

15th Steering Group Meeting of the Priority Area 2

Brussels, 4 December 2017

Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the European Union
(15, Rue Caroly, 1050 – Ixelles, Bruxelles)

1. OPENING REMARKS

Mr Pál Ságvári, HU Priority Area coordinator welcomed the participants on behalf of the HU-CZ coordination of PA2.

Ms Pavla Kačabová, National Coordinator of the EUSDR from the Czech Republic also welcomed the participants and informed the participants about changes in the CZ coordination, introducing Ms Aneta Mrkvičková, the new Priority Area Coordinator on the CZ side.

Mr Pál Ságvári proposed a tour de table introduction, noting the changes of members of coordination, and also the high number of participants delegated by SG members from their respective Permanent Representations in Brussels.

2. REPORT OF THE PRIORITY AREA COORDINATORS: PROGRESS SINCE THE 14TH STEERING GROUP MEETING AND OUTLOOK TO 2018

Mr Pál Ságvári informed the participants about the activities of the PA2 in the second half of 2017, including events, studies, project generation and management, communication and promotion.

Regarding events, he informed the SG about the involvement of PA2 in the organization of the 6th Annual Forum of the EUSDR and also about the Stakeholder Seminar entitled 'Can we complete gas market integration in the Danube Region by 2020?' held the next day at the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the European Union. He introduced 3 studies and 1 publication of PA2 in 2017. Századvég Economic Research Institute wrote the first study on clean connectivity. The two studies that the Stakeholder Seminar was built on were made by Masaryk University ('Challenges and opportunities of natural gas sector in the Danube Region') and the Regional Centre for Energy Policy Research - REKK ('Risks and opportunities in the Danube Region's natural gas sector'. A publication entitled 'Thematic overview' on the topics of the 6th Annual Forum – connectivity in traditional energy, transport, clean transport – was published and distributed during the Forum.



Concerning project generation activities, **Mr Pál Ságvári** presented a short summary of the 7 projects that applied for funding in the Danube Transnational Seed Money Facility Call. All projects received a Declaration of Alignment form PA2 (Danube Geo-Ed, RuGeoHeat, Development of Small Hydropower Station Generating Electric Energy, RESDrive, DHswitch, DRiSET, Green and Smart Danube Community Energy). He also raised the topic of Danube Strategic Project Fund (DSPF): 2 projects were submitted with the support of PA2, but none of them were supported. **Mr Pál Ságvári** presented the concerns of PA2 in connection with the DSPF: the selection of projects was month late, the selection procedure was not clear, there was no information about the final assessment, there was the lack of information during the whole procedure etc. He highlighted that these concerns might have a bad effect on potential project partners who may lose confidence in EUSDR related funding possibilities.

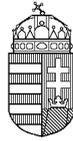
Mr Pál Ságvári also informed the SG member about the project management activities of the HU coordination in the DARLINGe project, including preparation of project materials, involvement in the organization of the 1st Transnational Stakeholder Forum and participation at the 6th Annual Forum of the EUSDR.

Mr Pál Ságvári presented the achievements of 2017, including an overview of deliverables in due the first project period.

A brief outlook to 2018 plans was also done, noting that the main topics of the HU and CZ side have to be identified in a concrete manner under the broader subject indicated in the Application Form and the Roadmap.

3. ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE HUNGARIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE EUSDR AND THE 6TH ANNUAL FORUM IN BUDAPEST

Mr Félix Moldován presented the outcomes of the Hungarian Presidency and its closing event, the 6th Annual Forum of the EUSDR organized in Budapest on 18-19 October. He briefly introduced the programme of the Presidency and highlighted that, for the first time since the implementation of the EUSDR started, the Hungarian Coordination managed to kick of a discussion between presidencies of all existing EU macro regional strategies. He informed the SG members that over 1200 participants were present at the event, and that the summary and the Joint Statement of the Ministers responsible for the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region are both available at the webpage of the Forum. He depicted the involvement of HU PA2 coordination in the preparation for the Forum, mainly in building the thematic focus of the conference – energy security, infrastructure development, clean connectivity and an outlook to financing after 2020. He also briefed the SG about the high-level participation at the event, informing them that Prime Minister of Hungary, Mr Viktor Orbán, opened the



conference. **Mr Moldován** also highlighted the successful ministerial panel discussion on energy security.

4. AOB & CLOSURE OF THE STEERING GROUP MEETING

Mr Pál Ságvári initiated the approval of one more project to the SMF call, which was accepted by the SG with no objections. He also reminded the SG members that the Transnational Stakeholder Database is of utmost importance to the coordination, and asked the participants again to send their lists; referring to the decision that was made regarding submission of national stakeholder lists by SG members during the 14th SG Meeting in Budapest. **Mr Pál Ságvári** announced that the next SG meetings will be held mainly in Budapest and Prague, and also initiated that the SG meetings of PA2 could be potentially held in a rotating manner between the 14 member countries and asked the SG members to consider the idea and apply if interested.

Mr Pál Ságvári and **Ms Pavla Kačabová** in their closing words informed the participants that all materials and presentations of the meeting will be distributed via email and will also be updated to the PA2 website.