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# Executive summary of the SCOPING REPORT OF SEA for the Operational Programme of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014-2020



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In the new programming period of the European Union (2014-2020) the role of ex ante evaluation is reinforced, mainly because of the strong orientation of Cohesion Policy towards effective contribution to the three priorities of EU 2020 Strategy, i.e. smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and linked targets. In line with this aim the Common Provision Regulation (No 1303/2013 of European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006) requires an ex ante evaluation to be carried out for each programme, in order to improve its quality and design that should also verify that objectives and targets set in the programmes can be reached. Where appropriate, the ex-ante evaluation shall incorporate also the requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) done in line with Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (SEA Directive).

**In the frame of the Scoping Report the following information is provided for decision on scoping:**

#### **The Danube Transnational Programme**

On 6th October 2011 the European Commission adopted a draft legislative package for the Cohesion Policy for the funding period 2014 - 2020. According to it, European Territorial Cooperation will be continued and even reinforced as a separate cohesion goal. The Danube Programme is meant to be a new transnational programme, which is to contribute to the implementation of the Macro Regional Strategy for the Danube Region as well. The European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) adopted by the European Commission in December 2010 provides an overall framework for parts of the Central and South East Europe area aiming at fostering integration and integrative development. The assessment object of the SEA is the Operational Programme of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014.

#### **The geographic frame for SEA:**

The Danube Region covers 12 countries (9 EU countries: Austria, the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia as well as 5 non-EU-member countries: Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the Republic of Moldova) plus the 'Danubian' regions of Germany and Ukraine.

#### **Time frame for SEA:**

The time frame of the SEA - for those development trends which are related to the expected state of the environment and the possible impacts on environmental issues - is the programming period 2014-2020 plus two years.

#### **Objectives and areas of interventions:**

On the bases of the pre-selected thematic objectives and investment priorities of the programme the following Priority Axes, specific objectives and fields of actions are proposed in the first Draft Operational Programme Version 1.0 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014. (The detailed content of the thematic objectives and investment priorities have not been approved by the Programming Committee yet, but the selection indicates the potential investments.):

Priority Axes	Thematic Objectives	Investment Priorities	Specific objectives	Fields of actions
PA1	TO 1 Research & Innovation	1b (6f)	SP 1: Building more balanced innovation capacities in the Danube region and contribute to a positive change in innovation performance.	F 1: Eco-innovation F 2: Collaborative university system F 3: Knowledge transfer F 4: Cluster policy F 5: Social innovation F 6: Skilled entrepreneurship
PA2	TO 6 Environment, resource efficiency	6c	SP 2: Strengthen common approaches to valorise the natural and cultural heritage in a sustainable way.	F 7: Cultural diversity F 8: Sustainable tourism
		6d (5b)	SP 3: Strengthen effective approaches to preservation, restoring and management of large-scale bio-corridors and wetlands to contribute to the stability of ecosystems.	F 9: Integration of ecological networks and green infrastructures F 10: Integrated flood risk management F 11: Climate change adaption
PA3	TO 7 Transport	7b	SP 4: Improve regional connectivity to the TEN-T infrastructure through systematic preparation of strategic investments in cross-border transport infrastructure and missing links and bottlenecks and accompanying capacity-building for better planning, implementing and managing cross-border investment projects.	F 12: Regional connectivity to the TEN-T
		7c	SP 5: Prepare the ground for sustainable transport solutions including rail and inland waterways investments, modal integration, intelligent transport and sustainable transport in urban areas in order to reduce the environmental impact of transport in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and local pollution.	F 13: Integration of low carbon transport systems F 14: Environment friendly metropolitan transport & mobility
		7e	SP 6: Better coordinate the development of smart energy distribution systems in order to make the significant investments of regions in renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and smart	F 15: Smart distribution F 16: Security of energy supplies

			grids more efficient and contribute to the security of energy supplies.	
PA4	<b>TO 11 Governance</b>	11 acc. ERDF Reg.	SP 7: Strengthen policy development in areas with major societal challenges through improved cooperation and capacity building of public bodies and other stakeholders and the creation of powerful cross border information- and planning tools.	F 17: Social dimension / labour market F 18: Social dimension / education & training F 19: Social dimension / migration F 20: Social dimension / Inclusion of Roma F 21: Civil society development F 22: Metropolitan networks
		11 acc. ETC Reg. Article 7	SP 8: Strengthen the skills (capabilities) and resources (capacities) of institutions and actors to implement the EUSDR in a more effective way.	F 23: Support to PACs F 24: Financing fund F 25: Focal Point

### Determining the likely significance of effects

The effects of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014 have been determined by the specificity of the programme and the type of actions planned as likely significant, have cumulative nature according to the criteria of the European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment –ANNEX II.

According to the characteristics of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014:	
- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	considerably
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	even tempered
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	considerably
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	to a high degree
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection)	facilitates this type of implementation
According to the characteristics of the effects:	
- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	widely
- the cumulative nature of the effects	widely

	cumulative
- the transboundary nature of the effects	in respect to the partner countries
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	risk exists
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	widely
- social and economic processes are assumable that may have environmental consequences indirectly	considerably
- the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	interventions may affect protected areas
<b>According to the value and vulnerability of the programme area – likely to be affected:</b>	
- due to the specific natural characteristics or cultural heritage	such areas may be affected
- due to the exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values	such areas may be affected
- due to intensive land use (such as areas of intensive agricultural or forestry growing, production, areas with dense population, etc.)	such areas may be affected

**The environmental assessment shall be carried out** since the characteristics of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014 fulfil the categories and requirements which determine the necessity for the Strategic Environmental Assessment procedure, due to the following reasons:

- The Operational Programme of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014 is a programme which is determined to be likely to have significant environmental effects according to Article 3(3) and 3(4) of the SEA Directive. The determination of the likely significance of effects is detailed in chapter 3.
- The Operational Programme of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014 is subject to preparation and adoption by national and regional authorities in the partner countries, and prepared for adoption through legislative procedure by the Governments.
- The Operational Programme of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014 is required by legislative provisions.
- The Operational Programme of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014 is financed by the European Union and by national Governments.

- The Operational Programme of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014 is prepared for several sectors detailed in chapter 2.
- The Operational Programme of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014 sets a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II of the Directive EIA.

This executive summary is based on the detailed Scoping Report of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014. Scoping Report is provided for the environmental authorities for their decision on the likely significance of effects of the Operational Programme of the Danube Transnational Co-operation Programme 2014.

Environmental authorities have 30 days to send their remarks in English language. The possible remarks of the environmental authorities will be integrated into the final scoping report and into the environmental report. Non-reception of comments will be considered as approval of the document. The Report is available in English language and in PDF format on the following website<sup>1</sup>: <https://www.nth.gov.hu/en>

Comments could be sent to the following e-mail address: [danube@nth.gov.hu](mailto:danube@nth.gov.hu).

The language for the comments is English.

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<sup>1</sup> Website of the Office for National Economic Planning (hosting the future Managing Authority)