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Premises for tourism development in the settlements of the middle sector of the Prut river (Botoşani and Iaşi counties)

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Abstract

The tendency to capitalize less known and promoted natural and cultural resources is also remarked among the current trends of the tourism development. Along time, in Romanian tourism, some areas that concentrate a greater number of resources have been capitalized in tourist activities and programmes.
In the context of the current changes, starting from the need to reduce the economic disparities at regional and local level, other tourist resources have also been included in the hospitality and travel industry. In Romania, the Prut valley is characterised as an extended crossborder area with the Republic of Moldova but also as having an authentic tourist potential.
Based on the bibliographic data and the field research, one has seen that the settlements situated on both banks of the Prut river own important tourist resources, the natural ones dominating, followed by the cultural ones. Consequently, the whole Prut valley offers real conditions for developing some tourism forms and attracting potential tourists interested to see a nature scarcely changed by human activities. A first tackling refers to the human settlements in the Prut corridor in the Botoșani county.

Keywords: *the Prut corridor, tourist potential, tourism forms*

Rezumat. Premise pentru dezvoltarea turismului în localitățile din sectorul mijlociu al Prutului (județele Botoșani și Iași)

Tendința de a valorifica resursele naturale și culturale mai puțin cunoscute și promovate face parte de asemenea, din tendințele actuale de dezvoltare turistică. De-a lungul timpului, în turismul românesc, unele zone care concentrează un număr mai mare de resurse au fost valorificate prin activități și programe turistice.
În contextul schimbărilor actuale, pornind de la necesitatea de a reduce discrepanțele economice la nivel regional și local, alte resurse turistice au fost incluse spre valorificare în industria turismului. În România, valea Prutului este caracterizată ca o zonă extinsă transfrontalieră cu Republica Moldova, dar, de asemenea, și ca având un potențial turistic autentic.
Pe baza datelor bibliografice și pe baza cercetării de teren, s-a remarcat că așezările situate pe ambele maluri ale Prutului dețin resurse turistice proprii importante, dominând însă cele naturale, fiind urmate de cele culturale. Prin urmare, întreaga vale a Prutului oferă condiții reale pentru dezvoltarea unor forme de turism și atragerea potențialilor turiști interesați să vadă natura foarte puțin antropizată de către activitățile umane. O primă abordare se referă la așezările umane din coridorul Prutului, din județul Botoșani.

Cuvinte-cheie: *coridorul Prutului, potențial turistic, forme de turism*

Introduction

In the surface national hydrographical network, in comparison with other big rivers, the valley of the Prut river occupies a unique position. It lies in the north-eastern and eastern part of the country, as a border limit with Ukraine and Republic of Moldova. The Prut is a left tributary of the Danube, with a total length of 953 km, out of which 742 km in the national territory (Diaconu, 1969).

Its dimensions place it on the third place in the category of the great rivers, after the Danube and Mureş. Its hydrographical basin includes a total surface of 28396 sq. km of which 10990 sq. km on the Romanian territory (Water Register Atlas in Romania, 1992).

This river was known from the very first settlements in Dacia, thus the antique Greeks named it Pyretus and then the Romans – Hierasus or Gerasus (Gâștescu, 2002). The archaeological discoveries prove the existence of social organisation and inhabiting forms from the very early Palaeolithic.

Its springs lie at the altitude of 2068 m, under the Hoverla peak, on the north-eastern slope of the Cernahora Mountains (or Cerna Gora), a component element of the Forest Carpathians range in Ukraine and its course enters Romania through the Oroftiana village, the Suharau locality in the Botoşani county.

On the Romanian territory, according to the data from the Romania Water Register atlas - part I from 1992, the Prut attracts from the right side the waters that form a codified hydrographical network which sums up 248 rivers and 4551 km, meaning 1.9% of the total length of the codified network in the country and a density of 0.41 km/km^2, superior to the country mean, of 0.33 km/km^2. It flows into the Danube at 15 km downstream to the Galati municipality.

The main characteristics of the Prut valley

Its valley represents a contact basin between the Moldova Plateau in the west of Romania and the Podolic Plateau, on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, in the east. The evolution and geographic aspects are connected to those of the Moldova Plateau, some authors considering this unit a subdivision of this plateau. From the geological point of view, the Prut basin is superposed on three structure units: the Moldovian Platform (till the Fălciu-Plopana fault), the Bârlad Platform (between the Fălciu-Plopana and Adjud-Oancea faults) and the Covurlui Platform, presenting each a basis with folded forms covered by a layer, with monocline forms (Geography of Romania, 1983, 1992).

On the Botosani county territory, the Prut river has a length of 230 km and its tributary stream Jijia only 133 km (http://www.apeprut.ro/sgabt.html), while in the Iasi county, the Prut river has a 211 km length and its main tributary streams Jijia – 131 km and Bahlui – 119 km (http://www.rowater.ro/daprut/sgaiasi/default.aspx).

Its whole hydrographical basin includes a complex of large interfluves with aspect of bridges, hills and hillocks separated by wide valleys, sculpted in the monocline sedimentary layer (Posea et.al., 1982). The general inclination of the relief, towards south-south-east, in the same direction with the orientation of the most important valleys, reflect an evident adaptation to the structure (the Geography of Romania, 1992) (Fig. 1).

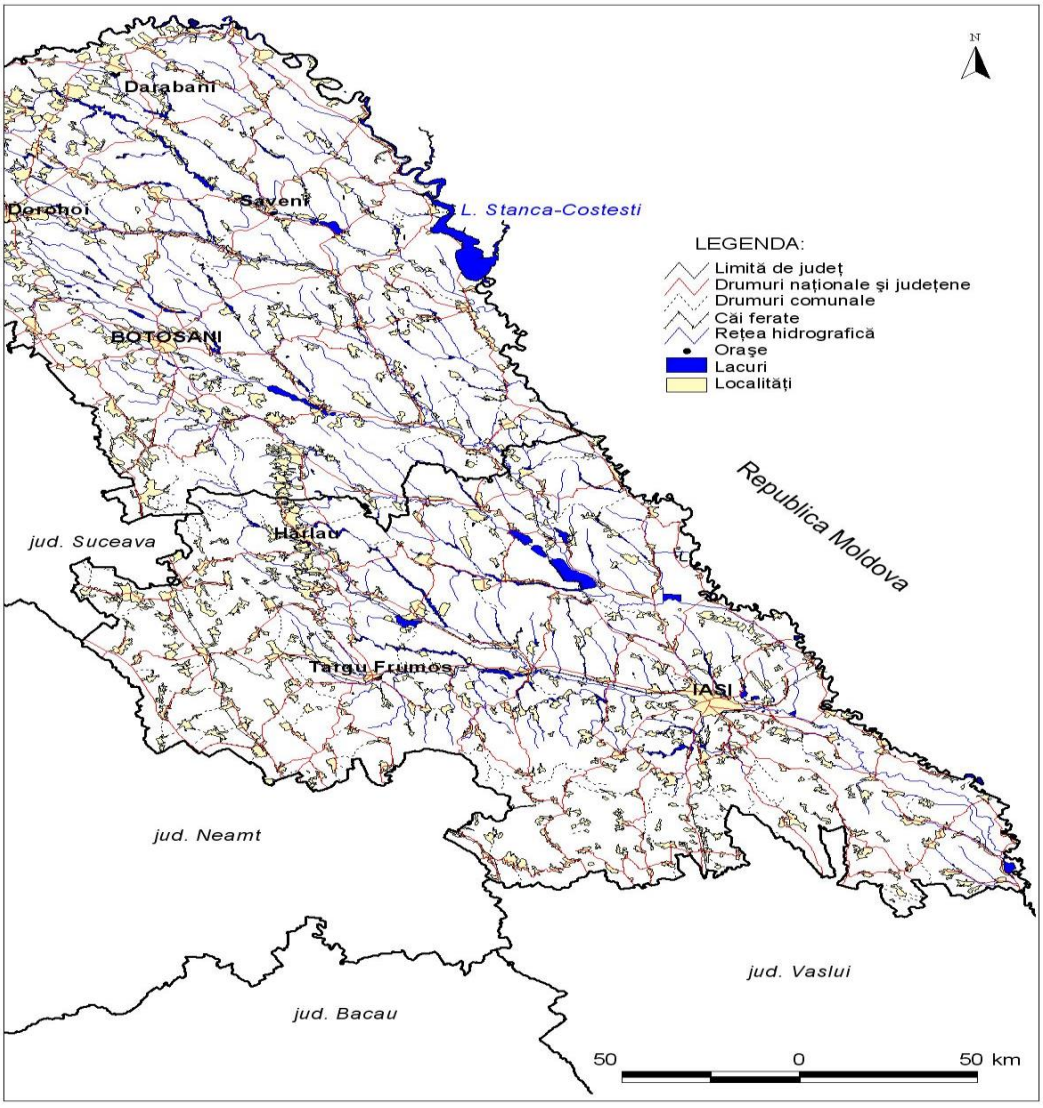

Fig. 1: The middle sector of the Prut corridor corresponding to the Botoşani and Iaşi counties

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The monocline structure has favoured the appearance of positive forms and subsequent valleys (Băcăuanu, 1973). The main levels in morphology have values of 300-500 m in the north-west, 300-400 m in the central part, 150-200 m in north-east and south and have a balanced distribution (Băcăuanu 1961, 1968).

The altitudes over 500 m are few and isolated. In conformity with the data in the "Geography of Romania" paper vol. IV, 1992, the lowest height limits which can be seen along the passage of the Prut river are of 130 m in Oroftiana, 32 m close to Ungheni and 15 m towards the confluence with the Danube.

Concerning the climate, due to its position in the extra-Carpathians region, far from the influence of air masses from the Atlantic ocean, the Prut basin receives annual quantities of moderate precipitations. Due to the fact that the Prut river overlaps the Moldova Plain, it is directly influenced by the European east and north air masses. Due to the fact that it is close to the Eastern Carpathians, the western air masses, in the lower surrounding geographic areas, 'suffers' föehn-like processes. The precipitations are reduced, between 500-550 mm (at Rădăuţi 564 mm, at Iaşi 529.4 mm, media of year). At general level, the climate is temperate continental with some excessive influences, meaning that summers are warm, sometimes with tropical days and drought periods and winters – colder, with frost periods (Băcăuanu et. al., 1980).

From the bio-geographic point of view, the whole Prut corridor lies in the area of hill forests, dominated by oak, of meadow forests and forest-steppe and steppe grasslands. Following a slower anthropic process there are many regions with natural vegetation and fauna. The studied area has traditions of over 50 years concerning the creation of ponds (Gâștescu, 1971). The building of the dam and hydro-technical accumulation lake in Stânca-Costeşti, in the Botosani county between 1975-1978 led to important modifications. The formation of the Stânca-Costeşti accumulation lake determined important changes of the fish fauna in the area.

There was a massive transformation of the typical habitats of the wet areas bordering the Prut river, i.e. of the floodable area which favours the multiplication of pond fish and birds, putting in danger the ecologic integrity of the area natural environment.

In the respective lake certain species such as barbel, chub and others disappeared, mixed regime species appearing here (Fig. 2).

Along time, the aquatic fauna reduced both quantitatively and qualitatively and this situation cannot be justified by pollution, because the river Prut in is in good condition from the physical-chemical point of view - the concentrations do not exceed the standards established by the Directive 98/83/EC. Currently, the Prut river is faced with a decrease in the fish stocks, taking as a comparison the analyses made in 1947 when there were 37 species of fish compared to the 26 found in the present (http://www.apeprut.ro/Buletin_calitatea_apei.pdf).

Fig. 2: Stânca-Costeşti area (the year 1926)

Source: archive of the Faculty of Geology and Geodesy of the Bucharest University, via prof. dr. Răsvan Damian

Birds, more than any other group of vertebrates are widespread in the presented area, both in number of species and number of individuals. Most of the birds reported here are migratory species (44 species) representing international natural resources; of these we mention the white stork, the bee eater, the little egret, the diver, etc.

These aspects imposed some effective measures for the protection of these populations and the habitats in which they live; it represents a necessity of the compliance with the international conventions and agreements to protect wild flora and fauna ratified by Romania. 31 sedentary species and 18 passage species also live in this fauna interest area. Of the total number of species, 22 are of community interest, 27 species whose conservation requires the designation of protected bird-fauna areas and 39 species which are under strict protection in conformity with Directive/409/CEE on the conservation of wild birds (http://apmbt.anpm.ro/Mediu/biodiversitate-14).

The project implementation to declare the Stânca-Costeşti lake area a **bird-fauna special protection area** will try to conserve and restore viable populations of wetland specific birds in conformity with the Convention on wetlands of international importance especially as water birds habitat signed in Ramsar in 1971 and ratified by Romania through Law no. 5/2000. In the Natura 2000 network, there is the Ciornahal forest for the ROSCI-0141 structure, the Stânca Costesti reserve for the ROSCI 0234 structure and the Costeşti lake for the ROSPA00058 one (http://www.mmediu.ro/protectia_naturii/protectia_naturii/natura2000/Lista_situri_N2000_custodie.xls) (Fig. 3).

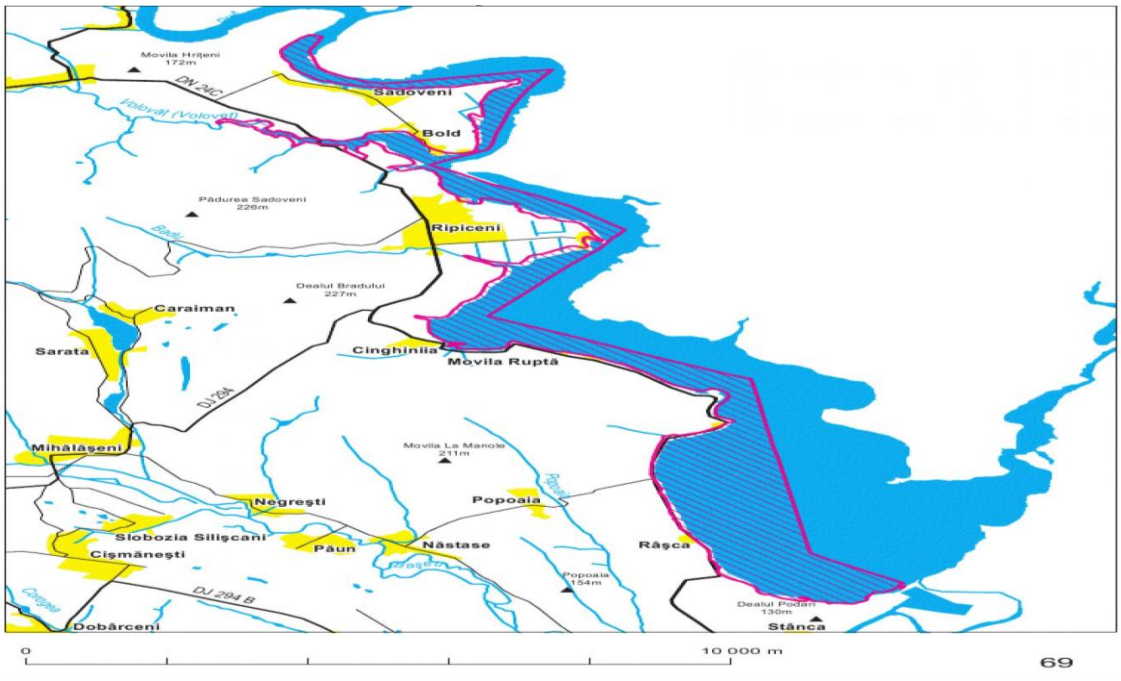

Fig. 3: the ROSPA0058 limits of the Stânca Costesti lake

Source:http://natura2000.mmediu.ro/site/273/rospa0058.html

In this context, the conservation of wetlands includes a significant cross-border element, for the purpose of collaboration and adoption of a common and unified strategy concerning the integrated management of the wetlands - resources of great economic, natural, scientific and recreational value.

The act of conferring the official status of "trans-border protected site" to this area in the future will allow the creation of some restrictive measures for the biodiversity protection and conservation, together with the preservation of traditional practices for the sustainable capitalisation of natural resources and preservation of socio-cultural values of riparian communities. In this context, the southern part of the Prut valley is likely to become a true cross-border National Park - one of the few in Europe.

The Botoşani county council, having in view the Romanian legislation in force and together with the Environment Protection agency (the Natural Biodiversity Protection department), the Romsilva local office, the Botoşani Ornithological Society, the Water Administration department, the Botoşani hunters and fishers county association as well as the local councils in the Edinet (Republic of Moldova) and Botoşani counties have issued decisions concerning the regime of protection and conservation of the areas with special habitat in the perimeter declared reserve.

In Romania, in the interest area, the protection and conservation regime has been settled for: flora reservations of *Schiwerickia Podolia* from Ripiceni and Ştefăneşti; the forest perimeter for the soil protection and consolidation of slopes, namely the Prut area forest in the Darabani and Truşeşti forest ranges; dendrology park in Ştefăneşti plus other valuable protected areas (Mohan et. al., 1993).

In terms of tourism development, it has a real chance in the Prut border settlements along the Romanian sector. Thus, those natural and cultural resources that can be capitalised through tourism activities related to ecotourism have been selected. This selection has been carried out because other rural communities in the Prut river basin have poor ways of communication which makes the access to those tourist resources more difficult.

The analysis of the Prut corridor in the Botoşani and Iaşi counties

Along its length, some secondary sectors can be identified due to the changes of the minor and major riverbed, slope flow, climatic and pedo-bio-geographic conditions. The middle sector which starts from the north, in the Radauti-Prut-Lipcani settlement (Obcinele Bucovinei), the Moldova Plateau and continues till the lower Prut plain (near the Corbani-Răducăneni settlements) over a distance of 380 km can be seen in Romania but also in the Republic of Moldova (Muşinschi, 1999-b).

Two compartments or sub-sectors can be distinguished in this sector (Mușinschi, 2009):

- the **northern sub-sector** where the Prut valley has an epigenetic nature, between Rădăuți-Prut and Stânca-Ştefăneşti, with a narrow corridor and without terraces on the right bank. The basin shows a narrowing in this sector, while between Rădăuţi-Prut and Mitoc it widens slightly till the limestone cliffs at the south of Mitoc. The valley has

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terraces on both sides, who have a climate-lithologic origin in this sector (Muşinschi, 1999-a).

- the **south sub-sector** in the depression plain till the line of the Corbani - Răducăneni-Grozeşti localities (Fig. 4)

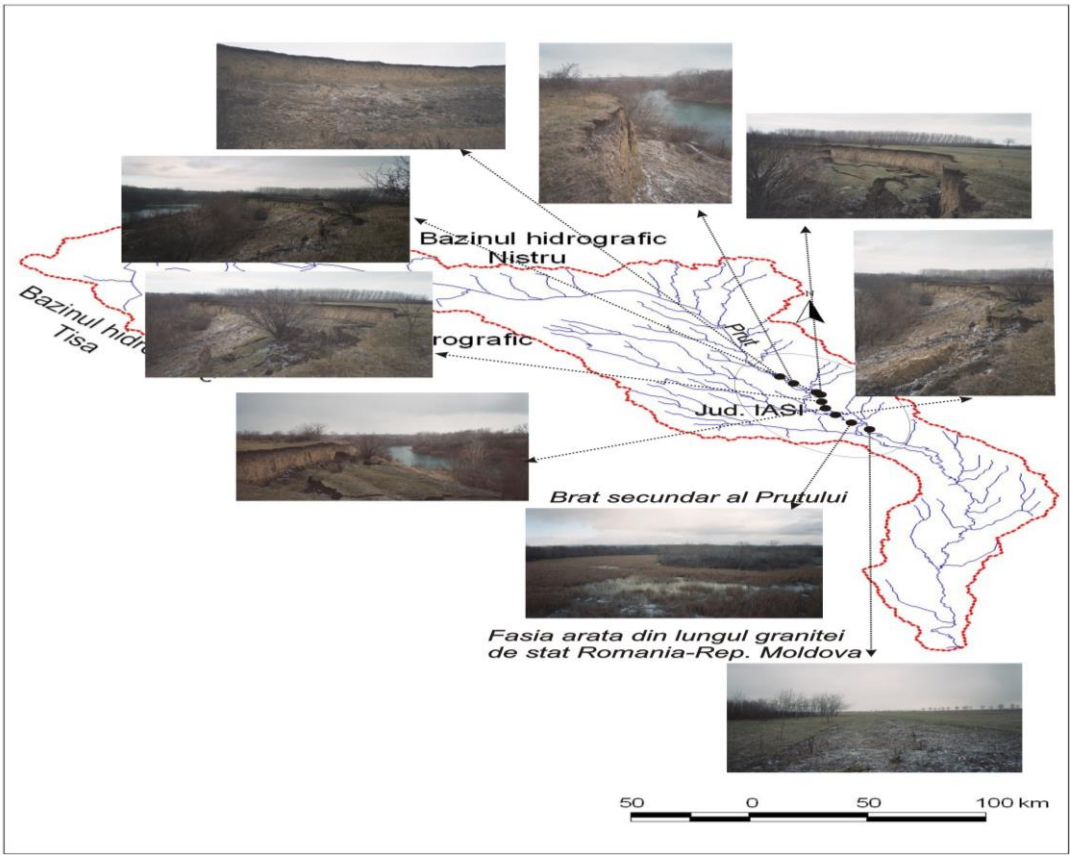

Fig. 4: Geo-morphologic aspects inside the Prut corridor in the Iași county

Source: F. Vartolomei, carried out in November 2010

Apart from the historical monuments and cultural artistic events in the Prut valley, there are two special ethnographic areas. The first ethnographic area is known as '**Ţinutul Botoşanilor'** and includes the villages on both sides of the confluence area between the Prut and Jijia rivers. (Juraşcu Barbu, 2007).

The old houses are simple, with 2 to 4 rooms, small vestibule, many of them built of adobe. Few houses have walls made of straw filled with clay material called rolls, mostly covered with tile. Newer homes are larger and more spacious, made of brick and covered with tin. The pillars of the porch are made of oak wood, adorned with different notches. The male traditional costume is simple, with long shirt and pants, narrow belt, sheepskin waistcoat and the female one with long shirt and 'fota' skirt, geometric stitching in black, blue, yellow, red.

The second ethnographic area is - '**Ţinutul Iaşilor' -** where the houses are characterised by a simple architecture, with porch, dominated by the new ones made of brick, with tin roof. The male costume is simple with long shirt and wider pants, narrow belt, sheepskin waistcoat and the female one with long shirt and 'fota' skirt, combined geometric and floral seams, in different colours - blue, green and red.

Tourism development opportunities in the Prut corridor – the Botoşani and Iaşi counties

The analysis of the existing tourism potential on the 13 settlements (1 town and 12 villages) shows that cultural objectives are dominant, being mainly places of worship. The wooden churches and the wall ones are particularly valuable, the latter being built between the 18th and 19th centuries (Fig. 5).

The Prut river meadow holds a special place, 'flanked' mainly by terraces where there are areas with natural vegetation, forest areas which can become highly charming recreational and leisure places. The many ponds that have a valuable fish fund confer a plus of attractiveness. The accessibility for these localities is good, being given by 29A national road, continued by another national road (24C) which follows the Prut river valley almost in a parallel way, till it flows into the Danube (Fig. 1).

The settlements belonging to the first category own natural and anthropic resources in almost equal proportions and can offer more tourism activities, while the settlements of the last category include only 1-2 tourist interest objectives (Stoica & Petrescu, 1997) (Table 1).

Most forest areas owing a protection function for the Prut river banks and its main tributaries, of the rivers 'flowing' into the Costeşti accumulation lake could develop tourist functions with minimum tourist facilities and equipment. The natural/artificial lakes in the major riverbed of the Prut could have designed locations for fishing and for rowing and motor boats.

Table 1. Hierarchy of settlements in the Prut corridor according to the real tourist offer

Settlements with very high tourist potential	Păltiniş, Rădăuţi-Prut, oraş Ştefăneşti, Trifeşti, Prisăcani
Settlements with high tourist potential	Victoria, Santa Mare
Settlements with medium tourist potential	Mitoc, Ungheni
Settlements with low tourist potential	Româneşti, Ţuţora
Settlements with very low tourist potential	Ripiceni, Manoleasa

Source: documentation and authors' interpretation, 2012

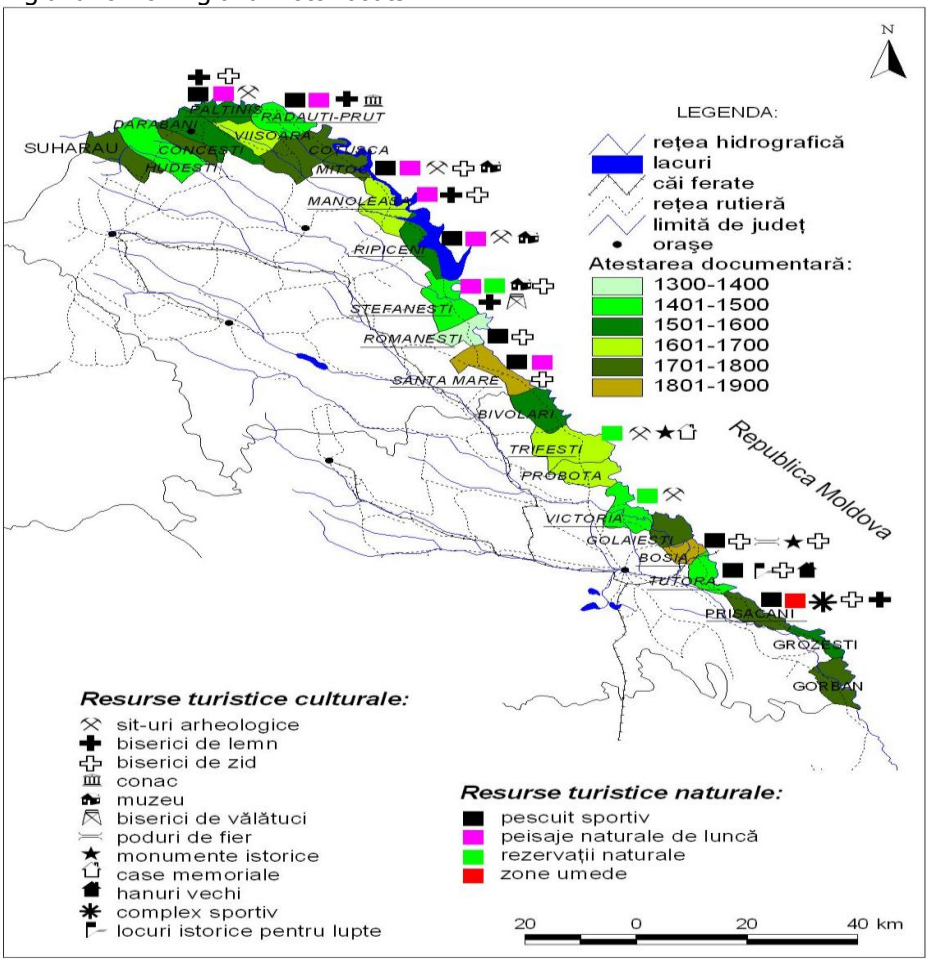

Fig. 5: The tourist resources within the Prut middle corridor

Close to the meadow natural areas of the Prut and Jijia rivers, near the nature reserves, watch towers at heights of 3-5 m for watching birds and nesting sites could be created. Although there is a valuable hunting fund for birds and small mammals, there are no hunting lodges (Vartolomei, 2002).

In rural areas, the calendar with traditional or modern cultural and artistic events is not rich, although in many settlements many cultural centres have been rehabilitated and modernised; the main holidays are those dedicated to the days of the communities or to the patron saints of the churches (Table 2). Memorial houses rarely organize cultural events to celebrate the artistic and literary creation and attract both locals and tourists. The Stânca – Costeşti hydro-energetic complex itself - composed of dam, accumulation lake, technical pavilion - is not used as an industrial tourist objective.

From the assessment that has been carried out, based on the existing data in the Regional Development and Tourism Ministry, the Prut corridor settlements do not have accommodation and food units for tourists; there are only mixed commercial shops and local refreshment bars, but these cannot meet tourists' requirements - only in a very small extent (Table 2). The locations that could attract

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tourists are not marked and there is no presentation and promoting data on the websites of town halls, there is only general information about the history and activities of the settlements.

Table 2: The evaluation of the tourist potential of the localities the Prut corridor

Administrative unit/locality	Geographic position	General geographic data	Natural tourist resources	Cultural tourist resources	Cultural and religious events
The Botoşani county					
Păltiniş	the territory of the locality includes Colinele Başeului and the Prutului meadow; the extreme northern point (N) of Romania - 48 °15'06" lat. N	relief- mostly plains and low hills, temperate continental climate, wetter and colder; blizzard phenomenon and snow, the fog is a phenomenon with a duration of 40-45 days per year and decreases to the south. the Prut river and Lişmăniţa- the major tributary, steppe and forest-steppe vegetation and fauna, meadow areas	the Prut meadow- recreation and sport fishing, meadow natural landscapes	the Horodiştea village: -archaeological site in Horodistea, Neolithic, Bronze Age in "Bâtca", at the NW village limit; "Dealul Crucii" at 2 km SW from the village; -the „Sf Nicolae" wood church (1770); - the „Naşterea Maicii Domnului" (St. Mary) wall church (1862-1863) - Cuzlău village: the "Sfinţii Voievozi" wood church (1783)	15.08 / patron saint of the Ivăncăuţi church 8.9 / patron saint of the Horodistea church 8.5/ pilgrimage to **Sf. Ioan Iacob Hozevitul** memorial house; 14.10/patron saint of Păltiniş church Personalities of the locality: -Saint **Ioan Iacob Hozevitul** -Doxachi Hurmuzachi (1782-1857), village magistrate Partnie Ciopron - bishop -Marcel Chitac - painter
Rădăuţi Prut	in the north-east of the upper Jijia plain, the Prut meadow and terraces	plain relief mostly; temperate continental climate, wetter and colder; snow precipitations - average of 27-30 days in the Dorohoi-Botosani area and less than 20 days in south and southeast, the snow lasts about 60 days-layer of 10-15 cm; steppe and forest-steppe vegetation and fauna	the Prutului meadow- recreation and sport fishing, meadow natural landscapes	▪ Rădăuţi - Prut village: - "St. Nicholas" wooden church (17th century); wall church" St. Maria" (1884) founded by the Pillat family; - poet I. Pillat's mansion (1830), donated to the Moldova and Bucovina Metropolitan church, today "Ion Pillat" cultural centre - the Miorcani village was located on the road from Rădăuti -Prut to Stefănesti, the ancient road called "Calea Hotinului" (Hotinului road)	9 May -patron saint of church in Rediu village; 8 September-patron saint of church, Rădăuţi-Prut village; 26 October-patron saint of church in Miorcani village; Personalities of the locality: -Ion Pillat – poet; Alexandru D.Lungu – writer, actor; Ion Pogorilovschi – philosopher, publicist; Corneliu Dimitriu – painter; Doina Ignat – rower (boating)
Mitoc	in the north-east of the upper Jijia plain, the Prut area hills, meadow and terraces of middle Prut river	mainly plain relief; temperate continental climate, wetter and colder, steppe and forest-steppe vegetation and fauna; the Prut river at the confluence with the Ghireni river; the E. Racoviţă nature reserve located in the Prut meadow	picturesque landscapes in the Prut river meadow and the "Ponoare" lakes area; opportunities for sport fishing on the Prut river, which crosses the village on a distance of 21 km.	Mitoc village -archaeological site in "Pârâul lui Istrate", at 2 km SE of village- A82-Neolithic, upper Palaeolithic, Bronze Age, Dacian-Roman era, XVI-XVII centuries, medieval epoch, "Malul Galben" point – the same - "Sfantul Nicolae" wall church - museum of archaeology and history	patron saints holidays of the churches in the component villages; Personalities of the locality: Acad. Dumitru Graur-philologist Ion Caproşu – historian Florică Murariu – rugby player
Manoleasa	in the north-east of the Upper Jijia plain, the Prut river meadow and terraces	plain relief; temperate continental climate with medium annual temperatures around 8.3C, cold winters, dry summers, low rainfall with uneven regime with northwest prevailing winds Prut river at confluence with Volovat tributary; vegetation-small areas of steppe vegetation and areas of deciduous forest; the intra-zone one is represented by small and hydrophilic areas with halophytic species	Industrial fishing and sports, beautiful natural scenery; species of carp, barbel, bream, carp pike, catfish can be found in the accumulation lake on the Prut river, in ponds and rivers	the Manoleasa village -"Sfantul Nicolae" wood church-1804; the Sadoveni village – „ Sf. Arh. Mihail şi Gavril" wall church - 1845	the patron saints holidays of the churches in the component villages weekly fair, every Saturday
Ripiceni	in the eastern part of Upper Jijia plain in the Prut river meadow on the right bank, along the Stânca Costeşti accumulation lake	the same as for the Manoleasa locality; the ***Stânca Ripiceni*** floral reserve- 1 ha for the conservation of Schiwereckia Podolia flora, brought from Stânca Ştefăneşti floral location. -natural vegetation of steppe and meadow in the Prut meadow where 93 species of birds have been identified. - the Stânca-Costeşti accumulation was declared a bird-fauna importance area by HG nr.2151/2004	commercial and tourist fishing in the Stânca Costeşti accumulation lake on the Prut river ;	▪ Ripiceni village: -the "Ripiceni - Izvor" point located on a Prut terrace, where on the 12 inhabiting levels there is a sequence of Lower Palaeolithic up to later feudalism human communities ▪ - historical and ethnographic village museum profile	patron saints holidays of the churches in the component villages Personalities of the locality: Dumitru Ţiganiuc – poet -Vasile Chinschi- painter -Gheorghe Stanciu- painter -Constantin Prut- writer

Ştefăneşti town	in the north-east of the Upper Jijia plain, in the Prut river meadow and terraces	near the confluence of the Başeu and Prut rivers on the banks of the Stânca-Costeşti accumulation lake; climate-temperate continental influence, hot summers and cold winters; annually average of 70-75 days of summer (with temp. of or above 25 °C) and 15-18 tropical days (with temp. of or above 30°); about 43 days of winter (max. temp. equal to or below 0°C); steppe and forest-steppe vegetation and fauna, partly replaced by crops and animal breeding; dendrology park	**Stânca Costești** hydro-technical complex, **Stânca village,** Ştefăneşti village; the dam at **Stânca Costești** on the Prut river, lying within two countries forms on a 59km² surface the largest accumulation lake in Romania; the geological and floral "**Stânca Costești"** reserve-important for bird-fauna, most of the birds in the area (44 species) are migratory (47.3%), 31 species are sedentary (33%) and the remaining 18 species are passage ones (19.7%); in 8 cases, winter populations of northern Europe are added to the sedentary species in the reference area; arboretum	Ştefăneşti town - folk pottery center; "St. Luchian" memorial museum; "Cuv. Parascheva" wall church, XV century; XIX-XXth centuries old houses - **St. Luchian** painter's bust sculpture by sculptor **O. Han**; - Bădăuţi village - wooden church, 1834; - Bobuleşti village – rolls church, „Sf. Voievozi" 1777	patron saints holidays of the churches in the component villages; personalities of the locality: -Ştefan Luchian – painter
Românești	in the north-east of the Upper Jijia plain, in the Prut river meadow and terraces	temperate continental climate, hot summer, very cold winters, details as for Ştefăneşti; steppe and forest-steppe vegetation and fauna;	the Prutului meadow and valley, recreation and sport fishing place	the Dămideni village - church wall, XIX century Românești village - "Sf. Andrei" church wall, 1852	patron saint holiday in the Românești village
Şanta Mare	in the north-east of the Jijiei Inferioare and Bahluiului plain, in the meadow and terraces of the Prut river right bank	temperate - continental climate, annual average temperatures 8-9°C. Average annual rainfall between 400 and 450 mm. The dominant winds are from the northwest, with weights of 35-40%, then the south-east - 18 to 24%, steppe and forest steppe vegetation, fauna	the Prut meadow and valley, place of recreation and sport fishing; Ciornohalu forest, a sample of a relict steppe ecosystem made of many xerophytes elements to the northern part of the area: **Cotinus coggygria - scumpia** - Pontic-submediteranean item; many continental and southern elements specific to steppe areas		Day of the Şanta Mare locality – 8 September St. Maria patron saint Personalities of the locality: Mihai Mereuţă – actor
The Iaşi county					
Ungheni	the Mânzăteşti and Coada Stâncii villages lie in low hilly area and the other two villages- in plain area in the Jijia and Prut valleys	temperate-continental climate, hot summer, very cold winters, stronger continental features; steppe and forest-steppe vegetation and fauna;	the Prutului meadow and valley – recreation and sport fishing place	the Bosia village: -"Sf. Nicolae" wall church 1858; the Ungheni village: "Sf. Ilie" wall church (1912-1923); - the Eiffel bridge - railway bridge over Prut, between Ungheni town - Moldova Republic and Ungheni locality - Romania. Coada Stâncii village-"Sf. Dumitru" wall church (1815).	the day of the Ungheni locality – 8th November
Victoria	in the north-east of the Upper Jijia plain, in the Prut river meadow and terraces and Bahluiului hills, near the Jijia inferior course	excessive temperate continental climate, annual average temperature of 8/9 ° C, precipitations - 600 mm; winds from the northwest and east, cold winters, hot summers; steppe and forest-steppe vegetation and fauna	the protected areas are: Teiva Vişina and the Medeleni forest	the Victoria village: - archaeological site, Iron Age settlement; - heroes' monument; Luceni village - "Sfântul Nicolae" wall church, 1825 Sculeni village - "Sfântul Nicolae" wall church, 1825	Day of the locality Holidays for patron saints of the churches in the locality component villages
Trifeşti	on the Prut Jijia inter-river area near the terraces of Cerchejoaia Frasin valleys; here lies	excessive temperate continental climate, annual average temperature 9.6°C, rainfall - 595.52 mm; winds from the northwest and east, very cold winters, hot	- along the Prut river there is a sandy beach ideal for leisure, recreation and swimming. - the **hornbeam**	the Trifeşti village: "Dl Curţii" archaeological site, Neolithic, upper Palaeolithic, pre-medieval and medieval age (IV-XVII centuries), historical monument;	

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	'**Drumul Furiilor**', to the west of the Roşcani and Păuleni villages	summers; Prut river, Frasin, Roşcani, Păuleni, Cerchejoaia, Culicea, Canoasa rivulets, Rădeni, Căueşti, Roşcani (Iazul Curţii) and Comoara ponds;the Baraj accumulation lake; forest-steppe vegetation and fauna, in the Turia and Roşca hills can be found forest fund areas	**grove** reserve (Carpinus orientalis); also wayfaring tree, wig tree and less flowering ash	the Lunca Prutului village: - the Negruzzi family whole courtyard and houses 1807 - 1810, historical monument; - "Sf. Imp. Constantin şi Elena" wall church of 1839, sword bearer Costache Negruzzi-founder, historical monument; the Hermeziu village: - C.Negruzzi memorial house-the beginning of XIXth century	
Ţuţora	in the meadow and terraces of the Prut river and on the left part of the Inferior Jijia river	low plain and meadow relief; excessive temperate continental climate average annual temperature of 9.6°C, precipitations of 595.52 mm, winds blow from the northwest and east sector, very cold winters and warm summers	sport fishing on the Prut and Jijia rivers	the Ţuţora village, historical place- 19 September 1620 the fight between the Turkish-Tatar and Polish-Moldavian armies; the Chipereşti village: - "St. Nicolae" wall church, 18th century; - inn building from 1800	8 September – the Ţuţora village patron saint day of the locality; 8 November-patron saint of the Oprişeni church 6 December – the Chipereşti church patron saint
Prisăcani	in the meadow and terraces of the Prut river and on the left part of the Inferior Jijia river	relief of terraces and plateaus with low angle slopes; natural water basins led to the creation of ponds and pools for fishing; crossed by two rivers, Jijia(west) and Prut (east); steppe and forest-steppe vegetation and fauna	"La Mandra" park Recreational park - airport light aircraft; Prut, Jijia, lakes - fishing, hunting; Ciobârciu - wetland.	- Prisăcani village: - Sf. Voievozi church (1797) founder- bishop V. Costache; the Măcăreşti village: - Sf. Ioan Botezătorul wall church, (1860-1863); Moreni village: - "Sf. Nicolae" wooden church (1839-1840), historical monument; the Prisacani arts and crafts school; the Sports complex, a modern stadium, natural grass and a 500 seats stand	5-8 November the days of the Prisăcani village; days with sport events organised by the Prutul Prisăcani Sport Association, Pilierul Prisăcani sport club - especially rugby

Sources: Data and information from the public administrations for the 2009-2012 period (http://www.prefecturabotosani.ro/comune/localitati/paltinis.htm; http://www.carpati.org/articol/horodistea; http://www.primariamitoc.ro/nume.php; http://primariamanoleasa.ro/index; http://www.comunaromanesti.ro; http://www.primariatrifestiiasi.ro)

Conclusion

The settlements lying in the Prut river corridor, on its middle course, have a varied tourism potential which is not valued in economic terms. Its position is unequal, there are localities that have natural and cultural resources and have the greatest opportunities for tourism development at local and regional level. Most settlements are rural and some have their own characteristics, given by:

- low economic development level and the no diversification of the activities which process local raw materials;
- agriculture predominates, especially cereals and technical plants cultures, vegetables cultivation and animal raising, with subsistence character;
- the existence of some difficult social situations, with many poor families, due to the lack of fields and finances, high level of poverty;
- at the level of the settlements, the cultural, artistic and sport activities are reduced to the local library and the football field;
- there is a persistence of floods problems (like in 1969,1970, 1975, 1995) which led to the identification of some areas with water-logging and flooding problems: the Prutului meadow between Oroftiana and Romăneşti (525 ha-agricultural land), the Başeului meadow downstream Săveni (4200 ha), the Jijiei meadow downstream Dăngeni (4000 ha, 212 houses, 17 km of roads), the Sitnei meadow downstream Roşiori – Stăuceni (530 ha agricultural fields, 5 km of roads) (data from the Environment report for the carrying out of the territorial planning programme of the Botoşani county, 2009);
- to prevent and fight this natural risk, works have been carried out in order to regularize water courses (on Başeu, Sitna, Miletin rivers, as well as for some smaller tributaries) for a length of 228.5 km, dams (for Siret, Prut, Jijia rivers), accumulations (on Başeu, Jijia Sitna, Miletin, Prut);
- the rain showers during the warm season affect negatively the economic and social activity, being the element which leads to floods, landslides, depth erosion etc. On the other hand, the lack of rain for 10 -15 days leads to drought.

These aspects have a partially negative influence on tourist activities, but have a temporary character and in the long term do not create difficulties for the development of local tourism. The tourism activities in the localities of the Prut corridor may focus on rural, fishing and hunting, recreation and leisure tourism by creating some beach areas. There is also the possibility of creating a tourism cycling route and an ethnographic one.

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