

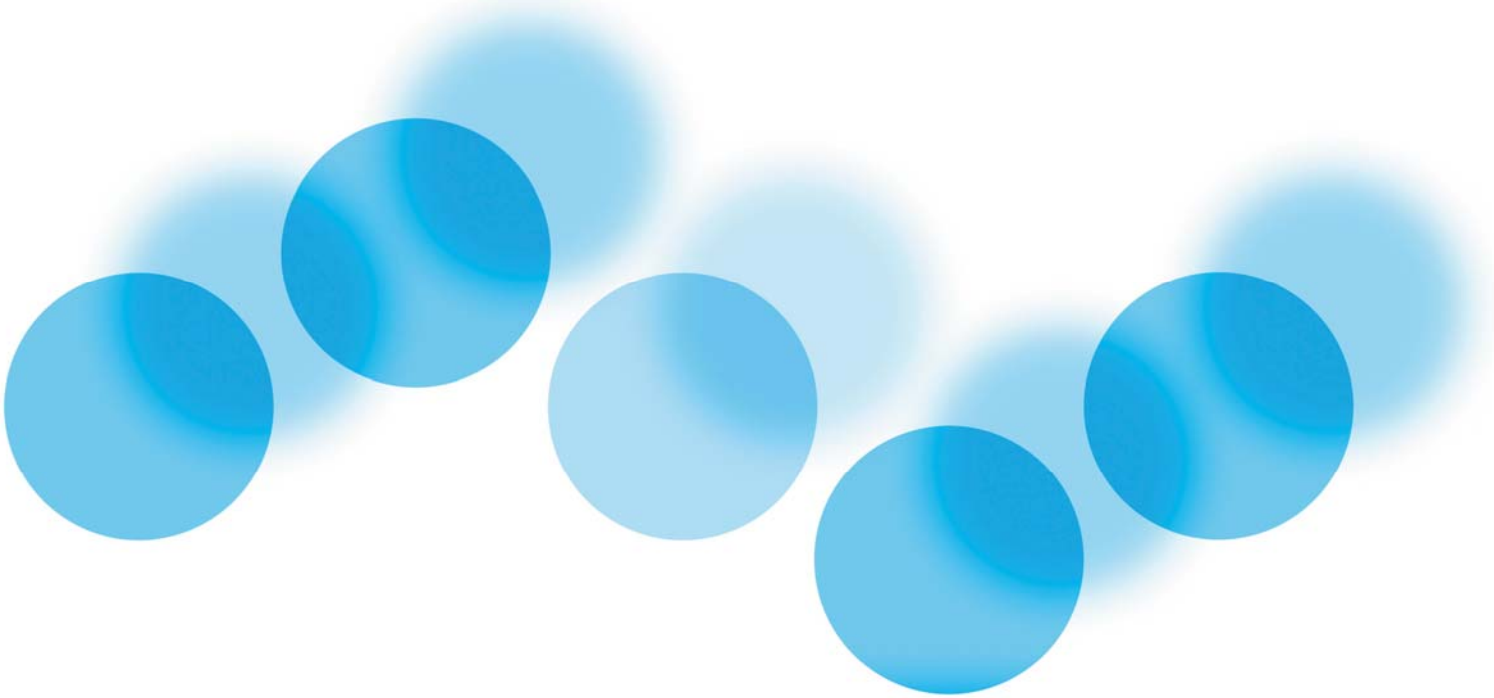


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PROJECT

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NGO SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME 2004-2005

Results of NGO Feed-back Mission
8 – 15 March 2005



WORKING FOR THE DANUBE AND ITS PEOPLE

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

BA	Bosnia i Herzegovina
BG	Bulgaria
CS	Serbia and Montenegro
CZ	Czech Republic
DRP	UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project
FY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (today CS)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HR	Croatia
HU	Hungary
MD	Moldova
PRP	UNDP/GEF Danube Pollution Reduction Programme (1997-1999)
PP	Public Participation
REC	Regional Environmental Center
RO	Romania
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
UA	Ukraine
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WFD	EU Water Framework Directive

A. Introduction

Over the last years, UNDP/GEF projects in the Danube basin have included a number of NGO support programmes for improving public awareness, stakeholder cooperation and education on environment, specifically on nutrient pollution in the Danube basin. This is also one of the key components of the UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project in its Phases 1 and 2.

The execution of the NGO Small Grants Programme is delegated to the REC (Regional Environmental Centre), with its headquarter in Szentendre/HU and its national offices in DRB countries.

In May 2003, the REC issued the first call for DRP small grants for NGOs in two tranches:

- National grants (organised via the national REC offices)
- Regional grants (organised by the REC headquarter).

Upon a 2-staged submission phase (NGOs were first invited to submit short concepts, then the best were commented and invited to submit detail project proposals), the national and regional REC selection committees granted in November 2003 5 regional projects (lasting up to 2 years) and 60 national projects (lasting 1 year) in 11 Danube basin countries (all except Germany and Austria). Their contracting and effective start had to be postponed several times by the DRP until September 2004.

Objective of this Consultant contract was to gain information and a feed-back from NGOs on the progress of their projects and to support the preparation and design of the upcoming second SGP call for DRP Phase 2 (planned for May 2005). More specifically, the Consultant was asked by the DRP office to execute the following **tasks**:

- Screen the NGO projects and propose a mission strategy to the DRP office and
- Agree with DRP the tentative mission programme and strategy.

- Meet the SGP manager at the REC to assess progress / status of NGO projects in the region, the perspective of the NGO responses for Phase 2, and propose local NGOs to be visited;
- Discuss first findings at DRP office and agree on missions to NGO project;
- Meet with representatives from the Danube Environment Forum (H. Wolf, DEF Secretariat);
- Organise and execute the trips (travel, contacting of NGOs and REC offices).

- Draft the mission report with findings and
- Meet at DRP office to discuss the results and its implications.

The Consultant wants to herewith thank the REC headquarter and its national offices for their support and contact facilitation. He wants to also thank all NGOs met during his trips for their generous hospitality, open comments and valuable information on the grants programme. He specifically thanks them for their understanding that due to time limits of this assessment and some logistic needs the meetings had to be kept rather short. The Consultant did his best to correctly report and provide his comments on the projects still far from being completed. Small misunderstandings and misinterpretations cannot be excluded but should not be decisive.

B. Main Mission Results and Recommendations

B. 1. Trip organisation and mission strategy

The total pool of NGOs that could theoretically be assessed was 77 in 11 Danube basin countries, i.e. 5 regional projects with a total of 17 NGOs and 60 national projects and NGOs.

Logistic and organisational objective was to meet as many NGOs as possible without making long travels. Prior to trip organisation, it was therefore agreed that NGO projects in BA, BG, RO, MD and RO should not be visited. For the **6 countries travelled**, the mission allowed to visit **22 NGOs** and to **assess a total of 25 projects** (32.5%): In the case of the NGOs Sosna, Terra's and Pro Bio/EPOS, both a regional and a national project could be assessed.

Trip I (8 – 12 February 2004) resulted in meetings with 13 NGOs in

eastern Slovakia (2 in Kosice)
Hungary (2 in Miskolc, 1 in Budapest and 1 in Szeged)
Serbia and Montenegro (2 in Subotica)
Croatia (1 Vukovar, 2 in Osijek, 1 in Varazdin) and
Slovenia (1 in Maribor).

Trip II (14 – 15 February 2004) resulted in meetings with 9 NGOs in

Czech Republic (3 in Olomouc and 2 in Brno) and
Western Slovakia (4 in Bratislava).

During this mission, most NGOs (6) were met in SK, also because this country has the most national projects (8; 5 visited) and is involved in 4 of 5 regional projects (all 4 visited). Largest grant volume was spent in CS (USD 60,000 for 7 projects; 2 were visited), the largest grants (USD 13,000 -15,000) were given to the 2 NGOs in RO and to one NGO in HR (visited on this mission). The **list of all granted DRP projects** and of those **visited during the mission** of the Consultant is given in the Annex (pages 23-24).

NGOs were contacted between 28 February and 14 February to agree on individual meeting time and contents.

Mission strategy was to use a meeting time of 1.5 to 2 hours to discuss the following:

- Presentation and explanation of the **NGO projects** (objectives, progress of activities) and check of NGO action quality (scientific, preparatory work, efficiency to reach target groups etc.) and their environmental relevance in relation to the DRP key issues. This took mostly more than an hour.
- **Feasibility** of the NGO projects: solving of local execution problems, link to - theoretically - available information from DRP, ICPDR and DEF (homepages and contacts).
- Experience with the **REC grant selecting process** 2003 and budget situation in contracts 2004; the recommendations for granting process 2005, NGO interest/feasibility to submit a new project proposal.
- Comment on the **overall benefit** of the grant for the NGO and of the NGO actions for the environment (nutrient pollution).

B. 2. Main findings

Introductory remark: It has first to be stressed that the mission did not allow checking all details and aspects of the NGO projects and activities. The findings are therefore given “as good as possible” within the provided working conditions (e.g. travel budget, language skills of NGO representatives met, present interim state of NGO activities).

The **quality of the meetings** was in nearly all cases excellent with some exceptions where time constraints (logistics of travel) and the NGO’s language barriers did not allow to receive sufficient results: Somehow incomplete information was received in the meetings with Arnika and Nautilus in CZ and with Csemete in HU. For 3 NGO (project)s, the Consultant did not gain enough information to provide a sound result (but still decided to add it here): Very incomplete for EPOS (CZ), partly for Sosna (national project) and probably also for Csemete (the meeting lasted only 90 minutes and in that time confusion had to be cleared up re. incomplete project info given by REC-HU).

1. Most NGOs were pleased about the **visit and the interest of DRP** in their activities (the regular contacts and interest of the REC are largely limited to administrative aspects). They were grateful to be invited for personal feedback and for addressing their questions to a donor representative, which the Consultant could answer in most cases. The Consultant could also provide them some valuable comments, advises for improving work and hints for contacts and sources of information, which the NGOs much appreciated.

2. It became evident that the present pool of NGOs is largely familiar with the complex topic of nutrients, and that their increased competence and knowledge (in few cases also at scientific level) was in many cases (not in all!) a result of this SGP.

For Phase 2 this means that **this pool of NGOs has a better starting point to design and execute meaningful projects** (in relation to nutrient reduction). In the majority of projects a follow up of Phase 1 will be logical and secure more lasting results and benefits. This refers both to stakeholder cooperation and concrete actions (in agriculture, wetland management etc.).

3. The **quality of NGO projects** at the present state of activities indicates in most cases a high quality of work, a good understanding of the issue, a strong commitment to produce meaningful outputs and a good sensitivity of the role NGOs can and should play within their countries and local region.

The **technical quality of projects in relation to the DRP key issues** (nutrient management, stakeholder cooperation) **is basically high**, only very few (2-3?) of the NGO projects assessed have low relevance. Still, most NGOs could benefit from some technical advise in order to make their projects more successful and more realistic. This refers to topics such as:

- Communication of the issue and the solutions (specific awareness raising)
- Cooperation with stakeholders and media (how to secure their interest)
- Contact to relevant expert institutions, other NGOs inside and across the borders
- Access to relevant data, information, studies
- Water quality monitoring (e.g. relevance of NGO action in comparison to laboratories)
- etc.

4. The **grant selection process** as well as the administrative support of the REC was in basically all cases much praised as being efficient, fair and good (“*much better than by other donors like Phare!*”). The grant submission and reporting forms are considered as clear and good to handle. For the next call some NGOs recommended to make the submission forms a

bit simpler (e.g. logical frameworks are not seen as really useful; several questions have iterative character – probably due to difficult translation - and should be improved).

Regional Grants

The quality of projects checked seems to be ok but now just after the preparatory phase of these projects it is certainly **too early to already make a valid assessment**. There are, however, some clear weaknesses, which could be reduced or prevented in Phase 2:

In comparison to national grants, the execution is more difficult for partners in regional projects: It seems that **most NGOs have actually the same or less money available for activities than national NGOs but the double amount of time**. Electronic communication is used to cooperate but it seems that there are too few personal meetings among partners (cut in budgets), and that some partners rather do national activities than real international cooperation. The transfer of skills and exchange of experiences seem to work only to a limited extent in the projects visited.

National Grants

Assessed at mid time of their project period, it was found that the quality of almost all projects was high!

The time available for NGOs in DRP Phase 1 (9-12 months!) was in most cases critically short. A follow-up in Phase 2 would be logical for various projects, both by continuing the work (e.g. stakeholder cooperation) and by transferring the experience made to other sites within their country and in other countries. This aspect was checked, results are given in the table on pages 9-11.

5. Main problems to execute the NGO projects

The NGOs met gave basically always the same answers on this important question:

First, the **time delay** caused by UNDP/GEF in 2004 had in many cases a strong impact on the NGO abilities to still execute the planned and awarded activities in the desired quality and result: Many projects (e.g. agriculture, wetlands) depend on annual seasons, i.e. winter is often used to prepare actions and spring/summer/autumn to execute them, so a project start in September can result in a start of field action only in the next summer when the NGO is actually already forced to write the final report. One NGO (Pajstun/SK) even withdrew its awarded project (the non-used funds were then distributed to the other awarded SK projects). NGOs also complained that they never knew in winter-spring 2004 when they can really start their activities. This unexpected “challenge” clearly damaged the image of the donor. The Consultant tried to explain that neither REC nor the DRP office in Vienna were responsible for the delay and suffered themselves very much under these problems.

Second, **important budget cutbacks** caused another serious problem for many NGOs who had budgeted their activities very carefully: This refers to

1. the loss of the USD between the NGO's project calculation and actual receipt of grants (the currency risk period is 15-28 months and losses are at 10-30 %!).
2. the cut-backs decided (mostly by the national REC offices) during the grant selection: Most complaints came from Slovak NGOs and could not be fully clarified during and after the mission: It seems that over 80% of all projects submitted were awarded and that all were strongly cut back. The Consultant assumes that there was an effort to award as many NGO projects as possible but he also learned from REC-SK that the excellent project of the NGO Creative received a very low score and would have been the first to be excluded because it could not well meet some evaluation criteria. In general, the granting committee should be careful with cutting budgets, which can in most cases result in a deterioration of activities, i.e. the overall project quality and results. Further, this cutting might be interpreted as a certain mistrust that NGOs

often budget more than really needed or that they are not able to make sound calculations.

3. the loss by inflation (15-28 months difference between budget calculation and start/end of project expenses) which was also an important factor in some countries.
4. the unexpected new requirement communicated by (some?) REC offices that **VAT** can in no single case be reimbursed. This lead(s) to a lot of misunderstandings and misinterpretations and should be urgently clarified, before NGOs increase their financial problems.

Third, in few cases the guidance of REC for the **proposal phase** was received with some irritation (NGOs accepted them even though they could not follow the logic). Further, there is some confusion to NGOs on the **use of DRP and REC logos**: The Consultant has learned that in some countries the logos may not be used (CZ “unless specifically asked for and agreed”, also rule for regional projects) while other NGOs used it because they were strongly asked to do so. Only in few cases, the new DRP logo was forwarded to the NGOs. It seems there are some misunderstandings by NGOs and national REC offices.

Fourth, for regional(?) projects the Consultant learned of a **30% limit** set by REC **for salaries and office overheads**. This seems to be a bit strange because the amount of needed staff input much depends on the character of the proposed NGO activities (e.g. for projects doing mainly awareness-raising it is a clear burden).

Other problems relate to local issues and have no general character.

6. **Link to available technical information:**

It was found that almost none of the visited NGOs made **use of internationally available technical information on nutrients** (re. magnitude of this problem, solutions for their reduction). Hardly any NGO knew about the technical results and publications available at the **ICPDR-DRP homepage** (esp. “*Ongoing Activities*”) as well as about the very useful “**Manual on Nutrients in Wetlands**”, prepared by DEF in April 2003. It seems that the REC informed about these info sources only on their homepage but not later at national or regional level (e.g. winners meeting). No systematic effort was made by the DEF to inform the granted NGOs to use this reference (DEF trainings in spring 2003 involved only some NGOs now executing granted projects). In 2004, only the leaders of regional projects were invited to the REC winners meeting, so a lot of useful information was not really transferred to their partners (also because communication between partners does not work as good in most cases as assumed).

Various NGOs simply executed the project they had in mind and were not really pro-actively interested in searching for more international information (partly due to the language barrier). The Consultant stressed that a simple check e.g. of the technical infos that the DRP and DEF homepages provide could have enlightened some NGOs, i.e. even if the DRP, REC or DEF did not offer such infos to the NGOs, they themselves have to look for such resources.

7. **Important questions** to be commented by DRP and REC offices:

? Can one NGO submit and execute both a regional and a national project? In Phase 1, this was the case for 2 NGOs (Sosna in Miskolc/HU, Terra’s in Subotica/CS); both projects were executed by different managers doing rather different activities. In a third case (ProBio/EPOS in CZ), the manager of a regional project is also the main expert for a national project. The Consultant did not identify a major problem in this situation but rather some advantage!

? Is there still grant money available from Phase 1 that was not spent? There is at least one case (NGO Creative in Kosice) where the budget cut-back (some 50%!) decided by REC

granting committee threatened the success of the project (the NGO is presently looking for co-funding but has to finish the project in a few months). In this case a model result for nutrient treatment in rural areas the DRB could be lost!

? How much does DRP support (want) co-financing of projects? Budget cutbacks have forced some NGOs to try this but it may be difficult to match the narrow time frame of the DRP programme. NGOs need some guidance what to do when their planned action is actually not feasible anymore!

8. Relevance of the NGO role in comparison to the complex nutrient pollution issue

Most NGOs are very realistic in rating their role and power in relation how much they can actually reduce pollution. They think that indirectly they can have a strong impact on pollution reduction (the Consultant thinks that concrete and well communicated NGO action e.g. with farmers can have a lot of impact). NGOs consider their initiatives mostly as crucial for the public awareness for the problem and see their role firstly as lobbyist and catalysers to address the burning water pollution and cross-cutting(!) issues that in most cases the local and national politicians and responsible authorities do not really like to address. The Consultant feels that NGOs could have even more relevance when doing **more concrete nutrient reduction action** and **better communicating its model character** to responsible institutions (government) and groups (e.g. farmers, communities, industry).

9. Benefit of the DRP for the NGOs

Most NGOs acknowledged that these small grants have (some said strongly) increased their technical capacities on the issue and strengthened their role and position among local stakeholders (new and better contacts). Only few NGOs stated that they already had good competence and capacity before and that the DRP support simply allowed them to do what they planned already before.

10. Follow-up of NGO action in Phase 2

Only ca. half of the NGOs met had already the intention to again submit a project to this grant programme. About one third did not know at all that a new grant would be called up. All NGOs met are now "alarmed" and wait for further information from REC on the new call, i.e. nearly all will be ready to submit a new proposal, provided they can meet the required themes and other conditions.

B. 3. Summary of NGO meetings and Consultant comments

Note: The following information and comment is only an **interim assessment of the visited projects** and a quick impression of the Consultant:

Regional Projects			
NGO Name (leader + number of partners)	Project Subject	Relevance of NGO action re. nutrients	Consultant comment
			<i>First Impression of Project Quality</i>
21673 Daphne/SK + 2 in BG and SI	Sub-basin stakeh. cooperat. + actions	Indirectly very high	Very good: Project runs well and will have a series of sound activities with mutual benefits and good joint results (SI partner works a bit on its own).
2675 ProBio/CZ + 4 in BG, CS, SK + CZ	Promotion of organic farming	Very high!	Very good: Experienced NGO with strong standing and contact network supports developing partner NGOs (the one visited in CS is also very strong). Multiple actions address farmers, agronomists and consumers.
21687 Hnuti Duha /CZ +1 in SK	Lobbying re. cross-border navigation canal	Project issue is the threat to destroy riverine landscapes	Very good: NGO is very competent and strong lobbyist with good contacts to all key stakeholders (national, local, intl.). Origin of problem and area for most NGO action is in CZ but intl. networking is crucial.
21681 Sosna/SK + 4 in HU, HR, RO + CS	Initiation of river coalitions of stakeh.	Indirectly high (stakeh. lobbying)	Good: Promotion of an innovative concept in DRB areas: good lobbyg. + concrete actions but partner cooperat. could be better! Holocen activities are not impressive, different to Sosna and Green Osijek.

National Projects					
NGO Name (leader + number of partners)	Project Subject	Planned end of project	Earliest end of project	Consultant comment	
				Quality of project	Rating (how to continue action in Phase 2)
CZ – Nautilus Club, Moravia	New technology for cleaning pond mud	Sept.	Aug.	??? Interesting innovative technology to reduce organic sludge from ponds but unclear if it really can be applied	???? <i>Theoretically much needed!</i>
CZ – Arnika, Moravia	Prevent leakage from a toxic waste deposit	Sept.	?Sept.	Good?: This small NGO deals with a very important issue typical for other DRB regions; many good lobbying actions but unclear issue competence	Good?: unclear at the moment
CZ – EPOS, Moravia	Promotion of bio-farming	Sept.	Sept.?	High: Small NGO but supported by a very experienced expert. Initiation of converting agriculture in a sub-region.	?? not assessed but certainly high

NGO Name (leader + number of partners)	Project Subject	Planned end of project	Earliest end of project	Consultant comment	
				Quality of project	Rating (how to continue action in Phase 2)
CZ – Sagittaria, Moravia	Improvement of fish pond management	Sept.	Sept.	High: Small, concrete and efficient project; nutrients are second problem after fish stocking; good stakeholder cooperation	High: Follow-up monitoring; transfer method to other ponds
SK - STUZ Soc. f. Sustain. Livg., Bratisl.	Sub-basin pollution analysis + stakeh. action plan	August	end of July	High: theoretical approach, sound data collection (probably not so well presented), good try to activate stakeholders	High: time and funds for phase 1 were too small
SK – TINCA, Bratislava	Restoration of an old river branch (<i>incomplete due to budget cutback</i>)	August	March!	High: Concrete action restoring a riverine wetland (weed cut + biomass disposal), v. good stakeh. cooperation, medium effect on nutrient pollution	High: Continue weed cut, monitor effect and do PR actions
SK – SOVS BirdLife, Bratislava	wetland restoration, reduced agricultural impact	August	end of July	Very high: small but concrete + well-based restoration action changing surrounding agric. practises; good stakeh. cooperation	Very high: communicate poll. reduction effect; monitor impacts
SK – Sosna, Kosice	3 river coalitions	Sept.	?	High: Experienced NGO that introduces shared responsibility and need for cooperation in water management among stakeh.	High: Continue building up coalition in the 3 areas; possibly add other areas in SK (more actions)
SK- Creative, Kosice	Small reed WWTP (<i>incomplete due to budget cutback</i>)	End of June?	Sept.	Very high: Clear innovative and pilot action for important sewage treatment in rural areas. Good stakeholder cooperation.	Very high: monitoring of pilot sites and copy of action to other sites
HU - Csemete, Szeged	Nature cons., envir. educat. + new farm waste treatment	Sept.	Aug.	Medium: Good activities but it seems the NGO wants to achieve too much and lacks experience and competence.	High: If the NGO will get more guidance (e.g. within a regl. project)
HU - MAKK, Budapest	Promoting bio-farming in floodplains	Sept.	June	Very high: Concrete action on a key issue in one of the key wetlands of the DRB. Strong links to local stakeholders and government.	Very high: Action should be followed up and extended to other farms and wetlands
HU - Zöld Akcio, Miskolc	Agric. pollutio – policy + farmer cooperation	October	Aug.	Very high: Pro-active, small NGO with high technical competence, excellent standing among key stakeholders and good lobbying	Very high: Follow-up important to secure progress and benefits

NGO Name (leader + number of partners)	Project Subject	Planned end of project	Earliest end of project	Consultant comment	
				Quality of project	Rating (how to continue action in Phase 2)
CS - Terra's, Subotica	Promotion of organic farming	May	May	Very high: Highest competence on the issue, impressive successes and clear nutrient impact, excellent awaren. material.	Very high: Want more model farms and better literature for farmers.
CS - Green Network, Novi Sad	awaren. on industr. + agric. pollution (<i>partly non-secured</i>)	May	May	High: Strong NGO with good network of contacts and poll. issue competence. Probably excellent communicators.	High: Stakeh. lobbying (e.g. to execute agreed actions) should be followed up!
HR – Europe House Vukovar	Promotion of organic-farming	Sept.	June	Medium: NGO lacks experience in educating farmers and has weak contacts. Good involvement of villages. Actions are fine.	High: If the NGO will get more guidance (e.g. within a regional project)
HR - Fr. Koscec Soc. Varazdin	Stakeh. activation to reduce ind. + munic. pollution	Sept.	July	Very high: Experienced and effectively working NGO, addressing inconvenient subjects of transboundary relevance	Very high: e.g. environm. education programme; or cooperation with CS, BA, SI
HR – Osijek Greens	Awaren. + monitor. of river pollution	Aug.	June	High: Limited baseline knowledge, good media contacts, committed to serious pollution problems but unclear impact	Medium: Continue local awareness raising makes sense
SI – STORK, Maribor	Promotion of re-usable diapers	Aug.	June	High: Simple, innovative action with clear environmental benefits; NGO not very experienced but well established	High: should follow-up in SI and become regional project

For details of NGO projects (background, activities, outputs and comments) please see chapter C.

B. 4. Recommendations for Phase 2

1. **Announcement of the next call:** It is strongly recommended to very soon (early April!) inform all NGOs involved in Phase 1 (i.e. not only the granted projects but also those who lost the tender) that a new call is coming up e.g. in May. This will allow all NGOs to start thinking about possible projects, even when the call details are not published. For NGOs presently preparing the final activities of Phase 1 it is absolutely essential that they know:

- by when a new call will start and
- under which conditions they would be eligible (i.e. by when they have to complete their ongoing projects at latest).

It may also be good to give **some guidance to the NGOs what kind of project they should submit in Phase 2** (see Consultant comments in the right column of the table on pages 9-11).

2. It is recommended to **shorten the call phase** (announcement, pre-selection for proposals, final selection and contracting) **to 5 months**.

For the submission of projects (templates), it is recommend to take out the Logical Framework and to prevent questions with similar content (this may be caused by **problems with translating English terms** and thoughts into national language).

3. REC has a rule that NGOs cannot run 2 granted projects at the same time; this means that all Phase 1 activities have to be finished before Phase 2 grant selection can start (the Consultant recommends the call **proposal phase!**).

This would not allow NGOs participating in regional projects to submit a proposal for Phase 2. However, as there are – the Consultant assumes successful – cases in Phase 1 where one **NGO is executing at the same time both a regional and a national grant** project: DRP office and REC should decide if such a situation can again be allowed in Phase 2. As long as there is a clear capacity available at the NGO to run 2 projects and there is a clear splitting of project management (e.g. 2 different persons, separate administration), the Consultant thinks this could be allowed within the new granting conditions.

4. Due to the fact that many NGOs can finish their projects only by the end of August (please compare column 3 and 4 of the previous table!), the Consultant suggests to **postpone the start of the NATIONAL grants programme until July or August**: This would reduce the stress to finish the present projects and allow many competent NGOs to still submit projects (in several cases the desired and recommended follow-up of present activities). This delay would mean that the winning projects would be contracted in early January 2006 and end in late January 2007. Projects lasting less than 12 months will – in most cases (depending on the project character!) - not result in meaningful outputs but it would be better to **allow more than 12 months for national projects**.

Also, NGOs who will not have succeeded with their submission to the Regional Grants programme in May-July 2005 could still submit a project at national level in August. Further, in case that not enough good regional projects would be received by REC (after the selection process in ca. October 2005), still some grant funds could be shifted to the national level to make full use of available funds and NGO capacities.

5. **Regional Grants:** With respect to the reduced time available within DRP Phase 2 (supply of final report from REC probably in February 2007), it is suggested to do the **call as intended in May 2005** and to secure final selection in October and **contracting by early November**. Projects could then still run for **15 months** until end of January 2007.

Regional grants should have **no more than 4 partners**, otherwise each will have less than USD 10,000 available for activities. Keep in mind that these partners need to budget more international travelling. The lead NGO should secure cooperation and exchange of experience. Preferably, there should be **joint activities**, not just joint issues!

Compared to national NGO activities there is no need to stretch regional projects over a longer period (2 years), i.e. the 15 months should be sufficient (based on current observation).

6. **NGO budgets** should not be strictly limited in their % of **salaries and overheads**. It is proposed to give a **30% share as guidance** and to ask for a clear justification if this rate will be passed in the proposed action.

Grant application **formats should not be extremely strict** to allow NGOs to thoroughly present their projects (one NGO reported that REC did first not allow to add one more sentence).

7. **Grant awarding has to be very careful with respect to budget cutbacks**: If NGOs are taken serious and competent they know how to calculate! Any really needed cutback should therefore be specified and explained (i.e. no money for a specific activity which the donor does not consider very needed). In other words: It is better to fully grant 6 projects than to save 25% in all 8 granted projects which then will all struggle to achieve the planned results. This may already be the rule at REC but has to be better applied.

8. **Project (concept and proposal) evaluation criteria should be re-assessed**: If e.g for criterion 1.3 of the criteria list an NGO is “only” addressing one sector it could still have a high environmental impact. The Consultant received the scoring result from REC-SK and has several detail questions on this example.

DEF also recommended to **involve experts into the evaluation of concept papers and into consultation of full proposals**. The Consultant supports this! These expert(s) should be familiar with NGOs, ICPDR and the DRP-SGP, and it would be good to have a certain system which kind and quality of projects should be preferred. REC and DEF input into this process should remain the same – this new input should only complement their work from the technical level (DRP issue side).

9. NGOs should be **urgently informed how to handle VAT**, i.e. under which forms (invoicing of receipts with or without showing VAT) VAT will be reimbursed or not by REC/UNDP.

10. The **use of the DRP logo** in NGO publications (most coming up in the next 3 months!) should also urgently be clarified by DRP office and explained to REC and the NGOs.

11. It would be good if DRP will still have some money left (**reserve fund** of e.g. USD 10,000) allowing to fund some key actions that go beyond the available national REC budget.

12. In addition to the good administrative support that the REC and its offices provide, all awarded NGOs should receive a certain **technical guidance**, especially after the start of their project. This can be quite simple advises but can also include contacts to some experts or other NGOs working on the same subjects (e.g. 2 NGOs working on promotion of organic

farming). This support is meant in addition to the infos provided at the winners meeting (has more administrative and general subjects and cannot specifically assess the local project situation).

Regarding the quality of new projects, a sound technical guidance given before the project start (e.g. at the end of Phase 1 or at the proposal phase after the call) could result in better project proposals.

The mission in March 2005 showed that most NGOs benefit from such guidance but also that not all NGOs need it and that few NGOs are not aware of the benefits this could have.

13. It would be very important that **all winning NGOs will attend the “winners meeting”**. This meeting should be used to push NGOs to make use of the available sources of information from ICPDR, DRP, DEF, REC and other sources.

14. **DEF (Danube Environment Forum)** should not only be involved into the preparation of the next call and in the selection of NGO projects but should also **establish a regular contact with the awarded NGOs** both at regional and national levels, because all these NGOs work under the same umbrella and general objective (awareness raising on and direct reduction of nutrient pollution). DEF activities (trainings, workshops, meetings etc.) should be communicated to those NGOs.

15. The Consultant feels that there are enough important project results (already in Phase 1) that should be communicated at DRB level. He recommends again to hold a 1-2 days **presentation event at the end of the DRP-SGP** (February 2007?) where the results of the best and most effective NGO action is communicated to

- DRB governments
- National and international media
- Other donors.

This event should be located at a place where also practical NGO action can be visited and demonstrated!

Conclusion of the Mission

The interim result of the SGP showed that a lot of impressive NGOs actions are under way and that GEF money is very well spent (and managed by REC). The selection of good projects is a tricky process and there is no guarantee that always the best projects are awarded and the worse are excluded.

Objective of this mission was not only to communicate the successes but to mainly(!) identify weaknesses and gaps. Therefore this report has to be more critical than the general situation is. Phase 2 preparation gives an opportunity to learn from recent experience and upgrade the SGP in various ways (especially linking NGO action to DRP activities) and to thus increase the overall success and environmental relevance of NGO activities.

C. Detail Results of Meetings with NGOs, REC, DEF

C. 1. Meeting with REC and DEF

Meeting with REC (Entela Pinguli) was held on 24 February in Szentendre with the objective to learn about the present status of the entire SGP and the experience of REC made so far, also in terms of pre-selecting NGOs that should be met during the mission. Second objective was their status of preparing Phase 2 of the SGP. REC has published various information about the SGP on its webpage, including brief infos about each granted regional and national project (the mission showed that most NGOs do not know about this). For REC, the delayed start created also a very difficult situation (for reducing the problem, winners meetings were held even before signing the DRP contract). Since then, the projects are well under way. National NGOs progress reports are being collected and summarised by REC (sent to Vienna in April), regional projects reports will be ready in June.

REC has initiated last winter an assessment study, reflecting the expectations related to NGO project “promises”. A REC country questionnaire was sent to REC national offices to summarise the expected results and used indicators. This report will be compared with the NGO progress reports and used in the coming months to help NGOs to refine their activities with respect to the DRP requirements. This report (ready in late April) will also indicate to REC and DRP, to which degree the NGOs are able to meet certain expectations.

Ms Pinguli and Mr Pernecky (REC Hungarian country office) provided some key information on NGOs that could be visited. The dissemination of a DRP-SGP press release drafted by a Viennese PR company was received with mixed feelings and had no success (comment: except for 1 NGO).

Regarding Phase 2, the Consultant pointed at the new DRP situation that the next granted regional projects cannot last 2 years but only until early 2007 (some 15 months). The resulting problem is that national NGOs finishing their projects only in September wouldn't be eligible for submitting new project proposals in May. As these NGOs are probably well qualified to do meaningful project, result of the discussion was that

1. NGOs should try to finish their projects already earlier (at best by end of June), and the Consultant should check this aspect during the mission,
2. NGOs could still be eligible for Phase 2 if they submit their final report for Phase 1 before the selection of project concepts takes place at REC for the project proposal phase (probably around early July).

It was concluded that REC should receive and sign its contract with DRP no later than April to still allow publishing the call in May. REC expressed its strong interest in the Consultant's mission which could have a clear impact on the design of the next call.

DEF: A brief meeting was held with Johannes Wolf (one of 3 speakers of DEF) on 28 February in Vienna who offered DEF support for the Consultant's mission. DEF itself is not in contact with most awarded NGOs and can therefore not comment on projects. Further, a phone conversation was held on 15 March with Monika Kovaceva (DEF Secretariat): She informed that DEF had received and summarised various comments from the DEF network on the SGP. Some of the comments rather referred to the design of the call in early 2003 while others reflect some early experience with the project start and recommendations for Phase 2. Some of these comments are:

- Increase the limit of national grants to USD 15,000 if more than 5 NGOs are involved.
- Extend the execution period for both regional and national grants in Phase 1, if needed.
- Re-allocate more funds from regional to national level.

- Clarify the DRP/REC requirement of “measurable nutrient pollution reduction results”.
- Involve experts into the evaluation of concept papers and into consultation of full proposals.

DEF has no overview how many NGOs attending their trainings in spring 2003 participated in the SGP call and which eventually succeeded. DEF did not contact granted NGOs (e.g. to offer them support, data, contacts, link to the manual on nutrients etc.) but agreed that this kind of link and support should be done in Phase 2.

C. 2. Regional Grant Projects

21673 Pollution in 3 sub-basins (Morava/SK, Mura/SI and Ogosta/BG) – Meeting with lead NGO Daphne: Project focus is on awareness raising of stakeholders on water pollution reduction, with the 3 NGOs supporting each other with their specific competences. The infos collected on pollution sources in the local areas will be published in a general leaflet (3 languages), further each NGO will publish small leaflets on local topics. Later, a coloured 4-languages brochure will present the common issues in the 3 river basins. Their new joint media strategy will support the dissemination of infos. Publication of the DRP press release in November 2004 was quite successful (newspaper, radio)! Action includes cleaning of streams in pilot areas with local people, a school education programme (incl. water quality monitoring) and an agri-environment workshop in BG for local farms and authorities (re. start of SAPARD programme). Further, in BG a reed bed wastewater treatment plant will be built for an eco-tourism hotel. At the end 3 water pollution reduction action plans will be developed with local stakeholders. The 3 NGO partners meet regularly on occasion of DEF meetings. The SI partner is not strongly participating in joint actions but probably still does good work.

21687 Danube-Odra-Elbe Canal – Meeting with lead NGO Hnutí Duha (2nd partner in SK): Project activities (i.e. public lobbying against this planned new transport facility) started already on Danube Day 2004 with a public debate of key stakeholders (canal promoters, opponents, locals) and a site visit in south Moravia. Actions include media work, contacting of local politicians and municipalities as well as a public campaign on the new Czech transport policy. Aim is to press for a Strategic Environment Assessment study presently under discussion, which would also involve the neighbouring countries. Two Briefing Sheets were already published, another two will come out in future, together with other PR tools (extended webpage, semi-annual bulletin, DVD documentary etc.). The SK partner has smaller tasks (monitoring of government activities and EU funds, upcoming publication of a brochure). Partner meetings are held every 2 months. Strangely, REC asked the NGO not to mention the donor or use the logo without prior agreement.

21675 Promotion of ecological agriculture – Meetings with lead NGO ProBio and partner Terra's (other partners in BG, SK, CS and CZ): Main project objective is the promotion of organic farming through education and dissemination activities in all partner regions. One key activity is the so-called *Bioacademy* (an international workshop in south Moravia with 250 participants and politicians from over 20 countries) where the water issue was already addressed in 2004 (see proceedings!). A 30-pages *study on the influence of organic farming on ground and surface water* is ready and will be translated in 4 local languages and printed in April (the English version will be available on internet). Main results on water protection will also be published in a *leaflet* (ready in late April in 4 languages) and distributed to specialists (students, agronomists, nature conservation agencies etc.). The study will be used to develop an *NGO Action Plan to expand organic farming in DRB countries*, which will be agreed at the Bioacademy in June 2005. There, one key topic will be pollution of Danube waters and non-chemical plant protection (all partner NGOs will attend), another activity a competition of doctorands and then there will be 5 excursions to demo farms (also abroad). One follow-up of the Bioacademy are *seminars* at 4 agricultural universities (first was in March in Nitra/SK, others to be held in March and April). In summer 2005 open field days

(advertised via media, posters etc.) with workshops will be held at pilot farms for farmers and consumers to address conversion of agriculture in mountain areas; a leaflet in 4 languages will present this topic. ProBio hopes that the cooperation will improve after the next joint meetings in March and June (first was in Aug. 2003).

While the lead NGO is already very advanced (500 members + consumer association of 200 members; good marketing system), its partners are still developing (yet not so professional):

The SK partner Eko-Trend focuses its action on consumer information.

The partner Terra's is the leading NGO for organic farming in CS (4 full time and 20 part-time employees, 55 farm members: yet 30 are organic). It successfully lobbied the new agriculture law of Serbia (versions 2000-2004). The former project manager is now certifying organic farms. The DRP project is running well: Data collection on surface water quality is done, 2 leaflets are under preparation for wider public and for agronomists (to be published in late March and August). Terra's hosts the next partner meeting, connected to their stakeholder seminar (2 presentations by ProBio) on 23 March. Terra's also has 4(!) model farms (dairy, cereals, vegetables, wine and flowers), to which they organise at least one visit of journalists and farmers per year, and they do successful media work (pack of articles). They sell products at local markets: Subotica with 100,000 people has already 10 eco-food shops!

21681: Networking River Coalitions – meetings with lead NGO Sosna and the 2 partners Holocen/HU and Green Osijek/HR (other partners in RO and CS): Sosna has introduced in 2002 the concept of “River Coalitions in Microregions” in the central Hornad basin. DRP project objective is to transfer this stakeholder cooperation concept to partners working in other river basins. In SK, they work with 16 villages on the lower Hornad river (downstream of Kosice), water authorities, schools etc. (total 26 members) as well as with the big industrial polluter US Steel (observer! Its serious water and air pollution is reducing but its WWTP is still the biggest point pollution in SK). Another big polluter, the Agro-Torysa farm (chicken and pigs) is yet not ready to cooperate. Communal wastewater is usually discharged directly or via septic tanks into water. The members meet 4(!) times per year and signed a “River Contract” requiring the execution of annual activities. Sosna task is to restore an oxbow lake (re-connect it with the river) near the Hungarian border, for which they gained support by the water agency (did the planning), US Steel (transport of excavated material) and local people (on-site works). Farmers in this region are yet not ready to change their practises and have no trust in organic farming. Another important success action was the installation of 2 compost toilets in villages: Sosna is now “exporting” this system to its DRP project partners.

The DRP project enables them to continue local activities (oxbow lake) and to network with the other 4 partners how to establish river coalitions (meetings in September 2004 in SK, in Sept. 2005 in HR and in Sept. 2006 in RO). The 5 partners are focusing activities on their local needs and will jointly produce only a booklet and an exhibition (in 4 languages). They have close electronic communication and interlinked websites but no budget e.g. for the leader to become familiar with the situation of the 3 remote partners (Sosna already cooperates with Holocen/HU). In SK, a leaflet will be distributed to key stakeholders and the exhibition shown in Kosice and some villages. There is one press meeting per year.

The partner Holocen/HU is already cooperating with Sosna since 1996: This included intl. youth conferences and river monitoring programmes. On 1 May 2004, they opened a joint bicycle trail along Hornad river, incl. bilingual folder map (sponsored by Carpathian Foundation). They made also a joint forest trail and brochure.

Their DRP project will focus on rural tourism in the village of Szanticska, a kind of open air museum for traditional houses and lifestyle (5000 visitors per year). Holocen wants to demonstrate alternative WWT with 2 compost toilets (one in village, one at parking: to be built in April). Facility staff will be trained to explain the toilets and visitors invited for comments in a guest book. The NGO has good contacts to local municipalities but cannot sign river coalition contracts due to the complicate HU administration rules (*in spite of strong efforts, the meeting did not provide better information on the Holocen actions*).

The partner Green Osijek is also a small NGO but will undertake a series of activities during the DRP project: Organisation of 2 composting places in Baranja region, cleaning of river banks and Danube villages (in spring 2005), monthly water quality survey around the mouth of the Drava into Danube as well as stakeholder meetings (first of five was in late March) and media work (started in December) to promote river coalition. River contracts should be signed in autumn 2005 and first activities be executed by summer 2006. The NGO did not know before the other network partners (except Sosna).

Green Osijek has long-years activities in Kopacki rit, the 2nd most important floodplain area in the Danube basin. It started an impressive youth education programme in its own, recently renovated forest school house in the center of the wetland (supported by USAID).

C.3. Czech Republic

Arnika, Moravia: The project target is a hazardous waste dump in western Moravia (Pozdatky) which exists since 1995 (yet 45,000 tons) and is leaking into downstream waters since 1996. After the first owner broke down, the site was bought in 2002 by an Italian construction firm which recently submitted a proposal to continue waste depositing using better management (drainage system, WWTP, cover of surface against rain water etc.). An EIA is announced to start in April. Arnika has disseminated a leaflet on the dumpsite to local people and held a workshop in November 2004. An exhibition is under preparation and a school painting competition started. A study on the chemical industry in the Middle Moravia region and a political petition of local communities (yet 2000 signatures) are under preparation. *(the NGO rep. meeting with the Consultant did not speak good English and was technically not very competent).*

Nautilus, Moravia: The project aims at the transfer of an innovative French biotechnology to CZ (cleaning the organic sludge/mud from ponds): It uses certain bacteria which are spread from a small boat into pond water to start decomposing the sludge (“they do not essentially need oxygen”). Numerous meetings were already held with potential partners (municipalities and other institutions responsible for Czech ponds’ water quality). A simple mapping has identified some 20 eutrophicated ponds. Pilot action is prepared for the Plumov reservoir (8 ha, near Prostějov) and Dalov pond (3.5 ha north of Olomouc). Problem is that this pond cleaning needs an investment of some USD 8,500/ha for which co-financing is presently searched for. The technology was tested last year at the Bolevesky fish pond near Pízen (12 ha) and in 1997 in France (documents proving positive results were shown to the Consultant). DRP funds are used to lobby, to apply the method in larger ponds and to monitor field results in spring 2005. The action is executed by a single person with very little support from the NGO. A new project info is presenting on the cover side the REC and the new(!) DRP logos. *(the NGO rep. meeting with the Consultant did not speak good English and his technical competence was hard to check).* It is strongly recommended to check this project again by a Czech expert (e.g. biochemist).

Sagittaria, Olomouc: The NGO works on improving the management of Písečný fish pond (19 ha; south Moravia), which is eutrophicated from surrounding agricultural land and municipal sewage of Milotice. It is the core of a 40 ha nature reserve with very important macrophyte stands (*Nymphaea alba*; *Nymphoides peltata*) and surrounding meadows (e.g. *Orchis palustris*). The fish pond (max. 2 m deep, divided into 2 parts) is harvested (emptied) every year (carp, pike, eel). In the past, manure was put into the pond to improve fish growth but surplus nutrients disturb the balance of zooplankton – weed fish – macrophytes – fish. This was recently stopped and a 50 m green belt created to reduce nutrient drainage from fields. The DRP project includes the preparation of a new management plan (improve self-cleaning, better fish stocks for 2005-2014: already approved!), the production of macrophyte seeds (in a pond enclosure of 20x20 m) for storage in a seed bank, scientific monitoring and awareness raising: 2-3 info panels, a brochure for fish managers and local people, a website and 3 meetings to lobby the municipality and other fish managers.

EPOS, Moravia: This project is run by a local NGO in south Moravia but the head of ProBio (see regional project no. 21675) is closely involved in the promotion of organic farming. The project aims at developing a concept for a sub-region and at consulting farmers and local authorities to change farming practises. The REC-CZ request to also produce a case study was accepted but not considered as very useful by the NGO.

C. 4. Slovakia

Sosna, Kosice: This NGO is exporting the River Coalition concept from Hornad river not only to 4 other countries (**see regional project 21681**) but also to 3 other sub-basins in central SK. A number of practical activities (e.g. wetland restoration) were cut from the budget (should be done in Phase 2). *There was no time to assess project details.*

STUZ Society for Sustainable Living, Bratislava: Focus is on the Myjava sub-basin (806 km², 85,000 people) of the Morava river with manifold pollution problems (municipal, industrial and agricultural). Activities started with a review of SK legislation regarding water quality management and WFD implementation in the Myjava region; the results have also national relevance. Detailed data collection on the local key problems will be followed by structured interviews with key stakeholders. In June, they will be invited to a workshop to assess results and possibly start a river basin forum. Results will be disseminated in a 60 pages b/w brochure. Main problem is the budget cutback.

ZOVS BirdLife SK, Bratislava: Project aims at improving 80 ha grassland in a Natura 2000 rated floodplain area and converting 15 ha of arable fields surrounding it to a grassland to better serve as a nutrient sink and flood retention area. Action will be executed with local farmers and is planned and closely coordinated with Nature Conservation Agency, Vah river water managers and municipalities (with latter: joint info leaflet!). It will include monitoring (together with students from Nitra) of nutrients and improving biodiversity. The used restoration technique builds on the key experience of NGO Daphne on Morava river. The harvested hay (= removed nutrients) can be well sold. Action will be communicated by 2 press releases and to 3 local schools and to local stakeholders.

TINCA, Bratislava: Project aims at reducing the silting up of an old oxbow lake (national nature reserve) near the Danube. This eutrophication results in a mass growth of macrophytes (*Myriophyllum*) and is caused by drainage of agricultural land (both within the oxbow and outside). Cutted weeds are used as compost in the local agricultural company. Good cooperation exists with stakeholders (nature cons. and water agencies, municipality and local NGO). Project had to be executed under big stress in September (the only period possible) and seriously suffered from the late start and the budget cutback (3.5 ha mowed = 30% of the aim; no info panels set up). The agency submitted a comprehensive EU-Life project for further actions (decision in September 2005). Tinca already submitted their final report to REC in March!

Creative, Kosice: This NGOs is realizing pilot projects for alternative wastewater treatment in small rural communities, which will not get any support for WWT from the EU. Two projects were supported by the Heinz Endowment Fund (USA) in Tichy Potok (for 150 people, 2 treatment steps, well operating since November 2004; USD 60,000) and in Krasna luka (700 people, 3 steps, under construction, USD 200,000 but still need of co-funder). Their technology uses simple processes (already tested in Czechia) without electricity, which meet emission standards for BOD and suspended solids. This secures low maintenance costs and user fees.

The DRP project is located at Nalepkovo (600 m asl., in Spis region 75 km west of Kosice) where wet meadows of Hnilec river (Natura 2000 site, downstream the Slovak Paradise national park) are affected by sewage from 5 houses (17 people): A special septic tank (Czech system with 3 compartments) retains the solids and improves water quality (BOD

standard). Below a 90 m² reed bed (*Phragmites* + *Phalaris*) retains the nutrients. Gained commitment of the municipality: They build the collector (USD 11,000) and provide the land for the WWTP next to the river. This WWTP is a pilot activity for Slovakia. For promotion, the NGO prepares a big brochure presenting all 3 pilot sites (Slovak + English) as well as a webpage. These pilot projects have visible and measurable environmental benefits.

Regrettably, the budget cutback by REC-SK (from \$ 15,000 to 5,600) leaves unsecured ca. USD 7,000 (requests for co-funding were submitted but not yet decided). Surprisingly, in the SK grant selection this project got very low points (scoring sheet), which indicates a certain weakness of the REC scoring system. The NGO also struggles with the \$ loss (from SKK 45 to now SKK 28!).

C.5. Hungary

Csemete, Szeged: This NGOs is executing 3 activities: 1. rehabilitation of Tisza habitats (replacement of alien by typical vegetation); 2. School activities, incl. building of a green path for children (together with the municipality: opened in October 2004); 3. Cooperation with farmers: 100 farmers will be invited in April and September to 2 fora to learn how to reduce nutrient pollution: This will be done at the agricultural faculty' demonstration farm. They expect 40-50 farmers to attend and 15-20 to eventually cooperate and build reed beds to retain nutrients. The NGO will help farmers to apply for subsidies from the government. Other activity is a hot spot survey in cooperation with county authorities (they want to get paid by the NGO – Consultant advised to inform the minister). The project suffers from the short DRP time, which does not allow to show results. (*the meeting with the Consultant was difficult due to weak English of the NGO and too little time of the Consultant*).

MAKK, Budapest: This NGO has competence on economic issues but focuses in this project on water-oriented activities at the mouth of the Bodrog river into Tisza (one of the GEF-PRP 1999 key wetland sites). Objective is to rehabilitate a landscape, which was destroyed in the 20th century by intensified agriculture (later collapsed). The area is presently subject of the HU subsidy programme for extensive farming in environment sensitive areas (ESA) as well as of the Vasarhely Plan for flood protection (trying to use the wetland for emergency flood retention in 3 diked polders = non-ecological). The BOKARTISZ Group (kind of NGO coalition headed by MAKK) lobbies for annual flooding (= ecological) and mosaic land use, and has started in 2003 a joint planning activity with river engineers (pilot area for the Tisza). Second (= DRP project), MAKK is cooperating with 6 farmers (170 ha) to develop and realise specific cultivation and economic plans. Requested agro-environment support was approved in October 2004 but payments are today uncertain (see present political dispute). Further, MAKK organised 6 info seminars for 240 farmers together with farm advisors. They were reported in local TV and in some national newspapers. In this project, MAKK became a link between farmers and government and addresses an issue that is usually ignored.

MAKK is the only NGO visited that is familiar with DRP issues (due to their involvement into component 1.6) but they did not know about the DEF manual.

Zöld Akcio, Miskolc: The DRP activities are part of their agro-environment programme since 2003 in the Bükk mountains (surroundings of the Bükk national park and Natura 2000 site) west of Miskolc. Zöld Akcio lobbies that this area becomes one of the Hungarian pilot areas for agricultural subsidies (ESA: to reduce pollution of the waters by farming and local sewage in the NP buffer zone): The farming at the mountain slopes (800 m asl to 100 m asl) is also in conflict with 2 drinking water abstractions. In December 2004, they prepared an outline (borders, development objective, measures etc.) for such a programme with Bükk NP and local communities (incl. regional development association), which was complemented by the agricultural university in Gödöllő and submitted to the ministry for agriculture in early 2005. The NGO proposed agri-environment measures and special farming methods for this region (habitat and species protection) and will now discuss it with the ministry in Budapest. The NGO is organising 2 micro-region fora (one in October with 32 local participants, the 2nd in

May). They prepared a comprehensive inventory on agro-technical and economic data (e.g. list of 60 communal, industrial and agricultural waste sites and 6 wastewater point sources which they relate to the WFD = good ecological status). Zöld Akcio is in close contact with local and county authorities and with a rural development partner in Austria (Moststrassen-Verein). The Zöld Akcio' ESA proposals will be disseminated in a brochure to increase farmer cooperation.

C.6. Serbia and Montenegro

Green Network Vojvodina, Novi Sad: Project subject is the raising of public awareness in 3 areas (Apatin, Backa Palanka and N. Sad) on the impact of agricultural and industrial pollution on wetlands (mainly the Danube incl. the DTD canal), in which nutrients are trapped but which have to be better managed. The NGO addresses local authorities through 4-5 lectures (first was in N. Sad with some 40 participants; next will be in Becej together with DEF-CS and in April in Sombor) at their parliaments, involving water managers, industries, farmers, foresters and NGOs: Objective is to initiate local actions. The events are also broadcasted via radio, other action is a photo exhibition (in late March in N. Sad) and a special webpage. In mid March, a colour brochure was published (only 300 copies; 12 A4 pages, professional quality, excellent presentation of problems, impact, alternative ways and DRP activities). A second bulletin is financially NOT secured (costs calculated in 2003!).

Terra's, Subotica: This national project is executed by a different person than the regional project with ProBio. Promotion of organic farming is done in the DRP project through the production of a *Manual on the principles of organic farming and laws* (coloured, in Serbian and Hungarian!). 3 seminars are held in Subotica (Aug. 2004), Becej and Beocin (February) for farmers and local administration experts. Terra's has a revised website (also in English). They cooperate with municipalities to establish a green fund (exists already in Subotica) and they lobby that from the new municipal fund for agricultural development 12% will be given to 30 farmers to pay the inspections during their conversion to organic production. Another action is a *questionnaire* (with REC + DRP logos) sent to farmers of the 3 municipalities regarding their knowledge (gaps) on organic farming (= baseline info). Objective is to reduce pollution of protected areas. Terra's will produce with DRP funds radio and TV spots in 2 languages and a TV film (30 minutes), using their own material. These will be ready in April and distributed to cooperatives and 3 local TV channels. Consumer seminars are being held for elderly people and schools.

C.7. Croatia

Franjo Koscec Society, Varazdin: This project "had to be checked", as it is, together with 2 Romanian NGOs, receiving the largest grants from DRP. The NGO is very well established and experienced both at local and international level. It organises 12 stakeholder workshops in local communities in north-western Croatia facing severe pollution problems (municipal, industrial and partly also agricultural sources). The region is located on gravel deposits and thus prone to groundwater pollution. Some villages are located near protected river sections and wetlands. Key problems are leaking sewers, pollution of drinking water wells, bad waste collection (some villages not serviced), illegal disposal of animal waste (penalties are cheaper than disposal), farmers totally ignoring agricultural advisory services and lack of WWTPs (some industries built their WWTP but operate it only rarely).

Workshop selection was based on 4 years of "green telephone" where infos on local problems were collected. Further, the NGO based its strategy on collected pollution data, which it shares with the Green Forum (HR NGO platform). So far, 5 workshops were held (reports given to the Consultant!) which always involve a local NGO partner, municipal experts and representatives from polluters. Each workshop is announced via a media round-

table 2 weeks before the event and started at 10 a.m. with a 15 minutes discussion broadcasted live on radio; it ends at ca. 5 p.m. The workshop is also a tool for public awareness: Thanks to excellent contacts, the NGOs contracted local TV stations (for USD 800, each workshop is reported 4 times at prime time and seen even across the borders in HU and SI). A colour brochure (12 pages, 1,000 copies) will later present project results. The project budget suffers from new 22% VAT for HR NGOs since May 2004 (i.e. need to reduce actions). The NGO knows the DRP via DEF & WWF; REC-HR informed about www.drp.org !

Osijek Greens (*do not mix them up with the NGO Green Osijek, involved in project 21681 on River Coalitions!*): The project aims at reducing industrial and municipal pollution around Osijek. It started already in August 2003 (due to urgent problems), i.a. with a data research on Drava polluters (450 private and 50 public enterprises), some of them not paying any fees. Activities include monitoring of pollution-emitting industries from the river side. Work is done in good cooperation with Croatian Waters agency and the ministry in Zagreb. The weak cooperation with the municipality and county is now improving. Pollution scandals are regularly published via media (press, radio), on their webpage and in the magazine "Alert" but local people do still not care very much about environment. In June, public meetings (open to journalists) will be held with HR Voda and municipal water works. In Sept. 2005, a brochure (100 copies) will be published on past and present problems and promised investments. The project facilitated the NGO to arrange cooperation with Serbian NGOs and stakeholders on Danube protection (yet 2 meetings held). In November 2004, a "Declaration on the Middle Danube" was signed by 3 HR and 4 CS stakeholders.

Europski Dom, Vukovar: This NGO has 3 activity fields (lectures on health, culture etc.; work on psychophysical health of traumatised local people; environment protection and farming). It works under very difficult local conditions (very low interest of most inhabitants in any issue, no support from municipality to this "non-Croatian" group etc.) and has limited staff capacity. Ecological farming activities started 3 years ago (different donors) and target villages in the back-country where farmers intensively use fertilisers and pesticides. The NGO is holding stakeholder meetings (mostly farmers) in different villages (yet 5), based on cooperation agreements with the 2 related municipalities (they have to organise meetings and assure participation): Introductory lectures (attended by each 20-30 farmers) are followed by half-day workshops (with agronomists) and practical demonstrations on composting (free distribution of California worms). Then, 2000 leaflets are distributed to farmers and households. Another activity are questionnaires (one at beginning, one at the end: all farmers have to respond) to explore how farmers produce, what they know about organic farming, what assistance they need to change etc. A key problem is the marketing (main products are pumpkin and vegetables). The NGO wants to re-involve Biopa (eco-farming NGO from Osijek) and, upon advise of the Consultant, also contact Terra's/CS. An upcoming activity is the growing of biological vegetable seeds in primary school gardens of 2 villages (250 kids).

C.8. Slovenia

Stork, Maribor: The project aims at introducing re-usable cotton diapers, which is innovative for Slovenia. Target groups are parents, doctors and nurses who all report very positive about the NGO initiative (better for baby skin). Promotion is done through a coloured brochure (32 pages, 10,000 copies). The NGO reacted very embarrassed that they forgot to mention the donors REC and DRP but both are mentioned on the cover side of the webpage (online since October 2004). The questionnaire on the webpage was already filled in by 100 visitors (= project target). Lobbying activities are expanding and focus is now on copying the Austrian model where users of cotton diapers get a re-fund of € 100 from the local municipality (for their saving of waste disposal costs). Media articles are being published in baby and health magazines. The NGO is looking for NGO partners in other countries (recommended to contact DEF). The project is not really reducing nutrients but a big amount of complex waste (4,600 diapers / baby = 1 ton of waste needing 500 years to decompose).

UNDP/GEF-DRP NGO Grants Programme 2003-2005

List of Granted and Assessed Projects

Regional Grants (5 projects: USD 32,500 – 50,000)

<u>Projects visited</u>	<u>Lead NGO</u>	<u>Environm. Issue</u>	<u>NGO action</u>
Szentendre/HU	REC	SGP coordination	n.a.
Vienna/Bratislava	DEF	NGO institute. Develop.	n.a.
21673 3 sub-basins	Daphne	nutrient pollution	sub-basin coop. + stakeh.
21674 Prut cooperation	ECO Center	nutr. pollution	studies, pilot actions, policy
21675 ecol. agriculture	Pro Bio + Terra's	ecolog. farming	promotion, action plan
21678 DOE canal	Hnuti Duha	navigation canal	wetland protection, lobby
21681 River coalition	Sosna + Gr. Osijek + Holocen	river basin networks	stakeholder cooperation

National Grants (60 projects: USD 4,700 – 13,400)

<u>Place visited</u>	<u>NGO Name</u>	<u>Environm. Issue</u>	<u>NGO action</u>
<u>Bosnia and Herzegovina</u>		USD 50,000 for 7 projects (USD 5,000 – 9,600)	
Tuzla	Ecolog. Union	Ecolog. education	training teachers
Srbac (near Sava)	Green Vrbas	Pesticides	educating farmers, pupils
Sarajevo	Eko Tim	PO4-free detergents	consumer awareness
Banja Luka	EcoS	Vrbas pollution	info for public & polluters
Visoko / Sarajevo	Fondeko	Bosna r. agric. pollut.	Eco-info to farmers
Milici NE Saraj.	Flora & Fauna	Jadar r. illegal waste	awareness-raising
<u>Bulgaria</u>		USD 33,500 for 5 projects (USD 5,000 – 8,200)	
Plovdiv	Green Balkans	Marica floodpl. pollut.	wetland restoration
Belogradchik	Env. Prot. Soc.	Dabravka dam pollut.	Restoration of land fill
Veliko Tarnovo	Ecoglasnost	Yantra basin pollution	awareness, water manag.
Lovech	Ecomission 21	Osim r. nutr. pollution	awareness + practises
Varna	Black Sea NGO	Dobrudzha agric. pollut.	awareness, good practise
<u>Croatia</u>		USD 50,000 for 6 projects (USD 4,700 – 9,700 + 13,400)	
Zagreb	PBN Club	cleaner food product.	Trainings of professionals
Vukovar	Europe House	organic agriculture	trainings + awareness
Slavonski Brod	Brod Ecol.Soc.	Sava water pollution	media work, authorities
Zagreb	Eleonora Soc.	Agric. pollution	awareness + education
Varazdin	Fr. Koscec Soc.	Drava water pollution	workshops + media work
Osijek	Osijek Greens	Drava pollution	monitoring + awareness
<u>Czech Republic</u>		USD 40,000 for 6 projects (USD 5,000 – 8,000)	
Brno	Veronica	agric. pollut./detergents	awareness + authorities
Moravia	Nautilus club	agric. pollut.	introd. cleaning technique
Bile Karpaty	VIS	water pollution	awareness + nature cons.

West. Moravia	Arnika	toxic waste dump	prevent leakages
South. Moravia	EPOS	eco-farming	promotion
South. Moravia	Sagittaria	pond eutrophisation	self-cleaning + promotion

Hungary USD 50,000 for 7 projects (USD 5,800 – 8,400)

Ipoly	Magosfa	industrial pollution	hot spot awareness rais.
Szeged	Csemete	agric. practises	nature cons., poll. reduct.
Bdp.	WWF HU	agric. in floodplains	BAP + awareness
Budapest	MAKK	bio-farmg. in floodpl.	Farmer cooper. + awaren.
Bdp.?	MTVS	IPPC	brochure + awareness
Miskolc	Zöld Akcio	agric. pollution	policy + awareness raising
Bakony	Pangea	small rivers pollut.	monitor., municip. educat.

Moldova USD 40,000 for 4 projects (USD 8,500 – 11,500)

Cahul	Ecoinginerie	municipal water pollut.	pilot installat. + traing.
??	Edinet	Ciuhur r. pollution	monitor., reconstr.+traing.
Ungheni	Calit. Mediului	pollut. of small creeks	WWTP reconstr., awaren.
Falesti	Cutezatorul	organic agric.	train., awaren. + action

Romania USD 35,000 for 2 projects (USD 14,500 – 14,800)

Mehedinti county	Speo-Alpin	BAP agric.	action plan, traing. + awar.
4counties	BIOTECH	organic farming	training,info material,monitor.

Serbia and Montenegro USD 60,000 for 7 projects (USD 5,600 – 10,500)

Subotica	Terra's	organic farming	public campaign + educat.
Bor	Soc. Young Resear.	Pollution from mining	worksh. new technologies
Belgrade	DEF CS	WFD implemnt. in CS	stakeholder awareness
Aleksinac	Experts network	Moravica pollution	monitor. + awareness
??	CEDI	industrial pollut.	Stakeh. cooper. + awaren.
Tara	Soc. Tara Friends	agric. pollution	awaren. rais.
Vojvodina	Green Network	agric. pollution	stakeh. awaren. + educat.

Slovakia USD 45,000 for 8 projects (USD 5,000 – 7,000)

Liptov	Tatry	munic. water pollution	envir. educat. + action
Morava	Soc. Sustain. Livg.	Water pollution	participatory strategy
Danube	TINCA	wetland pollution	macroph. cleaning action
Zitava/east Nitra	BirdLife	wetland rehabilitation	restorat. to retain nutrients
Ipel	Poiplie - Ipel Union	pollution of wetland	clean-up and awareness
3 SK regions	Sosna	river coalitions	awaren, clean-up, cooper.
Stupava/Bva.	* Pajstun	munic. pollution	awareness + education
Kosice	Creative	alternative WWT	pilot plant + awaren.

* Pajstun withdraw its submitted and granted project because the DRP-SGP start was delayed so much: The therefore available funds were distributed among the other granted NGOs.

Slovenia USD 40,000 for 4 projects (each USD 10,000)

NW Slovenia	ICRO	river self-purificat.	Envir. educat. + participat.
Goricko	Lutra	envir. protection	water protection seminars
Ljubljana	Union Organ.Farms	Promotion org. farmg	Education of stakeholders
Maribor	Stork	water pollution	promot. ecolog.. diapers

Ukraine USD 36,000 for 4 projects (USD 8,000 – 10,000)

Tisa,Prut, Siret	WETI	Pesticides	awareness
??	UNEP Committee	wetland management	awareness
??	Black Sea Network	delta navigation canal	awareness raising
Snyatyn	New Generation	water pollution (food)	stakeholder train. + coop.