

Heavy metals concentration in water and sediments of the Prut River lower sector

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Abstract. A 120 km sector of the Prut River, Eastern Romania, was surveyed for the concentration of four heavy metals (Cd, Cu, Pb and Zn) in water and sediments samples. The analysed sector is located on the border between Romania and Moldova and it is part of the Lower Prut Floodplain Natural Park. The most important steel-producing factory in Romania is located in the park vicinity. Four campaigns have been performed for water collection during different river regimes (both flooding and drought). The water quality is an essential condition for the wetland ecosystems within the park area and the aquatic biota they support, as trace elements bioaccumulation along the food webs might appear (David et al., 2012). Sediments can provide useful information regarding mid- and long-term pollution of the aquatic bodies, being capable of sequestering and releasing important amounts of heavy metals depending on the river regime and extreme situations (van Gestel, 2008; Verhoeven, 2009). For the sediments samples, there is an ascendant trend from upstream to the junction with the Danube River, as the distance to the main urban pole approaches, consequence of a strong human insertion. Romanian standards were used for comparison (MEWM, 2006).

Key words: Heavy metals, wetlands, water, sediments

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