The Liberty Island Project

WORKSHOP ON TRANSBOUNDARY WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN WESTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE
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From the river to the tap
So the healthier the river the cheaper to make the water drinkable.
A healthy river has...

- main branch
- side arms
- wide floodplain
- meanders
- natural ecosystem in the river and in the floodplain
Natural factors

- natural processes keep balance
- diversity keeps balance

They have economic use:
- natural filtering layers (gravel, sand) clean water
- natural production always give certain output – we shall learn again how much we can take without causing harm
Side-arms...

- are vital for spawning for fish
- have a diverse ecosystem differing from the main branch
- new ones are hardly formed in the Hungarian section of the Danube, due to various, mostly transboundary reasons
- threatened by silting up due to deepened main branch
- threatened by invasive species
Liberty Island
Liberty Island

- Closed side-arm by a rockfill dam
- Silted riverbed
- Degraded ecosystem, expensive drinking water
Why?

- degraded ecosystem is not able to renew
- colmated sediment closed the way of groundwater flow, no filtration through gravel layer → lower quality water which is more difficult to access
- more expensive water cleaning with more stress on the environment
- other adverse effects on nature:
  - fish spawning sites disappear
  - invasive species spread
  - improper forest mgmt
The solution

• re-vitalising the side-arm
• removing colmated sediment to allow natural filtration to work again
• providing more active groundwater flow towards the wells by re-vitalising water flow in the side-arm

How to achieve this?
• WWF gathered with partners: local municipality, state (NP, water directorate) and corporate partners (water supply company, others)
• successfully submitted a proposal to the European Commission’s LIFE+ fund
• with the unique alliance the revitalisation was able to start in 2009
Purchase of the land
Removing the sediment
Opening the rockfill-dam
Forest management
Thank you for your attention!

http://libertyisland.hu/