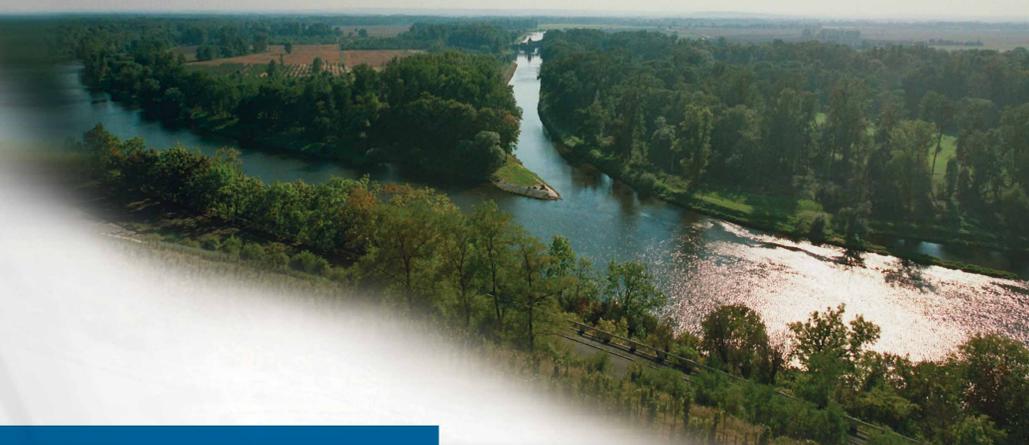




Elbe-Vltava Waterway



Elbe-Vltava waterway is the most important waterway in the country. It is the only waterway link between the Czech Republic and ports in the North Sea and the Baltic and it is also part of the Trans-European Transport Network TENT.

- ➔ **Navigability for freight ships:** a coherent network that is connected to a foreign network of waterways with length of 315 km - Elbe from the border with Germany to Přelouč, Vltava from Melnik to Trebenice - Slapy dam
- ➔ **Navigability for personal and leisure boats:** „In addition with isolated stretches of the river Vltava - from the Slapy dam to Tyn nad Vltavou

In the Treaty of Versailles of 1919 free access of landlocked countries to the sea was enshrined, because the politicians were aware of the importance of an independent connection to the international markets. Nowadays the Czech Republic has cost-free access to seaports. In the EU waterway network is currently valid navigation freedom from any country which is part of the EU.



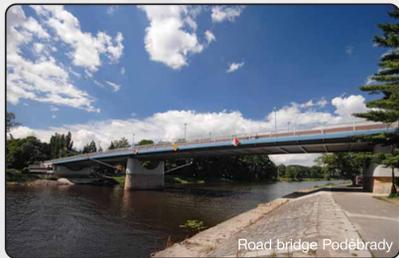
Lock Děčín visualisation



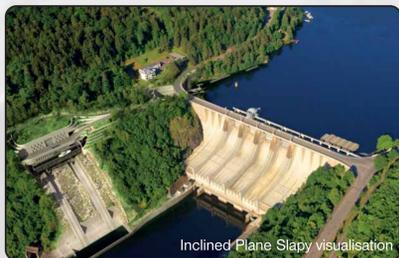
Port Melník



Lock chamber Lobkovice



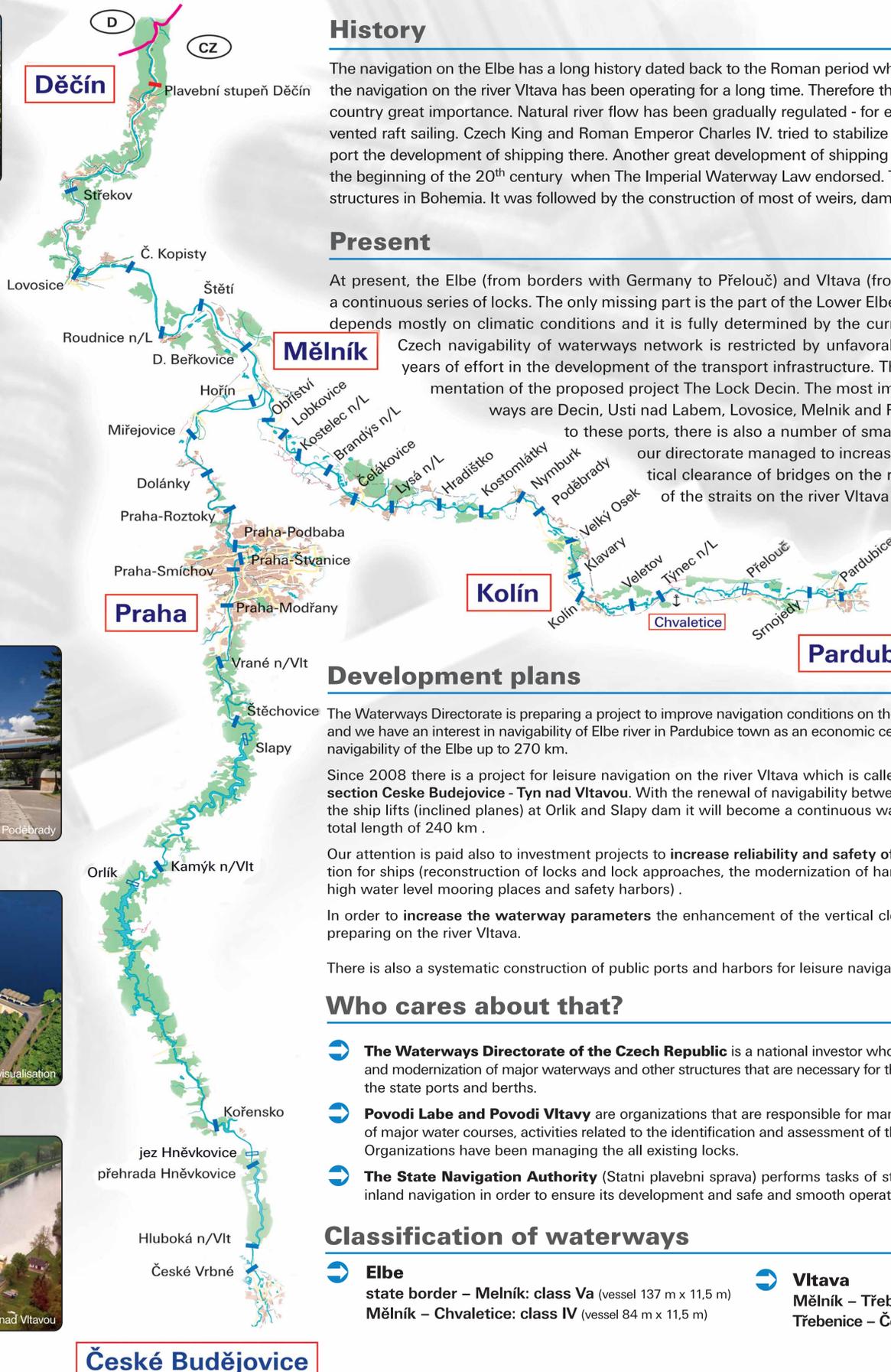
Road bridge Podebrady



Inclined Plane Slapy visualisation



Lock Hluboká nad Vltavou



History

The navigation on the Elbe has a long history dated back to the Roman period when the stone was transported there. Also the navigation on the river Vltava has been operating for a long time. Therefore the Elbe-Vltava waterway had for the entire country great importance. Natural river flow has been gradually regulated - for example millers often built dams that prevented raft sailing. Czech King and Roman Emperor Charles IV. tried to stabilize the situation on Czech rivers and to support the development of shipping there. Another great development of shipping occurred in the early 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century when The Imperial Waterway Law endorsed. That influenced the construction of water structures in Bohemia. It was followed by the construction of most of weirs, dams and locks on the Elbe and Vltava.

Present

At present, the Elbe (from borders with Germany to Přelouč) and Vltava (from Melnik to Trebenice) are covered by a continuous series of locks. The only missing part is the part of the Lower Elbe near Decin. Currently the voyage there depends mostly on climatic conditions and it is fully determined by the current water flow in the river. The whole Czech navigability of waterways network is restricted by unfavorable navigation conditions that degrade years of effort in the development of the transport infrastructure. The solution to this problem is the implementation of the proposed project The Lock Decin. The most important ports on the Elbe-Vltava waterways are Decin, Usti nad Labem, Lovosice, Melnik and Prague, Kolin and Chvaletice. In addition to these ports, there is also a number of smaller transshipment sites. In recent years our directorate managed to increase parameters of waterways such as vertical clearance of bridges on the river Elbe upstream Melnik and removal of the straits on the river Vltava between Prague and Melnik.

Development plans

The Waterways Directorate is preparing a project to improve navigation conditions on the lower Elbe (**construction of the lock Děčín**) and we have an interest in navigability of Elbe river in Pardubice town as an economic center in eastern Bohemia. This will extend the navigability of the Elbe up to 270 km.

Since 2008 there is a project for leisure navigation on the river Vltava which is called a **Completion of the Waterways in the section Ceske Budejovice - Tyn nad Vltavou**. With the renewal of navigability between these two cities and the construction of the ship lifts (inclined planes) at Orlik and Slapy dam it will become a continuous waterway (Czech Budejovice - Melnik) with a total length of 240 km .

Our attention is paid also to investment projects to **increase reliability and safety of waterways** including the flooding protection for ships (reconstruction of locks and lock approaches, the modernization of harbor walls, the introduction of RIS, building high water level mooring places and safety harbors) .

In order to **increase the waterway parameters** the enhancement of the vertical clearance of bridges and draughts has been preparing on the river Vltava.

There is also a systematic construction of public ports and harbors for leisure navigation.

Who cares about that?

- ➔ **The Waterways Directorate of the Czech Republic** is a national investor who is primarily responsible for the construction and modernization of major waterways and other structures that are necessary for the operation of the waterway. It also operates the state ports and berths.
- ➔ **Povodi Labe and Povodi Vltavy** are organizations that are responsible for management of river basins, the administration of major water courses, activities related to the identification and assessment of the status of surface water and groundwater. Organizations have been managing the all existing locks.
- ➔ **The State Navigation Authority** (Statni plavebni sprava) performs tasks of state administration and state supervision in inland navigation in order to ensure its development and safe and smooth operation.

Classification of waterways

- ➔ **Elbe**
state border – Melník: class Va (vessel 137 m x 11,5 m)
Mělník – Chvaletice: class IV (vessel 84 m x 11,5 m)
- ➔ **Vltava**
Mělník – Trebenice: class IV (vessel 110 m x 10,6 m)
Trebenice – České Budějovice: class I (vessel 44 m x 5,5 m)

Note: All measurements are approximate vessels. The maximum allowed dimensions are in the other dependent on the flow rate, vessel type, direction, boating etc.

On the water ecologically, cheap and troublefree