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SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS

University of Novi Sad | Faculty of Sciences
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, TOURISM AND HOTEL MANAGEMENT

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

# GEOSPATIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DYNAMICS: Between Fundamental and Applied Scientific Research

ABSTRACT BOOK





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### Geospatial and Environmental Dynamics: Between Fundamental and Applied Scientific Research

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## Integration of SWAT Modelling and Multi-Criteria Decision-Making Analysis for Spatial Valuation in Hydropower Development

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This study integrates SWAT modelling with Multi-Criteria Decision-Making (MCDM) analysis to thoroughly assess and evaluate the spatial suitability for small hydropower development. The SWAT model was employed to perform a comprehensive hydrological analysis of the study area, which included detailed assessments of water balance, erosion processes, sediment transport, and the complex interplay of these factors under varying climatic conditions. Furthermore, the analysis examined the potential impacts of climate change on the catchment's hydropower capacity, providing a robust framework for understanding future variability in water resources and ensuring that hydropower projects can remain viable in the long term. The SWAT model's outputs were validated meticulously by comparing simulated results with historical hydrological data and relevant empirical studies. This rigorous validation confirmed the model's accuracy and reinforced its applicability in hydropower planning, particularly in regions with similar hydrological and environmental conditions. The robust nature of the SWAT model enables a precise characterisation of the hydrological dynamics within the catchment, ensuring that the derived data accurately reflects the physical realities of the region, which, in turn, enhances the reliability of subsequent spatial analyses. The outputs from the SWAT analysis were subsequently utilised as critical inputs for the MCDM analysis. This analysis integrated various spatial and environmental factors, including terrain slope, soil type, land cover, proximity to existing infrastructure, and potential environmental impacts. Integrating these diverse datasets allowed for the development of comprehensive grid maps that delineate areas within the catchment most suitable for small hydropower development. These maps identify optimal locations and balance ecological sensitivity with socio-economic considerations, ensuring that development is both sustainable and beneficial to local communities. The findings from this integrated approach provide valuable insights for regional planners and policymakers, offering a scientifically grounded basis for the strategic development of small hydropower projects. This research significantly contributes to advancing spatial planning methodologies in Serbia, highlighting the importance of integrating advanced hydrological modelling with sophisticated decision-support tools in contemporary environmental management and infrastructure development.

Keywords: SWAT modelling; Multi-Criteria Decision-Making analysis; Hy drological assessment; Spatial valuation; Small hydropower plants

