

rivers of knowledge bulletin #1, Jan 2010

»It seems to me that we ought to start defending rivers against their antagonists.«

Wolfgang Weyrauch, a German poet and cultural manager in 1966.



What Weyrauch said almost 45 years ago has only in some parts of the world become a reality. Climate Change, a global threat and challenge, is one of the key topics of our near and far future, whether you look at it from an economic, ecological, ethical or social point of view. This global phenomenon is nevertheless only one isolated aspect of the whole picture. Another hazardous development is a scary degradation of rivers all over the world, caused by irresponsible destruction and waste of precious water resources. As a part of EU's C-Change



project with participating institutions from the Saarland (Germany), Frankfurt Rhein Main Region, Gelderland and Amsterdam in the Netherlands, the Île-de-France region (Paris) and projects from London, we take responsibility in answering to the Climate Change question with a focus on rivers. So what is it that makes rivers so charming, so wonderful? And how do global climate change and the future of our rivers correlate?



Until 2012, together with interdisciplinary and highly knowledgeable team of planners, ecologists, engineers, political representatives, designers, architects and the Faculty of Design at Academy for Arts & Design (Hochschule für Gestaltung) Offenbach we shall create 8-10 information stations alongside the southern riverbank of Main river between Mühlheim in the East and Raunheim in the West (including the cities of Kelsterbach, Offenbach and Frankfurt), spanning a distance of about 25 km. Specialists on river and general ecology like Sabine Swoboda, Dr. Anna Christine Sander, Ute Habelt, Renate Friedrich and Rolf Weyh work



in an integrated team with specialists in local and regional administration from several sectors like Heike Hollerbach, Anne Schleißner, Renate Friedrich, Dieter Gick, Manfred Ockel and Jochen Schaab. Gerhard Lux of Deutsche Wetterdienst provides the team with the latest insights on weather related phenomena. PR is run by the department of public relations at Offenbach City Hall, Matthias Müller. The project as a whole is driven by the Frankfurt Rhein Main Region's Planning Authority (Planungsverband Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main), notably Beate Schwarz and Reinhard Henke, responsible for the EU C-Change project in our region.



The conceptual development and co-ordination of the river-project is run by Hanne Münster-Voswinkel of Municipal Planning and Building Control Office (Amt für Stadtplanung und Baumanagement) Offenbach and Prof. Georg-Christof Bertsch of Academy of Arts & Design



(Hochschule für Gestaltung) Offenbach. The design project at the University is conducted by Prof. Petra Kellner, Prof. Georg-Christof Bertsch and Sascha Lobe together with students of industrial design and visual communications. As the River Main represents a very specific biological, climatic and historical pattern all design work has to start with a deep analysis of this

We also look at the Main/Rhine river system as part of the global sweet-water resources - and even beyond this perception, as a decisive segment which has to be thoroughly conceived in order to cope with the challenges of Climate Change and global developments of the near future. Thus we compare the Main with rivers in other parts of the world e.g. the Okavango in Southern Africa, the Indus, Yukon and five more which will be introduced through the upcoming **rivers of knowledge** bulletins which will be published on a monthly basis for the next two years. Through our bulletin we wish to keep you updated about our activities while encouraging you to get in touch with us, to ask questions and give us an idea of what seems most interesting to you concerning the entire complex of topics involved.

Prof. Georg-Christof Bertsch,
Frankfurt, Feb 1st 2010

Pictures in this bulletin are all view of river Main at 1. Mühlheim, 2. Offenbach, 3. Kelsterbach Nizza,