



Danube Day 2009 in Romania

14 Danube counties and 110 organisations celebrate Danube Day!

Once again, Danube Day in Romania was huge with festivities and workshops in towns along the length of the Danube. This year's **main event "The Danube Unites Us" took place in Tulcea**, while numerous local events ensured that every Danube county celebrated Danube Day.

Hosted by the Ministry of Environment and its governmental, scientific and NGO partners, Nicolae Nemirschi, Environment Minister, the State Secretary for the Environment and the Danube Delta Governor met with national experts, local officials and journalists in Tulcea to mark Danube Day. The Minister launched a national anti-poaching campaign and held a press conference that was covered by over 21 national and local media organisations. A message from the Mayor of the city of Ulm (located close to the source of the Danube in Germany) helped engender Danube solidarity from source to mouth. An oil spill response exercise also took place, as did a meeting between the Minister and local authority officers and experts. Journalists were taken on a boat trip of the Delta and were able to learn more about the successful work being undertaken to protect the Danube: the international cooperation between Danube countries, measures being taken to enhance water quality, restoration schemes, implementation of EU legislation and progress on the Danube River Basin Management Plan. Two exhibitions also took place: "A Chance for the Blue Danube" and a schools painting show.

Apele Române National Administration, local authorities and NGOs organised **awareness events across the country**. In Galati, the Eco-Counselling Centre Galati (ECCG), along with local and water authorities, encouraged children to think and act for their Danube by hosting a "Water Day". Interactive water games, water testing experiments and an outdoor painting class proved a big hit with the Galati youngsters who also learned about Danube Day, health issues and the need to save water and reduce pollution.

ECCG also organised the 2009 quest to find the young **Art Master of 2009**. Larisa Gheorghiu, with his artwork "Danube offers us Life – but what do we give the Danube back???" was crowned this year's Romanian Danube Art Master.

In addition to the main meetings in Tulcea, the way forward for managing the Danube rivers was discussed and debated at the local and regional level: special Basin Committee meetings took place across Romania. Danube Day was also about practical action: children and adults carried out rubbish collections on Small Brăila Island in the Balta Mica a Brailei Natural Park and were rewarded with a tour of the cormorant breeding grounds; water sampling took place in Mehedinti and Teleorman and flood simulation exercises were demonstrated in Buzau and Brăila counties.

The variety of fun activities that took place was enormous with events in **Brăila, Mehedinti, Călărași, Banat, Caras-Severin, Iași, Giurgiu, Teleorman and Olt** counties. Visitors and locals enjoyed river cruises, fishing, sport and art contests, concerts, exhibitions, seminars and folklore events. In Orșova, the Banat Water Directorate organised the "Danube Day Cup" fishing contest and river cruise in the Iron Gates area for water managers and local and regional river users. In Drobeta-Turnu Severin, a press conference and roundtable meeting involving officials, teachers and school children highlighted water issues in the Iron Gates section and the potential harmful impact of the TEN-T project to the Danube ecosystem. Projects on wetland restoration and pollution reduction were presented as was a student film entitled "Danube River - the Connecting Bridge between History and Culture at the Iron Gate".

In addition, Romania took part in the basin-wide horn blast. The sound of ship horns reverberated across Romania and the Danube Basin at 14:00 (CEST) 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, saw ships along the Danube from Germany to Ukraine simultaneously sound their horns in a salute to the rivers.

"The Danube river unites not only people, destinies and cultures, but energies and capacities which must be gathered in our efforts for the conservation and efficient use of the resources offered to us by the Danube Basin."

Nicolae Nemirschi, Romanian Minister of the Environment.

Danube Day Partners

Ministry of Environment; Apele Române (Romanian Waters) National Administration; Eco-Counselling Centre of Galati (ECCG); Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development; Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority; Save the Danube and the Delta Association; Coca-Cola Romania; Water Directorates of Dobrogea Litoral, Jiu, Olt, Arges-Vedea, Prut, Crisuri, Banat and Ialomita-Buzau; Tulcea Water Management System; National Agency for Environmental Protection; Tulcea County Prefecture, County Council and City Hall; Danube Delta Ecotourism Centre; County Prefectures of Teleorman, Mehedinti, Dolj, Olt, Caraș-Severin, Galati, Brăila, Giurgiu, Ialomita, Călărași

and Constanta; Water Management Systems of Caraș-Severin, Dolj, Mehedinti, Valcea, Olt, Giurgiu, Teleorman, Călărași, Brăila, Ialomita and Galati; GWP Romania; WWF Romania; Danube.EDU Association; Palace of Children – Tulcea, Călărași, Giurgiu, Brăila and Galati; City Halls of Zimnicea, Turnu Magurele, Coronini, Pojejena, Giurgiu and Moldova Noua; Giurgiu local council; Brăila County Council; Turnu Magurele Harbour; Zimnicea Harbour; Schools Inspectorates of Olt, Dolj, Mehedinti, Giurgiu and Brăila; Information and Ecological Education Centre, Tulcea; Oltenita Museum; Environmental Protection Agencies of Călărași, Mehedinti, Dolj, Caras-Severin and Brăila; Emergency Situation County Inspectorate Tulcea; Tulcea Harbour Master; National Environmental Guard; Eco Sud-Vest Association; Aqua Terra Iași ; Sports Directorates for Caras-Severin and Mehedinti; Moldova Noua House of Culture; Caras-Severin Directorate for Culture and National Cultural Heritage; Galati Natural Sciences Museum; Galati Water Works Department; Ion Vinea Cultural Centre; United States Embassy; Mehedinti Border Police County Inspectorate; Mehedinti Youth County Directorate; Portile de Fier Natural Park Administration; SH Portile de Fier; Town Halls of Devesel, Eselnita and Brăila; Brăila Sports Club; Balta Brailei Natural Park Administration; Ioan Nenitescu School, Tulcea; George Georgescu Art High School, Tulcea; Pojejena School; Catamarasti Deal School; Mircea cel Batran School; Marin Preda High School; Sf. Haralambie High School; Vasile Alecsandri National College; Gradinita Luceafarul Kindergarten, Galati; schools from Istria (Constanta), Dumbrava (Prahova), Viisoara (Mures), Orșova, Eselnita, Galati, Botosani, Dolj, Teleorman and the villages of Frecatei, Agaua, Titcov (Brăila); Constantin Brancoveanu University; Dutch Province of Overijssel; Euro-Teleorman Association; Teleorman County Hunters and Fishermen Association.

The Danube Day organisers would like to pay tribute to Ms Aurora VasIU, (Director within the Apele Române National Administration), who passed away this year. She made a considerable contribution to the success of Danube Day and will be greatly missed.

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.