



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL  
JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE  
Directorate A - Policy Support Coordination (Brussels)  
**Interinstitutional, International and Stakeholder Relations**

24 July 2015

# **JRC Annual Event on the Scientific Support to the Danube Strategy**

**27-28 October 2015**

**Maritim Hotel Ulm  
Basteistraße 40, Ulm, Germany**

## **1. BACKGROUND AND MILESTONES**

As the European Commission's in-house science service, the Joint Research Centre (DG JRC) supports the Commission's priority policy areas with scientific and technical advice. The support to individual regions and to macro-regional strategies in order to boost smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth and job creation forms a constituent part of EU policy and underpins the Europe 2020 strategy. In the context of the Danube Region, DG JRC is coordinating an initiative aiming to provide scientific support to the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR).

The JRC Annual Event 2015 in Ulm will take stock of the continuing scientific support activities for the Danube region and will focus on the DG JRC expertise that supports the European Commission priorities of boosting jobs and growth, building a European Energy Union and supporting the digital single market through smart specialisation in the Danube region.

The DG JRC initiative in support of the Danube Strategy was launched in close cooperation with key scientific partners of the Danube region. Through an integrated approach, the JRC and its scientific partners gather essential scientific expertise and data to help decision-makers and other stakeholders of the Danube Region to identify the policy measures and actions needed for the implementation of the EUSDR.

In May 2013 in Bratislava, DG JRC launched 4 scientific flagship clusters: the Danube Water Nexus; the Danube Land and Soil Nexus; the Danube Air Nexus and the Danube Bio-energy Nexus; complemented by 3 horizontal activities: the Danube Reference Data and Services Infrastructure; the Danube Innovation Partnership; and the Smart Specialisation for the Danube Region.

In June 2014 in Vienna, DG JRC presented the first results of the activities undertaken in the frame of the scientific clusters. The event aimed at fostering synergies between the

science and research community and the regional development providing opportunities for cooperation and helping to boost the development of the Danube Region. Stakeholder discussed how DG JRC can facilitate cooperation and help to overcome challenges in the implementation of the macro-regional strategy.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the event in Ulm is to show how the **excellence** and **relevance** of the research and support activities executed by DG JRC in cooperation with its partners from Danube macro-region can impact scientific, economic, social and environmental development. The event will focus on how research and innovation can create jobs, underline the relationship between businesses and universities, and open the door for cross-border cooperation opportunities.

## 3. AGENDA

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### 27 October 2015

<b>14:00</b>	<b>Introductory plenary session</b>			
<b>14:45</b>	<b>Energy Workshop</b>	<b>Water Workshop</b>	<b>Workshop on Smart Specialisation in the ICT sector</b>	<b>Workshop on instruments fostering scientific exchange in the Danube region</b>
<b>-</b>				
<b>18:00</b>				
<b>19:30</b>	<b>Dinner and presentation of the Danubius Awards</b>			

### 28 October 2015

<b>9:30</b>	<b>High-level panel session</b>			
<b>11:00</b>	<b>Energy Workshop</b>	<b>Water Workshop</b>	<b>Workshop on Smart Specialisation in the ICT sector</b>	<b>Workshop on instruments fostering scientific exchange in the Danube region</b>
<b>-</b>				
<b>13:00</b>				
<b>13:00</b>	<b>Networking lunch</b>			
<b>15:00</b>	<b>JRC and EUSDR Stakeholder session</b>			
<b>16:30</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>			
<b>17:00</b>	<b>End of the conference</b>			

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## 27 October

### 14:00      **Introductory plenary session**

- Welcome by **Vladimír Šucha**, Director-General of the Joint Research Centre, European Commission
- **John Bensted-Smith**, Director, Institute for Prospective Technological Studies, Joint Research Centre, European Commission  
*Priorities for research and innovation in the Danube macro-region:*  
Presentation of the JRC Smart Specialisation Platform using the tools of the RIS3 platform to demonstrate the top priorities in the Danube macro-region (**EYE@RIS**): Energy and ICT. Water is not among the priorities but its crucial role for the macro-region cannot be undervalued. The **regional benchmarking tool** and the **interregional trade and competition tool** show the different structure between the Upper and Lower Danube Region. These characteristics cannot be easily changed in the short term and affect the way innovation and economic evolution takes place in the region. The scientific activities of the JRC Danube Initiative support the scientific, economic, social and environmental development in the Danube macro-region.

### 14:45      Following the introductory plenary session, we will break out in four **parallel workshops:**

#### Energy Workshop

- By employing the RIS3 tools, it has been clearly recognised that energy production and distribution is one of the top priorities in the Danube macro-region. The focus of this workshop should be on the promotion of **renewable energy sources** as well as on energy efficiency. Using energy more wisely and fighting climate change is not only an investment in our future, it will also create new jobs and growth. Latest results in the fields of bio-energy in the Danube region, photovoltaics and energy efficiency as well as links to sustainable environment and climate will be discussed.

#### Water Workshop

- Water is an overarching and cross-sector theme and thus, the workshop will take a holistic approach on research and innovation for water across scientific excellence, industrial leadership and societal challenges. Topics of the workshop might include: emerging challenges for chemical contaminants in the Danube Region; a “reference water balance” for the Danube region and identification of water use conflicts; a baseline analysis of nutrient loads, opportunities and threats; research needs on the Danube sediment balance and

implications for river hydraulic infrastructures; hydro-economic modelling of climate and land use scenarios for the Danube; and optimisation of measures for nutrients in the Upper Danube.

### **Workshop on Smart Specialisation in the ICT sector**

- The ICT sector has clearly been identified as a priority in the Danube macro-region. The Europe 2020 strategy has recognised the potential and enabling role of ICT. The aim of the Digital Agenda for Europe is to deliver smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth through the realisation of the digital single market and the exploitation of the potentials for innovation of ultra-fast internet and interoperable services and applications. ICT-based innovations will provide one of the potentially most cost-effective means to help Member States achieve the 2020 targets.

### **Danube Innovation Partnership: instruments fostering scientific exchange in the Danube region**

- This workshop is an opportunity to discuss on innovative demand-driven technology transfer, using as a starting point challenges faced by the Danube countries in the domains of renewable energy, climate change mitigation technologies and ICT technologies. Technology transfer is not simply technology centric but is increasingly becoming a know-how and human capital driven process. At the same time, the traditional technology transfer paradigm, focused primarily on a technology push approach, is failing to encourage the research community to focus its efforts on topical domains that can deliver solutions to concrete societal challenges. Support to facilitate the deployment of technologies should be secured from the research and entrepreneurial communities with the help of incubators and early stage researchers linking universities and businesses.

**18:00**            **End of parallel workshops**

**19:30**            **Dinner and presentation of the Danubius Awards**

The *Danubius Award* was created in 2011 by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Science, Research and Economy (BMWFW) and the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM) with the intention to honour persons with extraordinary achievements in their scientific activity and output in relation to the Danube Region.

This award is complemented by the *Danubius Young Scientist Award*. This award will be granted to 14 young scientists - one from each country that is part of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

The award seeks to highlight the scientific work and talent of young researchers and enhance the visibility of the scientific community in the region: Moreover the award encourages young scientists to engage themselves in the scientific examination of the multifaceted issues and questions specifically related to the Danube Region.

- Welcome by **Peter Friedrich**, Minister for Europe and International Affairs (tbc)

Presentation of the Danubius Awards:

- **Barbara Weitgruber**, Director-General, Austrian Federal Ministry for Science, Research and Economy
- **Vladimír Šucha**, Director-General of the Joint Research Centre, European Commission

## **28 October**

### **09:30 High-level panel session**

This panel with science policy makers from the Danube region will discuss needs and opportunities for territorial cohesion and new growth through Smart Specialisation. The panel will discuss what is needed to further reinforce collaboration in the Danube macro-region.

- Moderated by **Vladimír Šucha**, Director-General of the Joint Research Centre, European Commission
- **Theresia Bauer**, Minister of Science, Research and the Arts, Baden-Württemberg (tbc)
- **Roko Andričević**, Croatian Deputy Minister, Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (tbc)
- **Serhiy Kvit**, Ukrainian Minister of Education and Science (tbc)
- **Romana Kanovská**, Slovak State Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (tbc)
- **József Pálinkás**, President of the Hungarian National Research, Development and Innovation Office (tbc)
- **Tudor Prisecaru**, Secretary of State for Research, Development and Innovation, Romanian Ministry of National Education (tbc)
- **Barbara Weitgruber**, Director-General, Austrian Federal Ministry for Science, Research and Economy (tbc)

### **11:00 4 parallel workshops continuation and conclusions**

### **13:00 Networking lunch**

### **15:00 JRC and EUSDR Stakeholder session**

- **Alessandro Annoni**, Head of Unit, Digital Earth and Reference Data, Institute for Environment and Sustainability, Joint Research Centre, European Commission

- Presentation of the **Danube Reference Data and Service Infrastructure** (DRDSI) as an example of JRC work in close collaboration with Danube stakeholders. DRDSI is a horizontal activity addressing the needs of all JRC Danube Nexi and stakeholders in the region and is a good example for close collaboration between the JRC and Danube stakeholder.
- **Panel discussion with all Priority Areas of EUSDR**  
Focus: links between the JRC Danube Initiative and the EUSDR Priority Areas.
- Moderated by **Miroslav Vesković**, Co-ordinator for macro-regional Strategies, Joint Research Centre, European Commission
- **Franc Žepič**, PA1b
- **Marketa Ročejdlova and Szilard Arvay**, PA2
- **Zsuzsanna Kocsis-Kupper**, PA4
- **Viktor Nedović**, PA7
- **Hans-Peter Herdlitschka**, PA8
- **Kurt Puchinger**, PA10
- **Karin Nygard Skalman**, PA INNO EUSBSR

**16:30      Conclusions**

- **David Wilkinson**, Director, Institute for Environment and Sustainability, Joint Research Centre, European Commission (tbc)

**17:00      End of the conference**