

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR DANUBE RESEARCH (IAD) – THE ROLE OF A SCIENTIFIC NGO IN TRANSBOUNDARY LARGE RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT**

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**ABSTRACT**

The IAD, affiliated with the International Association of Theoretical and Applied Limnology (SIL), is the oldest non-governmental organization (NGO) in the Danube River Basin (founded in 1956). In the “cold-war” period, when the “iron curtain” separated east from west, IAD operated as a permeable filter for scientists. The political paradigm of the early 1990s is now followed by an organizational and missionary paradigm of IAD. Since 1998, IAD has observership in the then established International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), and as such, is cooperating with their expert groups in order to implement the EU water framework directive. IAD presently has 11 member countries, and 13 expert groups, covering all basic disciplines of limnology including taxonomy of aquatic animals and plants as the basis of biodiversity.

Biomonitoring in the Danube River Basin has been the major focus of IAD which is reflected by the IAD water quality map of the Danube River and its tributaries. Recently, the scientific focus has clearly broadened from the traditional qualitative water protection towards quantitative and morphological water protection. Topics such as floodplain and wetland restoration, sturgeon migration, macrophyte inventory, ecological microbiology and riparian landscape mapping are presently being investigated. The poster shows the overlap of science, policy and economy in the course of any project from planning to realization, and the niche covered by IAD. It is emphasized that IAD is stretching between basic and applied science, and dedicated to the concept of integrated water management and the catchment approach. The ultimate aim is to support environmental protection policy and sustainable development in the Danube River Basin.