

Summary Report on Capacity Building Training Events for Public Authorities and Key Players

Output T3.4.

WWF Romania

December 2022



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1. Overview

In the course of the SaveGREEN project, the project consortium held a series of training events for public authorities and key players that were aimed at building capacity among relevant decision-making authorities and other relevant stakeholders, as well as promoting the project results in the Danube basin. The delivery of these workshops was based on the D.T3.3.3 „Capacity building materials adapted to national needs”. The capacity training programme included several training events on various aspects of green infrastructure planning, which were adapted to the national needs and focused on the countries’ particular issues and were offered to public authorities and/or key players. The materials used for the trainings can also be applied at the EU level.

The training events focused on presenting and practicing the use of the tools developed in SaveGREEN project. The main goal of the training events was to inform the relevant stakeholders in regards to the need to maintain ecological connectivity at the level of the landscape, through a cross-sectoral approach that involves input from all of the different stakeholders.

Trainings were held from relevant stakeholders from all SaveGREEN countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine.

In Romania, this activity was led by EPC with support from the WPT3 Leader, WWF-RO. In the rest of the countries, the training events were delivered by the Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation (BBF), Black Sea NGO Network (BSNN), Transport Research Centre Czech Republic (CDV), CEEweb for Biodiversity (CEEweb), WWF Central and Eastern Europe (WWF-CEE), Environment Agency Austria (EEA), and the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava - SPECTRA Centre of Excellence of EU (SPECTRA).

The on-spot training format gathered 292+ participants, namely 41+ participants in Austria, 81 participants in Bulgaria, 40 participants in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, 60 participants in Ukraine, 50 participants in Hungary and 20 participants in Romania, covering a high range of stakeholders, important for ecological connectivity at landscape level. There were representatives of the relevant authorities in environmental protection and infrastructure development, representatives of project designers, representatives of research institutions and NGOs as well as students and practitioners. The domains represented were also

varied, participants being specialists in ecology, transport infrastructure, engineering, hydromechanics, spatial planning, forestry, zoology and so on.

The participants to the training events can use the materials received during the trainings in their specific activity, and can ensure the inclusion of ecological connectivity in developing and implementing infrastructure projects. The methodologies presented to the participants can be used either by themselves or they can ensure that their employees and subcontractors will use them in specific projects.

Output T3.4. contributed to Specific Objective 1 “Knowledge/experience among relevant authorities and stakeholders increased” and Specific Objective 3 “International and national governance frameworks established”.

2. SaveGREEN Capacity Building Workshops held in Austria

WWF-CEE together with EAA organised 3 training events.

The **first event** was on 28 April 2022, where the two Austrian SaveGREEN project partners, the Austrian Environmental Agency and WWF Central & Eastern Europe, joined forces with the Austrian Society for Landscape Architecture to offer insights into the state of ecological connectivity in Austria.

The event, held in hybrid fashion, both physically and online, in the premises of the Austrian Society for Landscape Architecture in the centre of Vienna, was attended by 28 people, with representatives from the Ministry of Environment, landscape and spatial planning bureaus, landscape architects, the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, and environmental NGOs in the audience.

The event provided an opportunity for fruitful exchanges on crucial topics such as:

- the current status quo of ecological connectivity,
- the perceived needs of actors working on the topic,
- the tools already available and under development.



Figure 01: Roland Grillmayer of the EAA © Hildegard Meyer

To kick off the event, Roland Grillmayer of the Environment Agency Austria (EAA) presented a look back at the rise of ecological connectivity as a topic of growing importance in Austria over the past 20 years, spotlighting the main actors that drove this development, highlighting important pieces of legislation, such as the Organisational Directive issued by the Ministry of Transport in 2006 mandating the construction of 20 new green bridges until 2027, and describing the situation we face today.

A significant challenge is creating a harmonised dataset on ecological connectivity across all 9 federal states in Austria, rendered all the more difficult due to the strong cross-cutting nature of the topic, with a strong division of competences across federal and sectoral lines. Illustrating his point with numerous examples from around the country, Mr. Grillmayer stressed the urgent need for taking rapid action to preserve ecological corridors from further obstruction, particularly in bottleneck areas, where past construction activities and the natural lay of the land leave only a few remaining passages for wildlife to pass through the landscape.

As a continuation, Mr. Grillmayer presented the brand new 'Guidelines for Assessment of the permeability of ecological corridors', which were produced by the EAA in collaboration with wildlife ecologists and the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture. The Guidelines, conceived for wild medium- and large-sized mammals (larger than a hare), provide instructions for the assessment of construction projects requiring authorisation, that are planned within ecological corridors. Upon publication, the Guidelines are intended to support the formal environmental evaluations (such as EIAs, SEAs) of such projects.

At this point, Mr. Grillmayer underlined the importance of considering both the structural and functional permeability of ecological corridors, which is where the Guidelines for Standardised Monitoring of Functional Connectivity, being produced as part of the SaveGREEN project, offer useful insights.

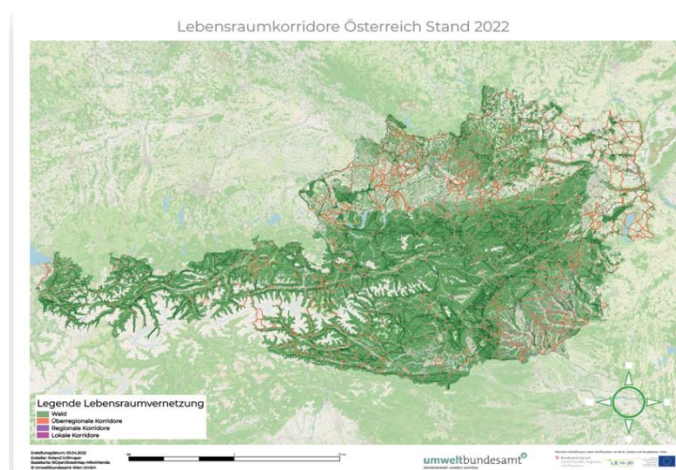


Figure 02: Ecological Corridors in Austria, 2022 © EAA

To anchor ecological corridors in special maps spanning the entire country, efforts are currently underway to integrate them into the national Forest Development Plan. These ongoing efforts were presented by Christoph Bauernhansl from the Federal Research Facility on Forests, who showed the participants the first renditions of these special maps. Another representative from the EAA sitting in the audience underlined the importance of this undertaking, given the fact that Austria does not have a national landscape plan for nature conservation.

In his last contribution to the workshop, Mr. Grillmayer presented the [Austrian Portal on Ecological Connectivity](#), which gathers maps, geospatial data and relevant publications on ecological connectivity in one centralised website. The presented tools generated notable interest from the audience, many of whom were unaware of the magnitude and depth of the data available. A representative of a landscape planning bureau confirmed that, from her practitioner's point of view, increasing the visibility of this data among relevant actors was one of the most important tasks at hand, as she viewed many in her sector as being aware of the topic and willing to consider it in their work, but often lacking sufficiently robust data.

The afternoon's last session was dedicated to a presentation by Hildegard Meyer of WWF-CEE on the SaveGREEN project and its activities in the two Austrian pilot areas '[Kobernausser Forest](#)' and '[Pötttsching](#)', followed by a discussion among all those present on the consideration of ecological connectivity in Austrian Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs).

The audience members agreed that planning authorities generally took ecological connectivity into account in EIAs dealing with large infrastructure projects, but that the topic was largely lacking in SEAs, where it is strongly dependent on the available data and plays only a marginal part of considerations on endangered species protection, and smaller construction projects, which do not require an EIA. Regarding the important players in the Austrian spatial planning landscape, the audience felt that while the large state-owned enterprises were sufficiently aware of the ecological connectivity as an issue of concern, a key target group for further awareness raising measures were the mayors of Austria's 2 095 municipalities, who have significant decision-making powers related to spatial planning and zoning decisions. The integration of ecological corridors into spatial plans at all levels of government in Austria, from the municipalities, to the Länder and the federal state, represented another crucial step to increase the visibility of the topic and allow relevant authorities to take it into account when formulated decisions with real spatial implications on the ground.

The **second event** held in Austria was organized on 8 November 2022. The two Austrian SaveGREEN project partners, the Austrian Environmental Agency (EAA) and WWF Central & Eastern Europe (WWF-CEE), held the second in a series of trainings for spatial planners on the integration of ecological connectivity into their work. The event, held online to facilitate participation by practitioners from all over the country, was attended by 13 spatial planning experts, among them planning authorities, university researchers, and spatial planning bureaus. In the 3-hour-long training, the participants and SaveGREEN team were able to exchange knowledge on the current state of ecological connectivity in Austria, efforts and suggestions on how better to anchor the conservation of ecological connectivity in spatial planning, and about the tools already available and currently in development to support these efforts.

To set the scene, Roland Grillmayer of the Environment Agency Austria (EAA) presented a review of the rise of ecological connectivity as a topic of growing importance in Austria over the past 20 years. In his presentation, he spotlighted the

main actors that drove this development, highlighting important pieces of legislation, such as the Organisational Directive issued by the Ministry of Transport in 2006 mandating the construction of 20 new green bridges until 2027, and describing the situation we face today.

In a second presentation, Mr. Grillmayer then presented the new ‘Guidelines for Assessment of the permeability of ecological corridors’, which were produced by the EAA in collaboration with wildlife ecologists and the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture. The Guidelines, conceived for wild medium- and large-sized mammals (larger than a hare), provide instructions for the assessment of construction projects requiring authorisation, that are planned within ecological corridors. Upon publication, the Guidelines are intended to support the formal environmental evaluations (such as EIAs, SEAs) of such projects.

The guidelines were greeted with enthusiasm by the participants. Nonetheless, the need to individually assess the particularities of every case were also highlighted. Indeed, one participant noted that, given the dire situation facing ecological connectivity in Austria today, any mitigation measures, even if they don’t quite meet the ideal standards, should be welcomed. Asked how these would be brought to the attention of the planning authorities of the Länder, the federal states in Austria, Mr. Grillmayer alluded to the Final Conference of the project “Lebensraumvernetzung”, which will take place on 23 November and to which all spatial planning and conservation departments of the 9 Länder have been invited.



Figure 03: Workshop participants in discussion © Christophe Janz

In the following two presentations, Mr Florian Danzinger and Mr Gebhard Banko from the EAA presented the online platform Lebensraumvernetzung.at, which offers up-to-date and publicly accessible data on ecological connectivity in Austria, and on-going efforts to render the ecological corridor network visible in Austria's national Forest Development Plan. In light of the fact that Austria does not have a national landscape plan for nature conservation, this being a matter decided at the level of the Länder, the Forest Development Plan offers the opportunity to visualise ecological corridors in one map and database used by the entire country.

Participants confirmed that the Forest Development Plan is an often-consulted tool, mandatorily so if any forested areas were concerned, and that this was a good step to increase the visibility of ecological corridors. The question was also raised, however, whether the issue might be missed in cases where no forested areas were affected, particularly at the level of municipal planning decisions. In these cases, participants and speakers agreed that spatial planners needed to take on greater responsibility in making local decision-makers and mayors aware of the issue. Another participant interjected that, while the Forest Plan was an important first step, the regional development plans of the Länder would be the most relevant instrument in which the corridors should be represented, as they enjoyed greater visibility. Mr. Grillmayer conceded that one weak point of the Forest Plan was its 10-year lifespan: towards the end of this period, there will no doubt be differences between the data presented there, and the continually updated data in the Lebensraumvernetzung portal.



Figure 04: Presentation by Hildegard Meyer on SaveGREEN © Christophe Janz

The last presentation was held by Ms Hildegard Meyer from WWF-CEE, who gave an overview of the SaveGREEN project and its activities in the two Austrian pilot areas 'Kobernausser Forest' and 'Pötttsching'. The attendees then opened a discussion on the consideration of ecological corridors in EIA and SEA procedures in Austria. Participants shared that, while the topic is growing in importance, there are strong divergences between the individual Länder, particularly regarding the extent to which the issue has already been anchored in local legislation and development plans.

A spatial planner working primarily at the local level in municipalities noted that there was often a call for more concrete data on the occurrence of specific species in a given area. In response, another participant noted that this wasn't a discussion that planners should get involved in in the first place. Considering the long periods of time and resources required for a solid monitoring programme, he called on his colleagues to uphold the modelled corridors represented in the maps compiled by the EAA. Irrespective of whether a specific protected species occur in these areas or not, they represent landscape elements of high natural value that need to be protected.

The final discussion centred around a look to the future and the challenge posed by the strong push for an expansion of solar and wind energy production. Given the immense need for expansion in these sectors to meet national climate targets, many feel that these production parks will also need to be erected on currently un-built land, thus posing a potential threat to biodiversity and ecological connectivity. One attendee noted that the risk was particularly acute, as no EIAs will be required for these projects. Two other participants highlighted that while solar parks are often fenced to protect them from theft, which poses a problem for migrating wildlife, some producers are pushing un-fenced projects. Promoting such approaches and directly engaging representatives of the solar sector was viewed as an important next step. Building upon this, another spatial planning expert underlined that, if implemented with the necessary accompanying measures, such projects could even represent an improvement to certain landscapes and ecological connectivity in these areas.

For the **third event**, that took place on 23 November 2022 in Austria –SaveGREEN partnered up with the LE Insects project that dealt with ecological corridors from the perspective of insects. We therefore, could reach more people and could give a more comprehensive insight into ecological connectivity in Austria. Presentation of

the project and information on how ecological connectivity is embedded in spatial planning in other countries was given by Hildegard Meyer, WWF-CEE.

The visualization of ecological corridors and the Guidelines on how to integrate them into planning, is a first step toward integration of ecological corridors into spatial planning. Due to the fact that in Austria there are 9 counties with different nature conservation, forestry, hunting and spatial planning laws, a lot needs to be done. At the national level, the topic is perceived as important. Ecological connectivity is being taken into account when planning huge projects driven by the ministries (e.g. new transport infrastructure, power lines to extend or renew the current electricity grid, etc.), but is not at the local level. Much of awareness raising is needed and laws reformed.

3. SaveGREEN Capacity Building Workshops held in Bulgaria

The capacity building trainings in Bulgaria were organised and implemented by the Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation and the Black Sea NGO Network supported by the Associate Strategic Partner of South West State Forestry Enterprise, e.g. three workshops/trainings for different groups and one day field visit to the pilot area of Rila-Verila-Kraishte. The first two workshops were held in Sofia, one in the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy UACEG held on 14.12.2022 and second in the Faculty of Biology of Sofia University SUFB held on 15.12.2022. The third workshop was held in Dupnitsa in the premises of the Dupnitsa Forestry Unit on 16.12.2022. On 18.12.2022 one day field visit to the pilot area of Rila-Verila-Kraishte was held.



Figure 05: Workshop/Training held in UACEG, Sofia on 14.12.22, Lecturers: Petko Tzvetkov&Andrey Kovatchev, BBF © Stela-Teodora Trendafilova, BBF

Each workshop consisted of up to 4 hours programme of theoretical and practical aspects of ecological connectivity and SEA/EIA/AA procedures to provide ecological

connectivity for transport infrastructure. Four main lectures were given during the each of the workshops:

1. Presentation of the SaveGREEN Project - Safeguarding the functionality of transnationally important ecological corridors in the Danube basin, Petko Tzvetkov, Coordinator, BBF.
2. Ecological connectivity and wildlife crossing facilities through transport infrastructure. Pilot area Rila-Verila-Kraishte. Petko Tzvetkov, Coordinator, BBF.
3. Ecological connectivity in the procedures for assessing the impact on the environment and Natura 2000 of plans, programs and investment projects. Andrey Kovatchev, External expert, Petko Tzvetkov, Coordinator, BBF.
4. Ensuring ecological connectivity in Southwestern Bulgaria. The case of Kresna. Andrey Kovatchev, External expert, BBF.

Detailed programme, presentations, participants list in Bulgarian, and images of each of the workshops are attached.

The field visit consisted of field observations of three selected specialized and non-specialised defragmentation facilities/mitigation measures, e.g. an overpass for bears, an underpass for wolves, and a non-specialized viaduct used by various species to migrate within the pilot area Rila-Verila-Kraishte as well as lectures in a meeting hall of Hotel Via Lacus, Sapareva Banya were given to the participants. The following presentations were given:

1. Presentation of the SaveGREEN Project - Safeguarding the functionality of transnationally important ecological corridors in the Danube basin, Petko Tzvetkov, Coordinator, BBF.
2. Ecological connectivity and wildlife crossing facilities through transport infrastructure. Pilot area Rila-Verila-Kraishte. Petko Tzvetkov, Coordinator, BBF.
3. Cross-Sectoral Operational Plan (CSOP) of the Rila-Verila-Kraishte pilot territory was also presented and discussed.

The visit ended with a discussion of the challenges and further solutions for improving the ecological connectivity and functionality of the existing defragmentation facilities.

Detailed programme, presentations, participants list in Bulgarian, and images from the event are attached.

In total 81 different participants took part in the capacity building programme. Sixteen (16) participants including 4 lecturers/ organisers took part in the first workshop primarily UACEG students and professors. For the second workshop 31 participants (5 lecturers/ organisers) took part in the event, primarily SUFB students, PhD students, professors but also other participants like NGO representatives and consultancy companies since the workshop was open for a wider audience as well. The third workshop participants were employees of the Forestry Unit and local hunters mainly in total 27 including 4 lecturers/ organizers. In total 26 participants including 5 lecturers/ organisers took part in the field visit. These were mainly NGO representatives, consultancy companies and PhD students.



Figure 06: Workshop/Training held in SUFB, Sofia on 15.12.22, Lecturers: Petko Tzvetkov&Andrey Kovatchev, BBF © Petko Tzvetkov, BBF

The events followed the agenda prepared by the Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation team and experts. The program was a mix of theoretical as well as practical information that will be used by future planning/ conservation/ management practitioners in their work. There were legal and theoretical information presented by BBF team and experts. After the main program there was a vivid and fruitful discussion. BBF guided the field visit to selected defragmentation facilities in the PA. The participants were introduced to the purpose and the characteristics of defragmentation measures including overpass, underpass, viaduct and fencing. The land use of adjacent areas and the landscape were also discussed. BBF team and experts presented the monitoring of functioning of this mitigation measures set up as a part of SaveGREEN project. For the majority of the participants it was the first time when they got acquainted with ecological connectivity issues and visited/ were introduced to defragmentation/mitigation measures in practice.



Figure 07: Workshop/Training held in Dupnitsa on 16.12.22, Lecturer: Petko Tzvetkov, BBF © Petya Sheremetova, BBF

Lessons learned:

As an outcome from the organization and discussions held during the capacity building events, as well as the preparations of the content of the workshops/trainings the following recommendation have been identified:

- Ecological Connectivity is relatively new topic for Bulgaria and for the related sectors and stakeholders.
- Ecological connectivity and legal aspects of defragmentation/mitigation measures should be integrated into the educational programmes of landscape/transport infrastructure planners and biology/ecology students;
- Regular training/capacity building programmes should be organized for the responsible institutions staff;
- Regular update/training should be organized for road construction advisors/consultancy companies;
- The legal frame should be updated in order to cover connectivity/defragmentation issues including SEA/EIA/AA procedures and content covered;
- Information campaign for the particular facilities should be carried out including information board installation explaining the purpose of the defragmentation/mitigation measure.



Figure 08 & Figure 09: Field visit to Rila-Verila-Kraishte Pilot Area, held on 18.12.22, Participants at the Overpass, © Spas Uzunov, BBF



Figure 10: Field visit to Rila-Verila-Kraishte Pilot Area, held on 18.12.22, Participants at the Viaduct, © Spas Uzunov, BBF



Figure 11: Field visit to Rila-Verila-Kraishte Pilot Area, held on 18.12.22, Lectures & Discussions in Hotel Via Locus, Sapareva Banya, Dupnitsa Region, Lecturer: Petko Tzvetkov © Alexander Nikolov, BBF

4. SaveGREEN Capacity Building Workshops held in the Czech Republic and Slovakia

The capacity building for the Czech Republic and Slovakia took place in Bratislava, Slovakia at Spectra Centre of Excellence of the EU (premises of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava) with attendance mainly of students of spatial planning and nature protection from Mendel University in Brno and from the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava. Besides students, there were participants from both universities, Transport Research Centre, Spectra CE and HBH Project.



Figure 12 & Figure 13: Workshop/Training held Bratislava

The event followed the agenda agreed on by partners CDV and Spectra. The program was a mix of theoretical as well as practical information that will be used by the future planning practitioners in their work. There were legal and theoretical information presented by CDV and Spectra and practical experience from HBH Project company, Friends of the Earth NGO and Spectra. After the main program a vivid and fruitful discussion followed that had to be halted due to the final agenda point – fieldtrip to the ecoduct in Moravský sv. Jan (Slovakia) guided by HBH Project company who are doing monitoring of functioning of this mitigation measure. For majority of the participants it was the first time when they entered an ecoduct or any other mitigation measure in practice.



Figure 14 & Figure 15: Field visit

The event is considered as a success due to more than 40 participants that met in Bratislava and a very positive feedback from the audience.

5. SaveGREEN Capacity Building Workshops held in Hungary

CEEweb for Biodiversity (CEEweb) in cooperation with Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences (MATE) was responsible for the Hungarian implementation of the training event.

The Hungarian SaveGREEN Final Conference & Capacity Building Training event was held between 1-2 of December, 2022, with the aim to disseminate the project results for Hungarian public authorities, key players and universities. The event was organized in a hybrid format, the first day has been held at the Normafa Event House in Budapest, while the second day has been placed at seat of the Hungarian National Railway company. The event has been held in different locations due to the high interest, but lack of capacities of the participants. The first day has been hosted by CEEweb, the second day the attendees has been invited to the Hungarian National Railway company.

Due to the change of the location between the 2 days, part of the onsite attendees from the first day joined online on the second day, as well as the representative of the Hungarian National Railway joined to the first day program online.

The aim of the training event was to share SaveGREEN's final results with Hungarian stakeholders, presented by CEEweb and MATE. Participants were present from ministries, national authorities, NGOs, universities as well as from research centres and private companies.

The online moderation was done by Ádám Varga, project assistant of CEEweb. The logistical and financial organisation of the event was implemented by Viktória Selmeczy, senior expert & project coordinator of CEEweb and Eliza Óhegyi, project specialist of CEEweb. Eszter Sebestyén, communication officer was responsible covering the communication aspects of the event.

Site-specific giveaways (D.C.5.1), - bird houses for Hungary - , factsheets on the Hungarian pilot area (D.C.2.3), and project flyers (D.C.2.2) were distributed at the event. The conference was organised in Hungarian.

Péter Olajos, president of CEEweb opened the event with a presentation with the title Natural infrastructure – human living space, which introduced the status and

the general conflicts between the human-built (green, blue and grey) infrastructure and the ecosystem.

The second presenter, Csaba Mezei, general secretary of CEEweb introduced the GREEN-trilogy projects, TransGREEN, ConnectGREEN and SaveGREEN, their results and outputs. The general introduction to the SaveGREEN project showcased comprehensive information regarding the project (the period of implementation, the main objectives, the preliminary results) as well as the connection of this project with other projects.

The third presenter, Zsombor Bányai (Hungarian University of Life Sciences, MATE) introduced the general results of developing and applying an evaluation methodology on ecological corridors on the planned section of M2 motorway.

The SEA Toolbox in the context of ecological connectivity has been introduced by Dr. Gabriella Mária Nagy, senior expert of CEEweb, with the aim to give a short description of the SEA and EIA legislative requirements, practical application, relation to ecological connectivity at the country and EU levels.

The afternoon started with a presentation on Exercise in EIA – assessment of long-distance and long-term cumulative impacts by Dr. László Kollányi (Hungarian University of Life Sciences, MATE). The presentation introduced the relevant links between the SEA/ EIA procedures and ecological connectivity, the assessment of long-distance and long-term cumulative impacts, as well as information of what can be done for ecological connectivity at different project stages - strategic level, project level, construction, operation.



Figure 16: Photos from the afternoon session – 2022.12.01 @credit: Anna Szentes, CEEweb

The second speaker of the afternoon, Dr. Weiperth András (Hungarian University of Life Sciences, MATE) introduced the Handbook for best practices for planning and implementation of mitigation measures with a presentation titled: Blue Infrastructure – let’s plan motorways together with experts of natural sciences. The presentation introduced examples of good (and bad) practices, which are available from the most relevant Hungarian case studies collected from previous projects.

The second day has been opened by Csaba Mezei, general secretary of CEEweb, and followed by Dr. László Kollányi (Hungarian University of Life Sciences, MATE) with an introduction to landscape-level connectivity. The presentation aimed to open a discussion on why it is important, as well as examples of what was done wrong in the past during the implementation of infrastructure.

The second presenter, Dr. Weiperth András (Hungarian University of Life Sciences, MATE) introduced the Hungarian Cross-Sectoral Operational Plan (CSOP) developed during SaveGREEN, including the scope & objectives of the deliverable and its structure, the outline of the common elements of the CSOPs, as well as the meaning for different authorities to implement a CSOP.



Figure 17: Photos from the CB training event – 2022.12.02 @credit: Anna Szentes, CEEweb

The project’s outputs were highly appreciated by ministry representatives, research institutions as well as private environmental companies. Follow-up project ideas were discussed, focusing on blue & green infrastructure.

6. SaveGREEN Capacity Building Workshops held in Ukraine

SaveGREEN project's experts in Ukraine organized two training events for stakeholders.

The first online event was the "Peculiarities of EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) during the planning of transport infrastructure construction and potential environmental risks analysis under the condition of a limited procedure of EIA in the post-war period". During the event, project experts Svitlana Matus, Anatoly Pavelko, and Halyna Levina spoke on the project's goals and also considered the main topical issues, in particular:

Conducting a legal analysis of the EIA procedure:

1. The environmental risks in the restoration of roads in the conditions of the limited EIA procedure.
2. The practical experience of conducting EIA during the design of the northern bypass road of Lviv city (Ukraine).
3. Main changes to Ukraine's legislation (Law "On Environmental Impact Assessment", "On Animal World") after the introduction of martial law.

The peculiarities of carrying out EIA procedure in war and post-war time in Ukraine was the main goal of the training event. The review of environmental risks during the restoration of roads under the conditions of a limited EIA procedure was presented by project experts. Also, the practical experience of conducting ATS during the design of the northern bypass of the city of Lviv was discussed.

The training event was organized online, 3rd November 2022. Total amount of participants: 24 persons. More than 10 different institutions were represented such as National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, WWF Ukraine, I.I. Schmalhausen Institute of Zoology of NAS of Ukraine, NGO "Danube-Carpathian Programme", Kharkiv National University of Urban Economy named after O.M. Beketova, Institute of ecology of the Carpathians of NAS of Ukraine, Architectural development company "Sheremeta Architect Group", Lviv State University of Life Safety etc.

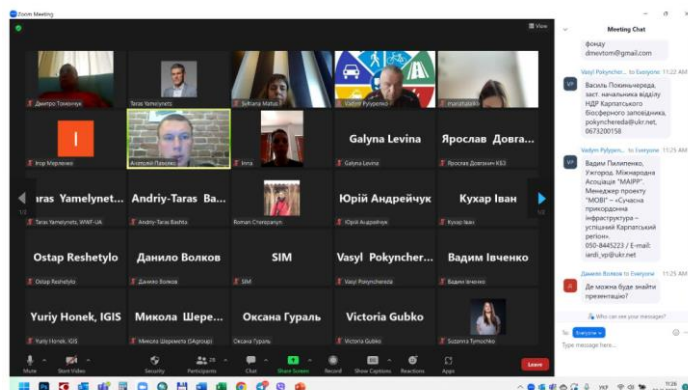


Figure 18: Training event peculiarities of carrying out EIA procedure in war and post-war time

During the training event the review of changes to the Laws of Ukraine "On Environmental Impact Assessment" and "On Animal World" after the introduction of martial law in the context of their impact were provided, the procedure for carrying out EIA during the construction and reconstruction of roads: legal review and practical experience have been discussed in detail. It was also presented and discussed the practical experience of conducting EIA during the design of the northern bypass of the city of Lviv.

The second Capacity-building event was the *"Hydrotechnical objects and roads as factors of fragmentation of natural ecosystems: solutions during military operations and the period of reconstruction"*.

The review of hydrotechnical objects and roads as factors of fragmentation of natural ecosystems and funding out the solutions during military operations and the period of reconstruction was presented by project experts. Also, the fragmentation of natural ecosystems and road construction was discussed.

The round table was organized online, 8th November 2022. Total amount of participants: 36 persons. More than 15 different institutions were represented such as National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Institute of Hydrobiology, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Institute of Telecommunications and Global Information Space, State Agency of Forest Resources of Ukraine, Institute of Evolutionary Ecology, WWF Ukraine, I.I. Schmalhausen Institute of Zoology of NAS of Ukraine, Desna basin management of water resources, Dnipro State Agrarian and Economic University, NGO "Danube-Carpathian Programme", Kharkiv National University of Urban Economy named after O.M. Beketova, Kyiv National University named after

Taras Shevchenko, Institute of ecology of the Carpathians of NAS of Ukraine, NGO Lviv State University of Life Safety etc.

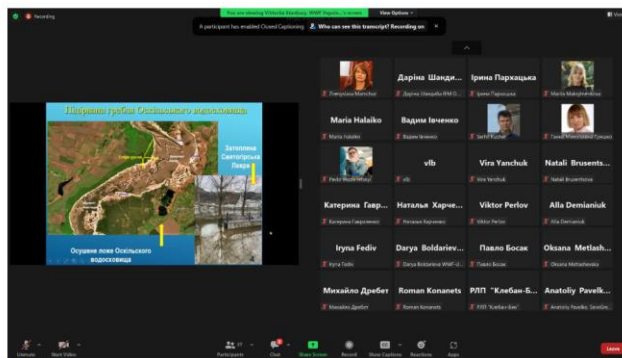


Figure 19: Capacity-building event - "Hydrotechnical objects and roads as factors of fragmentation of natural ecosystems: solutions during military operations and the period of reconstruction

During the capacity building event the river basin management plan as a tool for river restoration were discussed, the defragmentation of rivers: problems, risks and challenges of wartime were clarified, the fragmentation of natural ecosystems and road construction have been discussed in detail. It was also discussed solutions during military operations and the period of reconstruction.

7. SaveGREEN Capacity Building Workshops held in Romania

On December 15, 2022, at the Ibis Hotel in Bucharest, the EPC Environmental consultancy team organized with support from WWF Romania a training event within the Capacity Building component WPT3.4, regarding SEA/EIA development, within the SaveGREEN project.

At the event there were 20 participants. Among the guests were representatives of key stakeholders in the transport and environmental domains in Romania, such as: the National Company For Road Infrastructure Administration, National Railway Company, National Agency for Natural Protected Areas, The University Of Bucharest, project managers and road and railway project designers (such as Acciona Romania, Baicons SRL, Search Corporation, Mott MacDonald Group, Jacobs Engineering Group and Strabag Romania), as well as representatives of NGOs such as project partners (WWF Romania and Zarand Association), as well as the Association for the Conservation of Biological Diversity.



Figure 20: Participants to the capacity building training event in Romania ©EPC Consulting

The 20 participants to the event learned about the capacity building program of the SaveGREEN project and the methodology for analyzing the permeability of the transport infrastructure. The conference lasted for the whole day, during which there were presentation on the SaveGREEN project, followed by introductions to the capacity building program, information about the deliverables developed in the project and, at the end of the first part of the conference, the SEA/ EIA toolkit was distributed among the participants.



Figure 21: Set of tools for ensuring the sustainable use and management of green infrastructure in strategic environmental assessments (SEA) and environmental impact assessments (EIA)- deliverables distributed on the day of the event

In the second part of the conference, Silvia Borlea, Marius Nistorescu and Alexandra Doba of EPC, highlighted information about the training course developed within the SaveGREEN project as well as details on the environmental impact assessment (analysis of alternatives, presentation of baseline conditions, assessment of effects and impacts, measures, monitoring). There were also presentations by Silvia Borlea from the EPC team, which dealt with the methodology for analysing the permeability of transport infrastructure, which is detailed in the Toolkit distributed to the participants.



Figure 22: Presentation of the toolkit SEA/EIA. During the conference, the guests interacted and discussed the main topic, sometimes addressing questions or concerns about environmental assessments in the field of transport and discussing specific case studies related to their field of expertise.

The main purpose of this meeting was to present in detail the SaveGREEN project and the deliverables created within it and to train relevant stakeholders on the topics of SEA/EIA. This aim was assessed within a series of feedback forms, through which the participants offered feedback on the structure and content of the training course.

8. Conclusion

This document is a summary report of the capacity-building trainings (Output T3.2) held by the SaveGREEN consortium in each of the project countries. The trainings were based on the capacity building programme developed under WPTI and experiences made in the pilot areas. The materials prepared were adapted to national needs, and the Project Partners held trainings in which they presented the main key actions that need to be implemented by the participating stakeholders. Where needed, the training materials were translated into the national language, and the training events held in that language. There was at least one training for each country.

The training participants were varied, and covered a high range of stakeholders, important for ecological connectivity at landscape level. There were representatives of the relevant authorities in environmental protection and infrastructure development, project designers, research institutions and NGOs as well as students and practitioners. The sectors represented were also varied, participants being specialists in ecology, transport infrastructure, engineering, hydromechanics, spatial planning, forestry, zoology, etc.

To the extent possible, the trainings were held in an interactive manner, with the participants being involved in exercises and in practicing the tools presented to them in the SEA and EIA Toolkit. Case studies were also used where possible, especially in relation to more difficult topics such as the assessment of cumulative impacts.

The participants of the training events can apply the output in their specific own respective activities, and can ensure the consideration of ecological connectivity in developing and implementing infrastructure projects, agricultural, forestry or hunting practices within ecological corridors, the construction and expansion of settlements and buildings, and other activities with possible impacts on wildlife corridors. The methodologies presented to the participants can be used either by themselves or they can act as multipliers, ensuring that their employees and subcontractors will use them in specific projects.

Finally, the trainings also offered the opportunity to bring stakeholders from different sectors together and to show them the importance of working together, in order to achieve ecological connectivity at the level of the landscape. The

Handbook of Best Practices (part of Output T1.3) has a particular importance in this regard, as it contains clear examples, addressed to each category of stakeholders from different economic sectors (transport, agriculture, forestry, urban development, water management) and proposes specific recommendations for improving ecological connectivity in each respective area of activity.