

## Aspects of Romanian National Centre for River Restoration activities

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### Short history

The Romanian Centre for River Restoration (RCRR) was established on 01.09.2001, by Order of the Minister of Waters and Environmental Protection as a technical and consulting body for the Ministry, in view of joining the efforts of Romanian experts towards river restoration.

Romania, through the National Administration "Romanian Waters"/"Apele Romane" is a founding member of the European Centre for River Restoration (ECRR), which was established in Silkeborg, Denmark in 1999.

The main goal of the Centre is, according to the genuine Ministerial Order "to assure the conceptual approach of specialists from different activity fields, most of all biologists – ecologists versus civil engineers, water management engineers, hydropower and hydro technical engineers".

Since December 2013, the National Institute of Hydrology and Water Management, which is a sub-unit of the National Administration "Romanian Waters"/ "Apele Romane" ensures the Secretariat of the Romanian Centre for River Restoration.

### EU context. Romanian research and activities

Within Europe, the hydromorphological alterations are considered one of the most important pressures on river ecosystems and represent a major threat to water quality. According to article 4 of WFD all Member States are bound to implement «measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all bodies of surface water». Therefore, the river restoration gained a new approach in order to achieve the environmental objectives for all river water bodies as Water Framework Directive requires. In this regard, the chapter «Program of Measures» of the River Basin Management Plans became an important tool for the implementation of Article 4 of the WFD.

In this international context, in the last decades RCRR developed diverse activities as: organization of seminars, meetings with specialists working in different fields (water resources management, environment protection,

hydrology, hydrotechnical works, land reclamation), trainings, participation to international seminars and conferences in the river restoration field, and through the experts members of RCRR has constant concerns to develop projects and guidelines on ecological restoration of aquatic ecosystems.

In this context, the experts of the National Institute of Hydrology and Water Management (NIHWM) are doing research in the river restoration field which is important part of the water resources management system. The research studies developed during 2003-2016 aims to ensuring river continuity (lateral connectivity and longitudinal continuity). The results of these studies have been represented by specific solutions to facilitate the migration of fish fauna upstream reservoirs and to restore/or create wetland/floodplain ecosystems in order to improve river water quality. Also, the NIHWM experts developed the *Guide for ecological restoration of hydro-morphological modified rivers* which became a guideline for research studies that followed after 2011.

The annual scientific conference of NIHWM offers an opportunity for the practitioners, decision makers and stakeholders to share their expertise and experience in water management including river restoration. In the same time, the NIHWM experts are involved in many scientific events and projects.



During 2011-2013 the National Institute of Hydrology and Water Management gained experience in river restoration field as subcontractor of DLG – Government Service for Land and Water Management (The Netherlands), in the framework of the RESTORE Project (Rivers: Engaging, Supporting and Transferring knowledge for Restoration in Europe) application no. LIFE09 INF/UK/000032 (<http://www.restoreivers.eu/>).



The RESTORE project was an opportunity: (i) to disseminate the best practices in River Restoration field in the European countries; (ii) to share knowledge and promote best practices through the RESTORE website and River Restoration Wiki Database (more than 1000 river restoration case studies all over Europe); <http://riverwiki.restoreivers.eu>; (iii) to find partners to develop future projects.

The NIHWM organized with the support of National Agency for Water and Aquatic Environments of France (ONEMA), European Center of River Restoration (ECRR) and International Office of Water-Paris, the technical workshop on River Restoration and Natural Water Retention Measures organized within 12<sup>th</sup>EUROPE-INBO International Conference, Bucharest 2014, which brought together field stakeholders, decision-makers, experts and specialists from Europe, group and representatives of NGOs interested in the river restoration.

**Perspectives**

In the course of 2017, Romanian Center of River Restoration with the support of NIHWM, will organize a national workshop, with the theme of river restoration, open both to specialists in water resources management, researchers, stakeholders, as to NGOs. It will focus on conflicts that arise in river restoration projects.

Also, in the near future, NIHWM will develop a website dedicated to the Romanian Center for River Restoration and their activities.

*Ecological restoration of Danube Delta – Carasuhat Pilot Area (implemented project) the first Romanian wetland restored by local communities*

