



# ForestConnect project on climate-smart forest connectivity for large carnivores in the Balkan-Carpathian- Dinaric region

Zakrajšek Polona & Wiegele Elisabeth

Carinthia University of Applied Sciences, UNESCO CHAIR  
for Sustainable Management of Conservation Areas

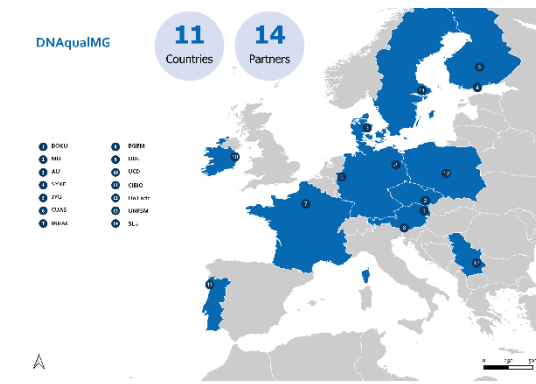
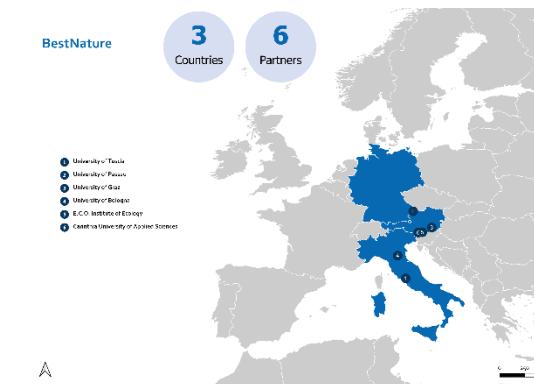
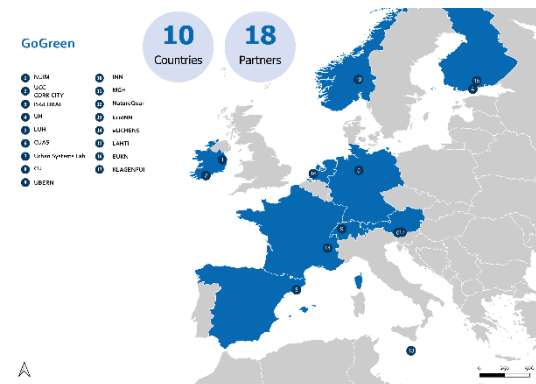
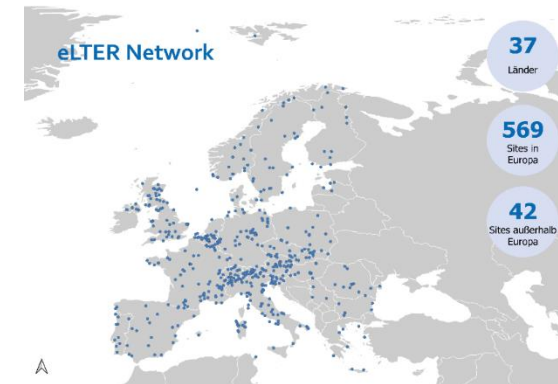
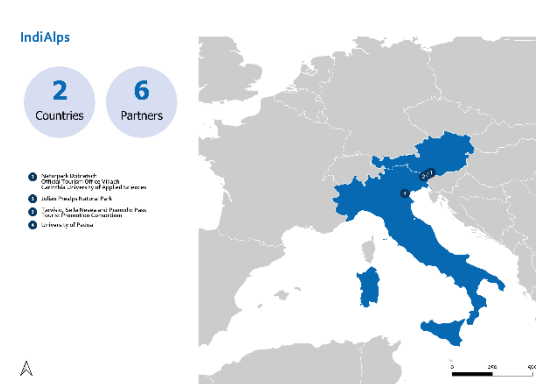
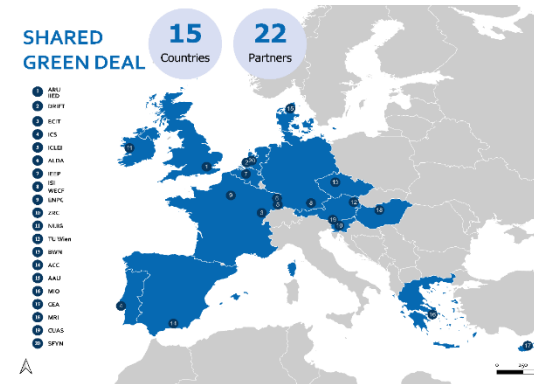
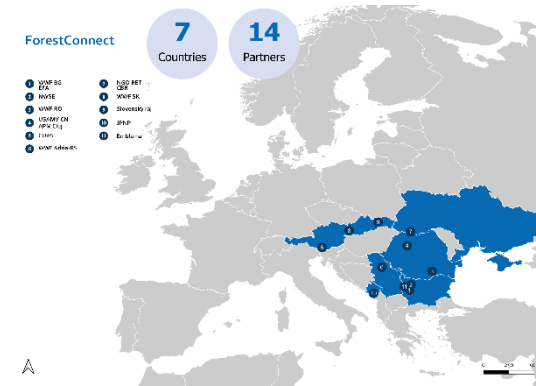
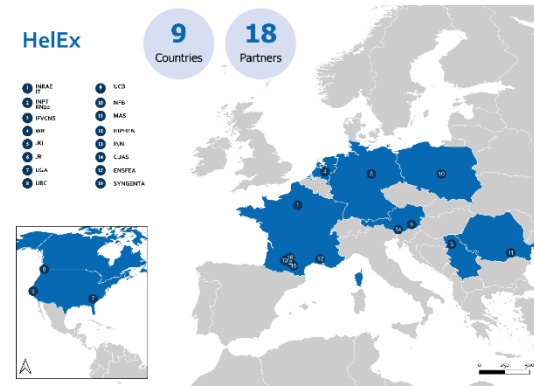
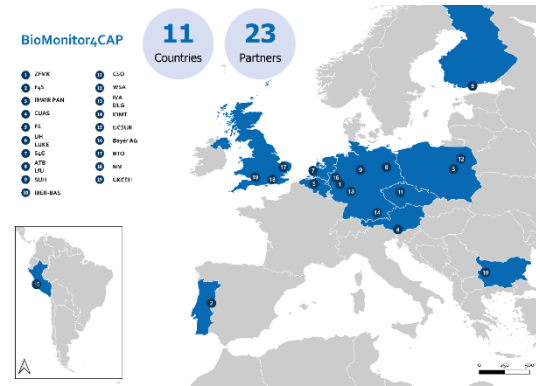




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# Forest Connect

## Towards a Climate-smart Forest Connectivity for Large Carnivores in the Balkan-Carpathian- Dinaric Region

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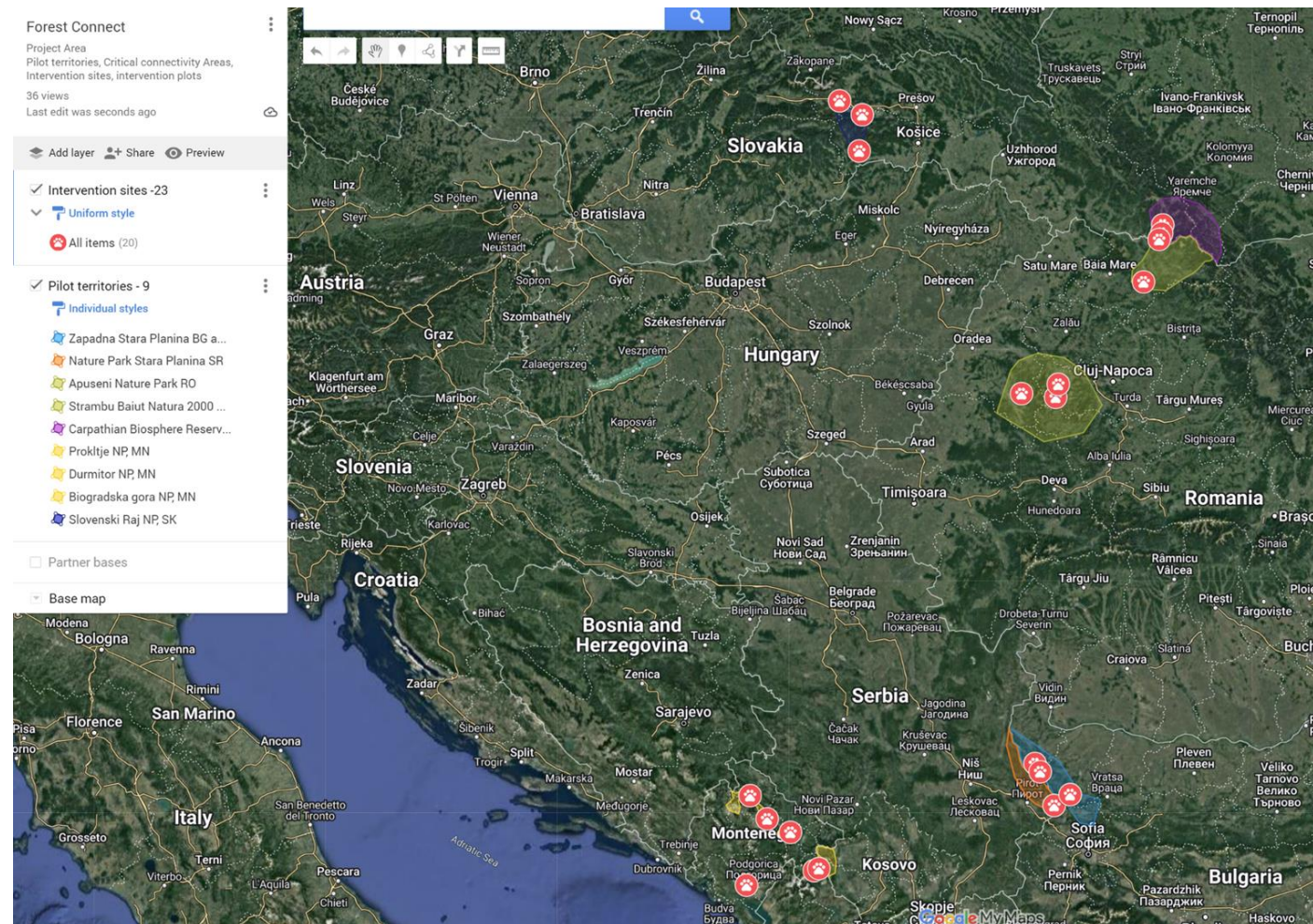
# Overview of project territories

7 countries  
AT, BG, ME, RO, SK, RS, UA

## 9 pilot territories

Zapadna stara planina Natura 2000 (BG)  
Biogradska gora NP (ME)  
Durmitor NP (ME)  
Prokletije NP (ME)  
Apuseni Nature Park (RO)  
Strambu Baiut Natura 2000 (RO)  
Slovenski Raj NP (SK)  
Stara planina NP (RS)  
Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (UA)

23 intervention sites



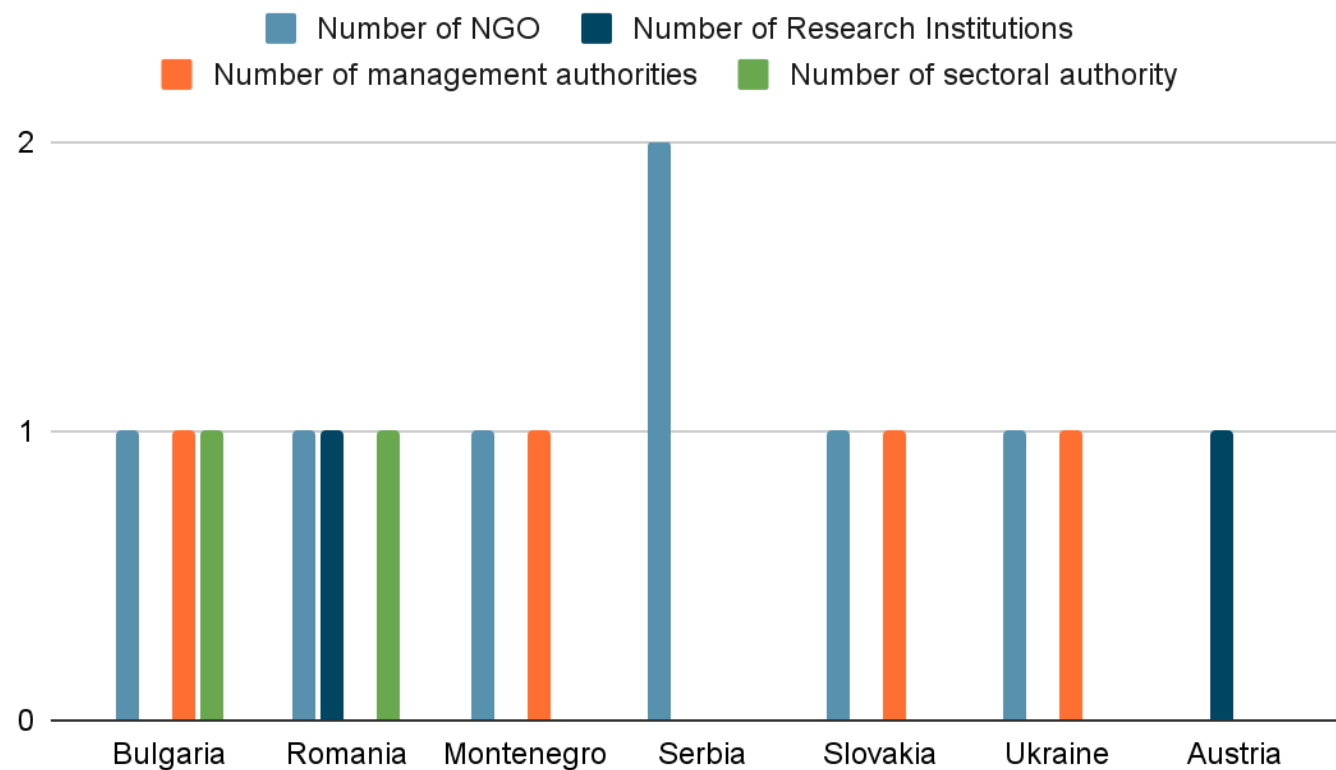
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## Project partners in the countries





## Why Large Carnivores?



- LCs as umbrella species are an indicator for healthy forest ecosystems connected through transnational ecological corridors.
- LCs are prone to various challenges and threats, including habitat loss, human-wildlife conflicts, and climate-induced changes. Climate-induced changes are hindering their ability to shift ranges and leading to displacement from protected areas. This displacement often directs them toward more densely populated settlements, consequently escalating the risk of human-wildlife conflicts.
- LCs habitats and movements have a transnational character. The range of their forest habitable areas is quite large since their natural behavior requires a substantial space regardless of the borders.
- The nature of LCs as species allows for the application of unified transnational solutions, as opposed to smaller animals with shorter migration routes that should be tackled locally. Transnational measures are perfectly suited for conservation measures of LCs.



# ForestConnect Context and Relevance

ForestConnect is designed to address common challenges and needs to **protect and preserve transnational forest ecological corridors of LCs** in the Carpathian, Balkan, and Dinaric Mountains.

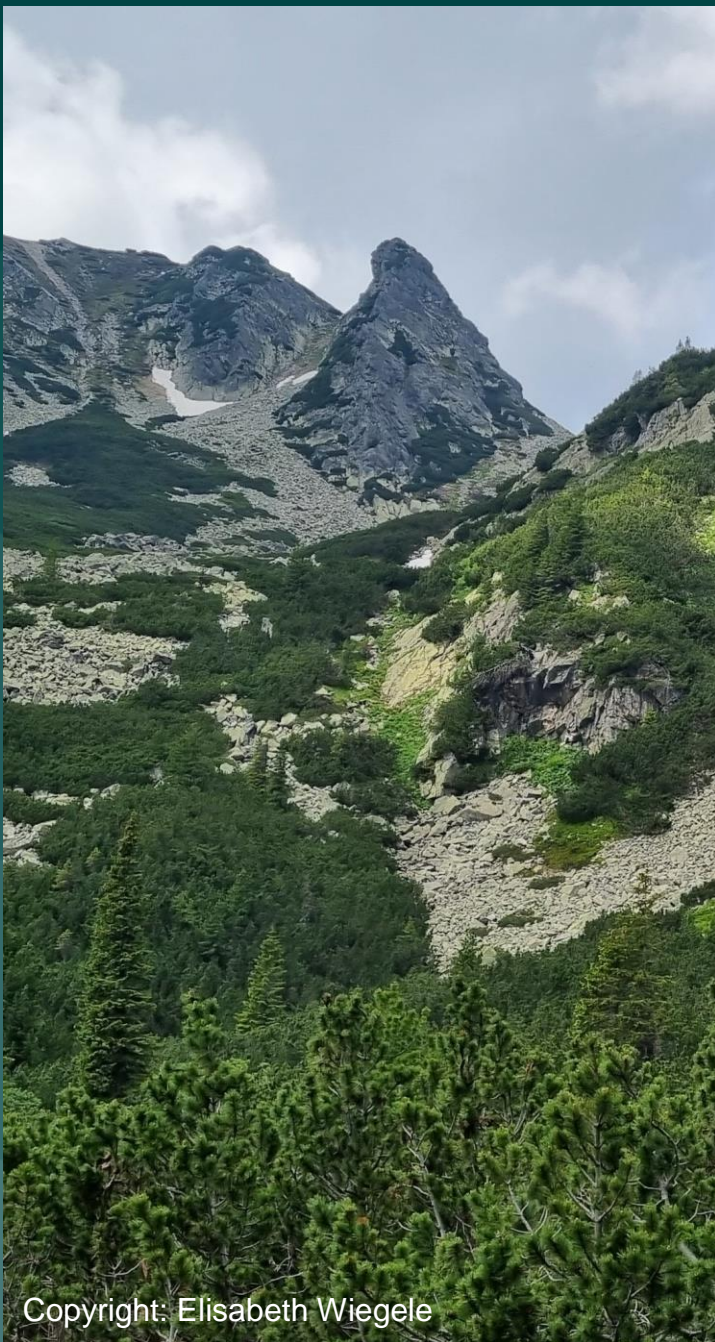
LC corridors are endangered not only by unsustainable management practices and infrastructural developments in forest habitats  
- **climate change poses additional pressure** on these ecosystems.

**Climate-induced habitat fragmentation** can:

- 1) impede LCs range shifts and displace individuals from protected areas towards more populated settlements with a risk of **increasing HWC**
- 2) Increasing the harvest of non-timber forest products may **affect the diet** to a more carnivorous one, additionally increasing the conflicts with cattle farmers.

Although climate change effects are recognized by management authorities, this is **not translated into resilience-enhancing forest management practices** and clear guidance for managers of the territories.





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## Specific Objectives

### 1. New tools and technologies integrated in transnational monitoring of large carnivores' forests

*Joint and harmonized development of transnational tools and technologies for monitoring of key large carnivore forest habitats and identification of species movement patterns in response to climate change*

### 2. Heterogeneity, connectivity and climate resilience of large carnivores' forests is improved

*Common solutions in line with the EU 2030 Biodiversity Strategy and based on joint pilot actions to improve heterogeneity, increase resilience and connectivity of forest habitats in the transboundary ecological regions used by large carnivores*

### 3. Promote capacity and cooperation for integrated LC climate-forest connectivity across eco-regions

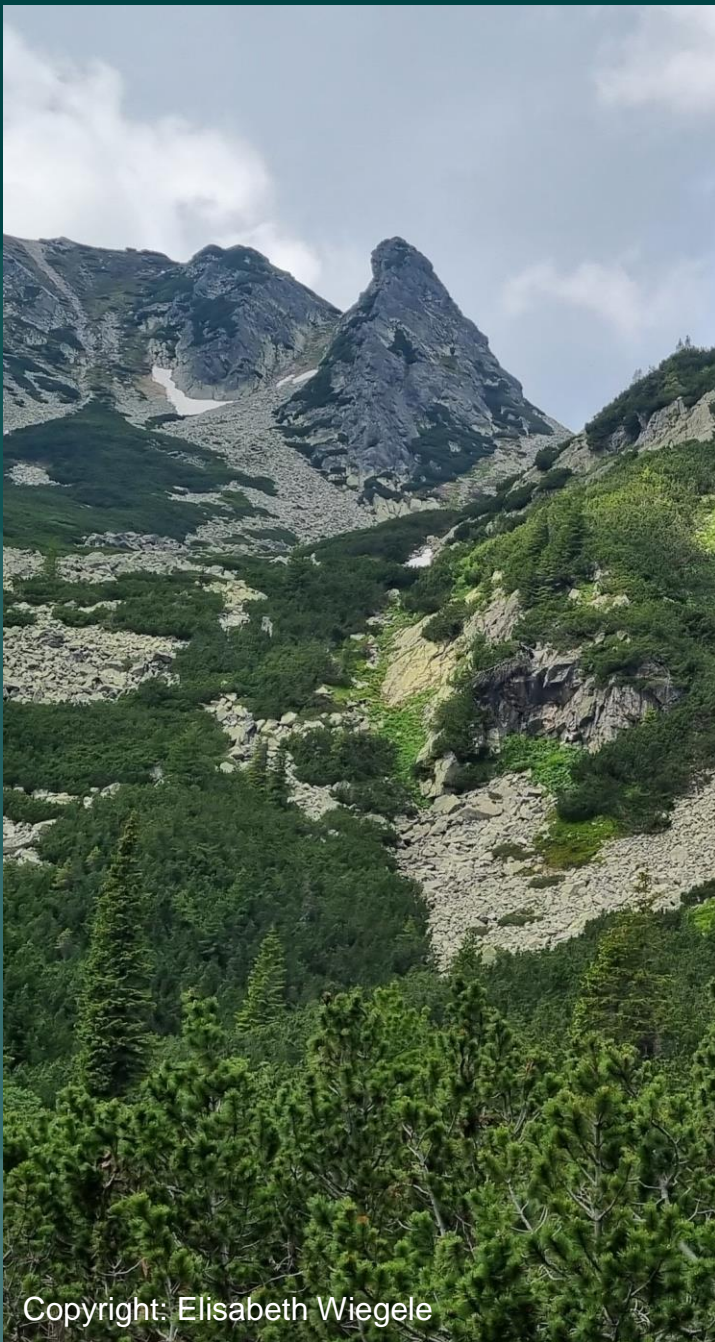
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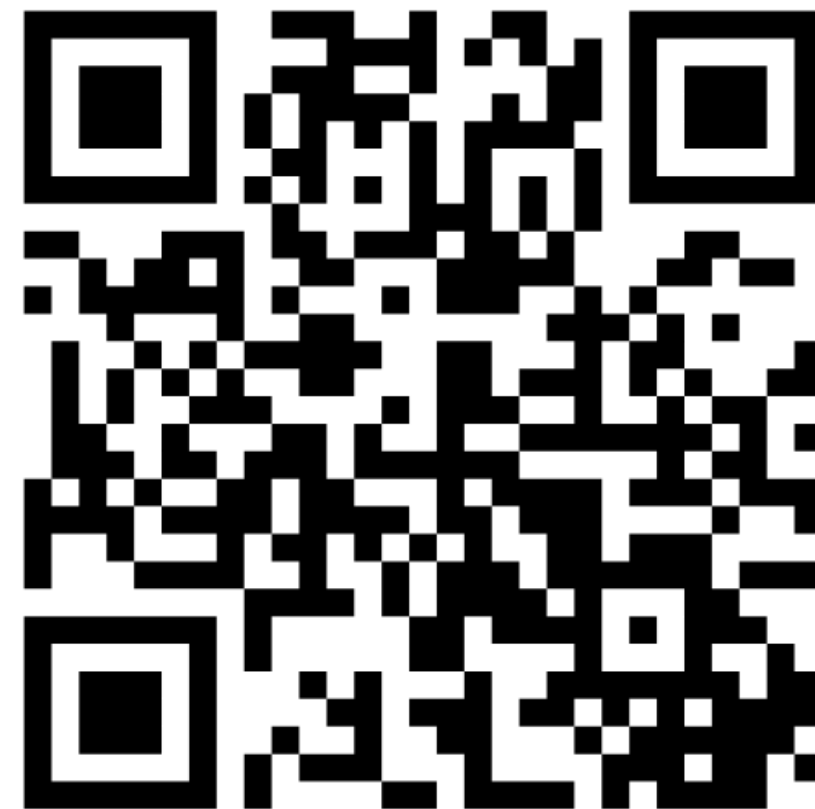
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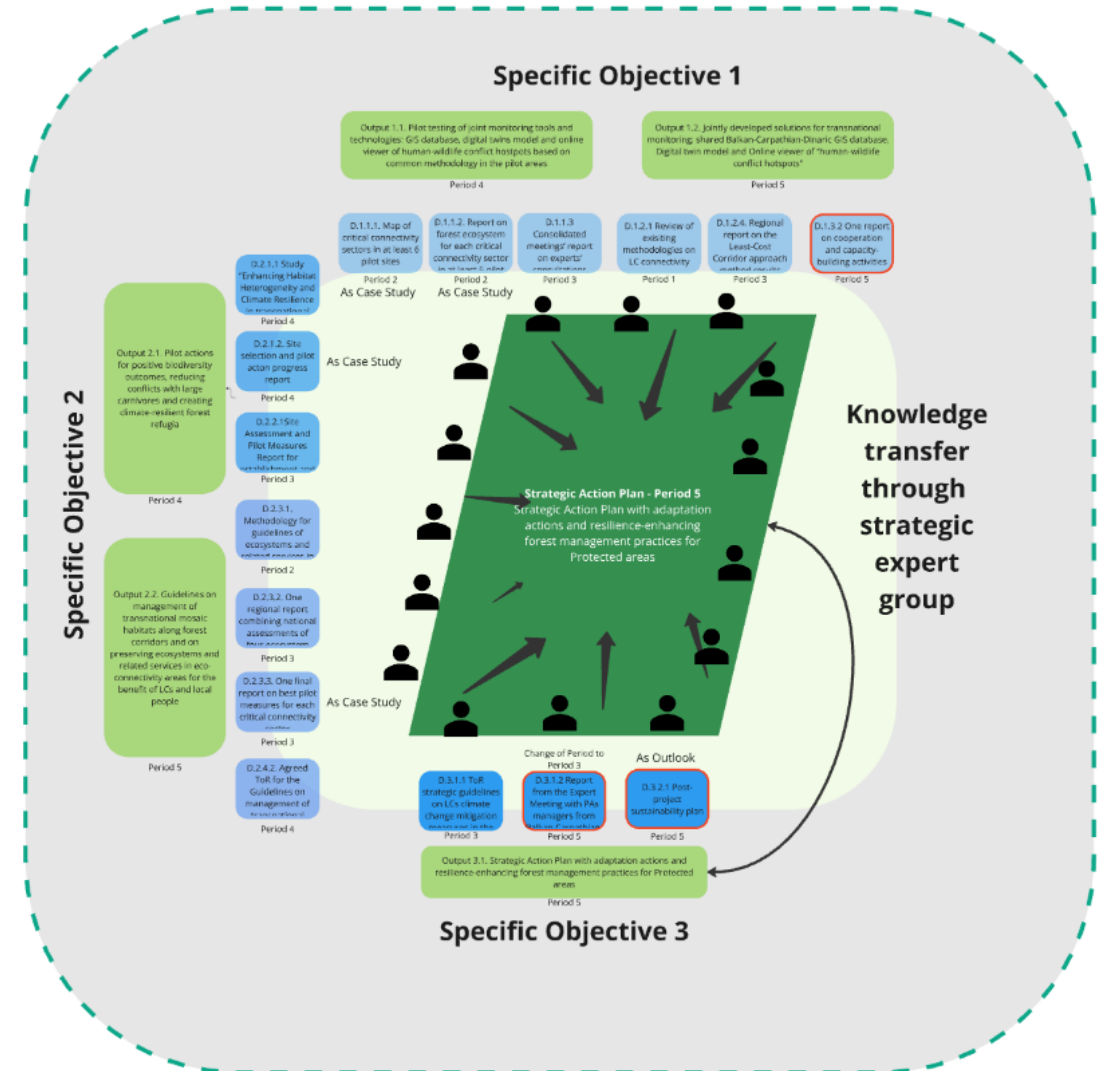
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# Strategic Action Plan

## Strategic Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience-Enhancing Forest Management in Ecological Corridors for Large Carnivores (Output 3.1.)

Subtitle: Practical Recommendations for Protected Area/Land Managers in the Carpathian, Balkan, and Dinaric Regions







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# How would you improve large carnivore connectivity?

Actions, measures, tools, ...

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## Survey for the Actions

### Overview of the survey, questions, and target groups of the survey

#### Current measures:

What measures are you currently implementing to enhance forest connectivity and mitigate climate change? How would you assess their effectiveness

#### Future plans:

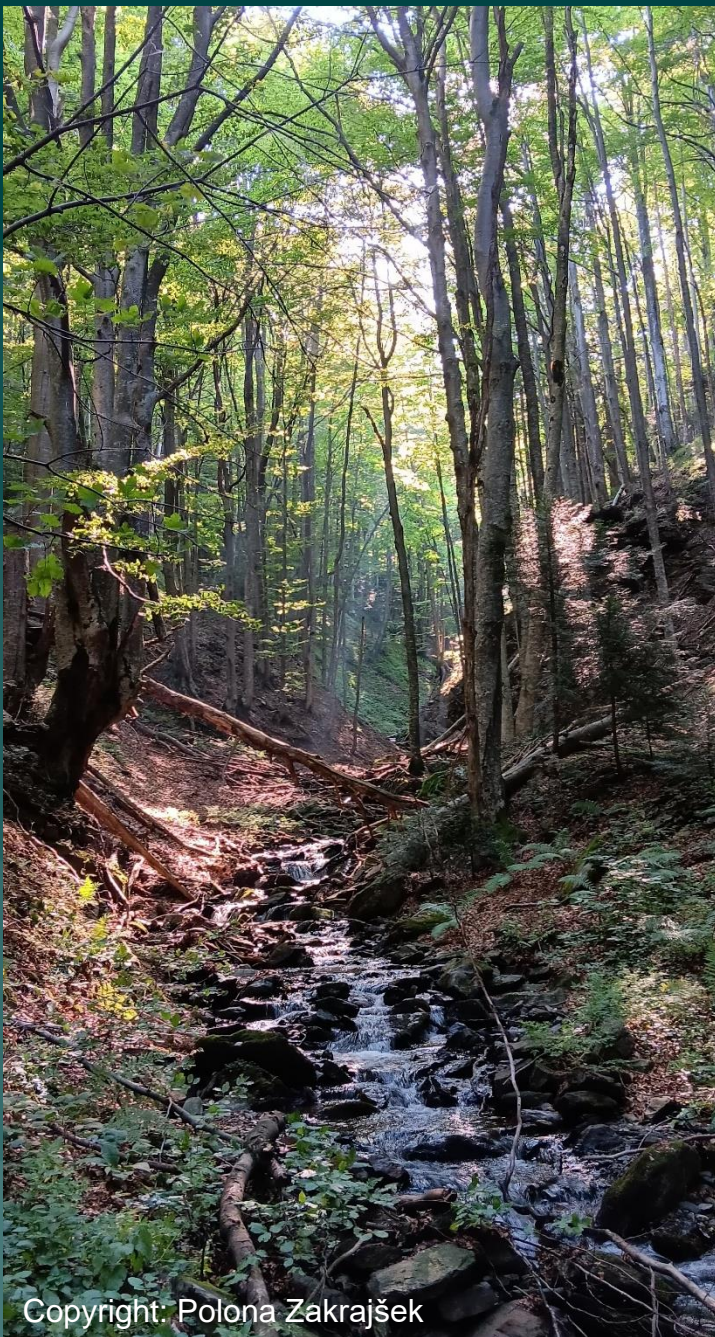
What additional measures would you like to implement to simultaneously improve forest connectivity, facilitate LC movement and support climate change adaptation?

#### Support and needs:

What do you need to enhance resilience-oriented forest management?







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## Contribution to the expert working group

The Forest Connect Strategic Expert Group is welcoming any kinds of contributions.

Scheduled online meetings:

- 28<sup>th</sup> of May
- 25<sup>th</sup> of June
- 30<sup>th</sup> of July
- 27<sup>th</sup> of August ...

Tasks: development of the international action plan, feedback loops with stakeholders

Email: [zakrajsek@cuas.at](mailto:zakrajsek@cuas.at)

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Conservation Areas

Zakrajšek Polona & Wiegele Elisabeth, Carinthia University of Applied Sciences  
UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Management of Conservation Areas

Email: [zakrajsek@cuas.at](mailto:zakrajsek@cuas.at)

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