

Inland Waterway Management - The Times They Are A-Changin'

by

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Today inland waterway managers have to react on a number of new challenges which emerged in the previous decades or are still underway. Taking the European Danube River as an example, several typical such challenges will be presented and discussed, e.g.

- environment and nature as new policy priorities,
- growing efficiency and effectiveness requirements on the transport and logistics market,
- higher end-user expectation on services of waterways and waterway transport,
- unforeseen developments in international trade relations and supply chains and
- the fast progress of digitalisation as well as the high expectations from digitalisation.

The reaction so far taken towards these challenges will be presented from the perspective of one of the Danube riparian countries, Austria, together with first experiences and subsequent adaptations of the reaction. Examples of actions are very different, e.g.

- adaptations of the legal framework and organisations,
- the development of medium-term action plans encompassing all relevant dimensions,
- several kinds of cooperation in the international context of inland waterways,
- appropriate development of services for the (end-)users of inland waterways,
- the definition of multi-purpose projects embracing several categories at once (e.g. economy, environment and safety) and
- proactive measures towards emerging technologies as, for example, digitalisation.

On the basis of such examples - stemming from the specific situation of one country on one (international) river - the presentation will make an effort to generalise the lessons learnt: Examples for general principles will be discussed and might include e.g.

- the integration of requirements for environment, economy and safety in multi-purpose projects (and strategies),
- the elaboration of tailor-made services for users and
- the appropriate treatment of the high need for harmonisation of digital services.

The principles for encountering current challenges of inland waterway management developed in this way shall ease the selection, the adaptation and the eventual use of the experience gained in Austria in the context of other waterways, whether in Europe or on other continents.

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