eurONATUR
Annual report 2013
The “European Green Belt”, arguably one of the most ambitious conservation projects on our continent, continued to be a significant priority for the EuroNatur Foundation in 2013. Following the route of the former Iron Curtain, the 12,500 km long European Green Belt aims at protecting and enhancing valuable natural and cultural landscapes, not only across national borders but also beyond the current borders of the European Union. This green backbone of Europe connects eight biogeographical regions and 24 countries, including EU Member States, accession countries, candidate countries for accession to the EU as well as non-EU countries. The coordination of this initiative is a major challenge, not least due to the fact that there continues to be a steady growth in the numbers of governmental as well as non-governmental actors and operational areas. The existing conservation initiatives are to be interlinked beyond national borders and expanded upon. Together with our partners we are on the right track, which is just as well given that the Green Belt has enormous potential: In addition to its ecological significance it contributes to a sense of identity. It is a symbol of East and West coming together, an icon of mutual interdependence. It is also a model for other regions in the world that are still divided by inhuman borders but which hopefully one day will be able to once again develop in unison. The fact that the European Green Belt also received broad political backing at the anniversary celebrations in Berlin in May 2013 is therefore of great significance and most welcome (please refer to the “European Green Belt” chapter of this report).

If the European Green Belt is not conceived in its entirety it will be at risk of fragmentation and thus dissolution. We all carry responsibility to ensure that this peace-building initiative will not be sacrificed to vested interests. This is exactly what may well happen on the Balkan peninsula, where under the guise of ‘green’ energy generation the “Blue Heart of Europe” with all the natural treasures it holds is at risk of being destroyed. The Balkan rivers are as yet largely unadulterated and therefore of enormous ecological value. But there are plans for hundreds of medium-sized as well as larger hydropower plants, with the construction of one of these being planned inside the Mavrovo National Park, one of the genuine pearls of the European Green Belt. Together with our partners we initiated the “Save the Blue Heart of Europe” campaign in 2013 with a view to drawing attention to this tragedy. We create transparency and make sure to increase public awareness of the threat to the Balkan rivers (please refer to pages 14-15 of this report).

Many of our projects we would not be able to implement without the support of our donors, supporters and sponsors. This Annual Report highlights what we have been able to achieve in 2013. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to you and to ask you to continue to support EuroNatur in the future. The protection of Europe’s nature in all its beauty and diversity is our common responsibility.

I trust that you will find inspiration in reading this report.

Yours sincerely,

Christel Schroeder

Dear Friends of EuroNatur,
EuroNatur Foundation lives up to its name: There are virtually no other organisations that focus their project activities on transboundary conservation in Europe as strongly as we do. This European focus is enshrined in EuroNatur's Statutes which set out the organisation’s commitments to include the “implementation of and support for nature conservation projects in Europe aiming at the protection, maintenance and reintroduction of fauna and flora in the wild”. We see it as our core task to overcome the many national borders in Europe in a positive manner and to enable nature conservation efforts at the level of the European continent.

What are the particularly distinct features of EuroNatur’s work?

- Transboundary protection of wild fauna:
  EuroNatur engages in protection measures for species of wild fauna such as wolves, bears, lynx, Mediterranean monk seals, migratory birds and their habitats in Europe.

- Large-scale protected areas in outstanding landscapes:
  We safeguard large-scale, intact natural landscapes and ecologically valuable cultural landscapes in Europe. In this context, one focus of EuroNatur’s work is on projects along the “Balkan Green Belt”.

- We don’t shoot from the hip but we’re in it for the long haul:
  EuroNatur fosters long-term relationships and works on lasting successes rather than leaving important regions to their own devices on foot of implementing short-term projects.

- Capacity building:
  We primarily work with regional partner organisations on site and provide advanced training for our partners in the EuroNatur project areas to enable them to effectively protect nature in their own regions.

- Conservation WITH people:
  We promote sustainable development in rural areas and offer functioning examples of regional development in harmony with nature. This helps us to win over local people as partners for achieving our conservation objectives.

- Presence both in the political arena and at the practical level:
  EuroNatur is an advocate of European nature in Brussels. We fight for a reorientation of the European agricultural policy to render it more favourable both in economic and environmental terms. And we fight for a conservation policy that opens up future prospects for both people and nature. Moreover we campaign for the actual implementation of planned measures for the protection of European natural heritage.

- Networks for nature:
  EuroNatur does not only engage in establishing an ecological network of the most important ecosystems in Europe but also brings together scientists, partners in conservation, farmers, politicians and business people from various countries, thus establishing transboundary communication and understanding.
Organisation & 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, organisationally 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. EuroNatur is a member of, amongst others, the following organisations: International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), European Habitats Forum, German League for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection (DNR), Association of German Foundations, AgrarBündnis e.V., Europarc, and Wetlands International - European Association. The latest exemption notice (Freistellungsbescheid) was issued by the tax authority in Singen on August 19, 2013.

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 2013 EuroNatur’s Presiding Committee had six voting members, all of whom served in a voluntary capacity. Their duties include determining the organisation’s strategic orientation, approving annual budgets, and approving the annual accounts. The Presiding Committee oversees the work of the Executive Director and the Director for Nature 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 organisation’s concerns. In 2013 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 organisation 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.

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 organisation’s operative work. In 2013, EuroNatur maintained two offices in Germany and employed a total of 20 staff. Central functions such as managing donors, bookkeeping, general administration and public relations work are based in Radolfzell at Lake Constance, as are most of the project management activities. The conservation policy office is based in Rheinbach near Bonn.

EuroNatur Service GmbH

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

1. Cantabrian Mountains (Spain)
2. Senne (Germany)
3. Brandenburg (Germany)
4. Narew / Podlasie (Poland)
5. Mura–Drava–Danube „Amazon of Europe“ (Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, Serbia)
6. Sava floodplains (Croatia)
7. Livanjsko Polje (Bosnia-Herzegovina)
8. Neretva-Delta (Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina)
9. Bojana–Buna and Lake Skutari (Montenegro, Albania)
10. Prokletije/Bjeshket e Nemuna (Montenegro, Albania, Kosovo)
11. Korab–Mountains and National Park Mavrovo (Albania, Macedonia)
12. Jablanica–Shebenik Mountains (Albania, Macedonia)
13. Illinska–Plakenska Mountains (Macedonia)
14. Šar Mountains (Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo)
15. Vjosa (Albania)
16. Belasitsa Mountains (Bulgaria)
17. Smolyan (Bulgaria)
18. Dragoman (Bulgaria)
19. Sakar (Bulgaria)
20. Carpathian Mountains (Romania)
21. Northern Dinarides (Croatia)
22. Tilos (Greece)
In 2013, the projects implemented by the EuroNatur Foundation

- Protecting the European Green Belt and further advancing the European Green Belt Initiative
- Protecting Europe’s rivers
- Protecting migratory birds in Europe
- Large mammal protection in Europe
- Agricultural policy, biodiversity policy, energy policy

This Annual Report describes in some detail a selection of projects under individual priority headings. The 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: 373,000 Euro.
Projects:
Advancing the European Green Belt Initiative (Partners: BUND; Funding: BfN with funds provided by BMU, EuroNatur’s donors),
Protecting biodiversity in the Macedonian Šar Mountains (Partners: MES; Funding: DBU, Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors),
Initiative for a Šar Mountains Trinational Protected Area (Partners: MES, PPNEA, Finch; Funding: BMU as part of the German International Climate Initiative, UNEP),
Transboundary protection for the Belasitsa Mountains (Partners: BBF Belasitsa, Belasitsa Nature Park, Lake Kerkini National Park, Environmental Association Planetum-Strumica; Funding: DBU, EuroNatur’s donors),
Sustainable forest management in Smolyan (Partners: Green Balkans; Funding: UBA, BfN with funds provided by BMU, EuroNatur’s donors),
Protecting the Dragoman wetlands (Partners: BBF; Funding: DBU, EuroNatur’s donors).

Priority “Protecting Europe’s rivers”
Funding spent on this priority: 180,000 Euro.
Projects:
“Save the Blue Heart of Europe” campaign (Partners: Riverwatch, MES, Ekosvest, Front 21/42, PPNEA, HDZPP; Funding: Mava Foundation, Manfred-Hermsen Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors),
Protecting one of Europe’s important lifelines – Support for the Transboundary Biosphere Reserve “Mura–Drava–Danube” (Partners: Green Osijek, HDZPP, WWF; Funding: EuroNatur’s donors, Mava Foundation),
Protecting the Sava floodplains (Partners: HDZPP, Lonjsko Polje Nature Park; Funding: EuroNatur’s donors).

Priority “Agricultural policy, biodiversity policy, energy policy”
Funding spent on this priority: 495,000 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),
Alliance for Farming and Nature Conservation in the Alps (Partners: i.a. BUND/Bavarian section, AbL, other farming and conservation associations; Funding: Mava Foundation),
Guidance for the establishment of regional, decentralized economic and supply structures in Podlasie/Poland with a focus on renewable energy (Partners: Białystok Marshal’s Office, Politechnika Białystok, Podlasie Regional Development Association, DFZ Leipzig, Energievision Frankenwald e.V., the town of Wunsiedel and the Wunsiedel Department of Public Works; Funding: UBA with funds provided by BMU),
Food-Feed-Fuel network project ‘Agrarantrieb’ (Partners: see www.agrarantrieb.de/partner.html; Funding: BMWi as part of its Central Innovation Programme for SME).
Priority “Protecting migratory birds in Europe”
Funding spent on this priority: 390,000 Euro.
Projects:
Safeguarding important resting areas for migratory birds along the Adriatic Flyway (Partners: HDZPP, Baobab, BIOM, DOPPS, BSPPS, CZIP, Naše ptice, Naša baština, APAWA, MES; Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Protecting the Ulcinj salt flats (Partners: CZIP; Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors); Protecting the Ulcinj salt flats (Partners: CZIP; Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors); Protecting the Tivat salt flats (Partners: CZIP, Morsko Dobro; Funding: DBU, Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors), Protecting the most significant karst poljes in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Partners: Naše ptice, Naša baština; Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors), Optimizing management at the Hutovo Blato Nature Park, with special emphasis on controlling poaching (Partners: Hutovo Blato Nature Park, Naše ptice, Ljepa naša; Funding: CEPF), Protecting the Dalmatian pelicans at Lake Skadar (Partners: Noé Conservation, Lake Skadar National Park administration, Tour du Valat, APAWA, CZIP, Natural History Museum of Montenegro; Funding: CEPF), Protecting OSPREYS in Asturia (Partners: FAPAS, Funding: EuroNatur’s donors), Protecting migratory birds on Tilos island (Partners: TPA; Funding: 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), Protecting the Eastern imperial eagle at Sakar (Partners: Green Balkans; Funding: EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Lesser kestrel reintroduction at Sakar (Partners: Green Balkans, DEMA; Funding: Life+, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Support for the protection of White storks, especially in European Stork Villages (Partners: European Stork Villages; Funding: EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors).

Priority “Large mammal protection in Europe”
Funding spent on this priority: 463,000 Euro.
Projects:
Protecting brown bears in the Cantabrian Mountains (Partner: FAPAS; Funding: EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Protecting brown bears in the eastern Carpathians (Partner: MilVus; Funding: WWF Germany, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Protecting brown bears, lynx and gray wolves in the northern Dinarides (Partner: University of Zagreb; Funding: EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme (Partners: MES, PPNEA, CZIP, Finch, ERA, KORA; Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Establishment of conservation organisations in Montenegro and Kosovo (Partners: MES, PPNEA, CZIP, Finch; Funding: BIN with funds provided by BMU, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Initiative for a Balkan Regional Ecological Network BREN (Partners: MES, ECNC; Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Protection of gray wolf populations that have recolonized western Poland (Partner: Wilk; Funding: Lappat Fund, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Protection of large carnivores in Poland, with special emphasis on wolves and lynx (Partner: MRL; Funding: Elisabeth Seifert-Becker’s endowment fund for the protection of wolves in memory of Viktoria Neumann, Emilie and Franz Seifert, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Maintaining the ecological integrity of migration corridors for large carnivores (especially wolves) in Poland (Partners: Conservation organisation “Workshop for all Beings”; Funding: EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors), Protection of large carnivores in Baden-Wuerttemberg, “Handlungssleitfaden Wolf” (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), Mediterranean monk seals - Cap Blanc (Partner: CBD Habitat; Funding: EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors).

Abbreviations
Partners:
AbL: Association for family farming in Germany
APAWA: Association for Protection of Aquatic Wildlife of Albania
BIOM: BirdLife Croatia
BMWI: Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy
BSPPS: Bird Study and Protection Society of Serbia
BUND: Friends of the Earth Germany
CZIP: Center for Protection and Research of Birds of Montenegro
DBFZ: German Centre for Biomass Research
DOPPS: BirdLife Slovenia
ECNC: European Centre for Nature Conservation
ERA: Environmentally Responsible Action group
FAPAS: Wild animal protection fund (Spain)
HDZPP: Croatian Society for Bird and Nature Protection
KORA: Coordinated Research Projects for the Protection and Management of Carnivores in Switzerland
MES: Macedonian Ecological Society
PPNEA: Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania
TPA: Tilos Park Association
Wilk: Conservation Association “Wolf”
WWF: World Wide Fund For Nature
Funding:
BBF: Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation
BUND: Friends of the Earth Germany
BIN: German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
BMU: Federal Environment Ministry
CEPF: Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
DBU: German Federal Environmental Foundation
Mava Foundation: Mava Fondation pour la Nature
UBA: German Federal Environment Agency
UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme
Multiple challenges
The “closed season” for nature ended with the historical turning point, the beginning of the post-Cold War period, in the early 1990s. The fall of the Iron Curtain meant that the biodiverse forests in the former border regions were now threatened by fragmentation due to road construction, near-natural river landscapes became vulnerable to channelization and almost untouched mountain regions came under pressure from timber extraction and ski tourism.

Towards a powerful movement
In 2013 the “European Green Belt” gained political support. At the occasion of the initiative’s 10th anniversary, representatives of conservation organisations and ministries from 24 countries bordering the Green Belt came together at an international conference in Berlin in May 2013. The majority of the representatives officially pledged their support for the protection of the European Green Belt. The event not only provided an ideal opportunity for local actors to exchange ideas but it also strengthened bonds and thus gave important impetus to improved cross-border cooperation.

A trans-European vision
The “European Green Belt” conservation initiative, which was co-founded by EuroNatur, aims at safeguarding this transnational ecosystem network and biodiversity hotspot for future generations. EuroNatur is the regional coordinator of conservation activities in the Balkan Green Belt. We are developing pilot projects for successful, transboundary cooperation which can also serve as templates for other European regions.
Selected EuroNatur projects in 2013

Impetus for the largest conservation project in Europe

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 from the Fenno-Russian border in the north to the Black Sea in the south (Map p. 5). The Green Belt connects eight biogeographical regions and 24 nations.

Status
Conservation activities carried out by the numerous actors involved are coordinated by four regional coordinators – one for each of the Green Belt’s four sections. EuroNatur is in charge of the Balkan Green Belt. To date all the coordination activities have largely been funded by the organisations involved. Long-term core funding for the initiative was not at hand. Moreover, there has not been an overall, European-level coordination unit ever since the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) laid down this mandate in 2010. In September 2011, EuroNatur and the BUND Green Belt Project Office (Regional Coordinator Green Belt Central Europe) commenced a three-year project aimed at structurally advancing the European Green Belt initiative, bringing substantive progress, and giving renewed impetus to the initiative.

Objectives
With a new concept for the initiative’s umbrella structure we want to create the prerequisites for improved networking between the rising number of actors and activities along the Green Belt and ensure that sufficient levels of long-term funding for this large-scale project are in place. This task has been assumed by a coordination group of which EuroNatur is a member. It is envisaged that in the long term the currently loose network will be given a binding organisational structure.

Selected activities and achievements in 2013
- Based on the groundwork undertaken in 2012, EuroNatur worked intensively on developing a new organisational structure for the initiative and commissioned a law firm to assess a range of potential organisational models that could be pursued.
- At the occasion of the initiative’s 10th anniversary, representatives of conservation organisations and ministries from 24 countries bordering the Green Belt came together in Berlin in May 2013. By the end of 2013, fifteen countries had signed a joint Declaration of Intent (DoI), officially committing themselves to continue their engagement to support the initiative and promote its sustainable development.

A coordination group meeting at the end of January adopted the “Riga Recommendations”. On this basis it was decided that the organizational structure of a “Verein” (a registered voluntary association) would be particularly suited to the “European Green Belt” initiative.

Partner: BUND

Funding: BfN with funds provided by BMU, EuroNatur’s donors
A green future for the Šar Mountains

Geographical location in Europe
The Šar Mountains (Map p. 5, No. 14) are a mountain range spanning the borders of Macedonia and Kosovo; they are part of the Balkan Green Belt, the southernmost section of the European Green Belt.

Status
Particularly the Macedonian part of the Šar Mountain massif is a true biodiversity hotspot, providing precious habitat for numerous endemic plant species, a wealth of butterfly species and large mammals such as gray wolves and brown bears. The Macedonian Šar Mountains also connect the rare Balkan lynx’s core range – the Mavrovo National Park to the south – with potential lynx ranges to the north. This diversity is however under threat. Illegal timber extraction as well as large-scale damaging construction projects threaten to destroy this unique mountain landscape. Attempts at designating the area as a national park have as yet been unsuccessful due to the local communities’ resistance to such a step.

Objectives
Our aim is to raise the local people’s awareness of the natural treasures at their doorstep and we hope to gain their support for the national park designation. We also aim at sustainable natural resource use in the region.

Selected activities in 2013
■ We provided advice and financial support to the local population in the Macedonian part of the Šar Mountains as part of a small-scale project support programme. These projects aim at developing conservation-based alternative income streams (e.g. nature-based tourism/ecotourism, sales of organically produced food etc.).
■ In April 2013, a training session was hosted in the city of Tetovo for all those who are implementing one of the small-scale projects. Amongst other skills, the 15 participants learned how to develop applications for follow-up projects and how to establish their own independent conservation actions.

Important achievements in 2013
■ In 2013 the last of the twenty small-scale projects on environmental education and ecological regional development which had commenced in the previous year were successfully completed. The Varvara municipality for example has established the beginnings of a tourism infrastructure including hiking trails and information material on the region’s ecological and cultural features.
■ We have come a lot closer to our goal of gaining the support of the local people in the Macedonian part of the Šar Mountains. This was evident, in particular, from the high participation rate in the small-scale project programme. The activities we initiated have developed their own dynamic, extending beyond the conclusion of the project.

Partner: MES
Funding: DBU, Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors
Smolyan: Conservation and forest use

Geographical location in Europe
The Bulgarian Smolyan (Map p. 5, No. 17) region is situated in the western Rhodopes mountain range near the Greek border and is one of the pearls of the Balkan Green Belt.

Status
The ecologically very valuable woodland and grassland communities provide ideal conditions for a great diversity of rare species of flora and fauna. It is not surprising that several sites in this region have been notified as components of the Natura 2000 system of protected areas. A large proportion of these sites is under forest cover and is subject to forestry land use. However, the forest management plans currently in force do not give sufficient consideration to the objectives of the Habitats Directive which means that rare and threatened habitats may suffer significant adverse impacts.

Objectives
In the Smolyan region we strive to establish forest management practices that are compliant with Natura 2000 objectives. The region is to serve as a tangible model of how sustainable land use in Natura 2000 sites can reconcile man and nature. Moreover, it is important to strengthen knowledge of the Natura 2000 system amongst those in charge in Bulgaria and engage in capacity-building for Natura 2000 site management.

Selected activities in 2013
- In 2013, model forest management plans for two selected forest districts in the Smolyan region were completed as well as coordinated and agreed with the authorities in charge. These plans contain specifications for the development of Natura 2000 habitat types and thus create a basis on which sustainable use can be achieved in the areas in question.
- In the spring and summer of 2013 a number of training course were held which instructed participants in how to identify and mark habitat trees in forests. Special templates were produced and a brochure containing identification criteria was prepared and published.

Important achievements in 2013
- The Bulgarian Ministry for Agriculture and Food as well as subordinate authorities were introduced to the model approach to sustainable forestry land use in Natura 2000 sites.
- Training courses and a study trip to the Black Forest contributed to strengthening knowledge on the Natura 2000 network and site management amongst those in charge in Bulgaria.
- Participants in the training courses on managing habitat trees also included representatives from regions outside of Smolyan which meant that we were able to also create vital impetus for sustainable forest management at the supra-regional level.

Partner: Green Balkans
Funding: UBA, BfN with funds provided by BMU, EuroNatur’s donors
Targeted by the hydraulic engineering lobby
But where in Europe can we still find pure unadulterated rivers? They have become very rare indeed and the hydraulic engineering lobby has their sights set on the last remaining ones. The uncontrolled expansion of hydropower and shipping spells their destruction. Dams completely alter a river’s hydraulic regime and block natural sediment transport, thus disrupting the ‘heartbeat’ of the entire river system. They destroy the habitats of migrating fish species such as eels and result in the downstream river bed to be dangerously deepened which in turn leads to a lowering of the groundwater level. Channelization for shipping purposes destroys a river’s natural dynamic, cuts it off from its floodplain and stops the pattern of flooding and drying out to which riparian ecosystems have adapted; at the same time the risk of downstream flooding increases. These kind of intrusions in sensitive river landscapes have a multitude of adverse impacts. Time is running out for Europe’s rivers!

Our mission
Together with our partner organisations we aim at protecting the last remaining intact ecological arteries on our continent and strive for their sustainable utilization. Shipping must adapt to rivers – not the other way ‘round. Hydropower projects must give due consideration to aspects of nature conservation and species protection, rather than destroy species and habitats under the guise of ‘green’ energy generation.

The focus in 2013
South-eastern Europe in particular still hosts numerous intact river landscapes. These are major European biodiversity hotspots. While many of these rivers have hardly been studied, it is reasonable to assume that they harbour very significant ecological treasures. The river landscapes of the Balkan Peninsula are also subject to a ‘general assault’ – this is a focus that kept EuroNatur and its partners particularly busy in 2013.

Ecological arteries par excellence
Crystal-clear streams, spectacular waterfalls, deep ravines, riparian woodlands and large untamed rivers with huge gravel islands create a network of ecological arteries in the landscape. Rhythms of rising and falling waters in these river landscapes create a paradise not only for resting and breeding birds, fish, mussels and snails but also fertile land for humans, space for recreation, and a rich food base.
Selected EuroNatur projects in 2013

Mura–Drava–Danube: Europe's Amazon

Geographical location in Europe
Courses of the rivers Mura, Drava and Danube at the intersections of the territories of Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary and Serbia (Map p. 5, No. 5). The wild alluvial forests and oxbows of the Lower Drava and Mura rivers create a green lifeline, stretching over a length of 380 km before they reach the Danube.

Status
The Mura, Drava and Danube rivers together constitute one of the last contiguous, primeval river ecosystems in Europe and one of the most valuable sections of the European Green Belt. However, since the end of the Cold War this natural treasure is under threat from gravel extraction, channelization and hydropower projects.

A focal point in 2013 was the stubbornly pursued plans by Croatian water management authorities to channelize a 53 km section of the Danube along the Croatian–Serbian border. This would severely impact on the Kopacki Rit Nature Park. Moreover, the Slovenian government had plans to build two large hydropower plants on the Mura. These would disrupt the integrity of the Mura, Drava and Danube river system and thus threaten migratory fish species in particular.

Objectives
We aim to halt channelization, hydropower plant construction and gravel extraction in the entire project area. To achieve lasting protection of the sensitive river landscapes of the Mura, Drava and Danube, we work towards the designation of a protected Transboundary UNESCO Biosphere Reserve spanning five countries (Croazia, Serbia, Slovenia, Austria, Hungary).

Selected activities in 2013

- Complaint to the Bonn Convention on the planned channelization of the Danube in Croatia.
- We initiated an assessment of the transboundary impacts of the planned hydropower projects on the Mura in Slovenia.

Important achievements in 2013

- In 2013, the Serbian government applied to UNESCO for inclusion of the valuable river landscapes in the Croatian–Serbian border region as a further significant building block of the Transboundary Biosphere Reserve. The only countries still missing are Slovenia and Austria.

Outlook
The international pressure on Croatia has gained us some valuable time. Chances are good that the channelization of the Danube in the Croatian–Serbian border region can be halted. We will increase our efforts to gain the support of the local people to ensure that the Transboundary Biosphere Reserve will not be a paper tiger but a living, thriving initiative.

Partner: Green Osijek, HDZPP, WWF
Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors
“Save the Blue Heart of Europe” campaign

Geographical location in Europe
Rivers and streams in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Kosovo. Focal regions of the “Save the Blue Heart of Europe” campaign are the Mavrovo National Park (Map p. 5, No. 11) in Macedonia, the Vjosa river (Map p. 5, No. 15) in Albania, and the Sava river in Croatia (Map p. 5, No. 6) and Slovenia.

Status
There are still wild and primeval river landscapes on the Balkan Peninsula; this is where the “Blue Heart of Europe” is beating. More than 80 percent of the watercourses are in a good or very good ecological condition. But under the guise of green energy generation, plans are afoot in Slovenia and Albania to construct more than 570 medium-sized or large hydropower plants, most of them supported by international banks and developers. They are putting one of the most important of Europe’s natural treasures at risk.

Mavrovo National Park
The hydraulic engineering lobby does not even respect protected areas. Mavrovo is one of Europe’s oldest national parks and a jewel in the crown of the European Green Belt. Amongst other development projects inside the national park, there are plans to build two major dams (“Boskov Most” and “Lukovo Pole”) with funding from the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBDR). These projects threaten to destroy biodiversity which has developed here over thousands of years. The unique primary beech forests and the critically endangered Balkan lynx (please refer to p. 24) are under particular threat.

Sava
The Sava river with its enormous alluvial forests, gentle meanders and agricultural lands under the influence of the rivers’ water regime gives rise to one of the most interesting riverscapes in Europe. Its floodplain serves as a prime example of what natural flood protection should look like. But the Sava has come under pressure from numerous dam-building projects as well as from plans for upgrading the river for shipping purposes.

Vjosa
The Vjosa river is one of the last remaining truly wild rivers on our continent but its fate is in peril as there are plans for the construction of a chain of eight hydropower plants. If these dams were built, long-distance migrants such as eels or mullets would no longer stand a chance. Moreover, a number of fish species existing only in the Balkan region and nowhere else in Europe would lose some of their most important remaining habitats and would become even more critically endangered.

Objectives
With the aid of the “Save the Blue Heart of Europe” campaign initiated in 2013, we aim to stop the dam construction and river engineering projects in the three focal areas of the Mavrovo National Park and the Vjosa and Sava rivers. In parallel, we aim to make the international public aware of the beauty of and the threat to the Balkan rivers. It is not our intention to completely block hydropower development in the Balkan region. However, plans to expand hydroelectric power must urgently consider the concerns of nature conservation and species protection. We therefore strive for a comprehensive plan which defines rivers and sections of rivers which must not under any circumstances be subjected to engineering measures.

Europe’s rivers
Selected activities in 2013

Mavrovo National Park
- As part of a protest campaign, more than 100 international conservation and environmental scientists lodged their concerns with the World Bank and the EBRD as project funders as well as with the Macedonian government. They took a clear stance against the destructive dam projects in Boskov Most and Lukovo Pole.
- Following an intervention by conservation organisations, the EBRD commissioned more in-depth assessments of the projected impacts of the Boskov Most dam. The technical quality of their reports is very poor and the assessment systematically downplays risks to nature and the environment. In response, fifteen internationally renowned scientists strongly criticized the EBRD for their involvement.
- In cooperation with a group of international experts we started to prepare the nomination of the primary beech forests in the Dlaboka Reka valley as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Important achievements in 2013

Mavrovo National Park
- Unsettled by the international criticism, the World Bank has not given its final approval for the loan to ELEM, the Macedonian electricity supply company, for the Lukovo Pole project.
- As a result of our efforts to achieve the nomination of the Dlaboka Reka primary beech forests as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the World Bank insisted on their exclusion from the plans for Lukovo Pole.
- While the more in-depth assessment of environmental impacts of the Boskov Most project was inadequate, the process has gained us some valuable time.

Sava
- The Environmental Impact Assessment for the upgrading of the Sava river had still not become legally binding in 2013 due to pending legal proceedings, but the plans were pursued unchecked. In June 2013 a consortium of experts presented a project evaluation report. In this report, the assessment of environmental impacts was wholly inadequate while the economics of the project were hyped. We presented a critical review of the report.

Outlook

Despite these initial and partial successes the Boskov Most and Lukovo Pole dam projects are still far from having been scrapped. The planned upgrading of the Sava river for shipping is also keeping us very busy. During the coming three years we will devote ourselves intensely to the protection of the Balkan rivers in the context of the “Save the Blue Heart of Europe” campaign and we will also increase our activities with respect to the Vjosa river. Along the Sava river we aim at mobilizing civil society so as to have broad transboundary support for the river along its entire path. We endeavour to demonstrate how the Sava region can be developed in a sustainable way and thus present an alternative to the planned river engineering and dam construction measures.

Partners: Riverwatch, MES, Ekosvest, Front 21/42, PPNEA, HDZPP
Funding: Mava Foundation, Manfred-Hermsen Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors
Internet: www.balkanrivers.net
Nomads of the sky

Every year in spring and autumn huge numbers of migratory birds move between their breeding grounds in Europe and their wintering grounds in Africa, filling the sky in remarkable numbers and impressive formations. But this journey is a perilous one. Safe and intact resting places allowing them to feed and recover their strength on their exhausting journey are becoming ever more rare. Moreover, every year millions of migratory birds in Europe are killed by bird hunters.

A journey to their death
The situation is particularly critical on the Balkan Peninsula: It is estimated that every year significantly more than two million birds are shot dead along the so-called Adriatic Flyway which stretches from northern and eastern Europe across the Balkans and the Adriatic Sea all the way to northern Africa. The long list of victims includes not only species that have become rare, such as Eurasian cranes and spoonbills, but also globally endangered birds of prey and species in regional decline such as skylarks and quail. Moreover, these species’ habitats are also under serious pressure from intensive agriculture, resource extraction and energy generation.

Our mission
Our efforts are targeted at curbing poaching and ‘weaving a tighter web’ of safe and intact resting grounds, one site at a time. As in earlier years, a particular focus of our work in 2013 was on the ecologically important wetlands in the Balkans.

The focus in 2013
The situation in Albania was more than critical: as in previous years, hunters quite literally turned Albania into a deathtrap for migratory birds. Moreover, a host of hydraulic engineering measures currently threatens to destroy the last remaining ecologically intact wetlands and important resting grounds for migratory birds in the Balkans (please refer to the Chapter “Europe’s rivers” on pp. 12-15).
Selected EuroNatur projects in 2013

Adriatic Flyway – Safeguarding the future of migratory birds

Geographical location in Europe

Bird habitats along the Adriatic Flyway in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Albania.

Status

The issue of bird hunting on the Balkans has been a constant focus of EuroNatur’s work. Due in part to our dogged persistence, the legal framework along the Adriatic Flyway has seen some improvements. However, there continue to be very serious shortcomings when it comes to the implementation of these regulatory provisions. In many locations there are no special control mechanisms that would allow for offences under civil or criminal law to be detected and prosecuted. Rarely is legal action taken against infringements of the law. Moreover, there are as yet insufficient numbers of qualified bird watchers who observe and document the status of bird populations over wide areas.

Objectives

In cooperation with our local partners we aim at establishing a functioning network of birdwatchers who regularly survey and patrol important resting grounds to gather data on both bird populations and illegal hunting activities. The data thus collected serve to inform the wider public as well as the authorities in charge with a view to halting illegal hunting.

Selected activities in 2013

- In the summer of 2013, three ornithological field camps for school groups and other interested participants from the local communities were held in the Croatian part of the Neretva Delta (Map p. 5, No. 8). The participants learned about the importance of the Neretva Delta for the protection of migratory birds and were taught standard bird observation methods and techniques.
- In December 2013 a three-day International Waterbird Census (IWC) training workshop was held near Novi Sad in Serbia. More than 100 volunteer ornithologists were trained for the annual census.
- During 2013 the Slovenian conservation organisation DOPPS, with support from EuroNatur, intensively lobbied against planned additions to be made to the list of huntable species in Slovenia.

Achievements in 2013

- The network of birdwatchers has grown, meaning that bit by bit we have been able to extend surveillance of important resting areas.
- Thanks to our persistent lobbying an extension of the list of huntable species in Slovenia is now very unlikely to go ahead.
- In July 2013 National Geographic magazine published an article entitled “Last Song for Migrating Birds” by US American best-selling author Jonathan Franzen. His account also highlighted the devastating situation of migratory birds in Albania and thus contributed to the Albanian government’s decision in early 2014 to declare a two-year nationwide ban on hunting.

Partners: HDZPP, Baobab, BIOM, DOPPS, BSPSS, CZIP, Naše ptice, Naša baština, APAWA, MES

Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors
The Ulcinj salt flats – Oasis for migratory birds

Geographical location in Europe
A lagoon that has been modified for salt production, located in the Bojana-Buna Delta (Map p. 5, No. 9) at the southern coast of Montenegro at Ulcinj. It is one of the resting grounds on the Adriatic Flyway.

Status
The Ulcinj salt flats are one of the most important resting, breeding and wintering grounds for migratory birds along the eastern Adriatic coastline. The salt flats are in private ownership and hunting is prohibited at this site. In some years up to 200 spoonbills and 100 Dalmatian pelicans rest here at the same time; other regular visitors include birds of prey such as ospreys or European honey buzzards. Nonetheless, the migratory birds are at risk here. From the commencement of the autumn migration to the end of the spring migration poachers pursue resting and over-wintering migrants. And even the owner of the salt flats poses a risk as he has plans to sell the site to investors as development land for a large-scale tourism venture.

Objectives
Our aim is to stop illegal hunting at the salt flats and achieve the long-term protection of this valuable ‘oasis’ for migratory birds as a nature reserve.

Selected activities in 2013
- Between November 2012 and April 2013, CZIP with support from EuroNatur patrolled the area with a view to stopping bird hunting. Especially on weekends, CZIP staff and volunteers patrolled the salt flats and made sure the hunting ban was being complied with.
- In the summer of 2013 EuroNatur started a campaign for donations in order to be able to fund a ranger presence at the salt flats during the breeding season between April and the end of June 2014.

Achievements in 2013
- As a result of the surveillance efforts by CZIP staff the salt flats were a much safer place for migratory birds in the winter of 2012/13 than in the years prior. Even just after a few staff deployments levels of infringements had dropped significantly.
- For several weeks, these deployments aimed at stopping bird hunting were a focal topic in Montenegrin national and regional media.
- Greater flamingos also benefited from the improved security. For the first time in many years these majestic birds did not only use the salt flats as a resting ground but also for breeding. More than 1000 birds settled at the site and more than 170 nests were counted. However, massive wilful disturbance of the colony led the birds to abandon their breeding efforts at the end of May.

Outlook
Our aim is to continue surveillance at the salt flats during the core hunting period as this effort has been proven very much worthwhile. Moreover, we hope to extend the patrols to cover the April to June breeding period in order to afford the flamingos and other breeding birds effective protection from human disturbance.

Partner: CZIP
Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors
Karst poljes: Biodiversity treasure troves

Geographical location in Europe
Intermittently flooded karst poljes in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Status
Karst poljes are very specialized and species-rich habitats in the Dinaric Alps. Depending on levels of precipitation and groundwater levels, these karst fields alternate between being completely inundated and largely dry. During the bird migration seasons some poljes host thousands of birds who rest and feed here on their journeys. In terms of their ecological functionality, the karst poljes of Bosnia and Herzegovina are still particularly intact. But it is precisely these poljes, these unique natural treasures, that are highly threatened as they have as yet not been awarded any official form of protection from adverse impacts. The karst poljes of Bosnia and Herzegovina are at risk of being destroyed by the intensification of farming, by peat and lignite extraction, and in particular by hydropower projects.

Objectives
Our aim is to clearly demonstrate the threats faced by and the outstanding significance of the karst poljes so as to help them gain an appropriate protective status. In addition, our aim is to ensure that from now on environmental impact assessments and spatial development plans give due consideration to the poljes’ ecological value.

Selected activities in 2013
■ Based on field studies conducted in 2012, a detailed investigation of the karst poljes of Bosnia and Herzegovina was carried out in 2013, including a survey and documentation of the poljes’ sizes and flooding regimes and an inventory of their diverse flora and fauna.
■ The project’s survey data were entered into a newly set up database, allowing for online access to the data through a web platform.
■ In October 2013 an international workshop was held where approximately sixty attendants representing the political arena, science and nature conservation discussed initial proposals for the karst poljes’ long-term protection.

Achievements in 2013
■ The survey results provided remarkable proof of the karst poljes’ uniqueness and ecosystem value as well as of their species richness.
■ The workshop provided the first ever opportunity for international experts to engage in an exchange on these poljes, allowing them to identify the key threats to these systems as well as approaches to their sustainable utilization.

Outlook
The data obtained as part of this project provide us and our partners with the means to contribute to the pre-selection process for potential Natura 2000 sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina which has already commenced. Together with our partners we aim to draw up tangible proposals for the protection and sustainable use of the karst poljes.

Partners: Naše ptice, Naša baština
Funding: Mava Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors
Large mammal protection in Europe

Wolves, brown bears and lynx are the epitome of European wilderness. Their protection and the protection of their habitats are amongst EuroNatur’s key initiatives. In the marine sphere the organisation focuses on the last remaining Mediterranean monk seals.

Brown bears
Brown bears in Europe are strictly protected and highly endangered. Significant populations can still be found, for example, on the Balkan peninsula and in the Carpathians. From the Balkans the bears may one day be able to resettle the Alpine arc. For this reason, two focal areas of EuroNatur’s brown bear protection programme in 2013 were the northern Dinarides (primarily in Croatia) and the Carpathians (primarily the Romanian eastern Carpathians). A third focus was on the protection of a small and isolated bear population in the Cantabrian Mountains in northern Spain. Key threats for the bears in these three focal regions include poaching, in some cases also legal hunting, and the destruction and fragmentation of bear habitats primarily as a result of transport routes and wind farm developments.

Lynx
Lynx in Europe have been reduced to residual populations. Unfragmented landscapes and sufficient prey are essential for their survival and both these have become rather rare in Europe. The strictly protected lynx is also very susceptible to poaching. EuroNatur and its partners are fighting for the species’ survival in Europe and aim to enable it to increase its range again. An important focus of our activities in 2013 continued to be on the protection of the Balkan lynx, a subspecies of the Eurasian lynx. The Balkan lynx is one of the world’s rarest cats and its future hangs in the balance. An additional focus was on the protection and enhancement of the lynx population in Poland and in the northern Dinarides.
Gray wolves
The once widespread ‘gray hunters’ have vanished from many parts of Europe. Despite the fact that nowadays the species is given the highest protection in most EU Member States, wolves are still being shot. Moreover they suffer from the ever increasing fragmentation of landscapes as a result of the construction of roads and settlements. Sizeable wolf populations remain in eastern Europe and on the Balkan peninsula, amongst other places. These are the regions where EuroNatur and its partners are working to protect the interests of these fascinating wild animals. A significant focus of EuroNatur’s programme for the protection of wolves in Europe in 2013 was on Poland. One of our main objectives is to facilitate the peaceful coexistence of man and wolf.

Mediterranean monk seals
Mediterranean monk seals used to roam the entire Mediterranean Sea and adjacent marine regions. Today they are amongst the twelve most highly endangered species on the planet. Ecosystem destruction, marine pollution and overfishing have brought them to the brink of extinction. As undisturbed sandy and rocky shores have become rare throughout the monk seals’ range, they not only lack valuable resting areas but it has also become difficult for them to rear their young. The last major surviving colony of Mediterranean monk seals lives on the Mauritanian Atlantic coast. This is also the region on which EuroNatur focuses its work for the benefit of this species.
Spain’s last brown bears

Geographical location in Europe
The Cantabrian Mountains (Map p. 5, No. 1) in the north of Spain are home to Europe’s westernmost brown bear occurrence. There are two separate populations that are largely isolated from each other – one in the west and one in the east of the Cantabrian Mountains. The wildlife group Fapas is active in the western region.

Status
The primary impacts that have driven brown bears to the brink of extinction are illegal hunting, scarcity of food and loss of habitat. As a result of persistent protection measures the western population has slowly but steadily increased over the past twenty years. The population is however still small and extremely sensitive to human impacts. It is all the more tragic therefore that there was a renewed increase in poaching in 2013. The eastern population is in very bad shape; it is estimated that there are a mere 25 individuals left including at most eight females with cubs.

Objectives
Our aim is to prevent the extinction of brown bears in the Cantabrian Mountains.

Selected activities in 2013
- Fapas, in cooperation with the Spanish Civil Guard, focused on combating poaching in the western region: More than 100 camera traps were active and allowed for surveillance even in very remote areas. Regular ranger patrols were undertaken. Land was purchased in important bear areas, thus increasing local presence with a view to combating poachers.
- Research was undertaken on the distribution, population density and behaviour of brown bears. To this end, Fapas staff travelled more than 3,000 kilometres on foot and collected close to 1,000 samples of evidence of the presence of bears. Moreover, camera traps were active in important bear areas.
- All observation data collected over the past 15 years were transcribed to the “Ursus” database. “Ursus” is an indispensable tool when it comes to drawing up submissions on developments impacting on bear areas.
- Based on the records saved in the “Ursus” database Fapas intervened against plans to clear-fell the Teverga mountain forest for woodpellet production which would have destroyed valuable bear habitat.

Important achievements in 2013
- The number of females with cubs is steadily increasing in Fapas’ working region.
- Bears were recorded in areas from which they had been absent for a long time, indicating that they are increasing their range again in the western region.
- The felling project in the Teverga mountain forest was shelved on account of Fapas’ objection.
- Three fincas in important bear areas were secured by purchase, thus increasing local presence to combat poachers.
- Camera traps recorded two poachers in the western Cantabrian Mountains. The police commenced investigations.

Outlook
Combating illegal hunting will continue to be a focus in 2014. The bear population in the Cantabrian Mountains can only recover if we can halt this practice. Upon careful and thorough consideration we decided to focus all our energies on protecting the western population and to not increase our efforts in the eastern region at this time.

Selected EuroNatur projects in 2013

Europe’s large mammals

Partner: FAPAS
Funding: EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors
A source of bears – the northern Dinarides

Geographical location in Europe
The range of the brown bear population in the northern Dinarides (Map p. 5, No. 21) covers areas in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. EuroNatur is primarily active in Croatia.

Status
The brown bear population in the northern Dinarides is of key significance to the recolonization of the Alpine arc. The chances of brown bears crossing the borders into Italy and Austria hinge on the successful protection of bears in Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Current evidence suggests that at least in Croatia the development of the bear population is favourable. In Slovenia however the situation is of concern as the number of legal culls is much too high. The only reason for why the population has not yet collapsed is that increasing numbers of bears are migrating to Slovenia from the south. As a result, the genetics of the Dinarides population are slowly being eroded away. In Croatia the bears are under increasing pressure from new wind park developments. Some of these are being constructed in regions where the bears’ hibernation dens are located. Massive impacts are caused by the infrastructure required. As yet, little information is at hand on the status of brown bears in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Objectives
Our aim is to maintain the as yet relatively sizeable bear population in the Dinarides and to create the necessary conditions for the bears’ recolonization of the Alpine arc.

Selected activities in 2013
■ Guidelines for environmental impact assessments were drawn up. These guidelines outline factors that must be considered in the siting and construction of wind power installations with a view to protecting large carnivores such as brown bears.
■ Comprehensive brown bear monitoring in Croatia continued with the aim of gathering important information on the bears’ distribution, population density and behaviour as well as on brown bear deaths caused by humans.

Important achievements in 2013
■ For the first time, a transnational project outline for the protection of brown bears in the northern Dinarides was completed and a corresponding funding application for the “DINALP BEAR” project was submitted to the European Union. The aim of the project is to prepare for the recolonization of the Alpine arc by brown bears and to help reduce conflicts between humans and bears.

Outlook
We must engage in cross-border activities in order to prevent further genetic erosion in the Dinarides population. Moreover, we must urgently extend our activities into Bosnia and Herzegovina where there is at present no functioning partner network and knowledge of the brown bears’ status is scarce.

Partner: University of Zagreb
Funding: EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors
Balkan lynx – Stepping back from the edge

Geographical location in Europe
Mountaineous border regions as part of the Balkan Green Belt between Albania and Macedonia as well between Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo.

Status
The Balkan lynx, a subspecies of the Eurasian lynx, is under acute threat of extinction as a result of habitat destruction, direct persecution, and reduction of its prey base due to hunting. Evidence of offspring being reared has as yet only been found in the Mavrovo National Park (Map p. 5, No. 11) in Macedonia. And it is in this national park out of all places that plans are afoot for the construction of two major hydropower dams (please refer to p. 14-15). The most recent estimates indicate that there are a mere 50 Balkan lynx left – far too little to maintain a stable population. There are still knowledge gaps as to the species’ current range. Useful data had been missing from Montenegro and Kosovo in particular and no conservation experts were locally involved in the protection of the Balkan lynx.

Objectives
We need to continue to improve our knowledge of the Balkan lynx’s range in order to afford the species effective protection. It is essential that their last remaining habitats be safeguarded. To this end the network of conservation experts on the Balkan Peninsula must be further developed, especially in Montenegro and Kosovo. The long-term objective is a coherent network of protected areas on the Balkan Peninsula which is managed with a view to the needs of the Balkan lynx and its prey, enabling it to expand its population and range.

Selected activities in 2013
■ Experienced colleagues from Macedonia and Albania trained junior conservationists from Montenegro and Kosovo.
■ The latter conducted an extensive baseline study on the current distribution of the Balkan lynx in Montenegro and Kosovo.
■ Intensive camera trap monitoring was undertaken in the Mavrovo National Park and in northern Albania.

Important achievements in 2013
■ All countries within the range of the Balkan lynx now have reliable teams of lynx experts.
■ Using camera traps we were able to show that Albania’s last remaining lynx live in the northern part of the country.
■ Media in Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo highlighted the critical plight of the Balkan lynx.

Outlook
The network of conservationists, the body of knowledge about the Balkan lynx, and the local people’s awareness of the critical situation in which these rare cats find themselves have all grown. We have thus further improved the basis for successful protection measures. The Balkan lynx is however still on the brink of extinction. Amongst the most pressing problems are the planned hydropower dam projects in its core range (please refer to p. 14-15).

Partners: MES, PPNEA, CZIP, Finch, ERA, KORA
Funding: Mava Foundation, BfN with funds provided by BMU, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors
Lynx in Poland

Status
Little more than ten percent of suitable habitat in Poland is occupied by lynx at present. This is likely due to the high degree of landscape fragmentation due to settlements, roads and intensive agricultural land use. In 2013 there were only an estimated 30 lynx in Poland, all in the northwest of the country.

Objectives
Protection and enhancement of the lynx population in Poland.

Selected activities in 2013
- Continuation of the national lynx census in Poland
- Analysis of the viability of the Polish lynx population
- Detailed study of the distribution of lynx in the Bialowieza primary forest; for a long time this forest was the most important part of the species’ range in Poland.

Important results in 2013
- Due to a lack of prey, even the lynx’s core range in Poland hosts only a few individuals and these do not breed in the area.
- A re-establishment of lynx in Poland can probably only be achieved through active reintroductions.
- The forests in eastern Poland are better suited as lynx habitat than those in western Poland. If forest management allowed for a better understorey, the forests’ habitat quality for this ambush predator species could be improved.
- Connectivity with the Baltic lynx population significantly increases the chances of the lynx’s survival in Poland.

Outlook
Factors promoting or hampering the further distribution of lynx in Poland were analysed in 2013. These analyses serve as an important basis for the development and implementation of targeted measures and are therefore vital components of a comprehensive protection programme.

Partners: MRI, Polish Academy of Sciences
Funding: EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors
Targeting Poland's wolves

Status
Thanks to intensive protection measures, Poland’s wolf populations have remained stable in recent years. Slowly but surely the wolves are also recolonizing Poland’s western regions, migrating from eastern Poland. However, the expansion of the wolves’ range from east to west is still being hampered as settlements, transport routes and intensive land use fragment their migration routes and habitats, especially in central and southern Poland. Moreover, the western population is as yet quite small and acceptance of their presence is low amongst the local people. Here the threat from illegal hunting is particularly high.

Objectives
Our aims are to protect the existing wolf population in Poland and to accomplish an expansion of the wolves’ range within Poland.

Selected activities in 2013
- As in previous years, a nationwide wolf census was carried out in order to be able to monitor and assess the species’ population development and distribution in Poland – a necessary precondition for targeted protection measures.
- The Polish public prosecutor’s office and the Ministry of Justice were given technical assistance with a view to more efficient detection and prosecution of cases of illegal hunting in western Poland.
- In order to diffuse conflicts between livestock owners and wolves, herd/flock protection measures were supported in western Poland. For example, two livestock owners were supplied with fladry (flagged fencing) free of charge.
- Presentations, school visits and involvement in a TV documentary were used to inform the wider public on why wolves need our protection.
- Advice and assistance were provided to road development projects in 27 critical locations so as to ensure that adverse impacts of construction works on existing wildlife corridors are minimized.

Important achievements in 2013
- There is every indication that wolves have successfully recolonized western Poland as well. There are now 30 packs including 140 individuals. In the summer of 2013, 90 percent of the packs produced offspring. The persistent protection measures are certainly having an impact.
- Our partner’s critical statement on the adverse impacts on an important wolf migration corridor of the S7 expressway upgrade resulted in the investor having to carry out a new environmental impact assessment.
- First steps to incorporate the plan for ecological corridors in Poland prepared by our partners into binding documents on national landscape development were initiated. There is a chance therefore that future infrastructure projects will give due consideration to the wolves in Poland.

Outlook
The wolf population in western Poland is expected to further increase in size. Protection measures must however urgently be continued. The fight against poaching in particular, as well as the fragmentation of wolf habitats, will continue to keep us busy.

Partners: MRI, Wilk, “Workshop for all Beings”
Funding: Lappat Foundation, EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors, Elisabeth Seifert-Becker’s endowment fund for the protection of wolves in memory of Viktoria Neumann, Emilie and Franz Seifert

Photo: WilK / Flagged fencing
Protection of the Mediterranean monk seal

Geographical location in Europe
Mauritanian Atlantic coast, Cap Blanc. The six kilometre long “Costa de las Focas” seal reserve is located approximately ten kilometres north-west of Mauritania’s second-largest city Nouadhibou.

Status
Cap Blanc today hosts the largest surviving single population of Mediterranean monk seals. As a result of many years of intensive protection measures the population is on a steady path of recovery following a mass die-off in 1997.

Objectives
Our aim is to provide the best possible conditions for the Cap Blanc monk seal colony to continue its recovery and ensure its long-term survival.

Selected activities in 2013
- Rangers patrolled Cap Blanc regularly both from the landward and seaward sides in order to minimize disturbances resulting from the presence of fishermen and shell collectors.
- The caves used by the colony for rearing their young were monitored using fixed surveillance cameras. The aim of this measure was to generate more knowledge on the species’ behaviour and ecology, to monitor population development, and to quickly spot pups getting into difficulty at sea so as to save them from drowning.

Important achievements in 2013
- Thanks to regular ranger patrols, levels of seaward and landward disturbances were very low in the sensitive zone where the caves are located that are used by the colony to rear their pups.
- The Cap Blanc Mediterranean monk seal population has further increased, continuing the steady positive trend which began in 2006. It is estimated that in 2013 the population numbered approximately 250 individuals.

Outlook
The steady decline in seaward and landward disturbances of the monk seal colony and the steady population growth demonstrate the efficacy of the monitoring and patrol efforts undertaken for the past ten years. Despite the apparently positive development of the Cap Blanc population it is however still too early to give the “all clear”. The status of the Mediterranean monk seal continues to be critical and the activities undertaken at the Mauritanian Atlantic coast must urgently be continued. It is particularly important to ensure the seal pups’ survival. Our long-term aim is for the seals to return to open beaches for breeding purposes. On the beaches it is much easier for the adults to protect their pups from high surfs and swells than in the caves. To this end we must keep disturbances at a very low level at all times.

Partner: CBD Habitat
Funding: EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors
Intensive agriculture is the prime driver of the increasing loss of biodiversity in Europe. In many areas the visual character of the landscape is now dominated by monoculture cropping rather than by species-rich fields, meadows and pastures. This development has strongly been favoured by the European agricultural policy of the past few decades. The high biodiversity still found in the Alps’ cultural landscapes is also increasingly under threat from the disparities in the distribution of EU farm subsidies. Extensively managed farmland is becoming ever more unprofitable, resulting in more and more farmers abandoning such land. This in turn spells the ‘death by a thousand cuts’ of the majority of such species-rich habitats. The reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for the 2014–2020 period offered the chance for a course-correction.

From the start of the reform process, EuroNatur as part of a broad alliance of associations engaged in intensive lobbying aimed at steering the future agricultural policy towards a genuinely greener future. One focus of our work was to firmly establish ecologically compatible land use and also to promote a more socially just agricultural policy. In this respect, the Alpine region commanded our particular attention.

In 2013 the debate on reforming the CAP entered into its decisive phase. As early as March 2013, EuroNatur in cooperation with 24 other European conservation and environmental protection organizations launched an online action (please refer to p. 31). Moreover, in negotiations with decision-makers in Brussels and Berlin as well as at numerous events, EuroNatur impressed on them the need for a turnaround in agricultural policy. EuroNatur’s agricultural policy expert Lutz Ribbe participated in, for example, a public hearing at the German Bundestag (Federal Assembly) in October 2013 where he outlined concrete proposals for change.

Our intensive press and PR work allowed us and our partners to repeatedly gain the attention of the more major
print media as well as of radio and television broadcasters (please refer to p. 31) and thus allowed the issue to break out into wider public focus. However, the agricultural policy reform as agreed in the autumn of 2013 fell far below the associations’ expectations. The EU Commissions’ originally quite ambitious reform proposals for a greener agricultural policy had been very much diluted by the EU Council and Parliament in the course of the negotiations.

The associations now need to regroup their existing forces and work on new pan-European alliances with a view to firmly influencing the next reform process for the post-2020 CAP.

When it comes to a successful policy turnaround in the energy sector, Poland has a particularly significant backlog. The country’s central government looks upon the European Union’s climate change policy as more of an impediment to economic development than an opportunity. Energy policy in Poland is very much top-down as discussions on environmental and energy policies in the country to date have not been particularly in-depth. There is a total focus on centralized supply and distribution structures. But a policy turnaround in the energy sector can only be successful if it is backed by the people and if they are actively involved in its design. Only a handful of regions in Poland have recognized this opportunity, but they largely lack the expertise necessary to allow them to evaluate renewable energy technologies and to utilize them for the benefit of both man and nature. This is where EuroNatur comes in.

Based on many years of existing cooperation, EuroNatur has been advising the province of Podlasie (Map p. 5, No. 4) since 2013 on the issue of how to achieve more efficient and considerate utilization of resources in the region. At present this district right on the eastern fringe of the EU is very strongly dependent on energy imports. Our project focuses on the establishment of decentralized economic and supply structures. Our aim is to initiate concrete pilot projects in the region with the active participation of the local people and municipalities, while at the same time contributing to the generation of the necessary political and economic environment for a bottom-up turnaround in energy policy. Initial foundations were laid in 2013. We were, for example, strongly involved in the energy section of the 2014–2020 regional development strategy for the province. In September 2013 the regional parliament formally adopted the strategy, including a clear commitment to the firmer establishment of renewable energies in the region. Renewable energies are seen not just as a contribution to combating climate change but also as a favourable opportunity for regional economic development. We selected seven municipalities for pilot project implementation. Initial cooperations between German and Polish institutions have been established with a view to making available the necessary expertise. One of these is the cooperation between the Bialystok Polytech and the German Centre for Biomass Research (DBFZ) in Leipzig. Two pilot projects have been initiated, including a small decentralized biogas plant on an organic farm holding. Construction of the plant is expected to be completed in 2014, making this Poland’s first micro biogas unit. With the establishment in 2013 of a so-called “energy cluster”, it is also evident that the project is becoming more firmly established in the region’s business world. The “energy cluster” brings together individuals, companies, and representatives of the municipalities who aim to actively involve themselves in the development and utilization of renewable energy in the province of Podlasie.

Partners: Bialystok Marshal’s Office, Politechnika Bialystok, Podlasie Regional Development Association, DBFZ Leipzig, Energievision Frankenwald e.V., the town of Wunsiedel and the Wunsiedel Department of Public Works
Funding: UBA with funds provided by BMU

Partners: BUND/ Bavarian section, AbL, Agricultural platform and other associations engaged in farming and conservation.
Funding: Mava Foundation, BfN with funds provided by BMU
Protecting national natural heritage in Brandenburg

The federal state of Brandenburg holds a stunning diversity of landscapes of conservation concern. To protect them from increasing land-use pressure, the aim is to include them in the National Natural Heritage Programme. In 2000 the German federal government established the statutory basis for their protection by allowing ownership of such sites to be transferred to conservation organisations, amongst others. Back then EuroNatur agreed to take on approximately 1,000 hectares. As of June 2014 EuroNatur has taken ownership of 859 hectares. Some of the sites are situated in Brandenburg (Map p. 5, No. 3) and the majority are under forest cover. However, not all forest cover is high nature value woodland but some consists of pine monocultures. EuroNatur is working on progressively transforming 335 hectares of forest into species-rich and site-appropriate mixed deciduous woodland. The targeted removal of timber from the pine stands opens up the canopy and allows for natural regeneration of deciduous tree species to occur. In 2013, this type of silvicultural conversion was carried out on approximately 20 hectares. In total, silvicultural conversion measures have been undertaken in 150 hectares of woodland sites to date.

Well-tended diversity in the Senne landscape

Of the formerly large expanses of heathland in the Senne (Map p. 5, No. 2) landscape of North-Rhine/Westphalia only a few sites remain today. EuroNatur has for many years been supporting the „Senne-Paderborn Biological Station“ in their work to protect and manage this valuable and species-rich little gem. In June, the biological station was awarded the “Deutsche Landschaftspflegepreis 2013”, an award for outstanding landscape management, for their maintenance of the largest contiguous heathlands in North-Rhine/Westphalia. Their 25 years of managing the heathlands at the Senne military training area was given recognition under the “exemplary projects” category of this award. The site is under British military administration and contains extensive heathlands, an example of the Westphalian historic cultural landscape shaped by man’s interaction with nature over time. Conservation management measures on the site significantly contribute to maintaining this cultural and natural heritage for future generations.

In 2001 the 10,000 hectare military training area was designated a Natura 2000 site, largely on account of its valuable open habitats such as sandy dry grasslands and dwarf-shrub communities which persist on the training site thanks to management measures. These habitats host an impressive suite of endangered species of flora and fauna, including for example red-backed shrikes, Eurasian wrynecks and sand lizards.

Partners: Nature Park administrations at Dahme-Heideseen, Märkische Schweiz, and Schlaubetal; German Federation for Nature Conservation (NABU) – Märkische Schweiz regional association; local conservation groups and farmers; landscape management association Landschaftspflegeverband Mittlere Oder e.V.; BUND Frankfurt/Oder district group
Funding: EuroNatur Trust for Eastern Germany (a generous financial endowment of 50,000 Euro was received in 2013 and added to this trust), EuroNatur’s donors and sponsors

Partner: Senne-Paderborn Biological Station
Funding: Gelsenwasser, Stadtwerke Bielefeld GmbH (public utility), EuroNatur’s donors
Last Song for Migrating Birds

In the summer of 2013, the US American best-selling author Jonathan Franzen wrote a devastating account for National Geographic magazine about the mass slaughter of migrating birds on the Balkans, drawing a great deal of public attention to the issue. National Geographic published the article in their English, German, Serbian and Slovenian editions. A year earlier the passionate bird-watcher and conservationist Franzen, accompanied by EuroNatur staff, had visited all major bird resting areas along the Adriatic coastline and investigated the background to bird hunting on the Balkans. His article emphatically demonstrates how bird hunting along the eastern Adriatic consistently and fatally undermines elaborate programmes for the protection of the migratory birds’ breeding grounds. In February 2014, the Albanian government declared a two-year nationwide ban on hunting. This important and significant decision was taken thanks in part to Jonathan Franzen’s article.

Voices for a strong agricultural policy reform

EuroNatur also publicized its position on current events in relation to the European agricultural policy (please refer to p. 28) in leading media outlets, including the prime-time television news service ‘Tageschau’ on the German public-service television network ARD, the 3sat nano television series, the weekly “Der Spiegel”, and the newspapers “Süddeutsche Zeitung”, “Die Welt” and “Die Zeit”. “We are fed up!” (‘Wir haben es satt!’) was the theme of a demonstration in January 2014 in which 25,000 people marched from the main station through Berlin’s governmental quarter to the German Chancellery. EuroNatur also participated in this major protest against industrial livestock production and environmental damage resulting from harmful pesticides. In March 2013, 25 European conservation and environmental organisations in eight EU Member States, amongst them EuroNatur, BUND, NABU and WWF launched a petition in favour of a strong reform of the EU agricultural policy. A total of 86,000 people signed the petition which called for a sustainable and ecologically compatible farming sector and asked the Members of the European Parliament to demand a true reform. The signatories made it clear that they expect more than just the provision of food from a farming sector that costs the taxpayer 57,000 million Euro per year.

Time for “Europe’s Natural Treasures”

For the 20th time already, EuroNatur in cooperation with the “natur” magazine, the NaturVision film festival and, in 2013 for the first time, the German utility company Gelsenwasser AG organized the “Europe’s Natural Treasures” international photography competition. Six hundred and forty amateur and professional photographers participated in the competition, submitting more than 2500 images. The twelve winning photographs were published on the website of “Die Zeit” and on geo.de, amongst others.

Bankers bike it for Spain’s last bears

From April to September 2013, the German ethical bank “UmweltBank” organized an internal cycling event for its employees, entitled “Banker on Bike” which involved the employees commuting to work in a carbon-neutral manner by cycling or walking. For each kilometre thus covered the bank donated one Euro to a conservation or social project of the employees’ choosing. Spain’s brown bears also profited from this event. The total donation of 20,000 Euro was split between four projects, with 2,500 Euro going to EuroNatur’s project for the protection of brown bears in the Cantabrian Mountains (please refer to p. 22).

Forty years of environmental coverage on ZDF television

At the occasion of its 40th anniversary, the German public-service television broadcaster ZDF’s environmental editorial team reported on the ten most significant environmental events of the last four decades in an edition of their “planet e” series entitled “Klima, Kröten, Kernkraftwerke” (Climate, toads and nuclear power plants). The webpage accompanying the TV documentary included interviews with seven representatives of leading German conservation and environmental organisations, including an interview with EuroNatur President Christel Schroeder who outlined the major significance for nature conservation of the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and described how the resultant European Green Belt initiative contributes to creating connections between people as well as between people and nature.
A firm financial footing thanks to the donors
In 2013 the 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 and environmental education. Once again, EuroNatur also attracted substantial financial support for project implementation from private foundations and associations as well as public sector funding, most notably from the Mava Foundation, German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU), Friends of the Earth Germany (BUND), the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), the German Federal Environment Agency (UBA), the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). Moreover, EuroNatur’s work was financially supported by certain commercial enterprises in 2013. These included i.a. the utilities company Gelsenwasser and the Bielefeld public utilities.

Income and expenditure headings based on DZI specifications
The income and expenditure headings used for the purposes of this activity report correspond to the prescribed specifications as part of the guidelines for the DZI (German Central Institute for Social Issues) Seal of Approval. The headings therefore diverge somewhat from the customary breakdown set out in the Handelsgesetzbuch (German Commercial Code), especially in the profit and loss account. Amongst the criteria assessed by DZI are two important threshold values, i.e. the share of expenditure on advertising and administration in total relevant expenditure, and the ratio of expenditure on advertising to total income from donations. Not all expenditure is included for the purpose of calculating the share of administrative expenditure: Expenditure on portfolio management is only taken into consideration if its total is a negative amount. Commercial activities are not considered at all.

DZI Seal of Approval awarded once again
In June 2014, the EuroNatur Foundation was again awarded the DZI (German Central Institute for Social Issues) Seal of Approval. EuroNatur had applied for the seal in August 2013 based on its 2012 annual accounts. As some items had to be reclassified and adjustments had to be made to the way the financial data are displayed, the layout of the 2013 figures differs somewhat from that of the previous year’s report.

The result of the DZI assessment of the EuroNatur Foundation is a positive one: Its advertising and presentation of information are truthful, unambiguous, and factual. Funding acquisition and the use of funds as well as the financial situation are clearly documented. The foundation and its gremia have suitable controls in place.
**Appropriate proportion of administrative expenses**

Compared to the previous year, the EuroNatur Foundation saw its income increase significantly by €463k to a total of €2,790k. Total income from donations and fines in 2013 was €975k, an increase of €79k. Relevant total expenditure for calculating the proportion of administrative expenses in 2013 stood at €2,233k, up by €78k compared to the previous year. Our projections for 2013 show that the EuroNatur Foundation spent approximately 19.8% of relevant total expenditure on advertising and administration. DZI will assess our results at a later point in time. The institute considers appropriate a proportion of administrative expenses of up to 20%, while a 20-30% are considered acceptable. The previous year’s figure was 21.9% which is deemed acceptable by DZI standards. In 2013, the proportion of advertising expenditure in total income from donations was 22.7% according to our own calculations. For 2012 DZI had calculated a figure of 27.8%. The proportion of all expenditure on advertising, which according to DZI definitions also includes general PR work, must not exceed 30% of total income from donations.

**Individual sources of revenue**

There was a slight increase in revenue from donations in 2013 (+€83k) compared to the previous year which was due to high donations from bequests (+€163k). Approximately one third of income in 2013 came from donations. Third-party grants for concrete project implementation also increased in 2013 (+€140k). This increase was solely due to financial support received from private foundations and associations. The EuroNatur Foundation’s non-profit tax-exempt and taxable commercial activities saw a €94k increase in turnover compared to 2012, while interest and capital gains rose significantly (+€160k). The latter increase is largely due to the redistribution of a bequest made in 2011.

**Expenditure**

Compared to the previous year, the EuroNatur Foundation increased total expenditure on projects, campaigns and education by €108k. More than 80% of total expenditure therefore went directly into work on projects, campaigns and education. There was a slight nominal decrease in expenditure on advertising, general PR work and administration in 2013 compared to 2012 (-€30k). The share of expenditure under these headings in total relevant expenditure now stands at below 20% which according to DZI is an appropriate proportion of expenditure for general PR work, advertising and administration. Pure administrative expenditure actually accounted for less than 10% of total relevant expenditure, with advertising and public relations expenditure each accounting for approximately 5% in 2013.

**Successful conclusion to the 2013 financial year**

The EuroNatur Foundation concluded the 2013 financial year with a positive operating result of €331k. €1k was withdrawn from project-specific reserves for site protection in Brandenburg. Revenue from bequests and endowments in the order of €165k was added to the Fund’s capital stock in full. For the first time, we generated a special €42k reserve for gains from transactions which can in turn be used to cover potential losses of future transactions (Umschichtungsrücklage). The sale of fixed assets (properties in this instance) generated redistributive gains which were allocated, in part, to the Umschichtungsrücklage purely for precautionary reasons. The remaining €125k were transferred to revenue reserves, with €26k to project-specific reserves for site protection in Brandenburg.
Notes on the 2013 Statement of Financial Position

Compared to the previous year, 2013 saw a significant increase (+€ 685k) in the EuroNatur Foundation’s total assets which now stand at € 4,583k. At the end of the financial year, non-current assets (fixed assets) stood at € 2,416k, whereas current assets stood at € 2,166k. Fixed assets increased by € 810k compared to 2012, a significant increase. In contrast, there was little change in current assets, i.e. primarily liquid funds and securities. EuroNatur was able to considerably reduce accounts receivable to a level of € 177k. These are all considered recoverable and are due within the next twelve months.

At the end of the 2013 financial year, the foundation’s capital stood at € 2,489k. Compared to the previous year equity increased by € 394k to a total of € 3,577k. Revenue reserves increased considerably compared to 2012 and stand at € 1,088k (+€ 166k). For the first time, a special € 42k reserve was established (Umschichtungsrücklage) as a financial buffer for the unlikely event of a necessary depreciation of fixed assets. It was generated exclusively from redistributive gains.

A solid foundation – Developments in recent years

The EuroNatur Foundation’s statement of its financial position shows that recent years have not only brought successes in the organisation’s conservation endeavours but that its work has also been successful in economic terms. Over the past five years, i.e. since 2008, total assets increased by € 2,142k and thus nearly doubled. Over the past ten years, total assets even increased by € 3,519k and thus more than quadrupled. The increase in equity, i.e. the foundation’s core capital including endowments and revenue reserves has been even more positive: Over the past five years, equity increased by € 1,713k and thus almost doubled, while over the past ten years it increased more than fivefold. These developments demonstrate that EuroNatur is on a secure financial footing and has been able to significantly improve its financial position over the past few years.

Economic situation
Wills and testaments for European nature
A further strengthening of the fund’s asset base is of great importance for EuroNatur’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 requests therefore provide immensely valuable support to us and are a great sign of confidence, confidence that we endeavour to honour with our commitment. In 2013 we once again transferred all endowments and yields from bequests to the foundation’s capital. The strengthened financial position of the EuroNatur Foundation has had a positive impact in the 2013 financial year. We expect that revenues from portfolio management will continue to increase in coming years.

Dependent foundations and named funds
In 2013 EuroNatur managed four dependent foundations and two earmarked named funds. The named funds’ capital totals approximately €235k. We would like to highlight a very generous €50k endowment made to EuroNatur’s Fund for Eastern Germany in 2013. The fund is used to protect the most important areas for nature conservation in Brandenburg. The total capital stock of the dependent foundations comes to approximately €2.165k. In the reporting year, yields from dependent foundations continued to primarily benefit EuroNatur projects.
- Dr. Manfred & Gudrun Keim Fund
- Ludwig Raue Memorial Fund
- Lappat Fund
- Wetland Foundation for Froggy & Friends
- EuroNatur Fund for Eastern Germany
- Elisabeth Seifert-Becker’s endowment fund for the protection of wolves in memory of Viktoria Neumann, Emilie and Franz Seifert

Bequests and legacies in 2013
Gerda Clara Cherbon, Ulm
Gertraud Härting, Sigmaringen
Elisabeth Margitta Siegrid Kühn-Thienemann, Stuttgart
Martin Meinel, Klingenthal
Irene Petzold, Friedrichshafen
Ute Irmgard Rahne, Braunschweig
Prof. Dr. Christel Schneider, Dortmund
Ursula Wedekind, Celle

Working together for Europe’s nature
EuroNatur’s successes in nature conservation in Europe in 2013 were made possible by the regular donors, sponsors and legacy donors as well as by the providers of grants and by our commercial sponsors, all of whom helped us in so many ways. We are most grateful for your support!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>€000</td>
<td>€000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Fixed assets</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Intangible assets + tangible assets</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Financial assets</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Current assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Stocks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Accounts receivable and other assets</td>
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<td>III. Liquid funds, short-term securities</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Deferred items</td>
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<td>TOTALS</td>
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<tr>
<th>LIABILITIES</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>€000</td>
<td>€000</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Equity</td>
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<tr>
<td>I. Foundation's capital</td>
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<tr>
<td>Core capital</td>
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<td>Endowments</td>
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<td>II. Revenue reserves</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Provisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Liabilities</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>D. Deferrals</td>
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<td>TOTALS</td>
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### Profit and Loss Statement for 2013

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<tr>
<th>Revenue according to DZI</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Cash donation</td>
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<td>863</td>
<td>37,05</td>
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<td>Donations in kind</td>
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<td>Bequests</td>
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<td>5,91</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0,09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fines</td>
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<td>0,50</td>
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<td>0,77</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal (total income from donations)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>0,50</strong></td>
<td><strong>895</strong></td>
<td><strong>0,77</strong></td>
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<td>Government grants</td>
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<td>17,06</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>20,65</td>
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<td>Grants from other organisations</td>
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<td>27,74</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>27,01</td>
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<td>Nonprofit tax-exempt and taxable commercial activity</td>
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<td>9,46</td>
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<td>7,30</td>
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<td>Interest and capital gains</td>
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<td>9,18</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>4,12</td>
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<td>Other revenue</td>
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<td>1,61</td>
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<td><strong>Total revenue</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,329</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Withdrawals from revenue reserves</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>2,350</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure according to DZI</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure on project aid</td>
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<td>Cash donations</td>
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<td>Donations in kind</td>
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<td>Expenditure on project monitoring and assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff-related expenditure</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>8,15</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>8,45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative and other expenditure</td>
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<td>0,99</td>
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<td>0,97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenditure on campaigns, education, public awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff-related expenditure</td>
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<td>3,76</td>
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<td>3,90</td>
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<td>Administrative and other expenditure</td>
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<td>2,06</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2,55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenditure on advertising and general PR work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff-related expenditure</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4,03</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4,18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative and other expenditure</td>
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<td>159</td>
<td>7,38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenditure on administration</td>
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<td>Staff-related expenditure</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>7,52</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>7,56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative and other expenditure</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2,42</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2,83</td>
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<td><strong>Total relevant expenditure</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,155</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(for calculating share of administrative expenditure)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenditure on portfolio management and commercial activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portfolio management</td>
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<td>Commercial activity</td>
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<td>7,26</td>
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<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,328</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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<td>Transfers to the Fund’s capital stock</td>
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<td>7,52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfers to revenue reserves</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>5,13</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfers to „Umschichtungsrücklage“ (special reserve for gains from transactions to cover potential losses of future transactions)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Transfers to „Umschichtungsrücklage“</strong></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,791</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,350</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

**Financial and economic crises**
The global financial and economic crisis which began in 2008, and the impacts of which are still being felt, has shown once again that our lives’ economic circumstances can change swiftly and dramatically. The fact that there are no truly secure forms of investment which also guarantee yields has definitely become apparent since the onset of the financial crisis in 2008. 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: The 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. For the first time, we have generated a special reserve for gains from transactions which can in turn be used to cover potential losses of future transactions (Umschichtungsrücklage), a safeguard against potentially required depreciation of fixed assets.

**Lack of competent and trustworthy partner organisations**
The EuroNatur Foundation has not opted for a Europe-wide network of offices with full-time employees, thus eliminating the considerable administrative expenditure such a network would incur. We are primarily concerned with cooperating with existing conservation organisations 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 organisations are few and far between. The lack of competent and trustworthy partners limits our options. It is for this reason, that EuroNatur also 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 organisation. If there is no such partner organisation 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 2013 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 organisations and work with them to find solutions to increase their efficiency. Our partners’ statements of expenditure are checked by the project liaison person for factual accuracy and by the accounting department for financial accuracy. All statements of expenditure are submitted to the managing directors prior to funds being paid out.
EuroNatur was again awarded the DZI Seal of Approval

In 2013, as in every year since 2006, the EuroNatur Foundation was once again awarded the DZI (German Central Institute for Social Issues) Seal of Approval which certifies that EuroNatur uses funds prudently, is reputable in its solicitation of donations, and keeps the proportion of funds spent on administration at acceptable levels.

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 2013, EuroNatur once again voluntarily submitted to an audit of its annual accounts by an auditor. The auditing and tax accounting firm WISTA AG audited the EuroNatur Foundation’s 2013 annual accounts in accordance with Par. 317 of the German Commercial Code (HGB) and in accordance with the accepted standards for the review of financial statements (IDW PS 201) 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, statement of income and notes, and including the accounting and the management report of EuroNatur – Stiftung Europäisches Naturerbe, Radolfzell, for the fiscal year from January 1 to December 31, 2013. […] Our audit did not lead to any objections.

May 27, 2014 WISTA AG, Mannheim"

Capital investment based on environmental and ethical criteria

The EuroNatur Foundation’s foundation capital now amounts to almost €2.5 million. Moreover, the EuroNatur Foundation holds trust property of more than €2.1 million in trust for the benefit of the non-autonomous foundations. In keeping with the organization’s philosophy, investment decisions are based on environmental and ethical criteria. Both inclusion and exclusion criteria are applied to these decisions. As a minimum, investment products are not considered if they invest in companies involved in nuclear power, agrochemicals, weapons, genetic engineering, pornography, alcohol, tobacco, the motor industry, 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 are the Umweltbank AG, the Bank J. Safra Sarasin AG, and the GLS Bank.
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 10% either side of the mid-point. The mid-points for the Administration I and Project Management II remuneration bands are €32k and €50k per annum respectively.

The three highest annual remuneration packages are received by the Executive Director, the Director for Nature Conservation Policy and the Head of Finance and Accounting. Extrapolated to full-time posts these three positions receive a total of approximately €223k. 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 expense allowances.

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 organisations (both governmental and non-governmental) that support our work. Systematic planning and comprehensive impact monitoring are pre-conditions to the efficient use of funds.

The EuroNatur Foundation takes both a supportive and an operative role. For projects undertaken by EuroNatur in cooperation with its partner organisations, 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 organisation’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.
Capital for nature conservation in Europe

Capital is an important guarantor of continuity and reach for a charitable trust such as EuroNatur. The trust’s assets are invested in interest-bearing securities the yields of which are used to achieve the trust’s objectives. This allows EuroNatur to sustainably and independently pursue its activities. The inviolability of both the trust capital and the donor’s will enjoys special legal protection: Dedicated federal state-run bodies, the supervisory authorities (Stiftungsaufsichtsbehörden) – in our case this is the Regierungspräsidium Freiburg – supervise trusts to ensure that the trust capital value is preserved and the trust terms and purpose as specified in the donor’s wills are observed in perpetuity.

Those who wish to exert long-term sustainable influence on developments can best do so through a trust. We offer a range of options for charitable giving, allowing you to fulfil your wishes under the aegis of the EuroNatur Foundation.

A financial endowment to the EuroNatur Foundation is a particularly sustainable form of support for the protection of Europe's natural treasures. In contrast to a donation, an endowment is not directly used in the short term but is a gift that adds to EuroNatur’s capital stock in perpetuity. Endowments are invested and continue to work for Europe’s nature, as increases in the trust capital generate higher long-term returns for EuroNatur, allowing the organisation to effectively pursue its objectives. Year after year endowments provide a reliable and effective basis for EuroNatur’s work on protecting bears, wolves, lynx, migratory birds and their habitats. EuroNatur was established in 1987 with DM 150,000 in start-up capital. Endowments have allowed this capital stock to grow to well over two million Euro in the meantime. For donors who primarily like to see their gift have sustained impact, endowments can be a good way of gifting moneys.

Those who desire to put their assets to good use in the long term and in their own name may consider establishing a dependent foundation under the aegis of EuroNatur. Externally these are not all that different from “normal” foundations. However, they differ from independent foundations in that they do not need to have their own formal structures. Under certain conditions EuroNatur may assume the responsibilities involved in preparing the establishment of a dependent foundation as well as its ongoing administration. A dependent foundation’s capital is administered separately and, if so desired, in accordance with specified criteria.

The establishment of an endowment fund is an option if the aspiration is to support EuroNatur’s work in a certain country or region or on a specific species protection project. We would request that such a gift have not too small a value, given that it is crucial that capital gains be obtained which are then used to fulfil the objectives of the fund. We can agree with the founder that the fund carries his or her name, or indeed the name of another person whose memory the founder wishes to honour (named funds).

Are you considering to support EuroNatur with an endowment, a dependent foundation or a named fund, thus contributing in a lasting manner to the protection of Europe’s natural heritage? For an informal consultation please contact:

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Conservation needs action – and money!

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

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

Donations:
Bank für Sozialwirtschaft Köln
IBAN DE42 3702 0500 0008 1820 05
SWIFT/BIC BFSWDE33XXX

Please spread the word and help us find new supporters for EuroNatur!
www.euronatur.org