

## Output Factsheet

**Output title: Output 5.2 - EU-wide transnational learning conference**

### Summary of the output (max. 2500 characters)

The transnational learning conference, including a dedicated workshop for ports for informing and exchanging views with relevant stakeholders of the region, was organised on 23 May 2019 in Budapest as the final event of the ENERGY BARGE project. The conference was attended by 85 participants.

Main results, outputs and deliverables were presented by the project partners and the experiences with regards to the pre-feasibility studies (DT3.1.3) and pilot investments (D.T3.2.2), conducted by PoVi and MAHART, were shared with other ports and market actors interested in starting or expanding their biomass business using Danube ports as logistics hubs.

The conference focused on the further development of inland waterways and actions to increase cargo transport on the Danube, how the EU Strategy for the Danube Region supports the goals related to sustainable energy sources and how the measures implemented in ENERGY BARGE fit into the transnational policy objectives. The conference was supported by the Hungarian Ministry of State for Energy Affairs and Climate Policy, which is aiming at an integrated energy and climate plan and strategy in Hungary, as well as the country's commitment to the EU climate targets.

The results of the pre-feasibility studies were presented by port representatives during the afternoon session. Each port defined specific investment projects to become a biomass hub as part of a transnational network along the Danube, taking into consideration market, technology and financial aspects.

A workshop regarding the connection of ports/multimodal hubs with the biomass sector concluded the conference. Three discussion groups targeted the topics "Placement of biomass industry in ports", "Future development of Danube ports" and "Derivation of policy recommendations for the Danube region". Users and providers of inland waterway logistics need to work together on innovative, multimodal solutions and speak with one voice when it comes to improving the infrastructural prerequisites and to unify customs regulations at the national borders. In addition, it will be important to make the logistics sector more attractive for young professionals since there is already a shortage of qualified personnel, which will become an even more serious issue in the next years due to the age structure in this sector.

### Contribution to EUSDR actions and/or targets (max. 1500 characters)

Output 5.2 contributes to ENERGY BARGE's main objective to extend sustainable deployment of biomass for energy production through secure, efficient and sustainable supply chains for renewable raw materials along the river. It addresses mainly the two project specific objectives (SO): SO2 (better connected, interoperable and environmentally friendly transport) and SO3 (practical solutions).

It addresses actors from the Danube logistics (service providers) and bioenergy (potential Danube logistics users) sectors by offering a platform to present and discuss the achievements of the ENERGY BARGE project. In addition, via the transnational workshop as part of the transnational learning conference, a better connection of ports/multimodal hubs with biomass producers, the processing industry, traders and end users of biomass is also an important goal of Output 5.2.

**Transnational impact(max. 1500 characters)**

The transnational impact of this Output is ensured by the participation of the project partners from seven countries, i.e. Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia, as well as the external participants of the final ENERGY BARGE conference. All main transnational project results were presented at the final conference, including Output 3.1 "Danube transnational biomass and bioenergy atlas" and Output 4.1 "Modal shift platform for green bioenergy logistics" as well as the transnational policy recommendations as part of WP6 (Output 6.1 & 6.2). Furthermore, the transnational workshop provided a specific forum for the presentation of new ideas and solutions in terms of biomass logistics on inland waterways since a strong transnational cooperation of all the riparian countries is required foster a modal shift.

**Performed testing, if applicable (max. 1000 characters)**

n/a

**Integration and use of the output by the target group (max. 2000 characters)**

The general aim of the Output was to present the project results to the target groups from the biomass and Danube logistics sectors, to facilitate a discussion to gather feedback regarding the project's outcomes and to motivate the target groups to use the results of the project for their respective business cases.

During the closing conference, a thematic transnational workshop was held. The aim of the workshop was to gather ideas, solution proposals and thoughts regarding the questions raised in the project. For adequate execution, the world cafe methodology was used. Three discussion groups targeted the topics "Placement of biomass industry in ports", "Future development of Danube ports" and "Derivation of policy recommendations for the Danube region". Users and providers of inland waterway logistics must work together on innovative, multimodal solutions and speak with one voice when it comes to improving the infrastructural prerequisites and to unify customs regulations at the national borders. In addition, it will be important to make the logistics sector more attractive for young professionals since there is already a shortage of qualified personnel, which will become an even more serious issue in the next years due to the age structure in this sector.

To attract new enterprises to settle in Danube ports, specific infrastructure requirements (e.g. wastewater network, steam, heat pipe system etc.) and port profiles have to be taken into consideration and adjusted to potential customer needs. Flexible buffer storage capacities and trans-shipment options are the most frequently used services by them. Ports need to actively contribute to local and national policies and strategies in order to favour sustainable waterway transport of biobased materials and to integrate Danube logistics to the location selection of major processors.

#### **Geographical coverage and transferability (max. 1500 characters)**

The Output primarily covered the Danube-adjacent EU countries as represented in the project consortium, i.e. Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany (Bavaria, navigable Danube stretch), Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. However, the concept could be transferred also to other macro regions in the Danube region and beyond. For this purpose, a synthesis report (D.T3.3.2), comprising information on the pre-feasibility studies of the five port partners, the pilot investments that were implemented by MAHART and PoVi and the main outcomes of the transnational learning workshop, was prepared and forwarded to the stakeholders of the respective project partners.

#### **Durability (max. 1500 characters)**

The transnational learning conference, including the transnational workshop on the results of WP5, was a one-time event. Nevertheless, the project partners will cooperate in the future alongside other topics of the project – such as the "Danube transnational biomass and bioenergy atlas" and Output 4.1 "Modal shift platform for green bioenergy logistics". BCG and VIA will ensure that the online platform will be accessible online for at least three years after the official project end. The same applies for the project's website so that interested parties can access the project's results for at least three years beyond the official end of the project. MAHART and PoVi will use their pilot investments in the ports for at least five years beyond the project's lifetime.

It is expected that the port partners will further elaborate the ideas about specific investment projects that were elaborated in the frame of the pre-feasibility studies, which were also presented by each port partner during the final conference. As a results from the pre-feasibility

study, Slovak Shipping and Ports JSC (SPaP) announced to establish a new biomass transshipment and storage facility in the Port of Bratislava with a total investment of 250,000 €.

**Synergies with other projects/ initiatives and / or alignment with current EU policies/ directives/ regulations, if applicable (max. 1500 characters)**

Synergies with regard to the transnational learning conference were exploited in particular with the project *DBS Gateway Region*, which focuses on hinterland transport development and fostering an increase of freight transport on inland waterways. A large information board of the project *DBS Gateway Region* was presented at the event. *ENERGY Barge* also provided inputs for the information board that was prepared by *DBS Gateway Region*, presenting the project in addition to six sister projects (*GRENDEL, DAPHNE, DANUBE SKILLS, ENERGY BARGE, DANTE, DANUBE STREAM*). Furthermore, project partners of *DBS Gateway Region* participated at the event and were involved in the discussions of the transnational workshop. Meanwhile, *ENERGY Barge* presented its project panel and the Modal Shift Platform at the final event of the project *DBS Gateway Region*.

**Output integration in the current political/ economic/ social/ technological/ environmental/ legal/ regulatory framework (max. 2000 characters)**

The Hungarian Ministry of State for Energy Affairs and Climate Policy was represented at the transnational learning conference, presenting the integrated energy and climate plan and strategy in Hungary, as well as the country's commitment to the EU climate targets. The Minister received information on the main achievements of the *ENERGY BARGE* project that is potentially of interest for upcoming policy strategies.

With its focus on fostering a sustainable utilisation of biomass for energy generation in the Danube region in combination with an increased involvement of Danube logistics services, *ENERGY BARGE* contributes to achieve the targets of Priority Area (PA) 1a "Waterways Mobility" and PA2 "Sustainable Energy" of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR).

Representatives of PA 1a and PA 2 of the EUSDR participated at the final *ENERGY BARGE* conference on 23 May 2019 in Budapest and presented current tasks and upcoming challenges for the respective areas of expertise. Outputs 6.1 "Transnational policy recommendations" and 6.2 "Transnational energy security strategy" were forwarded to the coordinators of the two Priority Areas to make a contribution for the upcoming policy framework concerning the Danube region.