



## Danube Day 2008 in Moldova

### Reaching across the border to Romania

The River Prut was the setting for Moldova's Danube Day. Near the border with Romania, the small village of Butesti Stinca in Glodeni rayon (NW Moldova) hosted a grand celebration, bringing together Danubites from surrounding communities and Romania.

2000 residents from five local communities (Butesti Stinca, Glodeni, Cuhnesti, Bolotina and Dusmani) and Romanian visitors came together to pay tribute to the Danube rivers. They marked the day with speeches, a meeting to advance the sustainable development of the Padurea Domneasca Protected Area and an afternoon of festivities including folk music, art and traditions. By inviting Romanian artists to perform and share their folk customs, Danube Day symbolically breached the Moldovan-Romanian border. The meeting on the future of Padurea Domneasca discussed working with Romanian authorities to develop a Biosphere Reserve, which would also bridge divisions.

The event began with an official opening by Ion Movila, Governor of Glodeni District, who spoke about tourism developments, the need to improve rural water infrastructure and the good working cooperation with regards to the environment. Dumitru Drumea, Head of Moldova's Delegation to the ICPDR, and Alecu Renita, Chairman of the Ecological Movement of Moldova, detailed work achieved along with the ICPDR; progress in implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive and Moldovan Action Plan; and options for improving nature protection. Extension of the Protected Area was later discussed at Padurea Domneasca, where participants met with local authority officers.

The afternoon saw the performance of folk songs and dances, bringing an air of celebration to Butesti Stinca. The music and dance, along with displays of rural crafts and costume, gave residents a strong sense of connection with the past, highlighting the ways in which generations of people have been inextricably linked to the land. Many of the songs performed by "Haiducii" had been collected from villagers living in the Middle Prut region over the last 50 years. They told of life in the area during the last century, many focussed on the natural environment. The popular band, "Busuiok Moldovenesc", presented regional dances, many related to the area's nature and describing how people managed their natural environment. While, the "Rapsozi Botosani" folk collective from Romania shared their traditions from the far side of the river. Getting back to the present, school

children performed contemporary songs in an ecological concert dedicated to everyone celebrating Danube Day.

The impact of Moldova's Danube Day was not confined to the Glodeni region. Thanks to good local and national media coverage (and the making of a documentary on Padurea Domneasca for national television), the Danube Day message was heard across the country.

### **Danube Day Partners**

Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources • Institute of Ecology and Geography of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova • Ecological Movement of Moldova • Regional Centre for Strategic Environmental Studies • Global Water Partnership Moldova • Institute for Environmental Research and Sustainable Development • Local authorities • NGOs from the Glodeni region • Media organisations.

## **The Danube rivers: let's use them – not abuse them!**

For general information about the 14-country Danube Day celebrations, view [www.danubeday.org](http://www.danubeday.org) or email the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River: [jasmine.bachmann@unvienna.org](mailto:jasmine.bachmann@unvienna.org).