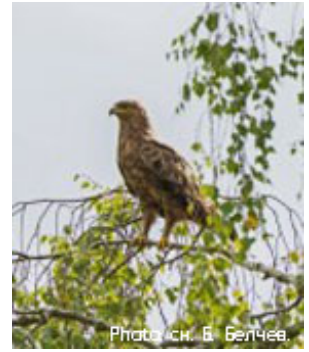




LIFE for Eagles Forests - Preserve Key Forest Habitats of the Lesser Spotted Eagle (*Aquila pomarina*) in Bulgaria

LIFE12 NAT/BG/001218



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Contact details:

Project Manager: Vanya RATAROVA

Tel: +359 878 599 351

Fax: 35929813736

Email: vanya.ratarova@bspb.org

Project description:

Background

The Lesser Spotted Eagle (*Aquila pomarina*) is classified as a globally threatened species. Bulgaria's population of the Lesser Spotted Eagle represents the southern tip of the species' distribution and thus its conservation status is important for its overall population range. Bulgarian habitats for the Lesser Spotted Eagle also act as important parts of the bird's migration route along the second largest flyway in Europe – Via Pontica.

Objectives

The project's main objective is to support the long-term conservation status of the Lesser Spotted Eagle by securing the protection and sustainable management of the forest habitats that are crucial for its existence. This goal will be achieved by carrying out a series of actions in 16 Natura 2000 sites, which will involve:

- Strengthening the strategic planning framework that guides the conservation of the Lesser Spotted Eagle and its key breeding and hunting grounds;
- Maintaining and enhancing feeding, breeding and roosting habitats for the priority Lesser Spotted Eagle through developing and deploying a model for sustainable forest management;
- Reducing the detrimental effects of unintended disturbance and direct

- persecution of the Lesser Spotted Eagle;
- Enhancing public understanding of and support for the conservation of priority bird species, their habitats and the wider Natura 2000 sites that are crucial for their long-term existence.

Expected results: The project is expected to strengthen the strategic planning framework for the raptor's conservation by developing a revised, published and endorsed National Action Plan for the Lesser Spotted Eagle. This will include the elaboration of a GIS model infrastructure and a feasibility study on integrating the traditional field inventory with new geospatial technologies.

Feeding, breeding and roosting habitats for the target species will be enhanced and managed through a new Habitat Distribution Model involving the development and application of a national methodology for establishing an inventory of biodiversity features covering approximately 80 000 ha. In addition, one forest will be registered for organic honey production, with 1% of the revenue from the apiculture products being returned to forest conservation. One Forest-environmental measure and one Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive Payments measure will be officially adopted and included in Bulgaria's Rural Development Programme for 2014-2020. Three forest extension services will contribute to the project and a conservation measure for birds will be introduced into the curriculum of forestry university students.

Detrimental effects of unintended disturbance and direct persecution will be reduced through a coordinated set of conservation operations including: establishing a stakeholder network; the mapping of target specie's nests within 16 SPAs; identifying 10 stop-over sites and temporary settlement areas for the birds; raising awareness in key Bulgarian institutions about the importance of bird crime, especially in relation to the target species; improving cooperation with organisations and experts dealing with bird crime issues; addressing threats caused by forest operations and other issues for 20 pairs of the Lesser Spotted Eagle in Bulgaria.

Results

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Species - Birds

Habitats - Forests

Keywords

endangered species, forest ecosystem, nature conservation

Target species

Aquila pomarina

Natura 2000 sites

SCI	BG0000117	Kotlenska planina
SCI	BG0000192	Reka Tundzha 1
SCI	BG0000212	Sakar
SCI	BG0000218	Derventski vazvishenia 1
SCI	BG0000270	Atanasovsko ezero
SCI	BG0001007	Strandzha
SCI	BG0001032	Rodopi - Iztochni
SCI	BG0001034	Ostar kamak
SPA	BG0002012	Krumovitsa
SPA	BG0002013	Studen Kladenets
SPA	BG0002014	Madzharovo
SPA	BG0002019	Byala Reka
SPA	BG0002021	Sakar
SPA	BG0002026	Derventski vazvishenia
SPA	BG0002029	Kotlenska planina
SPA	BG0002040	Strandzha
SPA	BG0002058	Sinite kamani - Grebenets
SPA	BG0002059	Kamenski Bair
SPA	BG0002066	Zapadna Strandzha
SPA	BG0002071	Most Arda
SPA	BG0002092	Harmanliyska Reka
SPA	BG0002094	Adata - Tundzha
SPA	BG0002106	Yazovir Ivaylovgrad

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	Executive Forest Agency
Type of organisation	National authority
Description	The public sector beneficiary is the Executive Forest Agency (EFA), which is part of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Bulgaria. The policy of the EFA is oriented towards the conservation, maintenance and increase of the country's forest area.

Partners

Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds,
Bulgaria Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt,
Germany

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE12 NAT/BG/001218
Duration	01-JUL-2013 to 02-JUL -2018
Total budget	1,784,335.00 €
EU contribution	1,336,335.00 €
Project location	Yugoiztochen(Bulgaria Balgarija)

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