

LONG-STANDING PROBLEMS AND DEVELOPMENT PATHS OF THE SAND RIDGE REGION

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Climate change adaptation has become an urgent global task, but some regions face disproportionate challenges in mitigating its impacts. One such area is the Sand Ridge Region on the Duna-Tisza Interfluvium, which is an extremely vulnerable area. These semi-arid zones have been grappling with water shortages for decades, which, in turn, has led to a range of complex socio-economic problems. For these reasons, the region requires high attention, well-considered spatial planning, and innovative rural development strategies. Our research indicates that in recent decades, no substantive responses have been provided to address the challenges facing the region. Recognizing these shortcomings, our work aims to identify the factors that have hindered or delayed the resolution of these issues. Insights drawn from our interviews with experts (n=14) and a survey of affected municipalities (n=56) reveal that even European Union funds have failed to resolve the region's long-standing conflicts. Deficiencies in territorial planning have contributed to a reduction in local autonomy and an increasing polarization between settlements. Thus, we propose a paradigm shift in spatial development. We highlight that models which consider territorial inequalities and are adapted to the region must be developed. In our opinion, bioregional planning can play a significant role in all of this, introducing novel ideas and practices regarding environmental and agricultural sustainability.

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