Environmental Engineering and Management Journal xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
http://www.eemj.icpm.tuiasi.ro/; http://www.eemj.eu

"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iasi, Romania

LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND MUREȘ FLOODPLAIN NATURAL PARK ROMANIA: A COMMON FIGHT AGAINST INVASIVE SPECIES

Oana Brînzan[1]*, Marian Drăgoi[2], Ioan Calinovici[1], Eugenia Țigan[1], Codruta Teodora Suciu[3]

[1]"Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Faculty of Food Engineering, Tourism and Environmental Protection,2 Elena Drăgoi str., 310330, Arad, Romania
[2]Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava, Faculty of Forestry, 13 Universitatii Str., Suceava, 720225 Suceava, Romania
[3]Administration of the Mureș Floodplain Natural Park, Pădurea Ceala F.N., 123456, Arad, Romania

Abstract

Invasive plant species, like Indigobush *(Amorpha fruticosa L.), B*oxelder *(Acer negundo L.)***,** Japanese knotweed **[***Fallopia japonica (Houtt.) Ronse Decr]* are altering the conservation status of terrestrial ecosystems along the Mureș Floodplain Natural Park in Romania. On a long run, and a large geographic scale, the invasive species have a high potential to generate a negative impact on the environment and the economy. Hence there is a stringent need of preventing, tracking down, and controlling invasive species. The research was carried out along with an awareness campaign meant to raise the knowledge of the local population regarding the danger of continuous expansion of invasive species through unsustainable agricultural practices. The fieldwork was conducted between September 2015 and April 2017 and consisted of a survey filled in by 240 respondents. After applying the principal component analysis on the answers given to a set of closed questions, we found that most of the attendees considered the meetings and the dissemination materials as important, but some local communities are against fighting Indigo-bush and other invasive species, and consider the cost of intervention is too high. This discrepancy between the degree to which local people appreciated the project and the degree to which they really want to get involved in fighting invasive species shows that grassroots awareness campaigns are still needed.

Key words: awareness campaign, invasive species, local communities, management, protected area

Received: March, 2019; Revised final: July, 2019; Accepted: Octomber, 2019

* Author to whom all correspondence should be addressed: e-mail: oana.brinzan@uav.ro; Phone 0040219331; Fax 0040257219242