



Field report

June 2023



Creating the largest forested National Park in Europe



Main activities summary

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- 02 Ecological restoration
- 03 Wildlife conservation
- 04 Conservation enterprise programme
- 05 Communication & community outreach



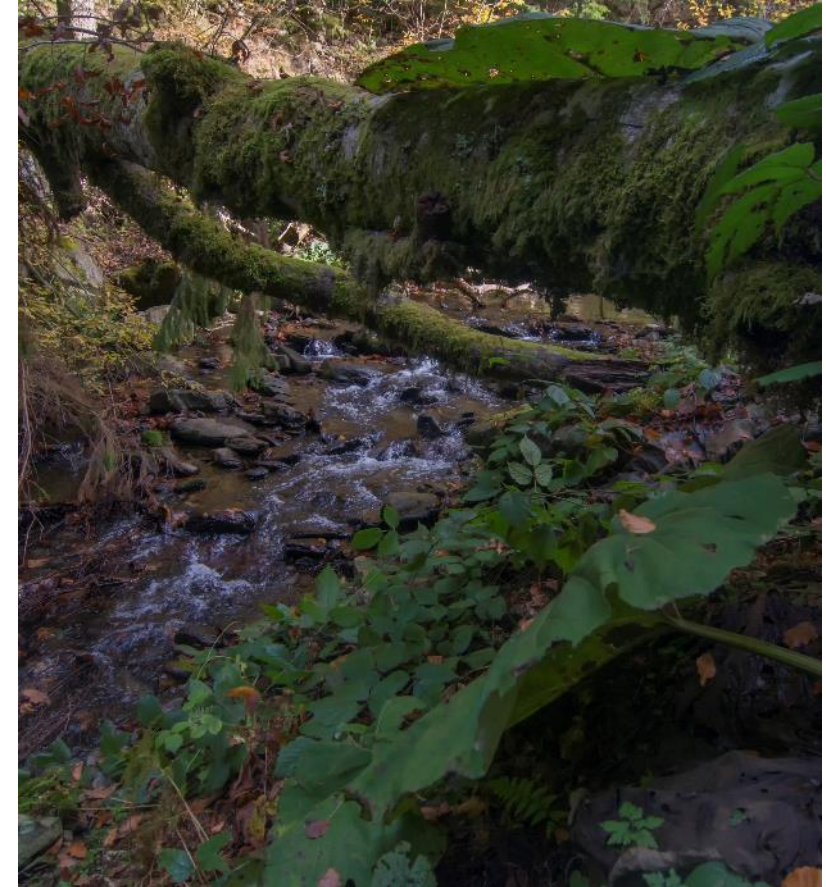
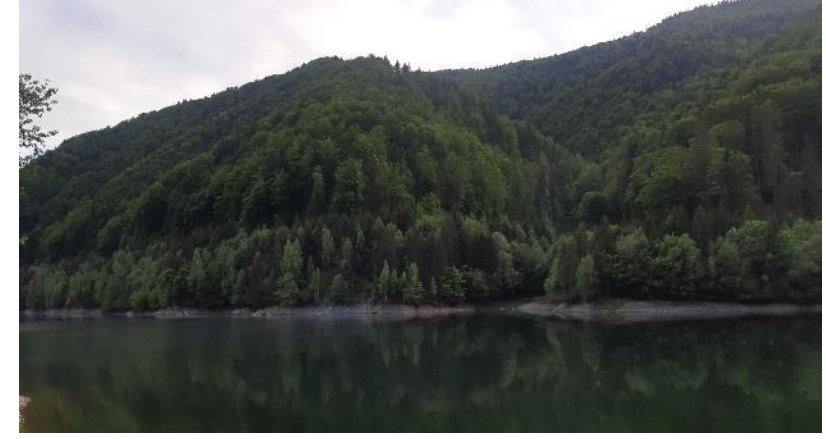
01

Forest conservation and
management



We are proud to manage a total of 26,900 hectares of forests, spread across 15 forest districts.

Our team of 15 dedicated forest rangers work tirelessly to protect and preserve these valuable forests for generations to come.



- All our forest districts are monitored on a daily basis.
- In forests where there have been windfall damage, natural and cyclical mechanisms are triggered, such as the increase in insects that attack trees.
- As part of our legal obligations, rangers monitor the development of these insect populations and take action to prevent damage to neighbouring forests held by other landowners.



Flowers from the project area

In June, the Făgăraș Mountains bloom with stunning colours, offering breathtaking views of vibrant flowers in the meadows, on the mountainsides and in the forests.



Clematis alpina



Convallaria majalis



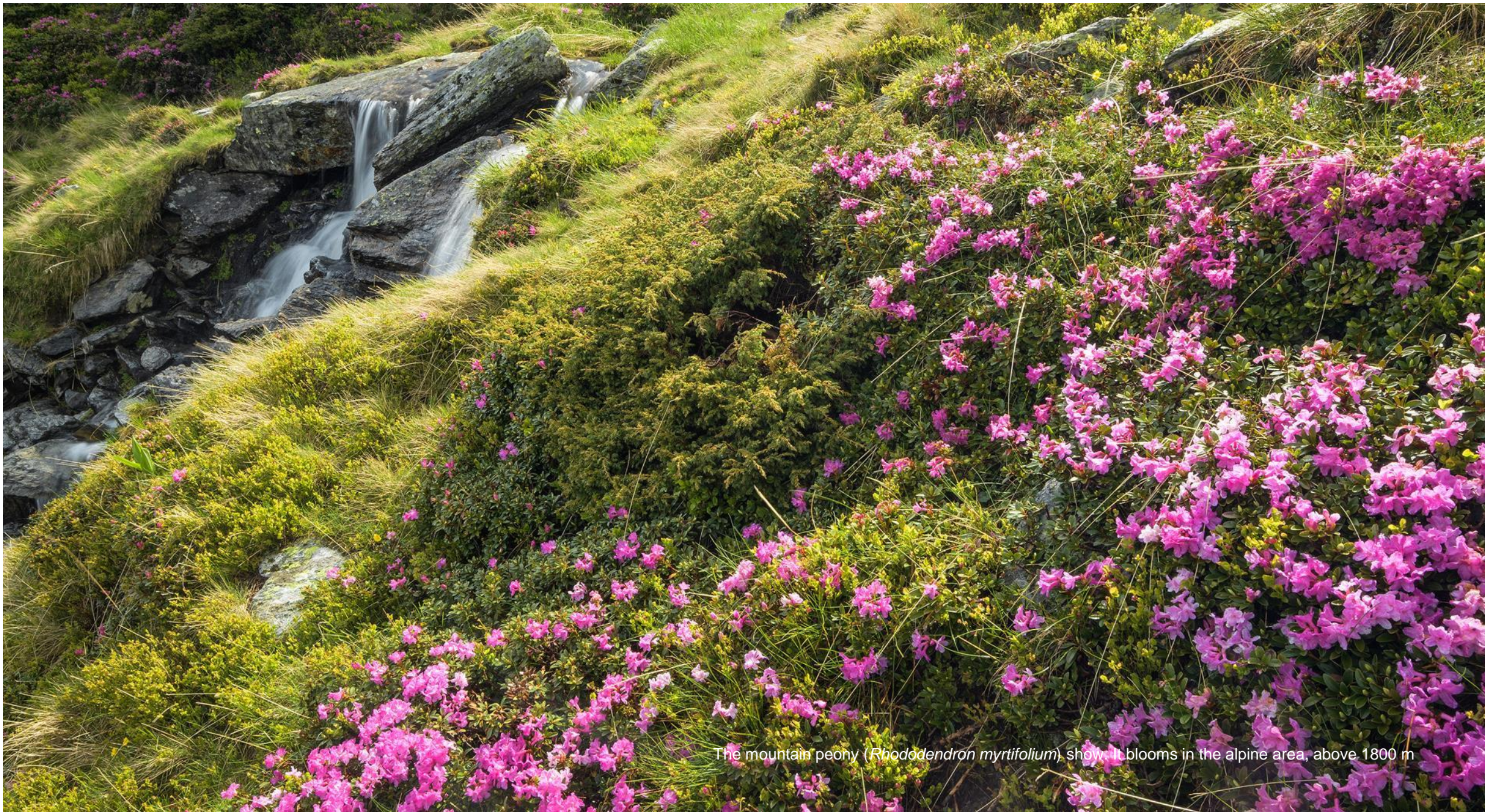
Globeflower (*Trollius europaeus*)



Anacamptis palustris ssp. *elegans*



The mountain peony (*Rhododendron myrtifolium*) show. It blooms in the alpine area, above 1800 m



The mountain peony (*Rhododendron myrtifolium*) shown. It blooms in the alpine area, above 1800 m



Flowering species in a hayfield

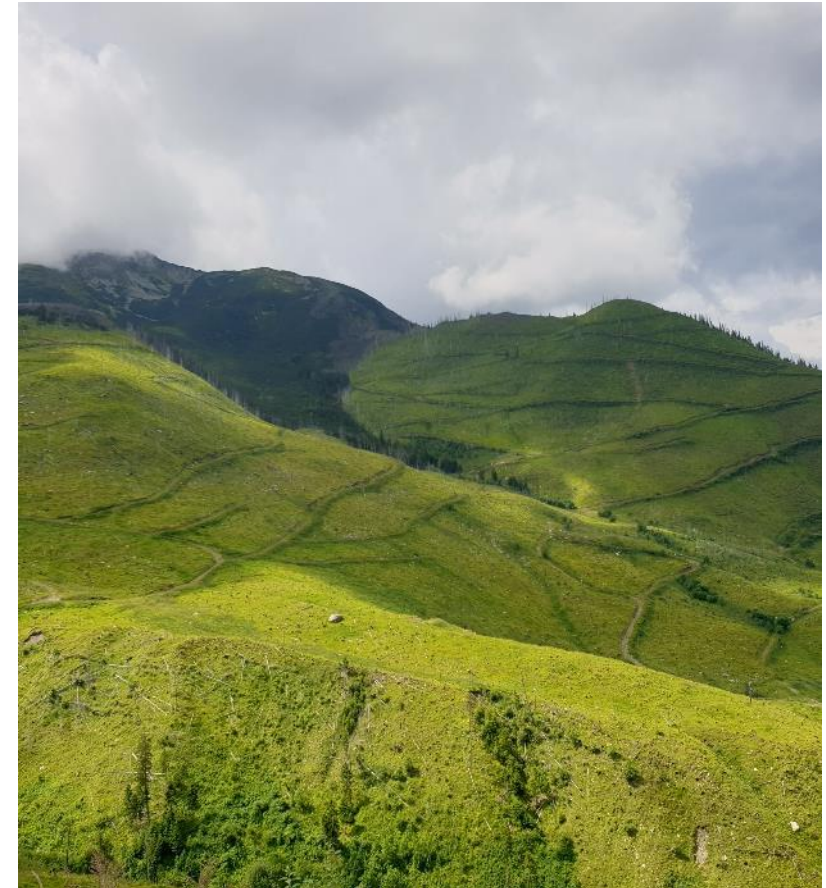


02

Ecological restoration



- We monitored the ecological restoration sites to determine the urgency of the work to cut the grass around the planted saplings.
- The saplings planted this year have largely survived, but as usual there are losses, and much care is needed for many years to come.
- Several saplings planted 1-2 years ago in areas close to the alpine area have survived but have not yet fully adapted.
- The struggle for survival is tough in the mountains and our efforts continue to try to get the forest back on its feet.



Green houses and tree nurseries

- The two greenhouses and nine nurseries keep us very busy.
- We do not use chemical fertilisers or pesticides and the work is very labour intensive.
- Weeding and watering are the most important tasks.
- Four permanent and 38 seasonal workers are involved in growing deciduous and coniferous saplings for the new forests in the Făgăraș Mountains.



Silver fir saplings in Dragosloveni nursery



Weeding the beech saplings in Dragosloveni nursery



Weeding the spruce saplings



Swiss pine (*Pinus cembra*) saplings



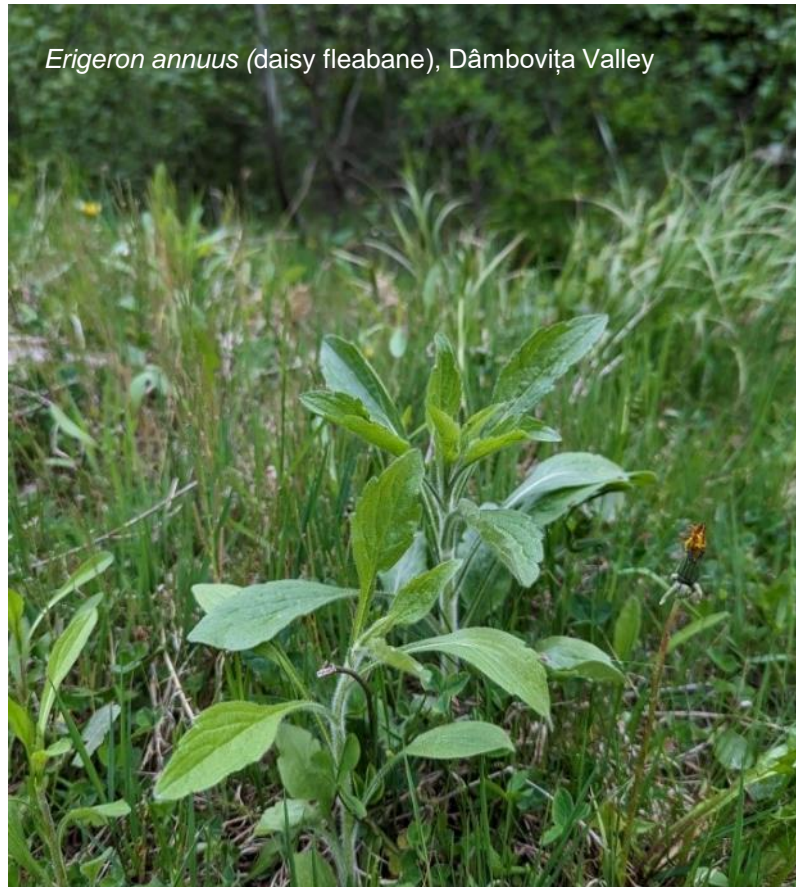
Weeding the juniper saplings

- External specialists continued to monitor changes in the diversity and abundance of terrestrial arthropods in our restoration areas. This month they set the field traps in the spruce monocultures and along the riverbanks.
- In addition to the contract specialists, we were also helped by Erasmus scholarship students who were on an exchange to the University of Constanța.

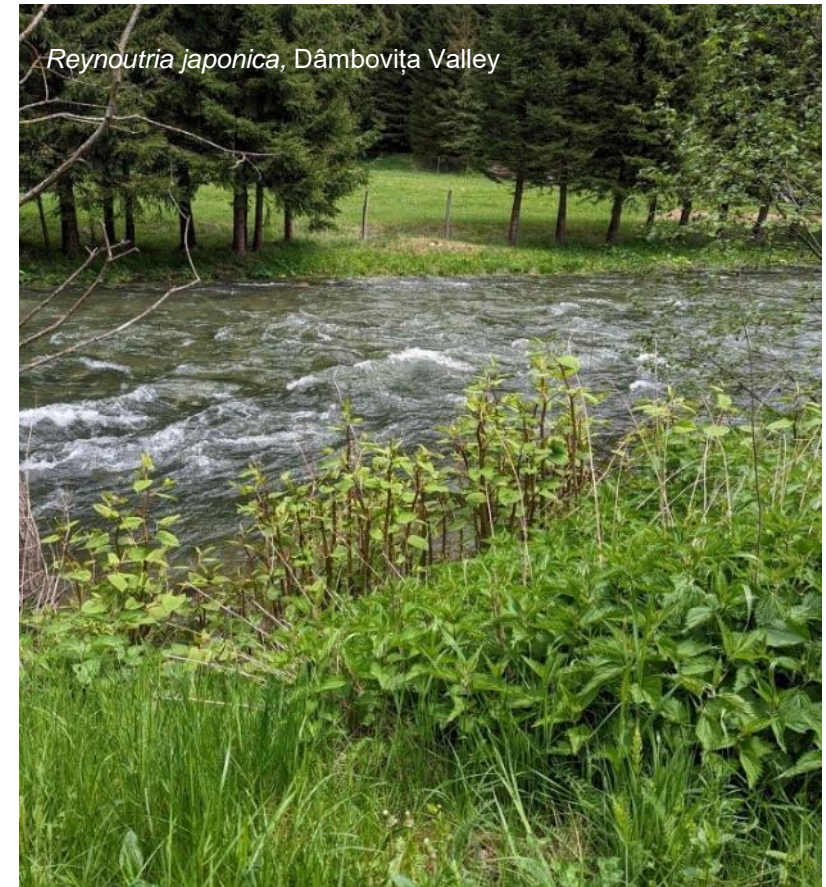


Removing the invasive alien (IAS) plant species along river valleys

- We started the removal of the invasive alien plant species.
- Due to cold weather, the abundance of invasive alien plant species (IAS) is still low.
- IAS are often introduced unintentionally by humans, without knowing the impact on the natural environment in that area. They replace other native species, which is why it is important to eliminate them.
- We will continue to uproot or cut *Erigeron annuus* (daisy fleabane), *Conyza canadensis* (horseweed), *Reynoutria japonica* (Japanese knotweed) throughout July and August.



Erigeron annuus (daisy fleabane), Dâmbovița Valley



Reynoutria japonica, Dâmbovița Valley

03

Wildlife conservation



Wildlife monitoring

Intensive ungulate monitoring: with 127 of 133 cameras installed, our teams are reaching new heights on the mountain.

We have started the red deer DNA sampling season. We have so far collected 26 scat samples as June was an extremely rainy month making field work very difficult.



How does the wildlife monitoring team collect a red deer DNA sample?

- They look for fresh droppings, no more than 5 days old
- The colour of the scat should be green, not black, shiny surface, no mould, fungus or decay
- The team should collect from less exposed areas if the droppings have been exposed to the sun or washed away by rain



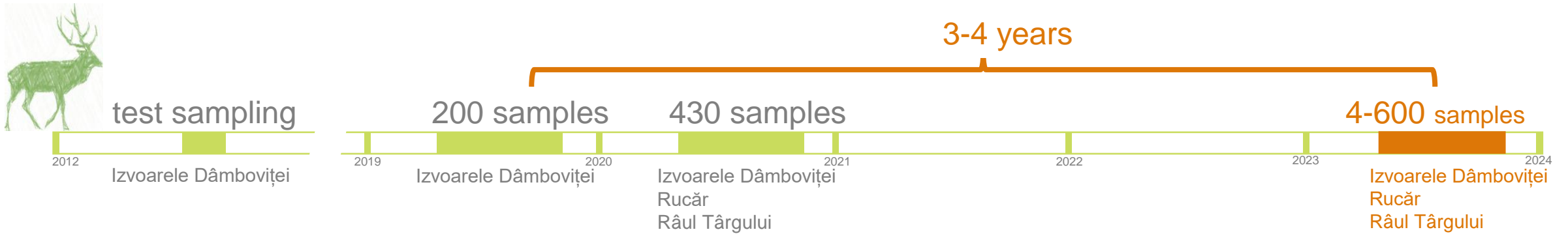
It's not an easy job, is it?



What are the results so far?

Long-term monitoring:

- We collected 630 red deer samples in 2019-2020;
- We have established the minimum number of individuals and sex ratio;
- In 2023, we will assess the minimum number of individuals after 3-4 years.



Ruben Iosif, our Wildlife research Biologist, was invited to the [LYNX Festival](#) to talk to the public about the vital role of the Eurasian lynx in biodiversity and the [lynx monitoring study](#) that the wildlife monitoring team has been conducting.



Wildlife reintroductions

Bison reintroduction:

We're closely monitoring the bison herds and we're pleased to report that the newborn calves are doing well.

The bison released this spring took their role as explorers seriously, climbing to an altitude of 2400 m, exploring the ridge of the Făgăraș Mountains and then returning close to the acclimatisation area.



Beaver reintroduction:

We monitor the beavers on a weekly basis.

Monitoring techniques: some of the beavers have been fitted with transmitters for ongoing monitoring. We also monitor their movements and behaviour using camera traps, direct and indirect observation.

The presence of beavers has influenced the physical, chemical and biological parameters of their habitat. Their role as a keystone species has a positive impact on the ecosystem.



Wildlife management

- We continue the active wildlife management in the areas we are custodians of: scaring wildlife to stay away from the villages, installing electrical fences in areas exposed to attacks, evaluating reported cases of conflicts, offering private compensations, and permanently patrolling to prevent conflicts and poaching.



Carpathian Shepherd dog programme

- A new generation of Carpathian Shepherd dogs is ready to take their place as guardian dogs for the farms in the Făgăraș Mountains.
- The puppies come from our breeding kennel at COBOR Biodiversity Farm, which we breed as part of the LIFE CARPATHIA programme and donate exclusively to farmers near the Făgăraș Mountains.
- All puppies are vaccinated and monitored by our team for one year after donation.



Wildlife images&video

Bison

Red deer

Wildcat

Wildboar

A playful marten

Wildlife in the Făgăraș Mountains



Wildlife images





04

Conservation Enterprise
Programme



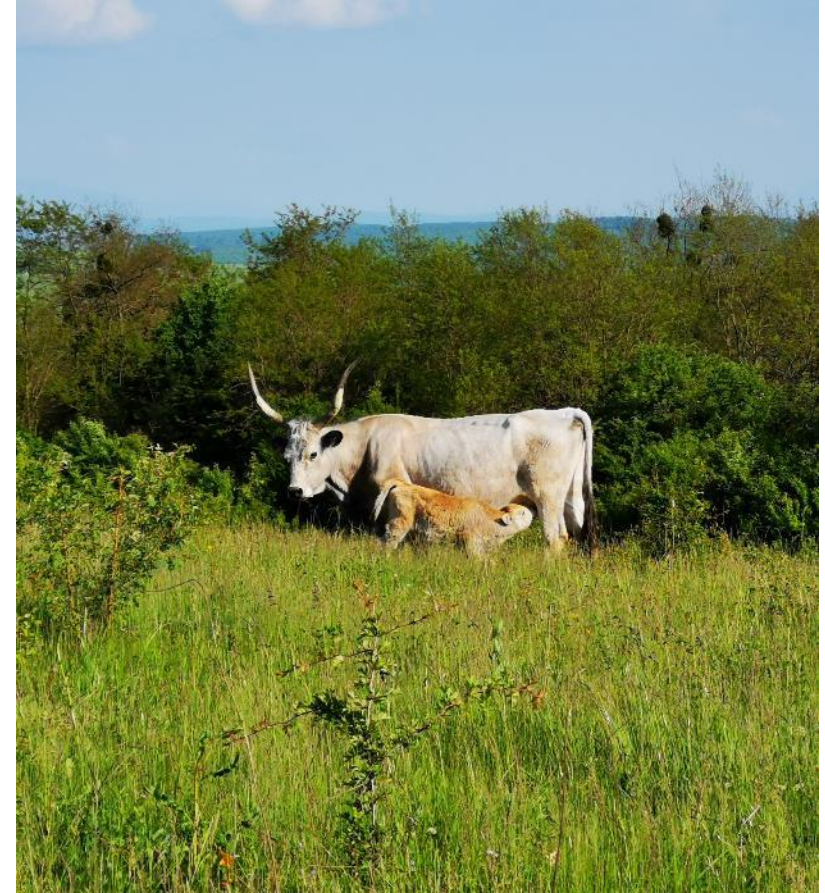
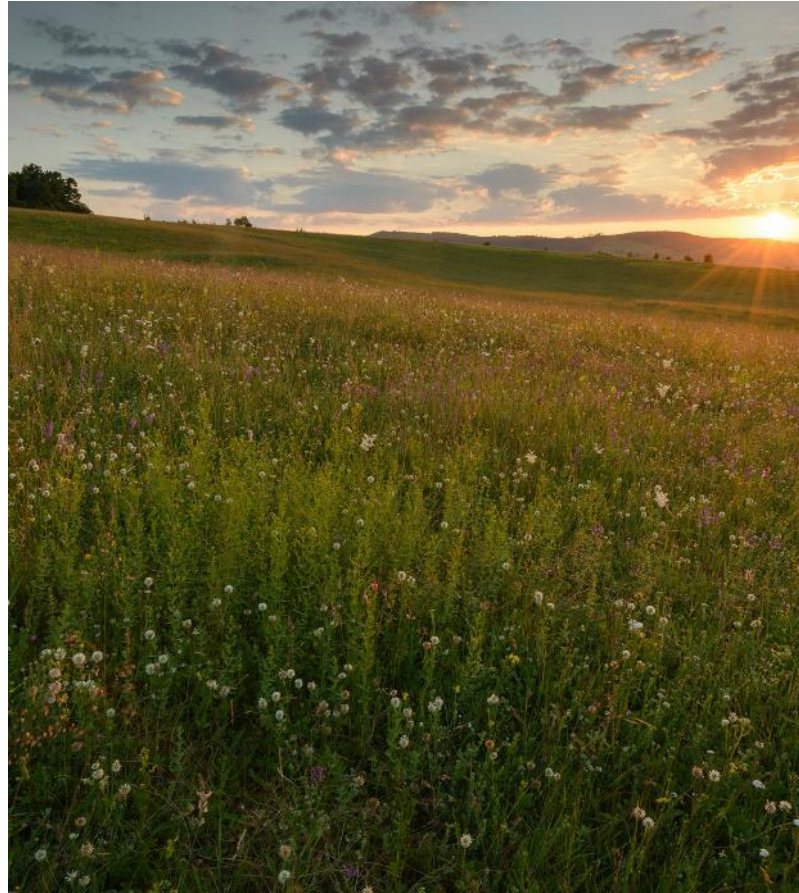
Food HUB

- We are continuing the food hub Roadele Munților Făgăraș with new organic producers joining our network.
- Colonia, an organic honey producer in the vicinity of the Făgăraș Mountains has joined our food with high quality organic honey and bee products.
- We are happy that more and more kitchens on the southern and the northern sides of the Făgăraș Mountains are interested in getting the Local Gastronomic Point accreditation. Our team is helping these families to obtain the authorisation to serve a modest but tasty menu to visitors in the villages.



Cobor Biodiversity Farm

- [Cobor Biodiversity Farm](#) offers a glimpse of the boundless freedom of the Transylvanian hills and the breathtaking natural beauty at the foot of the Făgăraș Mountains
- Discover our horse livery with beautiful horses and our magnificent Transylvanian grey cattle. Enjoy vibrant birdlife and walk through the flower-filled meadows that await your visit!

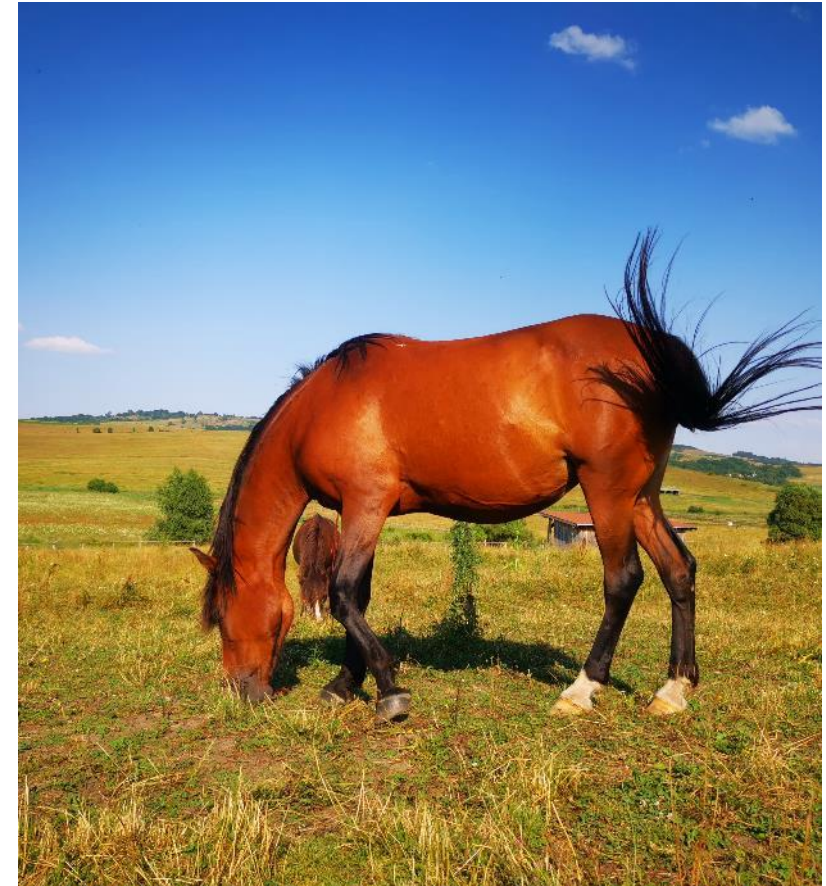


Cobor Biodiversity Farm

The farm activities go on:

- Gardening
- Relocating the horse feeders
- Taking care of the cattle and Carpathian Shepherd dogs
- Trimming, shoeing, treating horses and cattle.

Book your Transylvanian adventure at reservation@cobor-farm.ro



Wildlife hides

Our wonderful team at [Travel CARPATHIA](#) has prepared bucket list experiences for you in the Făgăraș Mountains!

Where would you like to have breakfast with a breathtaking view this summer? At the [Bunea wilderness cabin](#) or at the [Comisu wildlife hides](#)?

Book a wildlife experience and your trip will contribute to forest conservation and to the wellbeing of the local producers.



05

Communication &
community outreach



'Cobor between the Oaks' festival

- This was the first edition of the festival '[Cobor între Stejari](#)', an opportunity for the 1000 participants to discover nature through walks in the pastures of ancient oaks, tours in the village of Cobor, all around the Cobor Biodiversity Farm, and in the meadows where new oak saplings are taking root.
- The event was supported by the OAK Foundation.
- When: 3 - 4 June



See and feel the Festival





Carpathia Bike Tour

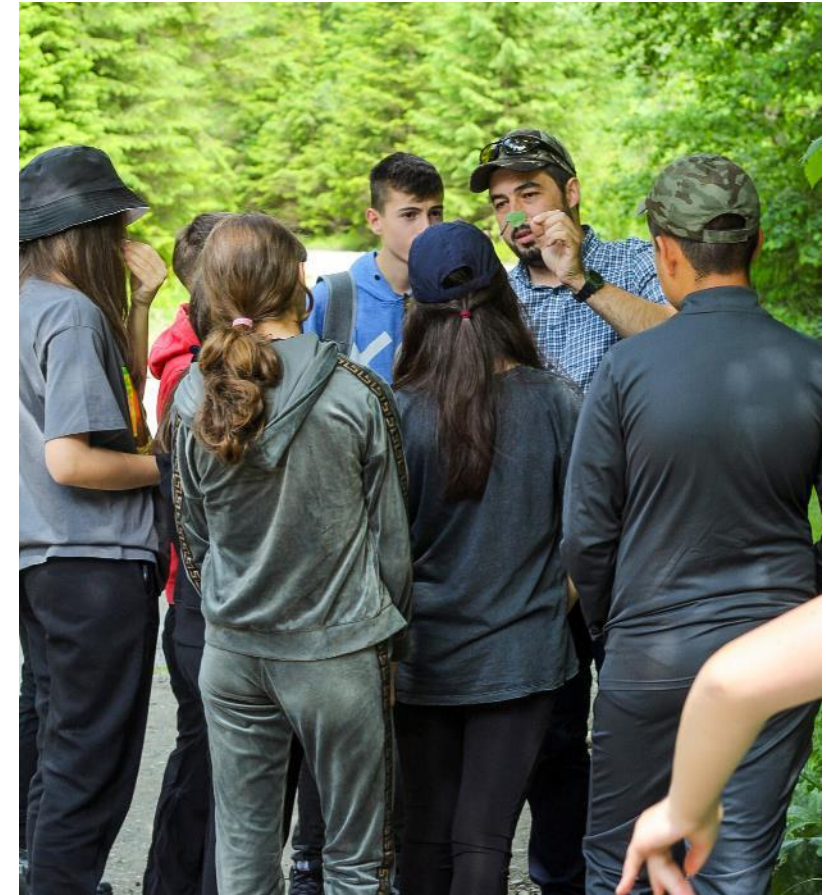
- Carpathia Bike Tour became an event highly appreciated by the cycling community.
- About 150 participants from all over the country took part in the Carpathia Bike Tour this year. The event was sold out a month in advance!
- 60 km on bike: country roads and forest trails
- An engaging programme, with stopovers for observation of local culture and biodiversity
- Excellent feedback from the participants
- Great response from the communities the tour passed through





Junior Ranger programme

- We launched the activities of the 'Junior Ranger' programme with the first group of students from the south of the Făgăraş Mountains, 19 children from the communes Podul Dâmboviței, Lerești and Dragoslavele.
- The Junior Ranger programme was developed by Foundation Conservation Carpathia with the aim of raising and developing a new generation of leaders for nature.



Partners at LYNX Festival

- It was an honour to support the first edition of the [LYNX Festival](#) as a partner.
- We enjoyed the best nature films, both local screenings and international award-winning films, outdoor and indoor photography exhibitions, as well as photography and documentary workshops.
- The 2023 edition of the festival attracted over 1,000 people to the screenings and many hundreds more to the other activities.
- Our sincere appreciation goes to our friends from [România Sălbatică](#) and Forona Associations for this wonderful festival.



International visits

- British journalist and award-winning author of five non-fiction books, [Isabella Tree](#), graced us with her presence during a visit that left us in awe and inspired us to reach new heights in our mission to promote and conserve nature.
- Her unwavering commitment to conservation and her joy in helping to create a 'European Yellowstone' is a testament to the alignment of our values.
- During her stay, Isabella had the opportunity to explore our conservation projects, discover the diverse flora and fauna of the Făgăraș Mountains and interact with the local community. She is writing an article for National Geographic about Rewilding initiatives in Europe, which will feature our project.
- We hope she had a good time and that the Făgăraș Mountains served as inspiration for a new book.



Results

26,900 ha

of forest under permanent protection, safeguarded for future generations

78,000 ha

protected for wildlife, with no sport or trophy hunting

1,991 ha

bought and restored (clear-cuts, alpine pastures, spruce monocultures)

4,056,554

trees planted in clear-cuts, riparian galleries and restoration areas of spruce monocultures

200

locals who make a living from the CARPATHIA project

2,200

students and teachers involved in environmental education projects

20+

local producers are part of the Food Hub Roadele Munților





European hare (*Lepus europaeus*)

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 78,000 ha.
- Sustainable development of local communities.
- Environmental education projects.



FOUNDATION
CONSERVATION
CARPATHIA

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