

Successful realization of ecological networks – an example Alps-Carpathians Corridor

The Alps and the Carpathians, Europe's largest mountain ranges, are among the world's regions with the greatest biodiversity. Not long ago, large mammals with a preference for forests - deer, bears, wolves, lynx – and a wide range of other forest animals could move between the Alps and the Carpathians without encountering major obstacles. An internationally important migration route spanned the Eastern Alps, the Rosalien and Leitha Hills as well as the Maria Ellend Forest (all in Austria), the bottomland woods of the Danube and March rivers and the Lower Carpathians in Slovakia. But this area between Vienna, Bratislava and Sopron (Hungary) is also among the most economically dynamic in Europe.



The increasing intensification of agriculture, the increasingly rapid expansion of built-up areas and in particular the expansion of transport infrastructure have fragmented this traditional migration route. When barriers hinder the migration of animal populations and habitats become isolated, lack of genetic interchange and impoverishment may sooner or later result in the extinction of the smaller animal populations.



With support from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP), the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions, the province (*Land*) of Lower Austria has become the leading partner in a cross-border EU project aiming to make the Alpine-Carpathian corridor accessible to wildlife again, re-creating a landscape that functions ecologically. The project will run from 2009-2012.

The overall objective is to initiate and implement cross-sectoral and cross-border activities, safeguarding habitat networks along the Alpine-Carpathian corridor. In this way, habitat needs can be balanced again, which again will help to improve the conditions for sustainable development in this macro-region. A first step of the project was the mapping of the corridor as a whole. The map will serve as a basis for local decision-making, and is therefore of fundamental importance for the project.



The project will contribute to the realization of legal agreements (Fauna-Flora-Habitat Directive, Convention on Biological Diversity) and is commensurate with existing spatial development concepts (Jordes+, Centrope).

Project partners

Leading partner: The *Land* (province) of Lower Austria

Weinviertel Management
ASFINAG Autobahnen- und Schnellstraßenfinanzierungs-Aktiengesellschaft
National Park Donau floodplains GmbH
NDS a.s.
Slovenská technická univerzita, fakulta architektúry
Štátna ochrana prírody SR, Správa CHKO Záhorie

WWF Austria
UNEP - Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention
Daphne - Institute for applied Ecology
Universität für Bodenkultur Wien, Institut für Vermessung, Fernerkundung und
Landinformation, Institut für Wildbiologie und Jagdwirtschaft

Online information

www.alpenkarpatenkorridor.at

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Map



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