

4th Hungarian Conference on Landscape Ecology

Kerekegyháza, Hungary, May 13–15, 2010

Although landscape ecology has long traditions in Hungary the first national congress was held at Szirák only in 2004, Success of that meeting underlined the importance of the topic both for research and practice. Since 2004 the Hungarian Conferences on Landscape Ecology were organised in the springs of every even year. For the fourth time such an event was held at Varga-tanya, Kerekegyháza in the heart of the Kiskunság region and organized by the Geographical Research Institute, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA FKI).

Since landscape ecology is an interdisciplinary field the national conference is always an appropriate occasion to discuss the topics with the representatives of various studies. Most of the participants came from geography, but there were several experts on GIS, botany, pedology, climatology, and management staff from the national parks.

Ádám KERTÉSZ, head of the organizing committee opened the conference. In his speech the emphasis was put on the role of water and water management in the landscape, with a special reference to the Kiskunság region. After the opening ceremony the first day was devoted for plenary lectures. Many of the presentations have dealt with the climate change and related problems. The keynote speakers of the plenary session tackled the present state of Hungarian landscape ecology, analysed the professional composition of researchers and outlined the possible research directions. On the second half of the first day both literature reviews and case studies were presented.

On the second day parallel sections were held on the following topics:

- Landscape forming, land use change, and the role of climate change
- Riparian habitats, floodplains and water management
- Landscape architecture, landscape planning and regional development
- Landscape protection and conservation
- Biodiversity in the landscape
- Cultural landscape
- Agricultural management and policy
- Landscape ecology in earth sciences

In addition to the paper sessions two poster sections were organised to display the summarised results. During the conference altogether 37 oral presentations were made and 15 posters exhibited. A volume of abstracts of papers were issued by the conference. The organizing committee decided to request all the authors to submit their results in an enlarged form. The full text conference proceedings are presumed to be published by the autumn of 2010.

On the third day an excursion was planned to observe the most valuable natural landscapes of the Kiskunság. The field trip was organised and guided by the staff of the Kiskunság National Park. The first stop was at Strázsahegy to enjoy the superb panorama of the landscape. The following sight was next to Fülöpháza where the participants could observe the one and only moving sand dune in Hungary. The lack of vegetation due to grazing and to hoeing is that keeps the dune drifting. Meanwhile a heavy shower started accordingly the rest of the sights were viewed only from the coach. However during the first two days of the congress there also occurred storms with extreme intensities both the alkaline ponds visited (Szívós-szék and Szappan-szék) were totally dried out. The last episode of the excursion and of the whole conference as well was the rich and delicious lunch at Fülöpszállás.



Field symposium at Kiskunság National Park. Among the participants: profs Á. KERTÉSZ, D. LÓCZY and P. CSORBA. (Photo by G. KIRÁLY)

To sum up the experiences of the meeting: interesting and important research results could be heard followed by fruitful and profitable discussions. ÉVA KONKOLY-GYURÓ on behalf of the Faculty of Forestry, University of West Hungary announced that the 5th Hungarian Conference on Landscape Ecology would be held at Sopron in 2012. Hopefully it will be as intriguing as the fourth was.

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