



# **euRONATUR**

## **Annual report 2018**

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Photo: Bruno De Lorenzo - Great White Egret (Ardea alba) - Kiskunsági Nemzeti Park

Photo: Kerstin Sauer



## Dear Friends of EuroNatur,

I am haunted by the UN report on the state of nature. The three-year assessment was produced by 145 scientists of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the results of this landmark global assessment are shocking: The researchers predict that one in every eight species will die out over the coming decades unless we radically restructure our economic activities. It is highly likely that some faunal groups, such as corals, will almost completely vanish from our planet, with unforeseeable consequences for other marine wildlife and for the human race.

When we look at these nightmare scenarios, some of the achievements in nature conservation appear to be nothing more than the proverbial drops in the ocean. But every one of these drops has the potential to kick off positive developments. An example would be the protection of Europe's last wild and free-flowing rivers: Since the commencement of the "Save the Blue Heart of Europe" campaign we have been able to significantly improve the baseline data and knowledge on the ecological value

of the Balkan rivers; the 'Eco-Masterplan' we published in late 2018 comprehensively pools this knowledge. We can now provide decision-makers in politics and finance with clearly documented evidence of the importance of halting the hydropower tsunami in south-eastern Europe. The "Blue Heart" documentary has touched people's hearts and minds. Approximately 30,000 people watched the film about the Balkan rivers last year and a huge petition calling on the international banks to stop investing in the destruction of the Balkan rivers had many more names behind it.

In the 1990s, when EuroNatur commenced its efforts to protect the Mediterranean monk seal, the outlook for these marine mammals was very bleak. The species was on the brink of extinction. Together with our partners in Greece and Mauritania we started an elaborate conservation project. Large areas have been designated as protected areas, the seals' pupping caves are heavily guarded and fishermen have been convinced to stop killing monk seals which they regarded as bothersome competitors. This package of measures has resulted in the gradual recovery of the Mediterranean monk seal populations and the recolonization by the monk seals of regions in the Mediterranean that they had abandoned.

This development shows us that species decline is not an inescapable fate. Together with our local partners we passionately fight for the protection of free-flowing rivers, large mammals, migratory birds and old-growth forests. Our expansive network allows us to stand up to powerful foes. Last year we have seen once again that Goliath can suffer painful defeats at the hands of David!

Our achievements would be impossible without the support by our donors, funders and sponsors. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude for your loyalty! On the following pages we would like to give you an impression of what we have achieved together in 2018 for the benefit of Europe's natural heritage.

I trust that this report will make enjoyable and interesting reading. Yours sincerely,

Christel Schroeder  
President of EuroNatur Foundation



Photo: Gunter Willinger - Biala Reka / Bulgaria



## EuroNatur – Connecting nature and people

We are committed to connecting nature and people in a peaceful Europe – beyond national borders. Our donors support us in this endeavour.

The growth-oriented way we lead our lives and run our economies at this point in history is characterized by ruthless exploitation of natural resources and has resulted in the pervasive destruction of nature as well as in drastic climate change. People all around the world are feeling the resultant adverse effects.

Nature is the natural resource base on which all humans depend. Species and habitat diversity are prerequisites of a quality environment. Our aim is a European continent that hosts free-flowing rivers, pristine forests and diverse cultural landscapes and that offers sufficient space for wild animals and migrating birds within these and other ecosystems.

### Our mode of operation

Our efforts for the protection of plants, animals and habitats are transboundary in nature; we strengthen local conservation organizations and create international networks between them. Together with our Europe-wide partner network we create solutions that allow humans to live and work in harmony with nature. In our work we follow a well-proven approach:

#### ■ knowing

Using reputable scientific studies, we provide evidence of the conservation importance and uniqueness of species, landscapes and habitats and of the threats they face.

#### ■ protecting

We work on driving forward the formal protection of endangered species as well as of habitats and landscapes of particular high ecological value. To this end we utilize national and international political structures.

#### ■ safeguarding

Protected areas and species must be given sustained effective protection. We support control measures and make our demands for rigorous protection measures heard in national and international political institutions as well as in the courts. Where necessary, we exert public pressure on decision-makers (for example by way of protests and media attention).

#### ■ living

We generate acceptance of the need for protection and potentially associated restrictions for the local communities. Together with the local people we establish ecologically compatible land-use methods in protected habitats that open up socio-economic prospects. This helps us to win over local people as partners for achieving our conservation objectives, thus laying the groundwork for the long-term effectiveness of our efforts.

## Important project areas

- ① Cantabrian Mountains (Spain)
- ② Senne (Germany)
- ③ Brandenburg (Germany)
- ④ Narew/Podlasie (Poland)
- ⑤ Western Beskidy Mountains (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia)
- ⑥ Bohemian Forest/Šumava (Czech Republic)
- ⑦ Sava Floodplains (Croatia)
- ⑧ Livanjsko Polje (Bosnia-Herzegovina)
- ⑨ Neretva Delta (Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina)
- ⑩ Labudovo Okno (Serbia)
- ⑪ Bojana-Buna and Ulcinj Salina (Montenegro, Albania)
- ⑫ Karavasta Lagoon (Albania)
- ⑬ Albanian Alps (Albania)
- ⑭ Munella Mountains, Korab Koritnik and Mavrovo National Park (Albania, North Macedonia)
- ⑮ Jablanica-Shebenik Mountains (Albania, North Macedonia)
- ⑯ Šar Mountains (North Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo)
- ⑰ Vjosa/Aoos (Albania, Greece)
- ⑱ Osogovo Mountains (Bulgaria, North Macedonia)
- ⑲ Sakar Mountains (Bulgaria)
- ⑳ Carpathian Mountains (Romania)
- ㉑ Sudetes (Poland, Czech Republic)
- ㉒ Northern Dinarides (Slovenia, Croatia, Italy)
- ㉓ Prespa Basin (Albania, North Macedonia, Greece)



Photo: Gzim Sinani - Green Belt photo competition / Hajla Peak, Rugove



## Transboundary nature conservation

Along the former Iron Curtain we can find a green network of species-rich habitats the likes of which have become very hard to find in the rest of Europe. The European Green Belt stretches from the northernmost Fennoscandia southward to the Black Sea and the Adriatic Sea.

During the Cold War period, wild mountain and river landscapes, old-growth forests and species-rich cultural landscapes stayed intact in the shadows of the exclusion zone between the East and the West.

### The Green Belt is under threat

The "closed season" for nature ended however in the early 1990s: The forests are becoming fragmented as a result of roadbuilding and logging, river landscapes are getting obstructed by hydropower plants and almost pristine mountain landscapes are getting destroyed by ski tourism. Nature is under ever-growing pressure, especially in south-eastern Europe.

### Symbolic of a peaceful Europe

It is our common responsibility to protect Europe's longest ecological network. The European Green Belt Initiative is dedicated to this mission. Its work is carried out by people from 24 European countries, making the Green Belt not only Europe's largest conservation initiative but also a positive example of overcoming ecological, cultural and geographical borders. The exclusion zone between the East and the West which had for a long time been emblematic of political tensions and division has today become a symbol of peace. The prime objective is to establish more firmly in European society the idea behind the initiative, which requires that all relevant governmental and non-governmental conservation bodies along the European

Green Belt come on board. In our role as regional coordinator of conservation activities along the Balkan Green Belt, EuroNatur together with the local partners is developing pilot projects for the transboundary protection of valuable natural and cultural landscapes.



## Selected EuroNatur projects in 2018

### European Green Belt Initiative: Many actors – one vision

#### Geographical location in Europe

Ecosystem network with an extraordinarily high level of biodiversity, forming a 12,500 km long corridor along the route of the former Iron Curtain (Map p. 5). The European Green Belt connects eight biogeographical regions and 24 nations.

#### Situation

The establishment in 2014 of the European Green Belt Association e.V. (EGBA) was an important milestone in the advancement of the European Green Belt Initiative. Governmental and non-governmental European Green Belt stakeholders work together in the EGBA, which is chaired by EuroNatur. Conservation activities carried out by the numerous actors involved are coordinated by four regional coordinators. EuroNatur is the regional coordinator for the Balkan Green Belt, the European Green Belt's southernmost section.

#### Objectives

Our common aim is to structurally advance and bring substantive progress to the European Green Belt Initiative, to gain backing and support in society at large and in the political sphere for the Green Belt as a pan-European habitat network, and to highlight the initiative's contribution to achieving important international conservation objectives.

Moreover, we hope to establish the Green Belt as a model for the further development of Green Infrastructure in Europe and thus as a positive example of maintaining the natural resource base on which life is built. Transboundary conservation projects generate exemplary cooperative partnerships.

#### Selected activities in 2018

- In October 2018, at the 10th Pan-European Green Belt Conference, more than 100 actors came together from 20 countries along the European Green Belt. They drew up joint demands to be put to governments and parliaments regarding the protection and future development of the Green Belt, and they agreed the next activities to be undertaken.
- Based on comprehensive analyses – primarily of the various habitat types and existing protected areas – a spatial delimitation of the Green Belt was developed and officially adopted by the EGBA.
- Once again, the European Green Belt Days were held with a view to strengthening awareness, encouragement and support for the European Green Belt. Together with local partners, EuroNatur organized several highly visible activities along the Balkan Green Belt, including the summiting of the mountain at the trijunction of Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo. More than 50 people from five countries thus highlighted the transboundary conservation efforts in the Balkans.

#### Selected achievements in 2018

- The delimitation of areas considered to be part of the European Green Belt provides a valuable basis for arguments to support their protection in discussions with decision-makers. For example, it has for the first time made possible analyses of the significance of the Green Belt for the European Green Infrastructure.
- The "European Green Belt Days" have become well established and now significantly contribute to the European Green Belt Initiative's visibility.

#### Outlook

We endeavour to further boost the European Green Belt Initiative's significance at the EU level and, in particular, to more intensively promote the initiative vis-à-vis the EU Commission as a model for Green Infrastructure in Europe. The European Green Belt Days will again be held in 2019 with a view to raising the initiative's profile.

**Partners:** BUND, IUCN and all stakeholders at the European Green Belt  
**Funding:** BfN with funds provided by BMUB, DBU, EuroNatur's donors





## Šar Mountains: Conservation in the tri-border area

### Geographical location in Europe

The Šar-Korab-Koritnik mountain range (Map p. 5, No. 16 and 14) as part of the Balkan Green Belt is located in the tri-border area of North Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania. On the Kosovan side the region is designated as a national park, on the Albanian side as a nature park. The North Macedonian part of the Šar Mountains is not protected.

### Status

The Šar Mountains in particular are a biodiversity hotspot. In addition to rare plant and animal species that in their distribution are restricted to these mountains, the region also still hosts European large mammals such as brown bears and wolves. However, the natural treasures of this mountain massif are under threat from clear-felling, construction projects and other forms of overexploitation.

### Objectives

Our aim is to achieve the transboundary protection and management of the Šar-Korab-Koritnik region's biodiversity, so as to maintain the ecosystem as a whole. We also aim for the sustainable management of natural resources and the designation as a national park of the North Macedonian Šar Mountains.

### Selected activities in 2018

- We analysed the formation process of the "Friends of Shara" action group. Based on the results we identified suitable actors in the areas of nature conservation, tourism and social affairs in Kosovo and Albania which are to initiate the establishment of similar local action groups for conservation in those countries.
- Three workshops were held, each with more than 20 representatives of the competent ministries, protected area administrations and municipalities, who were made aware of the area's conservation needs and trained in transboundary ecosystem management.

### Important achievements in 2018

- The "Friends of Shara" have keenly shared their knowledge and experiences with selected actors in the neighbouring countries.
- Seventeen of the workshop participants qualified as "ambassadors of transboundary ecosystem management". They now spread the idea and advocate for the area's transnational protection and for trilateral cooperation between the countries concerned.

### Outlook

We will continue to work towards improving the conditions for the transboundary protection of the Šar-Korab-Koritnik region's natural treasures.

### Local action group now propels its own momentum

For several years now, together with our partners we have been lobbying for the designation as a national park of the Šar Mountains in North Macedonia. We have been successful in turning the initial resistance on the part of the local population into pro-national park sentiment. A representative survey taken in 2016 showed that 83 percent of the local people were in favour of the establishment of a national park. A small projects programme for improved marketing of regional products and for the establishment of green tourism offers contributed to gaining people's support for the national park designation. They realized that the local communities can benefit from biodiversity protection. In 2015, representatives of local conservation associations established the "Friends of Shara" action group which initiated a pro-national park campaign. Since then the action group has autonomously been organizing events and lobbying for national park designation and it is receiving support from the local population.

**Partners:** GIZ, MES, Finch, PPNEA, "Friends of Shara" action group

**Funding:** BMZ, EuroNatur's donors





## PrespaNet: Civil society takes the lead

### Geographical location in Europe

The Prespa Basin with the Great Prespa Lake and the Small Prespa Lake (Map p. 5, No. 23) is located along the Balkan Green Belt in the border region of North Macedonia, Albania and Greece.

### Status

The varied mountain landscape and its lakelands is one of the highest nature value sections of the European Green Belt. Approximately 2,500 plant species occur in the Prespa Basin. The area also hosts endangered bird species such as the Dalmatian pelican of which it still hosts a sizeable breeding population. The pelicans benefit from the abundance of fish living in the lakes. Bears, wolves and lynx also persist in the region. This natural treasure is under threat, however, primarily from overfishing, intensive irrigation farming, and overgrazing. In 2013, EuroNatur's three partner organizations Macedonian Ecological Society (MES), Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania (PPNEA) and Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP) established the PrespaNet transboundary environmental network in Greece. The joint initiative is a response to the governments' apparent inability to address the urgent ecological issues in the tri-border region. PrespaNet does not only make an essential contribution to the protection of natural

resources but also contributes to intercultural understanding. This is the first time conservation organizations in the three Prespa Basin countries have come together to implement a larger project.

### Objectives

The aim is to ensure the transboundary and long-term protection of the Prespa Basin's natural and cultural treasures and the region's development for the benefit of humans and nature. The PrespaNet project endeavours to become a positive example of civil society engagement and transboundary cooperation in the Balkans.

### Selected activities and achievements in 2018

- MES opened a branch office focused on environmental education in Resen at the Great Prespa Lake. The office is lead by an expert on nature conservation and environmental protection who has roots in the area. With her local knowledge and her network she is excellently suited to advancing conservation efforts in the region.
- SPP was able to establish a group of roughly 15 volunteers who primarily support fieldwork with respect to the monitoring of bears, wolves, lynx and jackals in the Prespa Basin. The fieldwork is designed to improve the knowledge base and make it possible to afford the animals with better

protection. This is a major success in a region in which volunteer engagement is almost unknown.

- With its summer school in the Albanian part of the Prespa Basin, PPNEA organized an educational event for young people from all three countries. The participants were taught various fieldwork methods. Some of the participants have since been participating in the monitoring of large predators.
- In close cooperation, MES and SPP mapped the wet meadows and pastures in the North Macedonian part of the Prespa Basin in accordance with the specifications of the European Habitats Directive. In this context, MES was able to benefit from SPP's wealth of experience. Based on the results of the mapping it is now possible to draw up a comprehensive restoration plan.

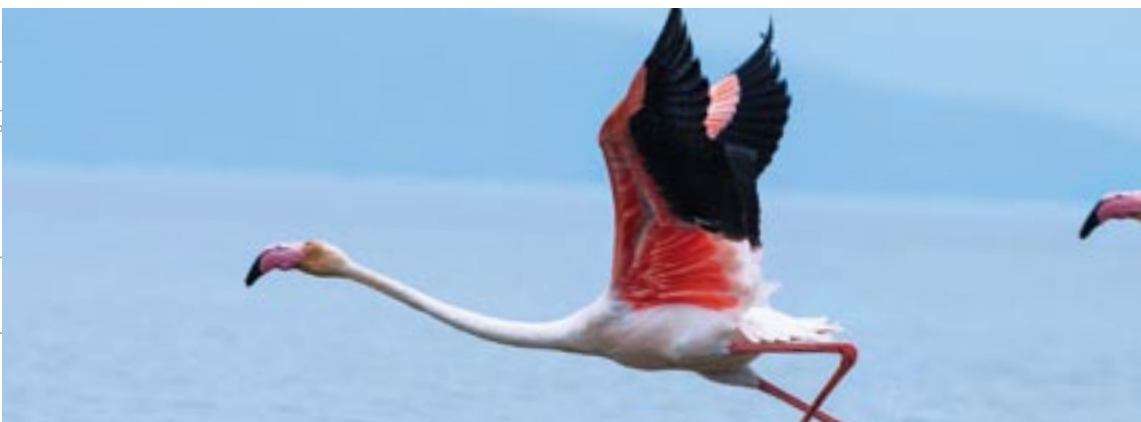
### Outlook

In 2019, PPNEA will also open a branch office in the Prespa Basin so as to establish a local presence. A further expansion of the transboundary cooperation is planned.

**Partners:** MES, PPNEA, SPP

**Funding:** PONT, Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, EuroNatur's donors

Photo: Datanreya Patra / unsplash - Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*)



## Protecting migratory birds in Europe

Bird migrations are among the most amazing natural spectacles on our planet. Many birds cover distances of more than 10,000 km in a single trip. The migration routes have evolved over thousands of years. One of these is the Adriatic Flyway which stretches across the Balkans, the Adriatic Sea and southern Italy all the way to northern Africa. The Adriatic Flyway is an important focus of the EuroNatur projects devoted to protecting migratory birds.

### An array of threats along the Adriatic Sea

The nomads of the sky face numerous threats on their migrations. Every year millions of birds fall victim to the shotguns of illegal hunters. Moreover, tillage farming in the Balkans is becoming ever more industrialized. Where in the past one could find clusters of small farms, there are now monotonous landscapes composed of huge arable plots, often mono-cropped and poisoned with pesticides. As a result, the migrating birds are no longer able to find sufficient sustenance on their exhausting journeys.

### Our mission

A variety of protective measures are required to reverse these alarming trends. We are committed to ensuring that selected areas along the Adriatic Flyway are designated as no-hunting zones and that these areas are regularly monitored so as to put an end to the illegal killing of birds. We are also fighting to preserve the last semi-natural wetlands in south-eastern Europe. Moreover, we are advocating for more stringent sanctions against the intentional poisoning of birds of prey and aim to achieve a ban on lead shot for hunting. Lead shot kills not only aquatic birds who

mistake the lead pellets for food but also birds of prey who feed on the poisoned carcasses and over time die of lead poisoning themselves.

### Allies at the European level

The protection of migratory birds is transboundary species protection par excellence. In 2018, EuroNatur was able to further expand their cooperation with other conservation organizations and committees that are active at the international level. One major success has been the approval by the Serbian parliament of a law which provides for Serbia's accession to the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). The Bern and Bonn Conventions – two important international conventions on the protection of species – last year began to monitor by means of a points system the signatory countries' progress on combating illegal hunting. Our partner organizations in the Balkans have also submitted their results. However, given that there was a great deal of resistance against the points system on the part of some of the Balkan countries, the actual significance of this instrument for species protection cannot yet be determined.

## Selected EuroNatur projects in 2018

### Protecting white storks from Spain to Turkey

#### Geographical location in Europe

European Stork Villages and other project areas in Croatia, Hungary, Germany, Spain, Romania, Slovenia, Poland, Austria, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Turkey, North Macedonia, Slovakia, Serbia and Greece.

#### Status

All over Europe more and more wet grasslands have been converted to monotonous arable land in recent years. In order to counter this trend, EuroNatur and its partners are working to protect wet grasslands, both meadows and pastures. The stork villages EuroNatur has recognized all over Europe are "flagship projects" in this respect. White storks are popular all across the continent and are very well suited to draw attention to the risks to its wet grassland habitats and all the other species they host.

#### Objectives

Our aim is for the European Stork Villages to be seen as national vanguards of stork protection. Starting from the existing stork villages we are working towards initiating "copycat" projects in the countries concerned, the focus of which will be on habitat protection measures. Such measures will not only benefit the storks, as the maintenance of their habitats automatically creates improved conditions for the common snipe, northern lapwing and black-tailed godwit.

#### Selected activities in 2018

- Sites were purchased in a number of countries with a view to implementing management measures such as scrub removal or gradual re-wetting.
- The 15th conference of European Stork Villages was held on June 14-17, 2018 in the Swiss Stork Village of Altreu. The stork protectors engaged in intensive exchanges with regard to the development of their villages and stork populations. The threats posed by power lines and electricity pylons were another important topic, given that they are an ongoing driver of stork mortality through collision or electrocution.

#### Important achievements in 2018

- The year 2018 saw the successful conclusion of five projects aimed at improving stork habitats, including the restoration and enhancement of numerous meadows and pastures, the establishment of new ponds, or the removal of rubbish.
- The [storkvillages.net](http://storkvillages.net) website has improved the initiative's external image and allows for easy exchanges between the stork villages.



Photo: Stork Village Bazica

#### Outlook

- In 2019 we are planning to develop a strategy for the further development of the network of European Stork Villages. There will also be another meeting of the villages in 2019.

#### Meadows and pastures for white stork & Co.

The European-wide project for the maintenance of wet meadows and pastures has been underway for four years. Storks all the way from Spain to Turkey are benefiting from the measures taken: Nine large-scale habitat restorations have been implemented in eight countries, among other measures. A total of 145 hectares of wet grassland were restored and/or enhanced; this is roughly equivalent to the size of 812 soccer fields.

**Partners:** Ciconia Foundation, Swiss Stork Society (Gesellschaft Storch Schweiz), European Stork Villages and their national partners in conservation

**Funding:** RHW-Stiftung, Pancivis Foundation, Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, Bristol Stiftung (Switzerland), EU LIFE, Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors



## Shot and poisoned: Dangerous Adriatic Flyway

### Geographical location in Europe

Bird habitats along the Adriatic Flyway in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Albania. The Adriatic Flyway stretches from north-eastern Europe through the Balkans down to Africa. Key areas are the Neretva Delta including the Hutovo Blato Nature Park in the border area of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the karstic Livanjsko polje in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the near-natural Labudovo Okno wetland along the Danube in Serbia and the Bojana-Buna Delta including the Ulcinj Salina in the border area of Montenegro and Albania (Map p.5, No. 9, 8, 10, 11).

### Status

Only a small number of near-natural breeding, resting and overwintering areas for migratory birds remain along the Adriatic Flyway as a result of the intensification of agriculture and increasing mass tourism. And in most of these remaining areas, birds, and waterbirds in particular, are being illegally hunted. In addition, there is the problem of poisoning. Birds come into contact with poisoned bait which is mostly targeting other carrion feeders such as wolves or jackals, or they die from lead poisoning by ingesting lead particles which had entered the environment in the form of lead shot for hunting.

### Objectives

Our aim is to reduce bird hunting by 50 percent by 2022 in selected project areas and by 20 percent in the entire Mediterranean region, with the latter to be achieved with the help of our expansive network of conservation partners. We are also working towards furthering knowledge on the extent of illegal killings of birds along the Adriatic Flyway and towards raising public awareness of the issue. Moreover, we endeavour to persuade the national governments to increase their efforts to combat illegal hunting by means of appropriate policies and statutory instruments. Our aim is to foster and extend our transboundary and cross-stakeholder network concerned with combating illegal hunting. Additionally, we are fighting for the designation as a protected area of the Ulcinj Salina in Montenegro, one of the most important wetlands on the Adriatic coast (for further information please refer to p. 29).

### Selected activities in 2018

- The "Balkan Bird Crime Task Force" was established. It serves to swiftly and easily exchange information on and evidence of illegal bird hunting between project partners by means of an online portal, and to coordinate appropriate action.
- For many years now, our partners in conservation have collected data on poisonings of vultures in the Balkans. These efforts have resulted in a study which was published in December 2018 under the aegis of the Vulture Conservation Foundation. The results are alarming: more than 2,300 vultures are assumed to have fallen victim to poisoned bait over the past 20 years.
- The book "Die Vögel Europas" – the ornithologists' standard reference – was translated into Croatian by our partner Biom. Published under the title of "Ptice. Hrvatske i Europe" it now also allows hobby ornithologists in Croatia to identify any bird species with certainty.





## Important achievements in 2018

- The cooperation between our partners in the Balkans and local law enforcement has been proving fruitful. Once again, illegal hunters in the Neretva Delta were caught in the act and arrested in 2018. Weapons and duck decoys were also confiscated in the Neretva Delta, and illegally constructed hunting shelters were demolished in several countries along the Adriatic Flyway.
- Our Serbian partner organization BPSSS was awarded the renowned Marjan-Marsh Award in London for their commitment to combating illegal bird hunting.

## Outlook

In recent years we have made a great deal of progress on protecting birds along the Adriatic Flyway. Regular patrols in the area and close cooperation with the police have resulted in a decline in hunting in much of the area. We intend to further push ahead with these efforts. But we also aim at significantly reducing other man-made causes of death for birds in the Balkans. In future we will therefore expand our focus to also include the issues of poisoning and electrocution. In addition we will continue our efforts to achieve the designation as a protected area of the Ulcinj Salina under national and international law.

## Hunting illegal hunters in the Neretva Delta

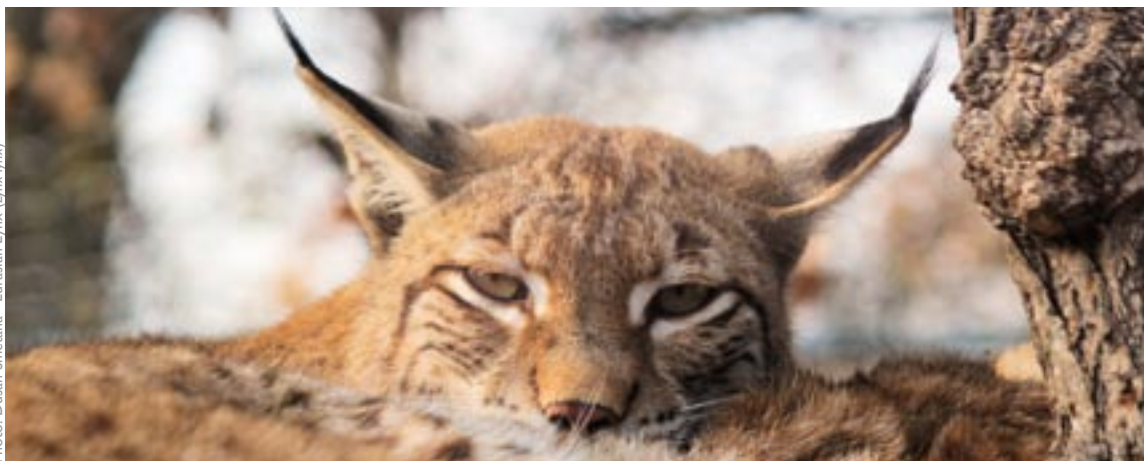
Croatia, in addition to Albania, is among the Balkan countries in which the largest numbers of birds are illegally shot. A particular focus of our Croatian partners' efforts to combat illegal hunting is the Neretva Delta. Since September 2017 they have been organizing camps against illegal hunting several times a year, at times with international participation, and in close cooperation with local law enforcement. The Biom staff has trained more than 400 police officers all over Croatia in how to effectively combat wildlife crimes. The Biom staff is also trying to engage in constructive dialogue with law-abiding hunters in the region, as fewer birds and a bad reputation does not serve them well.

Photo: Willi Rolfes – crane (Grus grus)



**Partners:** BirdLife International, VCF, IUCN Med, Tour du Valat, BPSSS, HDZZP, BIOM, Naše ptice, CZIP, MSJA, PPNEA, AOS, DOPPS, MES, WWF Spain, ATN, WWF Greece  
**Funding:** Mava Foundation, Natum Foundation, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors

Photo: Dusan Smetana - Eurasian Lynx (Lynx lynx)



## Large mammal protection in Europe

In recent years wolves, brown bears and lynx have made something of a comeback in Europe. Together with our partners we are working to protect the "Big Three" and their habitats. Our declared aim is to make possible the peaceful coexistence of wild animals and people. In the marine sphere we are focusing on preventing the extinction of Mediterranean monk seals.

### Lynx

There would no longer be any lynx in Central Europe but for international cooperation. Since 1970, resettlement programmes have re-established the Eurasian lynx in, inter alia, Switzerland, Germany, the Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia, France and Italy. Many of these populations are small and isolated since lynx depend for their survival on unfragmented landscapes and sufficient prey, both of which have become rare in Europe. Illegal hunting is also a massive problem for this species. The Balkan lynx, a subspecies of the Eurasian lynx, is critically endangered. At present, proven occurrences are limited to the Balkan Green Belt in the border region of North Macedonia and Albania and in a smaller region in northern Albania and western Kosovo. The survival of the Balkan lynx and the protection of its last remaining habitats continued to keep us busy in 2018. For further information please refer to pages 16 to 17.



Photo: Thomas Bononetti / Unsplash - Wolves (Canis lupus)

### Wolf

A wolf who is established in his pack does not venture far. But when a young wolf leaves his family ties behind in order to establish his own pack he might cross several national borders. This means that in order to successfully protect wolves we must "think big". Thanks to the decades of protection efforts wolves have begun to re-establish in many regions of Europe, a particularly impressive example being the wolves' recolonization of Germany from Poland since the turn of the millennium. With their support for wolf protection projects in Poland, EuroNatur's donors have significantly contributed to this conservation success story. A particular focus of our activities in 2018 was on the tri-border area of Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. For further information please refer to pages 18 to 19.





### Brown bear

The brown bear's range once covered most of Europe. Today brown bears in Europe are a highly endangered species. It is no coincidence that they are under such strict protection. But that is not enough. Even though in some areas they are expanding their range again thanks to intensive protective measures, they continue to be threatened by humans. Habitat destruction and habitat fragmentation by roads and settlements are putting these big furries under pressure. Additional risk factors are illegal killings and excessive cull quotas. In addition to the Balkan Peninsula, the focus of EuroNatur's brown bear protection activities in 2018 was on northern Spain. The Cantabrian Mountains host a small, isolated, and therefore particularly endangered brown bear population. For further information please refer to page 20.

### Mediterranean monk seal

Mediterranean monk seals count among the world's most highly endangered marine mammals. Centuries of persecution have resulted in the species disappearing from the majority of its former range. Ecosystem destruction, marine pollution and overfishing have brought the Mediterranean monk seals to the brink of extinction. Human activities, and tourism in particular, are threatening the important habitats the seals need for resting and for rearing their young. The last truly sizeable surviving colony of Mediterranean monk seals lives at Cap Blanc, a peninsula on the Mauritanian Atlantic coast. Suitable habitats can also be found along the 16,000 km of Greek coastline. A small population was able to survive on the Greek coast and has slowly been recovering thanks to comprehensive protection measures. We are working to ensure the Mediterranean monk seals' renewed expansion in the eastern Adriatic Sea. For further information please refer to page 21.



## Selected EuroNatur projects in 2018

### Balkan lynx: Protecting a rare cross-border commuter

#### Geographical location in Europe

Mountainous border regions as part of the Balkan Green Belt between Albania and North Macedonia as well as between Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo. A special focus is on the Mavrovo National Park in North Macedonia and on the Munella Mountains in Albania (Map p. 5, No. 14) as these are the only regions known to date in which the Balkan lynx has been shown to still reproduce.

#### Status

The Balkan lynx is a sub-species of the Eurasian lynx and a strictly protected species. According to recent estimates the Balkan lynx population has been reduced to fewer than 50 individuals. Habitat destruction, direct persecution, and the reduction of its prey base due to hunting has brought the Balkan lynx to the brink of extinction.

#### Objectives

Our aim is to achieve that the last remaining habitats of the Balkan lynx are designated as protected areas and managed for the benefit of the Balkan lynx and its prey. We want the Balkan lynx to recolonize its former range, with local communities supporting this rare cat's protection. To this end, we must further develop and strengthen our local partner organizations, plug knowledge gaps with regard to the Balkan lynx's distribution, and raise greater awareness in the political and public spheres as to the species' need for protection.

#### Selected activities in 2018

- We prepared all the necessary documents for an application for the designation as a protected area of the Munella Mountains and submitted these documents to the Ministry of the Environment.
- In the planned Munella protected area we were able to identify more than 20 destinations for nature-based tourism as well as cultural highlights; this is the first step towards the establishment of an ecotourism offer which will generate ecologically compatible income sources for the local communities.
- The teaching module on the Balkan lynx was extended from North Macedonia to Albania and is taught there at local schools.

#### Important achievements in 2018

- By the end of 2018 more than 2,000 pupils had been reached by the educational programme started in North Macedonia in 2015 which aims at raising awareness for the conservation needs of the Balkan lynx.
- All municipalities submitted written statements in support of our application for the designation of the Munella Mountains as a protected area.
- The cooperation with the Mavrovo National Park intensified as a result of the joint implementation of activities for the protection of Balkan lynx. In 2018 the national park appointed a Balkan lynx officer to run such activities.



- We were able to convince the Albanian government to extend the deadline for the review of the game law by six months, thus providing the opportunity for the timely establishment of a platform on sustainable hunting in Albania. Its aim will be to support the establishment of a sustainable hunting regime in Albania and to bring all stakeholders (hunting associations, conservationists and government representatives) to the table.

#### Outlook

We will intensify our focus on political processes. Most importantly our efforts will be targeted at achieving that the Munella Mountains will finally be designated a protected area.

**Partners:** MES, PPNEA, CZIP, Finch, ERA, Stiftung Kora  
**Funding:** Mava Foundation, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors





Photo: LIFE Lynx - installing camera traps



Photo: LIFE Lynx - transporting traps box

## Lynx from the Carpathians strengthen Dinaric population

### Geographical location in Europe

Dinaric Alps in Italy, Slovenia and Croatia (Map p. 5, No. 22). Carpathian Mountains in Slovakia and Romania (Map p. 5, No. 20).

### Status

While the Carpathian Mountains still host a sizeable lynx population, the Dinaric population has become so small and now has such low genetic variability that it is at risk of dying out sooner or later. In order to address this problem, a total of 14 lynx are to be caught in the Romanian and Slovakian Carpathians in order to release them into the wild in Croatia, Slovenia, and at the border with Italy. This "LIFE Lynx" project, which is financed by the European Union and supported by EuroNatur, involves foresters, hunters, scientists, veterinarians and conservationists from five countries. The activities do not however end with the animals' release into the wild. Many accompanying measures are needed such as, for example, avoiding conflicts with keepers of livestock, informing the public, lynx-friendly transport planning, and population monitoring.

### Objectives

The aim is to augment the gene pool of the Dinaric lynx population and to bring this isolated population into contact with other lynx populations, especially the Alpine

population. The long-term objective is to contribute to the reconnection of isolated lynx populations in Central and Western Europe.

### Selected activities in 2018

- Lynx tracks and hair samples were analyzed and camera traps installed in both the Dinaric Alps and the Carpathian Mountains. The results of this research allow the lynx teams to precisely assess the situation before and after the reintroductions and to monitor their success. This also serves to ensure that the captures do not significantly weaken the source population.
- Prior to releasing the first lynx into the wild, the lynx teams in Croatia and Slovenia invested a great deal of time and energy in order to establish a sound basis for cooperation with hunters and hunting associations. Among other activities, hunters were trained in operating camera traps. Their acceptance and assistance is crucial for the project's success.

### Important achievements in 2018

- A functioning network of hunters, foresters and protected area rangers was established in the reintroduction areas. In Croatia for example the first ever national monitoring of the lynx population was conducted.
- The project attracted a great deal of media and public interest, both nationally and internationally.

### Outlook

In 2019 the first lynx individuals are captured and re-released into the wild. Parallel efforts are underway to create the best possible conditions for the animals' survival in the reintroduction areas. Public relations and educational work are crucial to these efforts.

**Partners:** University of Zagreb, Slovenia Forest Service, Hunters Association of Slovenia, Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation, Technical University in Zvolen, University of Ljubljana, Progetto Lince Italia, Karlovac University, Biom, ACDB, Italian Carabinieri special command unit for the protection of forests, the environment, and the agri-food sector

**Funding:** EU LIFE, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors, and others

**Internet:** [www.lifelynx.eu](http://www.lifelynx.eu), [www.facebook.com/LIFELynx.eu](https://www.facebook.com/LIFELynx.eu)



## Hunted hunters: Wolves in Slovakia

### Geographical location in Europe

Central Slovakia

### Status

Despite Slovakia's EU membership and the resultant status of wolves as a strictly protected species, wolves can still officially be hunted in Slovakia. This is particularly problematic given that there are no reliable data on the size of the Slovakian wolf population. Moreover, the hunting of wolves in Slovakia negatively impacts on the populations in neighbouring countries; in essence Slovakia is a sort of a Bermuda triangle for wolves in eastern Central Europe.

### Objectives

Our aim is to have a scientifically sound monitoring system in place for wolves which produces reliable estimates as to the country's wolf population. Only on that basis can we put forward recommendations for the cull quota. For the short-term we call for a reduction in the numbers culled and for an expansion of the protection zones for wolves. Our long-term objective is the complete cessation of wolf culls in Slovakia.

### Selected activities in 2018

- Our partners at CWS continued their monitoring of wolf populations in Polána and Velka Fatra and commenced new monitoring efforts in the Slovak Karst National Park. Reliable data on wolf populations are particularly important given the planned construction of a motorway in the immediate vicinity of the national park and given the fact that the areas around the Slovak Karst national park constitute a well frequented wolf migration corridor. We need sound arguments in favour of the construction of wildlife crossings.

### Important achievements in 2018

- Owing to targeted PR work and intensive cooperation with hunters and livestock producers we were able to enhance the wolves' reputation in Slovakia.

### Outlook

The monitoring of wolf populations in Slovakia by our partners is to be continued until such time as a sound estimate of the species' current status is available for the entire country. When it comes to the construction of motorways along the wolves' migration corridors, we will push for the construction of wildlife crossings.

### Increasingly fewer wolf culls

Despite the ongoing critical situation, together with our partners at CWS we have achieved a steady reduction in the cull quota for wolves in Slovakia in recent years, i.e. from 150 individuals in 2010 to 70 individuals in the most recent quota. Additionally we were able to achieve a ban on the hunting of wolves with dogs as well as a maximum cull of one wolf per hunting area and year. These achievements are due in part to the good cooperation between CWS and Slovakia's nature conservation authority.

Partner: CWS

Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors



## Transboundary wolf protection in the Sudetes

### Geographical location in Europe

Border region of Poland and the Czech Republic, with a focus on the Sudetes (Map p. 5, No. 21).

### Status

Wolves are slowly expanding their range back into areas of Europe from which they had been absent for a long time and they are also settling in areas parts of which are densely populated and intensively used by humans. The potential for human-wildlife conflict is high. Wolves recently also returned to the Sudetes on the border of Poland and the Czech Republic. The Sudetes mountain range is highly frequented by tourists year-round. Moreover, increasing settlement and land-use intensity have resulted in the wolves' habitats to become more and more fragmented. The predator's return to the Sudetes is a cause of unease among the locals. Wolves have been absent here for so long that people have no memory of living alongside them. Some politicians capitalized on people's fears and challenged the wolves' protective status prior to the 2018 Polish local elections.

### Objectives

Our aim is to ensure that wolves continue to enjoy the status of a strictly protected species on both sides of the

Sudetes. We endeavour to achieve a high level of acceptance for *Canis lupus* in the general public and in the political sphere. Targeted protection measures, such as the construction of wildlife crossings, aim at ensuring the wolves' long-term survival in the border region of Poland and the Czech Republic.

### Selected activities in 2018

- Our project partner together with volunteers conducted patrols in the region, in the course of which they removed illegal poisoned bait and informed the authorities of the same.
- In the Czech Republic, our partners at Hnutí Duha placed several articles and a TV report in the media. At seminars primarily targeted at hunters and volunteer helpers, our Polish partners at Wilk lectured on the economic "benefit" of wolves, explaining how the predation by wolves of roe deer and red deer contributes to natural forest regeneration. Another strong argument used to convince decision-makers who are sceptic of the wolves' return: The Polish Ministry of Agriculture pays out 150 euros per head of wild boar killed in order to halt the spread of African swine fever. Wolves in Poland kill approximately 40,000 wild boar every year; this equates to budget savings of approximately 6 million euros.

- In cooperation with a tattoo studio, artists presented and applied their wolf tattoos as part of an open day and donated the proceeds to wolf protection efforts.

### Important achievements in 2018

- Our partners were involved in the development of national wolf management plans, thus ensuring that wolves in Poland and the Czech Republic retain their status as a strictly protected species. This was by no means a certainty given the adverse political climate.
- Following talks with Hnutí Duha, the Czech agricultural committee decided to introduce a fairer system of compensatory payments for damage caused to livestock by wolves.

### Outlook

We are planning to expand our cooperation with keepers of livestock in order to encourage greater acceptance of wolves in the region. To this end we will conduct further information campaigns, for example on safeguarding livestock herds and flocks.

**Partners:** Hnutí Duha, Wilk

**Funding:** Elisabeth Seifert-Becker's endowment fund for the protection of wolves in memory of Viktoria Neumann, Emilie and Franz Seifert, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors





## Spain: Brown bears in the hunters' scopes

### Geographic location in Europe

Cantabrian Mountains in northern Spain (Map p. 5, No. 1). The region is home to two brown bear populations that are in contact with each other: one in the west, the other in the east of the mountain range.

### Status

The years of conservation efforts by EuroNatur and its Spanish partner Fapas have significantly contributed to the fact that the Cantabrian Mountains still host brown bears to this day. While the population in the western part of the mountain range continues to steadily grow, the situation in the eastern part is still critical. In 2018 only four female bears with cubs were recorded and clear signs of inbreeding are beginning to show. Nonetheless there are still illegal killings of bears, particularly in the eastern part of their range. Overall, the brown bear situation in the Cantabrian Mountains is deteriorating again. Some politicians are stirring up antipathy against brown bears especially among farmers and keepers of livestock. Investigations of the wildlife crimes have repeatedly been blocked. Unregulated "bear watching tours" are posing a new threat.

### Objectives

Our aims are to prevent the extinction of brown bears in the Cantabrian Mountains and to allow them to once again expand their range, especially in the eastern region.

### Selected activities in 2018

- The presence of Fapas rangers is an effective deterrent to illegal hunters in the bears' home ranges. In 2018 the rangers travelled more than 2,000 km on foot as part of 600 excursions.
- In the eastern Cantabrian Mountains, one Fapas ranger went on regular patrols with a sniffer dog. Together they disarmed several traps and removed poisoned bait.
- In the province of Palencia, Fapas was able to document by means of camera traps how an organized gang of illegal hunters set a pack of hounds on wildlife.
- In order to calm down the volatile atmosphere against the bears, Fapas has been collecting genetic samples from killed livestock in order to identify the causes of the livestock deaths. In many cases bears and wolves were exonerated.

### Important achievements in 2018

- There continues to be a good number of brown bears in the western Cantabrian Mountains and the animals are expanding their range.
- With financial support sourced from donations to EuroNatur, Fapas was able to file charges against the organized gang of illegal hunters in the province of Palencia.

- The law that allows livestock carcasses to be left on the land has successively been put into practice since 2018. Fapas contributes intensive educational work to its implementation. The law benefits carrion consuming species such as bears and vultures.
- Fapas was able to prove that livestock killings are often perpetrated by domestic dogs gone feral. This was an important step to countering the incitement of ill will against bears and wolves.

### Outlook

Combating illegal hunting continues to be a focus of our conservation efforts, especially in the eastern part of the Cantabrian Mountains.

**Partner:** Fapas

**Funding:** EuroNatur's donors and sponsors





## Hope for the Mediterranean monk seal

### Geographical location in Europe

Northern Ionian Sea (Greek mainland coastline and Ionian Islands) and eastern Adriatic (coastlines of Albania, Montenegro, Croatia and the associated islands).

### Status

The Mediterranean monk seal is the only seal species of the Mediterranean Sea and one of the world's rarest marine mammal species. Approximately 700 individuals survive in remote coastal sections of the Ionian Sea as well as along the Mauritanian coast. The species is therefore dependent on immediate and effective protective measures.

### Objectives

Our work is aimed at ensuring that research is carried out on the Mediterranean monk seals' habitats and that these habitats are protected. Our primary objective is the species' natural population expansion and establishment in the Adriatic Sea. To this end, together with our partners in the Adriatic countries we are establishing a "rescue and information network" for Mediterranean monk seal protection.

### Selected activities in 2018

- Our Greek partner organization MOm has begun to train staff of the partners in Albania, Montenegro and Croatia to become monk seal experts for their respective countries. They are to provide scientific guidance on the seals' return to the Adriatic and ensure their acceptance by local fishers.
- The monitoring of Mediterranean monk seals during the autumn, i.e. at the time they raise their young, was continued in 2018. Our partners at MOm were able to identify potentially suitable pupping caves for the females. Geographically, the focus of seal observations was on the western Greek islands which serve something of a bridge function for Mediterranean monk seals from the Aegean Sea, allowing them to recolonize the Adriatic Sea.

### Important achievements in 2018

- Monitoring along the 760 km of the Greek coastline has shown that the population in the study area consists of approximately 40 individuals, and that suitable caves are available for pupping and the rearing of young by the females. Overall the monk seal population is on a positive trend which gives us hope that the populations of this marine mammal in the Mediterranean are on a path to recovery.

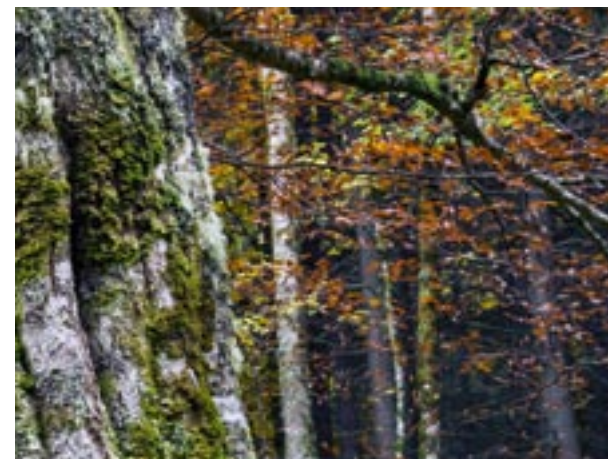
### Outlook

The "rescue and information network" is to be further expanded and an information campaign is planned for Albania, Montenegro and Croatia, so as to prepare the local people for the return of these marine mammals and in order to avoid human-wildlife conflict.

Partners: MOm, PPNEA, CZIP, Biom

Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors

Photo: Matthias Schickhofer - old-growth beech forest



## Why we run campaigns

For some years now EuroNatur together with its partners has increasingly been running campaigns aimed at preserving European natural heritage. With our campaigns we aim to create positive change by means of exerting public and political pressure. We expose undesirable developments and abuses, inform and mobilize the public as well as EU committees, organize protests and, where appropriate, take legal action. Our positions are based on scientific principles and facts. Through highly visible actions we shine a spotlight on the beauty of and risk to European natural treasures that have scarcely been noticed to date. EuroNatur is particularly strongly committed to strengthening civil society in the east and south-east of Europe. In our campaigns we fight together with our partners:

### For forests

Largely unnoticed by the European public, the European Union's last major virgin forests are being cut down in Romania. Based on the information available to us, 38 million cubic meters of timber are logged in the Carpathians every year, or an additional 20 million cubic meters over and above what is stipulated in approved forest management plans. There is an almost impenetrable web of ill-defined responsibilities, foreign investors and logging companies, corrupt officials and government representatives. In order to save the paradise forests in the Carpathians from being logged, EuroNatur and the Romanian conservation organization Agent Green have started the joint "SaveParadiseForests" campaign. Together with other organizations and committed individuals we aim to draw attention to the risks faced by this unique natural heritage and to achieve greater protection for the Romanian virgin forests. For further information please refer to pages 24 to 25 and to:

[www.saveparadiseforests.eu/en](http://www.saveparadiseforests.eu/en)

### For rivers

Free-flowing rivers have become very rare in Europe. Under the guise of green energy generation, plans are afoot to obstruct Europe's last wild river landscapes with hydropower plants. The hydropower boom has reached particularly frightening dimensions in the Balkans. The plans for hydropower generation leave hardly a river or stream intact, not even in protected areas. Similar to the situation in the Carpathian forests, we are dealing here with a labyrinth of ill-defined responsibilities, corruption, foreign lenders and construction firms. Together with the Austrian organization Riverwatch and local partners, EuroNatur initiated the "Save the Blue Heart of Europe" campaign. Its aim is to protect the Balkans from excessive hydropower development and to achieve that alternative forms of energy generation are promoted instead. For further information please refer to pages 26 to 28 and to:

[www.balkanrivers.net](http://www.balkanrivers.net)



### For migratory birds

The Ulcinj Salina in Montenegro is among the most important habitats for migratory birds in Europe. But the Montenegrin government is determined to turn this paradise for birds into a bastion of mass tourism. Despite the Ulcinj Salina's great ecological and cultural significance, in 2018 the Montenegrin government once again took only tentative steps toward awarding a protective status to the area. In order to give a voice to nature and the local people and in order to put pressure on the government to take action, EuroNatur together with its local partners initiated the international "#SaveSalina" campaign. Montenegro's accession negotiations with the EU offer important leverage. For further information please refer to page 29 and to:

[www.savesalina.net](http://www.savesalina.net)







## For forests: SaveParadiseForests

### Geographical location in Europe

Romanian Carpathian Mountains (Map p. 5, No. 20). These mountains host the European Union's last sizeable old-growth forests outside of Scandinavia. Focal areas of the campaign include old-growth forests in national parks and nature parks, areas of the European Natura 2000 system of protected areas and as yet unprotected old-growth areas.

### Status

Logging of old-growth forests in the Romanian Carpathian Mountains continues more or less unabated and this unique European natural heritage is at risk of disappearing. These centuries-old ecosystems safeguard ecological diversity, store enormous quantities of carbon and therefore significantly contribute to climate change mitigation. However, large-scale logging is taking place even in national parks and on sites that are components of the European Network Natura 2000. The state forestry management authority "Romsilva" is responsible for the management and funding of almost all of the national parks and nature parks. The logged timber is exported and sold to large timber plants in Romania. In order to halt this overexploitation, EuroNatur together with the Romanian nature conservation organization Agent Green started the "SaveParadiseForests" campaign.

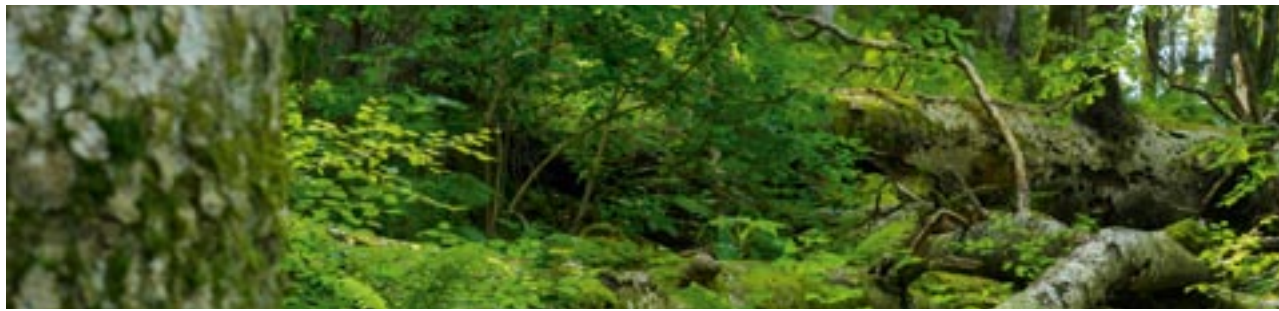
### Objectives

Our aim is to protect the Romanian Carpathian forests as some of the last remnants of wild nature we have left in Europe. Together with other organizations and committed individuals we aim to create awareness at the national and international levels of the risk facing the Romanian old-growth forests and we push for improved provisions for their protection. Timber companies should make a commitment to refrain from using timber from primary and old-growth forests.

### Selected activities in 2018

- With its investigative TV documentary series entitled "Out of control", Agent Green provided further evidence of illegal logging in Romanian national parks. The series showed that the Romanian old-growth forests are subject to large-scale logging even in sites protected under European law and it exposed the fact that Romsilva employees obtain personal financial gain from illegal logging. By the end of 2018, five episodes of the series had aired and caused a media frenzy in Romania.
- At the invitation of EuroNatur and Agent Green, the Austrian EU delegate Thomas Waitz visited the Domogled National Park to see for himself the level of destruction caused by logging. In order to make the best possible use of the delegate presence, Agent Green had organized an anti-logging protest at the starting point of the site visit which attracted much media coverage.
- A few months later Thomas Waitz hosted an expert conference organized by EuroNatur and Agent Green at the European Parliament which had as its topic the worrying situation in Romania's old-growth forests. Representatives of EuroNatur and Agent Green provided first-hand accounts of logging in Romanian primary forests. They also screened a short version of the "Out of control" documentary and thus impressively conveyed the extent of the alarming developments in Romania.





### Important achievements in 2018

- At the expert conference in Brussels the representative of the European Commission gave an assurance that the Commission would monitor the situation and that it would open proceedings against Romania if there was sufficient evidence.
- The news from Brussels made headlines in all of the Romanian media for three days solid, including at the leading TV channel Antena 3.
- Thomas Waitz's visit to Domogled National Park caused a useful stir in Romania. A local alliance's signature petition proved successful not long after: Logging around the villages of Prisacina and Scarisoara in the Domogled National Park has been halted for the time being.
- With the help of our Romanian solicitor we successfully sued for the release of the forest management plans for a number of forest areas. These will allow us to provide evidence of illegal logging in these areas which in turn opens up avenues for legal action.

### Outlook

We will continue to increase the pressure on the Romanian government, the forestry authorities and the timber companies at the national and international levels. We will also call on the relevant EU committees to take action against the Romanian government. Where possible and necessary we will take court action against illegal logging.

### Our achievements in recent years

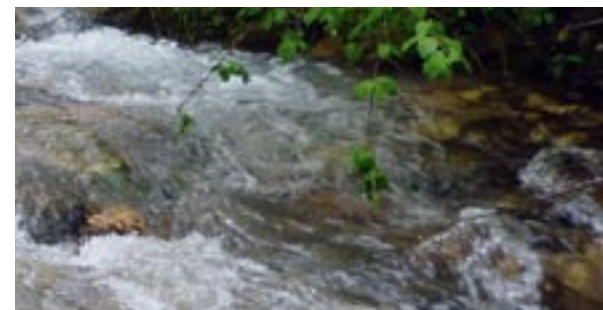
The network of fellow campaigners who are fighting to save the Romanian paradise forests has significantly grown since the campaign's commencement in 2016. Today, logging in Romanian old-growth and primary forests is no longer a merely internal Romanian issue but is receiving increasing international attention. EU committees are also now looking at the alarming developments taking place in Romania and increasing political and public pressure is being exerted on those responsible.



**Partner:** Agent Green

**Funding:** Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, Christian Martin Stiftung, Maiores Foundation, Pancivis Foundation, Ludwig Raue Memorial Fund, Bristol Stiftung, Fair Future Foundation, Richi Stiftung, EuroNatur's donors

**Internet:** [www.saveparadiseforests.eu](http://www.saveparadiseforests.eu)



## For rivers: Save the Blue Heart of Europe

### Geographical location in Europe

Streams and rivers in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia–Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Serbia, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Kosovo and northern Greece. Key areas of the "Save the Blue Heart of Europe" campaign are the Mavrovo National Park (Map p. 5, No. 14) in North Macedonia, the Vjosa river in Albania and the Aaos river in Greece (Map p. 5, No. 17), the Sava river in Slovenia and Croatia (Map p. 5, No. 7), as well as a number of ecologically particularly valuable rivers in Bosnia–Herzegovina.

### Status

The "Blue Heart of Europe" beats on the Balkans. Between Slovenia in the north and Greece in the south there are still intact rivers and river landscapes the likes of which have long since been destroyed in central Europe. They are hotspots of biodiversity and unique elements of Europe's natural heritage. However, more than 3,000 hydropower plants are either planned or already under construction in the Balkans, often without a credible Environmental Impact Assessment. A recent study has shown that a significantly greater number of international banks than previously thought are investing in hydropower plants in the Balkans. The main providers of finance include the European Bank for Reconstruction and

Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the World Bank as well as numerous commercial banks. Many of the hydropower projects are planned in protected areas. In 2013 EuroNatur and Riverwatch in cooperation with local partners started the "Save the Blue Heart of Europe" campaign.

### Objectives

Our aim is to preserve the beauty and ecological diversity of the Balkan rivers. Plans for hydropower expansion must urgently take into consideration aspects of nature conservation and species protection. We endeavour to halt all dam projects in the campaign's focal areas, for example at the Albanian Vjosa river, one of the last remaining major wild rivers in Europe. At the national and international levels we aim to raise awareness of the destructive impacts of hydropower plants on nature and to stop banks from further investing in hydropower expansion in the Balkans and get them to support the use of alternative energy sources instead, such as solar energy.

### Selected activities in 2018

#### Strengthened reasoning for protection of rivers

- We commissioned an expert report which showed that solar and wind power on the Balkans can deliver several times the amount of energy that the planned hydropower plants could generate.
- In late 2018 we published the Eco-Masterplan for the Balkan Rivers. Based on the criteria of intactness, species diversity and protected status of the river landscapes, the Eco-Masterplan defines no-go areas for hydropower. Our aim is to achieve that international financial institutions commit to not funding hydropower projects in the no-go areas. A total of 80,000 km of rivers were scientifically assessed for the plan. The masterplan also integrated the accumulated knowledge on Balkan rivers we have generated by means of numerous studies since the commencement of the campaign.
- In June 2018, experts commissioned by the Bern Convention – one of Europe's most important conventions relating to nature conservation – gained a first-hand impression on site of the risks posed to the Vjosa river by hydropower projects. Albania is a signatory to the Bern Convention. We had repeatedly highlighted to the Bern Convention the urgency of the "Vjosa case" and had submitted an official complaint with regard to the unbridled expansion of hydropower.





### Legal steps and pan-European network

- With the help of lawyers, our campaign partners in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia, Croatia, North Macedonia and Albania have taken formal legal action against several hydropower projects. In Bosnia Herzegovina we supported the lawsuit of the "Women of Kruščica" who protected their river from the construction of two hydropower plants by means of a sit-in lasting many months.
- In September 2018, the Austrian and Bosnian EuroNatur partners Riverwatch and Center for Environment together with EuroNatur organized the first European River Summit in Sarajevo as part of a newly formed alliance of various European NGOs committed to saving Europe's rivers.

### Generating an awareness of Balkan rivers

- The "Blue Heart" documentary produced in cooperation with the US-American outdoor clothing company Patagonia was screened about 300 times in 2018, with a special focus on the Balkan Peninsula. In June 2018 we also screened the film for members of the European Parliament.

- In tandem with the "Blue Heart" documentary and together with Patagonia we also launched the "No Money. No Dams." online petition targeted at international banks and calling on them to stop funding the destruction of the Balkan rivers.

### Important achievements in 2018

- The "Blue Heart" documentary brought worldwide attention to the beauty of and threat to the Balkan rivers. In 2018 the film reached close to 30,000 people from Albania to Japan.
- By the time the international "No Money. No Dams." petition was presented to the EBRD it had been signed by close to 120,000 people.
- The Eco-Masterplan clearly sets out the no-go areas for hydropower plants and thus constitutes a valuable planning aid for all in charge – from decision-makers in the Balkan nations and the EU to the hydropower plants' investors.
- The EBRD announced that it will revise its investment guidelines and that it will organize a banking summit in 2019 at which the funding of hydropower projects in the Balkans is to be critically examined.

- The Bern Convention has brought proceedings against Albania. The Convention also called on the Albanian government to suspend current hydropower projects on the Vjosa river and instead to conduct the requisite analyses that would allow it to assess the potential environmental impacts of the hydropower projects in the first place.
- The competent court confirmed the local inhabitants' objections against the hydropower projects at the Kruščica river in Bosnia-Herzegovina and annulled the planning permission.
- The decision on the construction of the Mokrice hydropower plant on the Sava river was adjourned, primarily due to a scientific study which recorded strictly protected fish species in the affected river segments. Donations to EuroNatur had made it possible for the study to be conducted.
- A European network for free-flowing rivers is emerging. The participants of the European River Summit submitted a declaration to the institutions of the European Union, the energy sector, the banks, and Europe's national governments. They primarily call for a stop to the promotion and funding of hydropower projects as a sustainable source of energy.





## Outlook

We will continue the campaign with great intensity. This includes further efforts to close knowledge gaps, court actions, media relations, political lobbying and activities to mobilize civil society in the countries hosting the Blue Heart of Europe. In future we will bring a sharper focus on the people affected and on the socio-economic impacts of hydropower projects. Moreover, we will further expand our activities in the Mediterranean region.

### Our achievements in recent years

Since the start of the campaign we have been able to significantly improve the knowledge and data base on the ecological value of the Balkan rivers. We were successful in shining a spotlight on the beauty of and threats to this European natural heritage, bringing the issue to the attention of the national and international public as well as important EU institutions. Thanks to the campaign, some Balkan rivers are now well-known even beyond Europe's borders. One of these is the Vjosa river. While decision-makers in the Balkans are still 'selling' hydropower as an alleged green source of energy, the EU institutions are gradually beginning to rethink the issue.

There is now a rising awareness as to the destructive impacts of hydropower projects. The EU Commission for example now regularly makes reference to the threat to Balkan rivers from hydropower developments in their official reports on the political and legal progress of the candidate countries for accession to the EU. Important financiers of hydropower plants in the Balkans, such as EBRD and the World Bank, are revising their funding guidelines and are increasingly more critical in their assessments of investments into hydropower projects. Moreover, the people affected are increasingly fighting back against the destruction of their rivers. There is now a large network of allies in the fight for free-flowing Balkan rivers. To date our efforts have resulted in preventing the construction of a number of hydropower plants in particularly sensitive areas. However, the Blue Heart of Europe continues to be at risk.

**Partners:** Riverwatch, Front 21/42, HDZPP, CZZS, Eko-svest, EcoAlbania, Tour du Valat, MedINA, Pindos Perivallontiki, IUCN ECARO, WI European Association, WWF Adria, GEOTA

**Funding:** Mava Foundation, Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, Patagonia, Fondation pour la Sauvegarde de la Nature, Bristol Stiftung, EuroNatur's donors

**Internet:** [www.balkanrivers.net](http://www.balkanrivers.net)



## For birds: #SaveSalina

### Geographical location in Europe

The Ulcinj Salina (Map p. 5, No. 11) is an area of salt evaporation ponds covering almost 1,500 hectares in the south of Montenegro near the border to Albania.

### Status

Thousands of birds are dependent on the Ulcinj Salina every year as a breeding, overwintering and resting site. But instead of affording national and international protection to this ecosystem, plans emerged some years ago for the site's conversion into a luxury resort. The salt works are falling into disrepair and it appears that this is quite deliberate. Following the site's privatization in 2003 under suspicious circumstances no further investments were made. Ten years on all staff were let go. Salt production has ceased since and salt loving bird species are increasingly disappearing. Thanks to the intensive lobbying by EuroNatur and its partners, the EU Commission and the EU Parliament have very clearly been signalling for years now that they expect the Montenegrin government to designate the Ulcinj Salina as a nature park and as a protected area for birds. Those in charge in Montenegro have not so far honoured any of the promises they made. In response, EuroNatur together with local partners initiated the "#SaveSalina" campaign in 2017.

### Objectives

We are fighting for the Ulcinj Salina to be afforded national as well as international protective status both on paper and in reality. Moreover, our aim is for the salt works to be operated again as only managed salt ponds provide suitable habitat for a large number of migratory and breeding birds in the long-term.

### Particular challenges

- The government continued to delay the protected area designation in 2018.
- The ownership situation has not been clarified. This step is a precondition to finding an investor for the salt works and to reviving salt production.

### ■ Selected activities in 2018

- In April we organized the 4th International Conference on the protection of Ulcinj Salina. The conference was attended by more than 80 delegates including representatives of the policy arena and nature conservation as well as inhabitants of the Ulcinj municipality. The competent minister declared that the Montenegrin government has developed a roadmap for designating Ulcinj Salina for conservation. However, for a long time these words had not been followed by actions.
- We started an international petition in order to increase pressure. The petition was addressed at the Prime Minister of Montenegro and i.a. called for Ulcinj Salina to be afforded protective status.

- Using the [www.savesalina.net](http://www.savesalina.net) campaign website and reports in national and international media we have brought attention to the ecological value of and threat to Ulcinj Salina.
- In order to foster nature-based tourism as an income source, a bicycle rental service was opened at the salt works which now allows visitors to explore the area by bicycle.

### Important developments in 2018

- December saw the opening of the environmental chapter of the EU accession negotiations between Montenegro and the European Commission. It lists the designation of Ulcinj Salina as a protected area as one of the preconditions for Montenegro's accession to the European Union.

### Outlook

We will increasingly turn the European public spotlight on the government of Montenegro. Once the issue of ownership has been clarified we will support the government in its endeavour to find an investor who ensures the continued operation of the salt works and we will provide our expertise for the purposes of developing a suitable management plan.

Partners: CZIP, MSJA, BirdLife International, Tour du Valat

Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur's donors

Internet: [www.savesalina.net](http://www.savesalina.net)

Photo: Unsplash - Alfred Schrock - maize (Zea mays)



## New minister – old agricultural policy

The agricultural policy of the EU has backed German and European agriculture into a dead end. With the ongoing industrialization of agriculture it undermines its own foundations: fertile soils, biodiversity and healthy livestock. And the energy policy is hardly any better. Carbon dioxide emissions in the EU are still way too high. EuroNatur calls for a swift turnaround in agriculture, conservation and energy policies and advocates at the international level for relevant changes.

The EU-level negotiations on the reform of the European agricultural policy post-2021 were in full swing in 2018. The distribution of a great deal of money is at stake here: Approximately 40 percent of the European Union's total budget is spent on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), with big farms being the primary beneficiaries. Biodiversity and the European culture of family farming are falling by the wayside. The situation is particularly dire for wild bees and other pollinators. In response, in the spring of 2018 several European conservation organizations including EuroNatur in a joint appeal called on the European Commission to take decisive action in this matter by, among other measures, banning the use of insecticides as quickly as possible and by making financial supports conditional upon sustainable agricultural management rather than linking them to farm size. The appeal had an impact: in late April 2018 an EU-wide ban on the application of certain neonicotinoids was agreed.

As the EU's most populous country, Germany plays a significant role in the negotiations in Brussels on the reorientation of the CAP. But Germany is thwarting progress on environmental protection. The new Minister of Agriculture Julia Klöckner who took up office in 2018 is, for example, opposed to an effective linkage between direct payments to farmers and the provision of environmental services. The appeal published by the Agricultural Platform at the time of her inauguration appears to have fallen on deaf ears. EuroNatur will continue to scrutinize the negotiations in Brussels on CAP financial planning in 2019.

**Partners:** AbL, BUND, Agricultural Platform as well as other farming and conservation associations  
**Funding:** BfN with funds provided by BMUB, EuroNatur's donors



# Energy transition in Poland: Generation change brings hope

On the energy transition front Poland still has a lot of catching up to do. Coal is still dominant and electricity generation from renewables is a rarity. However, as in many other countries, there is a growing willingness to take alternative lines of approach in electricity generation. EuroNatur has been advising the Podlasie Marshal's Office as well as a number of municipalities in the Podlasie Voivodship in north-eastern Poland for several years now on how to promote renewable energy generation. Just how strongly the Marshal's Office values our commitment to energy transition was evident at an event celebrating 25 years of engagement by EuroNatur in the region. At the ceremony on September 26, 2018, Lutz Ribbe, EuroNatur's Director of Conservation Policy was awarded the voivodship's highest Medal of Merit as the second ever non-Polish citizen.

Over the past year the local population's interest in energy transition has continued to grow. Both civil society groups and other municipalities demonstrated their increasing readiness to participate. Meanwhile, the progress made on energy transition in north-eastern Poland in recent years has begun to attract attention and recognition outside of the Podlasie Voivodship. For instance, the project was lauded as a positive example at the European Economic and Social Committee. Another positive development is the increasing integration into teaching of the topic of energy transition. New teaching materials on alternative energy sources and their significance for climate change mitigation were developed in 2018 and distributed to schools in the region, thus introducing the future generation to the issue of renewable energy.

Polish local elections were held on October 21, 2018. Many of the Podlasie mayors with whom we have been fighting for energy transition for years now were re-elected; other local politicians who were less active in this policy field lost the elections and were replaced by younger candidates who are much more open to our concerns. Our work has contributed to firmly placing the topic of energy transition on the political agenda, and this has definitely also influenced voter behaviour.

**Partners:** Bialystok Marshal's Office, Politechnika Bialystok, the town of Lapy, Hajnowka District, LEADER regions, Energievision Frankenwald, the town of Wunsiedel and the Wunsiedel Department of Public Works  
**Förderung:** UBA with funds provided by BMUB

## For living environmental waters in Europe

The adoption in the year 2000 of the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) was an important milestone for water pollution control in Europe. The WFD stipulates that the status of all aquatic ecosystems – rivers and lakes as well as peatlands, coastal waters and groundwater aquifers – must not deteriorate. Moreover, the WFD aims at a gradual improvement of the ecological status of all waters in the EU by 2027.

In 2018 the European Commission commenced its Fitness Check of the EU Water Legislation – a comprehensive policy evaluation assessing whether the current regulatory framework is "fit for purpose". But the reason why more than half of all environmental waters in the EU still have a poor ecological status is not due to the regulatory framework but to the very slow pace of WFD implementation in the Member States. However, instead of providing for improvements by means of more strict directives, there is a risk that the WFD will be 'watered down' on foot of the Fitness Check.

In the autumn of 2018 more than 100 conservation organizations and anglers' associations in the EU, including EuroNatur, therefore came together to defend Europe's strong water law. As part of the "#ProtectWater" campaign we started a large-scale media offensive, calling on Europe's citizens to participate in the public consultation on the future of the WFD to ensure that it remains intact. Simultaneously we called on the governments of the Member States to adhere to the targets that were jointly agreed 18 years ago.

By the end of the reporting year almost 190,000 people had voted for clean and natural waters, sending a clear signal to those in charge. By the time the consultation closed in March 2019 a total of 375,386 people had joined the "#ProtectWater" appeal.

**Partners:** WWF, EEB, ERN, EAA, WI and many other national and international conservation organizations and anglers' associations.  
**Funding:** EuroNatur's donors



## EuroNatur's public face: Media and PR work

### Media attention for our campaigns

In 2018, the international media increasingly took note of the destruction of primary and old-growth forests in the Romanian Carpathians (please refer to pp. 24 to 25). The British national broadcaster BBC reported on the alarming developments in the Carpathian Mountains along with newspapers and other media outlets, including German-language TV channels such as the German ARD and the Austrian ORF. In November 2018, the German national weekly newspaper "Die Zeit" printed a detailed report by journalist Fritz Habekuß. EuroNatur had made it possible for him to investigate the issue. In late November, EuroNatur's campaign partner Agent Green caused quite a stir when it published a shocking figure: Every year more than 20 million cubic meters of timber are illegally logged in Romania. This information made headlines for days including on Romanian television.

The "brave women of Kruščica" also received a great deal of media attention; these women had occupied a bridge for more than a year in order to protect their village's river from being destroyed by the construction of two hydropower plants. Among other media coverage, "Plan W"

– the business journal for women as part of the major German daily newspaper "Süddeutsche Zeitung" – printed a detailed portrait of the heroines of Bosnia-Herzegovina and their peaceful protest. These brave women also played a prominent role in the "Blue Heart" documentary (please refer to pp. 26 to 28).

Several media outlets reported on our fight to save the Ulcinj Salina (please refer to p. 29), including the Swiss daily newspaper "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" and the major German-language news website "Spiegel Online". These contributions helped to increase international awareness of this almost unknown and highly endangered paradise for birds on the Adriatic coast.

### EuroNatur Award for river protectors

In October 2018, Roberto Eppe, the President of the European Rivers Network, was awarded the EuroNatur Award for his outstanding commitment to the protection of Europe's river landscapes. A native of Switzerland, Roberto Eppe advocates for free-flowing rivers in Europe. As part of his long-standing efforts he has already successfully fought against hydropower projects on the Danube and Loire rivers. But Roberto Eppe also highlights alternatives and with his creative activities manages to draw people's attention to the significance of protecting rivers. One example of his creativity is the "Big Jump" event he initiated as part of which people from all over Europe meet up and jump into their rivers as a sign of protest for clean water.

### A big anniversary for the EuroNatur photography contest

In 2018, the EuroNatur Foundation was able to look back at a quarter century of fabulous nature photography submitted to its "Europe's Natural Treasures" contest. In the contest's 25th year we received entries from 892 photographers, both hobbyists and professionals, from 56 countries. Never before had the photography contest been as widely international as in 2018. As a result, the winning entries were publicized in media outlets around the world, even as far away as South Korea. The winning photographs were also exhibited in Germany and admired by many visitors. The highlights from the 25 years of contests were shown, for example, at the well-attended Culture Night in Radolfzell on October 2, 2018.

In 2018, EuroNatur also held its second and well received writing contest on the topic of "Alles ist im Fluss", a wordplay on the importance of rivers. A total of 130 authors answered the call for submissions and sent beautiful and elaborate musings on Europe's river landscapes, appeals to halt the flood of plastic entering our rivers, or descriptions of the flow of their personal narratives. The three best contributions were published in the digital EuroNatur Advent calendar and the overall winning story was also published in the March 2019 edition of the EuroNatur magazine.

Photo: Kerstin Sauer - Senne



## A Foundation to protect Europe's nature

EuroNatur is a non-profit foundation established in 1987 by Friends of the Earth Germany (Bund für Umwelt- und Naturschutz Deutschland, BUND), the German Federation for Nature Conservation (Naturschutzbund Deutschland, NABU) and German Environmental Aid (Deutsche Umwelthilfe, DUH). It is headquartered in Radolfzell. EuroNatur is legally, organizationally and financially independent, autonomous and non-partisan. A foundation having legal personality (rechtsfähige Stiftung) such as EuroNatur differs from a registered voluntary association (Verein) in that it has no membership base. The latest exemption notice (Freistellungsbescheid) was issued by the tax authority in Singen on October 10, 2018. EuroNatur is a member of, amongst others, the following organizations: European Green Belt Association, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), European Habitats Forum, German League for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection (DNR), Association of German Foundations, AgrarBündnis e.V., Europarc, and Wetlands International - European Association.

The current Articles of Association can be downloaded at [www.euronatur.org/statutes](http://www.euronatur.org/statutes)

## Presiding Committee provides strategic orientation

New members of the Presiding Committee are proposed by existing members and elected to the Committee by majority vote. The President is elected from among the members of the Presiding Committee. In 2018 EuroNatur's Presiding Committee had six voting members and one non-voting member, all of whom served in a voluntary capacity. Their duties include determining the organization's strategic orientation, approving annual budgets, and approving the annual accounts. The Presiding Committee oversees the work of the Executive Director and the Director of Conservation Policy with a view to its lawfulness, expediency and economic efficiency. Detailed Committee member profiles can be accessed at [www.euronatur.org](http://www.euronatur.org).

## Board of Trustees serves as an advisory committee

EuroNatur's Presiding Committee can nominate persons to the Board of Trustees who support the organization's concerns. In 2018, EuroNatur's Board of Trustees had 22 members, all of whom served in a voluntary capacity. They support EuroNatur in three areas: technical advice, especially with respect to access to funding; public relations work; establishing the organization and its work more firmly within society. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees attends the meetings of the Presiding Committee in an advisory capacity. Detailed profiles of the Members of the Board of Trustees can be accessed at [www.euronatur.org](http://www.euronatur.org).

## Salaried management staff in charge of operative implementation

The full-time salaried management team consisting of the Executive Director and the Director for Nature Conservation Policy is in charge of and responsible for steering the organization's operative work. In 2018, EuroNatur maintained two offices in Germany and employed a total of 25 staff. Central functions such as managing donors, bookkeeping, general administration and public relations work are based in Radolfzell at Lake Constance, as are most of the project management activities. The conservation policy office is based in Rheinbach near Bonn. More than 30 voluntary collaborators support the work of EuroNatur Foundation.

## EuroNatur Service GmbH

More than 20 years ago, the European Nature Heritage Fund established a wholly owned subsidiary, the EuroNatur Service GmbH, a limited company. This small but efficient service provider publishes and markets landscape and wildlife calendars and guidebooks on EuroNatur's project regions as well as a wide range of reference books and exclusive items. Additionally the EuroNatur Service GmbH has specialized on layout and mail order services which it provides to the EuroNatur Foundation and other clients.



Photo: Unsplash / Annie Spratt



## Economic situation in the 2018 financial year

### Donors form the basis

In 2018, EuroNatur Foundation's regular donors, sponsors and legacy donors continued to provide the financial footing for our tangible conservation efforts in Europe as well as for political lobbying, awareness-raising and environmental education. Once again, EuroNatur also attracted substantial financial support for project implementation from private foundations and associations as well as public sector funding in 2018, most notably from the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, Bristol Stiftung, Friends of the Earth Germany (BUND) and BUND Nature Conservation in Bavaria, the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), the Federal Environment Ministry (BMUB), the Christian Martin Stiftung, the German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Dr. Manfred and Gudrun Keim Fund, the European

Commission, the Fondation pour la Sauvegarde de la Nature, the Maiores Foundation, the Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, and the German Federal Environment Agency (UBA). Moreover, EuroNatur's work was financially supported by certain commercial enterprises in 2018. These included, among others, the utilities company Gelsenwasser and the Bielefeld public utilities.

### Income and expenditure headings based on DZI specifications

The income and expenditure headings used for the purposes of this activity report correspond to the prescribed specifications as part of the guidelines for the DZI (German Central Institute for Social Issues) Seal of Approval. The headings therefore diverge somewhat from the customary breakdown set out in the Handelsgesetzbuch (German Commercial Code), especially in the profit and loss account. Amongst the criteria assessed by DZI are two important threshold values, i.e. the share of expenditure

on advertising and administration in total relevant expenditure, and the ratio of expenditure on advertising to total income from donations. Not all expenditure is included for the purpose of calculating the share of administrative expenditure: Expenditure on portfolio management and commercial activities are not taken into consideration. Given that the DZI calculations of the shares of expenditure under the different headings are only undertaken following the publication of the Activity Report, there may be some discrepancies between EuroNatur's calculations and the DZI results.

### DZI Seal of Approval

In December 2018, EuroNatur Foundation was again awarded the DZI (German Central Institute for Social Issues) Seal of Approval. EuroNatur had applied for the seal in August 2018 based on its 2017 annual accounts. The result of the DZI assessment of EuroNatur Foundation was a positive one: It confirmed that we meet the seven DZI Seal of Approval standards (see p. 43).



## Appropriate proportion of advertising and administrative expenses

In 2018, EuroNatur Foundation saw a considerable increase in its income, having taken in € 4,965k compared to € 3,639k in the year prior (+ € 1,326k). Additionally, we received € 11k in endowments half as much as in the previous year (€ 20k). Endowments (donations towards the foundation's capital stock) are not shown in the profit and loss account. However, the DZI includes endowments in the total income. For the purposes of the DZI calculations therefore the total income was € 4,976k. Total income from donations including endowments in 2018 was € 1,044k, an increase of € 176k compared to the previous year (€ 868k). Relevant total expenditure for calculating the proportion of

administrative expenses in 2018 (total expenditure minus expenditure on portfolio management) stood at € 4,432k, up by € 853k compared to the previous year. This increase was primarily due to increases in project funding. Our projections for 2018 show that EuroNatur Foundation spent just over 15 % of relevant total expenditure on advertising and administration, i.e. slightly less than in the year prior (16.7 % based on our own projections, 18.9 % according to DZI's calculations performed at a later time – in this regard please also refer to the information on DZI guidelines on p. 34). The institute considers appropriate a proportion of expenses for advertising and administration of up to 20 %.

In 2018, the proportion of advertising expenditure in total income from donations was 32.5 % according to our own calculations. DZI had calculated a figure of 36.7 % for 2017, but only 7.1 % for 2016. The maximum acceptable proportion of all expenditure on advertising (which according to DZI definitions also includes general PR work) is 30 % of total income from donations (as an average of the three latest financial years). While we exceeded this maximum in 2017 and 2018, at 25.4 % the three-year average is still below the 30 % threshold.



### Individual sources of revenue

There was a considerable increase again in 2018 in revenue from donations (not including endowments and fines) (+ € 178k) compared to the previous year. This was largely due to one large donation from a bequest. Third-party grants for concrete project implementation also increased once again in 2018 (+ € 922k). This increase was almost exclusively due to greater financial support received from private foundations and associations. EuroNatur Foundation's non-profit tax-exempt commercial activities saw a turnover of just under € 3k in 2018. A commercial enterprise generated a turnover of just under € 8k. Interest and capital gains in 2018 were significantly higher than in the previous year (+ € 191k) due to the sale of a property.

### Expenditure in detail

Compared to 2017, EuroNatur Foundation increased its total expenditure on projects, campaigns and education by € 772k. Once again, more than 80 % of total expenditure therefore went directly into work on projects, campaigns and education. There was a nominal increase in expenditure on advertising, general PR work and administration in 2018 compared to 2017 (+ € 20k). The share of expenditure under these headings in total relevant expenditure decreased and now stands at approximately 15 %, which according to DZI is an acceptable proportion of expenditure for general PR work, advertising and administration. Purely administrative expenditure actually accounted for less than 8 % of total relevant expenditure. Advertising and public relations expenditure accounted for approximately just under 4 % each in 2018.

### Successful conclusion to the 2018 financial year

EuroNatur Foundation concluded the 2018 financial year with a positive operating result. Therefore € 172k revenue from testamentary gifts could be added to the Foundation's capital stock and € 275k could be added to the revenue reserves. Overall, EuroNatur Foundation was therefore able to further stabilize its financial foundation in 2018. Moreover, we were able once again to convince additional financiers of the merits of our conservation efforts; the additional revenue was directly invested into effective nature conservation projects.





## Notes on the 2018 Statement of Financial Position

Compared to the previous year, 2018 saw an increase of € 137k in EuroNatur Foundation's total assets which now stand at € 9,805k. At the end of the financial year, non-current assets (fixed assets) stood at € 6,923k, whereas current assets stood at € 2,880k. Fixed assets increased by € 567k compared to 2017, while current assets, i.e. primarily liquid funds, decreased by € 432k. Accounts receivable increased by € 363k to a level of € 561k. These are all considered recoverable and € 527k are due within the next twelve months.

At the end of the 2018 financial year, the foundation's capital stood at € 5,685k, i.e. € 183k higher than in the previous year. Compared to the previous year, equity was increased by € 429k to a total of € 8,154k. We were able to moderately increase revenue reserves compared to 2017 to € 2,469k at year's end. The liabilities of € 1,415k primarily consist of project grants already received but not yet spent in 2018.

## Economic development in recent years

EuroNatur Foundation's statement of its financial position clearly shows that recent years have not only brought successes in the organization's conservation endeavours but that its work has also been successful in economic terms. Over recent years, total assets increased continuously and have more than quadrupled since 2007. The increase in equity, i.e. the foundation's core capital including endowments and revenue reserves has been similarly positive. These developments demonstrate that EuroNatur is on a secure financial footing and has been able to significantly improve its financial position in recent years.



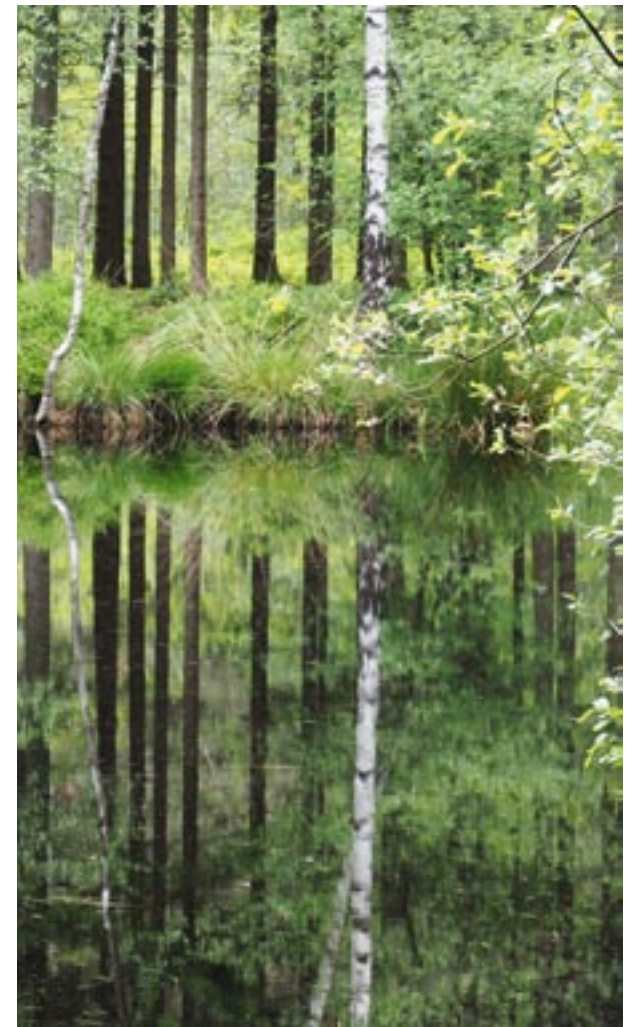
## Planned giving for European nature

A further strengthening of EuroNatur's asset base is of great importance for the foundation's independence and performance as a successful advocate for nature in Europe. The increase in the foundation's capital creates planning certainty and independence. Endowments and bequests therefore provide immensely valuable support to us and are a great sign of confidence, confidence that we endeavour to honour with our commitment. In 2018, all endowments and yields from bequests were transferred to the foundation's capital stock. This has further strengthened EuroNatur Foundation's financial position. We expect that revenues from portfolio management will, as a minimum, remain stable in the coming years.

## Bequests and legacies in 2018

In 2018, the following individuals bequeathed funds to EuroNatur Foundation upon their death. We are greatly indebted to them and will honour their memory.

- Sigrid Dorothea Keyna, Himmelpforten
- Ingrid Luise Müller, Freiburg
- Margot Elisabeth Mann, Schwarzenbruck
- Wilhelm Schmidt, Ihrlerstein
- Gerth Richter, Klingenberg am Main
- Hans Steffen Gysel, Winterthur, CH







### Dependent foundations and named funds

In 2018, EuroNatur managed three dependent foundations and three earmarked named funds. The named funds' capital (€ 485k) remained unchanged compared to the previous financial year while the capital of the dependent foundations (€ 2,169k) increased by € 10k. In the reporting year, yields from dependent foundations continued to exclusively benefit EuroNatur project activities.

- Dr. Manfred and Gudrun Keim Fund
- Ludwig Raue Memorial Fund
- Lappat Fund
- EuroNatur Fund for Eastern Germany
- EuroNatur Fund for the Protection of Migratory Birds
- Elisabeth Seifert-Becker's endowment fund for the protection of wolves in memory of Viktoria Neumann, Emilie and Franz Seifert

### Working together for Europe's nature

EuroNatur's successes in nature conservation in Europe in 2018 could only be achieved with the support provided by our donors, sponsors and legacy donors as well as providers of grants and commercial sponsors. We are most grateful for your support!



## Statement of Financial Position as at 31.12.2018

ASSETS		2018		2017	
		" 000 €	" 000 €	" 000 €	" 000 €
A. Fixed assets			6,923		6,356
	I. Intangible assets + tangible assets	0		6	
	II. Tangible assets	980		1,640	
	II. Financial assets	5,943		4,710	
B. Current assets			2,880		3,312
	I. Stocks	16		14	
	II. Accounts receivable and other assets	561		198	
	III. Liquid funds, short-term securities	2,303		3,100	
C. Deferred items			2		0
TOTALS			9,805		9,668

LIABILITIES		2018		2017	
		" 000 €	" 000 €	" 000 €	" 000 €
A. Equity			8,154		7,725
	I. Foundation's capital				
	Core capital	77		77	
	Endowments (financial year € 11k, previous year € 20k)	5,608		5,425	
	II. Revenue reserves	2,469		2,223	
B. Provisions			236		218
C. Liabilities			1,415		1,725
TOTALS			9,805		9,668

# Profit and Loss Statement for 2018

Revenue according to DZI	2018	2017	%	%	Expenditure according to DZI	2018	2017	%	%
	" 000 €	" 000 €	2018	2017		" 000 €	" 000 €	2018	2017
Cash donations*	830	821	16.73	22.56	Expenditures on programmes				
Donations in kind	23	16	0.46	0.44	Staff-related expenditure	1,038	868	22.83	23.85
Bequests	172	10	3.46	0.27	Administrative and other expenditure	2,715	2,113	59.71	58.03
Fines	8	1	0.16	0.03	Expenditures on advertising and PR work				
					Staff-related expenditure	202	169	4.44	4.64
<b>Subtotal</b> (total income from donations excluding endowments)	<b>1,033</b>	<b>848</b>			Administrative and other expenditure	137	150	3.01	4.12
					Expenditures on administration				
Government grants	317	305	6.38	8.38	Staff-related expenditure	276	206	6.07	5.66
Grants from other organizations	3,105	2,195	62.54	60.32	Administrative and other expenditure	64	73	1.41	2.00
Commercial activity	3	2	0.06	0.06	Expenditures on portfolio management & business operations				
Interest and capital gains	442	251	8.90	6.90	Portfolio management	115	62	2.53	1.70
Other revenue	65	38	1.31	1.04					
					<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>4,547</b>	<b>3,641</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>4,965</b>	<b>3,639</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	Transfers to the Fund's capital stock	172	0		
Withdrawals from revenue reserves	29	31			Transfers to revenue reserves	275	29		
					Transfers to „Umschichtungsrücklage“	0	0		
	<b>4,994</b>	<b>3,670</b>				<b>4,994</b>	<b>3,670</b>		

\* In the 2018 financial year we received € 884k in monetary donations, € 55k of which have not yet been claimed due to earmarking. The latter are expected to be claimed in the following year and at the time of actual spending of funds.

Endowments € 10.680,65 (previous year € 20.540,65)

## Dealing with potential risks

For a non-profit foundation, EuroNatur Foundation's capital stock is relatively slim. Therefore the organization is urgently dependent on donations and third-party grants in so as to be able to discharge its mandate as an advocate of nature in Europe. We are aware of the fact that with this funding comes great responsibility and day in, day out we work towards using the funds as efficiently as possible. The manner in which these grants and donations are passed on to partner organizations in the east and south of Europe is also a sensitive issue, one that is predicated on a very good network of contacts built up over many years. Moreover, a multi-level control system is essential for the correct assessment of and effective response to risks. Risk mitigation measures must also be adopted for capital investments.

### Potential risks and the measures we take to avert them

#### Financial and economic crises

The global financial and economic crisis which began in 2008, and the impacts of which are still being felt, has shown once again that our lives' economic circumstances can change swiftly and

dramatically. That there is no interest without risk has now become an undisputed fact. In this light it is becoming increasingly difficult to find some middle ground between security and financial returns. Charting our course in this respect we abide by the following principles: EuroNatur Foundation invests its equity capital in low-risk funds, taking into account ethical and environmental criteria (please refer to the chapter on "Transparency"). Moreover, reserves are built up in order to be able to even out fluctuations in revenues. Over the past years we have established a special reserve for gains from transactions which can in turn be used to cover potential losses of future transactions ("Umschichtungsrücklage") as a safeguard against potentially required depreciation of fixed assets.

#### Lack of competent and trustworthy partner organizations

EuroNatur Foundation has very consciously not opted for a Europe-wide network of offices with full-time employees, thus eliminating considerable administrative expenditure. We are primarily concerned with cooperating with existing conservation organizations that are well connected in their local areas and are successful in their endeavours. In many countries of southern and eastern Europe, powerful non-profit and independent conservation organizations are few and far between. The lack of competent and trustworthy partners limits our options. It is for this reason that EuroNatur invests in the systematic development and strengthening of civil society in southern and eastern Europe. EuroNatur's project

work is always predicated on cooperation with a local partner organization. If there is no such partner organization in a particular region, it is reason enough for EuroNatur not to engage.

#### Misappropriation of funds

We have self-imposed strict rules on budgetary control. All outward payments are checked for mathematical and factual correctness. Payment orders are always subject to the "Two-man rule". Target-performance comparisons are carried out on a monthly basis, allowing for swift detection of potential irregularities. Our 2018 annual accounts were audited by the independent auditing and tax accounting firm WISTA AG and endorsed with an unqualified audit certificate.

#### Inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in project work

We regularly scrutinize our internal processes, which allows us to continuously increase our efficiency. We also analyse the work of our partner organizations and work with them to find possible ways to increase their efficiency. Our partners' statements of expenditure are checked by the project liaison person for factual accuracy and by the accounting department for financial accuracy. All statements of expenditure are submitted to the managing director for approval prior to funds being released. In order to increase the efficiency of our work we conduct staff development and training, in terms of both content and methodology, for ourselves and our partners on an ongoing basis.



# Transparency – one of EuroNatur's important tenets

## EuroNatur was again awarded the DZI Seal of Approval

In 2018, EuroNatur Foundation was once again awarded the DZI (German Central Institute for Social Issues) Seal of Approval. It will expire at the end of the third quarter of 2019. The Seal of Approval certifies that, amongst other things, EuroNatur meets the DZI's seven standards as follows: EuroNatur conducts its work in keeping with its statutes; the organization's management and oversight are adequately structured, clearly separated and are being exercised effectively; in our solicitation of donations and public relations work we provide information in a clear, truthful, factual and open manner; we openly and comprehensively report on our work, structures and finances; remuneration is paid taking into consideration the organization's charitable status, qualifications, levels of responsibility, and industry pay standards; the procurement and use of funding as well as the organization's financial status are traceably documented and adequately verified; the proportion of funds spent on advertising and administration in 2018 was at an appropriate level in accordance with the DZI standards ("appropriate" = 10 % to 20 %). The effectiveness of the organization's spending is monitored and results are documented and published.

## Initiative for transparency in civil society

EuroNatur has been a signatory to Transparency International Germany's "Initiative Transparente Zivilgesellschaft" (Initiative for transparency in civil society) since 2010. Signatories to the initiative

voluntarily commit to publishing ten particular items of information about their organization on their homepage. These include i.a. their statutes, the names of essential decision-makers, and information on how they are funded, how they use their funding, and their personnel structure.

## Auditing

In 2018, EuroNatur once again voluntarily submitted to an audit of its annual accounts by an auditor. The auditing and tax accounting firm WISTA AG audited EuroNatur Foundation's 2018 annual accounts in accordance with Par. 317 of the German Commercial Code (HGB) and in accordance with the accepted standards for the review of financial statements as set out by the Institute of Public Auditors in Germany (IDW) and endorsed the accounts with an unqualified audit certificate. An extract from the audit certificate states the following:

*"We have audited the annual financial statements, consisting of the balance sheet as of December 31, 2018, profit and loss account for the fiscal year from January 1 to December 31, 2018, and the Annex, including the presentation of accounting policies. Additionally we audited the management report for the fiscal year from January 1 to December 31, 2018.*

*In our opinion, based on the information obtained during our audit, the financial statements are in all material respects compliant with the provisions of commercial law applying to corporations in Germany, and convey, in accordance with the German principles of proper accounting, a true and fair view of the Foundation's net assets, liabilities and financial position as of December 31, 2018*

*and the results of operations for the fiscal year from January 1 to December 31, 2018. The position statement, as a whole, provides an accurate picture of the Foundation's position. In all material respects this position statement is consistent with the annual financial statements, is compliant with the German statutory provisions, and adequately depicts the opportunities and risks arising from future developments. We declare that our audit did not lead to any objections as to the correctness of the annual financial statements or the position statement.*

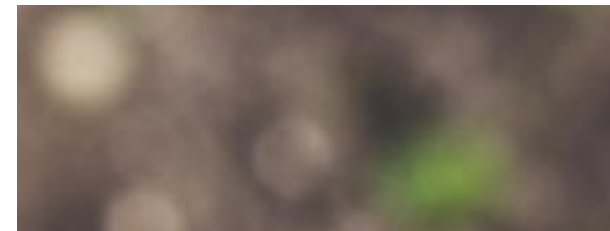
*June 12, 2019, WISTA AG, Mannheim"*

## Capital investment based on environmental and ethical criteria

EuroNatur Foundation's foundation capital now amounts to almost EUR 5.7 million. Moreover, EuroNatur Foundation holds trust property of more than EUR 2.4 million in trust for the benefit of three non-autonomous foundations. In keeping with the organization's philosophy, investment decisions are based on environmental and ethical criteria. Both inclusion and exclusion criteria are applied to these decisions. As a minimum, investment products are not considered if they invest in companies involved in nuclear power, agrochemicals, weapons, genetic engineering, pornography, alcohol, tobacco, the motor industry, the oil and coal industries, airline companies, or if they are invested in government bonds in nations practicing capital punishment, actively driving forward nuclear energy, or which are considered corrupt. Our main financial service providers for asset management purposes in 2018 were the Bank Vontobel Europe AG, Munich Branch, and the V-BANK AG in Munich, Germany. Additionally, since the summer of 2017 we have consulted with an independent financial advisor on a fee basis.



Photo: Unsplash / Annie Spratt



## System of remuneration

EuroNatur's employees are assigned at five different functional levels, in addition to the management team. These five levels are Administration I and II, Divisional management, and Project management I and II. Remuneration bands have been set for each of the levels, extending 20 percent either side of the mid-point. The mid-points are EUR 37k and EUR 41k for Administration I and II respectively, EUR 51k per annum for Divisional management, and EUR 45k and EUR 55k respectively per annum for Project management I and II.

In 2018, the Executive Director received an annual remuneration package of EUR 96k gross. Without exception all members of the Presiding Committee and the Board of Trustees act in a voluntary capacity and only receive reimbursements for cost incurred, but no flat-rate expense allowances.

## Advertising and donor information

Six times a year EuroNatur Foundation sends out information to its donors to keep them in touch with ongoing projects and request support for concrete endeavours. Similarly, support for individual projects is solicited, and information provided, through the organization's website at [www.euronatur.org](http://www.euronatur.org), the digital EuroNatur newsletter and emailings. In addition,

regular donors receive the EuroNatur magazine four times a year as well as topical project reports containing comprehensive information and reports on current developments in the projects. In 2018, EuroNatur Foundation conducted its own donor information and fundraising. With the exception of printers, no aspect of these tasks was outsourced to any agency or external service provider.

## Impact monitoring and impact analysis

One of the most important tenets of EuroNatur's work is the efficient deployment of funds entrusted to us by our donors and by the organizations (both governmental and non-governmental) that support our work. Systematic planning of activities and comprehensive impact monitoring are preconditions to the efficient use of funds.

EuroNatur Foundation takes both a supportive and an operative role. For projects undertaken by EuroNatur in cooperation with its partner organizations, and which in most instances are in receipt of third-party financial support (from both governmental and non-governmental sources), EuroNatur reports back in detail to the financial backers. Impact monitoring already begins at the stages of project development and project application. EuroNatur

develops projects based on comprehensive situational analysis and needs assessments. Together with our partners we formulate the overall objectives and prepare project applications based thereon. These can only attract funding if the objectives are clearly set out and if activities are proposed that serve to meet these objectives. Evidence of the use of funds must include comprehensive evaluations of the achievement of set objectives as well as rationales for potential changes in or adjustments to activities or even objectives. In order to receive grants from EuroNatur, applicants must present cohesive project designs in keeping with the principles set out above. The partner organization's reports are subject to comprehensive evaluation by EuroNatur and our project managers regularly visit the project areas to discuss the projects' progress.

Both positive developments and difficulties arising are assessed in order to allow for procedural adjustments to be made and to learn lessons for the future. Progress reports document project development up to the point of the projects' completion.

Photo: Kerstin Sauer – elephant seal (*M. angustirostris*), Spitzbergen



## A testament for European nature

We are now living through the biggest mass extinction since the dinosaur age, and climate change has become reality. But the political arena, the business world, and society lack the resolve to reverse these trends. It is therefore all the more important for individuals to provide a counter-balance, to assume responsibility and help shape the world's future, even beyond their own death.

Testamentary gifts and legacy bequests to EuroNatur support the organization's long-term planning of project activities designed to maintain Europe's natural heritage. Your assets help us to maintain a Europe that offers genuine quality of life, where there are free-flowing rivers, pristine forests, diverse cultural landscapes, and sufficient space for wildlife.

Testamentary gifts will not burn away in one-off activities. Instead, they will lay a solid foundation for effective nature conservation and thus generate far-reaching prospects for people and nature. Financial support of this nature has significantly strengthened the Foundation's financial asset base over the past three decades. EuroNatur Foundation, as a non-profit foundation, is exempt from inheritance tax and gift tax. Any gifted or bequeathed assets can therefore be devoted exclusively to the pursuit of the Foundation's objectives.

Questions surrounding the issue of charitable bequests are answered on the [www.mein-erbe-tut-gutes.de](http://www.mein-erbe-tut-gutes.de) platform. EuroNatur has already been a member of the "Mein Erbe tut Gutes" ('My Legacy Does Good) initiative for four years now. A total of 22 organizations currently participate in this initiative – all are non-profits. As a neutral platform offering

information and inspiration, the initiative aims to support people in their endeavour to use their estate to pass on their own values. It offers advice and guidance to potential testators as to how they can actively frame their will to this end and shows how testamentary gifts and legacy bequests sustainably safeguard the successful work of charitable organizations. In order to be able to offer independent legal advice, the initiative cooperates with the Deutsche Vereinigung für Erbrecht und Vermögensnachfolge e.V. (a German paralegal association for inheritance law and asset succession).

Are you too thinking about considering EuroNatur in your will? If you would like to find out more about this issue please get in touch with us. Your contact:

**Sabine Günther, Tel.: +49 (0)7732-927217.**



## EuroNatur's project foci in 2018

In 2018, the projects implemented by EuroNatur Foundation focused on the following areas:

- Protecting the European Green Belt and further advancing the European Green Belt Initiative
- Protecting Europe's rivers and river landscapes
- Protecting migratory birds in Europe
- Large mammal protection in Europe
- Protecting Europe's last wilderness areas
- Agricultural policy, biodiversity policy, energy policy

This Annual Report describes in some detail a selection of projects under individual priority headings. EuroNatur Foundation has supported and implemented a number of additional projects and initiatives over and above these priorities, a more detailed description of which is beyond the scope of this report.

### Priority "European Green Belt"

**Funding spent on this priority: 425,000 Euro**

#### Projects:

**Development of the European Green Belt as part of the Green infrastructure** (Partners: BUND; Funding: BfN with funds provided by BMUB, EuroNatur's donors), **Strengthening the cooperation along the Balkan Green Belt** (Partners: IUCN, PPNEA, BBF, Green Balkans, Callisto, ERA, MES, CZIP, BPSSS, DAYKO, ASER; Funding: DBU, EuroNatur's donors), **Transboundary protection for the Osogovo Mountains** (Partners: BBF, MES; Funding: DBU, EuroNatur's donors), **Transboundary protection for the Šar Mountains** (Partners: GIZ, MES, Finch, PPNEA, "Friends of Shara" action group; Funding: BMZ, EuroNatur's donors), **Protection of the Šumava National Park** (Partners: Hnutí Duha; Funding: EuroNatur's donors), **Strengthening NGO-led Conservation in the Transboundary Prespa basin** (Partners: MES, PPNEA, SPP; Funding: PONT, Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, EuroNatur's donors)



### Priority Protecting Europe's last wilderness areas

**Funding spent on this priority: 364,000 Euro**

#### Projects:

**Protecting primary forests in Romania** (Partner: Agent Green; Funding: Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, Christian Martin Stiftung, Maiores Foundation, Pancivis Foundation, Ludwig Raue Memorial Fund, Bristol Stiftung, Fair Future Foundation, Richi Stiftung, EuroNatur's donors), **Ecological forest conversion of monoculture pine forests in Brandenburg to semi-natural mixed forests** (Partners: Nature Park administrations at Dahme-Heideseen, Märkische Schweiz, and Schlaubetal; German Federation for Nature Conservation (Nabu) - Märkische Schweiz regional association; Stiftung Naturschutzfonds Brandenburg; local conservation groups and farmers; Funding: EuroNatur Trust for Eastern Germany, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors)



### Priority Protecting migratory birds in Europe

Funding spent on this priority: 905,000 Euro

#### Projects:

**Safeguarding the bird migration route along the Adriatic Flyway** (Partners: BirdLife, VCF, IUCN Med, Tour du Valat, HDZPP, Biom, DOPPS, BPSSS, CZIP, Naše ptice, AOS, MES, PPNEA, WWF Spain, WWF Greece, ATN; Funding: Mava Foundation, Natum Foundation, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Protecting the Ulcinj salt flats** (Partners: CZIP, MSJA, BirdLife, Tour du Valat; Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Protecting migratory birds in the Senne landscape** (Partner: Paderborn-Senne Biological Station; Funding: Gelsenwasser AG (water and energy supply company), Stadtwerke Bielefeld GmbH - public utility, EuroNatur's donors), **Bright Future for Black Vulture in Bulgaria** (Partners: Green Balkans, VCF, FWFF, Junta de Extremadura; Funding: EU LIFE, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Protecting European wet meadows and pastures, in particular in the European Stork Villages** (Partners: Ciconia Foundation, Swiss Stork Society (Gesellschaft Storch Schweiz), European Stork Villages and their national conservation partners; Funding: RHW-Stiftung, Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, Bristol Stiftung, EU LIFE, Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors)

### Priority Protecting Europe's rivers and river landscapes

Funding spent on this priority: 1,237,000 Euro

#### Projects:

**"Save the Blue Heart of Europe" campaign** (Partners: Riverwatch, Front 21/42, Eko-svest, EcoAlbania, HDZPP, CZSS; Funding: Mava Foundation, Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, Patagonia, Fondation pour la Sauvegarde de la Nature, Bristol Stiftung, EuroNatur's donors), **Saving Europe's last free flowing wild river – Vjosa/Aoos** (Partners: Riverwatch, EcoAlbania, MedINA, Pindos Perivallontiki, IUCN ECARO, WI European Association, Tour du Valat; Funding: Mava Foundation, Patagonia), **Halting Hydropower developments in the Mediterranean Basin** (Partners: Riverwatch, WWF Adria, WI European Association, GEOTA;

Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur's donors), **SavaParks network for transboundary protection for the Sava river landscape** (Partners: HDZPP, The Green Ring of the Zagreb County, all members of the SavaParks network; Funding: Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, EuroNatur's donors), **Preserving Sava River Basin habitats through transnational management of invasive alien species** (Partners: The Green Ring of the Zagreb County, all members of the SavaParks network; Funding: INTERREG, EuroNatur's donors), **Protecting the karst poljes of Bosnia-Herzegovina as important bird resting and breeding areas** (Partners: Naše ptice, Naša bastina, Youth Centre from Livno; Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur's donors)



Photo: Unsplash - Martin Adams

**Priority Agricultural policy, biodiversity policy, energy policy**  
**Funding spent on this priority: 312,000 Euro**

#### Projects:

**Agricultural platform** – alliance consisting of roughly 30 associations representing the concerns of nature conservation, environmental protection, animal welfare, family farming, organic farming, and development policy in the process for the reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (Funding: BfN with funding provided by BMUB), **Guidance for the establishment of regional, decentralized economic and supply structures in Podlasia/Poland with a focus on renewable energy** (Partners: Bialystok Marshal's Office, Politechnika Bialystok, the town of Lapy, Hajnowka District, LEADER regions, Energievision Frankenwald e.V., the town of Wunsiedel and the Wunsiedel Department of Public Works; Funding: UBA with funds provided by BMUB), **#ProtectWater Campaign** (Partners: WWF, EEB, ERN, EAA, WI and various other national and international NGOs and anglers associations; Funding: EuroNatur's donors)

**Priority Large mammal protection in Europe**  
**Funding spent on this priority: 603,000 Euro**

#### Projects:

**Protecting brown bears in the Cantabrian Mountains** (Partner: FAPAS; Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Protecting brown bears in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro** (Partners: CZIP, CZZS; Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Protecting brown bears, lynx and grey wolves in the northern Dinarides** (Partners: University of Zagreb, Carnivora Magna; Funding: EU LIFE, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme** (Partners: MES, PPNEA, CZIP, Finch, ERA, Stiftung Kora; Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Preventing the extinction of the Dinaric-South-Eastern Alpine lynx population through reinforcement and long-term conservation** (Partners: University of Zagreb, Slovenia Forest Service, Hunters Association of Slovenia, Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation, Technical University in Zvolen, University of Ljubljana, Association Progetto Lince Italia, Karlovac University, Biom, ACDB, Italian Carabinieri special command unit for the protection of forests, the environment, and the agri-food sector; Funding: EU LIFE, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors, and others), **Protection of grey wolf populations that have recolonized central and western Poland** (Partner: Wilk; Funding: Lappat Fund, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Protection of large carnivores in Poland, with special emphasis on wolves**



**and lynx** (Partner: MRI; Funding: Elisabeth Seifert-Becker's endowment fund for the protection of wolves in memory of Viktoria Neumann, Emilie and Franz Seifert, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Maintaining the ecological integrity of migration corridors for large carnivores (especially wolves) in Poland** (Partners: Conservation organisation "Workshop for all Beings"; Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Protection of the transboundary Polish-Czech wolf population** (Partners: Hnutí Duha, Wilk; Funding: Elisabeth Seifert-Becker's endowment fund for the protection of wolves in memory of Viktoria Neumann, Emilie and Franz Seifert, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Protection of the wolf population in Slovakia** (Partner: CWS; Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Protection of large carnivores in Baden-Wuerttemberg, Guidelines for dealing with wolves** (Partners: EuroNatur is a member of the 'Arbeitskreis Wolf' working group as part of the 'AG Lynx Baden-Wuerttemberg' working group, Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Protecting the Mediterranean monk seal colony at Cap Blanc** (Partner: CBD Habitat; Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), **Monitoring and protecting the Mediterranean monk seal populations in the northern Ionian Sea** (Partner: Mom, PPNEA, CZIP, Biom; Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors)





## Abbreviations

### Partners:

AbL: Association for family farming in Germany  
 ACDB: Association for the Biological Diversity Conservation  
 AOS: Albanian Ornithological Society  
 ASER: Speleological Association Explorers Romania  
 ATN: Association for transhumance and nature conservation in Portugal  
 BBF: Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation  
 Biom: BirdLife Croatia  
 BPSSS: Bird Study and Protection Society of Serbia  
 BUND: Friends of the Earth Germany  
 CWS: Carpathian Wildlife Society  
 CZIP: Center for Protection and Research of Birds of Montenegro  
 CZZS: Center for Environment in Bosnia-Herzegovina  
 DAYKO: Foundation of Protection of the Natural Life  
 DOPPS: BirdLife Slovenia  
 EAA: European Anglers Alliance  
 EEB: European Environmental Bureau  
 ERA: Environmentally Responsible Action group  
 ERN: European Rivers Network

Fapas: Wild animal protection fund (Spain)  
 FWFF: Fund for Wild Flora and Fauna  
 GEOTA: Study group for spatial and environmental planning in Portugal  
 HDZPP: Croatian Society for Bird and Nature Protection  
 IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature  
 IUCN ECARO: IUCN Eastern Europe and Central Asia  
 Kora: Foundation for carnivore ecology and wildlife management in Switzerland  
 MedINA: Mediterranean Institute for Nature and Anthropos  
 MES: Macedonian Ecological Society  
 MOM: Hellenic Society for the Study and Protection of the Monk seal  
 MRI: Mammal Research Institute  
 MSJA: Dr. Martin Schneider-Jacoby Association  
 PPNEA: Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania  
 SPP: Society for the Protection of Prespa  
 VCF: Vulture Conservation Foundation  
 WI: Wetlands International  
 Wilk: Conservation Association "Wolf"  
 WWF: World Wide Fund For Nature

### Funding:

BfN: German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation  
 BMUB: Federal Environment Ministry  
 BMZ: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development  
 DBU: German Federal Environmental Foundation  
 GIZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit  
 PONT: Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust  
 UBA: German Federal Environment Agency

Photo: Gerald Jarausch - Team of EuroNatur in Radolfzell



## EuroNatur Offices

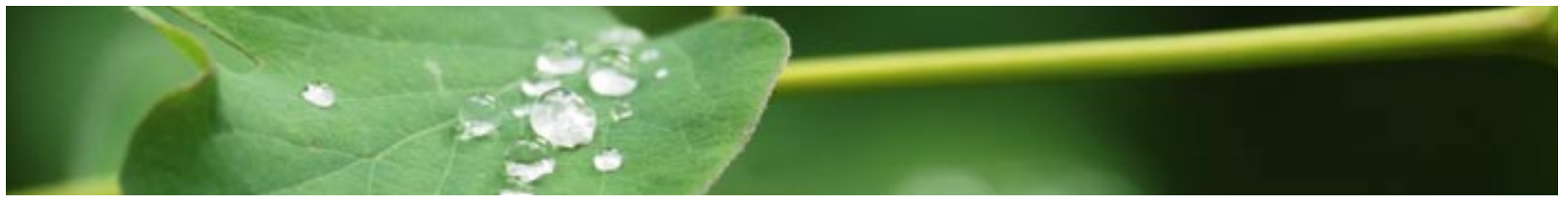
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## **Photo credit:**

Cover & p. 51: Kerstin Sauer

## **Graphic design:**

Kerstin Sauer; EuroNatur Service GmbH

ISSN 0945-148X

## **Printing:**

Fischer Druck GmbH & Co. KG,

printed on 100% recycling paper



The DZI (German Central Institute for Social Issues) seal of approval certifies that EuroNatur is serious, transparent and uses donations wisely and effectively.

## **Conservation needs action – and money!**

Our successful work is built on targeted strategies, efficient methods, sound knowledge, rich practical experience and respectable partner organisations in the project regions. But existing opportunities translate into concrete measures only with the help of our donors.

Donations to registered charities such as EuroNatur are tax-deductible. Please help us help Europe's nature and wildlife.

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