



Field report

November & December 2023



Creating the largest forested National Park in Europe



The month of November brought unusually high temperatures



However, in November we were still treated to a lot of snow, which held up well in the higher altitudes.

Main activities summary

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

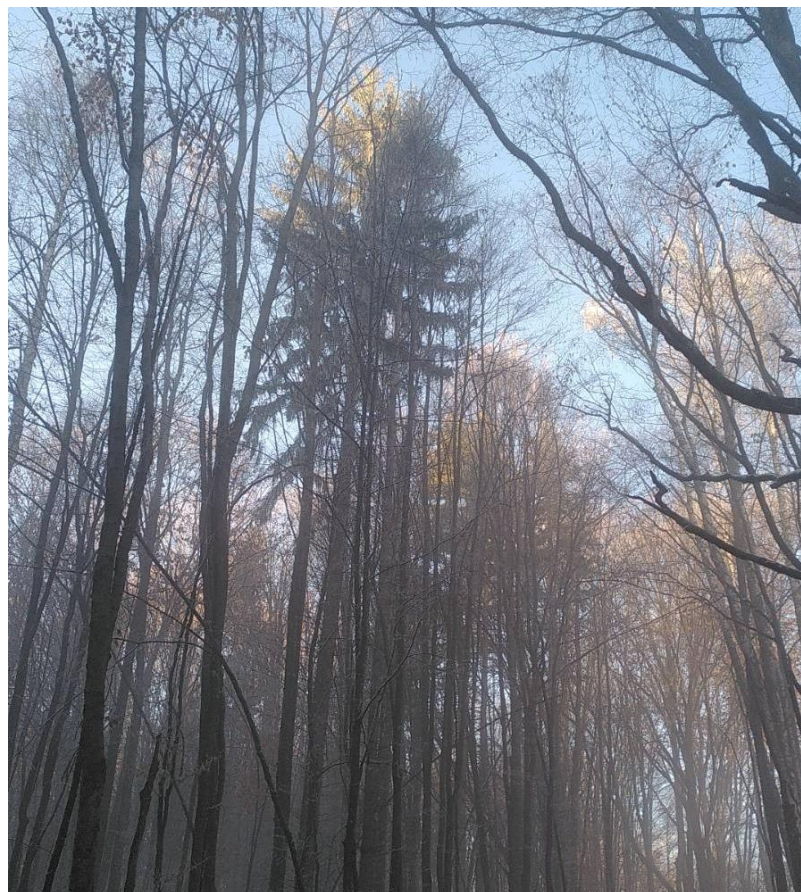


01

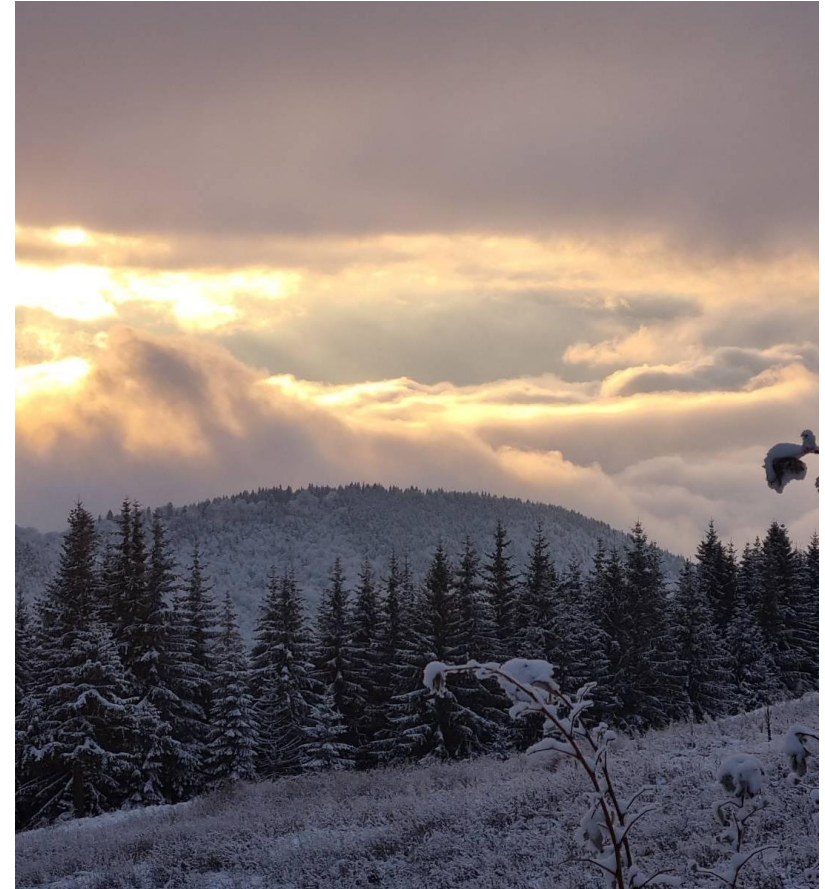
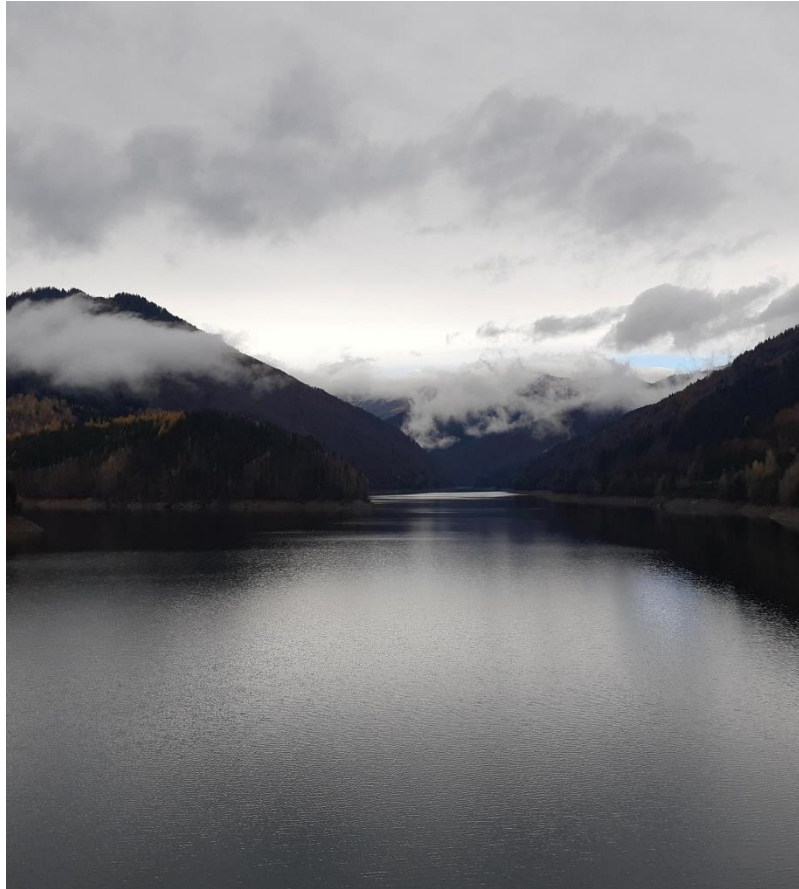
Forest conservation and management

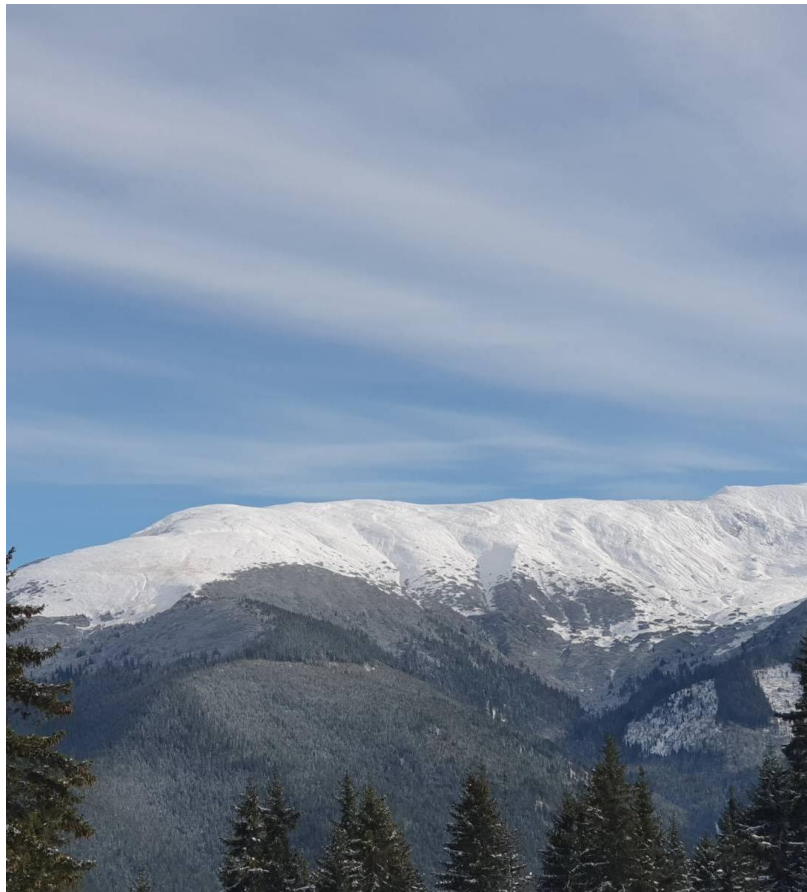
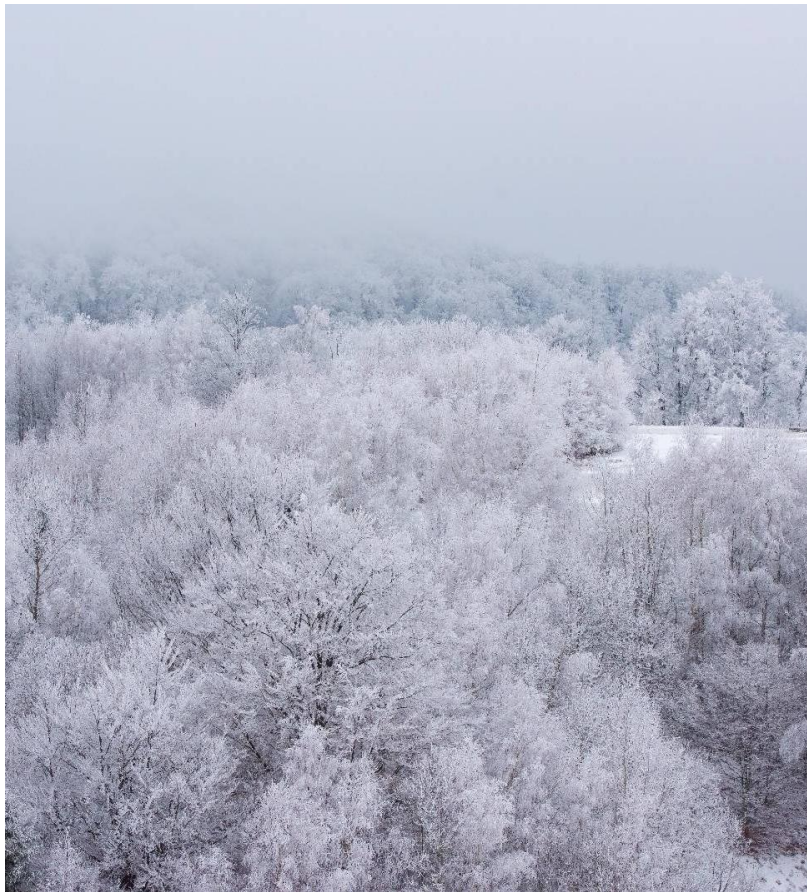
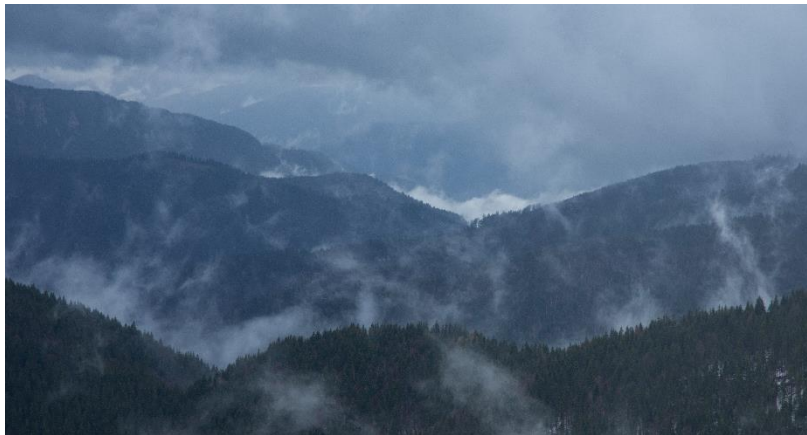


- In 2023, we successfully purchased 191 hectares for full protection.
- By protecting and fully conserving 27,027 hectares of mountain forests and alpine grasslands, we are actively contributing to a healthier future.
- The full biodiversity of these forests is crucial to maintaining an essential balance, playing a key role in climate regulation, natural processes and the provision of vital resources for all.



Images from the project area







02

Ecological restoration

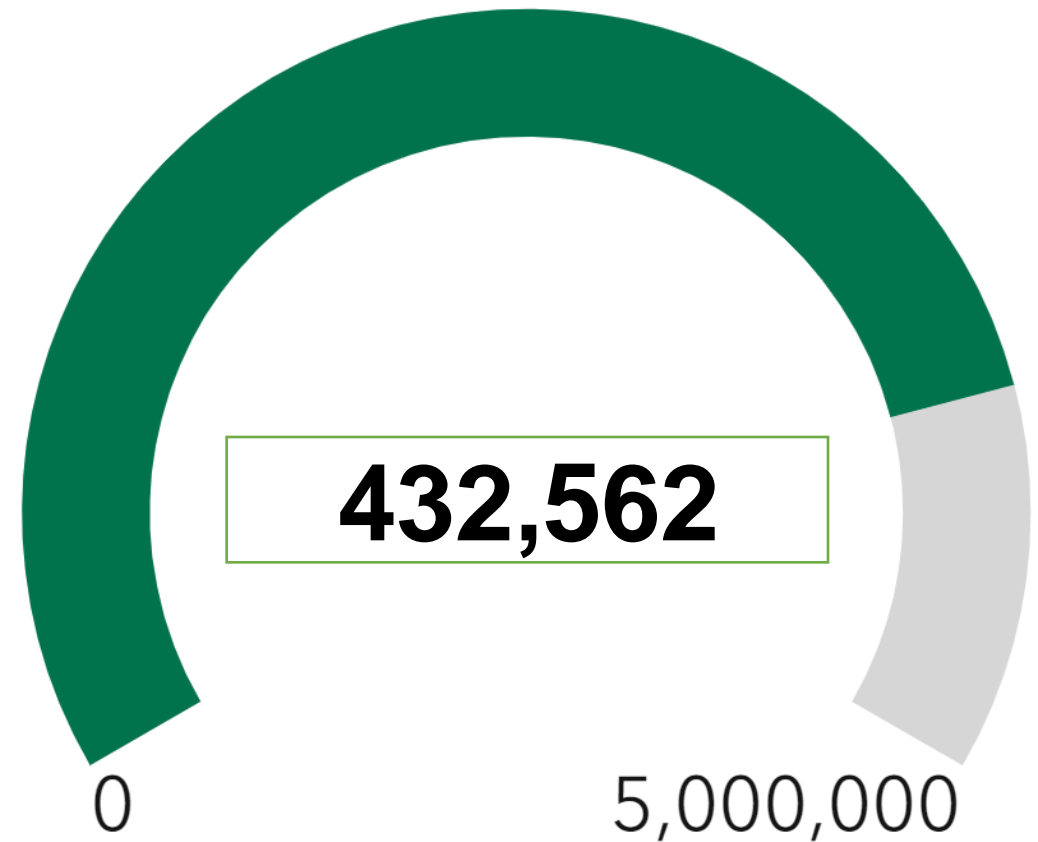


- This autumn's planting campaign was the most intensive so far due to the difficult site conditions (steep slopes, difficult access) and the early arrival of winter high in the mountains.
- However, we managed to exceed our target and planted 85,700 seedlings of beech, spruce, sycamore, rowan, juniper, dwarf pine, swiss pine in four ecological restoration sites in the Făgăraș Mountains: Pojarna, Zârna, Berivoiu and Dobroneagu.



- This year we successfully planted 432,562 saplings (trees planted in clear-cuts, riparian galleries and restoration areas of spruce monocultures).
- Our progress brings us ever closer to our goal of planting 5 million seedlings, a concerted effort to restore natural forests and alpine pastures in the Făgăraș Mountains.

Total number of saplings planted in 2023



Trees

- In November, we organised an ecological restoration camp for 16 children in the vicinity of the Făgăraș Mountains as part of the SUPERB project (Systemic solutions for upscaling of urgent ecosystem restoration for forest-related biodiversity and ecosystem services), the largest cross-border forest landscape restoration project in Europe.
- Through games, walks and field observations, the children learnt how hard it is to restore a forest and what the extensive process of ecological restoration means.
- In December, we organised a workshop for representatives of forestry departments, forest guards and local authorities. We presented the good practice results of the SUPERB project.



Greenhouses and tree nurseries

- We have had a productive year in our tree nurseries, with a steady stream of activity resulting in the production and care of the seedlings needed for our restoration programme.
- Our team of four staff is supplemented by 38 daily workers from local communities who grow the saplings from seed and care for them in the nurseries for 2 to 5 years until they are ready to be planted in the mountains.
- We work without chemicals and weed by hand, and from now on we hope for a thick blanket of snow to protect the seedlings and seeds until spring.



Dragosloveni nursery in early November



Tinisoare nursery in early November

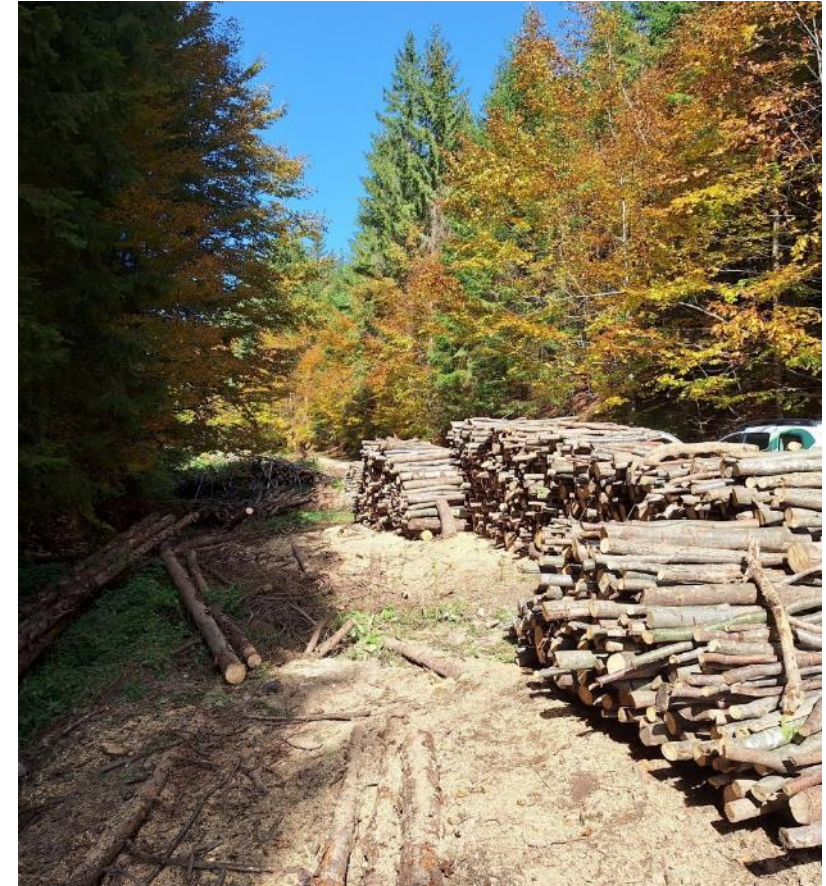


Silver fir saplings under the snow of November



Beech saplings under the cover of a layer of snow

- We came to the aid of the elderly people of Dâmbovicioara, who were suffering from a lack of firewood, by providing 70 cubic metres of wood.



03

Wildlife conservation



Wildlife monitoring

- We disseminated the results of our DNA monitoring wolf programme (*Canis lupus*), using non-invasive DNA sampling, through a comprehensive communication and dissemination campaign.
- The study monitored the wolf population in the Southern Carpathians over an area of 1,400 km², focusing on a pilot area covering the eastern part of the Făgăraș Mountains, Piatra Craiului, Iezer-Păpușa and Leaota Mountains.
- For more information on the study results, including detailed insights into the six packs studied, please visit [THIS LINK](#) and read the full scientific monitoring report [HERE](#).



- Our invitation to witness first-hand the implementation of our non-invasive DNA sampling wolf monitoring project in the Romanian Carpathians, and to hear the results directly from our team of experts, was warmly accepted by journalists from various national and local publications. In total, 263 pieces of materials appeared as a result of this media trip, with an estimated total audience of 6,072,617 people reached.



Wildlife monitoring

- We are working hard to monitor ungulates with camera traps. In December we stepped up our team effort and carried out an intensive check of the 127 cameras installed in the field.
- We continue to monitor the lynx species at the 77 locations (each with two camera traps) with infrared motion sensors installed in the field. This method is effective for studying cat populations, whose fur have a unique pattern which is different from individual to individual.
- We look forward to the results of this second study, which we are conducting in a pilot area of over 1200 km² in the eastern Făgăraș, Piatra Craiului and Leaota Mountains.



Wildlife reintroductions

- As the year comes to a close, the Făgăraș Mountains are welcoming more bison into their wilderness.
- Two males and six females from Hungary, Germany and Sweden are ready for a new life in the natural habitat of the Făgăraș Mountains.
- Their reintroduction into the wild is planned for 2024. The ongoing process of reintroducing bison to the Făgăraș Mountains is progressing well, as evidenced by the thriving wild herds and the arrival of six new calves this summer.



Wildlife reintroductions

- This year we were able to relocate 18 beavers to the southern area of the Făgăraș Mountains.
- We've been monitoring their progress closely and are pleased to report that the beavers have adapted very well to their new environment. A tangible sign of the success of our efforts is the birth of young kits at the reintroduction sites.



Wildlife management

- Our dedicated intervention teams have been working hard to protect small farmers and reduce wildlife conflict in the Făgăraș Mountains.
- Over the course of the year, our colleagues carried out 107 interventions and installed 27 electric fences in areas at risk of wildlife conflict.
- We used various strategies to prevent recurrent attacks, including artificial intelligence-based alarm systems and relocation efforts, and occasionally had to resort to removing individuals when all other options had failed.



Wildlife management

- As part of our voluntary compensation programme for damage caused by wild animals, we contributed by providing 48 sheep to nine farmers in the communes of Rucar, Sătic, Stoenești and Nămăești.



Wildlife images&video

Red deer

Alpine chamois

Eurasian lynx

Wolf





04

Conservation Enterprise
Programme



Food Hub

- We have launched the online shop of our food hub, Roadele Munților, accessible at www.roadelemuntilor.ro
- This platform provides easy access to a diverse range of over 170 natural products, handcrafted by 30 small producers from the Făgăraș Mountains area.
- From its inception in December 2021 until today, the Roadele Muntilor food hub has sold 28,700 products worth €94,000, helping to increase the visibility and profitability of our small, local producers.



Cobor Biodiversity Farm

- Experience the charm of nature at [Cobor Biodiversity Farm](https://cobor-biodiversity-farm.ro) – a place where you can indulge in clean and delicious food, breathe the historic air of Transylvanian villages, and actively contribute to the recovery of a thriving community.
- We look forward to your visit!
- Contact us at reservation@cobor-farm.ro to reserve your place.



Cobor Biodiversity Farm

- Winter is a good time to get a lot of administrative work done.
- We have cleared the pasture of bushes and shrubs, prepared the guesthouses for the winter holidays, made sure the Grey cattle herd has everything it needs for the winter and the horses are ready to receive guests. 😊



Wildlife hides

- We have ended the wildlife watching season with 510 guests enjoying [Travel CARPATHIA](#) bucket list experiences.
- Book your place for an unforgettable adventure in the Făgăraș Mountains - it's never too early to book your [Wildlife Hide experience](#)!



05

Communication &
community outreach



BAMBI Award

- On 16th November, Christoph and Barbara Promberger, our Executive Directors, were awarded with Germany's highest media prize - the BAMBI in the 'Our Planet' category.
- This award brings even more visibility to the Făgăraș Mountains, where we have been writing the conservation story for fourteen years.
- Together with personalities such as Michael Jackson, Ursula von der Leyen, Pope Francis, Tom Cruise, Bill Clinton, Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, Foundation Conservation Carpathia joins a select group of BAMBI winners, confirming its significant contribution to environmental protection and the promotion of a sustainable world.



Documentary film about the old trees and people of Nucșoara

- Together with WaterBear Network, the first interactive streaming platform dedicated to the future of our planet, and our long-term partner Jack Wolfskin, we launched 'Spirit of the Forest'.
- At the heart of the documentary is the [‘Forest with Immortal Stories’](#) project, carried out in partnership with Nucșoara TownHall, with the aim of preserving 2,544 ancient beech trees through adoption and promoting the area as a tourist destination of high natural value.
- We invite you to watch the short documentary [‘Spirit of the Forest’](#) [HERE](#) for free.



Carpathia Community Fund

- At the beginning of December, we met with initiative groups that have carried out effective projects this year through the 'Carpathia Community Fund'.
- Congratulations to the four teams that have made a difference in their community with the help of the Carpathia Community Fund grant: Seligstadt Youth Centre Association, 'General Ioan Boeriu' Secondary School, Recea, 'Aurel Vijoli' College Initiative Group, Carul Mare Team, Sărata.
- Thanks to the Community Foundation Țara Făgărașului for hosting the event and for the meaningful projects we have carried out together.



Doing good is contagious!

- We have learned from Association Casa Bună that 'doing good is contagious', and good is taking root in the communities at the foot of the Făgăraș Mountains.
- Santa Claus reached the children of Nucșoara and Lerești through hard-working volunteers and many other kind people.
- We are grateful to work with Association Casa Bună, one of the best organisations in Romania in solving social problems, and we look forward to continuing our partnership in supporting local communities in 2024.



CARPATHIA Nature Education Programme

- Richita Nature Exploration and Activity Centre takes a winter break. That's after hosting over 700 students in 2023 who participated in our education programmes.
- We will continue to welcome new groups of children, students and volunteers in 2024!



Awards

- Together with Nucșoara Municipality Town Hall and McCann PR Romania, we won two additional awards at the Romanian PR Award with our project 'The Forest of Immortal Stories':
 - ❖ Gold Award for Excellence in the Media Relations & Influencer Relation category.
 - ❖ Silver Award for Excellence in the Public Relations category.
- On 28th November, in a Royal act of recognition, our Foundation was awarded an Honorary Diploma in the category of *Civism through Innovative Educational and Cultural Actions* by Her Majesty Margareta and Prince Radu. With this Royal recognition, nature itself honours us for our commitment to its protection.



Volunteering

We would like to thank the dedicated volunteers who joined us in the second half of the year. They gave their time and effort to support our activities.

Special thanks to Rebecca Langer, Michael Kinkelbur, Maartje Eijlander, Tobias Janczik, Sylvie More and Melitini Damigou for their invaluable help and commitment to our wildlife monitoring efforts!

A sincere thank you to Carolin Grothaus for her outstanding commitment to the activities at the Cobor Biodiversity Farm! Her support is truly appreciated.





Carpathia Ambassador Programme

- In November, we had the honour of welcoming a new supporter of the future Făgăraş Mountains National Park. Sonia Argint visited us at the Dobroneagu ecological restoration site and the Nucşoara bison acclimatisation enclosure.
- Sonia is a TV personality, mother of two children, concerned about a healthy lifestyle, entrepreneur and nature lover. We thank her for being our ambassador.
- Her presence increases the visibility of our efforts and encourages us in our ongoing mission to preserve the Făgăraş Mountains.



Carpathia Christmas dinner

We have made it through another year and have reached almost 140 employees in Foundation Conservation Carpathia!

We're glad we were able to bring almost everyone together for our annual Christmas dinner.

It's been a year of great activities and results, and we can't wait to double them next year.

We wish you all the very best and thank you for your support!

Happy New Year!



Mentions in international media

- What happens when we destroy a wild animal's home?
- *'Fighting for forests and protecting apex predators like bears, wolves and lynx can benefit both people and nature. Creating a national park in the Carpathian Mountains, the 'ecological backbone of Europe', is one way we can encourage peaceful coexistence.'*
- This is what [BBC presents in the #OurPlanetEarth documentary](#) about the future National Park in the Făgăraș Mountains. This makes us proud to have such beautiful nature in our country!



Corporate appeal:

- If you are in charge of a Romanian company you can directly support our work, without any costs for the sponsor-company.
- The sponsorship is fully deductible if it falls within the limits of the law and if it is made before the end of the year on the basis of a sponsorship contract.
- The simple gesture of redirecting 20% of your income tax to Foundation Conservation Carpathia is an opportunity to contribute to the protection of the Făgăraș Mountains - now and for future generations.
- We thank all companies that have already donated!

If you would like to find out more details, please contact Ana Maria Atonoaie, Director of Partnerships and Corporate Relations, at a.atonoaie@carpathia.org or on +40753 956 452.



Results

27,027 ha

of forest under permanent protection and 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)

4,142,254

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

250

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



Merry Christmas!





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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