

SETTLEMENT EVOLUTION IN THE DANUBE BASIN

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The long-term process of urban changes on the banks of the Danube river - with tributaries of different orders, according to the Horton-Rzhanitsin system - and their environmental implications have been studied. The analysis reveals a tendency of populations to move towards major rivers and especially towards the Danube. This effect poses different stresses on the environment in upstream and downstream regions.

Pictures taken by Russian satellites, since the 1970's, show an expansion in urban development, shrinkage of river wetlands, and the deformation of the Danube delta. It is, therefore, possible to foresee possible trends in population distribution, for the coming 20-25 years, and draw some conclusions about the environmental status of the Danube basin in the future.

Professor **Alexander Reteyum** graduated from the Faculty of Geography at Moscow State University. He was a Research Fellow and later Senior Researcher at the Institute of Geography, and has been Advisor to the Minister for Environmental Protection. He is currently Chief Scientist on the Commission for Productive Forces and Natural Resources of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and Professor of Geophysics at Moscow State University. His research experience includes environmental impact assessment of energy, water and mineral resources, general theory of geosystems, regional development, environmental economics and law, sustainable development analysis and energy problem studies. Author of numerous publications, he has field experience in the Volga River Basin, the Russian North Caspian Region, Sea of Azov Region, West Siberia and Lake Baikal Region. Professor Reteyum is Member of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Geography at Moscow State University, and has received the "Winner of the All-Russian Competition on the Best Concept for the Transition of Russia to Sustainable Development" Award, as well as the Semenov Gold Medal of the Russian Geographical Society.