



# Save the Danube – Stop the Canal!

**Fit the ships to the river, not the river to the ships!**

The blue Danube is Europe's lifeline. Flowing through 10 countries on its nearly 3,000 km journey from the Black Forest to the Black Sea, for centuries our river has connected communities, people and nature. It provides us with essential benefits and services, including drinking water, recreation and biological diversity. For centuries, Danube fish and other wildlife have been a source of food and livelihoods.

But our river is threatened. Old-fashioned river engineering projects put forward by national governments and supported by the European Union will soon transform our living river into little more than a shipping canal.

If we do not act now, the so-called "Trans-European Networks for Transport" (TEN-T) will turn the living Danube into a lifeless "Corridor Number 7". Over 1,000 kilometres of the Danube will be deepened, regulated or dammed, destroying many of Europe's last great river landscapes and remaining wetland areas – areas like Straubing-Vilshofen in Germany; the exceptionally rich wetlands along the Hungarian, Croatian, and Serbian stretches; the natural Danube islands between Bulgaria and Romania; and the spectacular Danube Delta.

Lost will be not only fish and other species, but also other important environmental services on which people depend. Water tables will be affected, putting at risk drinking water for 20 million people. The loss of wetlands will increase the risk of flooding and lead to higher costs for water treatment.

Transportation is one important use of our river – but not the only one.

Furthermore, most of the current approaches to promote shipping on the Danube are old-fashioned, expensive and unnecessary. They are focused on adapting the river to ever-deeper ships, rather than promoting new or proven technologies in ship design, logistics and communications that can increase shipping capacities while limiting impacts.

***We want a living river, not just a canal.***

***Therefore, we call on the European Commission and national governments of Danube countries to:***

- ***Stop one-sided plans and projects that will turn the Danube into a lifeless transport corridor.***
- ***Protect and restore the full diversity and richness of life on the Danube and its floodplains***
- ***Develop a comprehensive and sustainable solution for sharing the river among different needs – not just shipping, but also fishing, tourism, agriculture, biodiversity and others. Fit the ships to the river, not the river to the ships***

