



LIFE Project Number
LIFE 13 NAT/RO/001154

MIDTERM Report
Covering the project activities from **01.10.2014** to **31.05.2018**

Reporting Date
31.05.2018

LIFE+ LIFE FOR BEAR
Conservation of Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*) population in Romania

Project Data

Project location	National level for some actions, Implementation area: Brasov-Prahova Valley Area	
Project start date:	01.10.2014	
Project end date:	01.10.2019	Proposed Exension date: 01.10.2020
Total budget	1.567.512 €	
EU contribution:	1.115.911 €	
(%) of eligible costs	71.19 % of total eligible budget	

Beneficiary data

Name Beneficiary	INSTITUTUL NAȚIONAL DE CERCETARE DEZVOLTARE ÎN SILVICULTURĂ MARIN DRĂCEA S.C.D.E.P. BRAȘOV (fostul Institut de Cercetări și Amenajări Silvice (ICAS) – Stațiunea Brașov)	
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ABBREVIATIONS

Project acronym

**LIFE 13 NAT/RO/001154
LIFE FOR BEAR**

COORDINATING BENEFICIARY

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
IN FORESTRY Marin Drăcea

INCDS

ASSOCIATED BENEFICIARY

CARPATHIAN FOUNDATION

FC

LOCAL FORESTS PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION KRONSTADT R.A.

KRT

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

MM

R.N.P. ROMSILVA - BUCEGI NATURAL PARK ADMINISTRATION R.A.

PNB

THE FOREST DISTRICT OF RÂȘNOV R.A.

OS

Other

BEAR TEAM

BT

SUMMARY

General progress

The Project “*Conservation of Brown Bear (Ursus arctos) population in Romania*” launched on 03.10.2014 and it’s under implementation. During the implementation of the project there were political / administrative changes in decision-making institutions which are directly involved in the management of brown bear species, so the completion period for some actions had to be extended.

Along with political/administrative changes, there have been changes in the attitude of people who carry out activities related to the bear species and/or their habitat and the attitudes of people whose activities are influenced by the presence and actions of bears. At the same time, the attention of the press raised on matters of bears, so that the management of this species in Romania has created controversy and has become an emotional subject for several groups: people who have to cohabit with brown bear species, animal lovers who do not live with bear species, hunting fund managers, hunters, public administrations, environmental activists, researchers, conservationists.

So far, the goal and objectives of the project are achievable, although there are delays in the implementation periods of some activities, but we would like to ask for a one-year extension of the project implementation period, so that the extended period contributes to a better achievement of the project objectives.

The delays in the implementation of some activities, as well as the delay in the submission of the Midterm Report, are caused by the political and administrative changes at the Government of Romania, especially those of the Ministry of Environment, as well as the changes in the management vision of large carnivores strictly protected species.

Since 2016, when the team of the Ministry of the Environment has taken the decision not to grant derogations for hunting interventions on specimens from the bear population, it has continued to cause great conflict especially between hunting managers, rural populations and some

environmental organizations occupied with the protection and conservation of nature, as well as animal lovers in the urban area, so that the subject of brown bear species management became very sensitive in Romania.

In 2018 the Ministry of Environment (MM) demonstrated an active participation by engaging in the debates and approval of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Brown Bear Population in Romania. The Action Plan, carried out under action C1, integrates elements of the project's actions. The Ministry of the Environment has submitted a project to get Structural Funds (POIM-124646 - Implement the measures contained in the national action plan for the brown bear species in Romania) through which it wants to implement this Action Plan. At the time of this reporting, the project is under evaluation. By replication and transfer of the actions from the LIFE FOR BEAR project, in a future project, implemented by the Ministry of Environment, sustainability will be ensured (*Anexa nr. C.1.6. la Midterm Report*).

The Ministry of the Environment issued an address to the project manager expressing its support for the activities carried out by the project within the limits of its legal attributions. (*Anexa C.2.7. Adresa nr. 21830/ECU din 01.10.2018 la Midterm Report*).

Preparatory activities of type A.

Under Action A1, the socio-economic analysis of interest groups in the project area was completed in 2015. Throughout the project, the results of the study are used in the implementation of other activities and in working with stakeholders.

Under Action A2, the analysis of conflicts and damage done by bear at national level was carried out. Official and unofficial data of conflicts and damage caused by the bear species have been centralized and analyzed. This activity was practically completed, but due to the administrative changes in bear species management, activity continued in 2017-2018 to capture a clearer picture of the effects of stopping hunting intervention on the bear population, the notoriety of the subject and changes in people's attitude. The activity also continued because there is a need to obtain additional information on resolution measures and on the determinants of conflicts. For this, an interview guide was developed as a working tool in the in-depth data collection that was sent as an annex to the progress report. The applicability of the interview was tested on members from the project team. Potential respondents from each interest group were identified, which can provide qualitative details on the topic concerned and they were contacted in order to conduct the interviews. As a direct consequence of the abandonment of direct interventions in the brown bear population in Romania through hunting activities, there is a considerable increase in the official files of bear-related damage at national level (In the year 2015 - 251 files, the year 2016 - 461 files, the year 2017 - 939 files) and an increase in bears' attacks on people, in some areas, completed with serious injury and their hospitalization (In 2015 - 12 persons, 2016 - 13 persons, 2017-30 persons). Based on these results, different measures to reduce conflicts have been proposed in the Action Plan for bear population on national level (Action C1). The final report will be restructured in order to clarify some aspects and present the information on concrete objectives.

In the context in which bear species management is changing, it is necessary to continue to monitor the conflicts between human and bear in order to have stronger basis in the solutions proposed in the Bear Management Plan at national level. We propose to continue to monitor the evolution of conflicts and damage and the final report to be made until the end of the project, integrating the data recorded by the end of 2018, at least.

Under Action A3, the bonity study of the hunting funds at the national level was finalized, where the bonity of all the hunting funds at the national level was completed and is to be completed the technical guidelines to analyze the habitat's natural habitability for each hunting unit. For this activity has been made: the inventory of the land use categories, by bonity classes, of brown bear habitats; an inventory of the forest habitat types in the distribution area of the brown bear population; the determination of the optimum herd and bonity of habitats at the hunting unit level (542 hunting funds) was made in order to establish the support capacity of bear habitats at national level; the distribution of land areas by land use categories was made for each bonity category; the bonity category has been determined based on the area occupied in the bear habitat; the comparative distribution of the presence of anthropic factor at the level of the project area was analyzed.

For the 542 hunting funds in the country, only the ones that totalize the distribution area of the bear, the optimum number for the brown bear species was calculated as 4002 individuals, with 398 individuals smaller than the 2002 calculation. In order to determine the bonity categories of habitats for the brown bear species in Romania, land use categories were inventoried for an area of approximately 7,185,000 ha (7,1850 km²), overlapping the brown bear population distribution area Romania.

Concrete C-type activities continued as proposed by the project.

Under action C1, in order to elaborate the action plan for the conservation of brown bear populations in Romania, there were made:

- several meetings between the experts of the project,
- four stages of consultation with specialists from institutes / institutions / entities / universities / non-governmental organizations involved in the management, conservation and research of the brown bear species.
- a public debate organized by the Ministry of Environment at the Parliament Palace on 09.05.2018. The consultation stages resulted in a reinforced version of the action plan, which harmonized the environmental, ethological, conservative, social and economic needs of the bear species and the human population.

The consolidated version of the action plan for the conservation of brown bear populations in Romania was approved by minister order (Order No. 625/2018 regarding the approval of the National Action Plan for the Conservation of the Brown Bear Population in Romania).

The Action Plan contains a mix of actions needed to achieve a peaceful coexistence between human and bear. Depending on the specifications of the existing conflicting situations, the actions must be implemented in parallel in order to get positive results. One single action will not solve the issue.

Under Action C2, based on several meetings with experts, a draft Intervention and Assessment Guide was made, which was made available to the Ministry of Environment and County Prefectures, as well as a proposal for completing the normative acts in force regarding the modalities granting compensation for damages and preventing damage caused by the bear species and not only, which was discussed with the government authorities. On the basis of the Intervention and Assessment Guide elaborated by the project team, the Prefect Institution of Brasov issued an Order (Order No. 1072 of 10.11.2017) regarding setting up a Joint Commission for the Assessment of Measures to prevent bear related or other wild animals Emergency Situations in Brasov County.

Also under Action C2, the project team, since its formation, intervened in 32 bear rescue actions, which consisted in: releasing bears from illegal snare, catching and relocating bears from

human settlements proximity, catching orphan bears and relocating them to the center for rehabilitation of orphan bears. BEAR CONFLICT team also intervened in cases of road and rail accidents involving bears from the area of implementation of the concrete actions of the project. Members from the project team also participated in three workshops organized at the Ministry of Environment between March and July 2017, where was analyzed the regulation of emergency response interventions towards situations generated by large carnivores that threaten the health and safety of humans. As a result of these meetings, a ward of a joint minister between the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Internal Affairs was carried out, but this order was not approved until the date of this report.

The Action Plan approved by Order no. 625/2018 approving the National Action Plan for the Conservation of the Brown Bear Population in Romania, stipulates an accreditation action of the specialists for solving the conflict situations, thus expressing its intention to use the results and experts trained by the LIFE FOR BEAR project to solve human-bear conflict situations.

By address 21830 / 01.10.2018, the Ministry of Environment expresses its support for the project activities and approves the team of specialists for solving man-bear conflict situations, formed and equipped by the project LIFE 13 NAT/RO/001154 FOR BEAR "Conservation of Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*) population in Romania".

We opened dialogue with Transilvania University Brasov - Faculty of Forestry and Forestry Exploitation Brasov, aiming to form a training course for specialists with competence in bear related assessing damages and establishing the compensations, in order to increase protection of the brown bear population. It is hoped that after accrediting the course within the university, 10 specialists will be trained in the following year.

Under Action C3, BEAR TEAM managed to obtain the derogation required to capture 20 bear specimens in order to mount and monitor their GPS / GSM systems. A draft of a "Technical guideline for capture, relocation, mounting GPS/GSM system and bear monitoring" has been developed, based on which 8 bears were captured, relocated and GPS/GSM collars were mounted on them and 3 bear relocation actions for which they could not install a collar because they were too young. On the basis of the monitoring of these bears, there have been determined the territory they used after relocation and the results of relocation actions could be determined. Maps of habitats used by relocated bears with GPS / GSM systems have been developed.

In Action C4, based on the specialized course attended by project team members in Germany, the areas with high density of ant-hills were identified in the area of project implementation, from where 120 ant-hills were multiplied and moved in favorable areas of the bear habitat. In 2017-2018, after the bear-hunting stopped, there was an increase in the density of bears in the areas where the ant-hills were installed, which endangered the viability of ant families.

In spring 2015, 2016 and 2017, bear feed crops have been set up in several places in the Natura 2000 sites Postavarul and Pietra Mare, in areas where the anthropic pressure has increased and the possibility of restoring the balance is more difficult or virtually irreversible. Cultures were made with a total of 13160 seedlings and 6000 cuttings of the species used by the bear to feed.

As part of Action C5, based on the project team's expertise, a first draft of a set of measures applicable to forest management was made, providing for special arrangements for the management of bear-friendly stands in conflict zones, requesting changes to the arrangements if in order to allow for the maintenance of bear habitats in the habitat, so as to reduce the number of conflicts.

Implementation of the measures applicable to the forest management of the Natura 2000 sites in the project implementation area will be done by the associated beneficiary Fundația Carpați for

ROSCI 0195 Piatra Mare, ROSCI 0207 Postăvaru, as custodian, for ROSCI0038 Ciucaș site implementation will be done by INCDS Brasov, as site administrator, and for ROSCI0013 Bucegi will be made by the Bucegi Natural Park Administration, as administrator.

For each forestry arrangement that will come to the advice of the custodian / administrator of the protected area, it will be necessary to implement the set of measures applicable to the forestry arrangement that would favor the stands necessary for the bear in the critical areas.

Under Action C6, in order to reduce conflicts by implementing protection measures, in the first stage, the project members inventoried the situation of the sheepfolds in the project implementation area, from the agricultural offices, from where the owners and locations of the sheepfolds were identified. The centralization of the location of the sheepfolds in the project implementation area was made and resulted in a number of 115 sheepfolds, distributed over the 12 administrative units. 10 complex systems of electric fences were installed at the sheepfolds and orchards, where there were more damage caused by bear. A custody protocol with the users of these protection systems was made and beneficiaries were trained for any errors in the installed system.

Within Action C7, the project database was updated for each activity, thematic maps were developed considering the parameters aimed by the project implementation team, namely the distribution of the bear, as well as other relevant objectives within the project area (sheepfolds, farms, apiaries, tourist areas and camping sites, areas frequented by habituated bears, etc.).

Under Action C8, since June 2015, patrol team members have conducted field trips to identify areas where household waste and waste collection platforms are located in urban areas near the forest and tourist areas (camp areas, chalets, hostels, hotels, etc.). This activity takes place throughout the year on a well-established graph or in areas where the frequency of bears is high. Areas with a high potential of human-bear conflict are frequently checked, these areas vary according to the food debris found at the waste collection platforms or the number of tourists in the camping areas.

In many places of the Brasov-Valea Prahovei area (the project area) the bears attend the platforms or household waste dumps. These areas have been monitored since the start of the project and the most frequently visited locations have been identified. 160 containers (bear-proof) will be purchased and will be located in the most sensitive areas. The purchase of bear-proof containers can only take place after the second tranche of financing is received because the project budget did not allow them to be purchased until this stage of the project.

At the platforms or household waste dumps in the urbanized areas near the forest, camping areas and areas with tourist activities outside the localities, between 01.04.2015 - 01.10.2016 there were identified 36 bear individuals frequenting different locations in the implementation area of the project and during the period 01.04.2018 - 20.05.2018 there were identified 40 bear individuals frequenting the household waste collection areas in the project implementation area.

A working meeting was organized in Predeal, Brasov county, which had a dual purpose: to set up a working group for limiting the habituated bears phenomenon and to reduce potential human-bear conflicts, by modifying the household waste management within the project LIFE13 NAT / RO / 001154 and the awareness of local communities about the risks of human-bear conflicts.

Following several discussions with local administrations, several approaches to garbage management have been attempted, such as daily waste collection, especially in the evening to leave no source of attraction for bears. This approach has caused an unexpected reaction. If the bears did not find any waste in the places they frequented near the forest, they have penetrated deeper into some localities, reaching their center. This caused discomfort and was considered to be a danger to the lives

and safety of people who were not accustomed to the presence of bears. Collaboration between stakeholders will continue to find solutions to manage conflicts.

Type D monitoring activities continued with annual reports.

In the D1 action, in order to achieve the conservation objectives of the *Ursus arctos* species, impact evaluation indicators have been determined, allowing periodic analysis of the factual situation as compared to the initial state recorded at the start of the project and monitoring has started in the following protected areas: ROSCI 0120 Mount Tâmpa, ROSCI 0207 Postăvaru, ROSCI 0195 Pietra Mare, ROSCI 0013 Bucegi, ROSCI 0038 Ciucaș.

The monitored indicators are:

- The degree of information and acceptance by the stakeholders of the action plan for the conservation of brown bear - C1
- Decrease of number of problem bears - action C2 and C3
- Reducing the number of human-bear conflicts - C8 and C6
- Degree of GIS database use – G7
- Improvement of trophic offer in habitats near conflict zones - C5, C4

Within the action, 5 main indicators were monitored, based on 28 quantifiable data categories, on the basis of which data could be obtained to determine the conservation status of the brown bear population at the level of the 5 protected natural areas within the project implementation area.

Taking into account the aspects monitored and presented in the last report, the impact of the project activities on the conservation status of the bear population is positive and helps maintain the conservation status of the brown bear population in the study area.

As a result of the conservation status of brown bear populations, at the protected area level, the overall conservation status of the brown bear species within the 5 protected natural areas is favorable.

In the framework of Action D2, the concrete areas to be monitored constantly were established, the parameters of the stakeholders attitude indicators in the project implementation area have been improved, the project reference actions to be followed for quantification of indicators were established. On the basis of the monitoring sheet, the established indicators were monitored. The Impact Monitoring Fact Sheet follows the concrete actions made in the Type C activities, determining the influence they have on the beneficiaries of the action and their attitude and involvement. Annual monitoring reports were made.

Action D3 has been completed. At the start of the project (at the end of 2014, until april 2015) 12 indicators were evaluated, the result of the evaluation is recorded in the Evaluation Report of the Brown Bear Conservation Initial Status in the Project Area, by establishing the starting indicators for Type C actions. (*Anex D.3.1. Deliverable report sent with Inception Report*)

The evaluation of the indicators took into account the period between 15.09.2013- 14.09.2014, as the existing data centralized to the level of the central public authority did not allow access to the conflict situations in the last part of 2014 and there was need for data on all four seasons, to capture seasonal differences in the number of conflicts.

Type E activities continued with education and information activities as follows:

Under Action E1 there were organized information events about the actions of the project for each target group and various information sessions regarding the bear and its associated issues (species conservation actions, conflict reduction methods). On the occasion of these events, the

project was presented and disseminated informative and promotional materials: promotional brochures, t-shirts, caps, posters, flyers, stickers and customized pens.

After consulting stakeholders and consider their additions, a draft modified version of the "Technical guideline for bear capture and relocation", was sent to: Ministry of Environment, Romanian Academy - Commission for the Protection of Natural Monuments.

The project was promoted by the project team at each event where they were present and on all occasions in implementing concrete actions. In addition to official presentations, informative and promotional materials, addressing the target groups was different according to the interests of each group regarding different matters of the bear species. So:

The Target Group I (made up of specialists working in the fields of fauna, forestry, biology, ecology, etc.) was mainly communicated with during the working meetings for the making of the action plan and at every event attended by members of the project team. The exchange of information was also done in individual meetings or by email. The subject of communications with this group mainly focused on applicable management measures to address the environmental, ethological, conservative, social and economic needs of the bear species and the human population.

The target group II (made up of staff of the institutions whose activity interferes with the bear species: managers of hunting funds, forestry administrations, environmental protection agencies, mayors, community police, sanitation companies, etc.) was communicated with during the meetings organized by the team of the project and on other meetings organized by various institutions regarding human-bear conflicting situations. Many representatives of the mentioned institutions from different localities also participated in many field actions. The subject of communication with this group has focused both on methods of managing existing and potential conflicts between human and bear, as well as on conflict prevention methods. Since contacts have been established with representatives of these institutions, they are still working in a team to find solutions in matters of human-bear coexistence.

With Target Group III (made up of people who often have conflicts with the bear, namely: shepherds, beekeepers, farmers) the communication was carried out both at an organized meeting, but more by field agents on the occasion of: patrols in areas frequented by bears, data collection, installation of protection systems. During these meetings, it was possible to discuss the nature of the conflicts, the attitudes generated, prevention methods and examples of good practices for conflict reduction.

In 2017, members of the project team participated in the LIFE events organized on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the LIFE program, where the project and some of its concrete actions were presented, and an exchange of experience between projects was carried out.

Under Action E2 the online communication channels (website, youtube, facebook) are regularly monitored and updated. It seeks to inform and raise awareness among stakeholders, especially the general public. In order to disseminate actions and results, the information is centralized and adapted to be transformed into synthesized and clear content. We discussed with partners about integrating into their website of a link to the website of the project.

Under E3, the action to install the 12 project information panels has been completed and a map has been made with their location. The flyers with the project data were distributed to the meetings and actions of the various project activities.

Under Action E4, all the proposed information materials, as well as the 23 information boards on the existence of bear, conservation actions and methods of conflict reduction, have been produced. The panels were customized for each site of the 5 Natura 2000 sites in the project implementation

area. They were located where there is a risk of human-bear conflict and access ways to enter Natura 2000 sites in the project implementation area. The map was created with the panels location.

In the first 3 years of the project, several meetings were held for different stakeholders and the project team participated in several events aimed at promoting bear conservation actions and conflict-reduction methods. Informative and promotional materials were offered at the meetings. In areas frequented by bears, dissemination actions were carried out in schools and links have been established to develop further educational materials on the bear for pupils.

In the last year, information actions were fewer, as there were changes and sensitivities in public opinion. In areas where the bears have created conflicting situations, the population has developed a hard-to-reach attitude. Further successful communication actions require a strategic reorganization of the informational content.

In march and may 2018, the INCDS "Marin Drăcea" headquarters, the Braşov resort, hosted several actions, with pupils, with the purpose of dissemination and awareness on bear general information and actions carried out within the project and elements of ecological education, such as: preventing human-bear conflicts and behavioral tips when meeting the bear.

Under Action E5, the information campaign aimed at local communities and pupils in the project area, which aims at raising awareness among the general public about the importance of the bear in the context of the Natura 2000 network, continued. Members of the project team participated in various events in which they provided informative materials and promotional and information on Natura 2000 sites (their importance and rules of behavior within protected areas).

F-type actions

Action F1. At the beginning of the project, project management and collaborations between partners have gone well, but since 2016, a difficult administrative collaboration has begun with the leadership of the Ministry of the Environment, which has made difficult the circuit of administrative documents. Following successive changes in the leadership of the Ministry of Environment, since spring 2018, collaboration began to work with the new leadership, so that the ministry's involvement in the project was felt, especially in finalizing the Action Plan for the Conservation of the Brown Bear Population in Romania. The project management was carried out in good conditions at the headquarters of the coordinating beneficiary I.N.C.D.S „Marin Drăcea”, Brasov Resort. Here is the entire project management team, along with a part of the implementation team, there are no changes in the Coordinator, but personnel replacements were made within the beneficiaries OSR, PNB and KRT.

Action F2. During this reporting period, part of the members of the LIFE FOR BEAR team participated in the International Conferences on Bear Management and Research (IBA 2016, 24 Edition, Anchorage, Alaska and IBA 2017, 25 Edition, Quito, Ecuador) and in an exchange of experience with the researchers at The Center for Large Landscape Conservation in Bozeman, Montana, where the team presented the following themes based on the LIFE FOR BEAR project: "*Specific features of Brown bear immobilization in Romania using general anesthetics and sedatives*" respectively "*The influence of urban development on the ecology and ethology of brown bear in the Romanian Carpathians*". (2016).

At the IBA 2016 conference, the LIFE FOR BEAR project implementation team proposed 4 presentations, accepted in the Conference, covering various topics, including sections on species management, diet, behavior, human-bear conflict, genetics, as follows:

- *Specific features regarding brown bear immobilization in Romania using general anesthetics and sedatives* - George Sârbu, Vodă Flaviu, Gridan Alexandru – Management Section
- *The influence of urban development on the ecology and ethology of brown bear in the Carpathians*- Ramon Jurj, Ovidiu Ionescu, Ancuta Cotovelea, Georgeta Ionescu, Marius Popa, Giorgiana Mircea, Constantina Jurj - Human-Bear Conflict Section
- *Evaluation of the Brown Bear Diet, in Spring Mid Summer Period in Brasov-Prahova Valley Region*- Georgeta Ionescu, Claudiu Pașca, Ramon Jurj, Mihai Fedorca, Cezar Spătaru - Feeding ecology and diet Section
- *Preliminary Results in Testing the Influence of Habituation on Genetic Structure of Brown Bears in Brasov-Prahova Valley Area* - Cotovelea/Fedorca Ancuța, Ovidiu Ionescu, Georgeta Ionescu, Ramon Jurj, Marius Popa – Genetics Section

At the IBA 2017 conference, the project team found other funding sources to take part in the 25th International Conference on Bear Research & Management in Quito, applying successfully to national competitions where the team presented the following:

- *Habitat suitability and bear population management in Carpathians* Authors: Georgeta IONESCU; Ramon JURJ; Marius POPA; Claudiu PAȘCA; Cezar SPATARU; Ancuta FEDORCA; Mihai FEDORCA; Alexandru GRIDAN; Ioana NEGREA; Ovidiu IONESCU.
- *Case study on the use of natural and anthropogenic habitats of bear specimens in Romania*, Authors: Ramon JURJ; Simon DIETER; Ovidiu IONESCU; Georgeta IONESCU; Marius POPA; George SARBU; Ancuta FEDORCA; Alexandru GRIDAN; Flaviu VODA.
- *Designing ecological corridors network for brown bears in Romania*: Authors: Ancuta Fedorca, Mihai Daniel Niță, Ovidiu Ionescu, Georgeta Ionescu, Mihai Fedorca, Marius Popa, Ramon Jurj.

Also from other sources of funding, GIS expert Marius Popa will take part in IBA 2018, the LIFE WITH BEARS-26th International Conference on Bear Research & Management in Slovenia-Ljubljana from 16-21 September 2018, with great importance, being organized by the project's collaborators - Djuro Huber (Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Zagreb), LIFE DINALP BEAR - LIFE 13NAT/SI/000550 - Population level management and conservation of brown bears (*Ursus arctos*) in the Northern Dinaric Mountains and the Alps.

Collaboration with the LIFE Connect Carpathians project, the only ongoing LIFE project in Romania, targeting the *Ursus arctos* species, has been a continuous process, so, common ways have been found to develop an action plan for the conservation of the bear population, including measures applied at national, regional and local level.

Project manager Jurj Ramon, field engineer Voda Flaviu and sociologist Jurj Constantina (project LIFE FOR BEAR) and Iain Trewby, project manager (Fauna & Flora International) and technical manager Moș Radu and field project team LIFE Connect Carpathians) took part in activities on how to make more efficient fieldwork and the interaction with stakeholders.

Action F5. Monitoring the progress of the project is carried out and the project implementation plan is updated whenever needed.

**Written
Ramon JURJ – Manager project**