International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine

Ben van de Wetering
General Secretary
Catchment area

3rd biggest European river

9 countries, 58 million inhabitants

Drinking water supply for 30 million people
Pictures
Functions and uses

The ideal river for ...

... nature protection
... agriculture
... drainage
... shipping
... tourism
... economic activities
... power production
... drinking water production
Changes over the centuries

Over the years: 85% loss of alluvial flood areas
Landmarks

- 1950 - Foundation
- 1963 - Convention of Berne
- 1986 - Accident at Sandoz
- 1987 - Rhine Action Program
- 1993 and 1995 – Flooding
- 2000 - Programme Rhine 2020
- 2000 - EU Water Framework Directive
- 2007 - EU Floods Directive
The ICPR

ICPR
Established 1950, amended in 1963 and 1999

Members
Switzerland, France, Germany, Luxemburg, Netherlands, European Union

Cooperation with Austria, Liechtenstein, Wallonia (Belgium)

Observers
Intergovernmental Organizations (IGO's)
Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's)
Cooperation

• De-centralised organization

• National delegations
  – political mandate
  – technical know how
  – annual budget 1.200.000 €/a (operational costs of the Secretariat)

• Political framework, no sanctions

• Legal framework provided by EU Directives (WFD and FD) and national legislation

• All agreements by consensus. Measures as recommendations to countries

• Obligation to report on implementation of measures

• Small neutral Secretariat, 4 languages
Results

Development of the communities of the Rhine and average oxygen content of the Rhine at Emmerich

Contents of ammonium (ammoniacal nitrogen) in Rhine water (1991-2006)

Improvement of river continuity
But more to do …
New topics

- Micro-pollutants

- Contamination of fish

- Mitigating effects of climate change
Welcome
to the website of the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine.

Nine states - one river basin.
For the benefit of the Rhine and all of its tributaries, the members of the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) Switzerland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands and the European Commission successfully co-operate with Austria, Liechtenstein, the Belgian region of Wallonia and Italy. Focal points of work are sustainable development of the Rhine, its alluvial areas and the good state of all waters in the watershed.

Workshop: Impacts of climate change on the Rhine river basin
On 30 and 31st January 2013 the ICPR staged a workshop on “Impacts of climate change on the Rhine river basin”. About 90 experts in the field of water management met to discuss the complex impacts of climate change on the Rhine river basin. The workshop focused on the Rhine river basin as a whole and the Rhine basin countries were joined by representatives from academia, governmental and non-governmental organisations, companies, public utilities and other stakeholders.

Reports
210. Bericht des Präsidenten der IKSR 2012 - 2013

209. Darstellung der Entwicklung der Rheinwassertemperaturen auf der Basis validierter Temperaturmessungen von 1978 bis 2011
Der IKSR-Bericht 209 beschreibt die Entwicklung der Rheinwassertemperaturen.

press releases
03/07/2013
Upstream Salmon Migration again possible at some 480 Obstacles
Rotterdam, 3 July 2013 Result of the present ICPR balance of ecological measures taken during 2000 - 2012: Upstream migration is again possible at some 480 obstacles in the Rhine catchment. 122 km² of floodplains have been reactivated, 90 lowland lakes and backwaters have been reconnected to the dynamics of the Rhine. During its annual Plenary Assembly on July 2 and 3 in Rotterdam the ICPR presented these successes leading to an ecologically more stable and varied Rhine system. In this context new strategies to improve fish migration were discussed. New monitoring methods and networking tools with other European countries were presented to ensure better fish migration.
Publications
Publications
Technical reports

203. Integrated assessment of micro-pollutants and measures aimed at reducing inputs of urban and industrial wastewater

The 14th conference of Rhine Ministers on 18 October 2007 required the ICPR among others to develop a joint and comprehensive strategy for reducing and avoiding micro-pollutant inputs from urban wastewater and other (diffuse) sources into the Rhine and its tributaries by...


Industrial chemicals are substances used as components, additives or admixtures in industrial production processes. The industrial chemicals concerned by this report are organic compounds of xenobiotic origin, such as solvents, surfactants, flame retardants, adhesives and...

201. Report issued by the President of the ICPR 2011 - 2012

Balance of the present state of the Rhine and its catchment – joint progress report for 2012/2013. As decided by the Strategy Group, a ‘Balance on the progress made due to improvements of the state of the Rhine and its catchment’ will be drawn in the beginning of 2013...

200. and 199. - Balance on the implementation of the Action Plan on Floods between 1995 and 2010

Since the last great flood of the Rhine in 1995 the countries in the Rhine catchment have invested some 10.3 billion € into improved flood protection and have thus increased the protection of people and goods. According to the balance on the implementation of the Action Plan on...

198. Low water periods in the Rhine river basin in 2011

During the PLEN-CO12, the Dutch delegation referred to the period of extremely low water in 2011, which gave rise to different problems and measures in the Netherlands. It was convened that all delegations would deliver a survey on available national knowledge on all low water...
Events

Symposia
• Monitoring in large river basins (Basel, 28-29 October 2013)  
  REGISTRATION OPEN till 15 September 2013
• Upstream – downstream migration (2005)
• The river, the port and the sea (2000)
• Ecology and flood prevention (2000)
• The Rhine – again a salmon river (1999)

Workshops
• Impacts of climate change on the Rhine river basin (2013)
• Warning and alarm plan (2010)
• Master plan migratory fish (2010)
• Micro-pollutants from diffuse sources (2010)
• Water structure measures along the Rhine – best practice (2008)
• Micro-pollutants from urban wastewater (2007)
• Water protection and navigation (2006)
• Integrated approach towards sediment management (2005)
• Flood action plan (2004)
Events

6TH INTERNATIONAL RHINE SYMPOSIUM

Monitoring in Large River Basins

Following the 15th Conference of Rhine Ministers in Basel

Monday, 28 October 2013 from 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, 29 October 2013 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
> Congress Center Basel

NEW DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION!
15 SEPTEMBER 2013!

www.iksr.org

General Programme

Monday, 28 October 2013 from 4:00 p.m.

Welcome to the participants and information about the symposium, 20 years joint operation of the Swiss-German monitoring station in Weil am Rhein and the UN year of water cooperation 2013

Introductory lecture on the whole purpose of modern environmental monitoring

Joint dinner

Tuesday, 29 October 2013 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Block 1 (Chemistry) – Monitoring programmes of the Rivers Rhine, Moselle-Sarre and Danube: Natural constituents and pollutants, micro-pollutions, drinking water supply and impact of climate change

Block 2 (Biology) – Monitoring of invertebrates and fish in the Rivers Rhine and Danube: invasive species, salmon and sturgeon migration, riparian vegetation and floodplains, ecosystem services and restoration

Block 3 (Sediments) – The role of suspended matter and sediments in river monitoring: Bedload management, flood protection and sediments as habitats of the aquatic fauna

Round Table and Conclusion – Monitoring between Management and Science: Lessons learnt in international river basins, challenges and proposals for future water monitoring.

Closing speech of the President of the ICPR
Challenges

First Phase (50ties - 70ties twentieth-century)
• Building trust and mutual understanding
• Convincing society of the danger of continuous increasing water pollution

Turning Point: Sandoz Accident
• From short term detailed technical discussion to long term ambitious goal setting
• Integration of all relevant policy fields

For the future
• How correct the impact of missing environmental management of the past
• How to take account of uncertainties regarding the socioeconomic evolution and the impact of climate change
Both the Sandoz fire in 1986 and the floods of 1993 and 1995 were triggers for fundamental changes in policy

• always try to find a positive approach, even when catastrophic events have occurred

• start with building common denominators, not with identifying disagreements

Agreements should be developed bottom-up and with involvement of all stakeholders. This does increase ownership and acceptance.
Thank you!

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