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## Donau-Auen National Park



The National Park stretches like a green belt along the Danube from Vienna to the national border in the east of Niederösterreich. Its 9,300 hectares preserve the largest continuous river-meadow landscape in Central Europe, which is ecologically virtually intact. The National Park is driven by the Danube and its ebb and flow, and it is home to a dazzling variety of habitats, flora and fauna, many of them already endangered.

### The genesis of the National Park

Through the Danube regulation at the end of the 19th century, mankind made drastic changes to the natural balance of this meadow landscape, and these were followed by the forestry industry and a series of hydroelectric power stations. In 1984, though, the construction of the Hainburg power plant threatened the definitive destruction of the last free-flowing stretches of the Danube in an Austrian basin landscape. The peaceful occupation of the meadow by thousands of environmentalists in December 1984 spelt the end of the power plant project, and preparatory plans were drafted for a protected area. On 27 October 1996, the National Park contract between the Austrian Republic and the provinces of Vienna and Niederösterreich was signed.

### Nature preservation in the National Park

In order to conserve the biodiversity of animals and plants, the preservation of their habitats is of key importance. This is the only remaining area in which the free-flowing Danube can still shape its meadows on a large scale over the long term. Nevertheless, great efforts are needed if the impact of previous interventions is to be in some way alleviated or even reversed. The hydraulic measures taken on the Danube to restore the river and revitalise its various courses and its ecosystem as a whole are of critical importance for the preservation and promotion of the meadows' typical communities.

### Experiencing the outdoors in the National Park

This impressive meadow landscape can be explored by visitors on long hiking trails and a great array of excursions.

### For more information :

National Park Forestry Authorities  
Lobau (MA-49) Tel.: +43/ 2249/ 2353 and  
Eckartsau (ÖBf AG) Tel.: +43/ 2214/ 2335-18,  
E-mail: [infostelle@oebf.at](mailto:infostelle@oebf.at)

The National Park magazine 'Au-Blick' and a folder are available from:

Nationalpark Donau-Auen GmbH  
Tel.: +43/ 2212/ 3450 or by  
E-mail: [nationalpark@donauauen.at](mailto:nationalpark@donauauen.at) .  
☐ <http://www.donauauen.at/>

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