



Contribution to Forest Restoration

FOR NATURE,
FOR COMMUNITIES

LIFE Platform Meeting
June 3-5, 2025

Barbara & Christoph Promberger

FOUNDATION CONSERVATION CARPATHIA

Created in **2009**

Overseen by an
**International Board
of Directors**

Largest conservation
organisation in
Romania

160 passionate staff

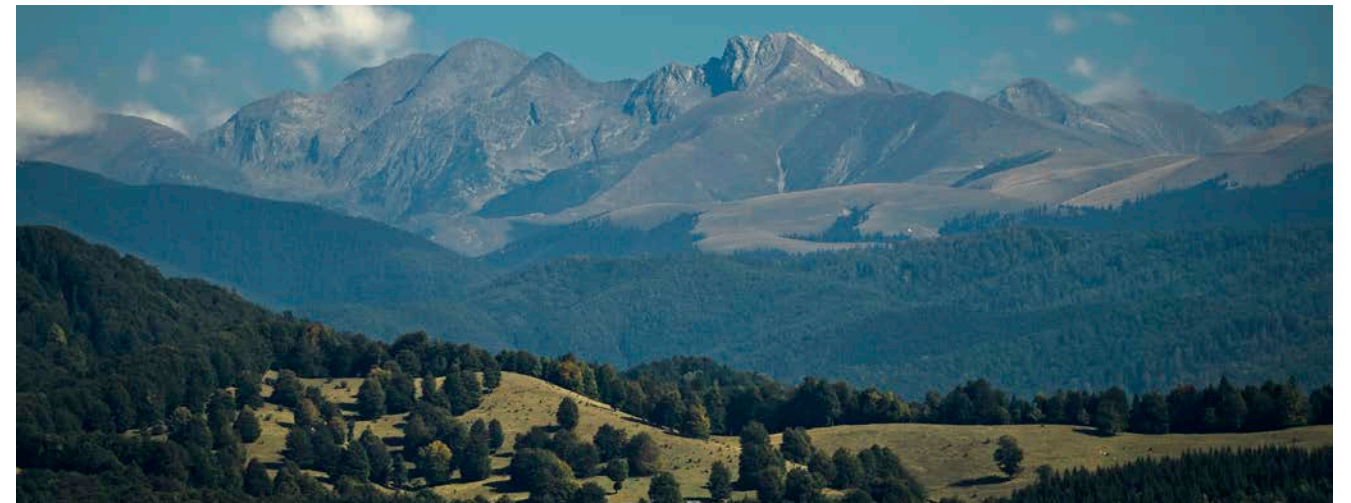


VISION & MISSION

FOR COMMUNITIES
FOR NATURE

Foundation Conservation Carpathia's **VISION** is to create a resilient Carpathian ecosystem for biodiversity and people.

Foundation Conservation Carpathia's **MISSION** is to create central Europe's largest forest National Park in the Romanian Făgăraș Mountains.



Location

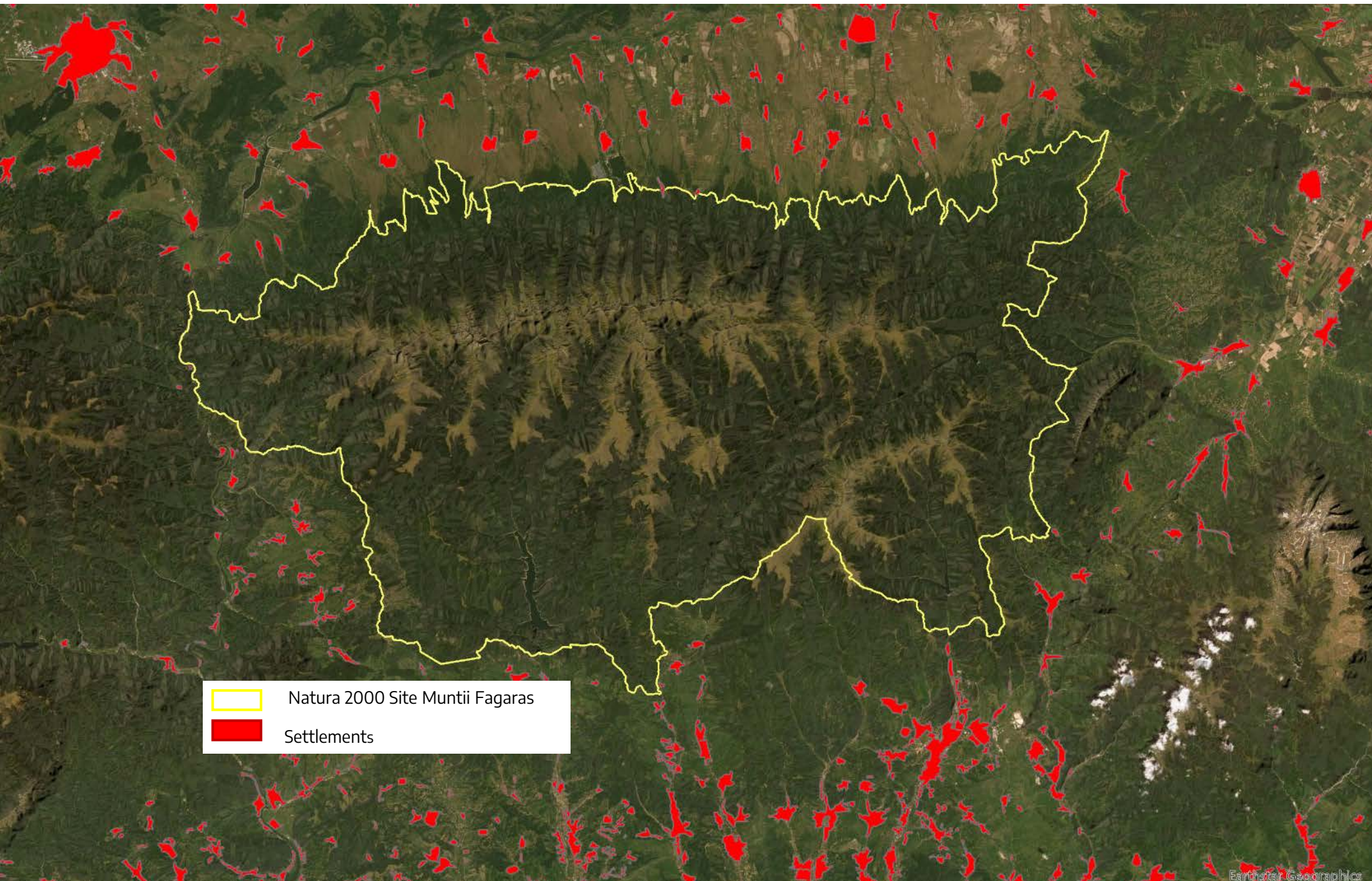


South-central
Carpathians

> 250,000 ha



Făgăraș Mountains



- No settlements inside this area
- Just one (summer road)
- Largest remaining surfaces of Romanian old growth forests



The Threat



Restitution of
forests in 2004-
2010

Phase I

2007-2012

Land Acquisition



Land Acquisition



**~7,000 ha
purchased**

Forests and some alpine grasslands

**Set up own
forest service**

<20 staff; rangers, biologists

**Halted illegal
logging**

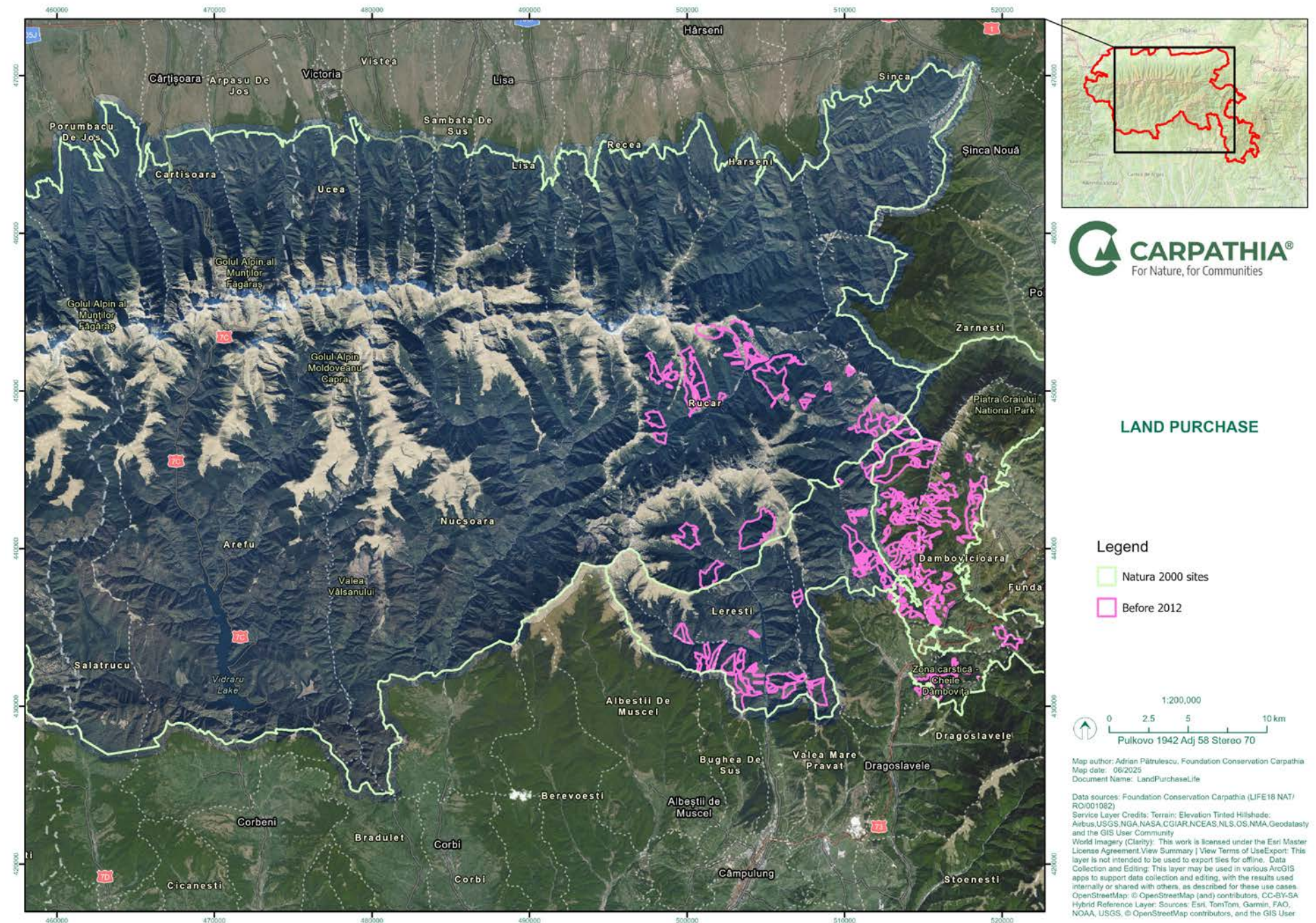
Natura 2000 Site Custodians





Impact Pre-LIFE

Local and resitriected to land conservation



Phase II

2012-2018

Restoration of
degraded habitats



Ecological restoration of forest and aquatic habitats in the Upper Dambovita Valley, Fagaras Mountains



LIFE11/NAT/RO/823



Land purchase

Total: 1,643 ha

294 ha virgin forests



359 ha clear-cut forests



990 ha managed forests



Concrete conservation actions



LIFE11/NAT/RO/823

Total project budget:
5,835,248 €

EU financial contribution
2,917,624 € (50%)



LIFE I - Restoration



**Restoration
on >1,000 ha**

1,2 million saplings planted

**Jobs for
locals**

Generating income through
conservation

Expertise

Nurseries, halting erosion, ...



LIFE I - Restoration



Organisation development

Number of staff tripled, diversification

Communication

Dissimination of results, media

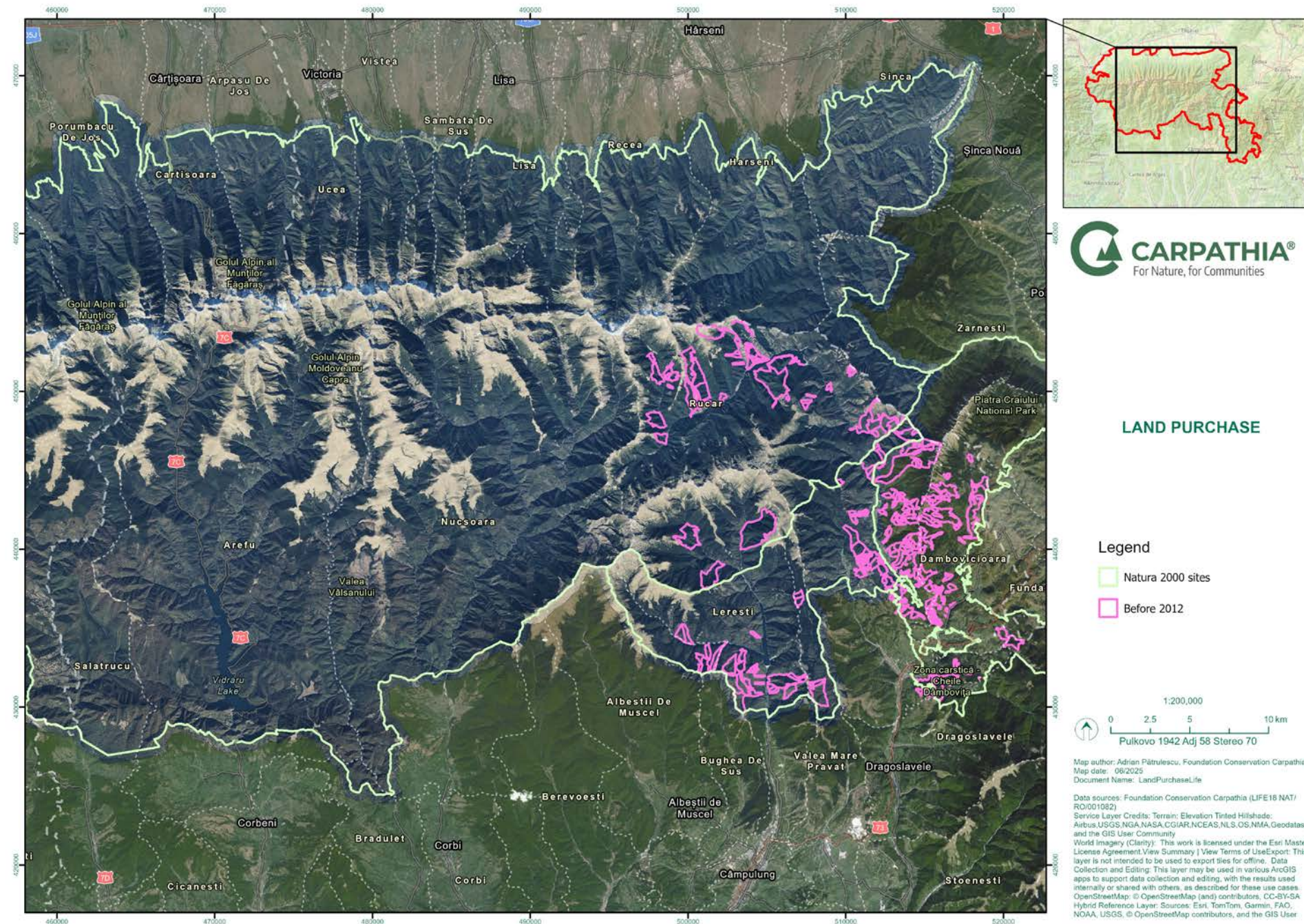
Credibility

towards donors and local communities

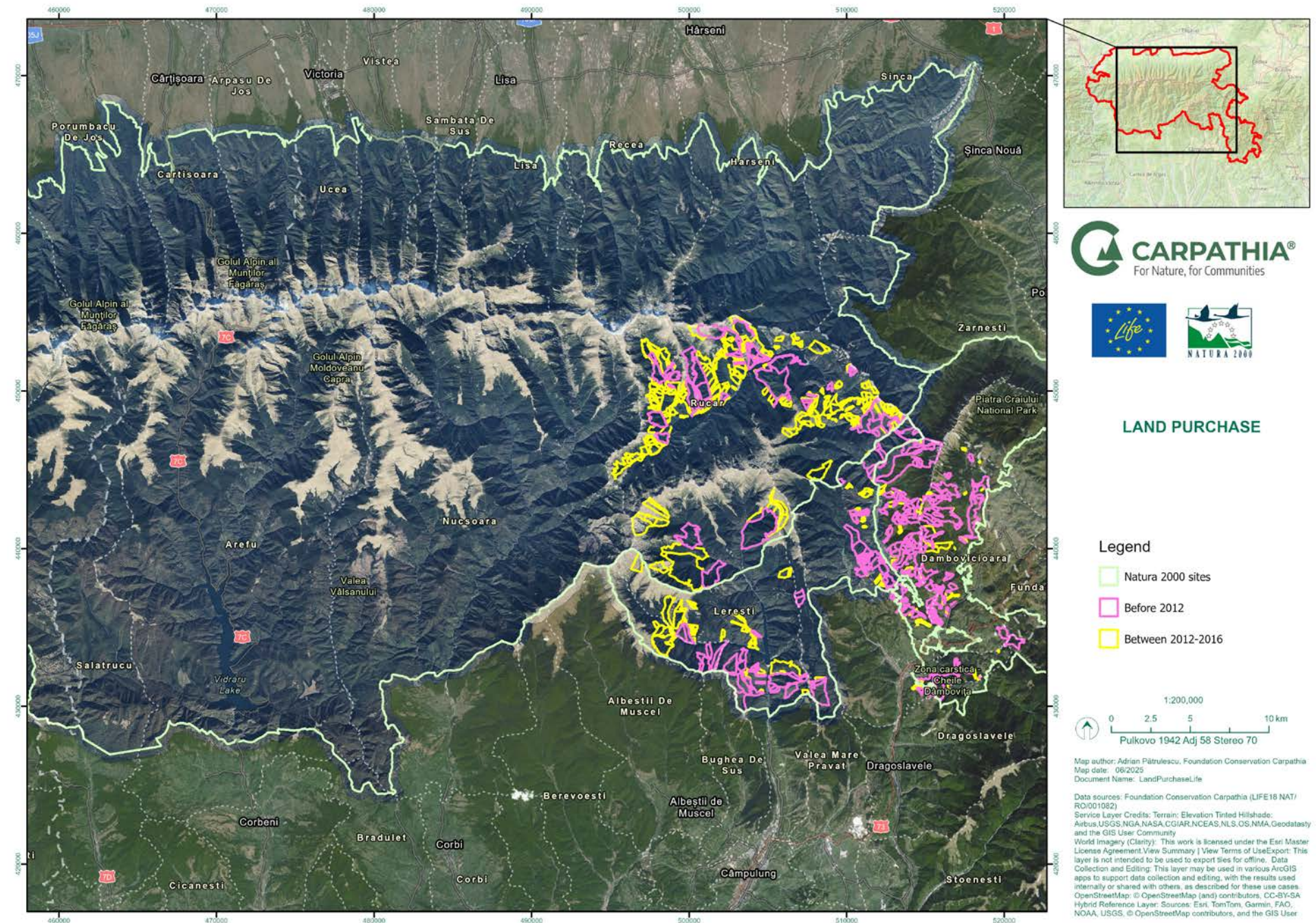




Impact LIFE I



Impact LIFE I



Habitat restoration and increase in protected forests

Phase III

2019-2025

Local Communities
and Economy



Funding opportunity

ELSP & LIFE II



End of first LIFE project – NEXT STEPS?

In summer 2017, Arcadia Fund launched the Endangered Landscapes Programme with a call for 8 x \$5m grants for landscape restoration projects.

We designed a combined ELSP/LIFE project as an opportunity to move our project onto the next level.

In 2018 we received the ELSP grant and in summer 2019 a second LIFE grant.



Funding opportunity ELSP & LIFE II

Total LIFE Project Budget:
€ 27,619,867

EU contribution:
€ 9,378,982 Euro

ELSP grant:
\$US 4,999,990

Own contribution (mainly forest
purchase):
€ 13,695,439



ELSP & LIFE II – Conservation Activities

Forest protection and restoration

- Purchase of >4,000 ha of forests for full protection
- At least 750 ha clear-cuts and alpine grasslands restored
- At least 500 ha spruce monoculture converted into natural forest habitats

ELSP & LIFE II – Conservation Activities

Wildlife conservation

- Reintroduction of bison and beavers
- Wildlife protection on 75,000 ha
- Wildlife-human conflict reduction



ELSP & LIFE II – Conservation Activities

Other conservation

- Removal of invasive species
- Conservation of golden eagle
- Bird monitoring

ELSP & LIFE II – Making the National Park

Public Awareness

- Dissemination materials & activities
- Visitor management & Infrastructure dvlpmt
- Study trips & media visits
- Ambassadors & Education
- Expert group

Bun venit!
Welcome!

Centrul
de Activități
și Explorarea
Naturii
Richita

corpathia.org



ELSP & LIFE II – Making the National Park

Green Economy

- Economic assessment & capacity building
- Implementation of conservation enterprise programme
- Food-hub Roadele Muntilor
- Travel Carpathia



ELSP & LIFE II – Making the National Park

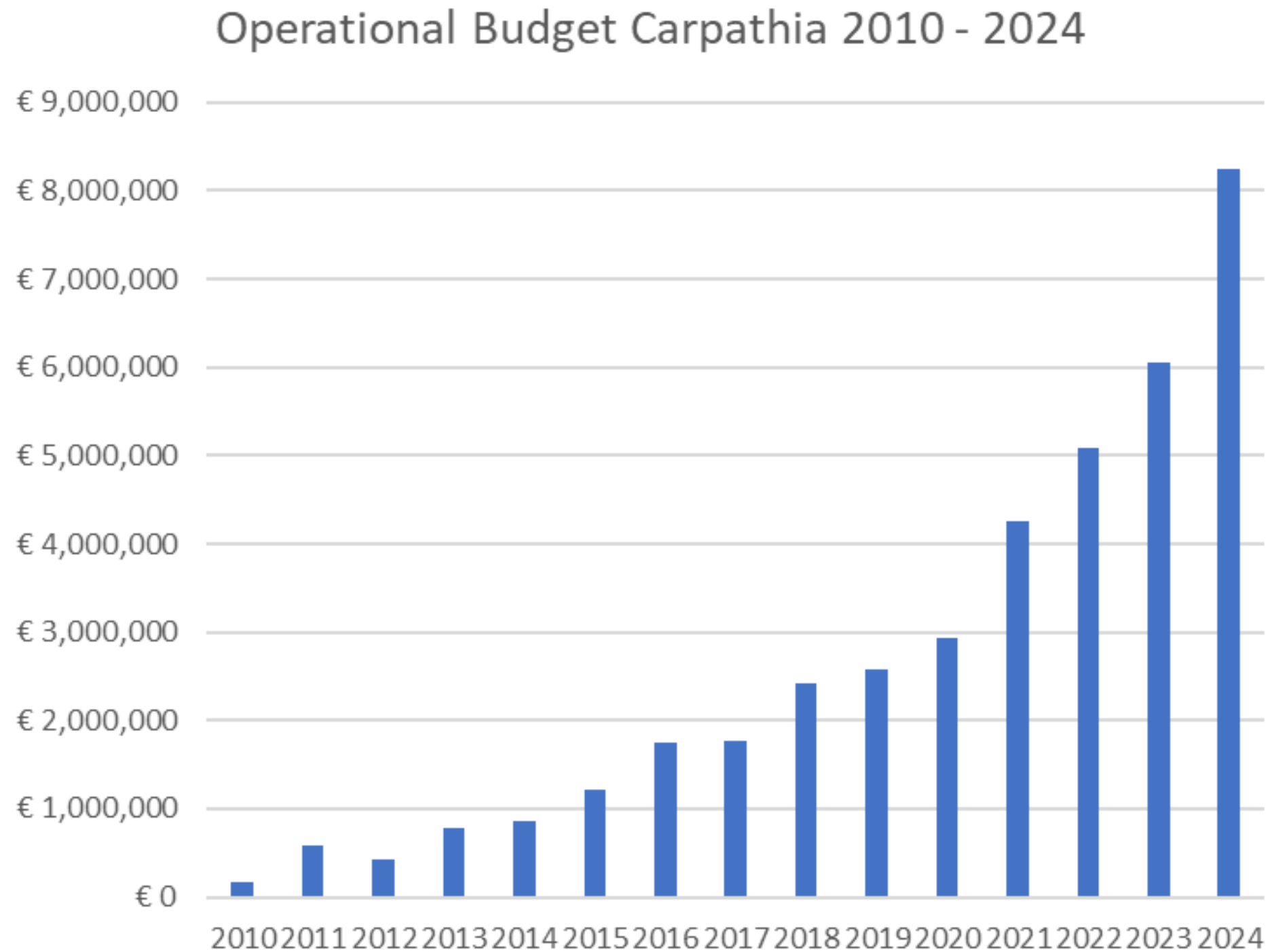
Communities

- Stakeholder Platform
- Local events

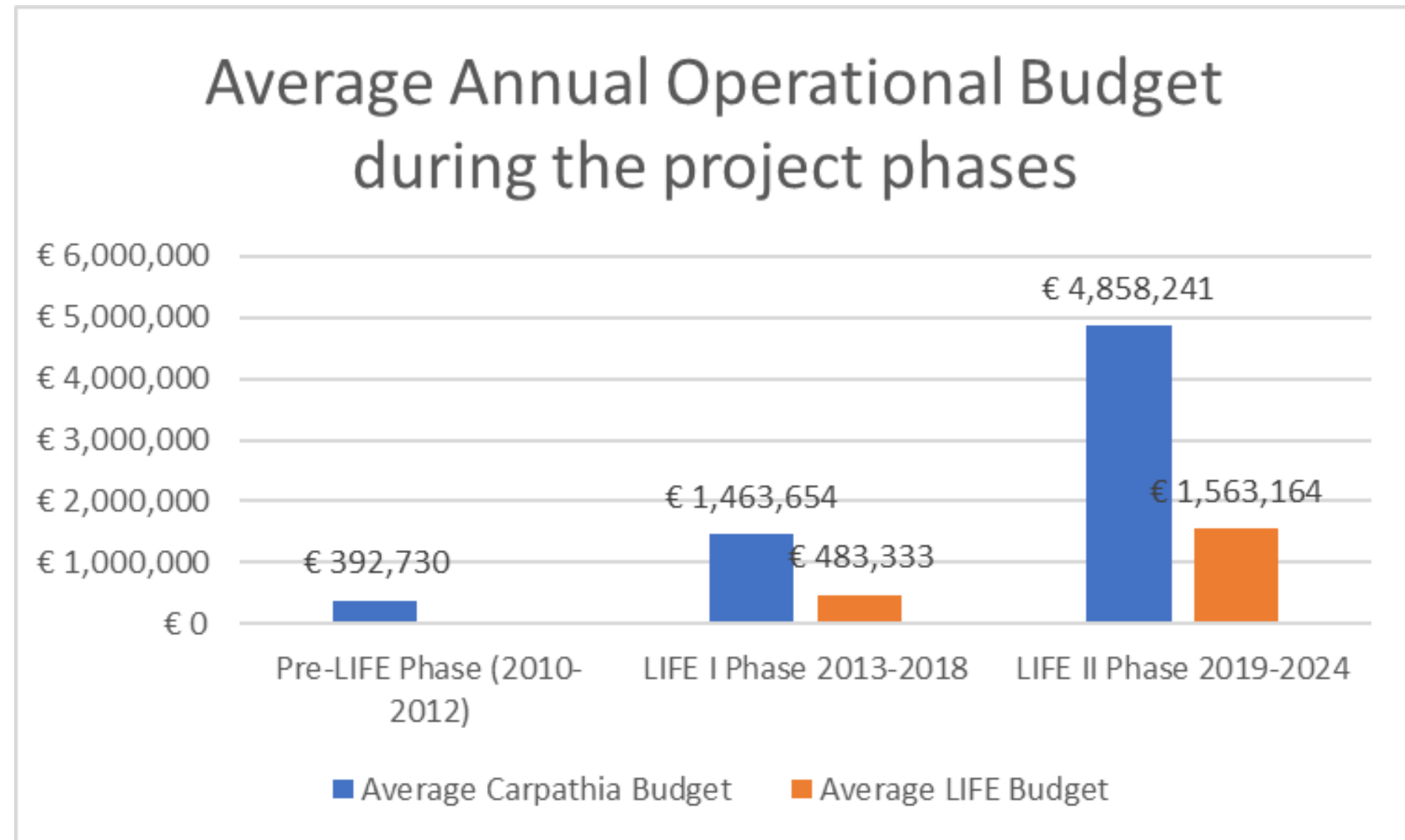
... plus many of the other activities with huge impact upon local communities.



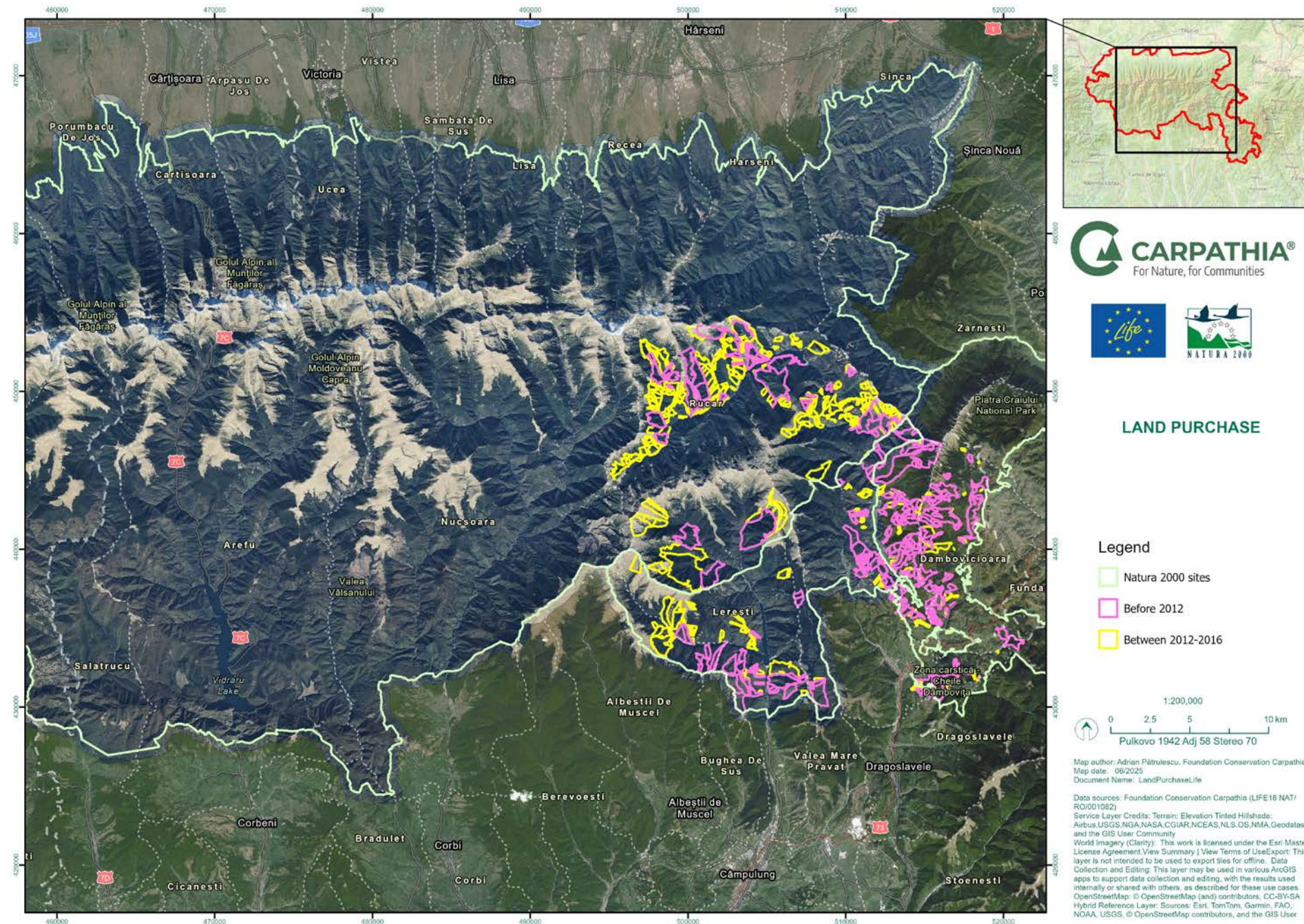
The story of Foundation Conservation Carpathia is a huge success with an exponential increase of conservation spending and a consequent impact upon forest restoration.



This success was triggered by two LIFE projects, which not only directly contributed financially, but also triggered additionally 200% of co-funding.

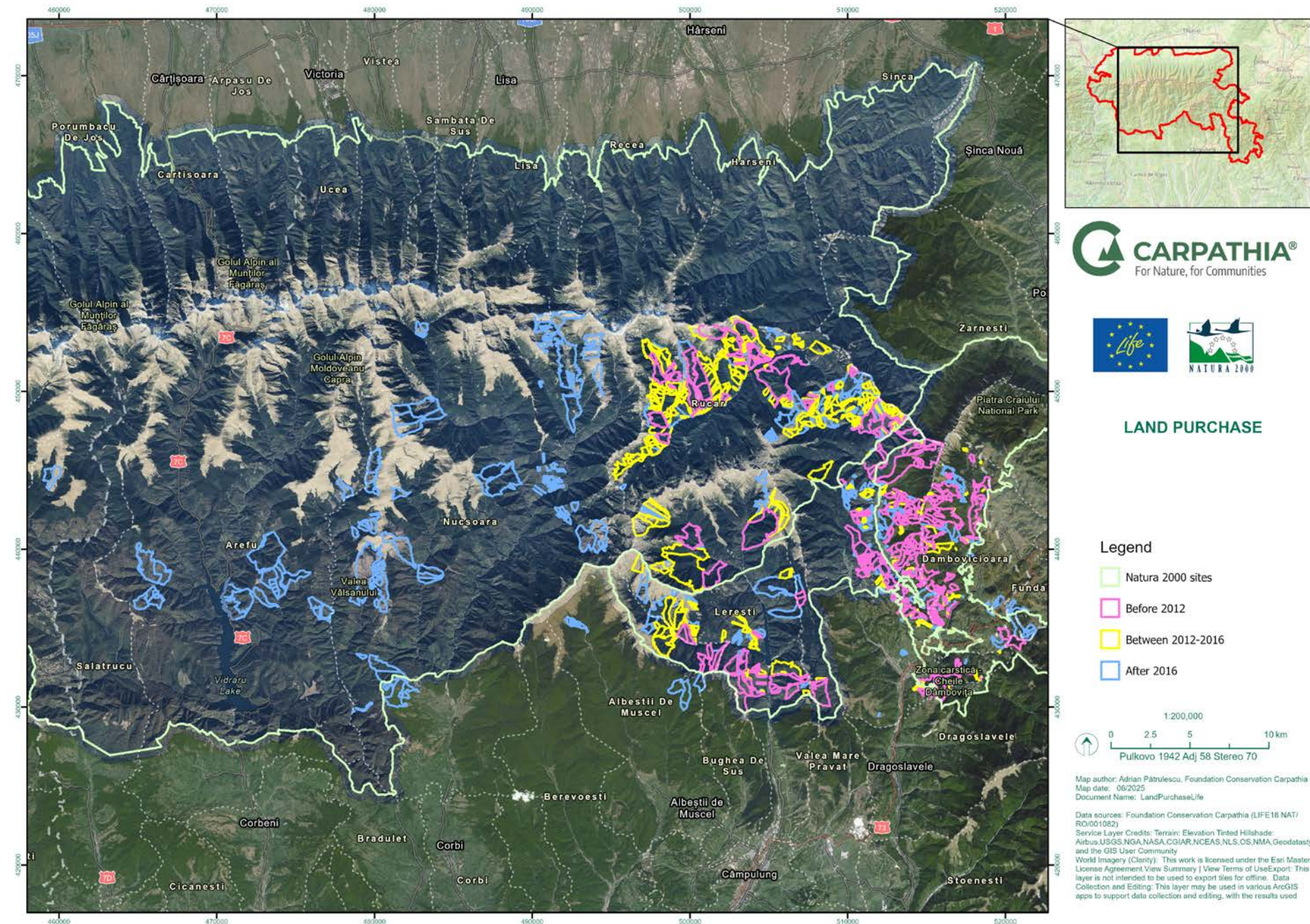


Impact LIFE II





Impact LIFE II



Forest restoration and conservation in 12 communes and regional voice

End of 2019 we organise a series of public hearings to explain the project to the public and to local communities.

An orchestrated group of National Park opponents goes from public hearing to public hearing and blows up every event.

2019



In spring 2025, we ended the project with an event, where we presented the results of the 6 years of work.

250 people came from the local communities, amongst them 14 local mayors. We didn't hear a single negative voice and all invited us to increase our activities in their respective communes.



Thank you LIFE!

