



euRONATUR
OUR YEAR 2019

EDITORIAL & CONTENT



Dear Sir or Madam,
dear Friends of EuroNatur,

The year that has passed was marked by very encouraging action taken by the younger generation. They call on all of us to finally take serious measures to address the climate crisis, which is of course also a biodiversity crisis. Now that you are reading our 2019 Activity Report, our present is marked by a global pandemic, and to a degree that was almost unimaginable. The origins of the pandemic in turn have a lot to do with the destruction and ruthless exploitation of both habitats and people. Similar to the initiative shown by the young people involved in the Fridays for Future campaign, the expressions of solidarity in many places during the pandemic have made visible the positive and utopian potential of societal change.

Utopian visions, if correctly understood, are not pipe dreams but visions of an emergent positive future. One such tangible utopia that underpins my work at EuroNatur is a vision of a peaceful and friendly Europe with meaningful encounters between humans, and between humans and nature of which we are an integral part. This vision drives our civil society engagement as well as our endeavours at the socio-political level.

EuroNatur's work is based on the support provided by both individual donations and institutional project funding. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all our supporters. Our successes would be impossible without you. I invite you to learn more about the EuroNatur team's visions and our work in 2019, as set out in this Activity Report.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. Dr. Thomas Potthast
President of EuroNatur Foundation

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MISSION & VISION

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.



WE HAVE A DREAM

EuroNatur staff provide insight into the motivation guiding their work. They draw visions of a future towards which they are working together.



“ I wish for a Europe, in which we can experience the joy of seeing bears and lynx in the wild. I dream of a world, in which nature conservation no longer means protecting nature from people or people from nature, but shaping harmony between them. ”

Mareike Brix, project manager bear & lynx protection



“ In my dream, I stand in an ancient forest, certain that all beings on earth live in freedom. People and nature coexist in peaceful harmony and natural cycles are left intact, so that all life in this forest and the forest as a community can evolve freely. ”

Janinka Lutze, Campaigner SaveParadiseForests



“ I dream of a life in which the heartbeat of bird migration immerses me in devotional silence in autumn and brings me the bracing energy of nature in spring. I dream of a thriving natural Europe, which I can proudly pass on to my kids; in which they can walk through forests full of birdsong and meadows where larks raise their young. ”

Dr. Stefan Ferger, project manager migratory bird protection



“ I dream of untamed rivers, providing nutrition for body and mind. People across Europe recognise the vital necessity of rivers. I dream of a network of river activists, forged by mutual trust and inspired by the vision of preserving rivers for future generations. ”

Annette Spangenberg, Head of project unit



“ I dream of a Europe in which I can hear the orchestra of nature sounds, where I can swim in free-flowing rivers and walk through wild forests. I dream of a Europe in which people embrace each other across borders and treat nature like a very good friend. ”

Katharina Grund, Public relations



“ I dream of a European Green Belt, in which I feel rooted and winged at the same time, because I can see how nature unfolds, untamed by national boundaries. I taste the cocktail of wild rivers, swamps and forests, connecting people. My heart opens and I feel pacified. ”

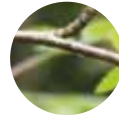
Laura Meinecke, project manager European Green Belt



“ When speaking to our donors, I feel their joy of discovering nature and contributing to its protection. I dream of this enthusiasm igniting lots of others and together we stand committed to protect Europe's natural beauty. ”

Sabine Günther, donor management and fundraising

ORGANIZATION & STRUCTURE



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 November 4, 2019. 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, Agrar-Bündnis e.V. and Wetlands International - European Association.

The current Articles of Association can be downloaded at 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 2019 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.

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 2019, EuroNatur's Board of Trustees had 20 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.

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 2019, EuroNatur maintained two offices in Germany and employed a total of 26 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 in Rheinbach was closed at the end of March 2020 with the retirement of the Director for Nature Conservation Policy, Lutz Ribbe. 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 European Nature Heritage Fund and other clients.

ORIENTATION MAP

Please note: This map is for orientation only, merely depicting the project areas highlighted in the 2019 EuroNatur Activity Report. The report shines a spotlight on selected projects, successes and challenges encountered in 2019 in order to illustrate the foundation's core issues and working methods. We are engaged in ongoing efforts to protect European natural heritage through our projects which, for the sake of brevity, cannot be described here in great detail. A comprehensive overview of all of EuroNatur's activities is given in the chapter entitled "Priorities for support in 2019". The EuroNatur newsletter www.euronatur.org/newsletter-en provides information on current developments.

- ① Cantabrian Mountains (Spain)
- ② Neretva Delta (Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina)
- ③ Bojana Buna Delta and Ulcinj Salina (Albania, Montenegro)
- ④ Munella Mountains (Albania)
- ⑤ Vjosa/Aoos (Albania, Greece)
- ⑥ ⑦ Carpathians (Romania, Slovakia)
- ⑧ Northern Dinarides (Slovenia, Croatia, Italy)
- ⑨ Lake Prespa (Albania, North Macedonia, Greece)
- ⑩ Lake Kerkini (Greece)
- ⑪ Stara Planina (Serbia)



— Green Belt Europe



HIGHLIGHTS IN 2019

What did we achieve together in 2019 in terms of the protection of Europe's rivers, forests, migratory birds and large carnivores? Actors who are part of the EuroNatur network present their personal highlights.



“ In response to pressure exerted by BPSSS, a special police unit for 'green crimes' was established in Serbia – a total novelty in our country. We closely cooperate with the officers. They have understood that we are able to help the government to effectively combat bird crime. ”

Milan Ružič, founder and President of BPSSS, EuroNatur partner in Serbia.



“ Illegal logging of the Carpathian forests is one of Europe's biggest environmental crises. In 2019, together with Agent Green and ClientEarth we have taken our fight for this natural forest treasure to the next level by submitting a complaint against the Romanian authorities to the European Commission. Now we have a real chance to save Europe's last primary and old-growth forests. ”

Gabriel Schwaderer, EuroNatur's Executive Director.



“ We are proud to have accepted the 2019 EuroNatur Award on behalf of all the other women from Kruščica. In our fight for our beloved river we really have all made a lot of sacrifices. We hope that we, the women of Kruščica, encourage many other women and indeed entire societies to stand up against oppression. ”

Medina Zukan, Maida Bilal and Safija Ahmić (left to right), inhabitants of Kruščica, Bosnia-Herzegovina.



“ Kostas, Lena and Nicole, the orphaned Mediterranean monk seals, took our hearts by storm. But even from an entirely objective point of view their rescue was a major success. Given that a population of just 350 individuals remain in the Mediterranean, each single rescue contributes to the re-establishment of these rare monk seals. ”

Magdalena Kulisch, project manager at EuroNatur.

“ With the help of EuroNatur donations we were able to file charges against the ‘bear killer gang’ from Palencia, and Fapas was able to cover the legal fees for the lengthy court proceedings. This was an important success for the protection of bears. This case is likely to encourage rangers and the police to track and file charges against other groups of illegal hunters. ”

Roberto Hartasánchez, President of Fapas, EuroNatur partner in Spain.



“ The inclusion of Munella Mountains, one of the few places where Balkan lynx are known to still reproduce, in the candidate list of protected areas in Albania is a major step in the right direction. A 530 km² refuge will help the survival of these endangered felines and many other threatened species such as bears, chamois and golden eagles. ”

Aleksandër Trajçe, Administrative Director of PPNEA, EuroNatur partner in Albania.

EUROPEAN GREEN BELT

Nature conservation along what used to be a chasm between systems

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. 7). The European Green Belt connects eight biogeographical regions and 24 nations.

Status

In the shadow of the Iron Curtain a unique habitat network was able to develop with an astonishing level of species diversity. It offers space for European large mammals as well as for a myriad of endangered invertebrates and plant species. But pressure on the Green Belt is intensifying, with habitat destruction, illegal hunting and non-sustainable tourism being on the increase.

Objectives

Our aim is to foster sustainable regional development along the Green Belt that allows for the conservation of the interconnected habitats as an ecological network while ensuring local peoples' livelihoods. Moreover, we endeavour to establish the European Green Belt as a symbol of peace as part of the European culture of remembrance.

DURING THE COLD WAR PERIOD, A CORRIDOR OF WALLS, BARBED-WIRE FENCES AND ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES DIVIDED OUR CONTINENT. BUT THE IRON CURTAIN HAS TRANSFORMED INTO A LITERAL LIFELINE AND NOW FORMS EUROPE'S GREEN BACKBONE.

When it comes to nature conservation, EuroNatur thinks beyond borders. The European Green Belt initiative is an excellent example of how that kind of thinking is put into practice. At the institutional level, EuroNatur chairs the European Green Belt Association e.V. (EGBA) and is the regional coordinator of the Balkan Green Belt section. Together with our Balkan partners we work on tangible solutions for the reconciliation of people and nature along the Green Belt, for example by means of organic grazed livestock systems. The transboundary cooperation on the European Green Belt contributes to international understanding.





Selected activities in 2019

- The length of the European Green Belt is historically determined. But how wide is the ecological network? In 2019, the EGBA stakeholders agreed on the criteria used to calculate the extent of the Green Belt. The result: Including its marine areas (but excluding the Fennoscandian segment) the ecological network covers an area of more than 275,000 km², 36 per cent of which have already been given a protective designation.
- Once again, the European Green Belt Days were held with a view to strengthening the awareness and popularity of the European Green Belt. Together with local partners, EuroNatur organized several highly visible activities along the Balkan Green Belt, including a number of transboundary field trips, for example on Lake Kerkin (Map p. 7, No. 10), on the Greek-Bulgarian border which is known for its highly diverse birdlife.

Selected achievements in 2019

- The year 2019 marked the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain. A central festive event at the occasion of the anniversary was held in the Austrian town of Illmitz. The event culminated in the signing of the 'Illmitz Resolution'. With this Austria incorporates key requests set out in the 'Eisenach Resolution' and commits to maintaining the Green Belt as a unique natural landscape unit. In this context, important major media outlets from all across Europe reported on this European conservation initiative.

Outlook

We endeavour 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 are again to be held in 2020 with a view to raising the initiative's profile.

Partners: All EGBA members and stakeholders in the European Green Belt initiative.

Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors

EUROPEAN GREEN BELT

“ Nature brings us together ” Interview with Daniela Zaec

Daniela Zaec from North Macedonia loves Lake Prespa (Map p. 7, No. 9), her place of birth, one of the southernmost jewels of the European Green Belt. After many years in the capital Skopje, the nature conservationist has returned to her home region to work for our partner organisation, the Macedonian Ecological Society (MES) – right on the border with Albania and Greece.

What is it that you love so much about the Prespa region?

In addition to many great childhood memories, above all it is the region's rugged beauty. That's the unique attraction of the Prespa region. Ezerani, for example, is a wetland area on the northern shore of Lake Prespa and a paradise for birds. It's so wild there and there's so much to see.

Do you worry that the wild beauty of Prespa could be lost?

Yes, the biggest danger is that those of us who live in the Prespa region take this beauty for granted and that we fail to realise how much our behaviour is putting it at risk. People must be made aware of that. Nearly every day new apple plantations are springing up – in protected areas too. There's a lot more pesticide use than necessary. All these harmful substances end up in the lake. And the extraction of sand on Lake Prespa's shores is just as damaging. Many areas, that I remember from my childhood as places of wild beauty, have been obliterated by summer homes or have simply become apple plantations.





Why is international support so important in ensuring Prespa remains a good place to live?

We don't receive government funding, so we have to figure out ourselves how to finance our nature conservation activities. Right from the very beginning, EuroNatur has recognised the value of the Prespa region right from the outset and has always been ready to help us, both technically and financially. What I appreciate most is that you actually come to see us, talk to us and listen to us. You don't say: 'Here's our plan, now put it into practice', but instead you see our vision and help us to realise it. That doesn't happen very often.

How important is cross-border cooperation with Albania and Greece?

Very important! We knew that if we really want to achieve something, we have to work across national borders and we need joint goals. That's a major step forward because, for a long time, there was no international contact between conservationists from the three countries, mainly because of the political situation. Today, together with our colleagues in Greece and Albania we are developing nature conservation objectives, helping each other and sharing our knowledge. With each of our activities we are trying to bring the people of the three nations together. There is so much that connects us; we share the lake, the mountains and we live close to each other. Nature brings us together.

Interview: Katharina Grund

MIGRATORY BIRDS



Combating illegal killing, poisoning and electrocution: Protecting birds along the Adriatic Flyway

Geographical location in Europe

Bird habitats along the Adriatic Flyway in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Albania. The Adriatic Flyway stretches from north-eastern Europe through the Balkans down to Africa. Among the key areas are the Neretva Delta including the Hutovo Blato Nature Park in the border area of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bojana Buna Delta including the Ulcinj Salina in the border area of Montenegro and Albania (Map p. 7, No. 2 and 3).

Status

An international study conducted by BirdLife International in 2016 estimated that between 11 and 36 million birds per year may be killed or taken illegally in the Mediterranean region, and the situation has not become any less dramatic since then. Apart from Italy, Cyprus, Egypt and the Middle East, the Western Balkans are a hotspot of bird crime, with an estimated 600,000 to 1.6 million birds getting illegally killed per year. It is almost impossible for migratory birds to rest undisturbed in the region. In addition to illegal hunting and the increasing levels of habitat loss, the Balkan human population's rising energy demand constitutes an additional threat to Europe's birdlife. In recent years the development of wind farms and the electric grid have been driven forward in the region, thus also increasing the risk for birds of colliding with such installations and falling victim to electrocution or collision mortality.

Objectives

Together with our large network of partners in conservation, our aim is to significantly reduce illegal bird hunting in the Balkans. To this end, we endeavour to establish a more accurate picture of the extent to which birds are illegally killed along the Adriatic Flyway, to draw the public's attention to the significance of the problem, and to convince the national governments to consistently combat illegal hunting by means of suitable policies and statutory provisions. We hope to reduce bird deaths by electrocution at power lines by applying correction measures to existing installations while at the same time building up awareness for bird-friendly constructions to ensure that these will be used in future energy projects.

TWICE EVERY YEAR A MAJOR PROPORTION OF EUROPE'S BIRDS SETS OUT ON A LONG AND DANGEROUS JOURNEY. IN THEIR BREEDING, RESTING AND OVERWINTERING AREAS WE PROTECT THE NOMADS OF THE SKY FROM ILLEGAL HUNTING AS WELL AS FROM INCREASING LEVELS OF HABITAT DESTRUCTION.

The protection of migratory birds and their habitats in Europe has been a core concern of the EuroNatur Foundation since its establishment. We have been able to make a great deal of progress, for example by achieving a ban on bird hunting in Albania. As a result, the country has become a more attractive breeding and resting region for many migratory birds. Moreover, we have established a partner network in the countries sharing the Adriatic Flyway whose staff professionally collaborate and take joint action against bird hunting. Successes such as these strengthen our resolve. But there is still a lot of work ahead of us before the skies above the Balkans can truly be declared safe for our feathered globe-trotters.



Selected activities in 2019

- In Serbia, a special police task force was established that is charged with combating environmental crimes such as illegal bird hunting. In the course of numerous meetings and joint trainings, our Serbian partners at BPSSS have established a good relationship with the new police task force and closely collaborate with the officers.
- In late 2019, three specimens of the endangered Northern Bald Ibis were shot in Croatia. Our Croatian partners at Biom turned this sad news into an opportunity to draw public attention to the issue of illegal bird hunting. The media exposure resulted in an increased awareness in the country of the issue of wildlife crimes.
- In all the Western Balkan countries our partners have intensified their collaboration with the national electricity grid operators. This allowed for the insulation of some initial particularly dangerous powerlines.

Important successes in 2019

- The Ulcinj Salina has finally been granted protection! As a result of the long-standing efforts by EuroNatur and many of its partners, the salina was declared a nature park in June 2019 and the following month it was designated as a Wetland of International Importance (Ramsar site) (please refer to p. 30 to 33).
- As of March 1, 2019, Serbia has become the 79th Party to the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). Parties to this intergovernmental treaty commit to taking measures for the conservation of migratory water birds and their habitats. EuroNatur and its Serbian partner organisation BPSSS had long worked towards the country's accession to the agreement.

- In Albania, the use of poisoned bait was made a punishable offence. Prior to this decision it had been legal to lay poisoned bait to control, for example, jackals. This insidious hunting method results in the death of large numbers of carrion-eating birds, such as vultures.

Outlook

The close cooperation with local law enforcement has resulted in reduced levels of illegal hunting in many of our project areas. Our aim is to further promote this development in cooperation with the authorities. This also includes a scaled-up response to the laying of poisoned bait.

Partners: BirdLife International, VCF, IUCN Med, Tour du Valat, BPSSS, HDZZP, Biom, Naše ptice, CZIP, MSJA, PPNEA, AOS, DOPPS, MES, WWF Spain, WWF Greece, ATN

Funding: MAVA Foundation, Natum Foundation, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors

WOLF, BEAR & LYNX

Getting safely across motorways: Green bridges for wolves

Geographical location in Europe

Poland and Slovakia

Status

Wolves are re-expanding their range in Europe. However, intensifying land use and the expansion of the road network result in the increasing fragmentation of the wolves' habitats. Due to their central location in Europe, Poland and Slovakia are natural transit areas for goods transports. This gives rise to the intensive development of motorways and dual carriageways. Given that wolves travel great distances in their search for food and new territories, it is unavoidable that they encounter busy roads which often become lethal barriers.

Objectives

We create wildlife corridors between areas of ecological importance and thus contribute to the further expansion of wolf populations in eastern central Europe. In order to minimise the risk of traffic accidents and to avoid the isolation of populations we are driving forward the construction of wildlife crossings (including vegetated overpasses) for wolves and other wildlife.

EUROPE'S LARGE CARNIVORES ARE UNDER PRESSURE. WE ARE LAYING THE GROUNDWORK TO ENSURE THAT BROWN BEARS, WOLVES AND LYNX CAN ONCE AGAIN EXPAND THEIR RANGE, AND OUR EDUCATIONAL WORK IS AIMED AT GAINING THE NECESSARY ACCEPTANCE IN THE POPULATION AT LARGE.





Selected activities in 2019

- In Slovakia, our project partners at CWS have started to analyse traffic on a number of the countries' dual carriageways. Using the resultant data they were able to identify segments that are highly frequented by wildlife and have submitted initial recommendations for wildlife crossings to the competent authorities.
- In Poland, our partners from the ecological organisation "Workshop for all Beings" have critically monitored and advised on construction work on several roads. Additionally they have started an information campaign on migration corridors for large mammals in Poland.

Important achievements in 2019

- "Workshop for all Beings" has forged new alliances with other conservation organisations and with the Technical University of Lubin. It is very important to have a broad civil society alliance given that constructive cooperation with public authorities in Poland tends to be difficult.
- In Slovakia, our partners successfully captured several wolves and fitted them with GPS transmitters. The resultant data give important insights into the wolves' behaviour in areas with heavy road traffic.



Outlook

The density of wildlife crossings in Slovakia is still extremely low. We will work to ensure that political decision-makers address this gap. In Poland, we will critically monitor the planned road development projects and will notify potential issues to the European Commission.

Partners: CWS, "Workshop for all Beings", 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

WOLF, BEAR & LYNX

Dinarides: Peaceful coexistence of humans and bears

Geographical location in Europe

The Dinaric-Pindos brown bear population extends across eight countries from Slovenia to Greece. During the reporting year, our work focused on Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro (Map p. 7, No. 8).

Status

In addition to Scandinavia and the Carpathian arc, the Western Balkans is the most important brown bear range in Europe. It is however unclear exactly how many members of the *Ursus arctos* actually still roam through the Dinaric forests. There are significant knowledge gaps especially when it comes to Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina. There is a lack of systematic population surveillance as well as a lack of management plans for the bear population, both of which are needed in order to defuse potential conflicts and to ensure peaceful coexistence of bears and humans.

Objectives

Together with our partners in Montenegro and Bosnia we are aiming to find out exactly how many brown bears do indeed still live in the Dinarides and determine the measures needed in order to protect the bear population in the two countries. In addition, we advocate for acceptance for the bears' return among the governments, hunting associations and the population at large.





Selected activities in 2019

- In Montenegro, a bear task force has been in operation since the spring of 2019. The experts intervene when there are signs of potential conflict between bears and humans or when a bear is in danger. In November 2019, the first training unit was delivered for the Montenegrin bear protectors under the aegis of our experienced Croatian partners.
- A trainee programme for the protection of large carnivores, the "Large Carnivore Field School" was conducted in Bosnia-Herzegovina. During the one-week seminar in August the 15 participants studied, for example, how peaceful coexistence between bears and humans can be achieved or how a tranquilizer gun is correctly used. Tranquilizer guns are required when a bear needs to be approached for scientific purposes or when a bear must be rescued from a hazardous situation.

Important achievements in 2019

- The "Large Carnivore Field School" has for the first time highlighted the country's potential: There are many young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina who are interested in nature conservation and wish to contribute to the large carnivores' long-term protection as well as to facilitating the coexistence between humans and animals.
- For the participants, the bear task force's first training session in Montenegro was an important exercise for "emergencies". Being equipped with a tranquilizer gun means that the team has now achieved operational readiness.



Outlook

In both countries it is now important to complete the management plans and to introduce the bear task forces to the wider public so that the local people are aware of who to turn to in case of conflicts arising with bears. As a next step following the successful Field School we now plan to give junior researchers in Bosnia-Herzegovina the opportunity to develop and implement their own projects with regard to large carnivores. Next year we will also transfer the Field School concept to Montenegro.

Partners: CZIP, CZZS

Funding: Bernd Thies Foundation, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors

WOLF, BEAR & LYNX



Fresh blood for endangered lynx

Geographical location in Europe

Source population in Carpathians (Romania, Slovakia) (Map p. 7, No. 6 and 7).
Release region in Dinarides (Croatia, Slovenia, Italy) (Map p. 7, No. 8).

Status

Without international cooperation there would no longer be any lynx in the north-western Balkan Peninsula. Carpathian individuals of this rare felid were first released in Slovenia in 1973. However, the populations stayed small, isolated and genetically impoverished. Lynx in the Dinarides are at risk of extinction.

Objectives

The "LIFE Lynx" project is funded by the European Union and supported by EuroNatur. Its aim is to augment the gene pool of the Dinaric lynx population and to bring the isolated population into contact with other lynx populations, especially with lynx in the Alps.



More information, photos and videos at www.lifelynx.eu,
www.facebook.com/LIFELynx.eu



Selected activities in 2019

- Camera traps and genetic research are indispensable when it comes to getting an overview of the exact number of lynx and their ranges in the Dinarides mountain regions which are difficult to access in parts. In 2019, a total of 107 camera traps yielded photographs of lynx; hair traps, the analysis of tracks in the snow, and investigations of prey killed by lynx yielded DNA samples for analysis.
- Our partners have put a lot of commitment into PR work. Pupils in 16 educational establishments in the release region have studied this felid species. The first part of the documentary entitled "Path of the lynx" was screened at a festival and was received with great enthusiasm. Regular updates are posted to both the project website (www.lifelynx.eu) and on social media.

Important achievements in 2019

- In February 2019, the first two lynx from the Carpathian Mountains were released in Slovenia and Croatia respectively. The males Doru and Goru have already occupied territories in their new homes. Goru has even produced offspring already with a local female lynx.
- The involvement in the project of local hunters in Slovenia and Croatia has succeeded very well. With their expertise and local knowledge, hunters are important allies in ensuring the success of the re-introductions. Moreover, the Slovenian hunting association trained 20 police officers in how to deal with instances of illegal hunting of lynx.

Outlook

More lynx releases in the Dinarides are planned. Monitoring is to be continued both in the Dinarides and in the Carpathians with the aim of assessing the success or otherwise of the re-introductions and also in order to ensure that the source population is not adversely impacted.

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

EURONATUR, I'M WITH YOU!

EuroNatur's supporters are the foundation's backbone. Among them are Ildikó Kiss, Jürgen Fath, Liridon Hoxha and the Schaads, and they all say "EuroNatur, I'm with you!"



Jürgen Fath has been supporting EuroNatur with donations for more than 25 years. He is delighted that, at long last, the Ulcinj Salina was designated a nature park. He has already visited the bird paradise together with his wife Ildikó Kiss.

DEAR EURONATUR
TEAM: KEEP IT UP!

“ It was a very positive experience to meet the fellow EuroNatur campaigners in Montenegro. It is obvious just how passionate they are about the issue, despite the personal risks they face when carrying out their conservation work. When I met the people behind EuroNatur, it has brought me a good bit closer to the organisation at an emotional level. I do not think that the risks or threats to Europe's nature will ease but I firmly believe that we will succeed. ”

Jürgen Fath



THE EUROPEAN
GREEN BELT IS
AN AMAZINGLY
GOOD PROJECT

Liridon Hoxha was born in Freiberg but his family's roots are in Kosovo. As an intermediary between the two worlds, the biologist is dedicated to establishing an environmental centre and research facility in the foothills of the Šar Mountains.



“ If no one invests in the protection of the landscapes along the Green Belt they will soon look just like the rest of Europe: built-up, covered in concrete, and with its forests lost to logging. However, when people come together in cross-border initiatives such as the European Green Belt project, an incredible energy is unleashed. This is not just about nature conservation but ultimately it is also about preserving peace. Those who look at Europe as a whole can see right away that it's worth it to invest in EuroNatur's work. ”

Liridon Hoxha



Karin and Gerhard Schaad love nature and like to actively contribute to nature conservation efforts. They have already been supporting EuroNatur with regular donations since the 1990s and have also named the foundation as a beneficiary in their will.

“ I think it is wonderful to see how EuroNatur takes great care to ensure that the local people in the project regions can make a living in a way that is compatible with nature. There is also a very compelling level of transparency in the organisation. EuroNatur is a bit like a big family. ”

Karin Schaad

“ I feel the same way. Their presentation of how donations are used is clear and compelling and their donor liaison is superb. There is a palpable sense of commitment among the staff right up to the management level. ”

Gerhard Schaad

WE HAVE GREAT
CONFIDENCE IN
EURONATUR'S ECO-
NOMIC MANAGEMENT

CAMPAIGNS: FOR FORESTS SAVE PARADISE FORESTS

“ We are losing extremely valuable natural treasures, and by ‘we’ I mean not only Romania but the EU as a whole. If we do not succeed in Europe to put an end to this tragedy most of the last of our Paradise forests will be lost – forever. ”

Gabriel Păun, President of Agent Green

Geographical location in Europe

Romanian Carpathian Mountains (Map p. 7, No. 6). These mountains host the European Union's last sizeable primary forests outside of Scandinavia. Focal areas of the campaign include primary and old-growth forests in national parks and nature parks, areas of the European Natura 2000 system of protected areas and precious forests that are as yet unprotected.

Status

Romania hosts the largest natural untouched forest heritage within the EU's temperate climate zone. The old-growth and primary forests of the Romanian Carpathians taken together occupy an area the size of the Black Forest (where there are no longer any comparable forests however) and host many strictly protected species. Moreover, these ecosystems store enormous quantities of carbon and significantly contribute to climate protection. The Romanian government does not however engage in genuine efforts to protect the valuable Carpathians forests. In recent years, 20 million cubic meters of timber were illegally logged in the Carpathians every year. The 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 precious forests of the Romanian Carpathians for current and future generations by means of generating awareness at the national and international levels of the risk facing the Romanian old-growth forests and by pushing for improved provisions for their protection. Timber companies should make a commitment to refrain from using timber from primary and old-growth forests.



WITH OUR CAMPAIGNS WE AIM TO CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE BY MEANS OF EXERTING PUBLIC AND POLITICAL PRESSURE. TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS WE EXPOSE UNDESIRABLE DEVELOPMENTS AND ABUSES, INFORM AND MOBILIZE THE PUBLIC AS WELL AS EU COMMITTEES, ORGANIZE PROTESTS AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, TAKE LEGAL ACTION.

Is there hope for the Romanian primary forests?

Yes! Thanks to our campaign the tragedy unfolding around logging in the Romanian Carpathian forests has become a European issue. The Romanian government has increasingly come under pressure at a number of different levels: Civil society no longer tolerates the exploitation of their resources and takes to the streets to defend the forests; several proceedings against illegal logging are underway at the national level; as a result of the first comprehensive inventory of the Romanian Carpathians forests and our EU complaint, the EU Commission and the EU Parliament have never been under greater pressure to take action against the irregularities in Romania.

Information, photos and videos on the “SaveParadiseForests” campaign can be found at www.saveparadiseforests.eu



Selected activities in 2019

- In the Romanian Carpathians, the forests of outstanding importance for biodiversity and climate protection were identified. For the first time, the PRIMOFARO study (PRIMary and Old-growth Forest Areas of Romania) commissioned by EuroNatur provides hard data on the extent of primary and old-growth forests still in existence in Romania. It found that these cover more than half a million hectares. At the same time the study documents the enormous extent of logging: Over the past 15 years, 100,000 ha of primary forest were destroyed – primarily in Natura 2000 sites and national parks where nature should in fact be protected.
- In September 2019, together with Agent Green and the internationally active lawyers of ClientEarth, we submitted a complaint to the European Commission. We provided evidence of the fact that the Romanian forest management company "Romsilva" engages in clear-fell logging in protected Natura 2000 sites without conducting appropriate assessments of the resultant impacts, as prescribed by law.
- Agent Green held a number of peaceful protests with a view to mobilising Romanian civil society to rise up against the overexploitation of forests in the Carpathians. As part of the "March for the Forests" almost 5,000 people marched through Bucharest in November 2019 and called for the systematic detection of and a halt to illegal logging.
- With our help, our Romanian partners have already been able to initiate and proceed with more than 40 legal proceedings against illegal logging. In this manner we have already been able to get a number of logging concessions annulled.

Important achievements in 2019

- The PRIMOFARO study has provided us with new leverage to demand strict protection for the Romanian primary and old-growth forests at the national and European levels.
- With our complaint to the EU we have initiated infringement proceedings against Romania.
- The protests in defence of the forests have helped to strengthen civil society and establish a network of activists and volunteers in Romania.
- Agent Green secured an order to stop logging in some of the most valuable forest landscapes in the Domoglog Cernei National Park.

Outlook

We will continue to further mobilise the Romanian people to take peaceful action against the overexploitation in the Carpathians Mountains. Where possible and as necessary, together with our partners we will continue to take court action against illegal logging. In 2020, our focus at the international level is on two additional complaints to the EU.

Partners: Agent Green, ClientEarth

Funding: Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, Manfred-Hermsen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation, Fondation pour la Sauvegarde de la Nature, Bristol Stiftung, Fair Future Stiftung, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors

CAMPAIGNS: FOR RIVERS SAVE THE BLUE HEART OF EUROPE

Geographical location in Europe

Ecologically valuable watercourses in the entire Mediterranean region and the Balkan Peninsula. A particular focus is on Europe's last major untamed river: the Vjosa River in Albania (known as "Aoos" in Greece) including its catchment (Map p. 7, No. 5).

Status

Especially in the wake of the discussions on climate change, hydropower tends to be wrongly touted as a "green" form of energy generation. This massively increases the pressure on the natural environment. It may spell the end of the last free-flowing rivers. These include streams and rivers in the Alps, the Pyrenees, Norway and southern France as well as in the Balkans. More than one third of the currently planned 8,785 hydropower plants are to be located in southern Europe.

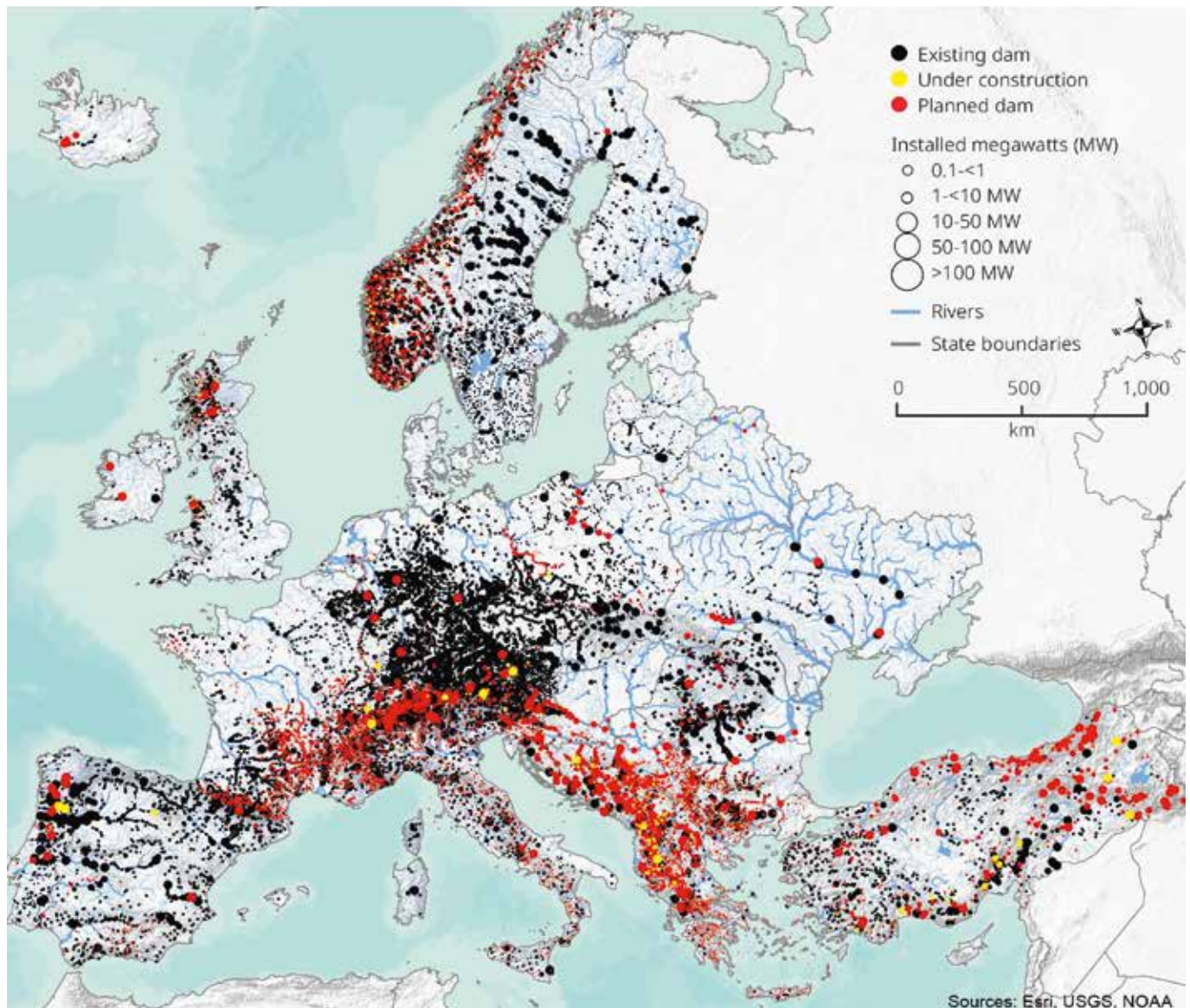
Objectives

Our aim is to protect Europe's last free-flowing rivers and their ecosystems. At the national and international levels we aim to raise awareness of the destructive impacts of hydropower plants on nature. Given that rivers and streams have already experienced a very advanced level of destruction, the hydropower expansion must largely be halted. For the Balkan Peninsula, we have set out no-go areas for hydropower plants as part of an Eco-Masterplan. These no-go areas were based on the following criteria: naturalness, species diversity and the riverine landscapes' protective status. We are trying to achieve that international financial institutions enter into commitments to refrain from funding hydropower projects in these areas and support the use of alternative energy sources instead, such as solar energy. We are also pressing for the Vjosa River to be designated a national park – all the way from its source to its estuary.

The Blue Heart of Europe beats in the Balkans

Between Slovenia in the north and Greece in the south there are still intact rivers and riverine landscapes that are unparalleled in Europe. They are hotspots of biodiversity and constitute a unique natural heritage. More than 3,000 hydropower plants are planned for the Balkans or are already under construction – often without a credible Environmental Impact Assessment. Even if only a fraction of these were to become operational it would spell an ecological catastrophe, especially given the fact that many of the installations are planned in protected areas. 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. In 2013, EuroNatur and Riverwatch in cooperation with local partners therefore initiated the "Save the Blue Heart of Europe" campaign.

For information, photos and videos please refer to www.balkanrivers.net



Inventory of existing hydropower dams, dams under construction, and planned dams in Europe. Most of the planned hydropower plants are concentrated in southern Europe (red dots). Many of Europe's rivers are already chock-a-block with hydropower plants (black dots).

CAMPAIGNS: FOR RIVERS SAVE THE BLUE HEART OF EUROPE

Selected activities and achievements in 2019

No money, no dams

- The EBRD organized a banking summit at which the financing of hydropower projects in the Balkans was critically scrutinised. Some of the biggest European providers of loans were represented, including UniCredit and Erste Group. On foot of the summit, the EBRD revised its investment guidelines for the rivers' benefit. This process had been triggered by the delivery to the EBRD of the "No Money. No Dams." online petition we had launched together with Patagonia in 2018 and which had been signed by 120,000 people.

Citizens mobilised to support the rivers

- In 2019, more than 375,000 people followed the call issued by numerous conservation and environmental associations, including EuroNatur, to urge the European Commission to maintain the European Water Framework Directive (WFD). This action was met with success: the WFD, which also covers the protection of rivers, will be left intact.
- Thousands of people in the Balkans would lose their arable land, their drinking water supplies and a significant part of their native home as a result of hydropower projects. In order to give those affected a voice, we initiated and supported protest weeks in the Balkans in July 2019.
- In Serbia together we were able to bring the local resistance against hydropower to national and supra-regional attention: In late 2019 all opposition parties as well as the Serbian Environment Ministry advocated against mini hydropower plants. In light of the local resistance not a single hydropower plant was constructed in the Stara Planina Nature Park (Map p. 7, No. 11).
- At the Wild Rivers Science Symposium in Tirana approximately 120 renowned scientists from Europe, the United States and Japan called on the political decision-makers in southern Europe to protect the last intact rivers in Europe.
- An explainer video on our Eco-Masterplan for the Balkans reached a viewership of more than 90,000 people. At an event in the European Parliament, we significantly raised awareness for the Balkan rivers' conservation needs.

“ A RIVER'S VALUE CANNOT BE MEASURED IN MEGAWATTS. ”

ULRICH EICHELHANN, CEO RIVERWATCH

Where are we now?

There is now an extensive network of allies who are fighting to protect the free-flowing Balkan rivers, at the national and EU levels and even globally. The affected communities have increasingly been voicing their discontent in the streets and are beginning to defend their rivers from destruction. Hydropower is no longer uncritically accepted as being a “green” source of energy and the pressure on officials is growing. Scientists are raising their voices against the destruction of the rivers, and we have also been able to initiate a rethink in the EU institutions as well as with important financiers of hydropower projects. Our partners are fighting selected hydropower projects with a powerful team of national and international legal experts. By means of numerous studies, we have developed an excellent knowledge and database that provides us with solid arguments. To date we have been able to prevent the construction of a number of hydropower plants in particularly sensitive areas of the Balkan Peninsula and in the Mediterranean region. The unstable political situation in the Balkans does however pose a particular challenge. It is therefore all the more important to support the local civil society in its work to protect the rivers and to ensure that it has international backing.



Legal steps initiated

- As part of the "Lawyers for Rivers" initiative, legal experts have been supporting local communities since 2019 in selected areas of the Mediterranean region and the Balkans in their efforts to take legal steps against hydropower projects. Several projects have already been shelved or had their planning permissions rescinded.
- In February 2019, we lodged a complaint against the Albanian government with the Energy Community. Albania is one of the contracting parties to this international organisation, the aim of which is to extend the EU internal energy market to Southeast Europe and the Black Sea region. The complaint concerns the approval procedures for the Kalivaç and Poçem hydropower projects on the Vjosa River which contravene the Energy Community's rules. Our aim is to achieve that the Energy Community initiates infringement procedures against Albania. The Energy Community has already announced that it will open an "Albanian case".

Reasoning for protection of rivers further strengthened

- Together with other non-governmental organisations we published an overview of all planned hydropower plants in Europe (Figure p. 27). It is the first inventory of its kind and it shows the massive threats faced by the last undeveloped riverine landscapes. The study attracted great media attention.
- We presented our vision for a Vjosa National Park to representatives of the Albanian Ministry of Environment and to the National Agency for Protected Areas.
- The village Kutë on the Vjosa is fit to become Albania's first solar village, as we have shown in a feasibility study. Kutë would be hugely impacted by the construction of the Poçem hydropower plant. Our aim is to present alternatives to the river's destruction to the government officials in charge.

Outlook

We will continue to pursue the campaign to protect Europe's rivers with great intensity. A study on the hydropower projects' socio-economic impacts is to show just how many people would be affected. In order to highlight alternatives to hydropower, we will help to make Kutë the first Albanian village to be self-sufficient in energy. We will also analyse the solar potential of roofs in Tirana. Together with our partners and legal experts we will at the same time vehemently fight the system of subsidies for hydropower as well as selected hydropower projects.

Partners: Riverwatch, Front 21/42, CZZS, 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, Fondation Genevoise de Bienfaisance, Fondation pour la Sauvegarde de la Nature, Patagonia, EuroNatur's donors

CAMPAIGNS: FOR THE BIRDS #SAVESALINA



Geographical location in Europe

The Ulcinj Salina (Map p. 7, No. 3) is an area of salt evaporation ponds covering almost 1,500 ha in the south of Montenegro near the border to Albania.

Status

Thousands of birds depend on the Ulcinj Salina as a breeding, overwintering and resting site. However, in 2005 the saltworks were privatised under questionable circumstances and appear to have deliberately been run down with a view to developing the site for mass tourism. Salt production ceased in 2013, the salina has been falling into disrepair and salt loving bird species have increasingly disappeared. Together with our partners we are committed to saving this paradise for birds.

Objectives

Our aim is to ensure that the Ulcinj Salina's outstanding ecological diversity is recognised both nationally and internationally, and that it is afforded effective protection. We also want to ensure that salt production resumes and that the local communities utilise the potential for ecologically compatible sources of income around the Ulcinj Salina and thus contribute to the protection of flamingos, black-winged stilts and all the other bird species.



“ WE ARE GIVEN ENCOURAGEMENT BY THE FACT THAT 100,000 PEOPLE SUPPORT OUR INITIATIVE TO SAVE THE ULCINJ SALINA AND BELIEVE IN OUR GOAL. ”

MARIJA ŠOŠKIC, ORNITHOLOGIST AT CZIP

Public pressure is effective!

In 2017, EuroNatur and its local partners initiated the #SaveSalina campaign. As a result, the Ulcinj Salina has gained recognition well beyond Montenegro's borders. Thousands of people said “Stop!” to the salina's development for mass tourism. Both the EU Commission and the EU Parliament are consistently pushing for the bird paradise to be afforded protection. The Montenegrin government had ignored this public pressure for years, but things took a delightful turn in 2019.

More information, photos and videos about the #SaveSalina campaign at www.euronatur.org/ulcinj-en



Selected activities in 2019

- Attention was once again drawn to the issue with the 5th International Conference on the protection of Ulcinj Salina. The conference was attended by more than 100 representatives of the policy arena, nature conservation and the media.
- In the run-up to the conference we attracted a great deal of media attention when we presented a petition to Montenegro's prime minister. The petition, which had been signed by 110,000 people, highlighted the salina's International significance and called for its protection.
- Together with our partner organisations and the local communities we developed business ideas for gentle ecotourism around the Ulcinj Salina and selected projects worthy of support.

Important successes in 2019

- In the summer of 2019, the Ulcinj Salina in Montenegro was given protection by way of its designation as a nature park. Moreover it enjoys international protection under the Ramsar Convention. This has finally put an end to the plans for the area's development for mass tourism.
- The EU Commission has called on the Montenegrin government to also ensure the salina's protection in practice and has made this one of the conditions of Montenegro's potential future EU membership.

Particular challenges

- The provision of a protective designation is not sufficient by itself.
- Operation of the saltworks must recommence. However, until such time as the site's ownership question has been resolved it will be impossible to find an investor for the salina.
 - While the Montenegrin government has promised financial investment in the Ulcinj Salina, there is as yet no conservation management plan for the site.

Outlook

The Ulcinj municipality appointed our partners at CZIP and MSJA to the working group for the development of a management plan. Together we are developing suitable restoration and conservation measures for the nature park. As soon as the ownership question has been resolved we will support the government in their endeavour to find an investor who will ensure the operation of the saltworks. A number of ecotourism projects will commence in 2020.

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

Funding: MAVA Foundation, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors

CAMPAIGNS: #SAVESALINA

“ And then it slowly dawned on me:
Ulcinj Salina is protected! ”

An interview with Zenepa Lika & Jovana Janjušević

It was a very special moment for Jovana Janjušević and Zenepa Lika when the Ulcinj municipality's chairperson finally announced in June 2019 that "Ulcinj Salina will be declared a nature park". The two Montenegrin EuroNatur partners had worked hard for years at the Center for Protection and Research of Birds of Montenegro (CZIP) and at the Dr. Martin Schneider-Jacoby Association (MSJA) to get to this point. This is their personal look back and ahead:

Can you describe the moment when you realized that the salina was finally designated as a nature park after these many years of struggle?

Zenepa Lika (MSJA): Although I conveyed the good news to everyone and posted it directly on Facebook, it took me a long time to realize that it was actually true. I felt like I was in some kind of void. It was only when I met our long-time fellow campaigner Darko Saveljic that it finally sank in: Ulcinj Salina is protected! I hugged him and we cried with relief.

Jovana Janjušević (CZIP): Having achieved the formal protection of the Ulcinj Salina was a bittersweet moment for all of us. It came after more than 15 years of advocating and campaign work. Especially the last five years have been very intense. But we have not only fought for the protection of the Ulcinj Salina on paper. Now investments have to be made and the nature park has to be managed; otherwise flamingos, pelicans and all the other bird species have no future here - regardless of the area's protective status.





Why is international support still so important?

Lika: The trust that we have painstakingly built up among the people must not be lost. The municipality of Ulcinj, despite its problems, has done everything possible to ensure that the salina is protected. International support is particularly important now to ensure that people have faith that the salina can really be saved. Thanks to EuroNatur's support, doors have often opened for us where otherwise we would not have been able to get in as much as a little toe.

Janjušević: Today, the Ulcinj Salina is known far beyond the borders of Montenegro. Among other things, Montenegro's EU accession process has proven to be an excellent mechanism to provide us national NGOs with compelling arguments for nature conservation. This gives us much more leverage. International attention is very helpful for us.



What kind of picture of Ulcinj Salina do you have in mind that encourages you to keep going?

Janjušević: Last summer I watched common terns raising their chicks in the saltworks on a floating artificial breeding platform. There they were safe from high water. New life can always encourage us to not give up.

Lika: I see workers in the fields harvesting salt, children who shriek with joy when they see flocks of flamingos in the salt ponds of the salina for the first time. I see people who come to visit and who are fascinated by Ulcinj Salina's beauty. In short: I see life in the salt flats.

Interview: Katharina Grund

MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS



Romania's old-growth forests in print media, radio and television

Our complaint to the EU has focused media attention on the logging of old-growth forests in Romania. Numerous national and international media outlets have picked up on the issue, including the "Tagesthemen", one of Germany's main daily television newscasts, and the German public broadcaster "Deutschlandfunk Nova". Several leading German media outlets gave the issue detailed and critical coverage, for example the major German daily newspaper "Süddeutsche Zeitung" and the German national weekly newspaper "Die Zeit". The international press also reported on our complaint to Brussels.



" THIS SIGNIFICANT MEDIA RESPONSE MADE SOME SERIOUS WAVES IN ROMANIA, WITH TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE TAKING TO THE STREET TO PROTEST AGAINST THE OVEREXPLOITATION OF THE PARADISE FORESTS. THERE HAS BEEN A MASSIVE INCREASE IN PRESSURE ON POLICYMAKERS. "

JANINKA LUTZE, EURONATUR CAMPAIGNER

The myth of clean hydropower

Hydropower is seen as "green" power, given that it is a regenerative source of energy. However, more and more media outlets now report on the catastrophic effects of hydropower dams on river systems. The "Save the Blue Heart of Europe" campaign is having an impact.

[ZDF heute, Germany, December 29, 2019, translated](#)

The hydropower plant by itself constitutes a massive ecological barrier for fish and other aquatic wildlife. [...] "There is only a very small number of good fish ladders. Most of them don't work." says Gabriel Schwaderer of the EuroNatur Foundation."

[Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Switzerland, July 14, 2019, translated](#)

For now, the Vjosa river is flowing as it always has. Here, near the small village of Kutë, its riverbed spans several hundred metres. But Kutë's treasure is at risk: Just a few kilometres downstream, at Pocem, a Turkish developer wants to construct a large dam. The reservoir that would be created by the dam would flood the fields.

[The Guardian, November 28, 2019](#)

Europe's last free-flowing rivers could be fatally disrupted if a new generation of hydroelectric dams are built, experts have warned. More than a quarter (28%) of new hydropower plants are to be constructed in nature reserves, with many planned in the Balkans, home to some of Europe's last free-flowing rivers.





EuroNatur presents itself...

EuroNatur Foundation presented its work in the public sphere as part of numerous events held in 2019. Here is a selection:

- Nature Days ("Naturschutztage") in Radolfzell, Germany (January 3-6, 2019) with a screening of the "Blue Heart" film.
- Open air cinema night in the yard of the EuroNatur head office in Radolfzell (August 19, 2019) presenting a selection of documentaries on EuroNatur projects.
- Radolfzell Culture Night (October 3, 2019) with an exhibition of the winning photographs of the EuroNatur photography contest entitled "Europe's natural treasures".
- naturgucker (a project encouraging citizen science biodiversity recording) congress in Göttingen, Germany (November 1-3, 2019) with a presentation on the Ulcinj Salina.

ECONOMIC SITUATION

“EuroNatur stands on solid foundations”

Surplus generated, new donors and a great deal of solidarity: In this interview EuroNatur's Executive Director Gabriel Schwaderer looks back at a successful financial year 2019.

How did EuroNatur perform economically in 2019? This is a crucial question to be answered in an Activity Report.

It was a good year. We had a positive operating result of more than 300,000 euro and saw a slight increase in our total income which amounted to more than 5 million euro. Moreover, our books now show that for the first time our total assets exceed 10 million euro. In this context it is particularly worth noting that we were able to significantly increase income from donations by roughly 174,000 euro.

Where are these additional donations coming from?

There are two reasons for this increase: Our loyal donors who have been supporting us for many years were even more generous, and we were also successful in attracting new donors – more successful than in the years prior. Our objective for the coming years is to further expand and maintain this donor base. We are very grateful for this form of support; it will become even more important for the Foundation in future years – at the latest when funding from the MAVA Foundation will run out. With 2 million euro per annum it is currently our biggest donor, but the MAVA Foundation will close its doors by the end of 2022. We have known this for a long time and have been able to prepare accordingly. Last year's increase in donations is a welcome step in the right direction.



Donations form the basis

In 2019, 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, campaigns, awareness-raising and environmental education. Once again, EuroNatur also attracted substantial financial support for project implementation in 2019, primarily from private foundations and associations as well as from public sector funding, most notably from Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, Bristol Stiftung, Friends of the Earth Germany (BUND) and BUND Nature Conservation in Bavaria, German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), Federal Environment Ministry (BMUB), German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU), Deutsche Gesellschaft für



Internationale Zusammenarbeit (giz), Dr. Manfred and Gudrun Keim Fund, European Commission, Fondation pour la Sauvegarde de la Nature, Fondation Genevoise de Bienfaisance, Bernd Thies Foundation, Manfred-Hermsen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, MAVA Foundation, and the Federal Environment Agency (UBA).

Moreover, EuroNatur's work was financially supported by certain commercial enterprises in 2019. These included, among others, the utilities company Gelsenwasser and the Bielefeld public utilities.

So how is the 2019 operating profit going to be used?

Our aim is not to generate profits but to achieve our substantive objectives. Profits help us to do that as they improve our financial baseline. Two major nonrecurring items give rise to this encouraging result: We received donations from bequests in the order of 140,000 euro which will be added to the Foundation's capital stock in order to strengthen our financial foundations. When it comes to testamentary gifts there's usually a notion of perpetuity involved and they are a great sign of confidence in our work. We see it as our duty to make long-term use of this money for the benefit of nature conservation in Europe. And that is exactly what we need the Foundation's capital stock for. It gives us security and provides a stable foundation. We will add an additional 177,000 euro – largely from a good financial result – to the revenue reserves. So this will be an investment reserve and a financial buffer for potential losses from capital investments, should there be another financial crisis.

Talking about crises: Faced with the Covid-19 pandemic and economic crisis, conservation organisations are also battling financial insecurity. How did EuroNatur Foundation fare in the first six months of 2020?

The way things look now (editor's note: in June 2020), 2020 will probably be a relatively bad year. It would be irresponsible to ignore that. We have as yet not experienced any adverse financial repercussions; quite the opposite, in the initial phase of the pandemic we have even experienced wonderful solidarity. Donors encouraged us both verbally and through their cheque books to continue to stand up for European nature – especially now! But it is reasonable to assume that the public purse strings will tighten when it comes to our sector, as major investments are directed at the country's economic stability. Moreover, many other foundations are important donors to EuroNatur and it is impossible to foresee how their assets will develop. We also completely understand if our private supporters who may be furloughed or even lose their jobs reconsider their spending choices.

ECONOMIC SITUATION



Income is one side of the equation. What about EuroNatur's expenditure in 2019?

The picture here is similar to the income side: In 2019 we were able to mobilise more funding than ever before in our history for nature conservation in Europe – more than 4.7 million euro! This also allows us to be highly effective in our project, campaign and educational work. Significantly more than 80 % of our total expenditure goes into projects and programmes. This also explains the increase, compared to the year prior, in our total liabilities of 1.6 million euro: these are primarily project grants we have already received but not yet spent.

But if EuroNatur wishes to retain the prestigious DZI Seal of Approval, its expenditure must also meet a range of specifications (please also refer to the box opposite). Will EuroNatur be able to achieve that again?

Yes, we expect to retain the seal but must await the results of the DZI assessment, the outcome of which has always been positive in recent years. Among the aspects assessed by DZI is, for example, the proportion of relevant total expenditure spent on advertising and administration. According to our own calculation, this amounted to just over 14 % in 2019 or a little less than in the previous year. We have been able to gradually reduce this percentage over recent years. DZI regards as “appropriate” any figure between 10 % and 20 %. And that is literally the appropriate bracket: In our view anything less than 10 % would be too little as it would mean that we do not sufficiently invest in our future. We must spend money on advertising – there are even donors who support exactly that, i.e. they financially support our marketing activities.

Presentation of the Activity Report in accordance with 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 October 2019, EuroNatur Foundation was again awarded the DZI (German Central Institute for Social Issues) Seal of Approval. EuroNatur had applied for the seal in August 2019 based on its 2018 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 (please refer to the chapter "Transparency" on p. 45).

There is another factor that is relevant for the DZI Seal of Approval and that is the proportion of advertising expenditure in total income from donations. This is where EuroNatur exceeded a threshold value in 2019, right?

That is true, in part. Let me explain. According to our own calculations, the proportion of advertising expenditure in total income from donations in 2019 was 28 % (2018: 32.5 %) and therefore below the 30 % threshold DZI regards as the "maximum acceptable" proportion. But there is a second component: This proportion of all advertising expenditure (which according to DZI definitions also includes general public relations work) should amount to a maximum of 30 % of the income from donations, calculated as an average of the three latest financial years. At an average of 32.6 % we now exceed this threshold value for the first time, due to the fact that following a large testamentary gift we strongly invested in public relations work in recent years, because we realised that we must invest in order to advance the organisation rather than merely living off of the substance. The 2019 figures clearly show that there is now once again a downward trend when it comes to the proportion of advertising expenditure in total income from donations. However, what is much more important to us is that since 2006 the DZI has confirmed that we meet our obligations as set out in our statutes and that we provide the public with credible and factual information.

**A concluding outlook on 2020 and beyond:
How well-positioned is EuroNatur Foundation in this decade?**

Given our positive operating result, the increase in our capital stock and the sound capital reserves, I'm very optimistic for the future, despite the Covid-19 pandemic. All these factors are expressions of a very stable economic situation, which is not an end in itself but a precondition for us to effectively work to protect nature in Europe.

Questions by: Anja Arning

ECONOMIC SITUATION



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 2019, 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 2019

In 2019, the following individuals bequeathed funds to EuroNatur Foundation upon their death. We are greatly indebted to them and will honour their memory.

- Klaus Thomas Luther, München
- Anna Maria Loise Germann, Meckenbeuren
- K. Hunger
- Kurt Eichler, Schwieberdingen
- Dr. Ruth Liwerski, Bad Pyrmont



Dependent foundations and named funds

In 2019, EuroNatur managed three dependent foundations and three earmarked named funds. The named funds' capital (€ 485k) remained unchanged compared to the previous financial year, as did the capital of the dependent foundations (€ 2,169k). 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 2019 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 31.12.2019

ASSETS		2019	"000 €	2018	"000 €
A. Fixed assets			8,267		6,923
	I. Intangible assets	0		0	
	II. Tangible assets	973		980	
	II. Financial assets	7,294		5,943	
B. Current assets			2,125		2,880
	I. Stocks	13		16	
	II. Accounts receivable and other assets	659		561	
	III. Liquid funds, short-term securities	1,453		2,303	
C. Deferred Items			3		0
TOTALS			10,395		9,805

LIABILITIES		2019	"000 €	2018	"000 €
A. Equity			8,471		8,154
	I. Foundation's capital				
	Core capital	77		77	
	Endowments (financial year € 17k, previous year € 11k)	5,765		5,608	
	II. Revenue reserves	2,629		2,469	
B. Provisions			257		236
C. Liabilities			1,667		1,415
TOTALS			10,395		9,805

PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT FOR 2019

Revenue according to DZI	2019	2018	%	%
	*000 €	*000 €	2019	2018
Cash donations*	1,004	830	19.83	16.72
Donations in kind	30	23	0.59	0.46
Bequest	140	172	2.77	3.46
Fines	10	8	0.20	0.16
Subtotal (total income from donations excluding endowments)	1,184	1,033		
Government grants	412	317	8.14	6.38
Grants from other organizations	3,007	3,105	59.39	62.54
Commercial activity	13	3	0.26	0.06
Interest and capital gains	396	442	7.82	8.90
Other revenue	51	65	1.00	1.31
Total revenue	5,063	4,965	100.00	100.00
Withdrawals from revenue reserves	18	29		
	5,081	4,994		

Expenditure according to DZI	2019	2018	%	%
	*000 €	*000 €	2019	2018
Expenditures on programmes				
Staff-related expenditure	1,110	1,038	23.30	22.83
Administrative and other expenditure	2,909	2,715	61.06	59.71
Expenditures on advertising and PR work				
Staff-related expenditure	178	202	3.74	4.44
Administrative and other expenditure	145	137	3.04	3.01
Expenditures on administration				
Staff-related expenditure	266	276	5.58	6.07
Administrative and other expenditure	81	64	1.70	1.41
Expenditures on portfolio management Et business operations				
Portfolio management	75	115	1.58	2.53
Total expenditure	4,764	4,547	100.00	100.00
Transfers to the Foundation capital stock	140	172		
Transfers to revenue reserves	42	275		
Transfers to „Umschichtungsrücklage“	135	0		
	5,081	4,994		

* In the 2019 financial year we received € 1,389k in monetary donations, € 189k 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.

The endowments of € 17,365.65 (p.y. € 10,680.65) are not included in the income statement.

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 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. Due to differences in legal systems, language barriers and potentially greater corruption risks, the manner in which these grants and donations are passed on to partner organizations abroad 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 Corona pandemic and its far-reaching effects on national economies as well as the 2008 global financial and economic crisis have 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 2019 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 and effectiveness. 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 2019, 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 2020. 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 traceability documented and adequately verified; the proportion of funds spent on advertising and administration in 2019 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 2019, 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 2019 annual accounts in accordance with Par. 317 ff. 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, 2019, profit and loss account for the fiscal year from January 1 to December 31, 2019, 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, 2019.

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, 2019 and the results of operations for the fiscal year from January 1 to December 31, 2019. 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. Pursuant to Section 322 (3)(1) HGB (German Commercial Code) 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 5, 2020, WISTA AG, Mannheim"

TRANSPARENCY

Capital investment based on environmental and ethical criteria

EuroNatur Foundation's foundation capital now amounts to almost € 5.8 million. Moreover, EuroNatur Foundation holds trust property of more than € 2.2 million in trust for the benefit of three dependent 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 2019 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.

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 % either side of the mid-point. The mid-points are € 38k and € 42k for Administration I and II respectively, € 52k per annum for Divisional management, and € 47k and € 57k respectively per annum for Project management I and II.

In 2019, the Executive Director received an annual remuneration package of € 97k 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, 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 2019, 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.

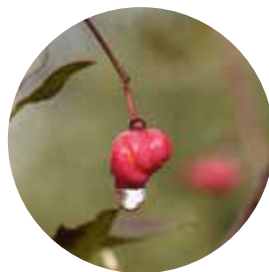
Impact monitoring and impact analysis

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.

HOW YOUR LEGACY CAN DO GOOD A TESTAMENT FOR EUROPEAN NATURE



Nature is the very foundation on which our lives are built. We all depend on it. This is one of the most important messages to come out of the Corona crisis. Time is of the essence as the biodiversity and climate crises do not pause because of the pandemic. But the political arena, the business world, and society at large lack the resolve to initiate a reversal in these trends in pursuit of a future that offers genuine quality of life. It is therefore all the more important for individuals to provide a counterbalance, 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 where there are free-flowing rivers, pristine forests, diverse cultural landscapes, and sufficient space for wildlife.

Testamentary gifts lay a solid foundation for effective nature conservation and thus generate far-reaching prospects for people and nature. 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.

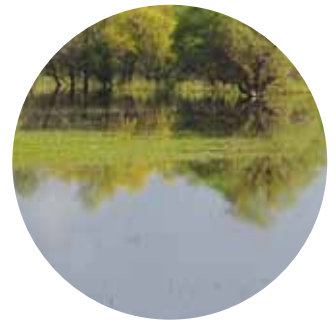
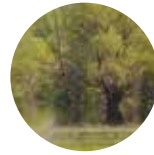
Are you too thinking about considering EuroNatur in your will? If you would like to find out more about this issue please get in touch with us. Your contact:

Sabine Günther,
sabine.guenther@euronatur.org, Fon +49 (0) 7732/92 72 17

“ NATURE CONSERVATION IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME, AND A SENSITIVE TOPIC. BEFORE I MADE MY WILL, I HAD IN-DEPTH DISCUSSIONS WITH SABINE GÜNTHER AND GABRIEL SCHWADERER. AT EURONATUR I AM SEEN AS A HUMAN BEING, NOT JUST SOME NUMBER. I HAVE A VERY GOOD FEELING ABOUT THIS. ”

**DR. MED. ULRIKE HURLER
INCLUDED EURONATUR IN HER WILL.**

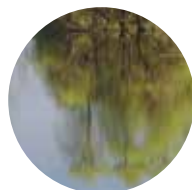
EURONATUR'S PROJECT FOCI IN 2019



In 2019, 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**
- **Protecting large carnivores in Europe**
- **Protecting Europe's last wilderness areas**
- **Agricultural policy, biodiversity policy, energy policy**

This Activity 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: 354,000 Euro

Projects:

Protection and development of the European Green Belt and ongoing advancement of the initiative (Partners: all EGBA members as well as the actors involved in the European Green Belt Initiative; Funding: EuroNatur's donors), Risk analysis, development of solutions, and capacity building in the Šar/Korab-Koritnik region along the Balkan Green Belt (Partners: MES, PPNEA, Finch; Funding: DBU, Ludwig Raue Memorial Fund, EuroNatur's donors), Biodiversity protection in the Šar Mountains by means of strengthening local action groups (Partners: MES, Finch, PPNEA, CED for the "Friends of Shara" action group; Funding: GIZ, 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 rivers and river landscapes"

Funding spent on this priority: 1,674,000 Euro

Projects:

"Save the Blue Heart of Europe" campaign (Partners: Riverwatch, Front 21/42, CZZS; Funding: MAVA Foundation, Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, Patagonia, Fondation pour la Sauvegarde de la Nature, Fondation Genevoise de Bienfaisance, 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, EuroNatur's donors), 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 through funding mechanisms ERDF and IPA, EuroNatur's donors), Support for the protection and sustainable regional development of the Bosnian karst poljes Livanjsko Polje and Duvanjsko Polje (Partners: Naše ptice, Naša bastina, Dinarica; Funding: MAVA Foundation, EuroNatur's donors)

EURONATUR'S PROJECT FOCI IN 2019



Priority "Protecting migratory birds in Europe"

Funding spent on this priority: 909,000 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** (Partners: 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: European Stork Villages and their national conservation partners; Funding: Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, Fondation pour la Sauvegarde, Bristol Stiftung, EU LIFE, Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors)



Priority "Protecting large carnivores in Europe"

Funding spent on this priority: 624,000 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, CZSS; Funding: Bernd Thies Foundation, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), Protecting brown bears, lynx and grey wolves in the northern Dinarides (Partner: University of Zagreb, Carnivora Magna; Funding: EU LIFE, EuroNatur's donors and sponsors), Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme (Partners: MES, PPNEA, 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, Associazione 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), Protection of grey wolf populations that have recolonized central and western Poland (Partner: Wilk;

Funding: Lappat Fund, 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 Polish-Czech wolf population (Partners: Hnutí Duha; 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 (Partners: 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), Protecting Mediterranean monk seals in the Eastern Adriatic (Partners: MOm, PPNEA, CZIP, Biom; Funding: EuroNatur's donors and sponsors)

EURONATUR'S PROJECT FOCI IN 2019



Priority "Protecting Europe's last wilderness areas"

Funding spent on this priority: 318,000 Euro

Projects:

Protecting primary and old-growth forests in Romania (Partners: Agent Green, ClientEarth; Funding: Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection, Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, Fondation pour la Sauvegarde de la Nature, Bristol Stiftung, Fair Future Foundation, 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)

Priority "Agricultural policy, biodiversity policy, energy policy"

Funding spent on this priority: 241,000 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 BMU), 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 BMU), #ProtectWater Campaign (Partners: WWF, EEB, ERN, EAA, WI and various other national and international NGOs and anglers associations; Funding: EuroNatur's donors)



Abbreviations

Partners:

ACDB: Association for the Biological Diversity Conservation
AOS: Albanian Ornithological Society
ATN: Association for transhumance & nature conservation in Portugal
Biom: BirdLife Croatia
BPSSS: Bird Protection and Study Society of Serbia
CED: Center for education and development
CBD-Habitat: Foundation for the Conservation of Biodiversity and its Habitat in Spain
CWS: Carpathian Wildlife Society
CZIP: Center for Protection and Research of Birds of Montenegro
CZZS: Center for Environment in Bosnia-Herzegovina
DOPPS: BirdLife Slovenia
EAA: European Anglers Alliance
EEB: European Environmental Bureau
EGBA: European Green Belt Association
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
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

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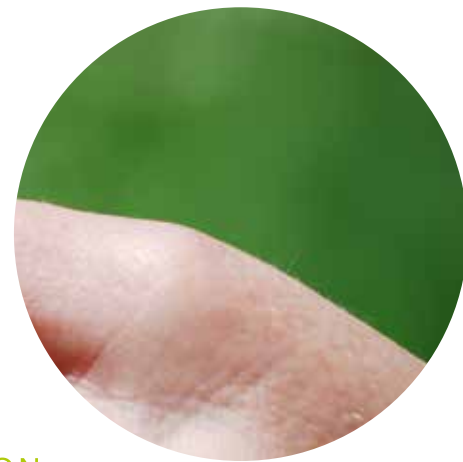
BfN: German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
BMU: Federal Environment Ministry
DBU: German Federal Environmental Foundation
ERDF: European Regional Development Fund
GIZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IPA: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
LIFE: L'Instrument Financier pour l'Environnement
PONT: Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust
UBA: German Federal Environment Agency

IMPRINT



The EuroNature team in April 2020. Even during the Corona lockdown we are committed to nature conservation in Europe - most of us from home. From top left: Janinka Lutze, Kerstin Sauer, Magdalena Kulisch, Sandra Wigger, Dr. Stefan Ferger, Ines Fantinato, Elfrun Lindenthal, Mareike Brix, Susanne Buchholz, Ilka Beermann, Sabine Günther, Katharina Grund, Matthias Heinrich, Annette Spangenberg, Anja Arning, Leonie Kraut, Mira Bell, Amelie Huber, Christian Stielow, Laura Meinecke, Tara Sukic, Gabriela Strobel, Gabriel Schwaderer, Daniela Löchle.





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