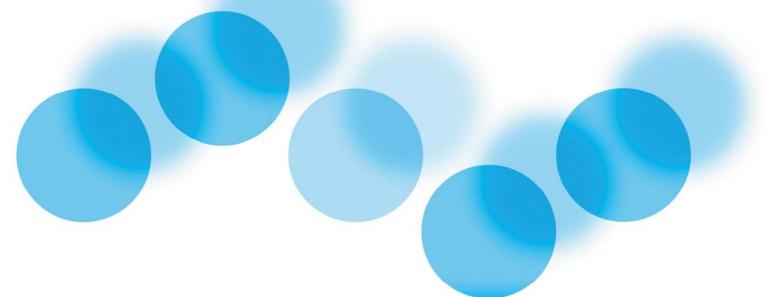June 2005

DANUBE RIVER BASIN COMMUNICATIONSTRATEGY

FINAL REPORT

UNDP GEF

WORKING FOR THE DANUBE AND ITS PEOPLE

PREFACE

The long-term goal of the UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project is, in short, to strengthen capacities of key Danube stakeholders and institutions to effectively and sustainably manage the Danube River Basin's (DRB) water resources and ecosystems for citizens of Danube countries.

In order to affect change in the DRB, citizens of the Danube must be motivated to take action. The purpose of this assignment was to identify those key groups of Danube stakeholders most interested and/or able to take action, and to motivate them to take action to protect the DRB. This Communication Strategy is designed to provide guidance on how to facilitate change through communication activities.

This document provides the baseline for planning communication activities within the DRB. It provides both an approach and methodology for planning campaigns as well as guidance for developing a work plan for DRB communication activities. Communication planning is a fast paced activity. Today's plans become old and outdated very quickly, thus, the need for an iteration of planning, implementation, learning and then planning once again.

This document represents one milestone in a difficult process. While many speak of communication strategies and planning, there are very few concrete examples that provide guidance on actually how to develop a practical communication strategy for transboundary river basin management activities.

An important lesson learned is that there should be an emphasis on developing a strategy that is actionable, measurable and should form a 'living document', to be updated on a continuous basis as it is implemented. In short, a communications strategy is an ongoing process.

When we came to prepare the Communication Strategy, we were faced with considerable obstacles: we found very little material of practical value already in existence and available. There are plenty of communication strategies, but they tend to be of the "awareness needs to be raised", "a brochure needs to be produced", "an educational initiative should be started" variety. Admirable – but of little practical use.

We needed a practical, applicable, strategy that could evolve. A strategy that would act as a tool to deliver results. As we think others can benefit from this experience, we therefore offer in this document some lessons learned, a practical methodology, some contextual material – and the Strategy itself – in the hope that it will prove to be of value to others, and act as a source of good practice, as well as being a strong, deliverable Communication Strategy for the enhancement of the environment of the Danube River Basin.

The report represents a milestone in the efforts of several people to develop a meaningful DRB Communication Strategy. The WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme was contracted to develop the strategy. Its efforts were enhanced by the engagement of Tony Hare of Tony Hare Communications.

This report reflects the views of the experts involved. The report and its contents remain the property of the UNDP/GEF DRP and should not be used without providing full credit to the DRP.

For further information about the DRP, objectives, activities, results etc. please visit the DRP webpage at: www.undp-drp.org

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Abbreviations

DEF	Danube Environment Forum
DCP	WWF International Danube-Carpathian Programme
DPRP	Danube Pollution Reduction Programme
DRP	Danube Regional Project
DRPC	Danube River Protection Convention, Danube Convention
EU	European Union
EC	European Commission
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GWP	Global Water Partnership
HoD	Head of Delegation
IAD	International Association for Danube Research
ICPDR	International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
IRBM	Integrated River Basin Management
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
P.A.R.T.s	Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice
REC	Regional Environment Center for Central and Eastern Europe
TNMN	Trans National Monitoring Network
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WFD	EU Water Framework Directive
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

1. Introduction

Status of the Danube River Basin Communication Strategy

Communication Strategies need to be actionable and dynamic. This Strategy is under ongoing review and update as activities are carried out and implemented.

The version presented here is that of June 2005.

Why is a Danube River Basin Communication Strategy necessary?

There are many challenges facing those managing the Danube River Basin. Effective communications are a vital tool for those whose task it is to overcome the challenges. In particular, effective communications can help to ensure that all stakeholders who could potentially contribute to management initiatives, or who are potentially affected by them, are aware of relevant issues, and have the opportunity to put their concerns into action.

For maximum benefit communication activities should be guided by a strategy.

The objective of this Danube River Basin Communication Strategy is to ensure appropriate public information about Danube River Basin co-operation objectives, activities and accomplishments in order to enhance public participation in management activities. This will help to create the basis for the effective implementation of activities concerning nutrient reduction, ecosystem management and transboundary co-operation at the local, sub-basin, national and international levels.

The Strategy is intended to guide subsequent UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project (DRP) communication activities that will be determined during the course of project implementation. This could include the development of specific information products as well as the preparation and implementation of regional and/or public awareness activities as per the DRP project document and project implementation plan.

In addition, the Strategy can help to guide the activities of partner organisations.

What does the Danube River Basin Communication Strategy say?

The Strategy sets out an overall desired outcome:

> **"To create strong public awareness of the problem of aquatic pollution, especially of nutrients and toxics, in the Danube River Basin; and, within the context of implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive, to create strong public support for, and participation in, actions that lead to significant and measurable reductions in this pollution."**

The Strategy recommends communications activities aimed at important Target Audiences within the Danube River Basin. For each Target Audience a separate sub-strategy sets out the following information:

- Background information on the specific issue and the Target Audience
- The organisation(s) and/or individual(s) who should lead on communications activities
- A more specific desired outcome
- Key message/s
- A call to action
- A description of the communications activities
- Ideas for monitoring and evaluation of the success of communications activities

How to make the most of the Danube River Basin Communication Strategy

Communicating the Strategy

The Danube River Basin Communication Strategy should be officially announced to relevant stakeholders on an appropriate occasion.

The Strategy should be shared with key individuals and partners in the region (e.g. UNDP/GEF staff, ICPDR staff and delegates, ICPDR observers such as WWF, IAD, REC, GWP and DEF and other relevant organisations).

The Strategy should be posted on the DRP and/or ICPDR websites.

Resourcing the Strategy

UNDP/GEF and the ICPDR should assess the financial resources available for implementing the actions set out in the Danube River Basin Communication Strategy.

Depending on the level of available resources, it will be necessary to prioritise sub-strategies that should be implemented first.

Co-ordinating the implementation of the Strategy

Critically, the Strategy is dynamic, not static, and in order to be effectively implemented, needs to be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

It is recognised that no single body has the resources or expertise to fully implement the actions set out in the Danube River Basin Communication Strategy.

However, it is crucial that one organisation takes responsibility for leading the implementation of this Strategy and this should be the UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project.

The lead implementation organisation should be responsible for ensuring that the key recommendations of the Strategy are implemented and that all communications activities related to this Strategy are co-ordinated.

Other organisations can be effective partners in the implementation of the Strategy. These organisations may be river basin wide (such as WWF or IAD), national (such ICPDR Heads of Delegation) or local (such as DEF members).

One of the first tasks of the lead implementation organisation should be to identify national focal points and other partners who can help to implement parts of the Strategy.

Researching the Strategy

One of the lessons from the preparation of the Danube River Basin Communication Strategy is that there is great value in undertaking fact-finding early in communications planning.

This research does not need to be intensive and can often comprise a limited review of existing literature and a few well-chosen telephone interviews.

To optimise the use of resources, target audiences should be the subjects of research before strategic communications activities are put in place.

It will be necessary to undertake more fact-finding to continue implementing some of the sub-strategies and to devise new ones.

Reviewing the Strategy

The Danube River Basin Communication Strategy is intended to be a "living document". It should be continually reviewed as activities set out in the sub-strategies are completed, and as the need for new actions, or even new sub-strategies, become evident.

It will be necessary for the lead implementation organisation to ensure that the Strategy is reviewed and revised according to need.

The Danube River Basin Communication Strategy is intended to be an outcome-oriented and actionable document. It is best kept in a ring binder with separate sections for each of the sub-strategies. The sub-strategies can then be taken out, used, and put back as necessary. They can also be updated independently of each other.

For ease of revision the lead implementation organisation should keep separate MS Word master files for each sub-strategy.

The following documents represent further useful background reading for the Communication Strategy:

- Danube Pollution Reduction Programme Report (DPRP, June 1999)
- Danube River Protection Convention (IC/001)
- EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)
- Joint Danube Survey (ICPDR, 2002)
- Strategy for Public Participation in River Basin Management Planning 2003-2009 (draft UNDP/GEF, 2003)
- Socio-Economic Effects of Water Pollution in the Danube River Basin – Summary Report (DPRP, June, 1999)
- Strategic Action Plan for the Danube River Basin 1995-2005, Revision 1999 (DPRP, 1999)
- Water Quality in the Danube River Basin TNMN Yearbook (ICPDR, 2000)

Note/information resource:

At present, there is no central source of information about the environment of the Danube River Basin. It would be valuable to assess whether such a resource would be of value to Danube stakeholders, and – if so – how it could be viably and sustainably established. This issue has been partly analysed and addressed in the report 'ICPDR Information Access: Report and Suggestions', prepared by consultants through one of the DRP components.

Note/preliminary work:

In order to maximise the potential of the DRP to implement the Communication Strategy, it was necessary to clarify and integrate the visual and communication identity of the organisation.

This work was carried out in 2004, with the development and integration of a visual identity and strapline.

These have already been used in such new applications as the DRP website, brochures, posters, conference packs, etc.

2. Danube River Basin Communication Strategy

Overview

The Danube River Basin Communication Strategy aims to initiate a new approach to Danube challenges by harnessing the power of communications to deliver results on the ground*.*

This Strategy, in recognising the fluent and dynamic nature of communications, is a "living document": it will be executed and evolved on a continuous basis.

It focuses around Target Audiences and what they can do to deliver the Desired Outcome.

This first draft prioritises certain Target Audiences by presenting the work relating to them as 'Sub-strategies'. However, as the work evolves, the environment changes, and priorities change, so the Strategy will change and evolve.

Who is implementing this Strategy?

The implementation of this Communications Strategy should be led by:

- The UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project in partnership with the
  - ICPDR,
  - And other partner organisations.

It should be noted that funding for the DRP will end in the 2006-2007 period. At the same time, the intention for the Communication Strategy from the start was that excellent communications continue into the long-term through sustainable activities. It is therefore suggested that, in building partnerships with key players, an effort should be made to integrate communications objectives into their strategies and to build their capacities, so that continuity will be ensured for implementing the DRB Communication Strategy.

Partnering with the ICPDR

Background

In 1998, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) was established to guide the implementation of the Danube River Protection Convention (DRPC). The DRPC was signed in 1994 by numerous Danube States and the EU, dedicated to the reduction of pollution and the sustainable use of the resources in the Danube Basin.

The ICPDR, comprising the Contracting Parties of the Convention, is now working to implement both the DRPC and the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD). The WFD is a landmark piece of legislation that holistically enhances water resource management by valuing the ecological integrity of the river as a living and dynamic entity. The WFD requires an Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) approach to planning. In many ways the Danube Basin is a test case for implementing the WFD in international river basins in Europe.

The ICPDR Secretariat is based in Vienna. It consists of an Executive Secretary supported by a small number of experts in specific fields of water management. Since its inception, the ICPDR has

provided stakeholders with information, advice and expertise. To date, the focus has been on Contracting Parties to the DRPC and providing them with technical and scientific reports. A broader, secondary target audience has been serviced mainly by the 'Danube Watch' magazine and the ICPDR website.

The ICPDR is in a position to assess its existing communications vehicles in relation to the suggestions of this Strategy.

<u>Partnership in action</u>

A fully effective partnership in communications between DRP and the ICPDR Secretariat has been identified as an important factor in enabling the Communication Strategy to succeed, and its Desired Outcome to be reached. Of special value would be actions by the ICPDR Secretariat to engage and involve their key stakeholders. Other suggested activities toward this end include:

- Regular meetings and discussions between the DRP and the ICPDR Secretariat relating to the Communication Strategy and its implementation (ONGOING).
- Working in partnership on communication products and activities such as:
  - o 'Danube Watch' – research into Target Audiences, recommendations for enhancement of Danube Watch in terms of targeting, content and editorial, re-design (COMPLETED AND ONGOING SUPPORT).
  - o Development of integrated visual identities (ONGOING).
  - o Producing information materials such as brochures, leaflets, maps and website (COMPLETED AND ONGOING SUPPORT).
  - o Support of Danube Day (COMPLETED 2004 and ONGOING) and other public awareness raising events.
  - o Capacity building activities for communications (ONGOING).
- Working in partnership with stakeholders

Partnering with other organizations

Other basin-wide, national or local organisations (such as the Danube Environmental Forum (DEF), other NGOs, municipalities) will be invited to assist with co-ordination and communications tasks.

It could also be useful to identify 'national communications focal points' for each of the countries within the Danube River Basin to help to co-ordinate communications efforts. These might sit within national government organisations or in other well-established and authoritative organisations. If a national communications focal point does not sit within a government organization, it is important that the government must be willing and committed to working with the focal point. Regardless of where the focal point sits, he/she must be well equipped for the role.

Overall Desired Outcome

> **"To create strong public awareness of the problem of aquatic pollution, especially of nutrients and toxics, in the Danube River Basin; and, within the context of implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive, to create strong public support for, and participation in, actions that lead to significant and measurable reductions in this pollution."**

Within this overall Desired Outcome there will be specific Desired Outcomes relating to the specific Target Audiences mentioned below.

Note that quantified definitions of "significant and measurable reductions" in pollution will need to be developed. These quantified definitions should take into account targets for pollution reduction

set by the UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project and definitions of "good ecological and chemical status" as set out in the EU Water Framework Directive.

In quantifying the overall desired outcome, the following questions should be considered:

- What is the present level of public awareness of pollution (location and community-specific)?
- What is the present attitude of the public to the pollution (location and community-specific)?
- What are the levels of pollution in the Danube River Basin (location-specific and pollution-specific)?*
- What are the negative effects of this pollution?*
- What methods are proposed for reducing the pollution?*
- How exactly can the public express support?
- How exactly can the public participate?*
- What is the target level for public awareness, and by what date (location and community-specific)?
- What is the target for public attitudes, and by what date (location and community-specific)?
- What are the pollution reduction targets?
- What are the ecological and socio-economic benefits of pollution reduction?*
- What is the target level for public support?
- What is the target level for public participation?*

*The answers to these questions can largely be gleaned from existing reports such as the Joint Danube Survey (ICPDR, 2002), Water Quality in the Danube River Basin TNMN Yearbook (ICPDR, 2000), draft Strategy for Public Participation in River Basin Management Planning 2003-2009 (UNDP/GEF, 2003) and the outputs from the Danube Pollution Reduction Programme (DPRP, 1999).

Target Audiences for this Communications Strategy

The following target audiences have been identified within this Communications Strategy to be of key importance, with each having a 'sub-strategy' connected to it:

Sub-strategy 1:   ICPDR Heads of Delegation

Sub-strategy 2:   GEF

Sub-strategy 3:   Media

Sub-strategy 4a: Environmental NGOs - Danube Environment Forum

Sub-strategy 4b: Environmental NGOs – WWF

Sub-strategy 5:   Farmers

Sub-strategy 6:   Danube Communities - People of the Danube

Sub-strategy 7:   Local Authorities

It is recognized, however, that other target audiences may be included into this Communication Strategy over time. The Danube River Basin includes a multitude of stakeholders and stakeholder groups. A number of past efforts have been made to assess who these stakeholders and stakeholder groups are, and if possible, to prioritize them. This includes past efforts by both the

ICPDR and the UNDP/GEF DRP. A recent summary provides insight on the efforts made by UNDP/GEF toward this end and provides recommendations.

The importance of identifying the most important stakeholders in the Danube Basin is expected to increase given the public participation requirements of the Water Framework Directive. Toward this end, the ICPDR – mandated with coordinating the implementation of the WFD in the DRB and with support from UNDP-GEF - is holding a 'Stakeholder Conference' that will both prioritize stakeholders and their main concerns. The Conference will take place at the end of June 2005 in Budapest and results are expected to inform this Communication Strategy as to which additional stakeholders should become target audiences for communications in the future.

Key Messages

See specific sub-strategies for each Target Audience.

Calls to Action

See specific sub-strategies for each Target Audience.

How is the Message Delivered? (Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice)

See specific sub-strategies for each Target Audience.

Measurement, Monitoring and Evaluation, Lessons Learned

See specific sub-strategies for each Target Audience.

Sub-strategy 1: ICPDR Heads of Delegation

Background

Heads of Delegation represent their countries in the ICPDR.

Partnership and cooperation between DRP and the ICPDR Heads of Delegation is a powerful tool in delivering the Desired Outcome of this Communication Strategy at the national and international level.

Who's doing the communicating?

In partnership: UNDP/GEF DRP and ICPDR Secretariat.

Desired Outcome (specific)

Support of the Communications Strategy.

Clear mandate to the ICPDR Secretariat to cooperate with the DRP on the implementation of the Communications Strategy.

Support of communication activities on the ground at the national level.

Target Audience

ICPDR Heads of Delegation

Key Message/s

> **'The DRP Communications Strategy suggests activities that will greatly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our joint efforts to reduce pollution and implement the Water Framework Directive at both international and national levels.**

> **The implementation of the suggested activities will produce benefits to you as the national responsible body for the implementation of the WFD as well as for the water resources and citizens of the Danube.'**

Call to Action

> **'Support, and engage with, the DRP Communications Strategy at the national and international level.'**

How is the Message Delivered? (Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice)

Activities:

- Introduction of the DRB Communications Strategy at the June 2005 Standing Group Meeting.
- Ongoing engagement with Heads of Delegation to approve and support Strategy activities at the national and international level.
- Nomination of national communication focal points, possibly the national public participation contacts.

Measurement, Monitoring and Evaluation, Lessons Learned

- Successful introduction of DRB Communications Strategy at June 2005 Standing Group Meeting.
- Ongoing engagements of DRP and partners with Heads of Delegations and their departments.

Sub-strategy 2: GEF

Background

The UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project (DRP) is one of three components of the 95 million USD 'GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube/Black Sea Basin' – one of GEF's largest and perhaps most ambitious water-related projects in the world. The GEF Strategic Partnership supports the goals of the Commissions for the Danube and Black Sea to reduce nutrient and toxic loads to the levels necessary to allow Black Sea ecosystems to recover to conditions in the 1960s. GEF has been associated with the Danube Basin for over a decade.

UNDP/GEF considers the Danube to have global importance for a number of reasons. This includes the Danube as the test case for implementing the WFD in Europe, and many consider the WFD to be the best water legislation in the world. The Danube is the most international river basin in the world, shared by 18 countries. And the DRP could serve as a global model for reducing nutrient pollution, a common and serious problem in water bodies worldwide.

Who's doing the communicating?

DRP

Desired Outcome (specific)

GEF is confident in, and satisfied with, the work being done by the UNDP/GEF DRP team to successfully implement the entire DRP.

GEF uses the DRP as a model of good practice for GEF projects in other basins.

Target Audience

GEF

Key Message/s

> **'You are funding the DRP to make possible the partnerships and interventions that improve the environment of the Danube River Basin for the benefit of the people living there. Through our technical, diplomatic and communications interventions, we are succeeding in reaching your goals.'**

Call to Action

> **'Continue to support us, be aware of the good work we are doing, and use the DRP as a global model for how the GEF succeeds in improving river basin management throughout the world.'**

How is the Message Delivered? (Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice)

Activities:

- Continuous and ongoing liaison with GEF. (ONGOING)
- Production of useful and relevant products. (ONGOING)
- Submissions into existing GEF communications products.
- Proactive communications at June 2005 GEF International Waters Conference in Brazil (presentation, networking, brochures, reports, etc.)
- Proactive communications at 2003 GEF International Waters Conference in China (e.g. brochure). (COMPLETED)

Sub-strategy 3: Media

Background

Currently, the media generally follows environmental issues along the Danube if some event arouses public interest or if issues become topical. For example, media coverage was high during the 2002 floods. In times of drought, reports deal more with the question of whether, or at which levels, the river is navigable. The cyanide spill into the River Tisza in 2000 briefly made the Danube the centre of international attention. News can be generated by the publication of important studies – for example, the WWF study "Waterway Transport on Europe's Lifeline, the Danube" (01/2002), which made front page news on CNN World online. And sometimes, foreign reporters write summary reports on the Danube for environmental magazines.

At the same time, many journalists in the DRB are poorly aware and informed of the 'bigger picture' affecting the Danube environment, such as key overall values, threats and solutions. They are not aware of ongoing projects that, although not sensational, may be highly newsworthy. Many are not certain as to which organization to turn to for newsworthy Danube-related stories. And further, few journalists from non-environmental sectors (e.g. industry, politics) cover Danube environment news.

Who's doing the communicating?

DRP, DEF, REC, recipients of the DRP Small Grants, ICPDR Secretariat, possibly national communications focal points (to be identified), representatives from other DRP projects

Desired Outcome (specific)

Awareness and news coverage of the 'bigger environmental picture' and ongoing newsworthy projects in the Danube River Basin is increased and broadened among media in the Danube River Basin, in part through linking them with DRB environmental organizations that provide them with a continuous flow of credible and newsworthy information.

Target Audience

Media in the DRB, including environmental journalists and those covering other sectors, which should integrate environmental concerns.

Key Message/s

> **'We have some excellent newsworthy stories for you, now, about the Danube that will impress your audience and your editors and producers.'**

Call to Action

> **'Come to us for the environmental stories that we have for you and send it to your audience.'**

How is the Message Delivered? (Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice)

Activities:

- Create and compile a media list for international, national and local media in the DRB.

- Present to the media the organizations that are credible sources for newsworthy information about the Danube environment.

- Continuously generate newsworthy stories about the DRP and DRP Small Grants projects and feed to the media. (ONGOING - e.g. 'Green Horizons' feature story)

- Develop and deliver useful media-related products and activities (e.g. Press Pack, Fact Sheets, photos, VNRs, press releases, press conferences, press trips, press meetings).

- Ongoing liaison with media contacts, possibly including training activities.

- Capacity building for stakeholders and partners in media skills and relations.

Resources:

- Human resource time from implementing organizations.

- Identification of national communication focal points in the relevant countries.

- Funds for the development of media-related communications products and activities.

Tone of voice:

- Positive

- Enthusiastic

- Professional

- Exciting

Measurement, Monitoring and Evaluation, Lessons Learned

- Number of published articles.

- Number of positive relationships with media contacts.

Sub-strategy 4a: Environmental NGOs: Danube Environment Forum

Background

The Danube Environmental Forum (DEF) is a network of environmental NGOs active throughout the Danube River Basin. The DEF Secretariat and the National Focal Points in 13 Danube River Basin countries possess in-depth knowledge of the Danube environment. The objectives and functions of the DEF complement the aims of the Danube Regional Project (DRP).

The DEF wants to protect the Danube River and its tributaries, biodiversity and resources through enhancing co-operation among governments, non-governmental organisations, local people and other stakeholders geared toward the sustainable use of natural ecosystems. In addition to structures and activities at the local and national levels, DEF has created an 'International Water Policy Team' which provides expert knowledge and guidance to the DEF network and communicates with expert groups of other organisations.

DEF already provides consultations for other NGOs, organises training programmes and produces publications. But with its existing network of contacts and partners, and its access to expert local knowledge, DEF could do more to communicate messages to other audiences about the Danube Regional Project and the Water Framework Directive.

Who's doing the communicating?

DRP

Desired Outcome (specific)

DRP resources help the DEF in implementing its critical work addressing environmental issues in the DRB, and in improving DEF relations with other key stakeholders in the DRB including governments and the ICPDR.

Target Audience

As the DEF is the general Target Audience for this sub-strategy, it is valuable and necessary to acknowledge this for the purpose of widespread communication initiatives. It may also be useful to 'segment' it into more easily target able groups for other, more targeted communication activities. Possible segmented groups include Speakers, Secretariat, Water Policy Team, National Focal Points, DEF Board, and specific member organisations. This list will be under constant review and evolution.

Key Message/s

> **'The DRP is committed to supporting NGOs and NGO networks in the DRB and can provide resources and inputs to enhance and strengthen their work.'**

Call to Action

> **'Work in partnership with the DRP to meet our mutual goals of enhancing and improving the environment in the DRB.'**

How is the Message Delivered? (Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice)

Activities:

- Initiate and continue meetings with DEF and the DEF Secretariat to discuss and review implementation of the DRP. (ONGOING)

- Support activities and products that strengthen DEF's capacity and effectiveness in communications (e.g. training, media relations, publications, mechanisms for information exchange, website, , DEF profile).

- Support DEF public awareness raising activities and campaigns with a focus on media relations and information dissemination in cooperation with other partners of the strategy.

- DEF helps monitor national and local media coverage of Danube issues.

Resources:

- Initiate and continue meetings with DEF and the DEF Secretariat to discuss and review implementation of the DRP. (ONGOING)

- Provide help and support for the whole of the DEF community.

Measurement, Monitoring and Evaluation, Lessons Learned

- Allocation of resources.
- Outputs resulting from the above allocation of resources.
    - Structures are established for internal and external communication (DEF Secretariat staff and equipment, support/training to National Focal Points).
    - Communication tools are developed and implemented (email-conference-list, DEF homepage).
    - Internal information exchange is secured and regular updates/information flow within the DEF community is effective.
    - General strategies are developed (e.g. DEF Communications Strategy).
    - Communication links with other involved organisations are established.
    - DEF contributes to ICPDR expert groups and other expert bodies.
    - Successful completion of public awareness activities and special events (e.g. Danube Day, Photo competition, Water Day).
    - Training programmes delivered (e.g. on Water Framework Directive, Communications)
    - Preparation, printing and distribution of publications (e.g. Water pollution, DEF-leaflets, poster, bulletins).

Sub-strategy 4b: Environmental NGOs: WWF

Background

WWF is a global conservation NGO with a regional presence in the Danube River Basin, with a mandate specifically oriented towards protecting and improving the environment throughout the Danube Basin. The WWF 'Danube Carpathian Programme' (DCP) and its sister offices (e.g. WWF Austria, WWF Germany, WWF Hungary) have a long history of undertaking communications activities including website production, development of publications and factsheets, and a photo and video library. WWF has conducted a number of issue-driven campaigns in the region, has observer status with ICPDR working groups, and also contributed significantly to the development of the DRB Communications Strategy. WWF's offices in the Danube Basin work directly with other WWF offices outside the region including the WWF European Policy Office in Brussels and WWF Intl. in Gland, Switzerland, including cooperation with their respective communications teams.

Key priorities of WWF in the basin are to assist with the implementation of the EU's Water Framework Directive in the DRB, wetland restoration, and sustainable Danube waterway transport.

Who's doing the communicating?

DRP

Desired Outcome (specific)

WWF assists in implementing the DRB Communications Strategy in cooperation with the DRP and other partners.

Target Audience

The WWF community, especially WWF offices located in the DRB.

Key Message/s

> **'DRP and WWF have common goals for improving the environment in the DRB. Assisting with the implementation of the DRB Communications Strategy will help you with implementing your own organizational goals for the basin."**

Call to Action

> **'Work in partnership with the DRP and its partners, so that we may meet our mutual goals of enhancing and improving the environment, especially in helping to implement the WFD and restoring wetlands, in the DRB.'**

How is the Message Delivered? (Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice)

Activities:

- Initiate and continue meetings with WWF DCP and other WWF offices to discuss and review implementation of the DRP. (ONGOING)
- Work in partnership on communication products and activities.
- Support activities that strengthen WWF's capacity and effectiveness in communications.

Resources:

- DRP time.

Measurement, Monitoring and Evaluation, Lessons Learned

- In how many communications sub-strategies and/or other areas of activity do WWF and UNDP/GEF or ICPDR cooperate?

Sub-strategy 5: Farmers

Note: this Sub-strategy is under ongoing review: a number of different elements of the Sub-strategy are listed below, and more will emerge as the work continues.

Background

The ICPDR's Roof Report notes that agricultural activities in the Danube basin are a major source of diffuse pollution, including nitrogen and hazardous substances. The main sources of nitrogen are nitrogen mineral fertilizers and the raising of livestock. Emissions decrease downstream given the less intensive nature of agriculture in the middle and lower Danube.

The biggest impact from nutrient pollution is 'eutrophication' which reduces oxygen in the water, decreases plant and animal species and worsens water quality. Danube nutrient pollution has contributed to a severe ecological imbalance in the Black Sea. Overall, nutrient loads dropped in the last decade and the Black Sea shows signs of recovery, but nutrient pollution could rise again with economic improvements in CEE and agriculture becoming more intensive.

Pesticides also pose a serious risk in the Danube, generally increasing downstream. "Alarming concentrations" can be found in some tributaries and in the lower Danube. Since the 1990s, use declined by 40% but increases are again expected with economic developments and farmers illegally using banned substances such as DDT. The WFD specifies 11 pesticides as hazardous "priority substances" requiring phase-out within 20 years. Many are used in the Danube basin. The biggest threat is from DDT, a pesticide banned in Europe -- in Danube samples taken, 71% exceeded permissible levels. The current low use of hazardous substances shows that big improvements can be made before farmers become dependent on the use of agro-chemical products. Sustainable agriculture with less intensive practices is needed for the entire basin with reductions in the use of fertilizers, pesticides and nutrients.

Numerous efforts have been made to improve the sustainability of agriculture and increase agro-environmental programmes. However, the links between the agriculture and environment sectors still need significant improvement. This includes those between national agriculture and environment ministries and between the CAP and the WFD. Furthermore, farming associations (or 'advisory services') are limited in their knowledge of agro-environmental issues (e.g. effects of fertilizers on rivers) and rarely perceive them to be a part of their mandate in assisting farmers.

At the same time, farmers in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) often suffer financial difficulties, especially in recent years. They will only change current practices if they perceive them as beneficial (i.e. if agro- environmental practices are as financially rewarding). Furthermore, while there is little current demand in CEE for relatively more expensive organic products, there is high demand for organic products in Western Europe. Farmers are further often unaware of how to obtain financial support from national or EU sources for the introduction of environmentally sustainable technology. Their experience in preparing proposals is often none to little, and they often do not know where to get information, help, or advice.

Farmers view their Farm Advisory Services as more trustworthy than politicians, environmental groups or other organisations. On the basis of experience collected so far, Farm Advisory Services as well as local governments welcome co-operation and realize that it can promote the development of farming and the prosperity of local people.

In 2002, WWF Hungary, together with other NGOs and local governments, organised several 'Farmer Meetings' or 'Farmer Forums' to inform farmers about the types of agri-environment support they could claim and how EU accession will affect them. These forums met with a remarkable response with one attracting several hundred farmers.

Who's doing the communicating?

DRP and partners

Desired Outcome (specific)

Farmers (target number to be defined) are aware of and engaged with agro-environment schemes and other possible environmental initiatives, as a means of changing their farm practices and reducing pollution.

Target Audience

Farmers in DRB countries.

Key Message/s

> **'Using agro-environmental practices and other environmental initiatives will benefit you and your communities by helping to generate healthier environments and cleaner drinking water, and pollution will be reduced. This will also assist in the national goals of meeting the EU's water protection legislation by 2015.'**

Call to Action

> **'Be aware of and be engaged with agro-environment schemes and other possible environmental initiatives."**

How is the Message Delivered? (Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice)

Players:
* Farmer advisory services (or 'farmer associations').
* National/local NGOs with mandates, programmes and/or experiences in assisting farmers and farmer associations with agro-environmental programmes.
* Agro-environment experts within national agriculture ministries.
* Participants of UNDP/GEF DRP components concerned with agricultural best practices and farm advisory services.
* Local government representatives ('environmental expert' in larger settlements, and town clerk or mayor in smaller ones).
* Media.

Activities:
* Research to establish the awareness, perception and attitudes among farmers and others in the agricultural community in targeted areas.
* Establish communication links between project implementers and targeted groups.
* Raising awareness through communications activities and products.
* Disseminate results from DRP components related to agriculture.

Resources:
* Human resource time of implementing organizations.

Measurement, Monitoring and Evaluation, Lessons Learned
* To be confirmed, but centred around enhanced awareness among Danube Basin farmers.

Sub-strategy 6: Danube Communities - People of the Danube

Note: this Sub-strategy is under ongoing review: a number of different elements of the Sub-strategy are listed below, and more will emerge as the work continues.

Background

The people of the Danube River Basin – of whom there are some 81 million – are a critical Target Audience for this work. To achieve the Desired Outcome ("To create strong public awareness … to create strong public support for, and participation in, actions that lead to significant and measurable reductions in this pollution.") it is clearly essential to engage in communication work which is relevant to – and which reaches – the people of the Basin.

Who is leading the communication work?

DRP, ICPDR.

Desired Outcome (specific)

Measurable increases in public awareness at community level.

Target Audiences

In general terms, the Target Audience is 'the public' or 'the people of the Danube Basin'. However, this description, although accurate, is rather general. Effective communication work is about careful definition of Target Audiences and focused work to reach them.

It is therefore valuable and necessary to acknowledge this Target Audience for the purpose of widespread communication initiatives (such as Danube Day – see below) while also 'segmenting' it into more easily target able groups for other, more localised communication activities.

Specific Target Audiences

(This list will be under constant review and evolution)

6a   The people of the Danube

6ai   Activity 1 – Danube Day (see below)

6aii, 6aiii etc. to be defined as Basin-wide communication initiatives are carried out

6b   Consumers of specific media such as local and national print, radio and TV

6bi, 6bii etc. consumers of specified media, to be defined as mass media work develops

6c   Local communities along the Danube

6ci, 6cii etc – to be defined in terms of specific communities as community-oriented communications are developed, for example, the proposed Public Awareness Campaigns, each of which will focus on a particular community. Campaigns are proposed at present in Austria, Slovenia and Serbia, and more are expected to follow.

Key Message, in general:

> **'The Danube is your river – and it is more than just a river. It is a vital part of our lives, our heritage, our traditions, our culture and our landscapes. It influences and connects the lives of 81 million people. It is one of the most important and international rivers in the world - but it is under threat, especially from pollution. By recognising and celebrating the value and diversity of the river, we can help to protect it from pollution, and make sure that this great heritage is safeguarded now and for the future."**

(More specific Key Messages to be designed for the more specific Target Audiences – see below).

Call to Action, in general:

> **'Be aware of the importance of the Danube – and of the threats facing it. Engage with our initiatives to celebrate and protect the Danube and the Danube Basin.'**

(More specific Key Messages to be designed for the more specific Target Audiences – see below).

Activity 6ai: The People of the Danube - Danube Day

Background

(See above)

Who is leading the communication work?

ICPDR, with the support of DRP

Desired Outcome (specific)

Increased awareness of the value and importance of the Danube River.

Engagement and involvement of Danube Communities.

Target Audience

The people of the Danube

Key Message/s

Danube Day is a special celebration of our special river!

Call to Action

Join in!

Activities

Danube Day events and activities throughout the Danube Basin.

Results

An extremely successful Danube Day 2004, leading to continuation of the initiative in 2005 and onwards.

Sub-strategy 7: Local Authorities

Background

In the new EU Member States and Candidate Countries, it is generally agreed that local municipalities will have some responsibilities for the implementation of many of the EU's directives related to the environment. Examples include the Water Framework Directive, Nitrates Directive, Urban Wastewater Directive and CAP. Some local financing will also be required.

At the same time, little information exists on the nature of those responsibilities. This often results from a lack of communication between different levels of government within a country. Further, national government officials dealing with EU legislation may not be environmental experts and those who have heard about the directives may not be fully aware of what measures are necessary to help reach them.

Regarding the WFD, for example, it is clear that little related information has been made available to local governments. But this could be changed rapidly. For example, in Hungary the Environment Ministry already has a Communications Strategy. Undertaking some research on the existence of similar plans and strategies prior to implementing this sub-strategy is suggested.

Who's doing the communicating?

DRP, national communications focal points (to be identified), ICPDR Heads of Delegation, DEF, national NGOs (e.g. WWF).

Desired Outcome (specific)

Awareness is increased among municipal mayors and their staff of the importance of: reducing pollution in the Danube; the need for local, national and trans-boundary activities to tackle this pollution; and the value of their efforts in helping to implement the Water Framework Directive and other international water- and environment-related legislation.

Target Audience

Municipal mayors, other elected local representatives and municipal staff.

*Note that separate sub-strategies may be required for these Target Audiences at a later date, once communications activities are better developed.

Key Message/s

> **'You are responsible for the quality of life and the environment in your municipality which is important to everyone living there. By becoming more aware of and engaged with positive environmental initiatives, policies and the existing legislative framework related to the Danube, you will be able to improve the quality of life for the residents of your municipality.**

Call to Action

> **'Be aware of and engaged with positive environmental initiatives, policies and the existing legislative framework related to the Danube."**

> **'Contact the governmental officials in your country that are responsible for implementing the EU's Water Framework Directive and other international water- and environment-related legislation, to find out what you and your municipal staff can do to become more involved and contribute to improving the quality of the Danube near you.'**

How is the Message Delivered? (Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice)

Activities:

- Compile relevant statistics about municipalities in the Danube River Basin.

- Select a few municipalities for potential pilot initiatives.

- Survey the awareness and attitudes of local authorities in selected municipalities.

- Design appropriate projects.

Resources

- Local authority information resources

- ICPDR Heads of Delegations and other national institutions

Measurement, Monitoring and Evaluation, Lessons Learned

- Successful engagement of local authorities with initiatives related to ICPDR and DRP.

- Successful implementation of communication initiatives.

APPENDIX I: METHODOLOGY

Successful Communication Strategies - a summary

PART 1 - Overview

There are three simple rules to successful Communication Strategies (and this includes subtypes like Campaign Strategies, Marketing Strategies, Media Strategies, Sales Strategies...)

They MUST BE **outcome–oriented.** They MUST BE **actionable.** And they MUST NOT BE **static.**

> PARTS 2 – 4 OF THIS SUMMARY DESCRIBE THE ELEMENTS THAT GO TO MAKE UP AN ACTIONABLE, OUTCOME-ORIENTED COMMUNICATION STRATEGY.

PART 2 - Elements

Background

This is what the communication work is concerned about and what it seeks to change.

For example, if the habitat of a very rare bird - restricted to the coast near one small town and found nowhere else in the world - is threatened by destructive proposed leisure development plans, the communication work may be focused around stopping the development and saving the bird.

 When we are planning communication work, and drawing up a Communication Strategy, we need to gather all the relevant background material: we need to make sure we have all the facts before we begin our work.

Think about a painting: the whole thing is contained within the canvas. The foreground is the subject, but there's plenty of background that completes the canvas and makes the foreground meaningful, giving it context.

For our background we'll need statistics, data, research reports, papers about the legislation, reports on the bird and its habitat, reports on the conservation of the coast and similar stretches in the same or nearby countries, etc, etc.

For example, what is the total area of the bird's habitat? How much (area) has been lost to development already? How much is under threat from the present development? How exactly will this affect the bird? What are the benefits for local people of the development? Which companies are involved? What are their records elsewhere? Do they have environmental policies? What is the position of the local and national Governments? And so on...

We may or may not be able to provide all the relevant background. What is important is that we ask the right questions and make sure that the most useful and relevant materials are sourced and held as background. Some areas of information we may just record as questions that we hope to answer as we take our communication work forward.

By the way, another useful element for the Background is previous experience/lessons learned from other campaigns. Placing this information at our disposal means that we can use ideas or techniques which have been tried and tested before - we can then choose the ones that are best for us.

A useful practical point: when we are planning communication work using this approach, we will eventually end up with a Communication Strategy document. There is no need for all the background material to be included in such a document: reference to it will be sufficient. So in our

rare bird example, there may exist an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) carried out by the developers. Rather than including a copy of this in the Communication Strategy document, it is enough to make reference to its existence and to where it can be found. There should ideally be a set of master files (electronic and/or hard copy) containing all the background materials.

Putting this more bluntly, the Background is vital, but don't let too much of it spill over into your communication materials. Far too many leaflets, brochures and websites spend far too long talking background before getting to the point. In this hyper-competitive world, where thousands of messages and thousands of communication approaches are competing for our attention every day and every hour, we cannot afford to lose the Target Audience's attention. So don't bore them or waste their time making them plough through background materials – get to the point!

In short, I say: "Background? Keep it in the...".

Who's doing the communicating?

This may seem unnecessary at first glance, but in fact it does need to be included.

In business this is "where the buck stops" and always needs to be clear. It might be a particular team within a business, e.g. the sales team, the promotions team or the marketing team.

Another situation where it is important is when a communication work is of a dispersed nature. Consider, for example, a car company launching a new range of vehicles. Overall, in theory, the company itself is doing the (marketing and sales) communication, but the reality is that its different national offices, representatives or franchisees are doing the sales and marketing in each separate country. In different places, different communication approaches may well be necessary.

The most obvious illustration of a dispersed aspect of communication work is in marketing slogans and product names. Often they simply don't translate, and different approaches have to be taken in different countries.

After all, the Vauxhall Nova may have sold OK in the UK, but it wouldn't do much in Spain, would it? "No va" means "it doesn't go".

You should look for the exact description of the 'entity' that is doing the communicating, so it may be you yourself, for example, or it may be your organisation in general, or it may be a team within that organisation

The reason I say 'entity' is because it can be a collection of people, a single person or an organisation.

In some cases, where your organisation is working very closely in partnership with another, then the entity becomes '[(Your organisation) + (Partner)['.

But be careful here: unless the partner is totally equal it is better to think of your organisation 'owning' the communication work and the partner being a (vital) communication resource.

In our bird example, it would probably be the local office of an organisation like WWF that is doing the communicating.

Desired Outcome

This is what the communication work seeks to achieve.

It is vital to define the Desired Outcome precisely and in a measurable way, so that we have something against which we can measure the Results (and therefore the success) of the work.

For example, in our rare bird case, our Desired Outcome may include phrases such as: "... 10,000 hectares of forest protected..." and/or "... an increase of 25% in the population of the bird..." etc.).

So it might be worded thus:

> "To save our very rare local bird from habitat destruction by protecting at least 5,000 hectares of its habitat, and by stabilising the population at 100 breeding pairs - and by making sure that local communities benefit from inward investment into the area."

Target Audience/s

These are the people at whom the communication work is aimed.

In a straightforward piece of communication work, there will conveniently be just one Target Audience.

But often, there is more than one - if so, we consider the communication components separately for each Target Audience, thus building a modular Communication Strategy.

In the rare bird example, the Target Audiences may be: local communities; local and national Government; local and national media; developers; overseas stakeholders in the developer company; birdwatchers; and supporters of the campaigning organisation.

There may be different (but not conflicting) Key Messages and/or Calls to Action for different Target Audiences.

Key Message

This is what the communication work is all about.

You should think about it as being what the people doing the communicating would say if the Target Audience was standing right in front of them and saying: "OK, tell us what this is **all** about, in 30 seconds or less." It really does have to sum up the communication work quickly and clearly.

It may be slightly different for different Target Audiences - but all Key Messages must be mutually compatible.

In most cases, the Key Message does not have to be repeated word-for-word every time it is used. It is best seen as a tool that can be adjusted for different Target Audiences. For example, in the rare bird example (if we accept that there may be different Key Messages for different Target Audiences) the Key Message to local authorities might be:

"You are responsible for the well-being of local people, and for the quality of our environment. This bird and its habitat represent our special and thriving local community. By helping us protect it, you will help make sure that wildlife, environment and local people benefit from inward investment."

Notice that the Key Message starts with the word "You" – this is a good way to make sure we are talking to the Target Audience (i.e. looking outwards rather than looking inwards). You don't have to put "You" (or "Your") right at the start, but including it early on is a good idea.

It would be important to write this Key Message down and have it as the official Key Message, but people should feel empowered to put it into their own words. So, if you were sent to talk to the local authority about the issue, you might say:

> "Our message to you today is this: the bird is important to the community, and the places where it lives are important too. They have great potential to attract people and investment from outside. Why throw that away? By working to save the bird and its home you'll be helping to make sure that everyone benefits."

This means the same as the official Key Message: it differs only in being put in somebody's own words.

Remember: a Key Message should always include a benefit for the Target Audience: in this case the benefit (to the local authority) is that protecting the bird and its habitat will be viewed positively by the community and will also attract business and investment (something local councils always like!).

When the communication work is effectively a campaign (and you could easily have a campaign to save the rare bird), a Key Message may be used as a campaign slogan: a slogan is best seen as a resource (see Communication PARTs, next Paragraph).

Call to Action

This is what the people doing the communicating want the Target Audience to do.

The Call to Action may be different for different Target Audiences.

You should think about it as being what the people doing the communicating would say if the Target Audience was standing right in front of them and saying: "OK, tell us what you want us to do - in five seconds!"

In the rare bird example, the Call to Action for local people may be:

>"Be aware of your unique local bird and the threats that face it."

As the communication work evolves, so may the Call to Action.

So later on, the Call to Action for local people may be:

>"Support us in our work (campaign) to save the bird and to bring investment into the area which helps local people and wildlife rather than threatening them".

The Call to Action for supporters of the organisation doing the communicating may be:

>"Please support our work (campaign) to save the special bird and the local community - please donate to make our work possible and help our work succeed."

As the process evolves, new (and sometimes very specific) Calls to Action may emerge - for example "Sign The Petition", "Support The Legislation" etc.

How the Key Message is delivered - Communication P.A.R.T.s

(Players, Activities, Resources and Tools)

These are used by the people doing the communicating to achieve the Desired Outcome of the communication work.

There is a special section on them below (Part 3: Elements ii)

Measurement and Monitoring

Only time will tell how well a Desired Outcome has been achieved. We know that it needs to be measurable, so we obviously have to measure it. In the rare bird example, the measurement is based around the targets we set in the Desired Outcome (number of hectares of forest protected etc.).

Monitoring is about the process of measurement. We can only really tell what has worked and what hasn't by monitoring as well as measuring.

A good example of this is when we are fundraising. We may have a total target of 10,000 units to be raised in 3 years. If we monitor how much money we are raising month by month, or week by week – and if we also watch carefully how well different activities are raising money - we will learn a lot more than if we simply count the money at the end of the first year.

In the rare bird example, our measurements may show that the population of the bird has increased by 18% in a year: we want to know whether this is because of captive breeding and release, the control of hunting, the protection of the habitat, awareness-raising locally etc. We can only determine this my monitoring the performance of each of our communication activities/resources.

Evaluation

When we have measurement and monitoring information in front of us, we have to evaluate it. What is performing well? What's working less well? We may not be able to determine precisely how much each activity has contributed to our level of success, but our measurement and monitoring information gives us a good idea of what is working well, what is working less well - and hence where to focus our resources and activities as the work evolves and progresses.

Evolution

The importance of this stage of the process cannot be overestimated. It is what makes a strategy dynamic – makes it a living document, responding to the changes that take place as it is executed. With evolution, a strategy is always up-to-date and up-to-speed; the next actions can be calculated with precision. Without evolution a strategy is static and weak.

As we evaluate the ongoing measurement and monitoring information we can feed the lessons we learn back into the Communication Strategy - and by doing this we can adapt and evolve it to meet our needs.

Communication initiatives are like living entities. They are never static, they are always changing and growing until they ultimately succeed or fail.

So our strategies should not be documents which are compiled at the start of the initiative and then left alone until much later on: they should be simple, straightforward (perhaps modular) documents which evolve and change as our campaign progresses.

Results

Finally, at the end of the work we get the Results. We hope that they equal or exceed the Desired Outcome!

Remember, as with every Red Berry analysis, we don't know the Results in advance: they only become apparent once the communication process begins. In the end, we hope that they will be the same as the Desired Outcome: right at the start we don't actually have any Results yet; as the process continues we have a growing bank of Results.

Lessons Learned

When the communication work is over, we will be able to look back and see the lessons we have learned. This can be very helpful in the future, when we can employ the lessons learned in future situations where we use the Red Berries

In the next Paragraph we'll take a closer look at the Communication P.A.R.T.s that are available to communicator/s.

PART 3 - <u>Elements ii</u>

When planning and carrying out communication work, we have a wide choice of Players, Activities, Resources and Tones of Voice that can be used.

As with any creative and practical task, choosing the right tools for the job - and in the right order - is of course essential.

If the task was to change legislation, for example, it would be sensible to seek to talk to Government - and to meet with Ministers - before calling campaign supporters out onto the streets to demonstrate!

Let's look at the **Communication P.A.R.T.s**: the Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice.

A *Player* is anyone outside the person/people doing the communicating who has (or attempts to have) a positive material effect on the communication work. Players don't have to support and help the work: they do so voluntarily. They are associated with it because they want to be, not because it's their job!

One of the most interesting types of Player is a 'messenger' - somebody who passes on the Key Messages and Calls to Action of a piece of communication work or a campaign without actually being in the communication/campaigning team themselves. Think of a religious leader talking to his/her people about an issue (human rights, say, or environment): this person is a messenger - and a potentially valuable player in a piece of communication work (or a campaign).

> ### *Why aren't the people doing the communicating Players too?*
>
> You can count them as Players too if you like – but it's just a repetition of the 'Who's doing the campaigning? Section.
>
> ### *What about people like an organisation's volunteers and members?*
>
> I tend to think of them as a Resource (see below).
>
> ### *What about a campaign's opponents?*
>
> Although we must always recognise that campaigning is a two-way process we don't give 'opponents' or people who are only involved very peripherally the status of 'Players'. If we did, it would soon lead to the analysis (or - more importantly - the planning, when we are looking forward rather than back) becoming confused and impractical.
>
> By the way, there is one more interesting angle to this. If an opponent - a person or organisation we are campaigning against - acts unintentionally in a way, which supports our point of view then they effectively, become Players for us - although they may not want to!

An example of this is where politicians behave in a way that makes people distrust them - in this way they may effectively become Players for the point of view or campaign they oppose.

The *Activities* are the things we do to carry out our communication work. They may include meetings, presentations, email-petitions, advertisements… - you can probably think of many more.

The main *Resources* are time, people and money. It is often useful to include a timeline/ time plan within our Communication Strategy.

Other resources include the Internet, the media, publications (leaflets and posters for example) and - importantly - peoples' ideas, opinions and experience.

Think of the resources as something that actually belongs to the person/people doing the communicating - or something they can use.

Activities and Resources often overlap. When we produce a leaflet and use it in our work, are we using a Resource or carrying out an Activity? Actually it doesn't matter how we think of it: the most important thing is to think about the Activities and Resources: better that something seems to come up twice than getting forgotten.

<u>Activities and Resources – some examples</u>:

Here is a list, in random order, of some things that can be Activities and Resources:

- Research (NB: adds to the Background, which – like the work as a whole – is never static)
- Media
- Websites
- Special events
- Lobbying
- Fundraising
- Advocacy
- Members
- Newsletters
- Networking
- Leaflet production and distribution
- Celebrities
- Special benefits for those involved
- Volunteers
- Donors
- Training/capacity building
- Stunts
- Protests
- Educational initiatives
- etc., etc

And the **Tone of Voice?** This is the flavour of the communication work. It is about the way that the Key Message is presented to the world -- and it is important to get it right, and to remain consistent.

Here are some words that reflect Tone of voice: when planning communication work you need to choose from among these words (and other adjectives) to determine the tone of voice of your communication:

- Urgent
- Committed
- Reasonable
- Professional
- Determined
- Concerned
- Visionary
- Etc, etc.

People often put a few words together to describe the Tone of Voice of their communication work, for example: "enthusiastic, practical and time-efficient".

Communication Strategies – the modular context

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Communication strategies rarely have just one Target Audience. When there is more than one Target Audience, strategic planning becomes more complicated.

The most important factor is that we need to treat each Target Audience separately.

In each case the Key Message, the Call to Action and the way the message is delivered may well be different.

We do this by making the approach modular. We effectively draw up a separate strategy - a substrategy - for each Target Audience.

Let's have a look at this in a particular context - that of a hypothetical campaign (campaigning is one form of communications and is useful in an illustrative way as the Desired Outcomes are often easy to perceive).

Campaign title

<p align="center">"Save our rare bird"</p>

Background

This, as we know, covers all the basic background information: the total area of the bird's habitat, the area lost to development so far, the effects of development on the bird, the results of any surveys of the bird etc., etc.

Who's doing the campaigning?

The local office of WWF.

Desired Outcome

To save the very rare local bird from habitat destruction by protecting at least 5,000 hectares of its habitat, and by stabilising the population at 100 breeding pairs - and by making sure that local communities benefit from inward investment into the area.

Target Audience/s

This is where things get interesting. We actually have a number of different Target Audiences: local communities; local and national Government; local and national media; developers; overseas stakeholders in the developer company; birdwatchers; and supporters of the campaigning organisation.

The problem is this: if we just make a list of them, and then start to make a list of Key Message after Key Message and Call to Action after Call to Action and How... after How... we are going to end up with a very unwieldy, hard-to-use and unfocused strategy.

So what we do is this. Firstly we list the Target Audiences:

- Local Government
- Local communities
- National Government
- Local and national media
- Developers
- Overseas stakeholders in the developer company
- Birdwatchers
- Supporters of the campaigning organisation

(No doubt you can think of more).

Then we number them:

1.   Local Government
2.   Local communities
3.   National Government
4.   Local and national media
5.   Developers
6.   Overseas stakeholders in the developer company
7.   Birdwatchers
8.   Supporters of the campaigning organisation

Then we restructure the Strategy, doing the following:

Naming the first page "Page 1", then:

Developing a substrategy for each Target Audience (this is why the whole thing is called a modular strategy: each substrategy forms a module of the whole, integrated strategy).

Each substrategy is titled according to its Target Audience.

Thus:

(Page 1)

Campaign title

<div align="center">

"Save our rare bird"

</div>

Background

This, as we know, covers all the basic background information: the total area of the bird's habitat, the area lost to development so far, the effects of development on the bird, the results of any surveys of the bird etc., etc.

Who's doing the campaigning?

The local office of WWF.

Desired Outcome

To save the very rare local bird from habitat destruction by protecting at least 5,000 hectares of its habitat, and by stabilising the population at 100 breeding pairs - and by making sure that local communities benefit from inward investment into the area.

Target Audiences

1.   Local Government - see substrategy 1
2.   Local communities - see substrategy (the number after the last page of the substrategy for Target Audience 1)
3.   National Government - see substrategy n' (the number after the last page of the substrategy for Target Audience 2)
4.   Local and national media - see substrategy n'' (etc.)
5.   Developers - see substrategy n''' (etc.)
6.   Overseas stakeholders in the developer company - see substrategy n'''' (etc.)
7.   Birdwatchers - see substrategy n''''' (etc.)

8.   Supporters of the campaigning organisation - see substrategy n'''''' (etc.)

Then ...

Sub-strategy 1: LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Campaign title (or separate Substrategy title if there is one)

"Save our rare bird"

Background

(See Page 1).

Who's doing the campaigning?

The local office of WWF.

Desired Outcome

Overall: To save the very rare local bird from habitat destruction by protecting at least 5,000 hectares of its habitat, and by stabilising the population at 100 breeding pairs - and by making sure that local communities benefit from inward investment into the area.

Specifically: for the Local Authority to introduce a policy safeguarding the bird's habitat and to refuse permission for the destructive development to take place.

> Note: we can see here that the Desired Outcome can in fact be considered to work at more than one level. At the highest level, there is the overall Desired Outcome for the whole campaign. Then there is the specific, practical DO for this particular module of the strategy (relating to this particular Target Audience).

Target Audience

Local Government (i.e. the Local Authority). Specifically, the Planning Officers responsible for environment, conservation and planning policies and decisions, and the Council members local to the area - and other Councilors who might support our position.

> Note 1 – although this may appear to be an unnecessary repetition, this heading gives us scope to expand upon the characteristics of the Target Audience in terms of their Involvement, awareness, attitude, demographics, psychographics and lifestyle. The better e can describe and know them, the better equipped we are to reach them.

> Note 2: there is actually more than one Target Audience within Local Government (elected members and appointed officers; ruling party and opposition, etc., etc.). To accommodate this, we can simply subdivide the strategy further. It would be fair to say that the Key Messages to the Councillors and the Officers might be different: after all, the Councillors are perhaps more concerned about votes than anything else, whilst this has a much less significant bearing on the Officers.

Key Message

"Our special bird and its habitat represent our special and thriving local community. By helping us protect it, you will help make sure that wildlife, environment and local people benefit from inward investment."

Call to Action

"Enact a policy protecting the bird's habitat - and refuse permission for the damaging development to take place. "

How is the message delivered?

Face-to-face meetings with Councillors and Officers; public meetings; production of promotional materials (e.g. leaflets, posters); media campaign.

The tone of Voice is concerned, urgent, practical and democratic.

Measurement and Monitoring, Evaluation, Evolution

These will become apparent as progress is made.

Results

Likewise the Results will eventually become apparent.

Lessons Learned

Likewise the Lessons Learned will become apparent later.

It is clear that as each of the substrategies is developed, an integrated campaign strategy emerges (note, for example, that media activity is part of the substrategy for the Local Authority: at the same time we know that the media is a Target Audience itself, thus the strategy starts to integrate and work as a whole).

It is often hard work developing a modular strategy: but that hard work is rewarded later, when we have a clear, focused and evolvable strategy to guide our work.

APPENDIX II:

BACKGROUND

DRAFT DANUBE RIVER BASIN COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

WORK IN PROGRESS REPORT

MAY 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERALL INTRODUCTION

The UNDP/GEF *Danube Regional Project (DRP)* identified the necessity for using communications as a key tool towards achieving its project objectives. In response, UNDP/GEF created Project Component 3.3, the main output of which became the development of a *Communications Strategy for the Danube River Basin* (herewith to be known as the 'Strategy').

The main output of the Strategy is the identification of specific communications vehicles that are effective in delivering key messages and information to specified target audiences in order to achieve specific desired outcomes for the project.

This draft strategy has been developed following seven key steps through the application of the *WWF approach to drafting a communications strategy*:

1. **Key issues/problems**

2. **Desired outcomes/responses**

3. **Target audiences**

4. **Key messages and Call to action**

5. **Vehicles for delivering the messages**

6. **Testing**

7. **Evaluation**

*This document is currently a draft **partial** strategy and represents the compilation of the inputs given by members of the Drafting Group thus far. A "Gap Analysis" has been added as an Annex to this report and represents the Project Manager's assessment of what might still be added to this strategy, either for its draft phase or its final phase.*

1. Key Issues/Problems

1.1 Introduction

A considerable amount of discussion, over a period of many months, was devoted to identifying the key issues and problems to be addressed by this Strategy. This was crucial - a communications strategy requires a concrete issue or set of issues from the outset. Communications is one among other possible tools that can be used to solve specific issues.

During discussions, over this period of time, a number of options arose including:

1. Supporting DRP - Its Overall Objectives
2. General Public Awareness of DRB Environment, Institutions and Processes
3. Supporting DRP – Its Project Activities

At the same time, it was recognized at an early stage that Component 3.3 had limited resources in terms of financing, human support and time. Therefore, the strategy would need to prioritise and limit its suggestions from the outset.

1.2 Key Options

Option 1: Supporting DRP - Its Overall Objectives

At the beginning of the discussions, it was initially believed that the purpose of the Strategy was to provide communications support to the original identified key objectives of the overall DRP which were stated as:

> *Strengthening the implementation capacities for nutrient reduction and transboundary cooperation in the Danube River Basin.*

Communications was seen as one of many tools that could be used to achieve this objective. Other potential tools included policy and model projects, for example.

A significant amount of early discussion during Component 3.3 was geared to helping UNDP/GEF clearly identify what its overall objectives were for the DRP, as well as what the overall issues were that they were trying to resolve through the project. For example, it was recognized early on that the original DRP objective - *Strengthening the implementation capacities for nutrient reduction and transboundary cooperation in the Danube River Basin* – needed to be assessed in terms of what it really meant and what specific issues it related to.

Similarly, while recognized as very useful for project planning purposes, the *DRP Organizational Chart* was not seen as very effective as communicating externally the goals or issues of the project. It *was* known, however, that an over-arching goal of the DRP was to stop the ongoing destruction of the Black Sea environment – and that communications could be used as a tool towards that end.

Later on, the answers to these questions were best presented in the *DRP brochure* developed by WWF for UNDP/GEF as part of its ToR for Project Component 3.3. In the brochure, a clear link was made between the original project objective and six specific objectives for the DRB. It is important to note that UNDP/GEF realized that the DRP itself could not address everything in the DRB, and therefore that key priorities had to be set for the DRP as well – in terms of external communications.

Accordingly, the brochure highlighted these six key objectives (herewith to be know as the 'Six Key Issues'):

1. Reducing nutrient pollution;
2. Reducing toxic pollution;
3. Improving water supply and other water services;
4. Strengthening agricultural policy;
5. Providing river basin management tools; and
6. Protecting wetlands and biodiversity.

The following represents brief descriptions of the Six Key Issues:

1. Reducing nutrient pollution

- The volume of nutrients – mainly from household products, urban sewage and agricultural fertilizers – is too high and is the key reason for the Black Sea environment being seriously at risk through the process of eutrophication.
- The biggest source is agriculture (e.g. manure, artificial fertilizers).
- Danube NGOs have a high degree of interest in the subject and have many existing related activities.
- It is of major concern to the EU and its DABLAS (Danube-Black Sea) Task Force.
- It is an increasing environmental problem globally. There are simply far too many nutrients exceeding the carrying capacity of the earth. The World-Watch Institute has released two reports which give excellent background to the global nutrient pollution crisis: *Toxic Fertility*, by Danielle Nierenberg, World-Watch March/April 2001; and *Psoup*, by Elena Bennett and Steve R. Carpenter, World-Watch, March/April 2002.
- There is minimal public awareness about what nutrients and nutrient pollution are, what solutions exist, and what people can do to support solutions. `Nutrients` just are not part of the everyday vocabulary of people. If they are, they often sound ´nutritious´, not polluting. This perception needs to be modified.

2. Reducing toxic pollution

- ***This section needs to be filled with a brief description of this issue!!!

3. Improving water supply and other water services

- Household waste includes other sources of nutrients, especially human waste, which enters sewage systems.
- Sewage is the main vehicle through which household and industrial detergents, that include large concentrations of phosphates (a key nutrient), flow into watercourses.
- In many locations in the Danube Basin, this sewage is poorly treated before flowing into natural watercourses. Part of the reason behind poor treatment is the lack of treatment infrastructure and the large costs for implementing investment projects.
- A related problem is the lack of awareness among users of water supply and other water services that they should pay the real costs for being serviced – this lack of awareness is especially true in urban centres, especially in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).

- EU Accession governments are already under pressure to meet the EU´s *Urban Wastewater Directive*. For the candidate countries hoping to join the EU, fulfilling this Directive has often proven to be the most difficult and expensive part of the accession process. Many countries have been given time extensions, some more than a decade after accession happens, to meet this directive.
- Many remote communities have no sanitation infrastructure.
- Big cities are a major source.

4. Strengthening agricultural policy

- The release of excess manure and fertilizers through agriculture now represents the largest nutrient pollution input.
- Fertilizer use in the DRB is expected to increase as recent sectoral trends indicate that intensive agriculture is expected to increase, especially in CEE with the adoption of the EU´s *Common Agricultural Policy* as part of the EU accession process.
- Some agriculture destroys and displaces wetlands.
- DRP Output 1.4 will encourage best land-use practices related to agriculture and wetlands and can add to the understanding of this issue.

5. Providing river basin management tools

- Member States to the Danube Convention are required to fulfil the EU´s Water Framework Directive which calls for the implementation of integrated river basin management tools within all catchment areas in the DRB.
- The implementing agencies of Member States need help in identifying what these tools are and how they can be used consistently throughout the DRB.

6. Protecting wetlands and biodiversity

- A large body of evidence suggest that wetland vegetation significantly serves to remove nutrients from water bodies. DRP Output 4.3 is assessing the capacity of wetlands to removes nutrients.
- Some 80% of the Danube's wetlands have been destroyed since the end of the 19th century, threatening the habitat of numerous species. The number of endangered species continues to rise throughout the basin.
- Conserving wetlands has the added benefits of conserving floodplains, habitat and species and purifying water.
- Danube NGOs have a high degree of interest in the subject and have many existing related activities.
- DRP Output 1.4 will encourage land-use policy favouring the conservation of wetlands.

Following the identification of these issues, with the earlier decision to name Component 3.3 the "Danube *River Basin* Communications Strategy" rather than the "Danube *Regional Project* Communications Strategy", it was observed that the name could be perceived as needing to address any or all environmental issues within the DRB - a long and very comprehensive task - regardless of whether they were one of the DRP's Six Key Issues listed above or not.

It was soon recognized that comprehensively addressing all Six Key Issues in Option 1 would be outside the limitations of Component 3.3, and that priorities would need to be set. This led to agreement that at least one specific environmental issue would be selected for focused

communications activities, within the larger and broader framework of the overall Strategy. To be selected, the issue needed to meet the following criteria:

1. Critical environmental issue in the DRB.

2. Related to the reduction of pollution in the DRB.

3. Interesting enough to catch the attention of target audiences (i.e. brings benefits; can be "hooked").

To assist with selecting one issue, it was noted that the World-Watch Institute's article on *Toxic Fertility* suggests three major reforms to solve the global nutrient crisis:

1. Shift from intensive agriculture to organic farming.

2. Shift from fossil-fuel economies to renewable energy.

3. Reverse destruction of planet's last remaining natural areas.

Comparing the issues highlighted by above with those of World-Watch, agriculture and wetlands (natural areas) are common to both.

In the end, most members of the Drafting Group believed the key select issue to be selected for targeted communications should be the need to:

Reduce nutrient pollution from agriculture in the DRB.

Option 2: General Public Awareness of DRB Environment, Institutions and Processes

From an early stage of the project, it was agreed that one of the key issues in the DRB was a lack of general public awareness about the basin itself, institutions working there, and processes being implemented. More specifically, there is not enough awareness among people living in the DRB about the following information:

- What a basin, and *ecoregion*), are.

- That they live in the Danube Basin.

- What the main environmental issues/problems are, including the Six Key Issues highlighted by the DRP.

- What the solutions to those problems are.

- What institutions and other political mechanisms, laws, processes and tools have existed and continue to exist to implement the solutions.

- How people can be involved in solutions.

There is even less awareness about the following specific facts:

- There is a *Danube River Protection Convention (DRPC)* signed by numerous Danube states and the EU dedicated to protecting the Danube Basin.

- There has been a Commission (*ICPDR*) based in Vienna since 1998 with a mandate to implement this Convention and which already has a number of achievements.

- The ICPDR and the signatory Member States of the Convention are legally obliged to implement the Convention as well as the EU´s *Water Framework Directive (WFD)*.

- The WFD is a landmark act (one of the best in the world) that holistically enhances water resource management and pollution control by valuing the ecological integrity of the river as a living and dynamic entity.

- The WFD requires an *Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM)* approach to planning.

- All eyes in Europe will be on the Danube Basin as it is a test case for implementing the WFD in Europe.

Given this general lack of awareness, the result is a number of related problems and issues in terms of attempts to improve the environment in the DRB. These include:

- The ability of the institutions mandated to implement solutions in the DRB are less effective if people in the DRB are not aware of, and do not support and participate in (1) the implementation of those solutions and (2) the institutions mandated to implement solutions.

- The implementing organizations are not well known by the general public and do not have a recognized brand or image.

- Implementing institutions, especially the ICPDR, are now being encouraged to develop a strategy to include public participation into the development of the DRB Management Plan for implementing the WFD. This will also help fulfil obligations under the *Aarhus Directive*. Without an adequate level of public awareness, however, implementation of a public participation strategy and implementation of the WFD will be hampered.

- People have a right to know and to become democratically involved in the process. And people should understand their local environment and how it fits into the larger *ecoregion*, thereby promoting environmental stewardship and accountability.

- Officials and Opinion Leaders in particular will be more motivated to support the process if they are aware that there is an existing political process and framework, and that international action is already happening.

It is important to recognize that there have been in the past improvements in raising general awareness of, and promoting public participation in, the DRB. However, this has usually been through organizations working on their own rather than through a coordinated set of activities.

Option 3: Supporting DRP – Its Project Activities

Following further discussion, the question was raised as to whether the communications Strategy was meant to provide communications support solely for the activities within the DRP. There are about 80 activities within the DRP and the main activities were presented in the *DRP Organizational Chart* by UNDP/GEF early on.

All of these activities were geared to some extent towards helping achieve the original DRP objectives noted in Option 1. Each activity could also potentially have its own communications strategy (e.g. suggesting certain publications etc.) linked to one overall Strategy for the DRP.

Given project limitations, it was agreed that Component 3.3 would not be able to provide communications support to each and every DRP activity on a one-to-one basis. However, it was agreed that it would be possible to provide communications support to each activity at a generic level.

It was also agreed that the communications Strategy could provide "overall project-wide" support to the DRP, meaning support for communicating externally the DRP's main objective and activities, for example, as through the DRP brochure and website (see later).

2. Desired Outcomes/Responses

After careful analysis of the options in Step 1, the following key overall desired outcome of the strategy was agreed:

> *Create strong public awareness of, support for, and participation in reducing pollution input, especially of nutrients and toxins, into the Danube River Basin.*

This would be achieved through a strategy geared towards five main outcomes:

Outcome 1: Increased stakeholder awareness of the Six Key Issues identified in Option 1 above*.*

Outcome 2: Increased stakeholder awareness of, and stakeholder participation in solving, the one priority issue selected from the six above - *reducing nutrient pollution from agriculture* in the DRB

Outcome 3: Increased general public awareness about the DRB itself, the Six Key Issues, institutions working there, and processes being implemented, through a coordinated set of activities.

Outcome 4: Raised awareness about the project-wide goals and activities of the DRP.

Outcome 5: Communications support for the 80 activities within the DRP.

3. Target Audiences

Outcome 1: Raised stakeholder awareness of six key issues

Targets here are the main environmental stakeholders within and outside of the DRB – those people and groups with a significant stake in being affected by and potentially influencing the Six Key Issues highlighted in this Strategy. This includes:

- Governmental officials;
- Civil servants at various governmental levels, especially implementing agents of the WFD;
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs);
- Business or industry representatives;
- Academics and scientists; and
- International organizations.

Outcome 2: Reducing nutrient pollution from agriculture

For the specific outcome of reducing nutrient pollution from agriculture, the main audience will be farming networks working in the DRB. These include:

- Cooperatives
- Extension services; and
- Local communities.

Outcome 3: Increased general public awareness about DRB

This outcome relates to a broad set of target audiences. It is geared primarily to raising the awareness of potentially all residents living within the DRB, given that they have a stake in the environment where they live and can influence the DRB environment to a limited extent. These include:

- DRB citizens and residents;
- Teachers and trainers;
- Media representatives and journalists; and
- All of the target audiences listed for Outcome 1 above.

Outcome 4: Raised Awareness about DRP

The main audiences here are environmental stakeholders who are significantly affected by, or could contribute to implementing, the activities of the DRP. They are generally the same as those target audiences identified above for Outcome 1. They especially include:

- Member State delegations to ICPDR;
- NGOs to be affected by DRP; and
- Parties contracted by the DRP.

Outcome 5: Communications Support for DRP Activities

The target audience here is members of working groups for specific DRP activities. Members will for the most part be scientists and experts with technical knowledge in specific environmentally related fields.

4. Key Messages

Outcome 1: Raised stakeholder awareness of six key issues

"The following are considered to be the six key environmental issues, by the DRP, in the DRB:

1. Reducing nutrient pollution;
2. Reducing toxic pollution;
3. Improving water supply and other water services;
4. Strengthening agricultural policy;
5. Providing river basin management (RBM) tools; and
6. Protecting wetlands and biodiversity.

It is important that, as stakeholders in the DRB, you increase your understanding of these key issues to effectively apply your responsibility in supporting their resolution. New information services now exist to help you increase your understanding and the work that you do, and we encourage you to use them."

"Regarding the increased awareness and use of RBM Tools in the DRB, the DRP is making available to Member States to the Danube Convention a number of RBM tools that can be used to assist with the implementation of the Water Framework Directive in your country. UNDP/GEF encourages you to understand and use these tools and the DRP can assist you with this process."

Outcome 2: Reducing nutrient pollution from agriculture

Messages first need to be communicated to raise basic awareness of nutrient pollution. These include:

- "The volume of nutrients – mainly from household products, urban sewage and agricultural fertilizers – is too high and is the key reason for the Black Sea environment being seriously at risk through the process of eutrophication.
- Far from being ´nutritious´, excess nutrients are pollutants.
- Globally, this is an increasing important environmental problem. There are simply far too many nutrients exceeding the carrying capacity of the earth.
- Solutions exist and people and organizations like you can take action to support solutions."

In observing a past lesson learned, it was not so long ago that people globally were unaware of how excess carbon in the atmosphere contributes to global warming and climate change. In many parts of the world, these terms are now understood, have become part of everyday vocabulary and regularly enter daily discussions at home, on the street and in popular media. The same is true for the relationship between the release of man-made ozone-depleting substances and the depletion of the ozone layer.

There is therefore now an opportunity for the DRP to ultimately become a progressive model for expanding public awareness of the threats from nutrients worldwide, and place nutrients and nutrient pollution into everyday vocabulary, starting in the Danube Basin.

With this basic awareness, messages targeted to reducing nutrients from agriculture in the DRB can follow, including:

- "The release of excess manure and fertilizers through agriculture now represents the largest nutrient pollution input in the DRB.

- Fertilizer use in the DRB is expected to increase as recent sector trends indicate that intensive agriculture is expected to increase, especially in Central and Eastern Europe with the adoption of the EU´s *Common Agricultural Policy* as part of the EU accession process.

- Alternatives, such as organic agriculture, exist and you can use them." *(*** more research needs to be conducted here in the future in terms of alternatives)*

- Outputs from DRP Component 1.4 of the DRP can be used to provide solutions. For example, "do not convert existing wetlands into farming operations. Also, allow some existing identified farming areas to be restored into former wetlands."

Outcome 3: Increased general public awareness about DRB

"You live and work in a river basin. You should know more about it because what happens to it affects you, and so you can participate in its improvement.

Protecting the environment in the DRB means protecting water, air, soil and living things for you, your children and their children's use and enjoyment."

There are a number of key environmental issues and problems in the DRB including:

1. Reducing nutrient pollution;
2. Reducing toxic pollution;
3. Improving water supply and other water services;
4. Strengthening agricultural policy;
5. Providing river basin management (RBM) tools; and
6. Protecting wetlands and biodiversity.

Institutions and other political mechanisms, laws, processes and tools have existed and continue to exist to implement the solutions.

There is a *Danube River Protection Convention (DRPC)* signed by numerous Danube states and the EU dedicated to protecting the Danube Basin. There has been a Commission (*ICPDR*) based in Vienna since 1998 with a mandate to implement this Convention and which already has a number of achievements. The ICPDR and the signatory Member States of the Convention are legally obliged to implement the Convention as well as the EU´s *Water Framework Directive (WFD)*.

The WFD is a landmark act (one of the best in the world) that holistically enhances water resource management and pollution control by valuing the ecological integrity of the river as a living and dynamic entity. The WFD requires an *Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM)* approach to planning. All eyes in Europe will be on the Danube Basin as it is a test case for implementing the WFD in Europe.

There are ways to get involved and we can help you get started.

Outcome 4: Raise awareness about DRP

"UNDP/GEF has been working to address priority environmental problems in the Danube Basin since 1992, and has had numerous achievements.

The DRP is UNDP/GEF's third and probably final project in the Danube Basin, geared to strengthening the implementation capacities for nutrient reduction and transboundary cooperation in the DRB.

The DRP is part of the larger 95 million USD *GEF Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction in the Danube/Black Sea Basin* – GEF´s largest and perhaps most ambitious water-related project in the world.

The six key issues addressed by the DRP are:

1. Reducing nutrient pollution;
2. Reducing toxic pollution;
3. Improving water supply and other water services;
4. Strengthening agricultural policy;
5. Providing river basin management tools; and
6. Protecting wetlands and biodiversity."

Outcome 5: Communications support for DRP activities

"For your specific DRP activity, you are encouraged to use communications as one tool among many to achieve your objectives. The DRP can assist you with communications support."

5. Vehicles for Delivering the Messages

Introduction

As noted earlier, there has already been a number of awareness raising *products* and *activities* implemented in the DRB. Key implementing agencies of these activities have been the ICPDR, WWF, REC and DEF, among many others. It would be most efficient to build on what is already there. There is no need to completely *re-invent the paddle*.

At the same time, it has been noted that communications would be more effective if existing products and activities were *coordinated*. Furthermore, existing communications products and activities should be assessed or tested as to whether they meet the needs identified through this Strategy. If they do not, then they will need improvement or new products and activities will need to be developed.

The five vehicles (herewith known as the Five Key Vehicles) that follow have been chosen because of their ability to effectively deliver the key messages identified above. It is important to note that, in some cases, the vehicles also deliver a broad collection of information related to, backing up and strengthening the key messages. In some cases, the vehicles described here will include existing products and activities and these will be discussed.

The Five Key Vehicles are:

1. DRB Information Clearinghouse
2. General Awareness Raising Campaign (Arts Competition)
3. Issue-Driven Campaign (Reducing Nutrients from Agriculture)
4. DRP Awareness Raising
5. DRP Project Activities Support Service

The following table links each Key Vehicle with the Target Audiences and Outcomes identified earlier in this Strategy. It can be seen that Key Vehicles 1 and 2 are geared towards reaching more than one Outcome.

KEY VEHICLES	TARGET AUDIENCES	OUTCOMES
1) DRB Information Clearinghouse	Local, national, and international environmental stakeholders in DRB.	1,2,3,4
2) General Awareness Raising Campaign	Local urban residents in DRB countries.	1,3,4
3) Issue-Driven Campaign	Rural farmers who input nutrients into DRB catchment area.	2
4) DRP Awareness Raising	Local, national, and international stakeholders of DRP.	4
5) DRP Project Activities Support Service	DRP Working Group members.	5

5.1 DRB Information Clearinghouse

From the outset, the DRB Information Clearinghouse should focus on delivering the key messages and related information identified in this Strategy for all five key Outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Raised stakeholder awareness of Six Key Issues

- Outcome 2: Reduced nutrient pollution from agriculture

- Outcome 3: Increased general public awareness about DRB

- Outcome 4: Raised awareness about DRP

- Outcome 5: Communications support for DRP activities

While the above should be its focus, at the same time, it should be recognized that the Clearinghouse could potentially deliver a broader range of information related to other important issues in the DRB. Furthermore, the Clearinghouse can change its focus over time if necessary, modified to current and new issue priorities.

5.1.1 What is a Clearinghouse?

This is a *one-stop-shop* for all and any relevant information related to the environment in the DRB. There is currently no such facility existing in the DRB. Such a vehicle would add value to existing communications products by uniting them under one roof - what now exists is too spread out geographically and among different organizations thereby making it difficult for potential users to access. It would also add new products and activities where necessary. Basically, it can be seen as one large message or information delivery vehicle under which there are a number of sub-vehicles (specific products and activities).

An information clearinghouse is usually a basic function for any environmental organization representing a specific geographical area or convention – for example, the clearinghouse function of the *Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)* or that of the *OzonAction Programme* for the *Montreal Protocol for Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer*. Its three main functions are usually:

- Collecting information;

- Re-packaging information; and

- Distributing re-packaged information to target users.

Each of these elements is equally essential. More specifically, it will further serve as an:

- Information collector - centralizing information from all possible sources;

- Information "re-packager" - reformatting, restructuring, translating or modifying information;

- Information producer - developing new information that does not exist elsewhere;

- Source for obtaining precise information; and

- Expert referral service that refers or "points" users to sources of information and assistance.

As a result of its activities, a clearinghouse helps build the skills of stakeholders, enabling them to become more informed and involved in making appropriate decisions. Stakeholders can also learn to create their own clearinghouses tailored toward their own specific goals and target users.

For the DRB, there could be one clearinghouse for the entire DRB, as well as national clearinghouses focused on the DRB and country-specific issues.

5.1.2 User Needs and Capabilities

The vehicles will be delivering the key messages and related information identified above. The next step is to carry out an assessment of what already exists in terms of delivery vehicles in the DRB and whether this meets the needs of potential users (target audiences identified in Step 3). There are some existing communications products and activities in the DRB. For example, these include the ICPDR's newsletter *Danube Watch* as well as the ICPDR's website.

User *capabilities* must also be assessed - certain users may be limited by personal or external circumstances in their abilities in receiving information – for example, they may not be able to access the Internet easily.

Language is a key concern. Users get dissuaded and even offended in some cases if they receive important information that is not in their primary language. The DRB includes the lands of 17 countries and numerous languages – many people do not speak or read English. The assessment would be strengthened with an understanding of language capability in the DRB.

The assessment of user needs and capabilities should be structured according to a number of typical clearinghouse products and services from which to choose including:

1. Library
2. Publications
3. Databases and directories
4. Website and other electronic products
5. Question & Answer service
6. Visits, training and public awareness events
7. Media Relations
8. Promotional Items
9. Videos and Films

Each of the above products and services represent a mini-clearinghouse unto themselves, with each performing the three main functions of a generic clearinghouse – collecting, re-packaging and distributing information. However, the synergy of these multiple products and services with one another is what gives the clearinghouse its strength and value.

If possible, a professional market survey company should be hired to carry out this assessment. More work is needed to identify the information required through the assessment and implementation. Ideally, sample populations of target audiences in representative DRB countries would be assessed. *It is suggested that the professional market research Drafting Group Member for this project add information here.*

5.1.3 Financial concerns

Budget: A clear understanding of future funding for the clearinghouse is absolutely crucial, presented through a budget ideally for at least five years. It may not be worth the effort to create a clearinghouse if, say, funding has only been secured for one year by an external donor and possibilities for funding after that appear minimal or impossible. Staff will probably be the most expensive, yet important, component. Aside from human resources, other main budget categories include in-house operations (i.e. telecommunications), production costs (i.e. paper, printing) and distribution costs (i.e. postage, Internet line).

Pricing: Most probably, products and services will be free to users. However, many clearinghouses end up charging for some products, or some users, without having planned for it suitably. While collecting fees can supplement a clearinghouse budget, it can also be time-consuming and complex. It can also turn potential users away. It should be recognized that residents and NGOs in

Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States tend to have far lesser incomes than their counterparts in the West – priced communications products would therefore make them much more accessible in Western countries.

5.1.4 Products and Activities

Introduction

All of the products and activities noted below should focus on delivering messages and information related to the Six Key Objectives identified above. Each product/activity should be seen as having separate and interlinked component sections or areas for each Objective.

5.1.4.1 Library

A library is one of the oldest and most well known sources of information – mainly containing books and periodicals (e.g. journals and magazines). However, two major recent factors have influenced the current usefulness of libraries to clearinghouses.

First, clearinghouse users tend to be geographically distant – often preventing them from being able to visit a library physically. This is very true for the geographically large DRB. For example, it is hard to envision stakeholders in Moldova travelling to, for example, Vienna to take out books on nutrient reduction.

Second, the increase in electronically disseminated information has changed user demand for written publications.

Nonetheless, there will always be some library visitors. Furthermore, written publications are still demanded by many, and if users cannot physically visit a library themselves, they are still greatly served if a library maintains a *bibliographic directory* of its stock and makes it available to users either in print or electronic form (i.e. via a website). The library's value as a bibliographic reference centre is further increased if information directories are *searchable* on the Internet.

Library staff will undoubtedly be a key interface with users in clarifying questions and locating appropriate information. Librarians should also manage ongoing and new acquisitions – a library loses value if it discontinues periodicals or new additions.

The information needed to fill a library comes from various sources. This, of course, often comes at a cost. On the other hand, it is suggested to try to get new products for free by noting the clearinghouse's public function and non-profit status. Industry, for example, is usually quite willing to give detailed information about their products and services once they understand the goals of a clearinghouse.

Other tips include:

- Network with other libraries to avoid duplicating existing work;
- Create an electronic, automated library search system if possible;
- Create new topic collections on hot and timely issues and announce them periodically to users; and
- Have the librarian regularly communicate with target users to ensure that the right information is collected and that the information classification/retrieval system is appropriate to their needs.

Information in a library need not be restricted to publications. Other product examples include videos, films, posters, photos and CDs.

A library for DRB information focused on the Six Key Objectives would be highly useful given the lack of one now. A strategy should be created to determine the mix of library resources to be made available for information related to each of the Six Objectives.

5.1.4.2 Publications

Despite the plethora of electronic information available today, printed publications are still in significant demand from users in both developed and developing countries. Interestingly, observers now note that the two media have different key uses. Publications tend to be read more comprehensively and at length for deeper insight into issues. In contrast, information posted through electronic media (i.e. the Internet) is used more for quick and specific searches (i.e. facts and statistics). As an example, regarding the issue of RBM tools, a website could provide a quick list of recommended tools from the ICPDR while a publication could go into detailed explanation on how to effectively use each tool.

Publications produced in-house can be very valuable for users, whether they are short and snappy one-page pamphlets or 200-page in-depth analyses of timely subjects. Usually, clearinghouses only produce longer publications if they are supported in their research and writing by other divisions in their organization. In fact, a clearinghouse often becomes the producer and distributor of publications for the organizations to which they belong – like an in-house publishing and communications department.

In-house publications, however, are difficult to produce, time-consuming, require a diverse collection of human resource skills and are relatively costly. They require research, writing, editing, layout and design, copy editing and printing (usually done externally). Physical production costs can be quite high including paper, film and printing, as can distribution costs including transport, postage and storage. If in-house publications are to be made, then a highly skilled in-house editor and designer are strongly advised. An alternative is for the clearinghouse to contract out the development of publications to consultants.

If publications are to be produced by the clearinghouse, they should have a consistent design so that they are easily recognizable to users, as practiced for example by the REC.

Currently in the DBR, the ICPDR has been involved for some time in creating printed publications about DRB issues. These include, among others:

- Technical reports from scientific and expert groups;
- Collections of maps;
- "Joint Action Programme for the DRB January 2001 to December 2005";
- Annual Reports; and
- "Danube Watch" newsletter

Broadly speaking, the ICPDR's publications now appeal mainly to a technical and scientific audience, with its focus on long technical reports. Only the "Danube Watch" newsletter and website appear to be attempts to reach a larger audience.

ICPDR publications should be assessed in terms of their ability to deliver the key messages and information related to the Six Key Objectives identified in this Strategy and their ability to get to and be used effectively by target audiences.

It is suggested that the ICPDR launch a consistent design strategy for all of its future publications.

There is currently a lack of basic and brief information about the basin in general and the Six Key Objectives. A sub-strategy should be developed to create brochures and a set of 2-page Fact Sheets to fill this gap (e.g. one Fact Sheet for each Objective), which can be placed together in an attractive folder.

It is further important that a number of new publications:

- Appeal to a broader audience than just technical and scientific experts;
- Be developed with a suitable length, design and language that is appealing to potential users;
- Focus on graphical representations of the region including maps and photos; and
- Include brochures that market the services of the clearinghouse.

A sub-strategy needs to be created to develop the best mix of future publications for the Clearinghouse.

Danube Watch

Regarding the ICPDR "Danube Watch" newsletter, the advantage of having such a newsletter is that it can potentially:

- Regularly keep users and stakeholders updated about the latest news and issues – this looks very good in the eyes of users who would otherwise have to spend enormous amounts of time themselves in keeping track;
- Connect users with each other (networking and partnerships);
- Promote the clearinghouse and the organization to which it belongs; and
- Provide a forum where objective reporting can be mixed with subjective opinions on key issues.

It is suggested that "Danube Watch" be assessed for its effectiveness, as well as for its ability to focus on delivering the key messages and information on the Six Key Objectives identified in this Strategy.

5.1.4.3 Directories and Databases

Printed *directories* are very valuable sources for locating quick and specific information, especially related to organizations (i.e. ministries, NGOs, importers, donors) and other sources of information (i.e. bibliographic references). They also go out of date very fast (i.e. contacts change address) so they need constant updating which can be quite costly and time-consuming - but very worthwhile for users.

A *database* is an organized store of hard copy documents or computerized data. It is particularly useful when the information for a database is in the same format (i.e. addresses, numbers) so that users can search information more easily. Most databases include an internal *search engine* for just such searches. And directories should, if possible, be converted into searchable databases accessible via the clearinghouse's website *(see next section)*.

Furthermore, a good database officer with technical skills and experience is needed – especially because many databases end up going beyond their original objectives, becoming too complex for users and thereby defeating their original purpose.

There are numerous opportunities for DRB information to be incorporated into directories and databases, linked to the overall messages identified in this Strategy. A sub-strategy should be created for this purpose. One example is directories of printed publications related to the Six Key Objectives (e.g. reducing toxic pollution), which can later be input into searchable database format and included in the library and website. Another is a searchable photo database with photos from the DRB.

5.1.4.4 Website and other electronic products

The Internet and other electronic media are having a profound effect on the availability and flow of information, providing an extensive network of information sources at low cost. The growth in Internet use, including in CEE and the NIS, over the last few years has been exponential and this is expected to continue. It is therefore an essential product for most clearinghouses.

Website

A website is by far the most important product. The website's *Home Page* should clearly explain to users (or direct them to an explanation) exactly what the purpose of the website is and what they can use it for. Ideally, there will be a skilled *webmaster* with in-depth knowledge in design and website planning and mapping.

Websites are great for housing wide varieties of information. They can contain written information, photographs and other images - even movies and sound. It's a good idea to have news and new issues posted in brief on the Home Page – but these should not be crammed with text. There should also be plenty of attractive graphics which lead users to explore the website and its more in-depth information. Possible components of a website include information on:

- Timely news and issues;
- Organization and mandate;
- Upcoming events;
- Maps;
- Publications and related lists;
- Searchable databases;
- Immediate links to other organizations;
- Other clearinghouse services;
- User feedback section;
- Contact information … and the list goes on.

The website can electronically store and make available to target audiences almost all of the products and activities of the Clearinghouse.

Some clearinghouses post the full text of their long publications onto their websites. Very thoughtful, but time-consuming and costly for both webmaster and user. One suggestion is to give users the option of *downloading* from your website the publication file in more accessible formats (i.e. Word or with Adobe Acrobat).

It is easy to keep an ongoing record of how many visits (or "hits") a website gets. But one should not be misled by big numbers because they are not necessarily meaningful. Many are mistakes or hits by external search engines doing their regular checks. The webmaster should know how to properly interpret the numbers.

Websites with information about the DRB already exist including:

- ICPDR (includes a site for the DRP);
- WWF International Danube-Carpathian Programme;
- Others?

Existing websites should be assessed and, if possible, aligned with this Strategy. Some suggestions have already been made to the UNDP/GEF webmaster for aligning their website to the Strategy and to simplify user browsing of information.

Listserv

Another recent popular electronic tool is a *listserv* -- a distribution list management package. Listserv servers maintain lists containing the names and email addresses of users. Any member of a list can send an email to that list which the server will then forward to all other members of the list. This service provides a convenient means for the exchange of ideas and information between list members. There are many different lists, each containing users who share particular interests. Listserv servers can also log mail traffic, store all the messages associated with their lists, and carry out database searches of archives and files.

A separate listserv could be created for each of the Six Key Objectives of this Strategy, attracting stakeholders with similar interests in the DRB including the need for joint solutions.

Virtual conferences

Also growing in popularity (and sophistication) are *virtual conferences* – conferences and discussions between people through their computers over the web. Again, as with listservs, virtual conferences could be conducted for discussions related to the Six Key Objectives.

5.1.4.5 Question & Answer Helpdesk

Also known as a "hotline", the Question & Answer Service takes the clearinghouse services one step beyond. Not only do in-house staff have to know where all of the information is located. They also have to be able to get to it fast and present it as clearly as possible to users. For this, skilled *information specialists* with search, writing and communications skills are needed. They should also have in-depth knowledge of the Six Key Objectives and news.

Questions to a hotline can be made in person, over the phone, fax or email. Questions, however, may not always come from a targeted user according to the original plan. For example, high school students have been known to try to get their assignments done for them by clearinghouse hotlines.

The more typical customer will be targeted stakeholders who require *sources* of information related to the Six Key Objectives, more than the information itself. This is a key point. Clearinghouses often waste time completing papers for customers. That's not the goal. The main goal is to point the customer to relevant sources, be they in-house or external. There will be times, however, that the information itself will be provided (along with source) in response to short and specific questions relating to facts or statistics. But more often, sources will be the response. And there is an added bonus to providing sources only – through this approach, customers will also be encouraged to improve their own skills in searching DRB information.

Sometimes, many questions bombard the officer at once. So, once a question has been received, the hotline officer should check the following:

- Is the customer a primary target user?
- How time-sensitive or urgent is the request?
- How relevant is the question to the mandate of the Clearinghouse (i.e. does it relate to the Six Key Objectives?)?

The more primary the target, urgent the request, and relevant the question - the higher the priority.

If the query can be answered easily, then the response should be quick. If it is highly technical or politically sensitive, then consultation may be necessary with management, experts or cooperating organizations. Regardless, a response should always be sent immediately, either with the information requested, or with a note that it is coming - the important thing is to respond quickly to maintain user faith and interest.

The hotline officer then conducts a search for information, first internally, then externally. Internally, it means going through the Clearinghouse archives - from the library to the publications to the databases and so on, usually through the web. Externally, the officer should have a good command of the clearinghouse functions of other organizations - many of them will also have Question & Answer services that can be used. They will probably also have their own websites, libraries and so on. The point is to ease the search for the customer.

Journalists are renowned for using clearinghouses for information. Their job is to get information quick, so they use all the help they can get. They are also renowned for being very critical with answers.

Finally, a record of every question and answer made should be kept, including origin of customer, date, nature of question and time for response. This will help with evaluating the service later.

5.1.4.6 Visits, training and public awareness events

A clearinghouse can also undertake on-the-ground outreach work. This allows for reaching an important target group that does not usually have the access (or the time) to up-to-date, essential information via other communication channels. Face-to-face contact can be a very powerful force, allows for two-way instant communications (and feedback), and often leads to long-term partnerships and cooperation.

Many clearinghouses provide or facilitate interactive training sessions for users – for example, on-site training in how to more effectively use the services of the Clearinghouse. The DRB Clearinghouse could actively link itself with the training-related activities of the DRP.

Finally, a clearinghouse can also organize public awareness events that have a double benefit of disseminating messages and information as well as promoting the clearinghouse's services.

5.1.4.7 Media Relations

Journalists should also be seen as colleagues and catalysts for getting information out to the general public and target audiences and for raising awareness and public involvement. It is therefore a good idea for a clearinghouse to eventually create an information service geared to the specific needs of journalists – for example, a weekly tipsheet of news sent by email to journalists which they could use as ideas for bigger stories.

A DRB Clearinghouse could eventually encourage specific journalists to have as one of their foci one of the Six Key Objectives in the DRB, after they know that steady streams of useful and interesting news and information are secure and will follow.

It is a good idea for a clearinghouse to have an up-to-date list of journalists. For the DRB, this would include a list of local and international journalists in the location of the Clearinghouse, as well as top environmental journalists from each country in the DRB, especially the key 11 countries dealt with by the DRP.

Finally, it has been noted that there remain many "untold stories" in the DRB which are of interest to media and journals. The Clearinghouse could actively seek submitting DRB stories to select media.

5.1.4.8 Promotional Items

The clearinghouse could be involved in creating "entertaining" products which promote the DRB and the Clearinghouse itself. These typically include calendars, postcards, pins and T-shirts, for example – products that people could potentially use any or every day.

5.1.4.9 Videos and Films

There already exist a number of videos, films and documentaries related to the DRB. WWF DCP maintains a collection of these. It would be good to have copies of these in the DRB Clearinghouse library. Opportunities may also arise for the creation of new videos and films related to communicating information about the Six Key Objectives.

However, creating a video and film is expensive, and requires a high level of skill and time. There is a high level of interest from the media and film-makers about the Danube so the DRB Clearinghouse, if interested in making a film, should link up with an interested producer and provide valuable information for the film, and be recognized accordingly.

5.1.5 Marketing the DRB Clearinghouse

A *marketing plan* is suggested to market the services of the Clearinghouse to targeted audiences.

The first step is to produce printed brochures or pamphlets for distribution, *promoting* the Clearinghouse. Another good idea is the produce the promotional items mentioned above.

A directory or list of targets should be created, including the media. A dynamic *press release* presenting the Clearinghouse and its new products and services should be sent to the lists of potential users, media targets and other clearinghouses.

While optional, it is advisable to plan (and include in the press release) an *Open House* where potential users will have the chance to visit the DRB Clearinghouse and use its products and services first-hand. If planned properly, an Open House should include an opening ceremony, or press conference – best served with popular speakers and refreshments.

Other marketing ideas include:
- Promotional information in the Clearinghouse newsletter and website;
- Articles sent to journals, newsletters and newspapers;
- Information booths at conferences, workshops and trade fairs to inform and distribute promotional materials; and
- Presentations about the Clearinghouse at conferences and workshops.

5.2 General Awareness Raising Campaign

Introduction

The DRB Information Clearinghouse discussed above is primarily for target audiences with an active interest in learning about the DRB - stakeholders - because the information gives them a personal benefit, most probably in their occupation. For example, a journalist who needs to write a story or a government official who needs to implement the WFD in their country. In this way, the clearinghouse is primarily a *reactive* vehicle, waiting for stakeholders to use its services (although it does actively promote these services).

At the same time, a more active vehicle is needed to raise broad general awareness about the DRB as highlighted in Outcome 3. If one sees the users of the clearinghouse as the "converted", the vehicle below appeals more to the "unconverted".

5.2.1 Gauging Current Awareness

The first step should be a sample survey of awareness among the target audiences for Outcome 3 related to their understanding of the issues and information highlighted in Outcome 3. The survey should be conducted by a professional market research company, ideally door-to-door in a few

representative countries in the DRB – for example, Austria, Hungary, Croatia and Romania. *The Drafting Group market research expert could devote more work here*.

This would give an indication of similarities and differences between countries, and would identify gaps in awareness related to the issues identified for Outcome 3 as well as what currently interests DRB target audiences.

5.2.2 International Art Competition

5.2.2.1 Introduction

Following the awareness survey, gaps in awareness will become identified. In response, appropriate key selected messages about the DRB from this Strategy could then be delivered to fill those gaps, using an *international art competition* as the vehicle. The value in such competitions is that they have been tested and have proven very appealing to people, attract numerous applications, can be broadly communicated through mass media, and subsequently are very effective in raising awareness.

Lessons for this competition can be taken from similar art competitions and exhibitions implemented in the past in other sectors including:

- WHO "Artworks" project - getting smokers to quit using art;
- "Earth from the Air" travelling photo exhibition; and
- "World Press Photo" travelling photo exhibition.

All of the above were highly successful in attracting people and sending messages directly to them and indirectly via the media.

One of the added communications advantages of such a competition is their ability to outreach through both the art *and* environment sectors – media exist for both, much more so for the art sector, increasing potential message distribution, especially for urban targets.

5.2.2.2 Theme

The competition should choose as its theme a topic that is timely, emotional and positive. It should be positive because people in the CEE part of the DRB have been and are constantly receiving negative messages through the media these days about the world and especially their part of the world –for example, increasing poverty, loss of traditions etc. A positive theme based on the positive natural assets of the DRB around them will counter that current negative trend and invite their interest – something that could be tested in the market survey suggested above.

There should be two themes. One should specifically relate to *interconnectedness* – that the river ties countries and peoples together in the DRB. The second should relate to *pollution* – that the DRB has a serious pollution problem but solutions exist. Here the focus should be on the solutions, not the problems.

The themes, once selected, should be professionally pre-tested on sample audiences for effect.

5.2.2.3 Medium

There will be two art media - sculpture and photo. Sculpture will attract professional artists from the region and sculpture has the ability to display the tangibility and three-dimensional dynamism of nature. Photo will attract a much broader group of participants, both professional and amateur.

Sculpture tends to be more modern art-oriented – something that not all people are attracted to. Photo, on the other hand, tends to be more attractive to a broad-based audience. Photo is also much easier to transport and display.

5.2.2.4 Competition

The number of countries involved in the competition will need to be determined – the more along the Danube the better to encourage the interconnectedness theme.

The competition will have the advantage of being international, while being able to bring out a number of local messages based on local artists representing images of a local part of their DRB around them. In effect, the presentation of the art will be a presentation of the DRB being a greater whole than the sum of its parts.

Awards to be given to the winners should be attractive and enticing and possibly related to the DRB – for example, a boat cruise or a year's supply of organic produce.

5.2.2.5 Launch and Awards Ceremony

The competition should be launched through a significant media event to get messages out. Messages should be delivered by celebrities at the launch.

The awards presentation should be a major media and public event. The date selected could be the first ever *International Day of the Danube*, a yearly event, with the theme possibly changing annually (similar to *World No Tobacco Day* or *International Black Sea Day*). This could be a key Danube contribution to *International Year of Freshwater 2003*.

To launch the first Day, there could be a *Discover the Danube* boat trip down the Danube. Participants would be selected youth (who won national competitions) from each Danube country who represent their countries. They would learn about issues important to the DRP such as agriculture and fertilizers, nutrients, urban sewage, and wetlands and floodplains. Creative and related activities during the cruise could include testing the water, fishing, eating organic food, swimming, exploring wetlands, visiting sewage treatment plants, taking photos, meeting fishermen and farmers, writing stories, creating related artworks, and having interviews with journalists. Media representatives would also be invited on board.

When the youth return back to their countries, they could become funded as *National Youth Ambassadors for the Danube*, spreading the message to youth throughout the country.

5.2.2.6 Urban Exhibitions

Once the winners and art have been selected, the art could become a travelling exhibition in key cities along the Danube. Target audiences would be urban residents to broaden their awareness of their rural DRB environment.

The art could be transported via boat on the Danube, with participants invited for the cruise along the way including representatives from key target audiences as well as celebrities, media, national youth representatives, local officials and artists.

5.2.2.7 Budget

A key consideration is that such an activity could be expensive to implement. A possible solution is to receive discount assistance from a professional market research company. Another is to create a partnership with a corporate sponsor which would also benefit from the communications. For example, a phosphate-free detergent manufacturer in the DRB could increase its branding and sales. Such a partnership was used in the above "Artworks" project between WHO and pharmaceutical companies and proved successful.

5.3 Issue-Driven Campaign

5.3.1 Introduction

Outcome 2 highlighted the need to go in-depth into raising awareness about one of the Six Key Objectives identified in this Strategy – namely, *reducing nutrient pollution from agriculture*. While the DRB Information Clearinghouse would focus a key section and many of its products and activities on this objective, additional more active delivery mechanisms are required, primarily for the purpose of getting the target audiences to act in a way that directly contributes to solving the problem – namely, reducing nutrient pollution from agriculture.

Here a campaign is suggested. According to WWF, a *campaign* is meant to mobilize action above and beyond daily business, by seizing on opportunities and events and moving people from awareness to understanding to action. It is an active attempt to persuade others to get what you want. It is a connected set of actions to obtain a particular response.

The main target audience will be farming networks (e.g. cooperatives, extension services and local communities) working in the DRB. This "rural audience base" will balance the "urban audience base" that was the focus of the international art competition identified above – in this way, two broad-based audiences in the DRB have been targeted.

Key messages will begin with delivering information about nutrient pollution, followed by how agriculture is its main source. They will end with the message that alternatives exist and farming networks should implement them for their own benefit.

As a first step, gauge past experiences with surveying farmers in DRB about awareness and targeted communications campaigns to get them to act.

Given the limited resources of this project, a full sub-strategy was not possible for this project component. It is therefore advised that Phase II of the DRP include the creation of such a targeted strategy.

5.4 Raising awareness about DRP

Introduction

As noted in Outcome 4, awareness should constantly be raised about the overall and project-wide objectives and outputs of the DRP itself. The first communications vehicle created towards this end was a *DRP brochure*.

5.4.1 DRP Brochure

As part of the ToR for the DRB Communications Strategy project, a two-page A3 folded brochure was created as the DRP´s first communications product. The brochure included most of the key messages identified in this Strategy and was created originally for a global GEF meeting focused on water management in September 2002. At the meeting, the brochure was deemed a major success in giving audiences there a general background about the DRP and issues in the DRB. It was thus a successful delivery vehicle and is considered to be more effective in externally communicating the project than the *DRP Organizational Chart*.

Since the time of its launch, the information in the brochure has been "re-packaged" in various ways including a pamphlet for the Danube Environment Forum of NGOs (DEF) and the UNDP/GEF website. It continues to be the DRP's main information vehicle about itself.

The brochure should be actively distributed to a wider set of target audiences (e.g. Heads of Delegations, ICPDR). Furthermore, there is a need to re-edit parts of the brochure (e.g. add GEF logo, etc).

5.4.2 Other Vehicles

Other vehicles identified in this Strategy are also prime vehicles for delivering messages about the DRP. This includes the DRB Information Clearinghouse, where special sections could be devoted to disseminating information about the DRP and its activities. It includes the international DRB art competition where the DRP could be promoted. Finally, the issue-driven campaign for reducing nutrient pollution from agriculture could find value in specific DRP activities devoted to agricultural issues.

It is not suggested that UNDP/GEF created a separate information clearinghouse for its DRP communications. Rather, it should use existing and planned clearinghouses to link onto, given the existing close relationships. These include:

- UNDP/GEF information networks (e.g. website);

- ICPDR; and

- The proposed DRB Information Clearinghouse in this strategy.

At the same time, UNDP/GEF should re-align its website towards this Strategy, with a focus on the Six Key Objectives. It is also suggested that a Communications Officer be designated to actively coordinate the following communications activities to disseminate DRP information:

- Aligning DRP website;

- Question & Answer Service;

- DRP Communications Bulletin (see below);

- Story submissions to media; and

- Live presentations at workshops, conferences etc.

5.4.3 Launching This DRP Strategy

During earlier discussions, it was agreed that the DRB Communications Strategy should be officially launched once finalized and approved. News about the launch was to be posted on the Home Page of the DRP website. The Drafting Group still needs to develop a sub-strategy for how this launch would be implemented.

5.5 Support Service for DRP Project Activities

This strategy has identified the need to provide communications assistance *internally* to the many separate project activities (about 80), and the Working Groups managing them, within the DRP.

All DRP project Working Groups should receive a set of *Guidelines* on how to implement communications into their projects. All Groups should be encouraged from an early stage to incorporate communications into their project planning and budgeting. Furthermore, the Guidelines should be a modified version of the "Outline Paper" which was created by this Strategy for the purpose of explaining to UNDP/GEF and ICPDR how the "WWF approach to communications" works and how it is applied. This approach can similarly be used by all project Working Groups.

A regular monthly *DRP Communications Bulletin* should be distributed to all Working Groups to keep them informed of overall communications implementation and strategizing for the DRP, and possible links for their own activities.

If resources and funding permits, a consultant can be hired to train Working Groups in how to incorporate communications and the DRP Communications Guidelines, and to inform them about the DRB Communications Strategy and possible links with their activities (i.e. discussing proposed issue-driven campaign with agriculture-related DRP activities).

The guidelines should assist the Working Groups in communicating the right messages and information to the right target audiences, especially where the active involvement of specified target audiences are required for the successful implementation of the Working Group's activity.

The Output 3.3 Project Manager has already attended Inception Meetings for Working Groups for DRP Outputs 1.4 and 4.3 during which time he advised the Working Groups that one joint communications strategy be produced for these two outputs, which basically comprise the main elements of the DRP devoted to wetlands. This will be linked as best as possible to the Output 3.3 Communications Strategy, which provides overall guidance. It is hoped that this communications linkage between Output 3.3 and Outputs 1.4/4.3 will serve as a model for linking Output 3.3 with all other Outputs under the DRP.

5.6 Implementers – Who Manages and Implements the Delivery Vehicles?

5.6.1 Overall Coordination

It is recognized that the UNDP/GEF DRP cannot alone fully implement the Strategy given its limited resources and capacity. Other organizations within the DRB will also need to participate in its implementation, using the tools and guidance provided by this Strategy.

It is suggested that one body should be made overall *Communications Coordinator* for the implementation of the Strategy, and for carrying out any further strategy drafting activities (i.e. in the next Phases on the DRP). The Coordinator should be responsible for ensuring that the key actions of this Strategy are implemented, either through its own actions or through delegation to others. This includes ensuring the implementation of the following:

1. Develop DRB Information Clearinghouse;

2. International DRB Art Competition;

3. Draft strategy for an issue-driven campaign to reduce nutrient pollution from agriculture;

4. Information dissemination about DRP; and

5. Production and dissemination of communications support to DRP Working Groups.

The Communications Coordinator will need to have sufficient capacity and funding. *Sustainability* is an important criterion for choice, as an Information Clearinghouse should only be created if it is to exist for at least five years. Furthermore, the awareness raising expected in this strategy can take years.

While the Communications Coordinator should coordinate the above activities at an international level, other nationally based organizations can assist the Communications Coordinator in implementing the activities at the national level. Furthermore, the Communications Coordinator also has the option of contracting out to other international organizations specific international activities within this strategy.

Ideally, the Communications Coordinator should be in a position to fund some of the international and national activities. It is important to note that, currently, the DRP is in a position to fund some national efforts in a limited way, especially through DRP Output 3.1 (supporting Danube NGOs) and Output 3.2 (small grants for NGOs).

5.6.2 Links with DRP Outputs 3.1 and 3.2 – National DRB NGOs

This strategy can be seen as an *International Strategy* with a comprehensive communications framework, which can in turn be filtered and tailored down to the national level – to be

implemented in part by national organizations or *National Communication Focal Points*, preferably ones that already exist. This relates especially to the following desired outcomes of this strategy:

- Creating nationally-based DRB Information Clearinghouses;
- Implementing the International DRB Art Competition at the national level;
- Implementing the issue-driven campaign for farmers at the national level; and
- Disseminating DRP information nationally in the DRB.

If such a framework is accepted, DRP Outputs 3.1 and 3.2 could be intrinsically linked to Output 3.3.

For example, it has been suggested in the past that some or many of the Small Grants to be developed under Output 3.2 will be given to NGOs involved with raising awareness about DRP goals and outputs. If so, it is suggested that the winners of these grants should be key vehicles through which the international Strategy can be implemented at the national level. It then follows that the criteria for being awarded the Small Grants should be as favourable and related as possible to being such a vehicle.

It is also crucial that only the absolute number of necessary awards be given out. To clarify, too many NGOs sending out the same messages and information to the same target group will prove inefficient. It is also crucial that the NGOs receiving awards consistently communicate the same key messages developed by this Strategy.

In effect, the NGO grant winners could and perhaps should be some of the main implementers of the Strategy at the national and local levels.

Not surprisingly, many of these NGOs will be part of the Danube Environmental Forum (DEF), which is to be financially and technically assisted through DRP Output 3.1 – *Institutional Development of NGOs*. Part of this further suggests the development of NGO-specific communications products. These funds can also be used to fund NGOs as national vehicles for the Strategy.

Discussions have already taken place to link Outputs 3.2 and 3.3 to ensure that any communications about the DRP are consistent. As a result, some DEF products have already been launched with clear and consistent information about the DRP and the potential links in the future between the DRP and DEF NGOs.

Furthermore, this linking approach will help with evaluating the product effectiveness of Small Grants. During a June 3, 2003 *Small Grants Consultation Meeting* with the REC, the implementation body of Output 3.2, the REC noted it had found it very difficult to qualitatively evaluate the effectiveness of awareness-raising grants they had awarded in the past to NGOs working in the DRB.

They said that they relied on a quantitative indicator which is the number of communication products that were disseminated. This therefore assumes that what is disseminated is read or used, and desired responses follow. Communications practice proves, however, that this is not necessarily true. Even if products are disseminated, they may never be read or used, desired messages may not get through, and desired responses may never occur. This method is therefore not suggested.

One problem in the past for the REC may have been that the grants awarded to NGO communications and awareness-raising activities did not follow any standard or consistent communications strategy. It is possible that the NGOs, once receiving the award, developed their own messages, which possibly conflicted with one another. It is also doubtful whether any pre-testing was done by the NGOs on messages and products, or post-testing as to their effectiveness – hence again the REC's use of an indicator which measures 'number of products disseminated'.

It is thus highly recommended that this Strategy provide the overall framework to the grant-giving activities related to awareness raising and communications by NGOs in the DRB. The key messages

and products developed through the Strategy can be pre- and post-tested by professional market research companies – thus providing both quantitative AND qualitative evaluation indicators. Furthermore, the implementation of this Strategy will be exponentially more powerful if a number of different NGOs are consistently implementing the same Strategy throughout the region, at the right time, in the right places, with the proper overall guidance.

To compliment this, training activities have been suggested throughout the DRP. This includes Project Component 2.6, and training activities for Components 3.1 and 3.2.

During the June 3 meeting, a number of participants advocated maximum efficiency when inviting regional NGOs for regional training sessions. It is thus strongly suggested that a number of DRP components be dealt with at these meetings, including Components 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3, and how they interlink with each other.

If the above suggestions are welcome, then training sessions for regional NGOs could accomplish the following related to communications and awareness raising activities:

- Explain that a Communications Strategy for the DRB is being developed that will lead to key desired outcomes, messages, products and activities, and that these will be tested;
- DRB NGOs will be among the key vehicles for implementing many of the recommendations of the Strategy;
- Some of the Small Grants will be awarded to some NGOs to implement components of the Strategy, based on their capacity to implement, past experiences and expertise, knowledge with the issues, and relations with target groups;
- The Grants will also greatly help to support their capacity-building in the area of implementing communications and awareness raising activities, so that they could become key such players in the long-term future for the DRB;
- They will also learn how communications strategies are tested, so they will know first hand whether their efforts are fruitful and how they fit in with the larger efforts in the region, of which they are an integral part; and
- In the end, following testing at the end of the project, UNDP/GEF will be recognized as an international organization that truly understands professional communications, and cares.

During the July 19, 2003 meeting between WWF and UNDP/GEF, it was agreed that the above suggestions be seriously considered. A meeting with DEF was suggested, as was another possible meeting similar to the June 3 *Small Grants Consultation Meeting* with the REC in Austria – this time devoted to communications. This was again encouraged during an August 23, 2003 meeting.

5.6.3 Potential International Implementers

There are a number of internationally-oriented environmental organizations existing in the DRB which could potentially be involved in implementing parts of this Strategy including:

International Convention for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)

The ICPDR has already for years been servicing certain target audiences with information. To date, the focus has been on Member States to the Danube Convention and providing them with technical and scientific reports.

The secondary target audience has been a broader group, typically people and organizations with a stake in the environment of the DRB. This group has mainly been serviced by the "Danube Watch" newsletter and the ICPDR website.

The ICPDR is therefore in a position to assess its existing communications vehicles in relation to the suggestions of this strategy and fill any gaps. Some specific suggestions for ICPDR are to:

- Build a minimum communications capacity for itself and enhance its communications efforts, especially to become more of an Information Clearinghouse for the DRB;

- Plan and produce an ICPDR brochure which explains what the ICPDR is and does in a non-technical and appealing manner;

- Re-align its existing website with this strategy; and

- Assess its *Danube Watch* newsletter.

WWF

The WWF International Danube-Carpathian Programme (DCP) was contracted to manage this project given its extensive communications skills, experience and knowledge of the DRB region.

WWF is the only international NGO in the region, aside from the DEF, with a mandate specifically oriented towards protecting and improving the DRB, and communications is one of its six key strategies.

WWF DCP has a number of communications products and activities geared to the DRB including a website, numerous publications and Fact Sheets, and photo and video library. It has also conducted a number of issue-driven campaigns in the region.

UNDP/GEF

As the donor for this project, UNDP/GEF is in a position to develop its own in-house implementing body for this strategy.

Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)

The REC has been involved with this project from the beginning as the organization managing the Small Grants for the project (Output 3.2). The REC could take on additional communications responsibilities given that it has both an international headquarters located in Hungary and Country Offices in all of the Danube countries in CEE. It also has extensive capacity with information production and exchange.

Danube Environment Forum (DEF)

As noted earlier, the DRP already has links with Danube NGOs especially through DRP Output 3.1 – *Institutional Development of NGOs.* It is also envisioned that DEF NGOs will receive some of the Small Grants to be awarded through Output 3.2. While the national NGOs within DEF could take on some of the national implementation responsibilities for this Strategy, the DEF Secretariat might also be considered for its potential role in being the Coordinator.

UNEP

UNEP is globally coordinating the *International Year of Freshwater 2003*. Opportunities most probably exist to link some of the suggestions of this Strategy with products and activities that UNEP has planned for this *Year*.

6. Testing

Testing is an option before messages and products go out (pre-testing) and after they have already gone out to target audiences (post-testing). Testing is ideally done by a professional market research company using representative samples of target audiences. Professionals can assist the Strategy implementers in defining the appropriate questions and sample audiences to be used in survey work.

6.1 Pre-testing

Pre-testing of key messages is strongly suggested before they are incorporated within delivery mechanisms. Typically, the research should try to determine whether samples being tested are persuaded by the message to follow through with the desired action.

For example, for Outcome 2 (Increased general awareness of the DRB), testing will be very useful to determine whether the tone of the key message should be positive as suggested in this Strategy (i.e. Knowing about the DRB will help you to improve your environment) as opposed to being negative (i.e. There are numerous pollution problems in the DRB).

Pre-testing of delivery mechanisms (products and activities) is also encouraged. For example, sample target audiences can be shown draft brochure mock-ups to ascertain whether they achieve their desired effects or not. If not, the brochure can be modified before going through an expensive printing run.

It has been suggested in this Strategy that testing be used to define DRB information user needs and capabilities, especially for informing what should be incorporated into the DRB Information Clearinghouse.

Finally, it was also suggested to assess whether there have been any past or existing projects implemented to gauge or raise the awareness of farmers and related bodies in the DRB.

6.2 Post-testing

This type of testing is done once the delivery mechanisms have been sent out to the target audiences, as opposed to testing samples before they have been released.

Samples of the target audiences are surveyed to answer the following main questions:
- Did you have contact with a specific product or activity?
- What was the message that came across to you?
- Did you like the message?
- Did the message convince you to act in a certain way?
- Did you act in that way?

For example, urban residents of Danube cities can be questioned as to whether they heard about the DRB International Art Competition, whether they applied, whether they attended any events, and if so, what message did they receive, did they like the event, and did they act differently afterwards.

Another example is to question DRP Working Group members as to whether they incorporated the DRP Communications Guidelines into their activities from the beginning and whether they felt this benefited their activity or not.

7. Evaluation

The Evaluation step will benefit significantly from the information provided through the previous Testing step. The testing will have revealed whether certain delivery mechanisms achieved their goals of getting the right message to the right people to get them to act the right way to achieve the desired outcomes of this strategy.

This Evaluation step will consolidate all post-testing results into overall conclusions about whether this Strategy was appropriate in achieving the overall desired outcomes for this project.

More consideration could go into this step.

ANNEX: GAP ANALYSIS

As noted in the Introduction, this document is currently a draft **partial** strategy and represents the compilation of the inputs given by members of the Drafting Group thus far. This Gap Analysis has been added as an Annex to this report and represents the Project Manager's assessment of what might still be added to this strategy, either for its draft phase or its final phase.

Section: 1.2 Key Options/Option 1: Supporting DRP - Its Overall Objectives

Gap: Description of "reducing toxic pollution" required.

Section: 4. Key Message/Outcome 2: Reducing nutrient pollution from agriculture

Gap: More needed on what are alternatives to nutrients in agricultural production.

Section: 4. Key Message/Outcome 3: Increased general public awareness about DRB

Gap: Refine messages, making them less technical and better hooked to interests of target audience.

Section: 5.1 DRB Information Clearinghouse/5.1.2 User Needs and Capabilities

Gap: Market survey research into needs and capabilities of users can be made in this or next phase.

Section: 5.1 DRB Information Clearinghouse/5.1.4.4 Website and other electronic products

Gap: Assess alignment of websites with DRB information and assess effectiveness.

Section: 5.2 General Awareness Raising Campaign/5.21 Gauging Current Awareness

Gap: Market survey research to be implemented in this or next phase.

Section: 5.3 Issue-Driven Campaign/5.3.1 Introduction

Gap: Gauge past experiences with surveying farmers in DRB about awareness and targeted communications campaigns to get them to act, in this or next phase.

Section: 5.4.3 Launching This DRP Strategy

Gap: Sub-strategy for launching DRP Communications Strategy required.

Section: 5.6.2 Links with DRP Outputs 3.1 and 3.2 – National DRB NGOs

Gap: Follow-up meeting with REC and DEF to define links between Project Outputs 3.1, 3.2, 3.3.

Section: 7. Evaluation

Gap: Expand on this step.

(end)