

# BG Transnational Workshop

**Date:** 11-12 May 2022

**Team:** Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation, Black Sea NGO Network in cooperation with Executive Forest Agency (Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry) & Southwestern State Enterprise SE - Blagoevgrad

## Purpose of the transnational workshop

- Introduction of the pilot area and its problems, national circumstances
- Share and discuss the draft cross-sectoral operational plans (CSOP) with an international audience with the aim of sharing experience across borders and elaborate robust measures for the respective pilot area.
- For a better understanding of problems in the area, a field trip to the area/ bottleneck areas is planned
- Discussion on stakeholder involvement & drafting a case study for the handbook
- Recommendations for the improvement of the CSOP
- Preliminary conclusions & lessons learnt for our work in the pilot area

**Location:** Rila-Verila-Kraishte Pilot Area and Dupnitsa town, Bulgaria

## Target groups

- Pilot area leaders
- At least one representative of each SaveGREEN pilot area
- At least one representative of the local working group (representative of authorities, SaveGREEN Associated Project Partners, etc.)
- Experts from the national and international level (e.g. representatives IENE network, BISON project consortium)

## Program

Date	What	Comments
<b>10 May 2022</b>		
18.00	Arrival of participants at Rila Hotel, Dupnitsa town, Bulgaria	Easy to reach from Sofia (including public transport bus/train and car) or from South by car. If known early in advance, organised transport would be provided
19.00	Casual dinner, get together	Hotel Rila, Dupnitsa
<b>11 May 2022</b>		
9.00	Arrival of participants, registration	
9.30	<b>Welcome &amp; introduction to the workshop</b>	Ministry of Environment and Water - TBC Executive Forests Agency – TBC Road Infrastructure Agency - TBC WWF CEE, BBF&BSNN
9.30 – 12.30	<b>Introduction to the region, problems &amp; stakeholder involvement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SaveGREEN Brief Project Overview</li> <li>• Rila-Verila-Kraishte Pilot Area: natural features, N2000&amp;protected areas, bottleneck area and other challenges</li> <li>• N2000 priorities and objectives and providing ecological connectivity in Bulgaria</li> <li>• Forest Management in the Pilot Area</li> <li>• Existing transport infrastructure of LOT 1 Struma Motorway and implemented defragmentation measures;</li> <li>• Monitoring results</li> </ul>	Plenary session with speakers from the region: Hildegard Meyer, WWF-CEE Petko Tzvetkov, BBF  MoEW (TBC)  South-West State Forest Enterprise (TBC) Road Infrastructure Agency (TBC)  BBF Expert, Zoologist

	Moderated discussions	Hybrid participation and interpretation in Bulgarian and English will be provided!
12.30 – 13.30	<b>Lunch break</b>	
13.45 – 18.00	<p><b>Field trip to LOTI Struma Motorway (Dolna Dikanya-Dupnitsa), overpass for large mammals and underpass for large and medium sized mammals and non-specialised viaduct</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to the area and functioning of defragmentation measures</li> <li>• Presentation of the monitoring results</li> </ul>	<p>Defragmentation measures and weaknesses, monitoring results, etc. Comparison of different defragmentation measures undertaken and assessment of the surroundings.</p> <p>Participants will be guided by the staff of BBF</p>
18.30	<b>Return to Dupnitsa and dinner</b>	Hotel Rila, Dupnitsa
<b>12 May 2022</b>		
9.00 – 12.00	<p><b>Presentation of draft Cross Sectoral Operational Plan (CSOP) for Rila-Verila-Kraishte PA and discussions on proposed measures and solutions.</b> A focus is placed on needed improvements of already implemented defragmentation measures.</p> <p>Key issues: establish regulations on the access of defragmentation facilities (off-roading through overpasses, etc.), mitigation of impact of parallel transport infrastructure like regional road not addressed by the implemented measures, providing proper land management recommendations in adjacent areas – forestry and agriculture.</p>	<p>Presentations by:</p> <p>BBF team</p> <p>Discussions about the specific measure:</p> <p>Input from project partners and international experts would be very welcome</p>

	<p>Cooperation between different stakeholders: gov. institutions, NGOs and local communities.</p> <p>Discussion, conclusions and recommendations.</p>	
12.30 – 13.30	<b>Lunch</b>	
13.30 – 18.30	<p><b>Field visit to LOT 3 Struma Motorway (Kresna gorge) and presentation of natural features and challenges, planned defragmentation measures.</b></p> <p>Example of future construction and discussion on the already drafted conclusions.</p> <p>The Kresna Gorge is a place of exceptional species diversity determined by its relief and location where Mediterranean and continental climates meet. It is a valuable part of the NATURA 2000 network. The area and its rich biodiversity are threatened by the construction of the Struma Motorway through the area. Alternative solutions are under discussion between the Government, NGOs, local communities and the European Commission for 25 years already. The case is under monitoring by the Bern Convention.</p>	<p>Participation of international experts, e.g. from PPs and IENE network would be very welcome</p>
18.30	<b>Closing remarks</b>	
19.00	<b>Dinner</b>	Hotel Rila, Dupnitsa
<b>13 May 2022</b>		
9.00	Departure	