




Growing  
ideas  
through  
networks

## Riparian zones - Riparian vegetation: Concepts and definitions

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 **cost**  
EUROPEAN COOPERATION  
IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY


 Funded by the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme  
of the European Union




## Introduction

- To share knowledge => mutual understanding

Frog ?



Horse ?

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## Introduction : diversity of words

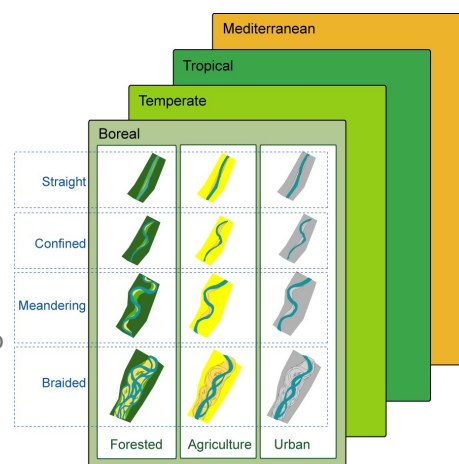
- names given to the vegetation that colonize river margins are numerous
  - “riparian vegetation”, “floodplain forests”, “alluvial swamp forests”, “gallery forests”, etc. in English= Fischer et al 2001 : 36 terms
- Same object but different name ; same name different object
- This diversity of terms
  - generate some misunderstanding and some tensions between actors
  - related to the variability of geographical contexts, studied topics, goals, etc.

## Content of the report

### A. Definition

- Sources of similarity (bidirectional fluxes, complex of vegetation types, etc.)
- Sources of variability (bioclimate, morphological pattern, landuses, but also disciplin, studied topic)

### B. Delineation



## Key messages

1. Recognize riparian zones as co-constructed socio-ecological systems driven by natural AND human processes that follow complex trajectories over time
2. Consider riparian vegetation as an open system (i) related to the channel, the surrounding area, the upstream watershed, the atmosphere and the substrate and (ii) connected to these components through bidirectional fluxes
3. Promote the use of a definition/delineation that integrates and maximizes all functions within the socio-ecological system
4. Develop examples and tools to promote good practices in the application of riparian zone delineation
5. Clarify knowledge that is site-specific and knowledge that is transferable (e.g. minimum riparian zone width necessary for a given function, effectiveness of given topographic index in delineating the riparian zone)



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Tracing the scientific trajectory of riparian vegetation studies: Main topics, approaches and needs in a globally changing world

Paper in Science of the Total Environment

**RIPARIAN ZONE / RIPARIAN VEGETATION  
DEFINITION: PRINCIPLES AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report : Online

<https://converges.eu/resources/riparian-zone-riparian-vegetation-definition-principles-and-recommendations/>



Science of The Total Environment  
Volume 653, 25 February 2019, Pages 1168-1185



Review

Tracing the scientific trajectory of riparian vegetation studies: Main topics, approaches and needs in a globally changing world

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2018.10.383>

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