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**Facts**  
about floodplain restoration

To be successful, floodplain restoration should adhere to the following three underlying principles\*:

- It should be effective (ecological science)
- It should be efficient (society benefits, resources, ES)
- It should be engaging (people)

\*According to Society for Ecological Restoration

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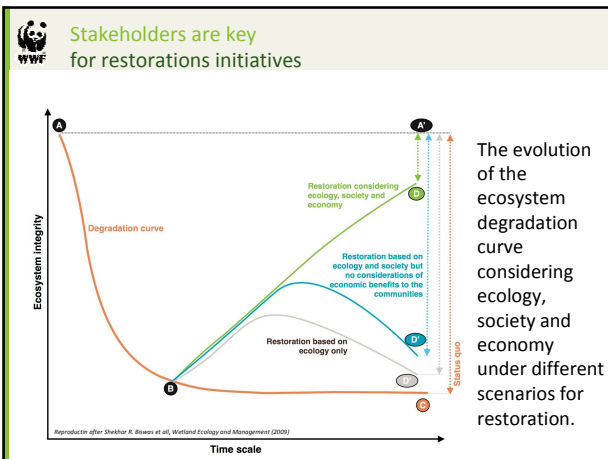
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### Facts about people engagement in floodplain restoration initiative

Floodplain restoration is a process of change for people also, that entails:

- affecting a wide range of interests and stakeholders with different values.
- the final decision for restoration is at local level, regardless the EU/national policy framework.
- people attitude is not stable but as something that might change in time based on internal or external cues

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### Lessons learned from floodplain restoration initiatives in Europe

- floodplain restoration is site specific.
- success depends on changing the traditional attitudes regarding flood defense practice.
- emotional experience/major distress for locals was a good reason for attitude change towards floodplain restoration.
- most of the restoration projects are voluntary initiatives and not legally binding requirements for the Member States.

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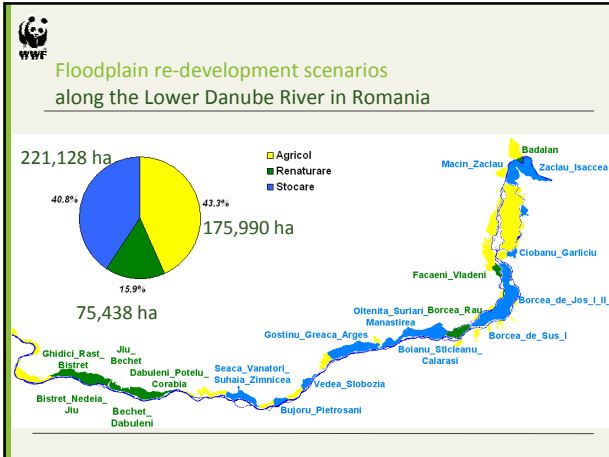
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How can we build capacity in support of continuous stakeholder engagement in floodplain restoration initiatives?

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<p><b>Gârla Mare</b></p>	<p><b>Geral marsh</b></p>	<p><b>Mahmudia</b></p>
<p>Reconnection floodplain connectivity with the Danube River. ~ 1600 ha</p>	<p>Restoring the hydrology of the floodplain marsh for the benefits of birds. ~ 1500 ha</p>	<p>Flooding arable lands to restore the former wetlands in the Danube Delta. 924 ha</p>

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**WWF**

### Garla Mare floodplain connectivity project

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**WWF**

### Engaging stakeholders in the Lower Danube floodplain restoration projects

Why to include local people in restoration projects?

- is a legal/ethic requirement for the planning process
- we need a good collaboration process with locals in order to listen to the local people, learn about the area and the traditional knowledge and use of the natural resources.
- it's important for the evaluation and reevaluation of the feasibility of the restoration works, including local interests.
- to get the full acceptance of the proposed works

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**WWF**

### Engaging stakeholders Insights from the process

1. Consider the values at risk for stakeholders
2. Promote common benefits
3. Provide alternative opportunities

Prochaska, J., Johnson, S., & Lee, P. (1998) - The transtheoretical model of behavior change

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### Engaging stakeholders

#### 2. Promote common benefits

- fishing ground improved; access to fishing.
- improvement of the vegetation on pastures due to soil moisture increase.
- associated benefits due to wild flowers (ex. beekeeping – wild mint).
- access to the Danube Delta for ecotourism development (e.g. rowing, canoeing, wildlife watching).
- water storage available during drought season for different uses (reduced costs with pumping, livestock)

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#### 3. Provide alternative opportunities

Visitor infrastructure.  
Cycling route.



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#### 3. Provide alternative opportunities

Reed use for biomass production  
or reed products handcrafting



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### Engaging stakeholders

The steps taken for Balta Geraiului

- public meetings to obtain an initial written agreement from 926 land owners in order to start the feasibility study of the 1500 ha marsh
- agreement of three local councils to implement the works and to build a visitor infrastructure on their lands
- public debates to obtain local community acceptance for the FS and their written support for the implementation of the restoration works

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### Engaging stakeholders

A successfull process



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### Final remarks

- People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it!
- People must perceive that they have the ability to perform the change.
- Improve the management by delegating the responsibilities to the local constituencies.
- Develop local business with conservation potential for the restoration site can help.

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Thank you for your attention

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