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THE FORESTS OF ROMANIA IN SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE AND IN GEOGRAPHY. TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS AND ACTIONS

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Abstract

The aims of this research are (1) to analyze the topic of forests in Romania as presented in scientific literature and (2) to identify the Romanian Geography teachers’ perceptions of and opinions about (a) the consequences of human actions on the situation of forests in Romania, (b) their own actions that lead to diminishing vulnerability and risks for forest clearances, (c) factors that influenced their attitude and behavior towards forests, and (d) suggestions for actions of forest protection and conservation. We considered these Geography teachers from the pre-university system as a professional category with impact on the formation of future generation’s opinions. In 2015, we used an online questionnaire and 208 Geography teachers volunteered to answer. We used statistical and qualitative interpretation methods for quantitative and qualitative data processing. The social reality highlighted by respondents’ choice was, in certain situations, different from the proof-based reality, but in most cases they represented objectively the problematic reality. This was similar to the one presented by forestry experts who argued that, in the last 25 years, the forests in Romania had undergone major negative changes. This research pointed out a problematic management of the forests in Romania and the necessity for direct actions, with stronger impact on people’s behavior towards the forestry environment. Moreover, the Geography teachers may offer to the political decision making factors and to diverse organizations some useful information about the complexity and development of the forestry environment, contributing in this way to a better forestry management in Romania.

Key words: education for sustainable development, forest management, forestry protection, forestry reality, Geography teachers’ perceptions and recommendations

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