



Press Release

ICPR sets priorities until 2027 and facilitates the mapping of biodiversity along the Rhine

The International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) presented its priorities until 2027 at its Plenary Assembly on 7 July 2022 in Brussels. In addition, a newly published report and an atlas provide an overview of the development of habitats and biodiversity along the Rhine.

After two pandemic-related videoconferences in 2020 and 2021, the ICPR plenary meeting was held again for the first time in presence in Brussels on 7 July under the current Presidency of the European Union.

Priority tasks until 2027

The "[Rhine 2040](#)" programme adopted at the Ministerial Conference in Amsterdam in 2020 sets ambitious water management goals. The ICPR's common vision is a sustainably managed Rhine river basin that is well adapted to climate change by 2040.

At the plenary session, the ICPR presented the tasks to be worked on until 2027 in order to further reduce water pollution, increase biodiversity and better manage floods and low water levels - in the spirit of an effective adaptation to climate change. The new [organisation chart](#) with the mandates published on the ICPR website shows the tasks of the working and expert groups.

One of the main focuses is to update the 2015 climate change adaptation strategy by 2025, including organising a major interdisciplinary workshop in 2024 to bring together the best available expertise.

On the Rhine and its largest tributaries, sites for new flood retention areas are to be compiled by 2025. In response also to the floods in July 2021, which affected some Rhine tributaries, a workshop on flash floods will be organised in 2023.

New findings on biotopes along the Rhine

During the plenary session, the new information on the interconnected habitats for flora and fauna along the Rhine, the so-called biotope network, was also published. The [ICPR technical report no. 284](#) and the [biotope atlas](#) (available in German, French and Dutch) are available to the public since July 2022. They provide a valuable overview of the status, the implemented measures and the need for action for the most characteristic biotopes along the Rhine corridor.

The ICPR has been working on the biotope network along the Rhine for more than 20 years. What is new is that the biotopes have now been predominantly surveyed using satellite data. They are now available to the interested public in the form of an interactive online map service. By using satellite data, the development of the biotopes can in future be updated comprehensively, spatially highly resolved and more regularly. This will be

crucial to enable all parties within the ICPR to develop the most effective biodiversity restoration measures possible. The methodology can in principle also be used in other river basins.

Contact for queries

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Background information on the ICPR

In the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR), Switzerland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and the European Union have been working together for 70 years on the basis of a convention under international law to reconcile the diverse uses and protection of water bodies. With a view to implementing European directives, the cross-border cooperation was extended to Austria, Liechtenstein, Italy and the Belgian region Wallonia.

At present, Veronica Manfredi of the European Commission holds the ICPR presidency. She and the different ICPR fora are supported by the international staff of the permanent secretariat in Koblenz (Germany).

See also www.iksr.org/en/ and <https://twitter.com/ICPRrhine>.