

Ahead of the EU negotiations on the final **TEN-T rules**, the Living Rivers Europe coalition of **NGOs** working towards the protection of rivers, lakes and wetlands in Europe, sent a letter asking for stronger protections for **European rivers** and to exclude Elbe and Sava rivers and the destructive Ruse-Varna waterway in Bulgaria.

Wetlands International Europe with other NGOs in Living Rivers Europe is calling for no new deterioration of Europe's rivers, raising concerns that without additional protections, the new rules pose high risks for freshwater habitats and species.

The letter makes the point that the inclusion of the **Elbe and Sava rivers** will be highly damaging to two of Europe's most unique and iconic free-flowing rivers. These rivers deliver valuable ecosystem services that will be degraded by the massive interventions and built infrastructure envisioned. With climate change already leading to more drought and low water episodes on these rivers, inland navigation is already impossible much of the year. The letter also highlights an especially concerning case in **Bulgaria**. The **Ruse-Varna** waterway project would be highly destructive for the Danube river ecosystem and was inserted at the last minute despite decades of controversy and not being announced officially to the public.

Source: Wetlands