



Danube Transnational Programme

DaRe to Connect

Project co-funded by European Union funds (ERDF, IPA)

DARE TO CONNECT

DECLARATION

FOR THE EUROPEAN GREEN BELT IN THE DANUBE REGION



The DaRe to Connect project partners together with the other organisations active in the European Green Belt Initiative are concerned by the ongoing loss of biodiversity and the increase in habitat fragmentation in Europe. This is jeopardising the potential of the Green Belt to serve as the backbone of the ecological network in Europe, which must be sustainably conserved as the basis for human well-being.

The DaRe to Connect project members

are committed to preserve the European Green Belt as the backbone of Europe's Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity.

are aware of the crucial function ecological networks of large and connected habitats have for supporting ecosystem services and the survival of threatened species.

are aware of the contribution of the European Green Belt to climate change adaptation and mitigation measures (Nature-based solutions) within the framework of the Fit for 55 package.

are aware of the responsibility to safeguard the European Green Belt as memorial landscape and a living symbol of the overcoming of the Cold War for future generations.

are concerned by the ongoing loss of biodiversity and the increase in habitat fragmentation in Europe and **alerted** that the land-use pressure on the European Green Belt is increasing significantly.

support the European Green Belt Initiative in its effort to further implement and develop the European Green Belt as a link between nature, culture and history.

share a common understanding of the importance of the well-established and long-lasting transboundary cooperation within the European Green Belt Initiative and reaffirm their intention to work more closely together.

call upon the countries along the European Green Belt to focus their work on the upcoming EU Nature Restoration Targets on the European Green Belt, i.e. existing and potential surrounding, connecting ecological corridors and stepping stones as well as buffer zones to fully realise the European Green Belt's potential for the restoration and safeguarding of natural and near-natural habitats.

support the institutionalisation of bi- and/or trilateral cooperation of countries along the European Green Belt on a governmental level.

recommend that the regions of the European Green Belt are brought into focus regarding the EU 2030 Biodiversity Strategy's aim to put 30% of the land surface under protection.

call upon the European Commission and the European Parliament to further support and initiate the implementation of concrete measures for the pan-European ecological network on Green Infrastructure, flanked by appropriate funding mechanisms.

request the governments of the countries along the European Green Belt to include the European Green Belt into their spatial development plans and to create appropriate economic conditions enabling agriculture and forestry to provide ecologically valuable services.

encourage the governments of the countries along the European Green Belt to support the nomination of the European Green Belt as UNESCO world natural and cultural heritage.