

## Conservation and Ecotourism in Riparian and Deltaic Ecosystems (Con-E-Ect)



Greece - Drama

### Eastern Macedonia and Thrace Institute of Technology (EMaTTECH)

Eastern Macedonia and Thrace Institute of Technology (EMaTTECH), is the lead Technological University of Greece. It is situated in the N.E. part of Greece, in a region that is bordered by Bulgaria and Turkey. It has a strong international profile collaborating with numerous Universities from four (4) Continents of the Globe. Under the framework of this international profile the UNESCO Chair Con-E-Ect has been established in 2016.



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Dr. Dimitrios Emmanouloudis is a Professor at Department of Forestry and Natural Environment Management of EMaTTECH, Greece. He is the director of the Laboratory of Mountainous Water Management and Control. He is a Forester-Hydrologist specialized on erosion and land degradation monitoring and estimation as well as on aquatic ecosystems protection and management.

<http://unescochair.teiemt.gr/>



# #CONEECT WITH THE «2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT»



## OPTIMIZING ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT & CONSERVATION IN DELTAIC AND RIPARIAN AREAS: INVOLVING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

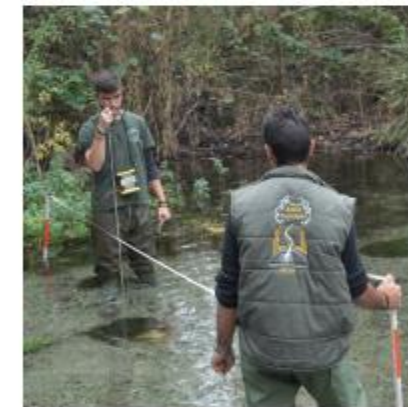
### HOW THE CHAIR IS ACTING ON THE SDGS

Riparian and deltaic ecosystems are of major ecological interest, for they fulfill many ecological functions and provide important ecosystem services. Nevertheless, due to their exploitation by humans over the course of the centuries, they have been severely degraded. The importance of conserving and protecting the riparian and deltaic ecosystems of Greece has been duly acknowledged both in the framework of the European Union



and other international normative instruments, since they have been designated as "Natura 2000" areas and "RAMSAR" sites. Establishing a UNESCO Chair in the EMaTTECH will enable the scientific staff, with extensive experience in numerous environment-related international projects, to conduct further research in the field of riparian and deltaic ecosystems. Furthermore, it will enable them to record the indisputably rich natural and intangible cultural heritage of the region, with a view to contributing to its safeguarding, assessing it through educational activities and integrating it into a Strategy Framework. The theme content of the chair is based on four pillars: Environmental Sciences, Education, Ecotourism, and Culture.

- Environmental Sciences  
The Chair works on the research and classification of material that relates to the effects climate change has on riparian and deltaic ecosystems, given the fact that they are the first to be affected because of their immediate proximity to the sea and their imminent altitude difference with it. The chair also works on the completion of research projects that focus on topics including, but not limited to, hydrology, management of deltas and riparian



environments, and ecophysiology of aquatic environments through continuous measurements and analyses.

- Education  
We are working to develop a series of educational material, which will address all age groups (pre-school, school, adults). This material will be thematically relevant to the riparian and deltaic ecosystems (climate change, endangered species), with emphasis on the accustomization of all age groups with them.

- Ecotourism  
The Chair has as an objective to raise the awareness on best practices, of adults who deal with tourism and ecotourism. These practices will contribute to the enhancement of all interested parties capable of undertaking action about ecotourism on a local level. Its main goal would be the creation of new opportunities of employment in this field, especially because of the crisis of the Greek economy.

- Culture  
The Chair aspires to create, through its research, a Cultural Ark: a database which will include content related to the cultural legacy of the Eastern Macedonia and Thrace region.

### FUTURE ACTIONS

The action plan of the Chair could be summarised as: implementation of open-access databases, behaviour codes for visitors of riparian and aquatic ecosystems, manual guides for the development of ecosystems, creation of microbotanical thematic gardens, detection of endangered species of fauna, creation of a laboratory for the observation of biotic and abiotic elements. Organization of local and international workshops and conferences.