



MINISTRY  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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The EU Strategy for the Danube Region:  
the opportunities and role of agriculture  
and environmental protection

***ICPDR Business Friends of the Danube - Agricultural Forum***

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EU Strategy for the Danube Region

Budapest, 23 March 2012

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## Why macro-regional strategies?

- **Macro-regional strategies:** new form of regional cooperation
- **Objectives:**
  - **more efficient use of existing EU and national financial resources** for regional development
  - **reducing regional disparities** on macro-regional level
- **Renewed EU partnership with neighbouring regions**, strengthening the relationship with the Western Balkans
- **First example:** EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

## Why macro-regional strategies?

### **A sustainable framework for policy integration:**

- **Commonly agreed priority actions**
- **Aligned funding**
- **Reinforcing major EU policy initiatives**
- **Reinforcing the implementation of Community acquis:**
  - Process guided by the **European Commission**
  - All strategic and policy decisions by **Member States**
  - Attracting and involvement of **non-EU partners**

# Geographical coverage



## Timeline

**June 2009:**  
European  
Council  
Conclusions

**2010:**  
preparatory  
conferences  
and public  
consultation

**Dec 2010:**  
Commission  
proposes Action  
Plan and  
Communication

**1st half 2011:**  
Hungarian  
Presidency of  
the EU Council

**February 2011:**  
Designation of  
11 priority  
areas to PACs

**13 April 2011:** Adoption of the  
EUSDR by the General Affairs  
Council: definition of the main  
pillars and priority areas,  
identification of actions and  
project examples

**May-June 2011:**  
Convening  
Steering Groups  
on 11 PAs, target  
setting launched

**14 June 2011:** Endorsement by  
the Heads of State at the  
European Council –  
implementation phase launched

**2nd half 2011:**  
Steering Group meetings,  
elaborating feasible targets,  
start of project identification

**1st half 2012:**  
Adoption action roadmaps  
PAC reporting to Commission

**2nd half 2012:**  
HLG on first progress report  
mid-2013: COM report on  
EUSDR perspectives

## 4 Pillars, 11 Priority Areas, Actions and Projects

- **A Connecting the Danube Region**
- **B Protecting the environment in the Danube Region**
- **C Building Prosperity in the Danube Region**
- **D Strengthening the Danube Region**



**11 priority areas, coordinated by a priority area coordinator**



## EUSDR Priority Areas and examples for targets

### **(A) Connecting the Danube Region**

1. To improve mobility and multimodality: (1a) Inland waterways (1b) Road, rail and air links	<i>“Improved travel times between major cities” “Multimodal Danube river port terminals”</i>
2. To encourage more sustainable energy	<i>“EU2020 climate and energy targets”</i>
3. To promote culture and tourism	<i>„Develop green tourist products along the region”</i>

### **(B) Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region**

4. To restore and maintain the quality of waters	<i>„Elaborate sub-basin management plans”</i>
5. To manage environmental risks	<i>„Implement flood risk management plans”</i>
6. To preserve biodiversity, landscape, air, soils	<i>„Secure viable populations indigenous fish species”</i>

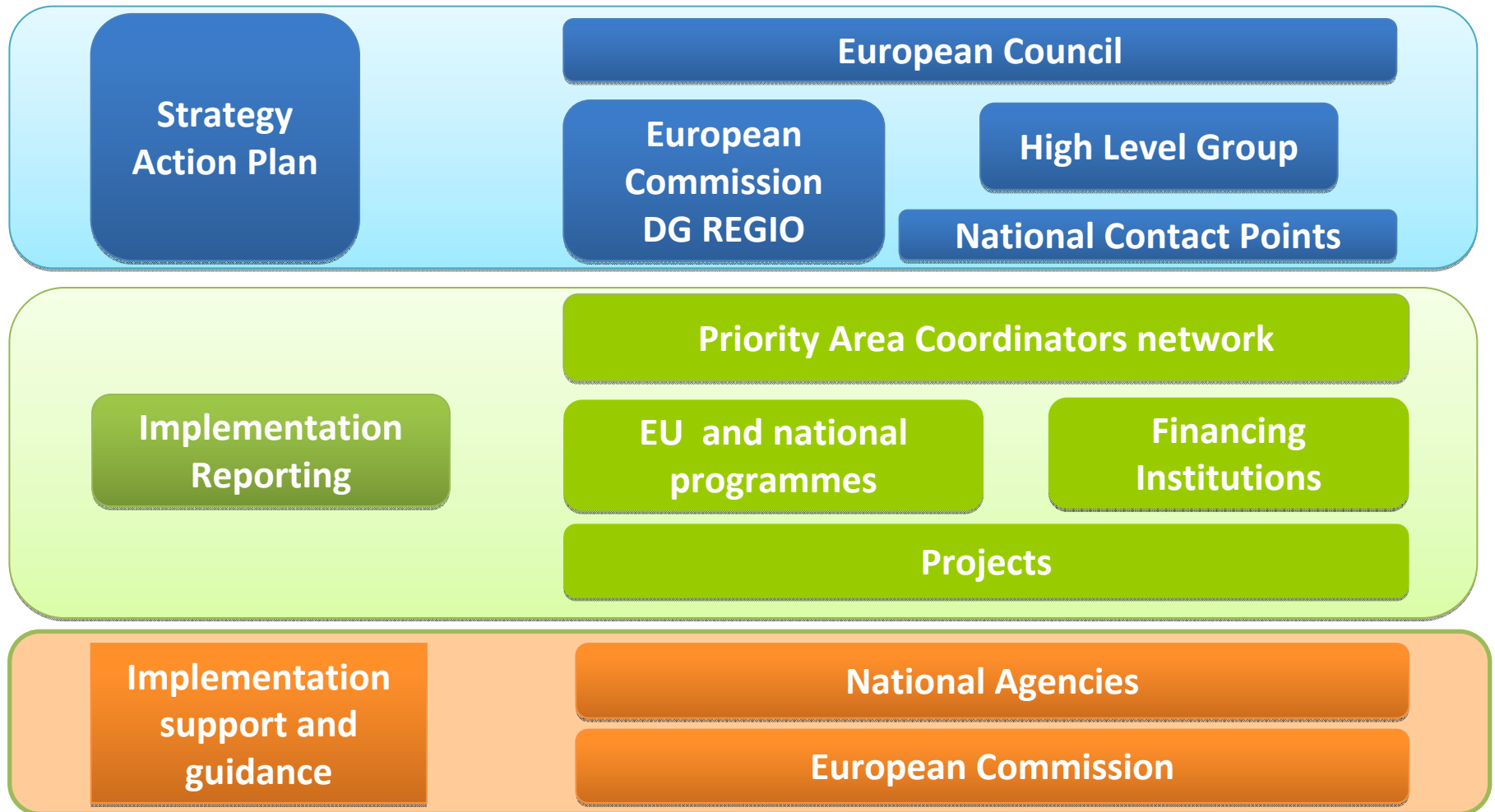
### **(C) Building Prosperity in the Danube Region**

7. To develop knowledge society	<i>„Full broadband access in the Region by 2013 “</i>
8. To support competitiveness	<i>„Patents +50%“</i>
9. To invest in people and skills	<i>„Tertiary education +40% for aged 30-34“</i>

### **(D) Strengthening the Danube Region**

10. To step up institutional capacity & cooperation	<i>“Benchmarks for reducing bureaucracy ”</i>
11. To work together to promote security	<i>„Cooperation between law enforcement actors”</i>

## Governance and implementation (initial stage)





## EUSDR Governance at policy level

### **1. European Council**

Endorsement of the Strategy and decision on main policy orientations

### **2. High level group for the Danube Region**

Assist the Commission in facilitating the implementation of the Strategy

### **3. European Commission**

Coordinates and facilitate the process

Reports on achievements and progress of the Strategy

### **4. National Contact Points**

Coordinate or consult national administrations

Provide advice and information to partners

### **5. Priority Area Coordinators**

Leadership on thematic Priority Areas

Responsibility in implementing the actions

## Implementation of PAs – Steering Groups

### Priority Area Coordinator and the Steering Group

strategic forum of cooperation

composed of EUSDR partner  
states' delegates

Roadmaps

Revision of targets

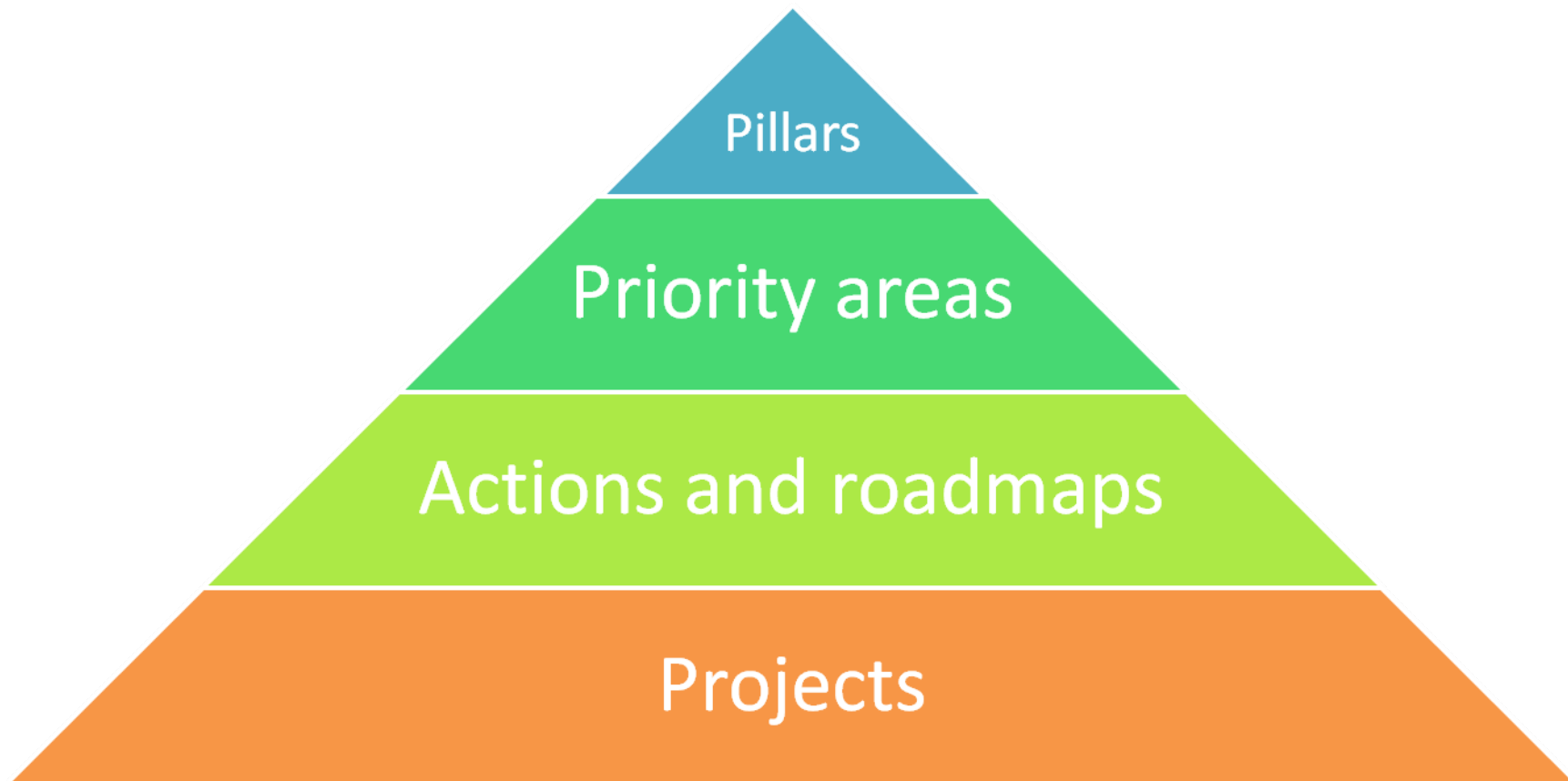
Revision of Actions

Issuing the „Letter of  
Recommendation (LoR)“

Project evaluation

Project labelling

## Strategy composition



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## Contribution of Hungary

- **Major efforts in the endorsement phase (HU PRES 2011)**
- **Perspective: maintaining strong support for the realisation of the EUSDR**
- **Hungary's approach:**
  - Danube region – green region with great ecological complexity
  - Building prosperity in the Danube region
  - Preserving and utilising the rich cultural and scientific heritage
- **Joint coordination of 3 PAs:**
  - PA2: to promote sustainable energy (CZ)
  - PA4: quality of waters, sustainable water management (SK);
  - PA5: managing environmental risks (RO);
- **Creation of the „Budapest Danube Contact Point“**

## Actions and targets of Priority Area 4. To restore and maintain the quality of waters

**Target: Reduce the nutrient levels in the Danube River to allow the recovery of the Black Sea ecosystems**

•**Action:** *“To foster and develop an active process of dialogue and cooperation between authorities responsible for agriculture and environment to ensure that measures are taken to address agricultural pollution”.*

•**Action:** *“To treat hazardous substances and contaminated sludge with the newest and best available technology and to develop and promote remediation measures for hazardous producing or abandoned industrial sites and waste deposits”*

•**Action:** *“To promote measures to limit water abstraction”*

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## Actions and targets of Priority Area 4. To restore and maintain the quality of waters

**Target:** Achieve the management objectives set out in the Danube River Basin Management Plan.

- Action:** *“To implement fully the Danube River Basin Management Plan”*
- Action:** *“To continue to invest in and support the information collection systems already developed by ICPDR”*
- Action:** *“To establish buffer strips along the rivers to retain nutrients and to promote alternative collection and treatment of waste in small rural settlements”.*
- Action:** *“To strengthen general awareness and facilitate exchange of good practice in integrated water management issues in the Danube Basin among decision-makers at all levels and among the population of the Region*
- Action:** *“To promote measures aimed at reducing knowledge deficits, transferring tools, methods concerning the safeguarding of drinking water supply”.*

## Actions and targets of Priority Area 4. To restore and maintain the quality of waters

**Target: Secure viable populations of Danube sturgeon species**

•*Action: “To reduce existing water continuity interruption for fish migration in the Danube river basin”.*

**Target: Elaborate, adopt and implement the sub-basin management plans, such as Sava, Tisza and Prut sub-basins**

•*Action: “To greatly strengthen cooperation at sub-basin level”.*



## Example for a roadmap of Priority Area 4.

***Action: “To greatly strengthen cooperation at sub-basin level”***

**Milestone n°1: Implementation of the ITRBM Plan**

Output: 2nd ITRBM Plan, strengthened cooperation within the Tisza River Basin

**Milestone n°2: Danube Delta Sub-basin Analysis Report**

Output: Updated information inter alia on impacts, risk assessment and improved harmonisation of monitoring activities through accomplishment of a Joint Danube Delta Survey

**Milestone n°3: Danube Delta Management Plan**

Output: Harmonised standards to water policy; Modernisation of systems of environmental monitoring; Development of a River Basin Management Plan for the Danube Delta sub-basin; Public access to information

**Milestone n°4: Prut Management Plan**

Output: River Basin Management Plan for the Prut sub-basin based on WFD requirements.

## Actions and targets of Priority Area 5. To manage environmental risks

**Target highlighted for PA5: To address the challenges of water scarcity and droughts based on the 2013 update of the Danube Basin Analysis and the ongoing work in the field of climate adaptation, in the Danube River Basin Management Plan to be adopted by 2015.**

**Action:** *“Anticipate regional and local impacts of climate change through research”.*

**Action:** *“To develop spatial planning and construction activities in the context of climate change and increased threats of floods”.*

## Actions and targets of Priority Area 5. To manage environmental risks

**Target: Implement Danube wide flood risk management plans - due in 2015 under the Floods Directive – to include significant reduction of flood risk by 2021, also taking into account potential impacts of climate change.**

***Action:*** “To adopt one single overarching floods management plan at basin level or a set of flood risk management plans coordinated at the level of the international river basin

***Action:*** “To support wetland and floodplain restoration as an effective mean of enhancing flood protection, and to identify the best response to flood risk”.

**Target: Update of the accidental risk spots inventory at the Danube River Basin level by 2013.**

***Action:*** “To continuously update the existing database of accident risk spots and contaminated sites”

***Action:*** “To develop rapid response procedures and plans in case of industrial accidental river pollution

## Actions of Priority Area 6. To preserve biodiversity and the quality of air and soils

### **Preservation and improvement of the quality of soils**

- **Action** - *“To ensure appropriate treatment of solid waste”.*
- **Action** - *“To create standardised and compatible information on land cover on transnational basis”.*
- **Action** - *“To raise awareness about soil protection”.*

**Example of project** - *“To implement the strategy for soil protection”*

- **Action** - *“To decrease the input of pesticides into the environment of the Danube Region”*

## Targets foreseen for Priority Area 6. To preserve biodiversity and the quality of air and soils

### **Targets on PA6**

- **To halt the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation** and achieve a significant and measurable improvement, adapted to the special needs of the Danube Region by 2020.
- **Secure viable populations of Danube sturgeon species and other indigenous fish species by 2020.**
- **By 2020, ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing green infrastructure and restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, including degraded soils.**
- **By 2020, Invasive Alien Species and their pathways are identified and prioritised, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and pathways are managed to prevent the introduction and establishment of new Invasive Alien Species.**

## Actions of Priority Area 8. To support the competitiveness of enterprises

### **Characteristics:**

- **Danube macro-region integrating EU's top-performing regions and neighbouring countries on their European path**
- **great potential to advance towards the completion of the Single Market**
  
- **Action** - *“To foster cooperation and exchange of knowledge between SMEs, academia and the public sector in areas of competence in the Danube Region”*
- **Action** - *“To support enterprises through high performing training and qualification schemes”*
- **Action** - *“To improve business support to strengthen the capacities of SMEs for cooperation and trade”*

## Relevances on agriculture

### **Hungary's suggestion to elaborate a joint rural development non-paper for the EUSDR**

- **Based on previous discussions**
- Proposal prepared by the experts of the **Ministry of Rural Development** and the **Government Commissioner for EUSDR** under international consideration
- **Integration to be carried out within the normal strategic review of the EUSDR**

#### **Main purpose:**

- **to reach a common understanding** about the suggested agricultural and rural development objectives until the first review of the Action Plan,
- **to decide about the Priority Area it might be integrated to** within the framework of the EUSDR review process.

#### **Main open question:**

- timing of the **integration of the proposal in the Action Plan of the EUSDR**
- **intensifying the related discussion among the member states**



***Thank you for your attention!***