



# Interreg



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## Danube Transnational Programme

### CAMARO-D

## Evaluation and transnational conclusions - SWOT

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis has been carried out as the base study for the CAMARO-D (Cooperating towards Advanced Management Routines for land use impacts on the water regime in the Danube river basin) project, which aims at developing comprehensive recommendations towards a strategic policy for the implementation of an innovative transnational catchment-based “Land Use Development Plan” for the Danube River Basin.

Extensive qualitative and quantitative surveys were carried out in nine countries that participate on the Interreg project. The results are based on interviews, workshops paper and online questionnaires, which were distributed among the selected stakeholders. Key findings are presented in this report and will be used in the subsequent stages of the study.

## 2. SWOT SURVEY - METHODOLOGY

The SWOT survey was performed and evaluated in 9 out of 19 countries of the Danube river basin. The selected nine countries cover over 82% of the Danube basin area, therefore represent well the overall conditions of the Basin (Table 1). The participating countries are Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Republic of Serbia and Slovenia.

The SWOT analysis is based on interviews, workshops and online and paper questionnaires. Interactive discussion during the workshops that was aimed at defining the major problems and creating new management goals. Questions such as insufficient sectoral cooperation in the field of water protection and flood control and land use, implementation of non-structural flood protection measures and green infrastructure, irrigation plans in the wider area of the pilot action and groundwater use have been discussed, as well as ecological agriculture issues, application of plant protection means (pesticides and fertilizers) and the education of farmers. Valuable inputs were given by the stakeholders from the pilot action area that pointed out real problems of water management and land use and gave the examples of positive management practices.

Following the stakeholder workshop, comprehensive SWOT-analysis regarding the actual knowledge base and gaps in regulatory framework considering interdependencies between

land use practices (agriculture/grassland management/forestry/settlements) respectively vegetation cover and water resources was carried out by means of the stakeholder-questionnaires.

Tab. 1 Countries in the Danube river basin. Participating countries in the SWOT survey are highlighted with bold font

Country	Basin area (km <sup>2</sup> )
AL	128
<b>AT</b>	<b>80423</b>
BA	36646
<b>BG</b>	<b>47413</b>
<b>HR</b>	<b>34965</b>
<b>CZ</b>	<b>21688</b>
<b>DE</b>	<b>56184</b>
<b>HU</b>	<b>93030</b>
IT	565
MK	109
MD	12833
ME	7075
PL	430
<b>RO</b>	<b>232193</b>
<b>RS</b>	<b>81560</b>
SK	47084
<b>SI</b>	<b>16422</b>
CH	1809
UA	30520

An English version of the questionnaire was prepared in both paper and electronic format, discussed with LP and within whole consortium and then translated into national languages by the Project Partners and distributed in analogue form within national workshops and within electronic form through lists of stakeholders and national networks (see the Annex 1). The goal of the questionnaire concept was to create a universal list of simple questions addressing stakeholders of various background and knowledge related to environmental conservation. The questionnaire had 23 questions that could be completed online by private or state

stakeholders. The same methodology of dissemination and evaluation was implemented in all the participating countries.

In general, the distribution of the questionnaires was done after the workshops, we also disseminated the online survey between the relevant stakeholders we have identified on the internal meetings. The survey distribution among the stakeholders was a responsibility of each of the project partner, the distribution was not centrally coordinated. The invitation emails were sent to the large farmers, state authorities managing the landscape, forests, surface and ground water. Also selected research institutions and private companies were addressed. Unfortunately, the recovery rate of the returned questionnaires is very low (below 5 %). With some countries we were not successful in approaching end users, especially the farmers or regular employees of the companies or authorities. Most of the questionnaires were filed by managers and researchers. The problem with the online-version was the feasibility as most of the governmental institutions had no authorization to fill in this questionnaire obviously due to safety regulations. Therefore only few persons could use and provide this questionnaire online.

### **3. RESPONDING GROUP**

The goal of the survey was to obtain answers and insights of the representative group of the stakeholders. Therefore, we addressed a wide spectrum of professions, interests, motivations, nationalities.

The total number of responds to the questionnaire survey was 352, most of the respondents come from Romania, Hungary, Austria and Germany (fig. 1). Characterization of the stakeholders is clustered in fig. 2.

Thematically, highest number of the responses come from the surface water quality sector (58 %), which impacts the overall conclusions of the survey.

Out of all the questionnaires 46 % come from the state agencies (typically administration, municipalities, state water management companies, forestry and environmental protection agencies, ministries), 40 % private companies and NGOs engaged with water management (planning, water treatment, etc.) and agriculture (farmers), 14 % from research institutes and universities. The responding stakeholders are evenly distributed in terms of their spatial

extend: 35 % are active on international and national level; 37 % on regional level; 28 % on local level.

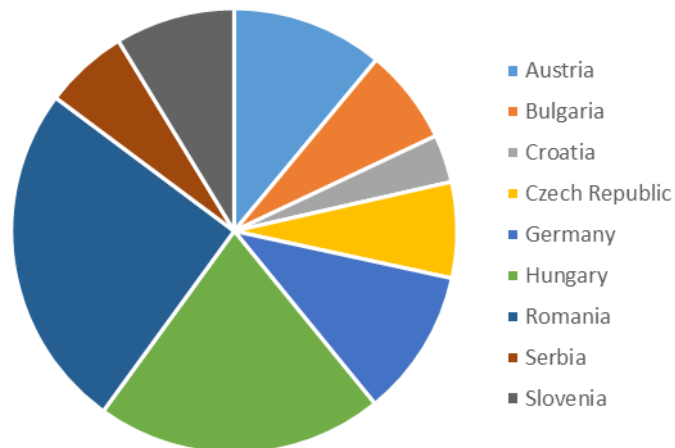


Fig. 1 Proportions of the collected numbers of the questionnaires

The respondents of the survey cover all of the environmental topics that we investigate within the CAMARO-D project. Most of the stakeholders work with water quality and quantity related issues (26 % surface water management, 16 % groundwater management), 20 % are active in agriculture, 19 % in forestry, 9 % in the landscape spatial planning, 6 % with soil conservation and 4 % with other environmental problems.

In terms of the size of the enterprise, where the respondent are employed, 38 % come from large companies (over 250 employees), 19 % from medium sized companies (50 to 250 employees), 22 % small companies (10 to 50 employees), 21 % from micro companies (less than 10 employees).

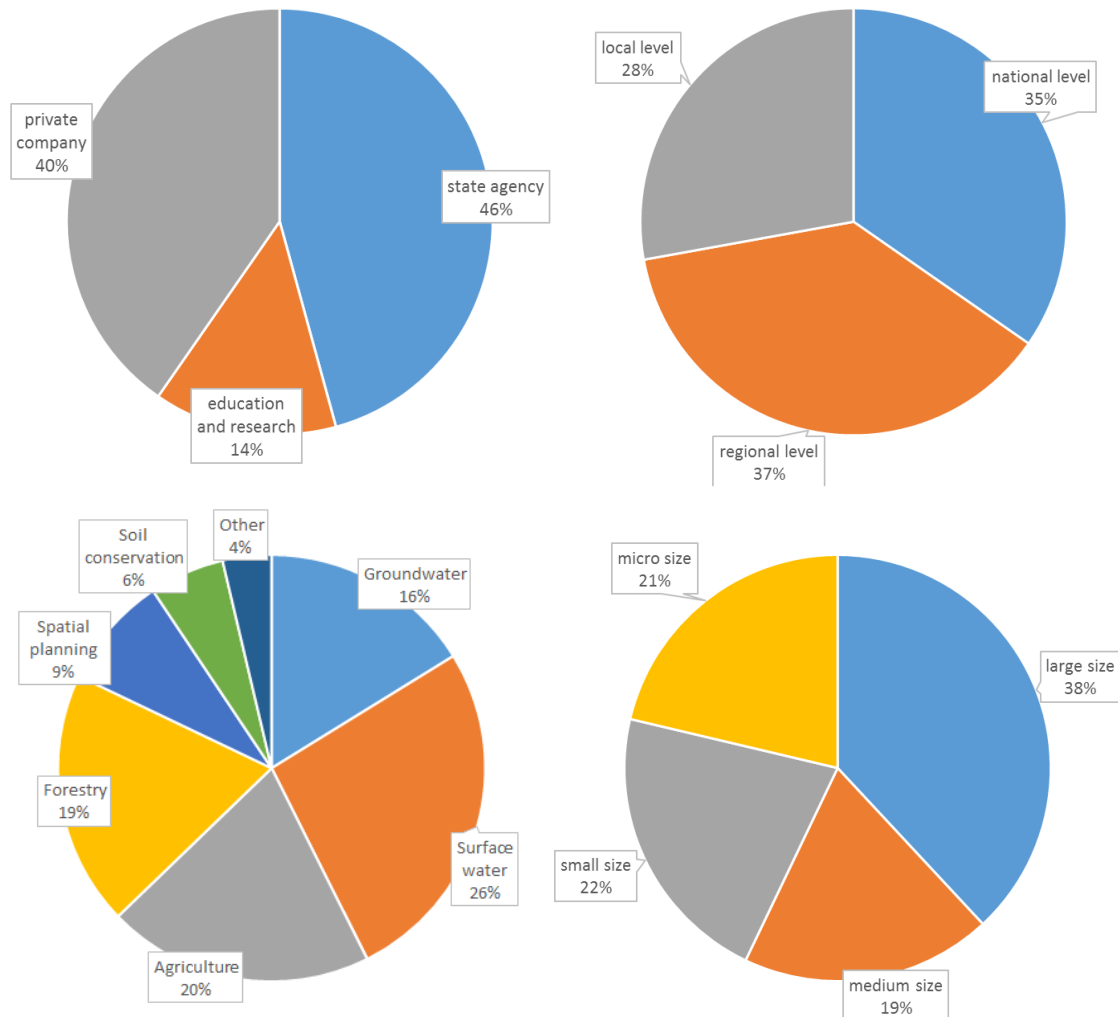


Fig. 2 Characterization of the respondents. (a) type of enterprise, (b) spatial extend, (c) main area of interest, (d) company size

## 4. SWOT ANALYSIS – EVALUATING

### 4.1. RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL SURVEYS

In this section the main take-away on country levels are presented.

#### AUSTRIA

**STRENGTHS**

**WEAKNESS**

<p>Good reputation among the public regarding the environmental issues</p> <p>The Best practices are partially utilized</p> <p>Comprehensive environmental know-how</p>	<p>We are financially secured, but we cannot invest more resources than we invest now</p> <p>We need to improve within monitoring/data on the environmental impacts of our activities</p> <p>We need to improve the dissemination of our positive actions among the public</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>We have transboundary cooperation</p> <p>We are member of a group that helps us to cope with the environmental issues</p> <p>EU projects/funds would help us to increase our environmental contribution</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Urbanization (soil sealing, within hazard zones) is the most harmful human induced activity</p> <p>Unsuitable land management/Spatial planning is the most harmful human induced activity</p> <p>We have dealt with soil degradation, erosion</p>

The most mentioned **strengths** of all respondents are:

- Good reputation among the public regarding environmental issues (82%), mainly mentioned within state agencies and education / research institutions
- Best practices partially utilized (76%) (especially by most of the state agencies and “other” institutions)
- Comprehensive environmental know-how (76%), mainly highlighted within state agencies and education / research institutions.

**Weakness:**

- 79% of all responding persons answered that they are financially secured, but they are not able to invest more resources
- 50% think that monitoring / data on the environmental impacts should be improved, mainly within institutions dealing with floods, soil conservation and “other” issues.

**Opportunities:**

- Transboundary cooperation are mentioned by 79% as common in their daily work (mainly within state agencies and “other” institutions, with national / transnational extent and within institutions dealing with surface water quality, agriculture and forestry), whereas cooperation with key organizations are classified only “moderate” by 66% (34% classified “strong”).
- 68 % think that EU or national projects / funds respectively new local / regional policy instruments or plans would help them to increase their environmental engagement. State agencies and education / research institutions and mainly national institutions see EU projects / funds more important, whereas national and regional projects / subsidies



are mostly interesting for education / research and “other” institutions. Regional projects / subsidies are mainly helpful for micro and small size companies and all institutions with local extent, whereas national projects / funds are more interesting for regional institutions. New local /regional policy instruments are especially welcomed by small and large size institutions and companies on national level.

- 66% see new information by means of education seminars / workshops very important (especially education / research institutions and institutions with regional extent). Also the membership with groups that help to cope with environmental issues is seen as important mainly by education / research institutions, large size ones and companies on regional and national level.

### Threats:

The most harmful human induced activities are:

- Urbanization (soil sealing, within hazard zones) (74%)
- Unsuitable spatial planning (63%)
- Intensification of agriculture (42%)

and are mentioned across all categories.

The **main achievements** in the last five years are mainly many surveys, interdisciplinary cooperation and the development of best practices and expertise in different land use practices. In some fields such recommendations were already implemented (e.g. LIFE+ projects and other EU projects, national strategies). Also data and monitoring were improved and extended. The awareness raising of other stakeholders about certain requests (e.g. drinking water protection) was tried to improve.

## BULGARIA

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESS
Qualified staff with up to date knowledge	The organization’s financial position is secure, but they can’t invest more resources than they invest now
Well informed about the current environmental situation related to their activities in the region	Improvement need: Involvement in EU/national supporting projects
Best practices utilized	Improvement need: Purchase of better technical equipment

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Demand for new and actual information in form of Workshops or seminars.	Pollution by industry is considered as one of the most harmful human activity
EU projects/funds help them to increase their environmental contribution	Floods
Motivation to modify their activities the way leading to general improvement of the environment	Wildfires

The most mentioned **strengths** of all respondents are:

- enough qualified staff with up to date knowledge necessary to meet environmental objectives (75%), mentioned within different type of stakeholders;
- Best practices partially utilized (71%) (especially by most of the state agencies and commercial institutions)
- Well informed about the current environmental situation (71%), mainly highlighted within state agencies.

**Weakness:**

- 54% of all responding persons answered that they are financially secured, but they are not able to invest more resources
- 42% think they don't have enough facilities/equipment/technology to ensure environmental neutral/positive activities, mainly pointed out by state agencies.
- The need to improve the dissemination of our positive actions among the public is important for 33%, state and research and education institutions.

**Opportunities:**

- Transboundary cooperation is mentioned by 71% as common in their daily work (mainly within state agencies and research and education institutions, with national / transnational extent and within institutions dealing with surface water quality, floods and forestry) on regional and nationwide scale.
- 79 % think that EU or national projects / funds respectively new local / and involvement in research projects will help them to increase environmental contribution. State agencies and education / research institutions and mainly national institutions feel motivated to modify their activities in a way leading to general improvement of the environment.
- 83% see new information by means of education seminars / workshops and internet very important. This is relevant for all types of institutions.

- 75% of respondents would like to have clear standards or methodologies presenting the best practices (mainly smaller scale companies and local and regional extend)

**Threats:**

The most harmful human induced activities are:

- Pollution by industry (62%)
- Urbanization (46%)
- Traffic and infrastructure (46%)

and they are mentioned across all categories.

**CROATIA**

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Qualified staff with up to date knowledge</p> <p>Staff makes our company/ institution better/stronger/ more important</p> <p>Involvement in EU/national supporting projects</p>	<p><b>WEAKNESS</b></p> <p>Needed improvement in environmental management</p> <p>The financial position is secured, but we can't invest more resources than we invest now</p> <p>Needed improvement of monitoring/data on the environmental impacts of our activities</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>EU projects/funds would help us to increase our environmental contribution</p> <p>We would welcome new information related to the impacts of our activities on the environment by means of education seminars/workshops</p> <p>We would welcome new national/EU policy instruments or plans</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Urbanization (soil sealing, within hazard zones)</p> <p>Unsuitable land management / Spatial planning</p> <p>Water pollution</p>

After being asked what are their main achievements towards better state of the environment in last 5 years, the stakeholders provided the following answers:

- Great spatial distribution of the Natura 2000 ecological network, preserved significant landscapes, nature reserves, nature parks and the like

- Preparation of the Elaborates of the sanitary protection zone
- We organize a series of round tables in the Republic of Croatia, already 7<sup>th</sup> Consultation on the multipurpose planning of the Sava River
- 6 Consultations on the multipurpose planning of the Sava River
- Collaboration with Croatian Waters in the development of the Flood Defense System Project, communication with citizens from flooded areas
- Corine Land Cover of the Republic of Croatia- land use, SAGRA, involvement in agricultural land monitoring projects

## CZECH REPUBLIC

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Qualified staff with up to date knowledge</p> <p>Appropriate facilities/equipment/technology to ensure environmentally neutral/positive activities</p> <p>We are well informed about the current environmental situation related to our activities in the region</p>	<p><b>WEAKNESS</b></p> <p>We are secured, but we can't invest more resources than we invest now</p> <p>Dissemination of our positive actions among the public</p> <p>It is difficult to implement new measures or strategies because of our internal administrative structure</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Functioning transboundary cooperation that can be further utilized</p> <p>We would welcome new regional or local strategies, policy or plans</p> <p>We would welcome new EU or national strategies, policy or plans</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Intensive unsustainable agriculture</p> <p>No awareness of the Best Management Practices</p> <p>Surface waters pollution</p>

Most of the gained responses come from the employees of the large state companies or organizations with national scale activities. The most of the private companies also belong to large or medium size enterprises with regional to national field of activity. Majority of the

respondents deal with water related issues, mainly surface water quality and floods management. Therefore, the presented analysis represents only specific segments. Micro private companies, forestry, agriculture, soil degradation and landscape planning, which have also been within the scope of the survey, are included in the results only partly, we haven't collected representative amount of the answers.

Presented results still express interesting insight into the current state of the stakeholders' activities, problems and recognition of their impacts on the environment. The results from the survey are in general agreement with our experience and outcomes from the interviews of the stakeholders.

Here, we present the most mentioned replies, which stakeholders on the Workshop consider to be relevant:

### **Strengths**

- *Qualified staff* with up to date *knowledge* – Most of the respondents claim that their company or institution has skilled employees with good orientation in the environmental issues. The employees have good education and experience and are further confronted with new information and data about the state of the environment.
- *Appropriate facilities/equipment/technology* to ensure environmentally neutral/positive activities – The large companies already utilize modern technology and equipment to minimize the negative environmental impact of their activities. We do not have enough responses from small private companies, especially small farmers, in their situation is worse.
- We are well informed about the current environmental situation related to our activities in the region
- *Good reputation* among the public, regarding the environmental issues – the respondents who participated in the survey feel that they have good environmental reputation. The public perceives them as the managers and protectors of the environment. We do not have many responses from commercial sector that pollutes the environment (intensive agriculture, power plants, chemical factories, car industry etc.).

- *Strong links with other key organizations/agencies* – state agencies and companies are very well interconnected among themselves. There is a functional network between universities, research and state enterprises.

## **Weaknesses**

- We are secured, but we *can't invest more resources* than we invest now – Even though the stakeholders have enough staff and equipment, they can't invest more resources to reduce their environmental impacts.
- *Dissemination* of our positive actions among the public – Most of the positive actions are not properly published or showed to the general public. Most of the stakeholders miss public relation know-how.
- It is difficult to implement new measures or strategies because of our *internal administrative structure* – Approximately a half of the respondents mention complicated internal administrative structure. Especially large size state companies and institutions lack more flexibility.

## **Opportunities**

- Functioning *transboundary cooperation* that can be further utilized – Respondents are willing to closely cooperate with the stakeholders from the neighboring countries and whole Danube catchment. This opportunity is not fully utilized yet and can be quite easily initiated.
- We would welcome *new regional or local strategies, policy or plans* – Most of the stakeholders are missing concrete and clear guidelines that would help them to manage their activities. All the state enterprises mention this issue. Less respondents mention *national or EU scale standards*.
- We have strong *motivation to modify our activities to improve the environment* – Half of the stakeholders feel motivated to further search for information how to improve their activities to reduce the negative environmental impacts.

## **Threads**

- Intensive *unsustainable agriculture* – Stakeholders mentioned concrete impacts such as soil erosion, soil degradation, soil compaction, incoming nutrients into the watercourses, problems with excessive use of pesticides and herbicides. Agriculture in the Czech Republic is typical for the large size of the individual fields.
- Surface *waters pollution* – The key environmental problem is surface water quality. Many reservoirs have serious problems with nutrients cycle, the waters are eutrophic with high algae concentration. Main source of phosphorous are waste waters, even though majority of the municipalities have functional waste water treatment plants.
- *Drought* – Half of the respondents consider droughts as the key thread, especially due to the expected consequences of climate change.

## GERMANY

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>No strong competition from other organizations</p> <p>Best practices are being partially utilized</p> <p>Comprehensive environmental know-how</p>	<p><b>WEAKNESS</b></p> <p>We are financially secured, but we cannot invest more resources than we invest now</p> <p>We need to improve the dissemination of our positive actions among the public</p> <p>We need to improve monitoring/data on the environmental impacts of our activities</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Regional projects/subsidies would help to increase our environmental contribution</p> <p>New local/regional policy instruments or plans are welcomed</p> <p>We are member of a group that helps us to cope with the environmental issues</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>We have dealt with invasive plants</p> <p>Intensification of agriculture is the most harmful human induced activity</p> <p>A barrier for our organizations development towards better environmental conservation is increased administration</p>

### Strengths:

- No strong competition from other organizations (70%)

- Best management practices are utilized partially (65%)
- Comprehensive environmental know-how (62%)
- We think we have a good reputation regarding environmental issues (59%)
- We have enough facilities/equipment/technology to ensure environmental neutral/positive activities and  
We are well structured; it is easy to implement any new measure or strategy (57%)

The conception of their reputation was very different for state agencies (76%) and private companies (33%). More state agencies believe they have a good reputation regarding environmental issues. The same difference can be found for the utilization of best management practices (state agencies 81%, private companies 42%).

### **Weaknesses**

- We are financially secured, but we cannot invest more resources than we do now (76%)
- We need to improve the dissemination of our positive actions among the public (68%)

Some of the weaknesses contrast the strengths, e.g. “good reputation” vs. “improve the dissemination of our positive actions” (see the chapters above).

### **Opportunities**

- Regional projects/subsidies would help to increase our environmental contribution and  
New local/regional policy instruments or plans are welcomed (68%)
- We are a member of a group that helps us cope with the environmental issues (62%)
- We are familiar with modern technology/methods and we partly implement them in our activities and  
New information related to the impacts of our activities on the environment by means of education seminars/workshops are welcomed (59%)

Local/regional help is preferred compared to national and EU at the moment, although all help was selected. “National/EU projects/subsidies” as an opportunity could be found in medium companies and “new national/EU policy” could be found in large, small and micro companies,



but the analysis of the groups that include a larger amount of respondents such as “all respondents”, “local extent”, “regional extent” and “forestry” showed that most respondents feel that local/regional help is more needed than national/EU help.

**Threats:**

- We have dealt with invasive plants (70%)
- Intensification of agriculture is the most harmful human induced activity (68%)
- A barrier for our organizations development towards better environmental conservation is increased administration (62%)
- Urbanization (soil sealing, within hazard zones) is the most harmful human induced activity (59%)

A majority of the respondents has dealt with invasive plants, probably because most are from the forestry sector. The Intensification of agriculture and urbanization (8 and 9, respectively) are the highest ranking threats for private companies, while state agencies only put urbanization (11) into the list as the fourth largest threat.

**HUNGARY**

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Qualified staff with up to date knowledge</p> <p>Well informed about the current environmental situation related to their activities in the region</p> <p>Enough facilities/equipment/technology to ensure environmental neutral/positive activities</p>	<p><b>WEAKNESS</b></p> <p>The organisation’s financial position is secure, but they can’t invest more resources than they invest now</p> <p>Improvement need: Purchase of better technical equipment</p> <p>Improvement need: Involvement in EU/national supporting projects</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Motivation to modify their activities the way leading to general improvement of the environment</p> <p>EU or Government could support them in their activities leading to environment conservation</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Pollution by industry is considered as one of the most harmful human activity</p> <p>Water pollution</p>

EU projects/funds help them to increase their environmental contribution

Groundwater depletion

The main take-away on country-level are the followings: the companies' self-declare being well informed about their environmental situations, they believe having qualified staff and equipment to success in their daily operation.

The SME-s are well structured, consequently they could rapidly react on modifications of implementation of new strategies. Among the larger entities, more cooperation was observed with the important organizations.

In case of state and international level organizations the following strength were identified: cooperation with key institutions, involvement in EU/national supporting projects and active cross-border cooperation.

They are motivated to contribute improving the condition of environment by modifying their activities and they expect support in the forms of EU/governmental financial support and EU/national policy instruments and plans. Demand for EU/national/local plans (strategies) was identified at smaller entities. Concerning the development possibilities of larger organizations, the existing cross-border cooperation activities must be highlighted.

The most challenging problem is the lack of additional funding – however the respondents in general assessed their financial position as secure. The most significant improvement opportunity is having better and more efficient technical tools and resources in place.

Small enterprises identified the low level of involvement in EU and national projects, and cooperation with Universities and consulting firms as areas to improve. Larger institutions indicated the need for development in monitoring data collection, informing the public and involvement in EU and national projects.

Industrial pollution was called out as the most harmful human induced activity. Smaller organizations identified lower financial income as barrier to further development, while the biggest obstacle for regional and general scale organizations is increased administration.

## ROMANIA

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Qualified staff with up to date knowledge</p> <p>Sufficient information about the environmental status</p> <p>Enough facilities and technology</p>	<p><b>WEAKNESS</b></p> <p>Lack of involvement in EU and transboundary projects</p> <p>We need to improve monitoring/data on the environmental impacts of our activities</p> <p>We are financially secured, but we cannot invest more resources than we invest now</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Regional projects/subsidies would help to increase our environmental contribution</p> <p>New local/regional policy instruments or plans are welcomed</p> <p>We are member of a group that helps us to cope with the environmental issues</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Droughts</p> <p>Soil degradation, erosion</p> <p>Water pollution</p>

The respondents' answers had a relatively uniform distribution in most cases (company type, company size, spatial extent) except the category environmental issues, where the frequency of responses had a low number in their sub-categories (groundwater quality, surface water quality, floods, forestry, spatial planning, soil conservation), without the agriculture.

### Strengths:

- Having the qualified staff with up to date knowledge which helps the company to realise their environmental objectives; 71%
- Being well informed about the current environmental situation related to the activities in their region; 66%
- Having enough facilities/equipment/technology to ensure environmental neutral/positive activities. 64%

### Weakness:

- 60% of respondents need to improve their involvement in EU/national supporting projects
- 55% of respondents need to improve the monitoring/data on the environmental impacts of our activities

- 51% of respondents consider that they are secured, but they can't invest more resources at the moment.

#### **Opportunities:**

- 87% of companies would welcome new local/regional policy instruments or plans.
- 86% of companies would welcome new national/EU policy instruments or plans
- 86% of companies consider that EU projects/funds would help them to increase their environmental contribution.

#### **Threats:**

- The main natural disasters/problems the companies have dealt with is drought (69%)
- The most important barrier of the organization development towards better environmental conservation is increased administration (67%)
- Another important barrier of the organization development towards better environmental conservation is lower financial income (60%)

The **main achievements** towards better state of the environment in the last five years are mainly the improvement of water supply systems, management of biodiversity conservation, improvement soil organic matter content and development and research projects in the field of management of the national forest fund.

More specific achievements of the stakeholders towards better state of the environment were:

- development of guides/infrastructures/standards and good practices in the field of environmental protection;
- development of an appropriate institutional framework for environmental protection;
- implementation of projects in various fields of environment protection;
- implementation of small scale heating systems on biomass and organization of awareness events on the importance of biomass;
- afforestation of degraded lands, followed by forestry works on improvement and maintenance of these afforested lands;
- soil incorporation of residues (straw, chips, etc.) after harvesting, to improve soil organic matter content (better water storage, water retention in soil);

- the use of green grapes (mustard), sown by wheat in stubble and incorporated under the plow;
- avoiding soil compaction by using modern processing technologies;
- staff training on environment issues and procurement of environmental friendly equipment.

## SERBIA

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Good reputation among the public</p> <p>Qualified staff with up to date knowledge</p> <p>Involvement in European and national supporting projects</p>	<p><b>WEAKNESS</b></p> <p>Lack of modern technical equipment</p> <p>We are financially secured, but we cannot invest more resources than we invest now</p> <p>Not enough staff</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>EU/national subsidies would help to increase our environmental contribution</p> <p>New information via seminars or workshops would be helpful</p> <p>New local/regional policy instruments or plans are welcomed</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Low financial income of the companies</p> <p>Water pollution</p> <p>Waste water management</p>

Most common responses for evaluation of strengths lead to conclusion that the responding group is highly competent in the area of its expertise and poses strong knowledge of current legislation, regularly is involved in EU/national supported project and has good reputation in public in regard to environmental issues.

Most common responses for evaluation of weaknesses indicate that there are not enough facilities or equipment to ensure environmentally neutral/positive impacts of carried out activities and that the financial situation of the group is secure, but more resources cannot be invested to increase the quality of the environment then they already do. The group singled out that the improvement should be in technical equipment, monitoring of environmental effects of their activities and more frequent involvement in EU/national supported projects.

Most common responses for evaluation of opportunities show that the questionnaire participants are open to new local/regional/national/EU instruments and plans, new information and knowledge exchange during educational seminars/workshops and that the support of the EU and/or government would lead to the improved conservation of the environment.

Most common responses for evaluation of threats: Lower financial income presents main barrier for Serbian institutions towards better environmental conservation. Most common problem the responding group had to deal with was water pollution (this answer was more or less expected since the majority of the respondents indicated surface or ground water quality as area of their expertise) and they recognize waste water management, pollution by industry as well as unsuitable land management as the most harmful human induced activities on the environment.

## SLOVENIA

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Qualified staff with up to date knowledge</p> <p>Good technical equipment</p> <p>Good information about the state of the environment</p>	<p><b>WEAKNESS</b></p> <p>We are financially secured, but we cannot invest more resources than we invest now</p> <p>Not enough staff</p> <p>We need to improve the dissemination of our positive actions among the public</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>EU/national subsidies would help to increase our environmental contribution</p> <p>New local/regional policy instruments or plans are welcomed</p> <p>Motivation to modify their activities the way leading to general improvement of the environment</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Too demanding administration may be the limiting factor in the environmental improvement actions</p> <p>Droughts</p> <p>Floods</p>

Most common responses for evaluation of strengths lead to conclusion that this responding group feels competent in terms of environmental know-how, staff and expertise and monitors impact of their activities on environment.

Most common responses for evaluation of weaknesses show that this responding group wants to improve their theoretical background and dissemination of their positive actions among the public. They also want stronger cooperation with consultants or universities. Their financial position is secured but they cannot invest more resources than they already do.

Most common responses for evaluation of opportunities show potential for improvement in areas of cooperation with other environment-related organizations/agencies from the same sector as well as transboundary cooperation and environmental conservation with support of the EU or government. Participants in this responding group are willing to modify their activities in a way leading to general improvement of the environment and are generally open to new policy instruments and plans on all levels (from local to EU).

Most common responses for evaluation of threats state lower financial income and increased administration as most important factors for hindered development towards better environmental conservation. Most common answers to natural disasters they have dealt with are river floods, water pollution, droughts and invasive plant species while they consider inadequate flood plains utilization to be the most harmful human induced activity, followed by traffic and infrastructure and unsuitable land management or spatial planning.

## **4.2. DANUBE SCALE SYNTHESIS**

The following overall conclusions on the strengths and weaknesses in current environmental management in the Danube basin can be drawn:

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Private companies, public sector and research institutes in all countries have qualified, competent and well informed employees. Stakeholders operate with up to date comprehensive knowledge on the general environmental issues, they have good information about the current state of the environment in the region (especially governmental agencies, research institutes and universities). The employees have good education and experience and are further confronted with new information and

data about the state of the environment. But the stakeholders are aware of the insufficient monitoring and data to quantify the environmental impacts of their activities.

- Most private and state enterprises have adequate technical equipment. Companies already utilize modern technology and equipment to minimize the negative environmental impact of their activities
- The negative aspect (weakness) is, that the qualified human resources are limited. In most of the cases the current employees are fully occupied with their daily obligations.
- Companies are financially secured, but cannot afford to invest more resources than they invest at the moment.
- Many respondents feel that they need to improve the dissemination of their positive environmental actions among the general public. Most of the positive actions are not properly published. Most of the stakeholders miss public relation know-how.
- Several countries of middle and lower Danube mention lack of involvement in EU and transboundary environmental projects.
- The most important barrier of the organization development towards better environmental conservation is increased administration.

### **Outlook on opportunities and threads**

- Stakeholders feel motivated to adjust or modify their current activities to mitigate negative environmental impacts.
- In all countries the respondents would welcome clear standards, guidelines, plans or policy providing comprehensible rules for everybody. Policies from very local scale to regional, national up to European Union scales are mentioned.
- Companies consider that EU projects, funds or subsidies would help them to increase their environmental contribution. Stakeholders in the Upper Danube countries prefer local or regional support projects.
- Respondents are willing to closely cooperate with the stakeholders from the neighboring countries and whole Danube catchment. This opportunity is not fully utilized yet and can be quite easily initiated.



- Most common answers to natural disasters the stakeholders have dealt with are surface water pollution, floods, droughts, intensive unsustainable agriculture (soil erosion, soil degradation, soil compaction), and invasive plant species.

## **5. ANNEXES**

### **5.1. SWOT SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

# CAMARO-D Survey

By filling in the questionnaire you are helping us to identify the main challenges and opportunities in landscape management in Danube region.

**Thank you very much for your cooperation!**

CAMARO-D Team

## RESPONDENT IDENTIFICATION

**Institution name:** *(voluntary)*

**Type of institution** *(select one)*

- Administration agency
- Education or Research
- State agency linked to Water management
- State agency linked to Forestry
- State agency linked to Environment conservation
- State agency linked to Spatial planning/management
- NGO
- Private company – landscape and spatial planning
- Private company - forestry
- Private company - water management
- Private company – agriculture
- Tourism
- Other:

**Company size according to EU recommendation 2003/361** *(select one)*

- Micro: < 10 employees
- Small: < 50 employees
- Medium: < 250 employees
- Large: > 250 employees

**Spatial extent** *(select one)*

- Local
- Regional (district, country)
- General (state level, international level)

**Which environmental issue is the closest to your business?** *(select one)*

- Groundwater quality
- Surface water quality
- Floods
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Spatial planning
- Soil conservation

## SWOT ANALYSIS - STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

**What makes your company/institution better/stronger/more important than the others?** *(select all appropriate answers)*

- Environmental know-how
- Technical equipment
- Staff
- Knowledge of the current legislation and environmental standards
- Environmental management (ISO standards etc.)
- Involvement in EU/national supporting projects.

- Technical equipment
- Other:

**Do you have the staff/volunteers and expertise necessary to meet your environmental objectives?** *(select one)*

- Yes, we have the qualified staff with up to date knowledge
- No, we do not have the staff
- We do not have the knowledge

- We lack both the staff and the knowledge
- We do not have any environmental objectives to deal with

**In what areas do you need to improve?**  
(select all appropriate answers)

- Theoretical background
- Monitoring/data on the environmental impacts of our activities
- Environmental management
- Purchase of better technical equipment
- Involvement in EU/national supporting projects
- Cooperation with consultants or universities
- Dissemination of our positive actions among the public
- Other:

**How secure is your organisation's financial position?**  
(select one)

- Not secure. We cannot afford to invest any resources to increase the quality of the environment (or to decrease the environmental impact of our activities)
- We are secured, but we can't invest more resources than we invest now.
- We already invest enough resources.
- We plan to invest more resources in near future.

**Are the best practices being utilized?** (select one)

- Yes, fully
- Yes, partially
- No
- We are not aware of the best practices

**Do you have enough facilities/equipment/technology to ensure environmental neutral/positive activities?**  
(select one)

- Yes
- No
- Not relevant

**Is your organization well structured and efficient or overly bureaucratic (to handle the environmental issues)?** (select one)

- We are well structured, it is easy to implement any new measure or strategy
- It is difficult to implement new measures or strategies because of our structure
- It is difficult to implement new measures or strategies because of other stakeholders or general policy

**Do you think you have a good reputation among the public, regarding the environmental issues?** (select one)

- Yes
- No
- We don't know
- Not relevant

**What are your main achievements towards better state of the environment in last 5 years?**  
(shortly describe, please)

## SWOT ANALYSIS - OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS

**How strong are your links with other key organizations/agencies in your area or sector (related to the environment)?** (select one)

- We have no links, we work alone
- Moderate cooperation
- Strong cooperation

**Do you feel motivated to modify your activities the way leading to general improvement of the environment?**  
(select one)

- Yes
- No
- Yes, we already behave this way

**How aware are you about the current environmental situation related to your activities in your region? (select one)**

- We are well informed
- We have a moderate idea
- We are lacking enough information, but we would like to be informed
- We are not aware and not interested

**Are you a member of ANY group that helps you to cope with the environmental issues? (select one)**

- Yes
- No, but we would like to get involved
- No and we don't want to be involved

**Is there a strong competition from other or similar organization in your area that forces you to behave less environmentally friendly? (select one)**

- Yes
- No
- Not relevant

**Do you have any transboundary cooperation? (select one)**

- Yes
- No
- Not relevant for our activities

**Are you familiar with the modern technologies/methods in your area of work/services? (select one)**

- Yes and we implement them in our activities
- Yes and we partly implement them in our activities
- Yes, but we do not implement them
- No

**Which funding/supporting opportunities would help you to increase your environmental contribution? (select all appropriate answers)**

- EU projects/funds
- National projects/subsidies
- Regional projects/subsidies
- Involvement in research projects
- Other:

**Would you welcome new information related to the impacts of your activities on the environment? In which way? (select all appropriate answers)**

- No, we are not interested
- Yes, education seminars/workshops
- Yes, internet resources
- Yes, books, magazines and leaflets
- Yes, personal consultations
- Other:

**Would you welcome new local/regional policy instruments or plans? (select one)**

- Yes
- No
- Not relevant

**Would you welcome new national/EU policy instruments or plans? (select one)**

- Yes
- No
- Not relevant

**What are the barriers of your organization development towards better environmental conservation? (select all appropriate answers)**

- Lower financial income
- Increased administration
- Necessity of hiring new staff
- Foreign languages
- Other

**Who or what could support you in your activities leading to environment conservation? (select all appropriate answers)**

- EU or Government (national or regional level)
- Local administration (eg. municipality)
- Better legislation
- Clear standards or methodologies presenting the best practices
- Target-oriented trainings tailored to the respective stakeholder group
- NGOs
- Volunteers

Other:

**Select three natural disasters/problems you have dealt with**

- Flash flood
- River flood
- Water pollution
- Muddy flows / sediment transports
- Droughts
- Wild fire
- Soil degradation, erosion
- Ground water depletion
- Invasive plant species
- Other:

**Select three human induced activities that you consider as the most harming**

- Intensification of agriculture
- Urbanisation (soil sealing, within hazard zones)
- Intensive forest management
- Inadequate flood plains utilisation
- Unsuitable land management / Spatial planning
- Pollution by industry
- Pollution by agriculture
- Waste water management
- Traffic, infrastructure
- Other:

## **COMMENTS**

**Please, feel free to add any comments, remarks or additional issues that are not addressed in the questionnaire.**

**Thank you very much for your time and cooperation!**

