



July
2021

Field report



Main activities summary

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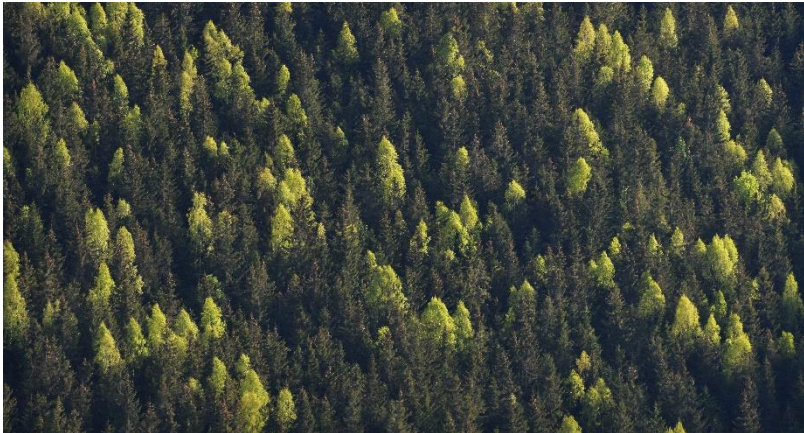


01

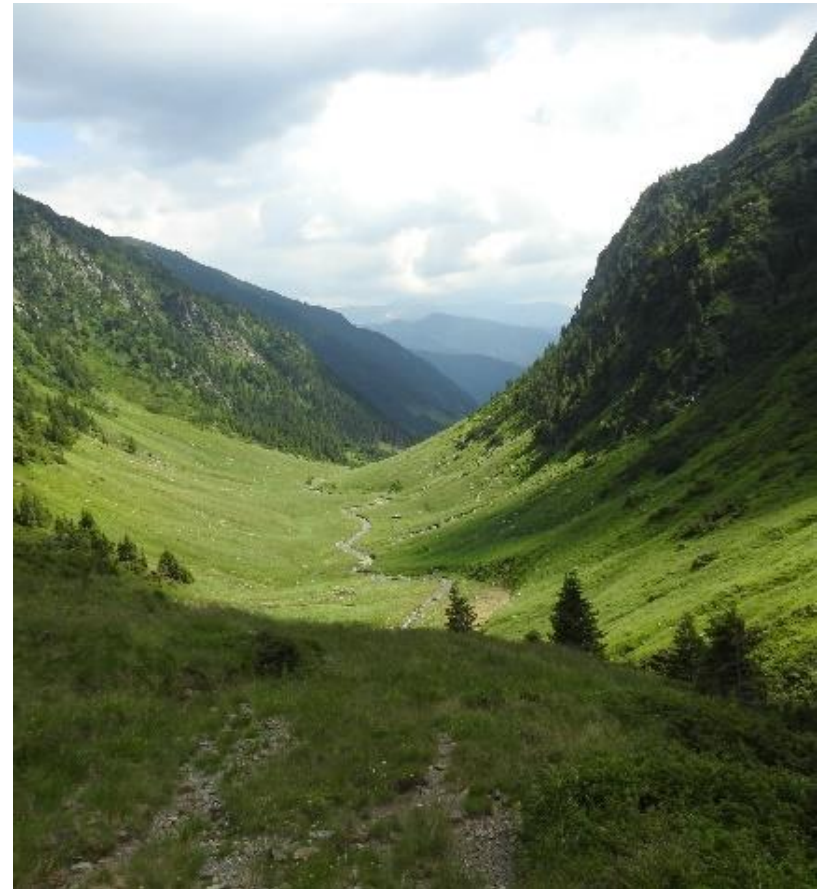
Forest conservation and management



- We were able to purchase an additional 36 ha of forests in the Nucșoara commune.
- In total, we have obtained 25,798 ha of forests and grasslands, safeguarded for future generations.



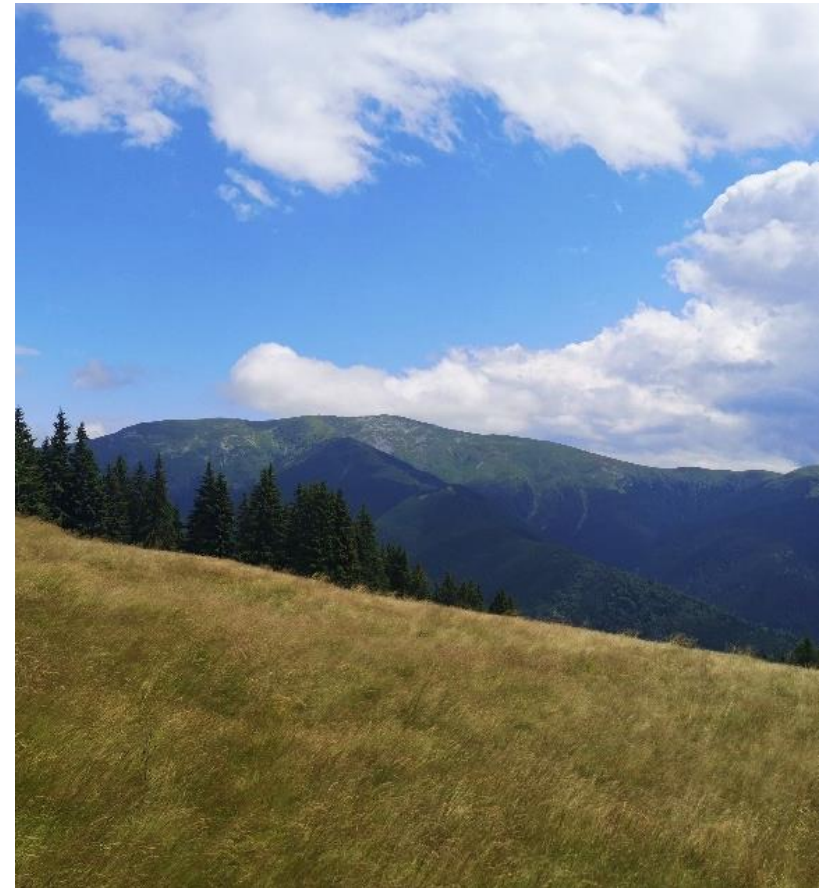
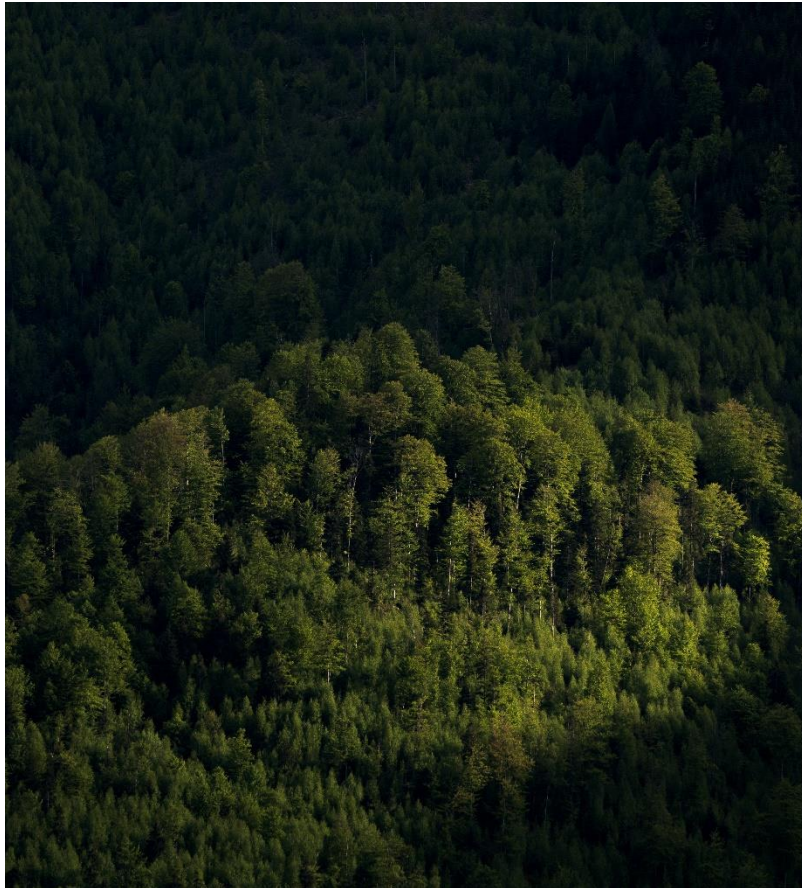
Images from the project area



- In order to monitor the development of bark beetles, our team of foresters installed special pheromone traps in several hotspots around spruce monocultures.



Images from the project area







02

Ecological restoration



- Clear-cuts usually come with soil degradation and erosion, especially along the tractor tracks. With every heavy rainfall, the ditches grow deeper and the topsoil is washed away.
- To halt erosion, we fill the ditches with wooden debris and soil, before we plant saplings, to fix it.
- In July we restored another 2,200 m of eroded tractor tracks.



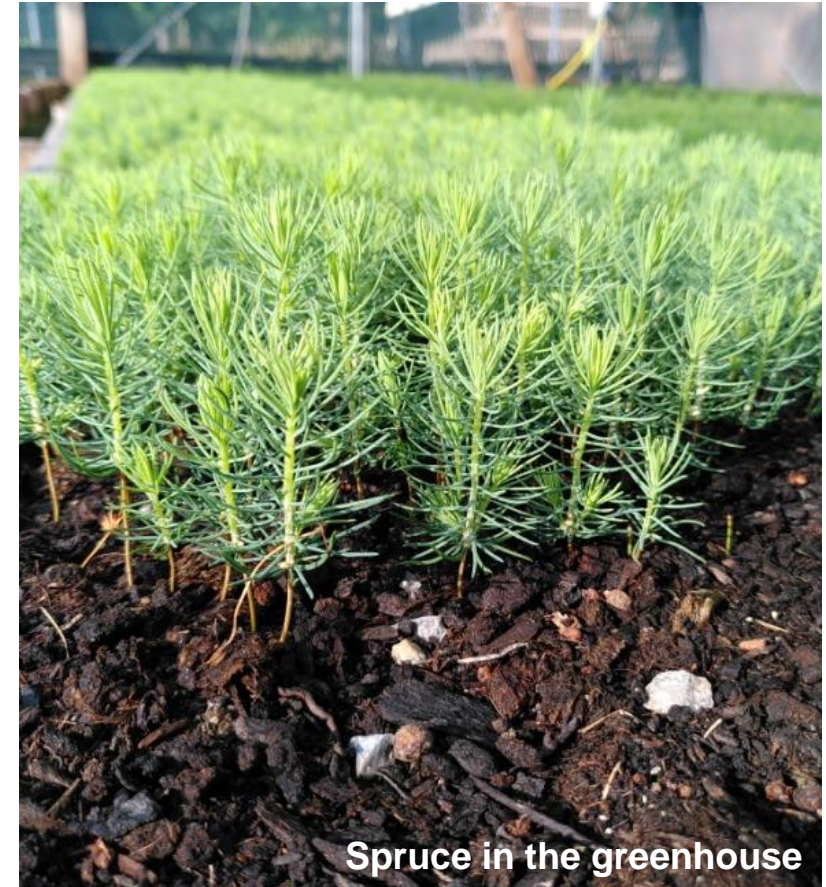
- This month, we monitored the success of our spruce monoculture conversion measures from the previous years.
- We are very pleased to see that beech and other deciduous tree species are thriving in the pockets of light created, slowly transforming these forests into more natural systems.



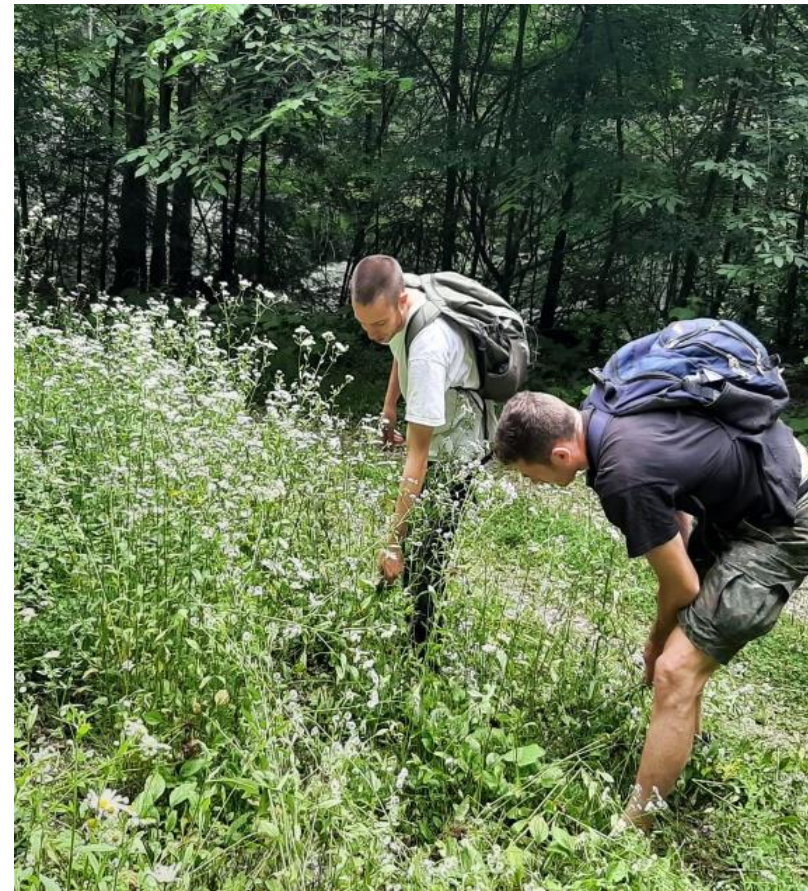
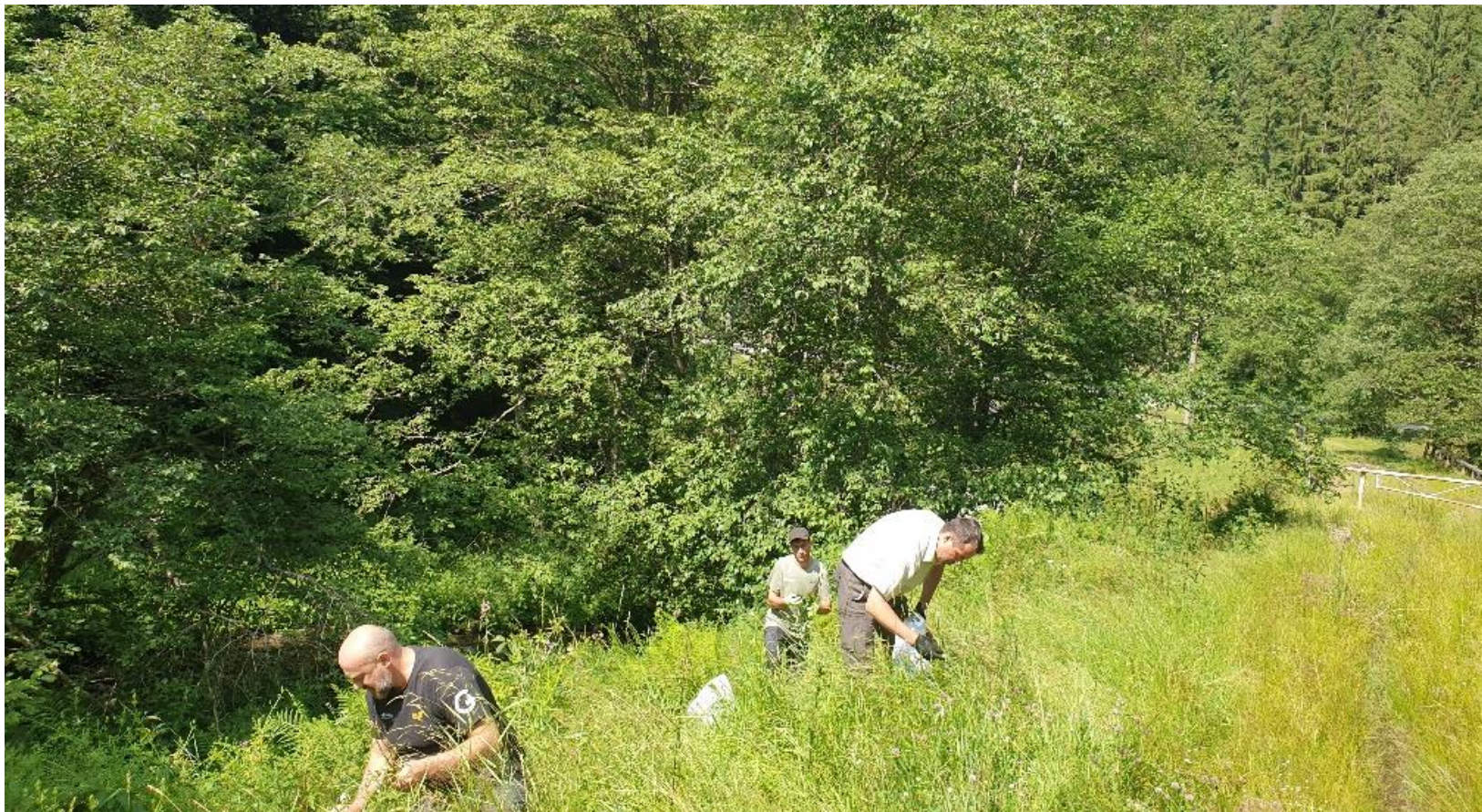
- Summer is a busy time in our tree nurseries: gates have to be fixed, fences need to be built, lots of weeding has to be done.
- A torrential storm reshaped the river, and fences destroyed by the floods needed to be repaired.
- You can join our ecological restoration efforts [here](#).



Growing for the future



- We continued to remove invasive alien species on Tămaşului Valley, Portăreasa Valley and Doamnei Valley, along 5,5 km.



03

Wildlife conservation



Wildlife reintroduction:

- Another two herds of European bison have been released into the wild!
- 28 individuals are now roaming free in the eastern Făgăraș Mountains.
- We are pleased with the current status, but there is a lot of work to do before mid 2024, when we plan on reaching at least 75 individuals at three separate reintroduction points.



- Aqua Crisius Association has successfully reintroduced another 1,500 specimens of grayling (*Thymallus thymallus*), each 11-14 cm long, in the southeast of the Făgăraș Mountains. Grayling is a popular food fish in Romania, but its fishing has been prohibited for over 10 years, due to the major risk of its extinction.
- In the last few months, Aqua Crisius also repopulated the streams with native trout: 3,500 juvenile fish and 23,000 embryonated eggs were released.
- In a recent assessment, specialists confirmed that the fish have adapted well, reflected by a good growth rate.



- Our golden eagle monitoring continues and we start to get a better idea of their whereabouts.
- If the eagles don't appear, we also make do with other birds of prey such as buzzards (*Buteo buteo*) and sparrow hawks (*Accipiter nisus*).



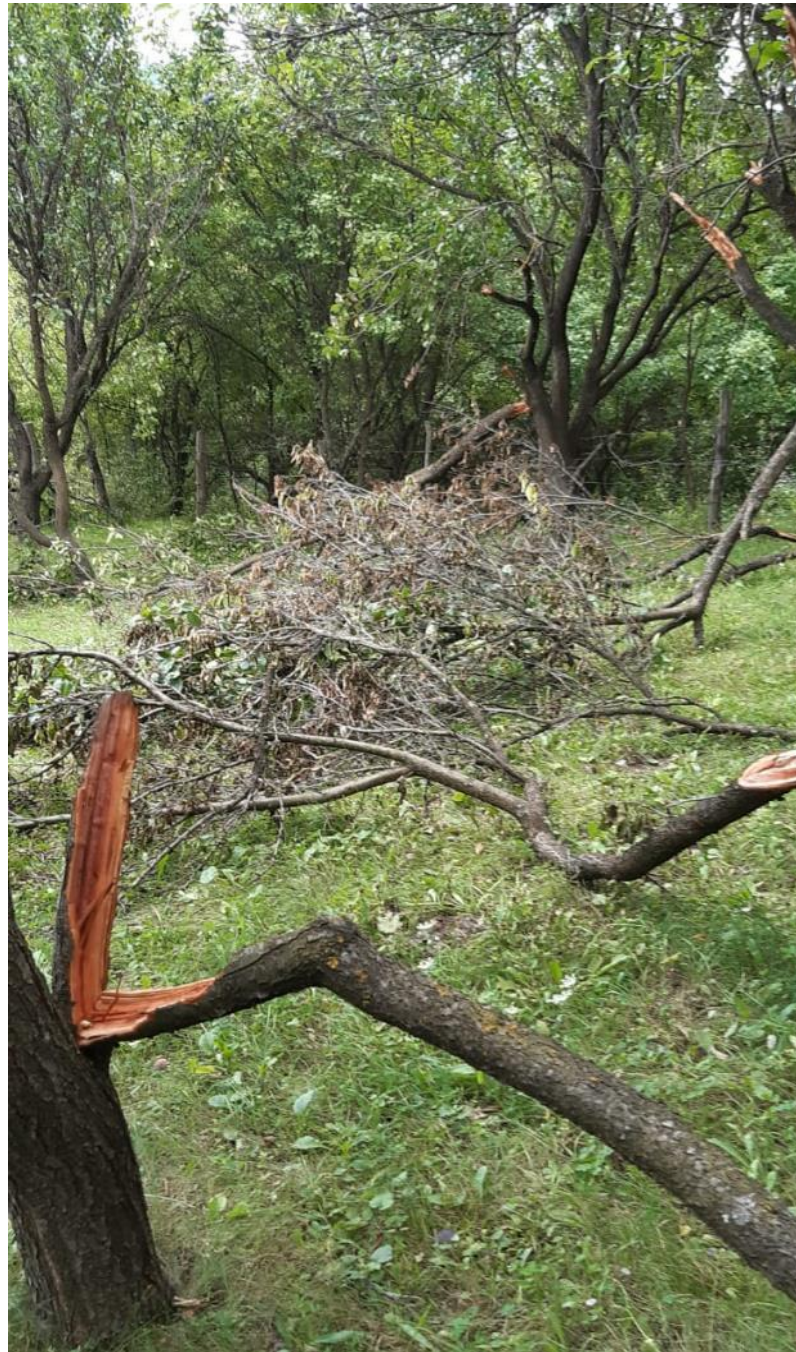
Wildlife monitoring:

- This summer we collected bear scats and hairs for genetic analysis specifically around artificial feeding sites to learn more about their potential impact. So far we have collected 248 samples that are ready to be shipped to the lab.



Wildlife conflicts:

- Bears continue to keep us on our toes: our rapid intervention teams struggle with some very persistent bears and try to respond to emergency calls together with the Gendarmerie and the Inspectorate for Urgent Situations
- As part of a new approach, we have rented some 30 ha of meadows in the vicinity of one of the most affected areas. Managing these meadows for wildlife will hopefully reduce the number of bears and wild boar descending into the villages. The first indications are promising.







04

Conservation Enterprise
Programme

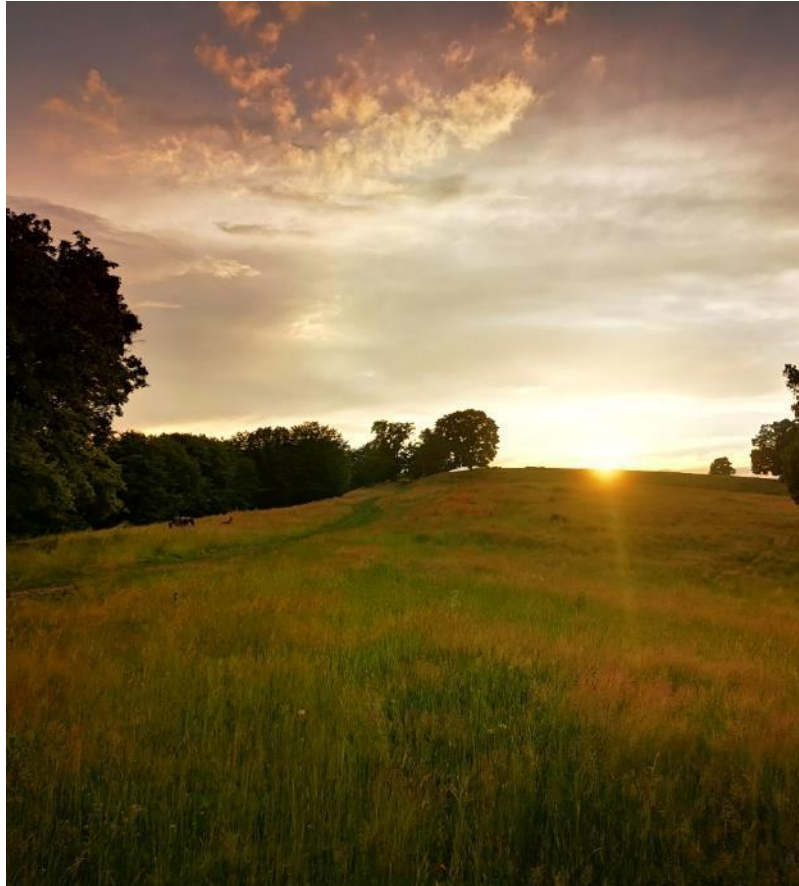


- The Food Hub continues to collect and distribute food from local farmers to three cities.
- We have extended the producers' list and we grow this business for the benefit of small-scale producers surrounding the Făgăraș Mountains.
- We are happy that more kitchens in the Argeș county received authorisation as a Local Gastronomic Point. More will follow and visitors can enjoy a modest, but tasty menu in the villages they visit.

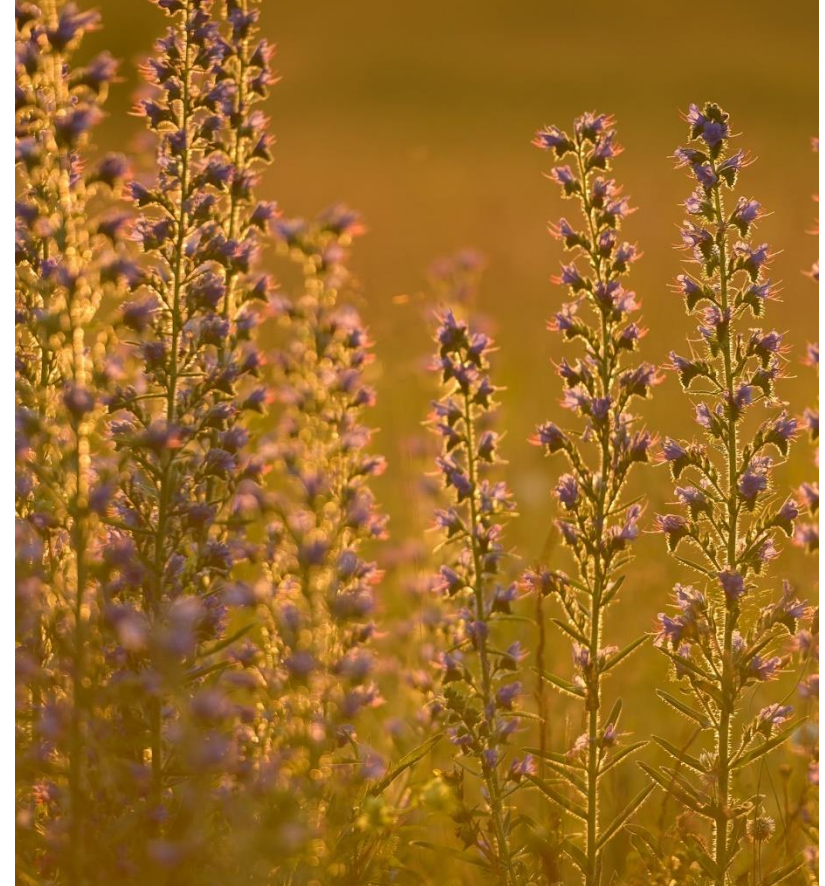


COBOR Biodiversity Farm

Cobor never fails to give you a taste of the vast freedom of the Transylvanian hills and the natural beauty right at the foot of the Făgăraș Mountains.



- Come for the beautiful horses in our [horse livery](#) and the amazing looking Transylvanian grey cattle, for the multitude of birds and the rolling pastures full of flowers.
- We have a true saying in Romania: “Eternity was born in the village!”



- Bundles of cuteness now, fierce defenders of grazing sheep and cows up in the Făgăraș Mountains later!
- 15 Carpatin shepherd dog puppies are waiting to be donated to livestock owners.





Wildlife hides

- Simona, the manager of [Travel CARPATHIA](#) has prepared bucket list experiences for you in the Făgăraș Mountains!
- The wildlife watching tours at Bunea and Comisu hides hosted 262 guests by the end of August and the season keeps on going. Compared to 130 guests in 2020 and 266 guests in 2019 we see an increased interest in travellers towards green experiences.



05

Communication &
community outreach





Centrul de Activități
și Explorarea Naturii
Râchita

- Richita – the Largest Environmental Education Centre in Romania has Opened its Doors.
- The event took place in the presence of representatives of local and national authorities, of teachers and students from the area and the vicinity of the Făgăraș Mountains.
- The Richita activity centre offers fantastic conditions for exploring and learning about the living world: special, hands-on programmes for groups of up to 30 people, for schools, universities, and all organizations interested in nature.





- 60 children from rural areas where we protect forests were the first to experience Richita Centre. Five days for each camp, built around five themes: connection with nature, bison, beavers, forest and water.
- They explored the forest, plants or insects from the subalpine area, the riparian area with existing microorganisms, they hiked to the Pecineagu dam and the Tămaşului Saddle, with a wide view over the Piatra Craiului Mountains and the Păpuşa Peak from Iezer. The wolves and lynx tracks were fascinating. And the stories about the reintroduction of the bison and the beaver into the ecosystem were received with openness and enthusiasm.
- The workshops aroused curiosities and associations between the daily life of children and the importance of protecting nature – an experience very different to normal school classes.



- Also students from the Bucharest University, together with teachers from the Penn State University, have spent a few days in the field along with our specialists.
- It was a very informative visit and hopefully, in 2022, the pandemic situation will allow the students from the States to join us for all the practical sessions as part of their studies.



- The stories of the Făgăraș Mountains can now be seen and heard in a unique travelling photo exhibition in Romania!
- The exhibition gathers selected images from the album '2544m – The Stories of the Făgăraș Mountains, the Highest Among the Romanian Carpathians', released with the financial support of OAK Foundation.



- Well known in Transylvania, the concept of brunch crossed over the mountains to Muntenia. The first brunch in Mușcel was organized on Sunday, 4th July, in Rucăr, one of the most beautiful communes at the foot of the Făgăraș Mountains.
- The local community from Rucăr prepared a tasty menu and invited lovers of nature, culture and local gastronomy to spend a summer's day at the foot of the Făgăraș mountains, in a traditional Rucăr household.
- The event was organized by the Reviving Rucăr Initiative Group, in partnership with Conservation Carpathia and My Transylvania Association, and aimed to promote the local community, culture and local heritage through the gastronomy specific to this mountain area.



- The team from Casa Bună Association together with their partners came to Nucșoara to deliver the first pairs of glasses for the kids. Another round of eye examinations for more children was performed – a well needed and very much appreciated support for the people in the communities at the foothills of the Făgăraș Mountains.



- We are always happy to welcome people that support different pillars of our activity.
- Our Ambassador, Nico de Transilvania, is involved in restoring severely degraded lands, affected by old, illegal clear-cuts and is also involved in supporting the community in Nucșoara, Făgăraș Mountains and the cultural activities.
- Nicoleta stands for Forests without Frontiers.



Volunteers

- Proud father & passionate son! Gabriel is another example of a ranger's teenager that wants to get involved in their parent's work.
- Gabriel is volunteering for the wildlife monitoring team and collects leftovers from bears for DNA analysis.



Volunteers

- Lena and Selina are from Germany and came here to create some new experiences. They are staying at Cobor biodiversity farm until the end of August and try to help where they are needed. Selina's main priority are the horses of the farm and Lena is also sculpting some wooden animals for Richita.
- The [volunteering programme](#) is developed under the LIFE Carpathia project.
- We are increasingly accepting volunteers to join us. If you are interested, please apply through the above link.



Balkan by bike – cycling for reforestation

- Do you remember what you did after graduating from high school? Here are [Teresa and Philipp](#) who embarked in August on a brave adventure, before they start attending university in October. They want to travel but decided to get involved in a good cause! The protection of climate and the environment is very important to them so their adventure on bike is to support our reforestation efforts in the Făgăraș Mountains. They would like to raise 10,000 euro to cover the costs of restoring and growing 8,000 saplings.
- You can support them to achieve their objective [here](#).





Join us in:

- Creating the largest forested National Park in Europe.
- Annual restoration of the original ecosystem of over 100 ha of clear-cuts.
- Protecting wildlife across a total of 65,000 ha.
- Sustainable development of local communities.
- Environmental education projects.



FOUNDATION
CONSERVATION
CARPATHIA

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PHOTO CREDITS: Asociatia Casa Buna, Georgiana Andrei, Balkans by bike, Simona Bordea, Marius Bugeac, Daniel Bucur, George Costan, Ionut Cretu, Dan Dinu, Laszlo Jozsef, Karol Kaliský, Nico de Transilvania, Daniel Mîrlea, Remus Munteanu, Alexandru Oprei, Doru Paunescu, Oliviu Pop, Flavius Raduta, Constantin Simion, George Soare, Elena Serban, Laviniu Terciu, Claudiu Toanta, Liviu Ungureanu.