

# Watch your Danube



## Igor Stanković

Mr. Igor Stanković, (33 yrs) is Limnologist at the Central Water Management Laboratory, Croatian Waters



### What did you study, when, where and most importantly: why?

I studied biology and chemistry at the University of Zagreb with special interest in freshwater ecosystems. At first I specialized for zooplankton, but since I started working in Croatian Waters, I am dealing with phytoplankton and macrophytes and I did doctoral thesis on phytoplankton of large rivers. I always wanted to be a biologist and my whole life was and is pointed towards that. I

can't imagine doing anything else in my life. When you look around yourself you see rocks, plants and animals. And when you look in a drop of water under the microscope, again you see rocks, plants and animals, only smaller. I will always be fascinated by that because each sample is different and equally exciting.

### What will your role be on board of the JDS3 ships?

I will be responsible for sampling macrophytes and helophytes. For this I will sample vegetation on each sampling site, 3km of left and right side of the river. I am interested in relative abundance of plants and their relation towards different environment regarding water velocity, water transparency and different kind of substrates.

### Why is this important? What can we learn?

The European Water Framework Directive describes "macrophytes" as one of the five obligatory groups of aquatic organisms to survey for the assessment of the ecological status of surface waters. Macrophytes can tell us a lot about eutrophication and hydromorphological status of rivers and therefore are very important biological element. Spreading of neophytes is also very important for further environmental management.

### What is an important gain from JDS3 specifically for your country of origin?

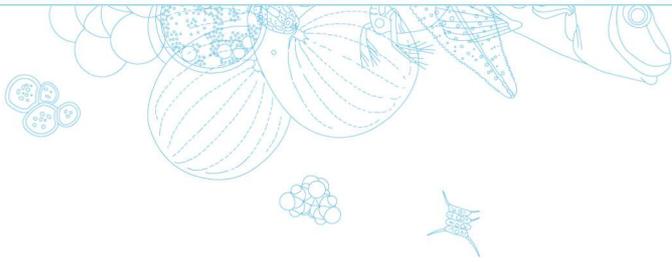
The Danube River flows through small part of Croatia, but more than half of Croatian territory belongs to Black sea catchment area. Understanding of ecological principles in the Danube River helps future water management in other large rivers of Croatia. Experience and knowledge from JDS3 on macrophytes will be applied to Croatian large rivers. Participation of Croatia in research and protection of the Danube River will also help in increasing global awareness of local population of its importance.

### What are you looking forward to regarding the JDS3?

I am looking forward to see the whole Danube River from scientific point of view and to work with other experts. I believe that this experience will make me a better scientist in the future and a better person in general. Extreme field trip experiences like this always gives long-lasting benefits in all human aspects.



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## Anything else? Something important you think should be mentioned on your profile?

Response of the environment to human activity is a response to our personal activity too. As we should be kind to people we meet in our life, we should also be kind to the environment and enjoy in it. Our professional and moral duty is to bring that knowledge to other people.