

REPORT

Travel grant of the ELTE Talent Support Council - 2024/25 Academic Year

Reporter: Nguyễn Vũ Đức Thịnh (NEPTUN ID: B87IW8)

I am pleased to report that my participation in the 45th International Association for Danube Research (IAD) Conference, held under the theme “Innovative Solutions and Cooperation to Protect and Restore Biodiversity and Ecosystems in the Danube River Basin”, was a deeply enriching academic and professional experience. The event brought together a diverse community of scientists, practitioners, and policy experts working on freshwater ecosystems, providing a unique platform for learning, networking, and scientific exchange.

This conference marked a significant milestone in my PhD journey, where I had the opportunity to present my research. My oral presentation, titled “Long-term Trends in River Trophic Status on a Global Scale”, focused on analyzing nutrient and productivity patterns in river systems using long-term data. The session was well-attended, and I received constructive feedback from both senior researchers and fellow early-career scientists. This interaction not only validated the relevance of my work but also offered new perspectives for refining my research questions and analytical approaches.

Throughout the conference, I attended a range of keynote talks, oral sessions, and poster presentations on topics including biodiversity conservation, river restoration, hydromorphological changes, climate change impacts, and ecosystem services. These sessions significantly broadened my understanding of the ecological challenges and restoration strategies specific to large rivers like the Danube, while also highlighting transferable concepts that I can integrate into my own research. I also appreciated the interdisciplinary nature of the conference, which encouraged dialogue between ecologists, hydrologists, engineers, and policymakers.

In addition to the academic content, the conference facilitated meaningful professional networking. I had the chance to connect with researchers from various institutions across Europe who are working on similar topics related to riverine ecosystems, nutrient dynamics, and biodiversity. These interactions may lead to potential collaborations, particularly in the context of data sharing and comparative river studies, which are central to advancing ecological understanding at regional and global scales.

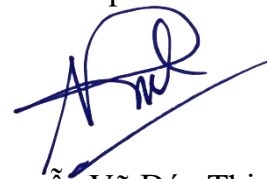
Participating in this conference also improved my scientific communication skills. Preparing and delivering an oral presentation to an international audience challenged me to clearly and effectively convey complex concepts. This experience will be invaluable as I move forward in my academic career, whether in teaching, publishing, or participating in future scientific forums.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the financial support provided through the travel grant of the ELTE Talent Support Council. Without this assistance,

it would have been difficult for me to participate in such an important event. The insights, connections, and experience I gained at the IAD Conference have had a tangible impact on my development as a researcher. I am now more confident, better informed, and more motivated to continue contributing to the field of aquatic ecology and freshwater conservation.

In conclusion, attending the IAD Conference not only enhanced the quality of my PhD research but also expanded my scientific network and deepened my commitment to collaborative and evidence-based approaches to ecosystem restoration. I am confident that the knowledge and experience gained will have lasting benefits for both my academic work and broader career in environmental science.

Reporter

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, cursive letters that appear to be 'NVDT'.

Nguyễn Vũ Đức Thịnh

Attachment: *The official programme of the 45th IAD (my oral presentation from 15:15 – 15:30 (session 3) on April 9th, 2025)*



The 45th IAD Conference

Innovative solutions and cooperation to protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems in the Danube River Basin

**9–12 April 2025
Sofia, Bulgaria**

Organised by:

Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, BAS (IBER-BAS)

Climate, Atmosphere and Water Research Institute, BAS (CAWRI-BAS)

General Secretariat of the International Association for Danube Research (IAD)

Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS)

Union for Conservation of Nature – Bulgaria (UCNB)

Supported by:

International Association for Danube Research (IAD)

Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, BAS (IBER-BAS)



DaWetRest



Organising Committee

Teodora Trichkova, IBER-BAS, IAD Country representative for Bulgaria (Chair)	Aneliya Ralinova-Nikolova, UCNB
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	Yanka Vidinova, IBER-BAS, IAD Bulgaria

Scientific Committee

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Doru Bănăduc, Romania	Neli Hristova, Bulgaria
Dragos Balaican, Romania	Pavel Jurajda, Czech Republic
Doychin Terziyski, Bulgaria	Petja Ivanova-Radovanova, Bulgaria
Dușanka Cvijanović, Serbia	Petr Paril, Czech Republic
Edith Durisch-Kaiser, Switzerland	Petya Ivanova, Bulgaria
Ekaterina Batchvarova, Bulgaria	Predrag Simonović, Serbia
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Emilia Varadinova, Bulgaria	Snežana Radulović, Serbia
Gabriela Costea, Germany	Thomas Hein, Austria
Georg Janauer, Austria	Tihomir Stefanov, Bulgaria
Gertrud Haidvogel, Austria	Vera Istvánovics, Hungary
Harald Kutzenberger, Austria	Violeta Tyufekchieva, Bulgaria
Hristina Kalcheva, Bulgaria	Vladimír Kováč, Slovakia
Ina Aneva, Bulgaria	Vladimir Vladimirov, Bulgaria
Ion Toderas, Moldova	Yanka Vidinova, Bulgaria
Iulian Nichersu, Romania	Yovana Todorova, Bulgaria
Jürg Bloesch, Switzerland	Yuriy Kvach, Ukraine

Conference Overview

The Danube River is the second largest river in Europe and the world's most international river, passing through 10 countries and four capitals, while 19 countries share the Danube River Basin (DRB). The Danube River Delta is the largest river delta wetland in Europe. The DRB is well known for its diverse landscapes, ecosystems and habitats, and unique flora and fauna, including the sturgeon species of high conservation concern at a global level. However, recent reports show that the Danube River is one of the top ten world's most threatened rivers with many ecosystems degraded and habitats and species lost. The main pressures to DRB identified are hydromorphological alterations, pollution by organic substances, nutrients and hazardous substances, owing to river engineering, hydropower plants, navigation projects, agriculture, etc. Growing threats are also the introduction of invasive alien species, sediment balance alteration, pollution with macro- and microplastics and effects of climate change as droughts or floods, water scarcity and extreme events.

Major instruments have been developed to address these issues at European and regional levels. The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (2020) aims at protecting and restoring nature, including improvement and widening of the network of protected areas, restoring freshwater and soil ecosystems, reducing pollution and addressing invasive alien species. The landmark Nature Restoration Law (2024) provides on restoration of terrestrial, coastal and freshwater ecosystems (art. 4) and restoration of the natural connectivity of rivers and natural functions of the related floodplains (art. 9). Together with other EU legislation, they support the EU's international commitments under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022), aiming to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. At regional level, these issues are addressed within pillar 2 of the European Union Strategy for Danube Region (EUSDR): *Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region*, in particular, under priority areas: PA4, 5 and 6.

Many projects, actions and measures have already been implemented at DRB and further restorations are planned to improve river morphology, reduce the impacts of impoundments and hydropeaking, restore river continuity for fish migration, reconnect wetlands and floodplains, etc. Restoration of natural and semi-natural ecosystems complements the protection of ecosystems to secure water, food and health, while enhancing biodiversity and mitigating climate change and adapting to its impact. Restoration is most effective when coordinated across key stakeholders (scientists, local communities, national authorities, managers, etc.) and implemented at large scales. Therefore, transborder and transnational cooperation is crucial for implementation of protection and restoration measures in the Danube River Basin.

Recognising the importance of cooperation for protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems, EU launched new Missions under 'Horizon Europe research and innovation programme 2021–2027'. The EU Mission 'Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030' aims to protect and restore the health of freshwater and marine ecosystems through research and innovation, citizen engagement and blue investments. To achieve its objectives, the Mission has established area-based 'lighthouses' in key European sea and river basins, serving as hubs for innovation and cooperation. The Danube Lighthouse projects develop concrete innovative and holistic solutions and approaches to the major challenges in the DRB. The Danube Lighthouse includes EcoDaLLi as the Coordination and Support Action (CSA) and Innovation Actions (IAs), such as: DANUBE4all, DALIA, DaWetRest and Restore4Life.

The International Association for Danube Research (IAD) was founded in 1956 with the aim of promoting and coordinating activities in the fields of limnology, water management, water protection and sustainable development in DRB. Thirteen countries are members of IAD. Participants represent scientists of various expertises, such as biology, chemistry, hydrology, geology, geography, climatology, etc. IAD provides education and training, supports the exchange of information and ideas, as well as mobility of scientists to foster cooperation and knowledge transfer within 12 expert groups. Since 1998, IAD is an observer and active participant in the work of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR). IAD is a founder and active member of EUSDR PA6 task forces: Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF), Danube River Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) and Danube Landscape Task Force. IAD is a partner in three recently approved EU Horizon projects: DANSER, SWIM, and SoS2Learn. Every second year IAD organises a scientific conference.

The Bulgarian section of IAD (IAD – Bulgaria), represented by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), has been actively involved in IAD since the establishment of the organisation. Through the years, scientists from IBER-BAS and former Institute of Zoology have led the expert groups on Zooplankton (Prof. Wesselin Naidenow), Zoobenthos (Prof. Boris Russev) and Invasive Alien Species (Dr. Teodora Trichkova). Currently, IAD members are from IBER-BAS, Institute of Oceanology, BAS, CAWRI-BAS, Geological Institute, BAS, Sofia University, University of Forestry, and Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Plovdiv. Until now, IAD – Bulgaria has hosted 4 scientific conferences of IAD: Sofia 1966, Sofia 1976, Varna 1990, and Sofia 2014.

The 45th IAD Conference organised by IAD – Bulgaria will provide a forum for the presentation of long-term multidisciplinary research and activities on various topics, highlighting the importance of building innovative solutions and cooperation to protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems in the Danube River Basin.

We dedicate this conference to the memory of our beloved IAD colleagues and friends:



Dr. Angela Curtean-Bănăduc
(Romania)



Dr. Artem Liashenko
(Ukraine)



Ing. Ivan Botev
(Bulgaria)

Scientific Topics

- 1.** Biodiversity – from microbial communities to water birds and mammals, status and future trends for aquatic species and habitats, biotic processes, soil diversity
- 2.** Protected areas and biodiversity conservation, ecological corridors, protection and rehabilitation of Danube sturgeons, soil restoration and protection
- 3.** Ecosystem functions and services from source to delta, restoration and sustainable use of biological resources, ecosystem management
- 4.** Wetlands and floodplains – ecology and restoration, reconnection to the Danube River, constraints and perspectives
- 5.** The Danube River Delta and coastal ecosystems – challenges, restoration and management
- 6.** Riparian landscapes – diversity, protection, management and planning
- 7.** Hydromorphological alterations and habitat changes – mitigation and restoration of hydrological regime and river morphological conditions, river connectivity, habitat management
- 8.** Water quality, from nutrients to toxins – pollution by organic substances, nutrients, hazardous substances, and macro- and microplastics; chemical and biological monitoring, including eDNA; sediment quality and balance alterations; integrated water management; Joint Danube Survey 5 (JDS5)
- 9.** Invasive alien species – priority species and pathways of introduction and spread, impact, prevention and management, restoration of damaged ecosystems
- 10.** Climate change (droughts, floods, water scarcity, extreme events, etc.) and land-use change impacts on aquatic ecosystems, mitigation and climate change adaptation in the Danube River Basin
- 11.** The human dimension – rivers as socio-ecological systems; long-term socio-ecological research and environmental history; sustainable development and public participation in the Danube and Black Sea Region
- 12.** Cooperation and innovative solutions to protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems in the Danube River Basin – policy, projects and networks, Danube and Black Sea Lighthouse, education and training, citizen science, information systems and databases, data planning and management
- 13.** Other topics related to the Danube River and Black Sea Basin.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

9th April 2025

09.15 – 10:00 **Registration**

10:00 – 10:30 **Opening of the conference and welcome of participants**

Dr. Teodora Trichkova, National representative of IAD for Bulgaria

Dr. Bernd Cyffka, IAD President

Dr. Vladimir Vladimirov, Director of IBER-BAS

Corr. Memb. Ekaterina Batchvarova, Director of CAWRI-BAS

Corr. Memb. Evelina Slavcheva, DSc, President of
the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Mr. Manol Genov, Minister of Environment and Water

Introductory speech

10:30 – 10:45 **Ivelina Vasileva, Member of the Mission Board of EU Mission ‘Restore our Ocean and Waters’, Danube and Black Sea Lighthouse Leader – European Ocean policies and Mission ‘Restore Our Ocean and Waters’ in support of research and innovation for the Danube and Black Sea Region**

Session 1

Chairs: Teodora Trichkova, Bernd Cyffka

Keynote presentation 1

10:45 – 11:15 **Cristina Sandu, Bernd Cyffka, Katrin Teubner – The International Association for Danube Research – Past and future of a scientific network in the Danube River Basin**

Keynote presentation 2

11:15 – 11:45 **Gabriela Costea – Fostering emotional connection and learning: The role of education in Danube Basin restoration**

11:45 – 12:00 **Coffee break**

Session 2 (DANUBE4all)

Chairs: Gabriela Costea, Dimitar Ivanov

12:00 – 12:15 **Marija Smederevac-Lalić, Martin Tschikof, Paul Meulenbroek, Yusdiel Torres-Cambas, Sonja Jähnig, Teodora Trichkova, Anthony Basooma, Thomas Hein – DANUBE4all – Ecological status and biodiversity deficit analysis of the Danube River course**

12:15 – 12:30 **Martin Pusch, Lisa Waldenberger, Abdul Waheed, Marlene Haimann, Ellis Penning, Helmut Habersack – Use of multifunctional nature-based solutions (NbS) for river and floodplain restoration**

12:30 – 12:45 **Albert Scriciu, Adrian Stănică, Camelia Ionescu, Christian Ferrarin – Enhancing ecosystem connectivity and community resilience in the Danube Delta: The Romanian case study of the DANUBE4all and EcoDaLLi projects**

12:45 – 13:00 **Martin Felix Gajdusek, Camille Janssen – Local vulnerabilities and pro-nature activism in ACCTING.eu and contrasting experimental patterns of citizen engagement in DANUBE4all**

13:00 – 14:00 **Lunch break**

Session 3

Chairs: Cristina Sandu, Boian Koulov

Keynote presentation 3

14:00 – 14:30 **Birgit Vogel** – International cooperation in the Danube River Basin: Current key activities including the Joint Danube Survey 5 (online)

Keynote presentation 4

14:30 – 15:00 **Markus G. Weinbauer** – Viruses, microorganisms and particles: Neglected ecological players in the Danube Delta

15:00 – 15:15 **Alexander Kirschner, Iris Schachner-Groehs, Gerhard Kavka, Edith Hoedl, Adam Kovacs, Andreas Farnleitner** – Long-term impact of basin-wide wastewater management on microbial faecal pollution levels along the entire Danube River

15:15 – 15:30 **Nguyễn Vũ Đức Thịnh, Flórián Tóth, Xavier Beito, Camille Minaudo, András Abonyi** – Long-term trends in river trophic status in a global scale

15:30 – 15:45 **Coffee break**

Session 4

Chairs: Yanka Vidinova, Markus G. Weinbauer

15:45 – 16:00 **Nevena Ivanova, Yanka Vidinova, Stefan Kazakov, Borislava Gyosheva, Michaela Beshkova, Tsvetelina Isheva, Veselka Tsavkova, Luchezar Pehlivanov** – Srebarna LTER-BG Site: Long-term research on ecosystem dynamics

16:00 – 16:15 **Yanka Vidinova, Mila Ihtimanska** – Monitoring of macrozoobenthos of Srebarna Lake – challenges in changing environment

16:15 – 16:30 **Vesela Evtimova, Monika Subeva, Emilia Varadinova, Yanka Vidinova, Yordan Uzunov, Mila Ihtimanska, Lyubomir Kenderov, Galia Georgieva, Desislava Stoianova, Rabia Soufi, Violeta Tyufekchieva** – A comparison of macroinvertebrate indices for assessment of ecological status/potential of standing water bodies in Bulgaria

16:30 – 16:45 **Petja Ivanova-Radovanova** – Possibilities and needs for protection of landscape values in urban green and blue systems

16:45– 19:45 **IAD Board Meeting**

10th April 2025

9:30 – 11:00 **IAD General Assembly**

Chairs: Bernd Cyffka, Cristina Sandu, Katrin Teubner

11:00 – 11:15 **Coffee break**

Session 5 (DANSER)

Chairs: Katrin Teubner, Iulian Nichersu

Keynote presentation 5

11:15 – 11:45 **Ronald E. Poepl** – Human impacts on sediment dynamics and hydromorphology: Some concepts and their applications

11:45 – 12:00 **Iulian Nichersu, Dragos Balaican, Matei Simionov, Bogdan Gheorghe, Edward Bratfanof** – DANube SEDiment Restoration: Towards the deployment and upscaling of sustainable management of the sediments across the Danube Catchment Basin (DANSER)

12:00 – 12:15 **Bogdan Gheorghe, Iulian Nichersu, Dragos Balaican, Matei Simionov, Edward Bratfanof, Oliver Livanov** – Monitoring and mitigating emerging pollutants in the Danube Delta within DANube SEDiment Restoration (DANSER) project

12:15 – 12:30 **Ronald E. Poepl, Michael Wagreich, Thomas Hein, Andreas Lang, Severin Hohensinner, Diana Hatzenbühler, Johannes Kowal, Sonia Recinos, Ulrich Schwarz, Julia Sandberger, Stefan Schneeweis, Gerhard Klasz** – The DANube SEDiment Restoration (DANSER) project: The Upper Danube case

12:30 – 12:45 **Katrin Teubner, Cristina Sandu, Gabriela Costea** – Restoring the Danube's sediment balance: IAD's commitment to research, training, and public awareness (DANSER)

12:45 – 13:00 **Discussion**

13:00 – 14:00 **Lunch break**

Session 6

Chairs: Marina Piria, Sasho Trajanovski

Keynote presentation 6

14:00 – 14:30 **Teodora Trichkova, Marius Skolka, Petya Ivanova, Béla Csányi, Momir Paunović, Yuriy Kvach, Angela Bănăduc, Doru Bănăduc, Hristina Kalcheva, Milcho Todorov, Ivan Botev, Rumen Tomov, Vladimir Vladimirov** – Invasive alien species and climate change as major threats to biodiversity in the Danube River Basin and Western Black Sea Coast: Management and restoration and the role of citizen science

Keynote presentation 7

14:30 – 15:00 **Yuriy Kvach, Gabriel Lupu** – The invasive alien species monitoring in the Danube Delta: Collaborative work of Romania and Ukraine

- 15:00 – 15:15 **Maria Yu. Tkachenko, Lukáš Vetešník, Jiří Hronek, Michal Janáč, Markéta Ondračková** – Host preferences and distribution of *Neoergasilus japonicus* (Ergasilidae), a highly invasive parasitic copepod
- 15:15 – 15:30 **Anastasiia Lepekha, Sergii Bushuiev, Yuriy Kvach** – Seasonal variations in egg size of the Oriental river prawn, *Macrobrachium nipponense*, an invasive decapode in the Danube Delta
- 15:30 – 15:45 **Michal Hnilička, Pavel Jurajda, Maria Yu. Tkachenko, Michal Janáč, Zdenka Jurajdová, Polina Nikova, Teodora Trichkova** – Black bullhead (*Ameiurus melas*) in Czech Republic – new threat for aquatic ecosystems, distribution and potential management

15:45 – 16:00 **Coffee break**

Session 7

Chairs: Carmen Postolache, Emil Bournaski

- 16:00 – 16:15 **Viktor Vyshnevskiy, Viktor Komorin** – The climate change and its impact on the Danube River and the northwestern part of the Black Sea
- 16:15 – 16:30 **Viktor Vyshnevskiy** – The destruction of the Kakhovka HPP and its impact on nature
- 16:30 – 16:45 **Petar Dimov, Stefan Kazakov, Tsvetelina Isheva** – LiDAR-UAV applications in monitoring wetlands. Case study: Lake Srebarna Biosphere Reserve
- 16:45 – 17:00 **Andrei Toma, Ionuț Șandric, Bogdan Mihai, Albert Scrieciu** – Aboveground biomass mapping with space-based LiDAR and multispectral data: A case study from the Danube Delta
- 17:00 – 17:15 **Sasho Trajanovski, Konstantin Zdraveski, Biljana Budzakoska Gjoreska, Sonja Trajanovska** – Advancing climate change education for heritage resilience in Southeast Europe: Stakeholder mapping, curriculum review, and needs assessment

17:15 – 19:00 **Poster Session 1**

19:30 **Conference dinner**

11th April 2025

Session 8

Chairs: Mateja Germ, Vladimir Vladimirov

Keynote presentation 8

- 09:30 – 10:00 **Ekaterina Batchvarova, Boian Koulov, Kalina Tylko, Mirjam Zillober** – Danube Wetlands' Restoration: An integrated approach (DaWetRest)

Keynote presentation 9

- 10:00 – 10:30 **Dužanka Cvijanović** – Habitat monitoring and conservation in the Danube Basin
- 10:30 – 10:45 **Katrin Teubner** – Shifting restoration focus: From minimum to optimum light requirements re-establishing submerged macrophytes

- 10:45 – 11:00 **Mateja Germ, Igor Zelnik, Aleksandra Golob** – Species richness of macrophytes in the lowland River Krka in Slovenia
- 11:00 – 11:15 **Gana Gecheva, Karin Pall** – Aquatic macrophytes along the Bulgarian stretch of the Danube River
- 11:15 – 11:30 **Vladimir Vladimirov** – The Danube River as a pathway for the introduction and spread of alien plants in Bulgaria

11:30 – 11:45 **Coffee break**

Session 9

Chairs: Ina Aneva, Necmi Aksoy

- 11:45 – 12:00 **Tzvetan Zlatanov, Georgi Gogushev, Magdalena Zlatanova, Georgi Hinkov** – Structural diversity of non-managed *Ulmus laevis* dominated forests on islands in the Lower Danube River
- 12:00 – 12:15 **Petar Zhelev, Ina Aneva, Dimitar Ivanov** – Sustainable management and conservation of *Quercus* forests and forest vegetation along the Danube River in Bulgaria
- 12:15 – 12:30 **Necmi Aksoy, Sertaç Kaya, Engin Eroğlu, Oktay Yıldız, Elif Atmaca** – Plant biodiversity and ecological characteristics in the riparian areas of Düzce Asar Stream in the Western Black Sea Region of Türkiye
- 12:30 – 12:45 **Mila Ihtimanska, Luchezar Pehlivanov** – Changes in taxonomic richness of macroinvertebrate community in the Bulgarian section of Danube River over a period of 57 years – application of taxonomic distinctness indices in freshwater ecosystems

13:00 – 14:00 **Lunch break**

Session 10

Chairs: Marija Smederevac-Lalić, Yuriy Kvach

- 14:00 – 14:15 **Tihomir Stefanov, Yordan Kutsarov, Stefan Kazakov, Luchezar Pehlivanov** – Recent records and status of European mudminnow *Umbra krameri* Walbaum, 1792 (Actinopterygii: Umbridae) in Bulgaria
- 14:15 – 14:30 **Yuliia Kutsokon, Anastasiia Shukh, Ladislav Pekárik** – Length-weight relationships of *Acipenser ruthenus* Linnaeus, 1758 from the Danube River, Slovakia
- 14:30 – 14:45 **Gábor Guti** – Analysing the human pressures on sterlet (*Acipenser ruthenus* L.) populations in the Hungarian section of the Danube River
- 14:45 – 15:00 **Marina Piria, Ivan Špelić** – Remodelled lowland streams: How human alterations shape fish communities
- 15:00 – 15:15 **Olena Hupalo, Kateryna Zorina-Sakharova, Artem Liashenko** – Ecological structure of juvenile fish communities in the Kilia Delta of the Danube River as an indicator of environmental quality
- 15:15 – 15:30 **Emil Kanev, Eliza Uzunova, Milcho Todorov, Kostadin Ignatov, Teodora Trichkova** – River connectivity issues and restoration activities: Upper Iskar River case study

15:30 – 15:45 **Coffee break**

Session 11

Chairs: Maria Kachamakova, Dragos Balaican

- 15:45 – 16:00 **Maria Kachamakova, Polina Nikova, Vladimir Todorov, Blagovesta Dimitrova, Yordan Koshev** – The Eurasian beaver (*Castor fiber*) is recolonising Northern Bulgaria through the Danube River after 150 years of absence
- 16:00 – 16:15 **Nikola Ganchev, Yordan Koshev, Maria Kachamakova, Blagovesta Dimitrova, Vladimir Todorov, Yassen Mutafov** – Distribution, conservation state and identified threats for the Eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*) in the Natura 2000 sites along the Bulgarian coast of the Danube River and its tributaries
- 16:15 – 16:30 **Polina K. Nikova, Yordan Koshev** – Species distribution modelling of the coypu in Bulgaria: Preliminary results

16:30 – 17:30 **Poster Session 2**

POSTERS

Poster Session 1

(17:15 – 19:00 h, 10.04.2025)

Chairs: Yuliia Kutsokon, Lyubomir Kenderov

- P1.01: Tsvetelina Isheva, Stefan Kazakov, Borislava Gyosheva, Adam Clarke** – Epiphytic diatom assemblages as ecological indicators of the swallow hypertrophic Srebarna Lake
- P1.02: Borislava Gyosheva, Stefan Kazakov, Nevena Ivanova** – Macrophyte diversity and ecological assessment of Srebarna Lake (Srebarna LTER-BG Site)
- P1.03: Monika Subeva, Stefan Kazakov** – Composition and seasonal distribution of zooplankton communities in four reservoirs in the Danube River Basin, Bulgaria
- P1.04: Lyubomir Kenderov, Teodora Trichkova, Ivan Botev** – New data on the mysid fauna in the Bulgarian sector of the Danube River
- P1.05: Mila Ihtimanska, Luchezar Pehlivanov** – Ecological potential assessment of the Bulgarian section of the Danube River according to a proposed modification of the multimetric index mRBA
- P1.06: Katarina Jovičić, Jelena S. Vranković, Isidora Santrač, Milena Dimitrijević, Branko Miljanović, Vesna Đikanović** – Metals in liver of northern pike (*Esox lucius*) from contrasting freshwater ecosystems: artificial reservoirs vs. the Tisza River
- P1.07: Jovana Kostić, Karolina Sunjog, Jelena Djordjević-Aleksić, Srdjan Subotić, Marija Smederevac-Lalić, Željka Višnjić-Jeftić** – Exploring the effects of untreated wastewater on metal concentrations and DNA damage in common bream *Abramis brama* (L., 1758) in the Danube River, Serbia
- P1.08: Marija Smederevac-Lalić, Milica Jaćimović, Gorčin Cvijanović, Dušan Nikolić** – Trends in commercial and recreational fisheries in Serbia (2008–2023): Implications for ecosystem-based management
- P1.09: Apostolos Apostolou, Boris Velkov** – Drifting nets as a tool to achieve fish management and conservation purposes
- P1.10: Nikolay Kodjabashev, Milen Ignatov, Teodora Teofilova, Konstantin Stefanov, Zornitsa Stoyanova, Dyanko Hristov, Milen Stoikov** – Origin, rate of spread and

potential distribution of the Eurasian beaver (*Castor fiber*) in the Danube River Basin in Bulgaria

P1.11 Nikolay Kodjabashev, Milen Ignatov, Teodora Teofilova, Konstantin Stefanov, Elitsa Michailowa, Simona Zaimova, Iordan Mitev – Methods to study ecology, distribution and abundance of the Eurasian beaver (*Castor fiber*) in Bulgaria

Chairs: Maria Yu. Tkachenko, Rumen Tomov

P1.12: Dmytro Dubyna, Tetiana Dziuba, Svitlana Iemelianova, Pavlo Ustymenko, Liubov Borsukevych, Pavlo Tymoshenko – The Kiliyan arm of the Danube Delta as a transit ecosystem of new alien species to the territory of Ukraine

P1.13: Mihaela Beshkova, Hristina Kalcheva, Stefan Kazakov, Tsvetelina Isheva – Long-term phytoplankton dynamics and trophic relations in the presence of invasive *Dreissena* spp. in Ogosta Reservoir (Danube River Basin)

P1.14: Milcho Todorov, Teodora Trichkova, Zdravko Hubenov, Ivan Botev – Range expansion and current distribution of the invasive alien Chinese pond mussel *Sinanodonta woodiana* (Lea, 1834) (Bivalvia: Unionidae) in Bulgaria

P1.15: Maria Yu. Tkachenko, Veronika Bartáková, Marie Drápalová, Mária Seifertová, Michal Hnilička, Jost Borchering, Teodora Trichkova, Tihomir Stefanov, Markéta Ondračková – Parasites of *Knipowitschia cf. caucasica* (Gobiidae) in its native and non-native range

P1.16: Teodora Trichkova, Polina Nikova, Milcho Todorov, Tihomir Stefanov, Michal Hnilička, Pavel Jurajda – Presence and status of alien fish species of family Ictaluridae in Bulgaria

P1.17: Trayana Kaludova, Kremena Stefanova, Ivelin Petkov, Violeta Slabakova, Valentin Panayotov – ROV-based visual survey of alien ctenophores in the Black Sea

P1.18: Rumen Tomov – Alien terrestrial invertebrates in the Danube River Basin: A reality check on their spread and the risk of new invasions

P1.19: Olga Deli, Yuriy Kvach – The spread of the non-native marbled cellar spider *Holocnemus pluchei* Scopoli, 1763 (Pholcidae) in southwestern Ukraine

Poster Session 2

(16:30 – 17:30 h, 11.04.2025)

Chair: Ekaterina Batchvarova, Vitalii Kolomiichuk

P2.01: Ina Aneva, Dimiter Ivanov, Petar Zhelev – Diversity of natural habitats along the Bulgarian part of the Danube River

P2.02: Dimiter Ivanov, Ina Aneva, Petar Zhelev – Wetlands along the Danube River and their importance for plant biodiversity conservation

P2.03: Vitalii Kolomiichuk, Mikhail Rusin – Southern Bessarabia kurgans as local centers of preserving the biodiversity

P2.04: Sasho Trajanovski, Konstantin Zdraveski, Biljana Budzakoska Gjoreska, Sonja Trajanovska – NEXUS-BIO: North Macedonian and Albanian biodiversity exploration using DNA barcoding

P2.05: Péter Levente Gál, Anna Greis, Polina K. Nikova, Bojana Vojnović, Maša Adamov, Csilla Tragner, Mihai Doroftei, Alexandru-Cătălin Dorosencu, Marian Mierlă, Dragoș Balaican, Matei Simionov, Iulian Nichersu, Katrin Teubner, Thomas Zechmeister, Justin Catau, Minuđer Mesaroš, Dušanka Cvijanovic – Vegetation cover degradation of meadows in Letea Forest caused by anthropogenic impacts on the Danube Delta in the climate change context: Evidence from long-term satellite monitoring

- P2.06:** Anna Greis, Péter Levente Gál, Polina K. Nikova, Bojana Vojnović, Maša Adamov, Csilla Tragner, Mihai Doroftei, Alexandru-Cătălin Dorosencu, Marian Mierlă, Dragoș Balaican, Matei Simionov, Iulian Nichersu, Katrin Teubner, Thomas Zechmeister, Justin Catau, Minuđer Mesaroš, Dušanka Cvijanovic – Water stress assessment across dune habitats of Letea Forest (Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve) using Normalized Difference Moisture Index (NDMI)
- P2.07:** Yevhen Sokolov – Assessment of fires in the Ukrainian sector of the Lower Danube sub-basin region, based on remote sensing data
- P2.08:** Donka Shopova – Assessment of environmental performance (EPI) in selected sections of the Danube River in Bulgaria
- P2.09:** Zoya Mateeva – Extreme hydro-climatic phenomena along the Middle and Lower Danube Basin in Bulgaria: Droughts, heavy rains and floods
- P2.10:** Nelly Hristova, Aleksander Saraffov, Silvia Kirilova – Morphometric characterisation of Bulgarian Danube Islands: A key to understanding hydromorphological alterations and habitat connectivity

Chairs: Dušanka Cvijanović, Emil Bournaski

- P2.11:** Boglárka Lakatos, Márton Pesel, Viktor Nyíri, Ágnes Tahy, Viktor Hegedus, Szilvia Szántó, Zoltan Palotai, Zita Gábor, Bernd Cyffka, Veronika Ullmann, Tim Borgs, Miklós Gyalai-Korpos, Zsolt Tamás, Krisztián Berberovics, Attila Dávid Molnár, Kateřina Chmelíková, Michal Kuráž, Zuzana Boukalova, Martin Hanel, Peter Gabriš, Michal Kravčík, Danka Kravčíková, Katalin Bene, Mate Chappon, Richard Ray, Viktória Szinyei, Adam Vizina, Adam Beran, Petr Pavlík, Erzsébet Poór-Pócsi, Kriszti Árvai-Nagy, István Kenyeres, Agnes Gyuro, Marton Kenyeres, Catalina Iticescu, Stefan Petrea, Catalina Maria Topa, Madalina Calmuc, Cristina Trifu, Ada Pandele, Ecaterina Luca, Silvia Chelcea, Atila Bezdan, Bosko Blagojevic, Vesna Neskovic, Jovana Bezdan, Marko Vukadinović, Simona Andrisca, Linda Iuhasz, Laura Stanciu, Sandor Pasztor, Valerica Anichitoaie, Gyorgy Deak, Georgeta Tudor, Monica Matei, Madalina Boboc, Elena Holban, Marius Raischi, Johannes Barth, Robert van Geldern, Jan Maier, Elena Preda, Raluca Ladaru, Vasile Alecsandru Strat, Catarina Reis, Oriane Georges, Elena Blagoeva, Christoph Ramshorn, Sebastian Schloegl, Monika Manolova, Desislava Pecheva, Vladimir Petkov, Eleonora Ivanova – Danube River Basin Lighthouse – Restoration of fresh and transitional water ecosystems (DALIA)
- P2.12:** Dušanka Cvijanović, Martin Tschikof, Gabriele Weigelhofer, Marie Wahl, Clara Rosenberger, Eva Feldbacher, Barbara Stammel, Johanna Weidendorfer, Sophie De Haney, Mathias Scholz, Tim Grandjean, Gabriela Costea, Minuđer Mesaroš, Maja Novković, Djuradj Milošević, Milica Stojković Piperac, Mihai Cristian Adamescu – A European-wide indicator toolbox for the assessment of wetlands and their restoration
- P2.13:** Bojana Vojnović, Maša Adamov, Maja Novković, Snežana Radulović, Nusret Drešković, Djuradj Milošević, Milica Stojković Piperac, Dragana Jenačković Gocić, Mészáros Minucsér, Dušanka Cvijanović – Integrating citizen science for mapping restoration target species in the Vlasina Wetland, Serbia
- P2.14:** Emil Bournaski, Ekaterina Batchvarova – IDES tool for improving ecosystem services in floodplains
- P2.15:** Mihaela Timofti, Andrei Stanisteanu, Mihai Dragomir, Alexandru Ionescu, Sven Smolders, Maxim Arseni, Madalina Calmuc, Nina Lazar, Daniel Constantin, Oriane Georges – Preliminary studies on a sector of the Danube River: Corabia-Turnu Magurele within the SUNDANSE project

12th April 2025

Conference excursion
(10:00 – 18:30 h)

The participants will visit sites at the Upper Iskar River Basin (tributary of the Danube River) and Rila Mountains:

10:00 Departure from Park Hotel Moskva

11:00 – 11:30 Iskar River, Tatarski Brod Site (river weirs)

12:00 – 12:30 Dragushinovo Village (restoration project – river bypass)

13:00 – 14:00 Mala Tsarkva Village (fish farm, lunch break)

14:30 – 15:30 Borovets Mountain Resort (Tsarska Bistritsa Palace and Park)

<https://tsarska-bistritsa.com/en/index.html>

15:40 – 17:30 Borovets Mountain Resort (free time, coffee/tea break)

Around 18:30 Arrival at Park Hotel Moskva.



Restored wetlands and streams along the Upper Iskar River at Dragushinovo Village – potential habitats of native crayfish populations (Photo: Milcho Todorov)