

# River Management and Ecology

European Policies | River Restoration

Hydropower

Conference is embedded  
within the trade fair  
RENEXPO – Connect Energies



vgbe/VÖU Expert Event

19/20 March 2026  
Salzburg | Austria

## vgbe | VÖU Expert Event River Management and Ecology

The joint Expert Event of vgbe energy and VÖU brings together experts from policy and public authorities, operators, manufacturers and suppliers, scientists, NGOs, and other key stakeholders to discuss crucial issues in river management, restoration, and ecology.

Rivers are dynamic hubs of biodiversity, providing essential water for domestic, agricultural, industrial, and energy purposes while supporting a wide range of ecosystem services. Balancing and optimising these multiple benefits is vital for ensuring water security and meeting diverse policy objectives. Under this year's motto, "go with the flow," we will explore the many dimensions of flow in rivers – ecological and environmental flows, residual and minimum flows, sediment flows, and more, covering topics such as fish migration, river restoration, hydropower, and sediment continuity.

Challenges in environmental protection, ecosystem resilience and river restoration affect all sectors. Strengthening capacity, sharing knowledge and improving cross-disciplinary cooperation are essential. This Expert Event provides a key platform for practical exchange and networking between all key stakeholders.

### CONFERENCE VENUE

Messezentrum Salzburg  
Am Messezentrum 1  
5020 Salzburg | Austria

### CONFERENCE LANGUAGE

English

### EVENING EVENT

All conference participants are invited to the RENEXPO - Connect Energies Evening Networking Event on Thursday, 19 March 2026, starting at 17:00.

### COOPERATION AND MEDIAPARTNER



### CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

Non-members of vgbe or VÖU	450.- €
Members of vgbe or VÖU	350.- €
Universities, Authorities	250.- €

The participation fees include the conference presentations (after the conference), coffee breaks, lunch on the first day, participation in the Evening Networking Event and a two-day ticket to the trade fair RENEXPO – Connect Energies

Austrian VAT will be shown in the invoice.

### ONLINE REGISTRATION

All participants of the conference are requested to register online. It is not possible to accept credit cards or currency at the conference office.

Please make your registration online at:

<https://register.vgbe.energy/32026/>

### vgbe energy e.V.

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[Event website.](#)

### CONFERENCE OFFICE

On Thursday, 19 March 2026, the conference office will open from 9:15.

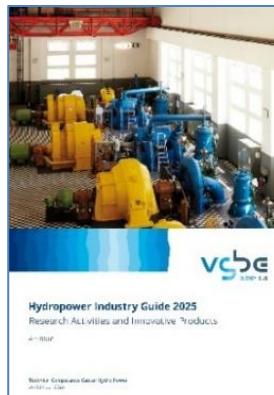
### PRIVACY POLICY & GENERAL TERMS

Detailed information on data protection as well as the general terms and conditions can be found at:

<https://t1p.de/vgbe-vsAGBen>

CET	THURSDAY, 19 MARCH 2026
10:00	Welcome and opening of the Expert Event <i>Lee Estrellado, vgbe energy e.V., &amp; Martin Schönberg, VÖU</i>
10:15	<b>SESSION 1</b>  Lecture 1: Implementation of ecological flows in Europe <i>Martina Bussettini, ISPRA – Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale</i>  Lecture 2: How much water does a river need? Environmental flows as the lifeline of hydropower impacted rivers <i>Marie-Pierre Gosselin, NINA – Norwegian Institute for Nature Research</i>  Lecture 3: Sediment flows and their implications for river management <i>Christoph Hauer, BOKU - University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna</i>
12:00	<b>Lunch break and visit to the Trade Fair</b>
14:00	<b>SESSION 2</b>  Lecture 4: Smart rivers: how AI is transforming fish migration monitoring <i>Jeffrey A. Tuhtan, Tallinn University of Technology</i>  Lecture 5: Innovative bypass solutions for safe downstream fish passage at hydropower plants <i>Ismail Albayrak, ETH Zurich, Laboratory of Hydraulics, Hydrology and Glaciology (VAW)</i>  Lecture 6: Towards a new era of AI driven hydrological forecasting <i>Daniel Gröger, alitiq</i>  Lecture 7: Hydrological modelling: a Polish perspective <i>Marcin Wdowikowski, Wroclaw University of Science and Technology</i>
16:30	<b>Q&amp;A and closing words</b>
17:00	<b>Start of RENEXPO®'s Evening Networking Event</b>

CET	FRIDAY, 20 MARCH 2026
09:00	Welcome <i>Martin Schönberg, VÖU, and Lee Estrellado, vgbe energy e.V.</i>
09:00	<b>SESSION 3</b>  Lecture 8: Legal framework for minimum flows in Austria <i>Christoph Cudlik, Schönherr Attorneys at Law</i>  Lecture 9: VERBUND's experiences with E-Flows in Austria <i>Walter Reckendorfer, VERBUND</i>  Lecture 10: Implementing and monitoring the efficacy of e-flows in Portugal <i>João Pádua, EDP Labelec</i>  Lecture 11: Ecohydraulic modelling of the River Thaya including water temperature and climate change <i>Fabian Friedl, AFRY Austria GmbH</i>
11:00	<b>Closing words and opportunity to visit the Research Session and Trade Fair</b>



## Hydropower Industry Guide 2025

Up-to-date and multi-faceted overview of products and services offered within the hydropower sector are published in vgbe's Hydropower Industry Guide.

Free download: [here](#)

CET	FRIDAY, 20 MARCH 2026
11:30	<b>RESEARCH SESSION (Exhibition Hall)</b> <i>Mario Bachhiesl, vgbe energy</i>
	The research session will delve into the latest research outcomes from European projects. Attendees will gain insights into breakthrough technologies, innovative methodologies, and key findings that are shaping the future of river management, ecology and hydropower.
	By showcasing these research projects, the session aims to provide valuable knowledge to enhance the operation, maintenance, and overall performance of hydropower plants while also reducing environmental impacts.
	Join us to explore how these research outcomes drive progress and foster innovation.
11:40	<b>Lecture 12</b> Results of the survey on the modernisation of hydroelectric power plants in Europe (ReHydro --- Link to website: <a href="#">here</a> ) <i>Mario Bachhiesl &amp; Lee Estrellado, vgbe energy</i>
12:00	<b>Lecture 13</b> Novel long-term electricity storage technologies for flexible hydropower (Store2Hydro --- Link to website: <a href="#">here</a> ) <i>Eduard Doujak, TU Wien IET</i>
12:20	<b>Lecture 14</b> Contributions of freshwater ecology to sustainable river management in Central Asia (Hydro4U --- Link to website: <a href="#">here</a> ) <i>Daniel Hayes, BOKU - University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna</i>
12:40	<b>Lecture 15</b> Key publications in hydropower (ETIP HYDROPOWER --- Link to website: <a href="#">here</a> ) <i>Lee Estrellado, vgbe energy</i>
12:55	<b>Closing words and opportunity to visit the trade fair</b>
15:00	<b>End of RENEXPO – Connect Energies</b>