



**DANUBE
WATER
PROGRAM**

Smart policies, strong utilities, sustainable services

Danube Water Program Update

This new sletter updates readers on the activities of the Danube Water Program. The program supports policy dialogue and capacity development to achieve Smart Policies, Strong Utilities, Sustainable Services in the w ater supply and wastewater sector in the Danube Region. The program is jointly run by the World Bank and IAWD, the International Association of Water Supply Companies in the Danube Catchment Area, w ith funding from the Government of Austria.

NEWSLETTER / January 2015

PROGRAM NEWS

All the best for 2015

The Danube Water Program Team wishes the community of people involved in the region's water sector all the best for 2015. As you will see throughout this newsletter there are a number of important events and activities planned for, or underway, in 2015 that will hopefully further improve the water services sector within the region. This newsletter highlights some of those activities and provides information on developments taking place within the first few months of 2015.

Update on Second Phase of Danube Water Program

Work on the preparation of a potential second phase of the Danube Water Program has continued and decisions of the Ministry of Finance of Austria on funding for the program are expected in the first half of 2015. The results of the Survey of opinions on existing program activities showed positive support for continuation of the program and identified topics of potential future activities. A power point presentation of the results of the survey can be found using the following link [Survey results](#)

State of the Sector review under preparation

The Program team is busy finalizing the regional State of the Sector review, which will provide a unique overview of the situation of water and wastewater services throughout the entire Danube region. The review, which will consist of a regional report and 16 country-specific notes, will be officially launched at the 2015 Danube Water Conference. A pre-launch validation phase will take place in the coming months with Program partners.

DANUBIS.org water platform to be further improved

The DANUBIS.org water platform, an online repository of resources for and about water and sanitation utilities in the Danube region, has seen a growing number of visitors since its launch in May of last year; with more than 100 unique visitors using the website in each of the last three months. Based on this success DWP has committed further resources to enhance and customize further the content. A new version will be launched before the next annual conference; if you would like to provide any feedback please contact David Michaud (dmichaud@worldbank.org).

Open Regional Fund and Danube Water Program Cooperation

Two Grant Agreements between the Open Regional Fund (ORF), supported by the German (GIZ) and Swiss (SDC) Governments, and IAWD have been signed, making funding available for activities supporting and creating synergy with actions of the Danube Water Program (Benchmarking and Regional Dialogue). The Grant Agreements are based upon an MOU signed between the partners in February 2014 and will build upon and expand existing initiatives of GIZ and SDC in the region related to the water sector.

Combined Meeting of Water Utility Associations and Workshop on Business Planning for Water Utility Associations Feb 16-18, 2015 in Tirana

In mid February (16-18), representatives of the Danube country water utility associations have been invited to Tirana to participate in both a workshop on business planning in water utility associations and to participate in discussions on further cooperation between the Associations. Over the past year and a half the water utility associations have been meeting together to discuss areas of mutual concern and opportunities for synergy of efforts and the February meeting is expected to be a further milestone in organizing cooperative action – particularly related to development of a common curriculum for capacity building among utilities offered by water utility associations. A model for managing cooperative utility capacity building curriculum is being developed by IAWD and will be discussed by participants at the meeting. The Workshop on business planning which will be held prior to the Association meeting is being organized by SHUKALB (the Albanian Water Utility Association), and is in response to the request of the Association members to learn more about ensuring the sustainability of utility association activities. For information on these events please contact Philip Weller (weller@iawd.at) or Violeta Wolff (wolff@iawd.at).

Workshop for Regulators in Kosovo Feb 23-27, 2015

On February 23-27 2015 a Regulatory Benchmarking Workshop will take place in Pristina, Kosovo to strengthen the analytical and strategic skills of regulatory agencies engaged in benchmarking. During the workshop, participants will discuss all steps of a proper regulatory benchmarking exercise, ranging from selection of data and indicators, to the collection and validation of data, their analysis and their use and publication. The workshop will be facilitated by Prof. Sandy Berg from the University of Florida Public Utility Research Center (PURC), who has successfully delivered dozens of regulatory training around the World; speakers from regulatory agencies and other experts will come to word. Around 20 representatives from regulatory agencies throughout the region are expected to attend. The event is by invitation only, but if you consider that it might be beneficial to your institution's work please contact David Michaud (dmichaud@worldbank.org) to enquire about participating.

2015 Danube Water Conference

The next Danube Water Conference will take place May 6-8, 2015 in Vienna and will be again jointly supported by the Ministry of Finance of Austria and GIZ and the Swiss Development Cooperation. GIZ/ORF and the DWP will jointly organize the conference which will bring together over 150 persons from the water sector (government, regulators, utilities and utility associations and municipal officials and associations). Commitments for participation have already been received from key European Union officials and senior representatives of the World Bank. The State of Sector report which is being prepared by the DWP will feature prominently in the program as will discussion of capacity building programs for utilities and municipalities.

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS

Competitive Grant Progress

The Competitive Grants issued under the Danube Water Program are progressing well and results from a number of the activities have been documented and are now available on the website of the DWP. <http://www.danube-water-program.org/>. For information on the Competitive Grants please contact Violeta Wolff of IAWD (wolff@iawd.at)

Commercial Efficiency Program Launched

The Commercial Efficiency program of the Danube Water Program has now begun and is being led by the company Valu Add together with a consortium of companies experienced in the commercial efficiency of utilities, including Budapest Waterworks. The countries targeted by the program are (Ukraine, Moldova, Macedonia, Kosovo and Montenegro) and utilities interested in participating in this program should contact their national water utility association or Philip Weller of IAWD (weller@iawd.at).

Utility Benchmarking First Cycle Completed

The first cycle of utility Benchmarking in the Danube basin have been completed under the Utility Benchmarking program managed by the European Benchmarking Cooperation under a contract with the Danube Water Program and GIZ/ORF. The program will be open to additional utilities interested in participating in this program. Please contact Philip Weller of IAWD for more information (weller@iawd.at).

Asset Management Progress

The seventeen utilities participating in the DWP capacity building program on Asset Management have all been making substantial progress in preparing the asset registries needed for effective decision making on maintenance and replacement of assets. At a workshop in Belgrade in November 2014 the utilities participating in the program shared experience to date and received additional guidance on the next steps in the process. The presentations and pictures from the event are available on the following link: <http://www.danube-water-program.org/pages/program-opportunities/asset-management.php>

Energy Efficiency Audits Completed

The second phase of the Energy Efficiency for Water Utilities training was successfully completed in December 2014 with a third round of workshops in Romania, Serbia, and Ukraine. Around 15 utilities prepared energy audits and investments plans for more than 10M Euros in more than 30 facilities, with potential for energy savings around 35% and payback periods of around two years only. In a third stage, the training participants will attempt to seek financing for the most promising of their projects, with Program support.

EVENTS AND NEWS FROM THE REGION

Budapest Spring Water Days March 4-6, 2015

The European Water Association (EWA) Spring Days (March 4-6) 2015 – Budapest Water Conference (BWC) and water industry expo, will be held in the framework of the European Water Association's (EWA) Spring Conference series and organized by the Hungarian Water Association (MaSzeSz), under the patronage of HE János Áder, president of Hungary and in collaboration with the Budapest Waterworks.

The three day event will provide an opportunity for public and private sector decision-makers, water utility professionals, experts and other stakeholders from the developed and the developing world to exchange views and share experiences with leading international experts on the most pressing challenges and potential solutions in the field of urban water management. <http://budapestwater.org/event/>

Utility Conference in Tirana May 13-15, 2015

The International Water Association and SHUKALB (the Albanian Water Utility Association) will convene a specialist conference targeted at south eastern European water utility operators in Tirana May 13-15, 2015. The conference will highlight key issues for utility operators (Asset Management, Benchmarking, Commercial Efficiency). The conference website provides additional information: [Conference website](#)

Ukrainian Water Utility Conference Feb 10-15, 2015

The Ukrainian Water utility association will be holding a major conference in February (10-15) celebrating its 10 years of service in the water supply and waste water sector. The conference will include sessions on such topics as addressing non-revenue water, relations with the national regulatory authorities, and the launch of a Ukrainian Hub for Utility Benchmarking as part of the Danube Water Program. The future development of the Ukrainian water utility association will also be discussed during this event held in Yaremche in the Carpathian mountain region. Information about the conference can be found on the following link: [Conference information](#)

