

PA Ecological Society "BIOTICA"

Annual activity report for 2022

In January, the 2022-2024 Development Strategy was approved by the PA ES BIOTICA (by the minutes 21 of the General Assembly meeting, on 28.01.2022). Thus, the following development directions were identified:

- 1. Improved conditions for biodiversity by rehabilitation of ecosystems, safeguarding endangered and rare species, and promotion of sustainable development (with a focus on target areas)***
- 2. Raised resilience of communities from the target areas.***
- 3. Consolidation of internal capacities and partnership***

I. Summary of achieved results in 2022

All activities contributed to the achieving of the planned indicators for 2022 of the BIOTICA's Development Strategy Outputs and contributed partly to the achievement of the planned indicators of the Outcomes.

Activities carried out within the Outcome 1. "Improved conditions for biodiversity by rehabilitation of ecosystems, safeguarding endangered and rare species, and promotion of sustainable development (with a focus on target areas)"

During 2022, the members of SE BIOTICA developed additional researches and a generalization of the researches for the core areas of international importance of the National Ecological Network in the Republic of Moldova. The species of plants and animals that were identified on site were described, as well as other valuable information was presented. Based on this, the publication "Atlas of plant and animal species of core areas of international importance of the National Ecological Network" was edited and will be distributed during meetings to interested persons and institutions.



Also, studies in forestry areas for entire territory of the country were done that included seed basis analysis, possibilities of seedlings basis, the needs for seedlings, institutional capacities to assure the forestation on the entire territory of Moldova.



After many years of work, the "Lower Dniester" national park was founded in April, where ES BIOTICA in collaboration with EcoContact developed the necessary documents for approval in Parliament, including the Law on the creation of the Lower Dniester National Park.

Also, the draft of Tourism Development Methodology in Protected Areas was elaborated and discussed with Moldsilva and other stakeholders during many meetings in 2022. It was then submitted to the Ministry of Environment for the approval.

During the period, afforestation works were continued on the left bank of the Dniester, in Cremenciug, on the bank of the Old Dniester riverbed, on an area of 5.3 ha in addition to those planted in autumn (within the project funded by ADA "Ecosystem-based adaptation, climate-resilience measures and institutional development in the Lower Dniester" (2017-2022)). This represented the largest forest curtain along a water basin planted in the last decades in the Republic of Moldova.

During the implementation period, with the support of Sweden, 11.7 ha were planted in Popeasca village (Ștefan-Vodă district) and 5 ha in Cîrnățeni village in partnership with Cîrnățeni village town hall. Common walnut, black walnut, pig chestnut, common ash, mulberry, boxwood, and various other hardy trees were planted.



In Balabanesti, along the Baltata river, approx. 4 ha of land (mainly willow and poplar) with the help of over 200 volunteers from different institutions were planted in spring and autumn 2022 within the project "Guardians of Moldovan Nature:Enforcing the rights of the communities on both banks of the Dniester").

In Iagorlic (left bank of Dniester) 200 trees, mainly limes and oaks, were planted with the involvement of volunteers on the territory of the scientific reserve.To improve the living conditions for hydrophilic birds, 10 artificial nests were made and installed on the left bank of the Dniester, later being monitored, birds were observed hatching in a part of them (within the project implemented jointly with PAArnika (Czech Republic) funded by the Program "Transition").The nests were used by *Anas platyrhynchos*, *Podiceps cristatus*, *Fulicaatra*, *Aythya nyroca*.



As a new activity was the reintroduction of a rare species (*Euonymus nanus* M. Bieb). After some coordination actions with the administration of Codrii nature reserve and Moldsilva the approval of this activity was received. 20 plants were planted in Codrii nature reserve on a suitable



area under oak with the aim of reintroducing the taxon into the reserve's biodiversity. Additionally, 60 plants were planted in the Lower Dniester national park, where they were planted in the predetermined sectors (in areas A (area with special protection) and B (buffer area) from the territory of the "Lower Dniester" National Park, in the "Lunca Talmaza" and "Grădina Turceasca", around a 280-year-old *Quercus robur* tree, protected by the Law (area B) and in a forest sector. The monitoring revealed that till the end of the year the plantings were live. This important activity was done with the support of Sweden.

As part of the activity, 2 winter animal nutrition facilities were installed in the Orhei National Park and the "Codrii" Nature Reserve.

A channel in Rascaieti near a spring was cleaned in order to reduce the flooding risks on the territory and support of local biodiversity.

Since the zoning system is very important for the protection of valuable ecosystems, the process of marking the boundaries of protection zones in the Orhei National Park has been started.

In 2022, 4 study tours were organized for different stakeholders (representatives of tourism operators, NGOs, representatives of local authorities, local activists, young persons) in Lower Dniester and Orhei national parks, as well as to Iagorlic reserve on the left bank of Dniester. During this study tours and exchange of experience the stakeholders were informed about a better management of protected areas and importance of the protected areas in the environment protection.

Several meetings were organized with representatives of institutions active in related fields, as well as partnerships were established by concluding partnership agreements.

Additional meetings were organized with the representatives of Codrii nature reserve, Orhei National Park, as well as representatives of Gradina Botanica, Institute of Ecology, Orheiul Vechi" cultural-natural reserve, Agency Moldsilva, State enterprise for forestry Tighina, College of Ecology etc. were organized where problems in the field of environment protection and common possible activities were discussed.



Activities carried out within the second development direction” Increasing the resilience of communities in the target areas”



During the reporting period, working group meetings were organized in all villages from the Lower Dniester national park to inform citizens about the creation of the "Lower Dniester" national park, where people discussed environmental issues on the territory of the national park, and continued informing the communities local regarding the creation of the national park.

The following issues were raised: waste management, the use of non-approved phytosanitary products, the problem of the old bed of the Dniester, zoning of the national park etc. At the same time, some objectives were established, such as the arrangement of public space in localities, offering and developing opportunities for the involvement of the local population in the tourism sector, the involvement of the diaspora and cooperation with economic agents, separate waste collection projects, the promotion of handicrafts, the organization of general cleaning of the village, involving students and supporting the initiatives of the entire local community. At the same time, together with the locals, we tried to identify means of communication to spread information among the villagers about the protected area status. Also, during the meetings with the local working groups in Rascaieti and Tudora the proposals to update the local strategies with the provisions related to environment protection were discussed.



In 2022 ES BIOTICA organized some workshops for the representatives of the local working groups and persons who want to become volunteer environmental inspectors, as a way to participate at the protection of environment in the region. At the event took part representatives from Czech Republic that informed about the solving local problems in their country. Also the participants were informed how a contravention should be identified and reported, who has the right to prepare the contravention report. The participants received information about the provisions of the legislation in the field and which articles must be based on the activity. In the same way, the participants discussed my frequent violations of the legislation in the localities and identified the need to inform the population as much as possible about the violations they commit and the methods to avoid them.

On 24-25 November, some meetings with local representatives of the local working groups and other interested persons were organized where some representatives from the national parks from Slovakia and Czech Republic took part, informing participants about the protection measures taken in their protected areas.

In 2022, PA ES BIOTICA in partnership with Plop-Stiubei Mayoralty identified the need to install a new water tower in place of the old one which was in a very bad condition. Thus, based on the technical project developed at the expense of the Plop-Știubei Mayoralty, the installation works of the tower with a capacity of 25 m³ were done in March-May 2022. 1189 people, including 608 women and 400 vulnerable people.

In cooperation with Popeasca Mayoralty, the works necessary to be carried out to improve the water supply system in the locality were identified, namely the renovation of a section of aqueduct with a total length of approx. 250 m, rehabilitation of the room with technical equipment next to three artesian wells. The works were conducted in March-May 2022. Beneficiaries of the intervention were 350 people, including 170 women and 32 vulnerable people.

In the partnership with Cioburciu Mayoralty, works were started to put the photovoltaic system into operation for the production of electricity with a capacity of 5 kWh on the Mayoralty building, ensuring the saving of financial resources of the local budget that can be directed to the solution of some local problems.



In order to improve the situation in the field of garbage, two interventions of cleaning the local landfills were done: in Tipova village (close to which is Tipova landscape reserve) and in Cioburciu village (Lower Dniester national park). The landfills were reduced as surface, compacted, in Cioburciu a fence was installed around the landfill. Around both landfills were planted tree seedling as natural fence.



Beneficiaries –3175 persons, including 1595 women.

In order to improve the situation in the "Orheiul Vechi" cultural-natural reserve by installing 3 ecological toilets, 5 large containers with a volume of 360 l and 5 sets of 5 containers for the selective collection of garbage.

In Gradinita village was agreed with the local authorities to build a visitor point in a picturesque place for locals and tourists. The visitor point is under construction and will be finished in 2023.

During 2022, many awareness raising activities in environmental issues, including biodiversity were organized.

During the celebration of international days for environment and biodiversity ES BIOTICA drawn attention to the problems and importance of the Earth, water, biodiversity, rivers, etc. The following days were celebrated: Forest Day (Stefan-Voda), Earth Day (In Chisinau and Stefan-Voda), Dniester Day (Tudora village), Environment Day (Dubasari), Biodiversity Day (Stefan Voda), Big Jump Swimming Day (Cioburciu village), Cleaning Day (certain locations from the Lower Dniester and Orhei national parks), Youth Day (Stefan-Voda) **(9 events)** where in total about 250 persons took part (including 135 women).



BIOTICA team organized trainings and information lessons for young people from the Lower Dniester national park to inform them about the biodiversity of the region, necessity to protect environment, including local animals and plants and other important topics, where about 80 persons took part, including 48 girls.

Some joint raids with the ecological inspectors and volunteer inspectors were organized in the region of the Lower Dniester national park to identify the violations of the environmental legislation, as well to inform local population about the provisions of the legislation in this field, where 18 persons took part.



Also, some training sessions were held for members of the administrative commission and volunteer environmental inspectors from Talmaza, Tudora and Palanca Mayoralties, where 23 persons took part.

Some excursions in the protected areas to draw attention to the biodiversity of the areas where organized, as well as to promote the regions, including in Lower Dniester and Orhei national parks, Iagorlic nature reserve from the left bank of Dniester, where 60 persons took part, including 28 women.

Sanitation events were organized in the Lower Dniester and Orhei National Parks to draw attention to the garbage problems to the local people, where more than 100 persons took part, including 50 women.

BIOTICA team participated to the many TV and radio broadcasts (more than 20) where discussed about the biggest environmental problems, including for biodiversity in the country. Videomaterials were elaborated, one about Iagorlic reserve and its inhabitants and others about Lower Dniester region and BIOTICA.

In the Lower Dniester some information panels with zoning and tourism information were installed in all villages, as well as some informative leaflets about the activities done by BIOTICA in the region in the last 4 years were edited and distributed.



5 meetings in Rascăiet and



Tudora villages were organized with representatives of the working groups and other interested local people to identify local environmental problems and development directions, as well as the indicators to be achieved. After several meetings, based on discussions and other relevant information, the team

members developed proposals for changes and additions to the existing environmental strategies for the villages of Răscăiet and Tudora, including the development of the "Lower Dniester" national park. The documents were sent to local public authorities for debate.