



Public Association Ecological Society “BIOTICA” Activity Report for the Year 2024

The year 2024 was a year full of achievements for the Public Association Ecological Society “BIOTICA”. The Ecological Society “BIOTICA” carried out its activities in 2024 in accordance with the Development Strategy for the period 2022–2024, a strategic document that reflects the organization’s commitment to environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, and the support of sustainable development of local communities. This strategic framework guided all interventions and initiatives implemented throughout the year, ensuring coherence, continuity, and impact in the organization’s work. Through its activities, the organization contributed to nature conservation, ecosystem restoration, and the creation of a more sustainable environment for people in the target areas.

Development directions of P.A. E.S. “BIOTICA”:

- ***Improved conditions for biodiversity through ecosystem rehabilitation, protection of rare and endangered species, and promotion of sustainable development (with a focus on target areas);***
- ***Increased resilience of communities in the target areas.***

Activities carried out under Development Direction 1: “Improved conditions for biodiversity through ecosystem rehabilitation, protection of rare and endangered species, and promotion of sustainable development (with a focus on target areas)”

In 2024, the BIOTICA team conducted important research. BIOTICA members and contracted specialists carried out studies on rare plant species in their natural habitats. In partnership with the organization Arnika from the Czech Republic, a modern pilot methodology for mapping key species was tested, thus laying the groundwork for the Natura 2000 network in Moldova. As Moldova gradually aligns with the European Union’s obligations in the field of nature conservation, particularly under the EU Nature Directives (Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds – the “Birds Directive” and

Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora – the “Habitats Directive”), legislative progress is being made. The mapping aimed to test the methodology for recording species using a mobile application in the field, including data transfer and storage.



In the Emerald site **Bugeac Steppe**, the rare plant species *Crambe tataria* and *Colchicum fominii* were monitored, as well as *Colchicum arenarium*, which was

found in grasslands, vineyard margins, and abandoned lands. The first flowers appeared on September 8, and the flowering period lasted until October 7.

Between August 23 and October 4, 75 presence points and 173 absence points were recorded, indicating that most specimens are found within protected areas and adjacent zones, outside the localities of Bugeac and Dezghingea. During field expeditions, mainly juvenile specimens were observed, which are expected to bloom in the following season, along with some individuals in the fruiting stage. The plants grow in dispersed groups of 3–7 individuals, while solitary specimens are rarely observed. The population status is favorable, and the conservation condition in the steppe sectors is good. In 2024, the Public Association Ecological Society “BIOTICA” contributed to ecosystem improvement through several afforestation and restoration actions in degraded areas. Thus, in Cîrnățeni (Căușeni district), 2.5 hectares were afforested to create new green spaces and support local biodiversity. In the Iagorlîc Reserve, located on the left bank of the Dniester River, the team sowed 2 hectares with oak acorns, contributing to the natural regeneration of forests and the protection of existing ecosystems. In the villages of Talmază and Răscăieți, in areas affected by erosion, planting works were carried out on a



Additionally, in a smaller but important action, within the Cultural-Natural Reserve “Orheiul Vechi”, 300 ash and linden saplings were planted near the Răut River, contributing to landscape restoration and the protection of natural resources. All these interventions were carried out to support local ecosystems,

increase biodiversity, and protect the environment.

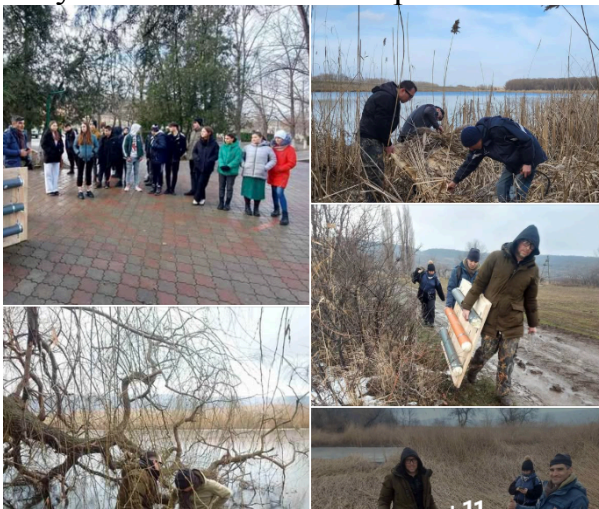
In 2024, the BIOTICA team carried out several activities aimed at improving ecosystems and conserving rare plant species in the protected areas of the Republic of Moldova. As part of these actions, six valuable species were cultivated, planted, and monitored, contributing to habitat restoration and the support of biodiversity. Among the reintroduced species is *Astragalus dasyanthus*, a nitrogen-fixing plant that helps enrich the soil and support pollinators. It was planted in April, May, and



October 2024 in the Lower Dniester National Park, in 300 specimens, in areas selected according to suitable growth conditions. *Digitalis lanata*, a species with medicinal and ornamental value, was planted in the Lower Dniester National Park in 34 specimens, contributing to genetic diversity and the stability of native ecosystems. Through these planting and monitoring actions of rare species, BIOTICA contributed to maintaining genetic diversity, ecosystem stability, and the protection of native flora, involving local communities and environmental conservation specialists.

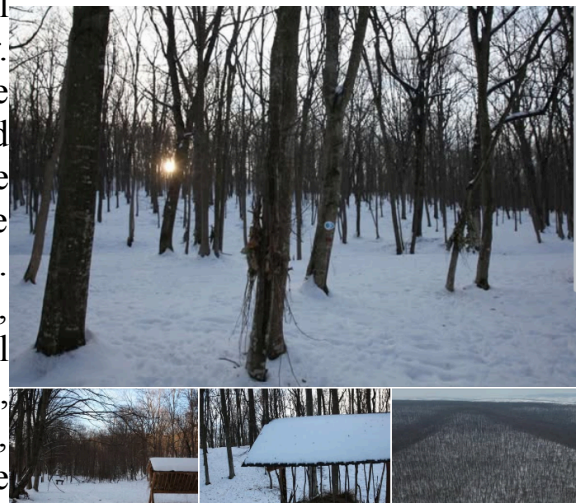
Supporting wildlife and restoring aquatic ecosystems in Moldova's protected areas

In 2024, the BIOTICA team continued to support wildlife and natural ecosystems in Moldova's protected areas. Monitoring of nests installed at the end of 2023 showed that all nests for the mute swan (*Cygnus olor*) were occupied throughout the year, and some nests for the red-footed falcon (*Falco vespertinus*) were also used. To provide additional support, 20 new nests were built and are to be installed in 2025 along the right bank of the Dniester River for the mute swan, red-footed falcon, and the stock dove (*Columba oenas*), ensuring better living conditions for these species.





For roe deer, five feeding points were installed in the Lower Dniester National Park, including in the Grădina Turcească Reserve and near the localities of Talmaza, Răscăieți, and Purcari. These will be regularly supplied throughout the winter. The team also intervened to improve wildlife access to water by cleaning and rehabilitating two natural springs in the Lower Dniester National Park, near the villages of Vișoara and Grădinița. Accumulated mud and soil were removed, the springs were reinforced with natural stone, and equipped with drainage systems, thus providing essential water for animals, especially during dry periods. To support the restoration of aquatic ecosystems, BIOTICA, together with botanists from the Iagorlic Nature Reserve, collected water chestnut seeds from near the village of Nezavertailovca and planted them in the reserve's ponds, thereby reintroducing a lost species and providing habitat for numerous aquatic organisms. These actions had a direct impact on the survival and well-being of local species, contributing to natural balance and the restoration of ecosystems in protected areas.



Activities carried out under Result 2: “Increased resilience of communities in the target areas”

In 2024, BIOTICA implemented a series of projects to support communities and the environment. In the village of Tudora, the waste disposal site was improved through area cleaning, sapling planting, and the installation of 300 posts and 600 meters of fencing, with active involvement of local residents. Although the waste management project in the Cultural-Natural Reserve Orhei was postponed due to administrative delays, these interventions reduced waste dispersion and improved the ecological situation. To improve access to water, reservoirs



reservoirs were installed in Tudora and Talmaza, and the pumping system in Cîrnățeni was rehabilitated, providing stable drinking water for over 4,600 people, including 400 vulnerable individuals. Additionally, a spring and a watering basin were arranged in the Iagorlîc Scientific Reserve, serving both tourists and wildlife. Ecotourism was promoted through the construction of a visitor point in Purcari and the development of tourist routes in the Lower Dniester National Park, providing facilities for both locals and visitors. In 2024, BIOTICA organized 29 awareness-raising and environmental education events. These included: six community events aimed at solving local issues, four events focused on rare and endangered species, six clean-up actions, two study visits to protected areas, and the training of 73 volunteers as environmental inspectors. Additionally, 4.5 hectares of forest were planted with the involvement of 60 volunteers.



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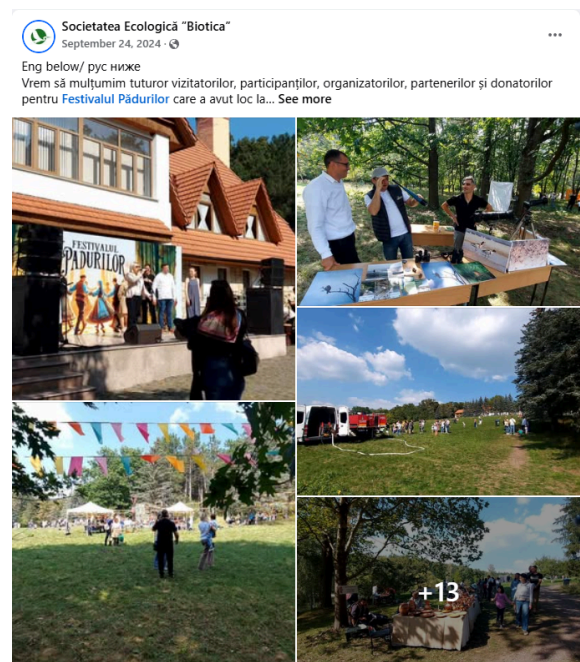


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The Forest Festival, organized on September 21 at the presidential residence in Condrîța, brought together approximately 4,000 participants, including children and the general public, featuring programs and exhibitions on the importance of forests and tree planting. The event was also promoted on Facebook, reaching around 29,700 views in the last four months of the year. In addition, BIOTICA developed educational materials: four video materials about volunteer environmental inspectors, three highlighting success stories from the afforestation program, one leaflet on the natural and cultural heritage of the Orhei Reserve, and six leaflets about valuable sites in the Lower Dniester National Park, distributed to tourists and local communities. Through these interventions, BIOTICA successfully combined environmental conservation, ecological education, and direct support for communities, demonstrating that nature protection can bring tangible benefits to both people and the environment.



Study Visits, Partnerships, and Community Development in 2024

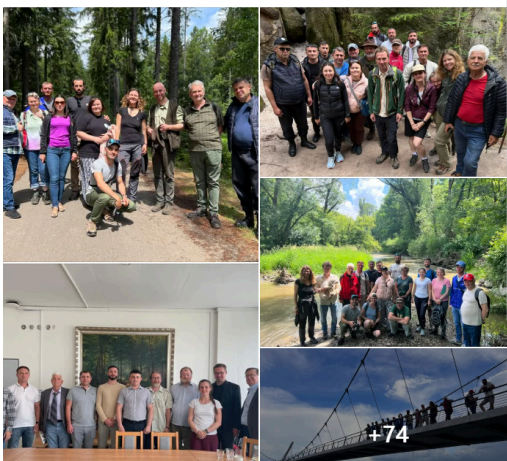
In 2024, BIOTICA continued to strengthen its team’s capacities and expand its activities in the field of environmental protection and community development. The organization’s team consisted of 9 dedicated members, including 5 men and 4 women, who participated in several key trainings essential for ecological

restoration, environmental compliance, and international Natura 2000 methodologies. These included:

1. A training organized by Propark (Romania) on developing ecological restoration plans for forests, grasslands, and water bodies;
2. An environmental compliance course provided by eCircular, covering the steps required for obtaining environmental permits, impact assessment, and pollution prevention;
3. Training on the international Natura 2000 methodology, delivered by Czech expert Peter Roth, who provided practical guidance for the designation of protected sites.

In addition to the professional development of the team, BIOTICA strengthened its internal and financial management by ensuring updated internal policies and manuals, quarterly and annual financial reporting, an external audit with no irregularities, and the updating of the accounting system in accordance with current standards. The organization's visibility in society increased through social media, rebranding, educational campaigns, and participation in events and conferences. In 2024, BIOTICA conducted 20 awareness-raising campaigns on topics such as afforestation, protection of rare species, conservation of water and soil, and waste management, reaching an audience of approximately 75,000 people. To strengthen partnerships, the organization collaborated with state institutions, NGOs, and local authorities, organizing joint meetings and activities, and training staff and consultants on the Code of Ethics and Anti-Corruption Professional Conduct.

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... Study Visit to the Czech Republic

An important milestone was the study visit to the Czech Republic, attended by 20 participants, including 5 women, as part of an 8-day program dedicated to the management of protected areas. Participants visited four protected areas, a sustainably managed commercial forest, and a major river revitalization project. The experience provided valuable knowledge about the Natura 2000 network, the institutional organization of nature conservation, and practical protection methods. It also contributed

to strengthening interpersonal relationships and fostering future collaboration between institutions and NGOs.

Local Policies and Private Sector Engagement

In 2024, BIOTICA worked together with the local group in the village of Tudora to update the local development strategy, introducing clear objectives and measures for environmental protection. The new strategy was discussed with the community, adjusted according to the needs and priorities of local residents, and submitted to the Local Council for approval. Following evaluation, the council approved the document, turning the strategy into an official implementation guide that will steer decisions and projects in the involved villages. This initiative



ensures that local development and environmental protection go hand in hand, actively involving the community in the process. Also in 2024, BIOTICA continued its collaboration with Samas-Plant, a nursery located in the village of Popeasca, Ștefan Vodă district. Established in 2013 on an area of over 2 hectares and equipped with modern irrigation systems, the nursery produces a variety of saplings—from large trees such as oak, ash, poplar, and willow, to local shrubs such as rosehip, hazel, and black elder. These saplings are used for afforestation projects in communities, including Tudora and Popeasca, as well as for the regeneration of the Lower Dniester National Park. The irrigation equipment, provided by BIOTICA with support from Sweden, enables planting in spring and ensures healthy growth of saplings, reducing losses and resource waste. In addition, Samas-Plant has committed to organizing educational visits and events for children and the wider community, helping visitors understand the importance of afforestation and environmental protection. This collaboration between BIOTICA, local authorities, and the private sector not only supports forest regeneration and ecosystem improvement but also increases community involvement in environmental projects, educates future generations, and creates a lasting positive impact on the environment.



Conclusion and Future Vision

The year 2024 was one of consolidation, engagement, and innovation for the Ecological Society “BIOTICA”. Through a wide range of interventions—from waste management and rehabilitation of water systems in local communities to supporting plant and animal species and creating nature observation points—the Ecological Society “BIOTICA” succeeded in improving the quality of life in rural areas, protecting ecosystems, and advancing environmental education. Awareness-raising activities, volunteer trainings, and study visits to the Czech Republic strengthened the team’s knowledge and stimulated collaboration between authorities, NGOs, and communities, promoting best practices in protected area management and biodiversity conservation. Collaboration with the private sector, through projects such as the Samas-Plant nursery, as well as community involvement in planting and clean-up activities, demonstrated that sustainable development and environmental protection can go hand in hand with economic and social progress. At the same time, BIOTICA strengthened its internal structure, financial control, and visibility in society, ensuring transparency and long-term sustainability. Looking ahead, the Ecological Society “BIOTICA” will focus on expanding its positive impact by continuing forest and aquatic ecosystem restoration projects, actively involving communities in local decision-making and initiatives, promoting environmental education among young people, and developing sustainable tourism. BIOTICA aims to become a model of collaboration between NGOs, authorities, and the private sector, contributing to the creation of resilient, responsible communities connected to nature and prepared to face future challenges.

