

Danube GeoTour

Valorisation of geo-heritage for sustainable and innovative tourism development of Danube Geoparks

Guideline for Quality Assurance Management and Standards for Outputs and Deliverables

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PA2: Environment and culture responsible Danube region
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Responsible Partner: Lead Partner
Author: Slavka Zupan, K&Z, Svetovanje za razvoj d.o.o.
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List of Abbreviations

DTP	Danube Transnational Programme
JS	Joint Secretariat
LP	Lead Partner
PP	Project Partner
QAM	Quality Assurance Manager
WP	Work Package



1. Introduction

Further to the rules of the Danube Transnational Programme the Danube GeoTour project partnership should set up an effective quality assurance management in order to steer and assure the relevant quality of the project outputs. Without quality validation of the outputs, expenditure cannot be reimbursed.

The quality assurance of the Danube GeoTour will be provided by an independent external expert, so called Quality Assurance Manager. Quality Assurance Manager will assess the quality of each Output foreseen by the Project Application and following this guidelines and programme rules. Each partner responsible for coordination of particular Work Package is obliged to deliver the documented Outputs before the set deadline for quality check to Quality Assurance Manager. The quality assessment should lead to higher quality of the final results of the project.

This guideline describes the internal procedures, sets standards for documentation of outputs and provides templates and checklist for quality assurance processes within the Danube GeoTour project.

Its aim is to facilitate a common understanding, procedures and agreement on key steps of (self)-assessment and quality level standards. Quality assurance shall secure the achievement of project objectives.

It is recommended that project partners use this guideline for description and presentation of deliverables, when applicable.



Figure 1 Quality Assurance Management of the Danube GeoTour project

2. Quality Management Structure

The quality management structure of the Danube GeoTour project consists of:

- Quality Assurance Manager (QAM);
- Work Package (WP) Coordinators;
- Additional Project Partner (PP) experts, if and when needed.

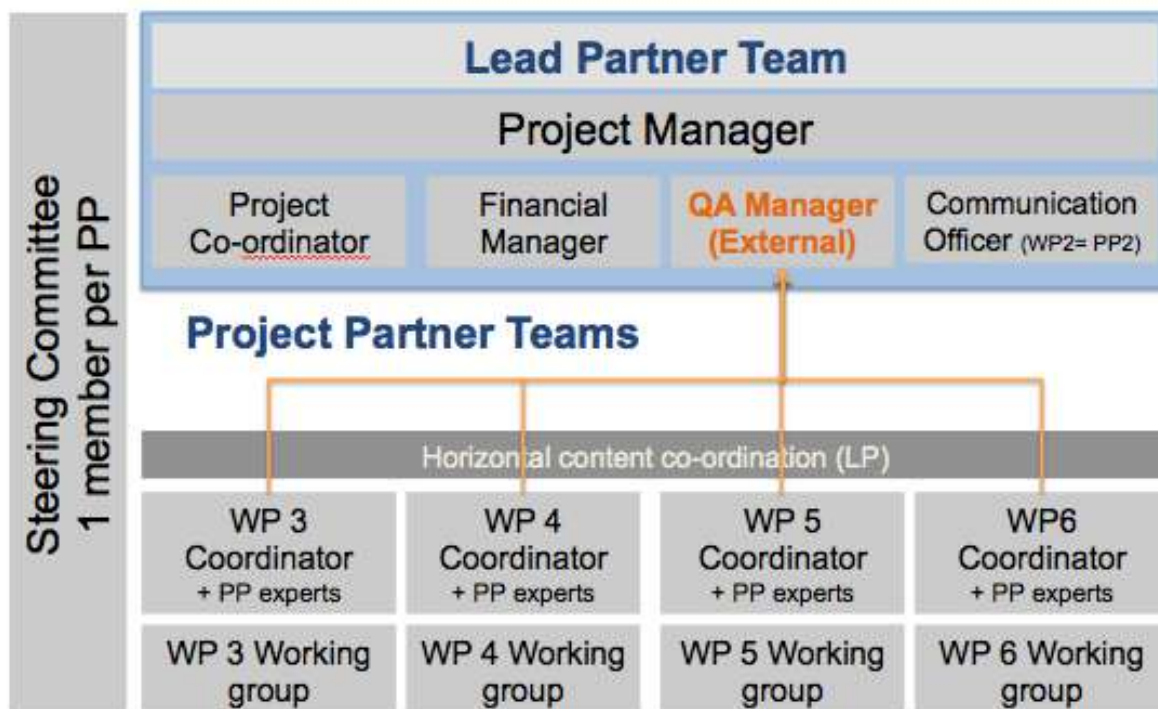


Figure 2 Quality management within the Danube GeoTour Management structure

Quality Assurance Manager (QAM)

The quality assurance management is provided and led by an independent quality assurance manager who is contracted externally by Lead Partner (LP). He/she takes over the task of QAM for the whole project. Quality assurance manager is responsible for:

- Reviewing all the project outputs from the qualitative point of view (proof reading, analysing, assessing quality and impacts) and providing recommendations and feedback to the partnership;
- Ensuring that his findings are included in the final outputs to be submitted to the Joint Secretariat (JS);

- Validation of the outputs before submission to the JS;
- Informing the JS about any obstacles/ problems encountered during the process.

A quality assurance manager bears the responsibility for the information provided in the quality report.

WP Coordinators

WP Coordinators are responsible for providing documented outputs within the quality and time frame as defined within this guidelines and Application form.

Project partner experts

Since there is a comprehensive diversity of skills and competences available within the partnership, the QAM is encouraged to liaise and consult on individual basis with the internal or external experts engaged within the project in respect to the specific thematic review. The QAM shall assure that the experts involved in the quality review are independent from the implementation team.

3. Key principles of quality

Each Project Partner shall respect the following basic principles of quality assurance agreed within the Danube GeoTour project:

- **Quality Assurance across whole project life cycle.** Partners and their experts shall ensure highest possible quality level of each step of the project life cycle and individual WP: from initial definition of scope, analysis, design of solutions, testing and final delivery.
- **Quality matters, not the quantity.** Project activities shall be implemented in a professional manner, applying the newest knowledge bases and goal oriented. The quality of solutions prevail against the quantity of the documentation. In particular, the quality is measured in terms of added value and effects in comparison to existing situation as well as applicability and transferability of the output to other partners and Danube programme area.
- **Consistency with the project objectives, application form and other outputs of the project.** This is demonstrated by checking that the outputs produced by the project contribute to the specific objective and indicators as well as the applicability for the final common Danube GeoTour product – itinerary.



- **Standards for documenting outputs.** This guideline sets minimum requirements and format for documenting the outputs. Same templates shall be applied for documenting deliverables, if applicable.
- **Output document: Professionally written and presented,** editing and English proof-reading required. The presentation shall follow the Visual Identity Manual of the Danube Transnational Programme as well as Communication Plan of the Danube GeoTour project.

4. Internal procedures for Quality Assurance

Although the assurance of quality is an on-going process, the key milestone is checking the quality of the outputs by QAM. The procedures are defined by three main steps:

- Submission of draft Output document for quality assessment 2 months before deadline;
- Quality review which shall with the max response time by QAM of 3 weeks;
- Final version to be delivered 2 weeks before deadline.

The Figure 3 bellow presents the key steps in the process of controlling and review of Output documents.



Submission of draft Output document and Output
Factsheet to LP and QAM

Figure 3 internal procedures for assessment of quality of outputs

5. Schedule for Quality Assurance of project Outputs

According to the Application Form the Danube GeoTour project is to deliver seven (7) outputs of which some of them are to be presented separately for each geopark. The table 1 below stipulates the time plan for delivery of individual Output document(s) to QAM and responsible WP Coordinator.

Table 1 Schedule for quality assessment of Output documents

Code	Project Output Title	Quantity	Period	Deadline for draft Output document	Responsible WP Coordinator
PO 12 O 4.1.	Guideline for development of innovative geoProducts	1	2	30.10.2017	UNIB
P07 O 5.1.	New competences in geoHeritage interpretation	8	2	30.10.2017	Geopark Karavanks
PO 11 O 3.1.	Strategy on management tourism pressures in Geopark	1	3	30.4.2018	PP5 IRSNC
P012 O4.2.	A gamification tool to support geoproduct creation	1	3	30.4.2018	UNIB
P013 O 4.3.	Pilot geoCulture and geoOutdoor products tested	8	5	30.4.2019	UNIB
P013 O 5.2.	Pilot innovative geoInterpretation methods tested	8	5	30.4.2019	Geopark Karavanks
P012 O 6.1.	Danube GeoTour Itinerary	1	5	30.4.2019	Balaton Geopark



6. Output document standards

All outputs shall be documented in a report.

Output document is prepared by the Partner responsible for the coordination of particular work package in assistance with the supporting WP coordinating partners and other partners.

Output Document is a written technical document presenting the achieved output. It's scope and structure depends on the type of output. Common template with minimum requirements for presentation of output process and achievements within Danube GeoTour is developed. The introduction and conclusion sections of the template are obligatory while the main content sections may be adjusted to the content of individual output. Namely, it is expected that the presentation of analytical outputs will differ from the presentation of outputs related to trainings or tools developed. Number of content sections is not limited.

Each output document shall be accompanied with the Output Factsheet of the Danube programme.

The **Output document** consists of:

1. Introduction
 - a. Background information
 - b. Methodology
 - c. Summary
2. Content Section
3. Content Sections (+ n)
4. Conclusions and recommendations
5. Bibliography
6. Annexes
 - a. Output Factsheet
 - b. Other annexes

The template of Output document is provided in **Annex 1** and template for Output Factsheet in **Annex 2b** of this guideline.

Output documents are written in English language. Before submission of Output document to QAM the WP coordinator shall ensure proof-reading and editing of the document.

The output document shall use professional technical language. On the other hand, Output Factsheet shall be written in non-technical manner, easy to understand also by someone not being expert in the specific field and also sufficient for communicating to the general public what the project has achieved.

It is recommended that project partners use this guideline for description and presentation of deliverables, when applicable. Project deliverables are not subject of review of QAM.



7. Quality assessment and report

Quality Report is a standardised document predefined by the Danube Transnational Programme. A Quality Report is validating and proving the quality of a delivered project output by the written opinion (positive and negative aspects) of the Quality Assurance Manager of the project, based on his/her assessment.

The quality assurance activity has a follow up, in the sense that the recommendations/ findings of the quality assurance manager should be implemented by the partnership and all these findings should be found in the Quality Report of the specific output.

The Quality Report is to be prepared separately for each single finalised output by QAM and submitted with the Progress Report due for the period in which the related output is delivered.

It is the responsibility of the independent Quality Assurance Manager to ensure that the outputs delivered by the project partnership meet sufficient quality.

The template of Quality report is provided in **Annex 2a**.

8. Annexes

Annex 1: Output document template

Annex 2a: Quality report template

Annex 2b: Output Factsheet template

