ECOTOURISM IN DANUBE DELTA BIOSPHERE RESERVE

LOCATION AND SIZE

Danube Delta is the 2nd largest delta in Europe, located where Danube River flows into the Black Sea; a total surface of 5.800 km^2 shared between Romania (86%) and Ukraine (14%).

BIODIVERSITY AND PROTECTION

Danube Delta has multiple conservation status, due to its diversity, both biological and cultural:

Worldwide

- UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Biosphere Reserve (since 1990)
- RAMSAR site important for migratory birds

European level - Natura 2000 Network

- ROSPA0031 Danube Delta and Razelm-Sinoie Lagoon
- ROSPA0076 Black Sea
- ROSCI0065 Danube Delta
- ROSCI237 - Methanogen submarine structures Saint George

National level - IUCN category I

- 20 strictly protected areas covering 509 km^2



- One of the most beautiful destination for ecotourism.
- Wetland of International Importance designated by Ramsar Convention.
- Natural Site of Universal Patrimony recognized by UNESCO.
- Natural museum of biodiversity - 30 types of ecosystems (8 strictly protected) and more than 5,000 flora and fauna species.
- Particularly known for its abundance of birdlife - more than 360 important bird species, among which most of the European population of *Pelecanus onocrotalus* and *Pelecanus crispus*.
- A valuable cultural heritage - tangible and intangible - historic monuments and archaeological sites (Iron Age fortified sites, remnants of Greek and Roman settlements, early Christian architecture), as well as a range of traditions and folk customs that have been preserved over time; an interethnic habitat.

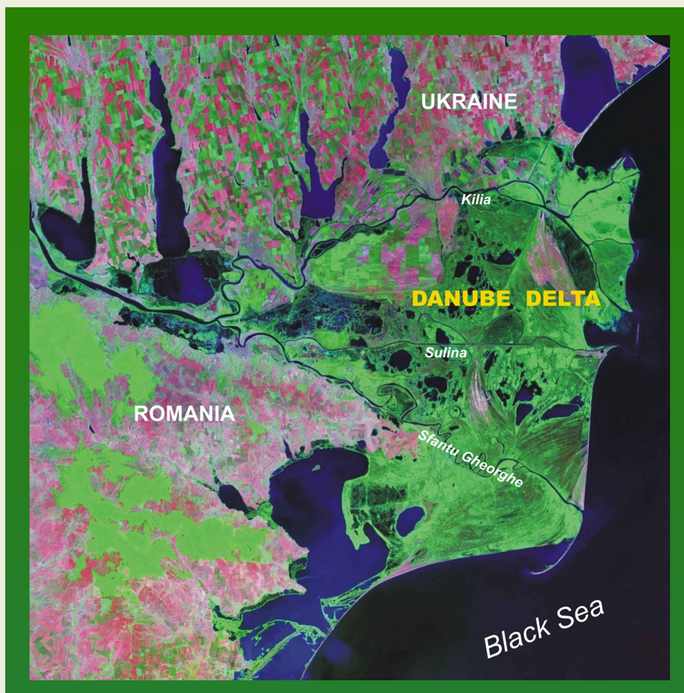
GOOD PRACTICES OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Association «Ivan Patzaichin - Mila 23» launched a slow tourism initiative for the Danube Delta, aiming to develop new experiential visiting infrastructure, contributing to the promotion of a sustainable and inclusive local economy, with a responsible tourism.

- ✓ The project will set up 40 new touristic destinations meant to encourage visiting Danube Delta in a slow way.
- ✓ The slow tourism routes, carried out with environmentally friendly rowing and electric boats, will create connections between natural and cultural attractions.
- ✓ The first water route (52 km) - dedicated to rowboats and named «Ivan's Delta» - respects the wish of the multiple rower champion Ivan Patzaichin, who wanted to create a unique experience in the area where he was born (Mila 23 Village); it can be covered in 2/3 days.







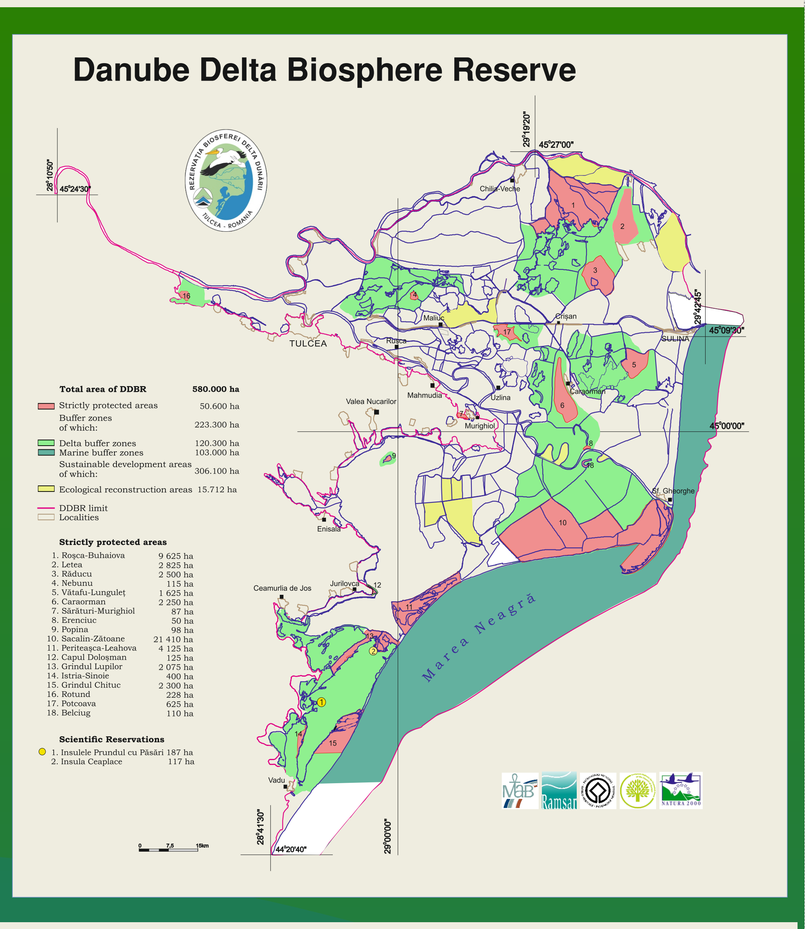
KEY - CHALLENGES

1. ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY

How a protected area can be managed effectively for tourism while ensuring its natural and cultural values - the assets that attract tourists in Danube Delta - are protected for future generations.

2. SOCIO - ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

How the tourism in Danube Delta can be developed so that to bring benefits primarily to the host traditional communities and provide them an important motivation to maintain the heritage and cultural practices.



Ecotourism is preferred in natural areas, being defined as representing the form of tourism in which the main objective is the observation and awareness of the value of nature and local culture/ traditions and which must meet the following conditions:

- ✓ to contribute to the conservation and protection of nature;
- ✓ to use local human resources;
- ✓ to have an educational character, in respect for nature;
- ✓ to have a minimal negative impact on the natural and socio-cultural environment.

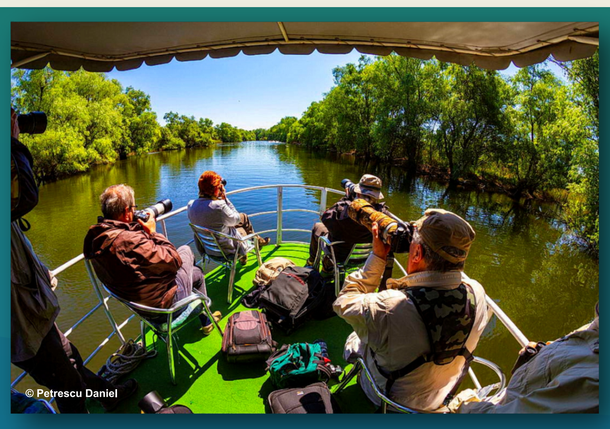
ECOTOURISM

The ideal form of tourism towards which all visitors to the Danube Delta should be guided and encouraged.













Slow tourism - traveling for an extended period of time at a slow pace - by kayak, canoe, rowboat or small - capacity electric motor, bike; it could offer a deeper understanding of the surroundings and a stronger connection with the authentic delta's life and culture; it ensures the protection and conservation of the natural heritage.

Birdwatching - photography programs, tours and cruises with floating boats.

Cultural tourism - visiting cultural-historical heritage, archaeological and ethno-folkloric sites.

Gastronomic tourism - discovering the traditional deltaic gastronomy in community (Local Gastronomic Point, a concept initiated and developed in Danube Delta).

Tourism for rest and recreation - using accommodation facilities on the Biosphere Reserve's area, floating hotels - for cruises; guesthouses; combining trips on picturesque canals and lakes with sunbathing and seawater on the beaches located along the Black Sea coast.



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https://gal-deltadunarii.ro

Asociatia Ivan Patzaichin - Mila 23
https://rowmania.ro

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