

Economic Values of Danube Floodplains

Ing-Marie Gren^a, Klaus-Henning Groth^b, Magnus Sylvén^c

^a Beijer International Institute of Ecological Economics, Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, 104 05 Stockholm, Box 50005, Sweden

^b WWF-Auen Institute, Josefstrasse 1, 76437 Rastatt, Germany

^c WWF International, Avenue du Mont-Blanc, 1196 Gland, Switzerland

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Abstract

The Danube floodplains are shared by several countries and provide a complex ecosystem with various habitats or biotopes. Three of them have been selected, forests, grasslands and wetlands, which produce services of value to society. Examples of the ecosystem's services are water purification, biodiversity, flood control, wind protection and food supply. In order to make appropriate estimates of these services, ecosystem models are needed to describe how these services are produced and how they are linked to the economies of the countries concerned. Such models are not currently available. Therefore, this study makes rough calculations of values by transferring results obtained in other studies to the Danube floodplains. The services subjected to valuation are provision of input resources, recreation and nutrient purification. The estimated total annual value of the existing Danube floodplains amounts to ECU 374/ha. The total annual value of the entire actual area of Danube floodplains corresponds to ECU 650 million per year. Approximately two-thirds of this value is obtained in Romania. The value of the land as a nutrient sink accounts for about one-half of the total value. It should be noted that the calculations are based on several simplified assumptions and the results must therefore be interpreted with caution.

Keywords

Danube; floodplains; economic values; forest; grassland; wetlands