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The importance of detailed hydrobiological research of rivers for the detection and conservation of originally preserved habitats

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Abstract

Due to multiple modern stressors, there are rapid changes in inland water habitats and irreversible biodiversity loss. Hence, in order to detect parts of rivers or basins with originally preserved habitat and biodiversity, detailed hydrobiological research of inland waters (simultaneous research of basic abiotic parameters and hydrobiocenosis) are necessary. The aim is to detect habitats' biological and ecological values, which are important for the permanent preservation of genetic and species diversity and the stability and functionality of the entire ecosystem or catchment area. In terms of ecology and conservation, these habitats have the same importance for inland waters and catchment areas as the hot-spot areas for preserving global biodiversity. The importance of these areas in this work is presented on the example of the Veliki Rzav River (Serbia). In order to support the program of declaring the river as a protected area, the research was conducted in 2021. In the Veliki Rzav River, many biological values such as preserved and high biodiversity of algae, macroinvertebrates, and fish were detected. For the first time in Serbia, new species of algae were detected, along with the significant presence of sensitive taxa in the macroinvertebrate community and a stable brown trout population with the detection of the new haplotype.

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