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WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR IRRIGATION WATER: A CASE STUDY IN CHALKIDIKI, GREECE

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ABSTRACT

The efficiency of systems of water allocation to various uses under conditions of resource shortage is today a common problem in many countries, particularly in those with intensive agricultural activities. In such cases the adoption of the concept of water as an economic good is a prerequisite, followed by the need to estimate the economic value of irrigation water, before coming up to practical decisions regarding water pricing reforms. In this paper a study pertaining to the economic valuation of agricultural water is presented. The contingent valuation method was used to measure farmers' willingness to pay for irrigation water in a Greek rural area. Results of the study indicate that farmers' attitudes towards paying for an overall improvement in agricultural water services depend not only on their demographic and social characteristics but also upon their personal experience in and perception of the impacts of the water services system under conditions of declining water resources availability.