

PRESS INFORMATION

Crowning the 'International Danube Art Master' Schools competition: Winner awarded at Danube River Basin Ministerial Meeting 13 December 2004

The national 'Danube Art Masters' from 12 countries¹ spent two exciting days in Vienna and presented their works at the Ministerial Meeting of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), held 13 December 2004. In the presence of Ministers and high representatives responsible for the sustainable management of the Danube Basin the 'International Danube Art Master' was crowned. "The award of this prize in the Ministerial meeting symbolises that the Danube river links all its people and all generations: the political decisions we are taking here today are meant to ensure that we can be proud of the inheritance we pass on to the next generation," says Catherine Day, ICPDR President 2004. The work of the 11 year old Jonatan Zajc Sobočan from Slovenia was awarded "International Danube Art Master" (electronic pictures can be downloaded from www.icpdr.org).

'Danube Art Master': a 13-Country Competition

This international school competition was carried out by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) in cooperation with the Danube Environmental Forum, the largest network of NGOs in the Danube Basin and funded by the UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project and the European Union as part of the first international Danube Day, celebrated on June 29 throughout the basin. In this competition, schools were invited to organize a school outing to the Danube (or a tributary) and to create "works of art". The competition, which was organised in most of the countries jointly by the national governments and non-governmental organisations, was an overwhelming success, with over three thousand entrants.

'Environmental Art' created by Children

Children were united across the entire basin – all visiting their local rivers and devoting time to considering what it means to them. Much of the art was made of elements found by the river: reeds, stones or driftwood, but also rubbish. "The diversity of art works created was a true reflection of the huge richness of the Danube Basin", explains Catherine Day, ICPDR President. "For many, the competition made them think about a vision for the Danube waters that would meet the needs of its diverse multi-national people. For others, the competition was a stimulus for scientific study to look at the geography, chemistry and ecology of rivers."

¹ Participation from Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia. Also children from Ukraine participated in the international school competition, but could not come to Vienna due to logistic difficulties.

International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)

The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) is an international organisation consisting of 13 cooperating states and the European Union. Since its establishment in 1998, the ICPDR has grown into one of the largest and most active international bodies of river basin management expert in Europe. ICPDR deals not only with the Danube itself, but with the whole Danube River Basin, which includes also its tributaries and the ground water resources.

The ultimate goal of the ICPDR is to implement the Danube River Protection Convention (DRPC) and make it a living tool. Its ambitious mission is to promote and coordinate sustainable and equitable water management, including conservation, improvement and rational use of waters for the benefit of the Danube River Basin countries and their people. The ICPDR pursues its mission by making recommendations for the improvement of water quality, developing mechanisms for flood and accident control, agreeing standards for emissions and by assuring that these are reflected in the Contracting Parties' national legislations and applied in their policies.

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