

# WASTEWATER UTILIZATION OPTIONS: WORKSHOP ON SEWAGE SLUDGE MANAGEMENT AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

## Outline

Recognizing the significance of the issue of sewage sludge that has been steadily growing in the Danube Region, the [EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Priority Area Water Quality](#) (EUSDR PA4), supported by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade initiated the elaboration of a [study](#) on sewage sludge treatment and recovery in the Danube Region in 2024.

The study was carried out by TRENECON Consulting and Planning Ltd, finalized in November 2024, and it was discussed thoroughly with experts and organizations in the Danube Region and within the frame of the Steering Group of EUSDR PA4 as well. A comprehensive overview is provided on the practice and legislation of the Danube countries, the best practices, and difficulties of sewage sludge management. The study further identifies the major problems and provides recommendations for future steps to be taken. The study also provided an update of the previous [study](#) that was developed in 2020.

Whereas some countries have specific sludge management and recovery strategies, others manage sludge in line with the criteria set out in their water and sewage management strategies. There are differences in the administrative backgrounds, the focus and the applied techniques however common points in management exist and targets common in nature are derived from the EC legislation and strategies. Regardless of the embeddedness of countries actions into EU legislation, sludge can be considered an important resource and, at the same time, a risk for the environment in all EUSDR countries concerning soil and water quality as well as human and livestock health.

Considering the [New Circular Economy Action Plan](#), the issue of sludge is specifically important as it has high energy content and contains several materials, notably phosphorus, that are important input materials for the chemical industry and agriculture.

In light of the conclusions from the above sludge management study, the Priority Area Water Quality with cooperation of the International Commission of the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) [call for an online workshop on SEWAGE SLUDGE MANAGEMENT AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY](#) on June 2025.

## Objectives

The main aim of the workshop is to discuss the situation of sewage sludge in Europe, primarily in the Danube countries, but with an overview to the situation of other regions as well (the Baltic Sea Region, the Adriatic and Ionian Region and the Alpine Region) and to extract relevant messages for DG Environment and national policy makers. Primary target group for the event is national sewage sludge experts in Europe, policy makers, water experts and thematic coordinators. Members of relevant Steering Groups are also welcomed to join the discussion.

The workshop that will be held in a virtual format would feature presentations about sewage sludge in the different regions, countries; utilities on EU legislation considering the recent policy updates, operationalising Circular Economy for waste-water management (including recovery and reuse of resources/water/energy).

Invited speakers would include experts from DG ENV, JRC, ICPDR, ISRBC, IAWD, EUSDR, EUSBR, GWP.

*The event applied to be a Green Week 2025 Partner event.*

*Agenda draft -the workshop is planned for a short online session in half day, planned to include the following organizations and countries:*

***Proposed presenters and topics***

- *EUSDR PA4 Water Quality* -introduction of the topic of sludge management in the Danube (10 min)
- Trenecon (Attila Fürstand) Presenting the Danube Region sewage sludge management study (15 min)
- *DG Environment Water Unit (Sylvie Grajales)* - overview of European legislation and the issue of sludge (15 min)
- *International Commission of the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)* (Adam Kovacs) Draft position paper on wastewater management (10 min)
- *JRC Wastewater treatment in the Danube region: opportunities and challenges* (TBC) (15 min)
- *World Bank -IAWD- Danube Water Program-* managing wastewater and sludge (TBC) (10 min)
  
- country experiences-utilities: 10-10 minutes***
- *SERBIA-CROATIA International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC)* (Samo Groselj) - sludge situation in the Sava basin (TBC)
- *AUSTRIA-GERMANY*
- *SLOVAKIA-HUNGARY*