

# Exploring Agricultural Heritage Landscapes in the Balkans: Insights from the Danube Delta and the Valley of Roses

Denisa-Ştefania Luca 

University of Oxford, Department of Archaeology, 1 South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3TG, United Kingdom;  
denisa-stefania.luca@education.ox.ac.uk

Received: 12 November 2024; Revised: 19 December 2024; Accepted: 21 December 2024;  
Published online: 24 December 2024

**ABSTRACT:** Archaeology has the potential to address environmental challenges in the Anthropocene by offering valuable lessons from historical experiences. However, its application in mitigating the climate crisis and enhancing community resilience still needs to be explored. This analysis positions archaeology as a novel perspective for characterising and managing Agricultural Heritage Landscapes (AHLs)—traditional farming systems with exceptional cultural and environmental value shaped by their unique landscapes. In the Balkans, rich yet understudied landscapes and vulnerable communities practising traditional farming provide intriguing study cases. The present article focuses on the fishing traditions in Romania’s Danube Delta (focusing on Letea village, Mila 23 and Crisan) and rose oil production in Bulgaria’s Valley of Roses (mainly Kazanlak). Using the AHL methodology, these practices are examined, particularly emphasising their archaeological dimensions and integration within a food systems framework. This approach uncovers innovative management strategies and advocates for revising the AHL methodology to incorporate archaeological and food systems perspectives. The urgency of protecting AHLs in the Balkans is underscored, highlighting the essential role of archaeology in proposing solutions such as diversifying land use, fostering community education, and understanding the evolution of cultural traditions. Additionally, the discussion emphasises the need for robust policies and more quantitative analysis to safeguard cultural heritage and landscapes. By drawing on its rich insights into the past, archaeology can inform policies that help AHLs maintain their identity while adapting to the challenges posed by the climate crisis.

**KEYWORDS:** agricultural heritage, heritage landscapes, environmental archaeology, landscape management, sustainable heritage.

**TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:** Luca, Ş.D. (2024). Exploring Agricultural Heritage Landscapes in the Balkans: Insights from the Danube Delta and the Valley of Roses. *Central European Journal of Geography and Sustainable Development*, 6(2), 50–75. <https://doi.org/10.47246/CEJGSD.2024.6.2.4>

<https://doi.org/10.47246/CEJGSD.2024.6.2.4>

| [Full text](#) |