

1. Hello, in this video we explain to you how the mud gets into the floodplain forest.

On its journey from the source to the estuary, the Rhine stream naturally transports not only water, but also the finest suspended matter and sediments that have dissolved from the bank areas. The process is also called erosion. On some days, the fine particles can be seen as cloudiness in the water. With the water current, the particles move quickly. But what happens if the water level suddenly rises?

2. During floods, so much water enters the Rhine in a short space of time that it can no longer transport the water quickly enough from its riverbed. The water rises and rises and eventually overflows its banks. Now the water also flows into the adjacent floodplain forest and with the water the sediments from the river also reach the floodplain forest. The powerful current of the flood stirs up further sediments and carries them into the flooded floodplain forest. Now the floodwaters are very cloudy and often brown in color.

3. While in places where no plants grow, the flood can flow with great speed and takes the fine sediment particles in the water with it, the water flow slows down between the dense roots, branches and trunks of the riparian forest plants. Here, the sediments, along with the water, slow down their movement.

4. In the slowed water flow, the sediments sink to the ground due to their own weight. This is called sedimentation.

5. While the flood water slowly drains away, some of the sediment deposited in the floodplain remains as new floodplain mud. The fertile mud is valuable fertilizer for many plants.