

# Watch your Danube



## Core Team Profiles

### Vinzenz Bammer

Mr. Vinzenz Bammer (34 yrs) is a fishery biologist at the Austrian Federal Agency for Water Management



#### What did you study, when, where and most importantly: why?

As I have always been interested in fish since I was a small boy and often went fishing with my father, I had worked in a fish hatchery after highschool. After that I decided to study fishery biology and water ecology at the university of Vienna and finished in 2010. I specialised on the Danubian fish fauna with special regards to benthic species as well as to alien species. During my studies I had the chance to take part in one of the first Danube river restoration projects in the area of the Donau-Auen National Park and was deeply impressed by the species richness and the sensitive eco system.

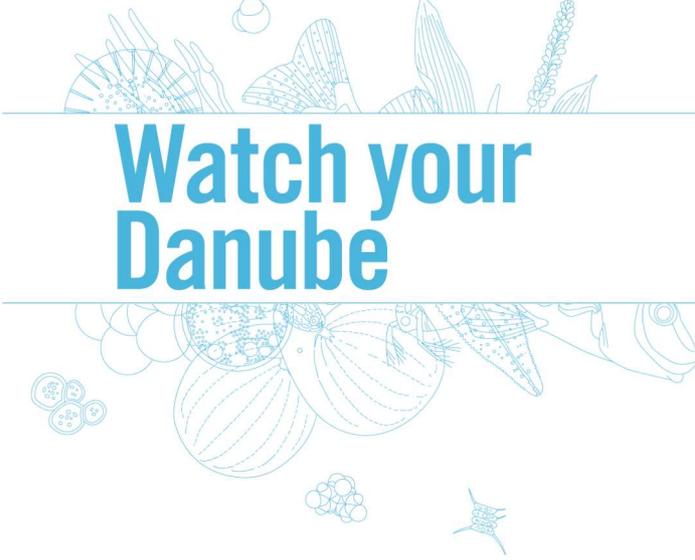
#### What will your role be on board of the JDS3 ships?

Together with my international fish team, I will be responsible for fish sampling along the entire Danube River. For this we will use electrofishing at day and night in the litoral zone near the shore but also near the river bottom, using a special trawling net. These methods allow us to catch fish without harming them. All fish will be determined to species level, measured and afterwards released.

#### Why is this important? What can we learn?

According the EU water frame work directive, the waters of all member states must be in a good ecological status within a certain time lapse. As it turned out, fish are ideal indicators for river degradation and can be used for assessing the ecological status of a certain river stretch. This status, expressed by a special fish index will be compared to the JDS2 fish results on the one hand, on the other hand to the JDS3 results of the other scientific groups. This will give a good impression of the current status of the fish fauna of Danube River and maybe a trend can be detected. This is one basis for the Danube River Management plan, but also for other international strategies (e.g.. sturgeon strategy). Due to multiple anthropogenic pressures like damming, excessive use of hydropower or diverse harming from agricultural exploitation, our rivers suffer from heavy disturbances and degradation which e.g. cause species poorness and a decline in fish biomass or abundance.

For stretches that show such an impact, restoration measures are necessary to achieve and preserve the ecological status for the future generations.



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## What is an important gain from JDS3 specifically for your country of origin?

The JDS3 fish data will be important for our national water management plan in order to achieve the goals set by the EU water framework directive. The results will also have influence on future fish sampling methods on large rivers and should also provide a better understanding on the ecology of the Danubian fish fauna. Beyond that JDS3 is a fabulous opportunity to raise public awareness for fish as well as for the importance of running waters in general.

The data will also be important for the Austrian national water management plan, which has to be revised until the end of 2014.

## What are you looking forward to regarding the JDS3?

I am especially looking forward to exploring the Danube Delta, which I have not seen yet and of course to catching rare species like sturgeons or extraordinary large specimens. Also the cooperation with international colleagues will be interesting and the exchange of experience and know-how will be exciting.

## Anything else? Something important you think should be mentioned on your profile?

All in all, I suppose that the Joint Danube Survey 3 will be a unique experience in my life and I am sure, that I will take home lots of great impressions from this cruise.