

Project title	Embankment and profile landscaping measures as well as linkage of meandering river sections to the Morava River at Marchegg (MUF), Part of the LIFE Nature Projects “Water World March-Thaya-Auen”
Content of the project	Renaturalization project on the Morava River within the scope of bilateral planning and implementation process for the improvement of the status of the water ecology of the Natura 2000 area March-Thaya-Auen. The project comprises preliminary studies, planning, official proceedings, execution of construction and a three-year phase of comprehensive monitoring.
Clients/Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LIFE Nature Project funded by EU means for the preservation and improvement of the European network of protected areas Natura 2000 • via donau - Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH • Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Environment and Water Management • NÖ Landschaftsfonds • NÖ Landesjagdverband
Partners/Planners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distelverein (project organizer) • riocom, Dipl.-Ing. Albert Schwingshandl, Technisches Büro für Kulturtechnik und Wasserwirtschaft (hydro monitoring, planning) • Atelier Arch. Alfons Oberhofer, architect and planner (coordination, planning) • Umweltbundesamt GmbH (water status monitoring and hydrology) • Dr. Werner Lazovsky, Technisches Büro für Ökologie, (vegetation ecological monitoring), • Mag. Norbert Teufelbauer, Dipl.-Ing. Zuna-Kratky (ornithological monitoring) • Dr. Thomas Spindler, Technisches Büro (fish ecology monitoring)
Project volume:	EUR 2,400,000 (incl. VAT); via donau's share is EUR 1,200,000
Start and duration	1999 to 2006
Section	Morava River, river km 15 – 25
Project description	The river engineering focus of the LIFE Nature Project is the revitalization of the Morava River and of the adjoining humid habitats. Cut off riverbends of the Morava River are now connected again to the main river, and in the Marchegg region an extensive meandering river system has been revived. The secured embankments were renaturalized and an environment for dynamic river processes created. In addition to the construction measures, a three-year ecological monitoring period was conducted, which led to important findings for similar renaturalization projects and highlighted the success of the model project for nature protection. The project consisted of the following modules:

- Preliminary ecology and conceptual studies: In the preparatory phase of the implementation, eight scenarios for linking the meandering river with and without riverbed ramps were developed; furthermore, an ecological preliminary investigation was conducted for the following special areas: sedimentology, hydrochemistry, macrozoobenthos, surveying of waters and structures, molluscs, fish ecology, dragonfly, birds, water and swamp plants as well as riparian vegetation.
- Design types were developed for the project submitted and the feasibility of the measures was agreed on with Slovakia. Due to the Slovak navigation rules, the navigability of the main river had to be preserved. Time-consuming official procedures followed.
- In the region of Marchegg, meandering riverbends were linked again and in the region of Vysoká and Engelbrecht, embankment structures were built and connections within the hinterlands were improved by lowering embankments and allowing variable cross-section profiles with fords and scouring processes.
- Three-year monitoring: The monitoring documented the effectiveness of the measures and the great success of the revitalization project. Water levels and hydrology, structure and profile development, vegetation, breeding, migrating and winter birds as well as fish ecology trends were documented.

The cross-border collaboration with Slovakia contributed a great deal to the mutual understanding of water engineers, ecologists and authorities.

The much more comprehensive LIFE Nature Project “Water Worlds” includes a priority project on the Thaya River. In this region, via donau reactivated the largest of the old river branches created by the regulation of the Thaya River by building an inflow structure and the natural embankment of the Thaya River was preserved by a river strip programme.

The role of via donau: via donau - Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH participates in the national share of the INTERREG III A Project with an amount of EUR 1,200,000 (incl. VAT)

Furthermore, within the scope of the bilateral discussion process, Ecology Team contributed its know-how to the preparation of the project modules and coordination services.

Contact

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