

CHRONICLE

Hungarian Geographical Bulletin 61 (4) (2012) pp. 349–353.

International Conference on Water resources and wetlands

Tulcea, 14–16 September 2012

The organizers of the conference were the Romanian Limnogeographical Association (ARLG), the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority, the Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development, supported by a series of universities (Salford, Bucharest, Iași, Cluj-Napoca, Târgoviște, Suceava) and academic institutions (e.g. National Institute of Hydrology and Water Management). The goal of the meeting was to present the findings of recent geographical investigations of lakes and wetlands. Participants arrived from more than 30 countries (including France, Austria, Brazil, Russia, Turkey, Japan, Iran, the United Arab Emirates and many others). (The organizers had reckoned with even more international participations, but unfortunately many foreign visitors cancelled their trip.) Hungary was also well represented by researchers of the Limnological Institute in Tihany, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and from the Institute of Environmental Sciences, University of Pécs. The venue was the elegant Hotel Delta on the Danubean promenade of Tulcea, which has been recently supplemented with a four-star wing.



The conference venue: the Hotel Delta



Professor Petre GĂȘTESCU is greeting conference participants at the opening ceremony



Riparian willow groves along a distributary channel of the Sulina Branch

Several surprises could be recorded during the conference. For Hungarians, the first of them was the observation that in Romania – as opposed to Hungary – limnology is not only a biological or ecological discipline but an organic part of physical geographical research too. Under the guidance of Petre GĂȘTESCU, member of the Romanian Academy of Sciences, a populous group of geographers are engaged in limnogeographical investigations and remarkable achievements could be presented. Dozens of papers of this kind are printed as extended abstracts in the voluminous conference proceedings of 662 pages.

The plenary papers of diverse topics were followed by lectures arranged in five sections: the ecology of river and lake ecosystems, climate change and water resources, coastal environments, deltas and wetlands and water policy – all highly actual fields of study with wide-scale practical applications.

Another pleasant surprise was the cultural programme associated with the festive dinner. The folk dance traditions of Romania and particularly of the multi-ethnic Dobrogea region were presented to us by a folk group.

The last day also brought an experience that will be long remembered by all participants. A whole-day boat trip to the Danube Delta in hot summer weather with temperatures above 30°C allowed us an insight into the life of this huge wetland. Our boat followed the Sulina branch navigation route half way to the Black Sea, to the centre of the cut-through meanders popularly called the Big M. From there we followed some distributary channels back to Tulcea. The boat moved with reduced speed so that we could enjoy the environment and birdlife (counting 17 species – including the overflight of several swarms of magnificent pelicans, a major attraction of the Delta).

For the successful organization gratitude is due to Academician GĂȘTESCU, Gheorghe ROMANESCU, professor of the University Alexandru Ioan Cuza in Iași and the coordinator of all tasks, secretary of the Organizing Committee, Petre BREȚCAN.

Dénes LÓCZY