



Watch your Danube



What is the Joint Danube Survey?

The Joint Danube Survey 2, also known as 'JDS2', is the world's biggest river research expedition in 2007. Its main goal is to produce highly comparable and reliable information on water quality and pollution for the entire Danube River and many of its tributaries. The Secretariat of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) coordinates the implementation of JDS 2.

Launched on August 14, 2007 from Regensburg, Germany, the three boats of the JDS2 will travel 2,375 km downstream the Danube River, through 10 countries, to the Danube Delta in Romania and Ukraine until late September.

Why is the JDS2 so important?

Water pollution is a major problem in the Danube River Basin. Danube governments need to make sound decisions about what future measures they will take to reduce Danube pollution and improve ecological health. This will help them to meet their obligations to implement the 'Danube River Protection Convention', which they signed in 1994, as well as the EU Water Framework Directive -- possibly the world's strongest water legislation. Nutrient, organic and hazardous pollution are all factors that could result in their failing to meet this EU law.

As a basis for their sound decision-making, Danube countries need high quality and comparable data and information. The JDS2 follows up on, and will compare results over time to, the work done during the first Joint Danube Survey (JDS1) in 2001. JDS2 also expands on the JDS1 by adding new parameters and sampling locations, and key Danube tributaries will be tested for the first time. The collected information will further enable the ICPDR to have some of the most progressive river databases anywhere in the world -- for example, in presenting information on thousands of species dependent on the river.

JDS2 Partners and Cooperation

The expedition attracted significant international cooperation from all Danube countries from Germany to Ukraine, including EU and non-EU members. The full-time International Team travelling the entire length of the Danube will include 18 scientists from Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Romania and Denmark. The Team will use three boats donated from different countries and institutions: Serbia's *Argus* will serve as the main research vessel; Hungary's *Széchenyi* ice-breaker will provide accommodation for the cruise team and carry cargo and supplies; and the EU's Joint Research Centre ship *Piscius* will assess fish species. Teams of national scientists will also help with sampling and testing on board the ships on river stretches within their countries.

Some of the actual scientific testing will take place en route, from analyzing water samples at the *Argus*'s own laboratory to electro-fishing along the Danube's banks. Other samples will be sent to laboratories throughout Europe for testing -- all centres of excellence for particular water quality parameters. Significant support was provided by private sector companies operating in the Danube Basin including the Alcoa Foundation, Kommunalkredit Austria, Dexia Kommunalkredit Bank, and Coca-Cola

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Hellenic Bottling Company. Finally, local authorities and the media living near the Danube will help in raising awareness and concern about Danube pollution and the need for everyone to participate in making it clean and healthy.

JDS2 Route, Stopping Points and Tests

On the Danube River, there will be 95 sampling stations made covering 10 countries. The following tributaries will also be tested: Morava, Drava, Tisa, Sava, Velika Morava, Arges, Olt, Iskar, Rusenski Lom, Jantra and Prut. Sampling at JDS2 stations will include different sampling types: water, sediment, biology, suspended solids, mussels, and fish, each taken from different sampling points (i.e. left, middle and right) at the station cross-sections.

Ten cities will also be visited by the expedition. Planned visits include an official launch ceremony in Regensburg (Germany) on August 14 and public events in Vienna (Austria), Bratislava (Slovakia), Budapest (Hungary), Osijek (Croatia), Belgrade (Serbia), Turnu Severin (Romania), Ruse (Bulgaria), Vilkoovo (Ukraine) and Tulcea (Romania).

The History of Danube Water Monitoring

The Danube has an extensive history of water quality monitoring. It began with the 1985 'Bucharest Declaration', which led to a series of monitoring stations for the basin. In 1992, the development of the Trans-National Monitoring Network (TNMN) for the Danube River was launched. Coordinated by the ICPDR, it now comprises over 75 monitoring stations. Over the last 25 years, other expeditions have navigated the Danube including the Equipe Cousteau in 1993, the Burgund Survey in 1998 and the Aquaterra Danube Survey in 2004 – however, these only focused on certain stretches of the Danube or limited parameters. In 2001, the JDS1 was the first expedition to test the entire length of the Danube River and produce comparable, quality results.

What were the results of JDS 1?

The JDS1 in 2001 had a mix of positive and negative results. On the positive side, it found high levels of biodiversity and rare species. On the negative side, results showed concern over organic and microbiological pollution, heavy metals, oil from ships, pesticides and chemicals. At the same time, significant awareness was raised about the Danube and need for pollution reduction measures. Followed by journalists and TV crews, it usually made it into the headlines of major newspaper, radio broadcast and TV news. At many locations where the boats stopped, public events were held including messages about recent national and local efforts made to reduce pollution.

Get involved! Online (www.icpdr.org/JDS) you can view the JDS2 and some of its results, stories and pictures. Or just come to the river and see it live!

Contact: icpdr@unvienna.org, Tel: +43 1 26060-5738

JDS2 Stops:

Regensburg, 14 August
Vienna, 20 August
Bratislava, 22 August
Budapest, 28 August
Osijek, 2 September
Belgrade, 6 September
Turnu Severin, 12 September
Ruse, 19 September
Vilkoovo, 25 September
Tulcea, 27 September