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AFFORESTATION IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

in conjunction with the 24th session of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on
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Prototype Carbon Fund: Afforestation of Degraded Agricultural Land in Romania

Basic paper by Mr. Ioan Abrudan, Mr. Viorel Blujdea, Mrs. Sandra Brown, Mr. Vasiliy Kostyushin,
Mr. Ciprian Pahontu, Mr. Henry Phillips and Mrs. Malina Voicu

Summary

The paper concerns the afforestation of degraded agricultural lands in the south-west and south-east of the Romanian Plain and the ecological reconstruction of part of the Lower Danube floodplain (Braila and Olt Counties) through the planting of native species. The degraded lands have been worked intensively for agriculture since the early 1970s, coinciding with the extension of the drainage of the River Danube. Initially these lands produced a range of crops including cereals, vegetables, fruits and grapes. Through excessive working and lack of investment in irrigation infrastructure and maintenance, the lands have become degraded and subject to erosion. They are now uneconomic for crop production and are either used mainly for pasture or abandoned. Afforestation represents an alternative land use.

The area to be afforested (6,728 ha) over a 4-year period forms the first afforestation project under the World Bank Prototype Carbon Fund (PCF) mechanism. The PCF will purchase the net carbon sequestered by the newly established plantations. During the baseline study conducted in 2002, the method for estimating and predicting future carbon sequestered by the established plantations was developed, together with the methodology for estimating carbon stocks (above and below ground) under

current land use options. An economic analysis shows that afforestation is the preferred future land use. However, without the sale of carbon to the PCF, the afforestation is not economically viable and would not be undertaken by the National Forest Administration (NFA). Risks due to leakage are identified together with mitigation measures. The baseline study sets out the plan for measuring and monitoring carbon sequestration, and also the monitoring of social and biodiversity impacts throughout the project's life.
