

BOOK REVIEW

E. Klimo, H. Hager, S. Matič, I. Anič, J. Kulhavý (Eds): FLOODPLAIN FORESTS OF THE TEMPERATE ZONE OF EUROPE - Publisher: Lesnická práce s.r.o., Kostelec nad Černými lesy, 2008, 623 p, ISBN 978-80-87154-16-8

This publication, which, for the first time, contains a comprehensive summary of information on the origins, status and functions of floodplain forests of the temperate zone of Europe, was released in 2008 after several years in preparation. Floodplain forest ecosystems in Europe have been strongly influenced by human activities, resulting in calls for their conservation, eventual expansion and revitalisation, and particularly as regards their hydrological regime. The main editor has managed to assemble a broad international team of authors, all of whom have a long-time interest in the study of floodplain forests and who have helped to create a wholly unique publication.

The book has two parts. In the first part, authors primarily from the Czech Republic, Austria and Croatia address problems that are common across various regions, such as geology and geomorphology, the history of the relationship between humans and floodplain forests, the hydrology and moisture regime, plant communities, restoration and management, floodplain forests from the viewpoint of landscape ecology, revitalisation, conservation, and the cultural activities of humans in relation to floodplain forests. The texts of individual chapters are enriched with clear case studies and supplemented with numerous photographs and illustrations.

The second part of the book provides information on the state of floodplain forests in 17 European countries. Each country's report was prepared in accordance with a unified questionnaire, but they have not all been produced to the same level. Particularly valuable is the information provided on biodiversity, management methods, and possibilities for establishing contacts for potential co-operation or acquiring further information.

At 623 pages, this voluminous monograph is richly provided with photo-documentation and drawings. At the end of the book, the main functions of floodplain forests are listed, including their high productivity, high levels of diversity and variability of the forest habitats, providing water flow protection for rivers, the large number of nature reserves, and their recreational and aesthetic functions within the landscape.

At the same time, it is recommended to carry out revitalisation projects while providing support for natural or semi-natural restoration efforts, to increasing biodiversity, and to scientific activities of those institutions undertaking detailed studies at the ecosystem, catchment and regional levels.

*Jaroslav Horák**

The book can be ordered from: Lesnická práce s.r.o. publishing house
28163 Kostelec nad Černými lesy
Czech Republic

Price EUR 40 + postage

* Associate Professor (Emeritus), Mendel University of Agriculture and Forestry, Zemědělská 3, 613 00 Brno, Czech Republic, E-mail : ulbdg@mendelu.cz