



Appeal for the renaissance of inland navigation in the Central and Eastern European economic region

With the enlargement of the European Union discussions about the development of a network of inland waterways for economic use were revived in the Czech Republic and Poland. In the Elbe/Oder region not only are the connection to the existing network of inland waterways in Western Europe and the future conditions of inland navigation on the Elbe and Oder rivers being discussed, but also the project of the Danube-Oder-Elbe water corridor. Numerous associations in the Czech Republic, Poland and Germany are taking part in this discussion.

The Elbe/Oder Chambers' Union wants to raise awareness of the best possible economic use of inland waterways, and therefore we have launched the ODRA-ODER 2010 campaign.

The Elbe/Oder Chambers' Union, an organisation of closely cooperating 32 chambers of commerce and industry in Poland, the Czech Republic and Germany, is appealing, along with the undersigned representatives of European economic, scientific and corporative organisations, associations and administrations, to the governments of the countries in Central Europe and the European Union for a coordination of actions in water transport and water tourism, as well as for a more economic use of rivers. The goal is to improve conditions and standards in passenger and freight traffic on inland waterways, and to address the differences in infrastructure and economic levels of the regions in Central Europe.

1. We appeal to the European Union and its member countries to create a strategy for inland navigation in the financing period 2014-2020, and to allocate essential funds to it. This appeal is made on behalf of the Czech Republic, Poland, Germany, Slovakia, and Hungary, and considers the inhabitants' interests and the interests of all national economies and administrations on all levels.
2. We appeal for the continuation and the acceptance of new ample hydrologic engineering investments on Central European rivers, including the Elbe and Oder, in order to harness the full use of rivers in transport, economics and tourism, and flood protection in the regions of Central Europe.

3. We appeal to the Czech Republic, Poland, Germany, Slovakia, Austria and Hungary to come to an international cooperation agreement in order to participate with and support the European Union in the process of realising the Danube-Oder-Elbe water corridor. We appeal for an acceptance of the Danube-Oder-Elbe water corridor as a priority project in the Trans-European Transport Networks, and the dedication of financial support from the European Union, as well as financial support from projects of regional and international co-operations, in order to create this water corridor.
4. We appeal for an intensification of Czech-Polish-German cooperation in the matter of building and completing the Oder inland waterway for international inland navigation.
5. We appeal for a ratification of the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN) by all countries in Central Europe, and for the acceptance of the Oder river (E 30), of the connection between the Oder and Vistula rivers (E 70) and the connection of the Vistula river with the town of Brest (E 40) into the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T).
6. We appeal for a joint development plan for water tourism and the arrangement of a corresponding infrastructure (ports, marinas, piers) on and along the rivers in Central Europe, amongst which are the Elbe, Vltava, Morava, Oder, Warta, Vistula and Váh rivers.
7. We appeal for the creation of conditions for the development of the Elbe/Oder region, which is on the one hand a link between the Czech Republic, Poland and Germany and on the other hand part of the connection to Eastern and Southern Europe. The region has the chance to become an important European economic and tourist region once again, as it used to be in the past. Through a comprehensive and integrated approach for sustainable development in the cultivated landscape, the Elbe/Oder region can contribute to the further development of the European Union.

We appeal for greater navigability on the Elbe and Oder rivers and the new construction of the Danube-Oder-Elbe canal as vital components in the development of a capable and efficient network of waterways in Europe!