



Memorandum „GIS Forum Danube“



Vienna, January 27th, 2004

Introduction – History:

The „GIS Forum Danube“ was founded in 1997 as a trilateral working group by the waterway directorates from Germany, Austria and Slovakia. As common goals these members defined the development of an intensive exchange of geographical data and a close cooperation in the field of waterway management along the Danube waterway. Since 1999 the group has been supported by the Danube Commission and had been asked to handle topics related to River Information Services (RIS). At this time the name of this trilateral working group was changed into “GIS Forum Danube”. In the following Hungary joined the meetings in 2000, Croatia in 2002 and Romania as well as the Ukraine in 2003.

Nowadays European states grow together and the European Union is extending towards the East. Therefore it is of utmost importance that inland navigation along the Danube waterway can rely on internationally compatible systems. Following this purpose the European Union has agreed on inviting European countries to implement pan-European River Information Services (RIS) by the end of 2005 at the conference of ministers of transport in Rotterdam (September 2001). By following these demands the “GIS Forum Danube” also guarantees the implementation of vital basic conditions along the European Corridor VII in line with the White Book of the European Commission (Brussels 12/09/2001).

Basic rules:

The basic task of the „GIS Forum Danube“ is the harmonization of geographical information in the member states, taking into account international technical as well as quality related standards. The provision and maintenance of such information shall be provided and maintained within a transnational data warehouse for RIS and additional waterway related applications. In addition the „GIS Forum Danube“ shall define and determine infrastructure for the implementation of a common and internationally compatible RIS.

Considering these tasks the „GIS Forum Danube“ is regarding the participation of all countries along the Danube waterway as being of utmost importance. They shall take over all described tasks as a constant committee. All member states can contract private or semi-public bodies to take over these tasks on their behalf.

Effective international standards (e.g. Inland ECDIS and dGNSS according to IALA recommendations) and European guidelines are regarded as a fundamental basis for all works and shall be taken over. In the run of common works Danube wide demands and experiences shall be collected and delivered to international standardization bodies in order to ensure their consideration.

Results and decisions are to be regarded as recommendations; for their implementation international standards shall be regarded as binding. The commonly passed results shall be presented to the Danube Commission in order to recommend them for resolution. Therefore the secretariat of the Danube Commission, Russia as an official member state of the Danube Commission as well as additional institutions and countries are invited to the meetings of the „GIS Forum Danube“ as appropriate.

Tasks and goals:

On basis of the mentioned basic rules the „GIS Forum Danube“ shall fulfil the following rules:

- Implementation of a cross-border, geo-related data warehouse as a basis for River Information Services and trans-national applications. Following applications are taken into consideration:
 - Development of electronic navigation charts according to the Inland ECDIS standard.
 - Trans-national calamity abatement
 - Cross-border ecological land register
 - Development of a touristic information system
- Definition and development of software tools for conversion of data from national databases into the data warehouse and furthermore into international applications.
- Basic rules for generation of geo-related data and definition of minimum quality standards.
 - Sounding data
 - Chart data
 - Hydrological data
- Exchange of information and experiences concerning the usage of digital terrain models as well as hydrological models as well as definitions of links to international applications.
- Definition and matching of common, trans-national basic infrastructure in support of RIS – e.g. installation of augmentation positioning signals according to the recommendation of IALA.
- Specific topics:
 - Matching of conversion of coordinates from national into common international systems.
 - Definition of common rules for the implementation of digital paper charts of the Danube Commission (“Carte de pilotage”)

These tasks may change according to political and technical developments. As a result all works of the „GIS Forum Danube“ shall remain flexible.

In the run of current and future tasks and goals of the “GIS Forum Danube” the effort for subsidies of the European Union shall be a vital goal.

Organisation:

The „GIS Forum Danube“ is divided into a „Steering Committee” and several work packages according to the above listed tasks and goals. The common language in all these groups shall be English as long as no other languages are commonly found as being appropriate.

Independent of subsidies each member state is responsible for financing its own costs in the frame of its activities within the “GIS Forum Danube”. Costs of the technical secretariate shall be financed by subsidies and/or means of the member states.

Steering Committee:

Members: 1 to 2 persons per member state including all work package leaders

Chairman and one vice chairman for 4 years

Technical secretariat for 4 years

Agreements shall be passed in unison among present representatives of the Member states in the sense of the “GIS Forum Danube”.

Two meetings per year shall take place at changing places. On demand additional meetings may be organised.

Tasks of the steering committee:

Strategic decisions

Definition of tasks

Coordination of work packages

Representation to the outside world (organisations and official bodies)

Work packages:

According to the tasks and goals six work packages are defined in the first run:

- Work package 1: Data warehouse
- Work package 2: Software tools
- Work package 3: Geo-related basic data
- Work package 4: Models
- Work package 5: Infrastructure
- Work package 6: Specific topics

Within these work packages members shall deal with and work out tasks, defined by the Steering Committee.

At maximum two experts of each member state shall take part in the work packages. Members of each work package nominates one leader. Meetings take place on demand. Work package leaders shall present status reports and results to the Steering Committee in written and verbal form. On demand work package leaders may nominate a representative for these tasks.

Work packages 1, 2 and 5 are part of the project „Data warehouse for Danube waterway – D4D“. Therefore related works shall comply with the rules within this project.

GIS Workshops Danube:

The „GIS Forum Danube“ shall organise one “GIS Workshop Danube” per year in one of the member states. At these workshops all member states shall provide a general overview of national results and activities. Topics of superior importance shall be considered in the workshop, too. Political guidelines and relating influence on the activities of the “GIS Forum Danube” shall also be discussed.

The Member states:

Countries, which are not members or observers by now are listed in brackets.

Germany
Austria
Slovakian Republic
Hungary
Croatia
Serbia-Montenegro
Bulgaria
Romania
(Moldova)
The Ukraine

Only the English version of this memorandum is regarded as the original document.