



Press release

On the move - the ICPR is preparing for the future



Malbun, 4 and 5 July 2019

The annual Plenary Session of the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) was staged in Malbun (Liechtenstein) on 4 and 5 July 2019. The preparation of the Conference of Rhine ministers, in particular of the new programme "Rhine 2040", which will be approved there, ranged among its focal issues. Furthermore, the ICPR discussed the new results concerning the substance pollution of the Rhine and low water monitoring.

Conference of Rhine Ministers/Programme "Rhine 2040"

The ICPR Plenary Assembly discussed the preliminary balance of the programme "Rhine 2020" and noted the draft of the new programme "Rhine 2040" and determined its general orientation. The members of the ICPR confirmed their obligations with respect to the ecological continuity of the Rhine. In this connection, further operational steps are planned before the 16th Conference of Ministers in Amsterdam. The new "Rhine 2040" programme will cover important functions of the Rhine catchment area as an ecosystem and its numerous pressures, e.g. on water quality and extreme events. Climate change and sustainable management will be overarching issues. The new programme is to be adopted by the 16th Conference of Rhine Ministers on 13 February 2020 in Amsterdam. The ICPR will also be reorganising its staff from 2020 when the European Union will take over the presidency. At the same time, there will also be a change in its management.

Special Measurement Programme 2017

In addition to the ongoing chemical analyses, the IKSr repeatedly carries out exemplary special measuring programmes with innovative orientations. A comprehensive list of substances was examined within the Special Measurement Programme 2017. In addition, non-target analysis has provided a broad overview of the pollution in the Rhine without having to determine each individual substance beforehand or knowing all the substances. The analysis confirmed that the Rhine contains a large number of known but also new substances. Ten more substances have been recommended for continuous monitoring within the ICPR, which already covers up to 170 substances. The evaluation of the Special Measurement Programme is available as ICPR Technical Report no. 257 at www.iksr.org.

Low water monitoring

In 2018, the Rhine and many of its tributaries had long periods of extremely low flow. Climate scenarios predict an intensification of such extreme situations in the future.

Together with the Federal Institute of Hydrology and its information platform UNDINE, the ICPR has established a real-time low water monitoring system on the Rhine. It is available online from today on at www.iksr.org. This will enable the development of such events to be better assessed in future and the public to be better informed.

Further information

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Short information

For almost 70 years, Switzerland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and the European Community have been cooperating in the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine to reconcile the diverse uses and protection of water. Their cooperation is based on a treaty under international law. For the implementation of European directives, cross-border cooperation was extended to Austria, Liechtenstein, Italy and the Belgian Walloon Region.

The current President is Martine Rohn-Brossard from Switzerland. The President and the different ICPR fora are supported by the international staff of the permanent secretariat in Koblenz (Germany).

For its successful work since 1950, the Commission was awarded the European RiverPrize in 2013 and the International Thiess RiverPrize in 2014. For detailed information on the ICPR please browse to the ICPR website www.iksr.org.