, its beautiful yet vulnerable wildlife and positive visions for the future.

Travelling upstream towards the origins of the Danube, a recent ecological success story was the focus for **festivities in Baden-Württemberg** in the east. Danube Day was celebrated at a hydropower plant near the Beuron Monastery, where recent environmental improvements have meant that fish migration can now take place unimpeded both up and downstream. Water flow in the Danube is no longer detrimentally affected, fish spawning grounds have been protected and hydromorphological improvements have been carried out.

In a basin-wide initiative, the sound of ship horns reverberated across Germany and the Basin at 14:00 on Danube Day, as Danube workers paid a very special tribute to their river. The annual **Greet the Danube horn blast**, organised by the Global Water Partnership (GWP), saw ships along the Danube from Germany to Ukraine simultaneously sound their horns in a salute to the river.

“Children are the best ambassadors for the protection of the environment.”

Dr. Markus Söder, Bavarian Environment Minister.

Danube Day Partners

Bavaria: State Office for Water Management for the Landshut region; State Office for Water Management for the Regensburg region; Bavarian Ministry of the Environment and Public Health; Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and local schools.

Baden-Württemberg: Tübingen District Administration in partnership with the Beuron Monastery; Beuron local authority; Sigmaringen district administration.

Shared Waters – Joint Responsibilities

For general information about the 14-country Danube Day celebrations, view www.danubeday.org or email the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR): jasmine.bachmann@unvienna.org.