



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

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UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

*Regional cooperation as a key to accelerate SDG 6 implementation –
The Danube Water Program as lighthouse example to improve water
and sanitation services within the Danube region*

Friday 24 March 2023, 8.00 - 9.15, ECOSOC

Organized by: Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management, Austria; World Bank, City of Vienna (Vienna Water), International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD), Albanian Water Supply and Sewerage Association (SHUKALB), Association for Water and Environmental Protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Aquasan Network Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Background on the event

The Danube Water Program (DWP) is an advisory and capacity building initiative that aims at strong utilities, smart policies and sustainable services in the Danube region. Financed by the Austrian Ministry of Finance and jointly implemented by IAWD and World Bank since 2013, the DWP brings together regional, national and local stakeholders to strengthen the water sector tailored to the regional circumstances and at different levels. The side event highlighted experiences and best practice examples from two countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina) of the DWP and presented, how these activities contributed to SDG 6 implementation.

Water Action Agenda

Strengthen and enhance the support to the water sector in the Danube region on a long-term basis using networks and products created under the DWP relevant for SDG 6 implementation and supports potential outreach and know-how transfer to other regions of the world to accelerate the achievement of SDG 6.

<https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/accelerate-safe-reliable-and-affordable-access-water-services-all-danube-region>

Key Issues discussed

- How a sustainable cooperation on water services in the Danube region was created since 1993
- Multi-level interventions by DWP to strengthen the water sector in the Danube region
- Enhancing capacities by DWP for improved service delivery in the Danube region
- Best practice example of advancing the Albanian water sector by supporting investments, cooperation and policy
- Best practice example of improving water services through capacity development in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Key recommendations to apply the DWP approaches to other regions of the world

Key recommendations for action

Based on the lessons learnt of the DWP implementation in the Danube region, the following key recommendations for actions supporting the water sector in other regions to accelerate SDG 6 implementation can be drawn:

- Improving governance through coordinated approaches tackling policies, institutions and regulations in a comprehensive manner including national and subnational coordination
- Reform utilities by improving efficiency to become credit worthy in order to obtain own financing
- Financing should be used more effectively and efficiently to create incentives e.g. for increasing performance and service delivery of utilities
- Integrated water resources management and improved storage capacities as key elements for adaptation and resilience to climate change
- Creating collaborative platforms to coordinate and collaborate different actors at national level