



ACADEMIA ROMÂNĂ
**INSTITUTUL DE ANTROPOLOGIE « Francisc I.
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**Taming the Postsocialist Nature:
Floods, Local Strategies and National Policies along
The Lower Danube**

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Project manger :
C.Ş. II, Dr. Ştefan Dorondel

– Scientific report 2015 –

Bucharest

The team members who participated to the third phase of the research project, 2015

Dr. Stefan Dorondel – project manager

Prof. Dr. Iulia Armaş - senior resercher

Dr. Mărioara Rusu – senior researcher

Dr. Stelu Şerban – senior researchercer

Dr. Violeta Florian – postdoctoral researcher

Dr. Oana Ivan – postdoctoral researcher

Drd. Cristina Posner– doctoral student

Phase 1 and 2 of the project (2013-2014).

During the first phase, there were preparatory activities for the field research (establishing the conceptual framework and methodology and selecting the areas for the upcoming field research). During the second phase, we did field research using qualitative (ethnographic) and quantitative (questionnaires on larger areas) methods.

Phase 3/2015- The field research and sharing the results phase: the appraisal of local and national strategies and policies regarding the land use and farming practices; sharing the results

The third phase of the project had two major objectives: collecting the field data, this time at the regional and national level, on strategies and policies regarding the land use and sharing the first results (through participation to national and international conferences and through publications). Both objectives were fulfilled.

Objective 1: Appraisal of local and national strategies and policies regarding land use and farming practices. Activities: data collecting and analysis at regional and local level

In order to fulfil this objective, all the members of the research team brought their contribution. Cristina Posner and Oana Ivan took interviews with representatives of the County Council, ISU and County Bureaus of Romanian Waters (In Giurgiu and Dolj county). Marioara Rusu and Violeta Florian took interviews with representatives of the Agriculture Ministry; Stefan Dorondel and Stelu Serban took interviews with the managers of environmental NGOs (Calafat, Tulcea, Galati, Braila), and also with experts from Danube Delta National Research and Development Institute (Tulcea), who were involved with the ecological reconstruction strategy write up or with different regional ecological reconstruction projects.

Regarding the national and local farming policies, in Romania, the issue of land regime was a constant concern of the different governments. The national development strategies have constantly included objectives that were focused on and changed the patterns of land use, such as: the change of land property as the former farming cooperatives and state farming enterprises collapsed; the privatization of commercial companies with state capital; the land restitution process accelerated; the support for the farm development (especially for the family business); development of land market, etc

The switch from the old centralized economic system and socialist property to the market economy, led to the extension of the private property over farm land and forest, which became predominant (over 90%) by the end of 2013; a major result of de-collectivization and privatisation. The pattern of farm use has changed, as the massive socialist farms were transformed in small farms owned by locals. After Romania became part of the E.U., due to the implementation of some PAC rules, a certain process of farm consolidation occurred: the number of the farms dropped and the average land use rose.

During the E.U. pre-admission time (1990-2006), there were established the main organizations and institutional networks necessary to the land reform process and re-establishment of the land improvement and water management concepts. The new created and implemented legislation constituted the general framework for the land use, land improvement and water management. This legislation also attempts to solve the issue of land consolidation and the rationalization of water management.

During the post-admission time (2007-2015), the land legislation has strength, but the legislation specific for the land improvement and water management became larger and larger in order to solve the multiple and diverse requests (for instance, the development processes of institutions and of economy, but also targeted the specific needs of vulnerable areas). If we are to discuss the water management, we need to notice that the normative approach is exhaustive through the assimilation of the integrated water management concept, a process of promoting the concentrated development of land, water

and resource in such a way that economic and social wealth reach its maximum, without compromising the ecosystem durability.

The strategic documents, written for national and/or regional level, tried to solve in a pragmatic manner, the many problems caused by the land reform and the changes occurred in the field of land improvement and water management.

The conceptual clarifications, operational type, were doubled by a set of pragmatic measures, with the implementation of the instruments meant to solve the critical problems or to create spaces for prevention and protection. This strategic process was very wide, that in terms of space comprised all forms of administrative forms, and in terms of time, covered both the pre and post- admission period.

Objective 2: Sharing the results

First, we organized an international work-shop that gathered international researchers and professors. We attach to this report a program of the conference that took place June 18th-21th. Some important names of the social sciences attended this conference. James C. Scott, Yale University (The State and the History of Rivers: In Praise of Floods), Sue Tapsell, Middlesex University, London (Taking Control: Empowering Communities for Local Flood Risk Management in the UK) sau Heinz Gutscher, the president of the Swiss Social Science Academy (The Role of Affect in Communicating Flood Risks in Switzerland), just to name a few.

During the work-shop, there was also a day field trip in Bulgaria, in Natural Park Brashlen-Kalimok, in order to see firsthand a natural restored area on the Danube through an international program. Nature restoration was a topic discussed from a theoretic and historic point of view. Stefan Dorondel plans to edit a volume based on the work-shop presentations. Besides the present participants, other researchers plan to contribute to the volume (Michael Cernea, for instance and Donald Worster- adding great value to the volume).

The manuscript will be sent for evaluation and peer-review at Princeton University Press (most likely in 2017).

Secondly, for the sharing results phase, the doctoral student Cristina Posner will have the public defence of her PhD thesis "*The analysis of the flood adaptation strategies of the local communities through traditional and participatory research methods; study case: The Danube Valley, between Giurgiu and Gostinu*", on December 7th, at Geography Department, Bucharest University. The thesis was partly done through the project. The thesis is new in the Romanian scientific literature, first of all due to its multidisciplinary approach through which the topic of risk perception and adaptive patterns of the local communities living in the lower Danube valley. Although this is a human geography research, the doctoral student often crosses the limits of this subject. There are two major directions that the author intends to and often succeeds to break the geography field: the socio-cultural anthropology and especially environmental history. The thesis has 5 objectives: 1. Ways of interactions (analysed from both diachronic and synchronic perspective). 2 Appraisal of structural methods of flood protections and excessive land humidity; and also the way in which local and central bureaucracy have implemented these methods in this particular area. 3. The analysis of a small local community (Gostinu) through the ethnographic method correlated with specific geographical methods (PGIS) in order to record the factors that influence the flood and excessive humidity adaptation. 4. The observation of the local community reactions to one of the national and even international policy regarding flood and excessive humidity: nature restoration of the Lower Danube Valley. 5. Appraisal of the impacts of the regional, national and international policies regarding flood and excessive humidity.

The third activity was focused on publishing in peer-reviewed journals, internationally recognized, of one ISI article and two BDI articles, as well as participation to two national conferences.

The following papers have been submitted for review or published:

Articles in indexed journals/ ISI impact factor

1) Iuliana Armaş, Ionescu, R și Cristina Posner (Nenciu) 2015. Flood risk perception along the Lower Danube river, Romania. *Natural Hazards* 78(1): 1-19 (ISI, IF. 1.719)

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11069-015-1939-8>.Doi

10.1007/s11069-015-1938-8

2) Marioara Rusu 2015. A Typology of Rural Areas in Danube Region. *Procedia Economics and Finance* 22 : 733 – 741 (ISI indexed)

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212567115002956>

3) Stefan Dorondel, Stelu Șerban, Daniel Cain, A Moving Island: Danube Dynamics and Borders Conflicts for Natural Resources in Modern Southeast Europe. It will be sent for peer-reviewing at *Environment and History* (ISI journal, IF. 0.778).

Articles in BDI journals

1) Cristina Nenciu Posner & Iuliana Armas 2015. Historical perspective on structural methods for flood protection in Lower Danube. *GEOREVIEW* 25(1): 1-12.

doi:10.4316/GEOREVIEW .2015.25.1.171.

<http://georeview.ro/ojs/index.php/revista/article/view/171>

2) Violeta Florian 2015. The Risk Culture. Case Study in Peri-Urban Areas. *Agricultural Economics and Rural Development*, 12(1): 3-26.

ftp://www.ipe.ro/RePEc/iag/iag_pdf/AERD1501_3-26.pdf

3) Marioara Rusu. Post Socialist Land Use Changes in the Danube Region. *Lucrari stiintifice. Management Agricol* (in print)

<http://www.lsma.ro/index.php/lsma/index>

4) Florian Violeta, Monica Tudor. Rural Competitiveness Through Innovation in Romania. Opportunities and Risks. *Lucrari stiintifice. Management Agricol* (in print)

<http://www.lsma.ro/index.php/lsma/index>

Book chapters:

Marioara Rusu 2015. Structura exploatațiilor agricole în Regiunea Dunării: disparități teritoriale, în *Perspectivile agriculturii și dezvoltării rurale prin prisma noii Politici Agricole Comune 2014-2020*. București: Editura Academiei Române, p. 535-545 (ISBN 978-973-27-2558-0).

Oana Ivan submitted for publication in *National Geographic Romania* the article: "Living with waters. On local adaptations in the context of a new geographic chance in Lower Danube plain"; will be published in December 2015 issue

The team members participated to the following international and national workshops:

Participation to international conferences:

- 1) Ștefan Dorondel, *Nature Restoration along the Lower Danube: History, Environment and Economics*, paper presented at the international work-shop "Challenges and Potentials for a Sustainable Development in the Danube Region: Contributing to Horizon 2020", organized by Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt, Austria, Klagenfurt 8-10 April 2015.
- 2) Ștefan Dorondel, *Natural Disasters and Environmental Justice: an Example from Eastern Europe*, paper presented at the international conference "Greening History. Studying the Environment Across Discipline: Past, Present and Future", organized by European Society for Environmental History și Versailles University, Versailles, 30 June-3 July 2015.
- 3) Ștefan Dorondel, Oana Ivan, *Floods, Power and Environmental Justice along the Danube Floodplains in Postsocialist Romania*, paper presented at the international workshop "Floods, State, Dams and Dykes in Modern Times: Ecological and Socio-economic Transformations of the Rural World" organized at The New Europe College, Bucharest, 18-20 June 2015.

- 4) Stelu Șerban, *Communal Ecology and Natural Restoration on the Danube*, paper presented at the international workshop “Floods, State, Dams and Dykes in Modern Times: Ecological and Socio-economic Transformations of the Rural World”, at New Europe College, Bucharest, 18-20 June 2015.
- 5) Iuliana Armaș, Radu Ionescu și Cristina Posner (Nenciu), *Flood Risk Perception along the Lower Danube River*, paper presented at the international workshop “Floods, State, Dams and Dykes in Modern Times: Ecological and Socio-economic Transformations of the Rural World”, at New Europe College, Bucharest, 18-20 June 2015.
- 6) Iuliana Armas, Cristina Posner, *Ethnographic and Psychometric methods addressing vulnerability and adaptation to floods in the Lower Danube*, paper presented at “ECOSMART International Conference – Environment at a Crossroads: SMART approaches for a sustainable future”, organised by the Faculty of Geography, University of Bucharest, 12-15 November 2015.
- 7) Andreea Florentina Marin, Iuliana Armaș, *Shape characteristics of fluvial islets based on GIS techniques. Case Study: Danube's Islets between Giurgiu (km 493) and Oltenita (km 430)*, paper presented at “ECOSMART International Conference – Environment at a Crossroads: SMART approaches for a sustainable future”, organized by the Faculty of Geography, University of Bucharest, 12-15 November 2015.
- 8) Oana Ivan, *Poissons disparus, digues brisées, l'agriculture industrialisée intensive et les vieux résignés: vivre dans l'ancienne plaine inondée du Danube*, paper presented at the international seminar organized by Centre Régional Francophone de Recherches Avancées en Sciences Sociales, București, 9 October, 2015.

Participation to national conferences:

- 1) Violeta Florian, *Cultura riscului și paradoxuri sociale specifice unor comunități rurale din bazinul Dunării*, prezentat la Conferința Științifică Anuală a Institutului Național de Hidrologie și Gospodărire a Apelor, Panta-Rhei-Everything Flows, București, 2-4 noiembrie 2015.
- 2) Florian Violeta, Monica Tudor, *Rural Competitiveness Through Innovation in Romania Opportunities and Risks*, presented at Simpozionul

științific național "Managementul dezvoltării rurale durabile", Timișoara, 28 - 29 mai 2015.

3) Marioara Rusu, *Post Socialist Land Use Changes in the Danube Region*, presented at Simpozion științific național "Managementul dezvoltării rurale durabile", Timișoara, 28 - 29 mai 2015.

4) Andreea Marin, Iuliana Armaș, Cristina Posner (Nenciu), *Schimbări plan-spațiale în evoluția ostroavelor. Aplicație în sectorul dunărean Giurgiu (km 493) – Oltenița (km 430)*, poster presented at Conferința Științifică Anuală a Institutului Național de Hidrologie și Gospodărire a Apelor, București, 2-4 noiembrie 2015.