



MEDIA RELEASE

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Austrian Danube River project chosen as finalist in International Thies Riverprize

A groundbreaking Austrian river management project has been announced as a finalist in the prestigious AUD\$300,000 (EU\$189,000) International Thies Riverprize - the world's largest prize in its field.

The Danube River project, initiated by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), was chosen as a finalist in the Australian-based prize for its collaborative approach to improve water quality.

The winners of the International Thies Riverprize will be announced at a special ceremony on Tuesday 4 September 2007 during the 10th International Riversymposium and Environmental Flows Conference in the city of Brisbane, Australia, from 3 to 6 September. The International Thies Riverprize is a partnership between the International Riverfoundation (IRF) and Riverfestival.

ICPDR Executive Secretary Philip Weller said the 45-year long Soviet era left much of the Danube River with terrible environmental problems including toxic waste pollution and destructive farming practices.

"The ultimate goal of ICPDR is to see the rational use of water within the Danube Basin and minimise negative consequences of the 2780km Danube on the Black Sea," Mr Weller said.

"Many countries along the Danube River are not part of the European Union however they all agreed to cooperate to meet strict EU water protection laws, showing their commitment to applying integrated river basin management.

"In addition, the project has shown excellence in water management through a network of water monitoring and sampling stations, research ships testing pollution and a transboundary warning system for accidents."

Riversymposium Chair Professor Paul Greenfield said the project exemplifies the spirit of the International Thies Riverprize.

"Many countries are facing a water crisis and now more than ever it is important for the International Thies Riverprize to reward and promote best practice water management. All people involved in the ICPDR project should feel proud their efforts have been recognised in this way."

Three other government and community groups from China, New Zealand and Canada received recognition as finalists for the Australian prize for their work in tackling pollution, water quality, erosion and flooding.

More information on the International Thies Riverprizes can be found at www.riversymposium.com.

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Additional information and images are available upon request.

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