

THE GREENWEB STATEMENT ¹

On Harmonization of Green with Grey Infrastructure in South Eastern Europe

The GreenWeb is an open interdisciplinary European Platform² of experts and organizations of various fields focusing to cooperate and work on ecology and transportation in SE Europe.

THE AIM

The aim of the GreenWeb Platform is to secure ecological connectivity ensuring the coherence and ecological functionality of areas of high biodiversity value while developing linear transportation infrastructures at national and international levels in SE Europe.

Green and Grey demands: Two opposite trends

While growing transportation networks, included in Grey Infrastructure, are necessary to meet economical and societal needs, Green Infrastructure is considered as fundamental natural capital providing important ecosystem services for human wellbeing and biodiversity.

The challenge

These demands can be contradicted when the development of Grey Infrastructure intersects Green Infrastructure, increasing the level of fragmentation of natural ecosystems.

Fragmentation is one of the biggest threats to biodiversity, therefore to ensure ecological connectivity, it is important to understand the value of significant natural zones and ecological corridors as functional Green Infrastructure, when planning, building and operationalizing linear transportation infrastructure.

The solution

Ongoing economic development in the South-Eastern European countries, especially the growth of linear transportation infrastructure, generates additional pressure on nature and demands urgent actions to ensure that minimum possible negative impacts on the environment are achieved.

For Grey and Green infrastructures coexistence, proactive engagement and dialogue with all stakeholders is required in order to find the best solutions to meet the objectives of EU policies for economic development, biodiversity conservation and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

By encouraging international collaboration in policy, research and practice, we will enhance the exchange of knowledge and develop harmonized standards and procedures for all actors involved.

THE MESSAGE TO BE SPREAD

The harmonization of “Grey” and “Green” Infrastructure in a dynamic world such as South-East Europe is of tremendous importance towards conserving the earth's living environment for future generations and for achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES GreenWeb will work towards:

1. Promoting environmental sustainability at policy level:
 - ✓ To promote the political will and support decision making for an environmental sustainable policy in Grey Infrastructure sectors with emphasis on transportation.
2. Supporting a Strategic approach:
 - ✓ To establish basic principles for guiding the overall sustainable approach from outlining necessary actions at national central governance and policy levels to concrete measures in practice at the local regional level.
 - ✓ To facilitate active involvement of politicians, specialists and stakeholders through the development of a network of specialists of interdisciplinary expertise supporting a strategic science-policy dialogue.
3. Promoting integrated planning:
 - ✓ To promote and apply integrated planning of transportation projects at the ecosystem and landscape level, supporting multidisciplinary cooperation of specialists from the entire spectrum of transportation and ecology sectors towards establishing of an environmental supervisory body to advise on the design, construction and operationalization of linear transportation projects.
4. Improving scientific knowledge:
 - ✓ To support the research and the production of scientific knowledge.
 - ✓ To create a Green & Grey infrastructure repository where methodological tools, policy recommendations and background information is compiled including existing databases and best use/practice examples of available resources and scientific approaches, which is readily available and accessible.
5. Optimizing and adapting technical solutions:
 - ✓ To use scientific knowledge and applied research toward to act proactively to produce best practice solutions for, and effective management of, linear transportation infrastructure projects in order to maintain, restore and enhance connectivity at the landscape level.
 - ✓ To support exchange of best practices and information in the field through sharing examples of good practices and learning lessons from less successful approaches, to apply optimal and appropriately adapted technical solutions.
6. Communication and dissemination:
 - ✓ To advance and integrate our understanding of the impacts of linear transportation infrastructure upon biodiversity and ecosystem services
 - ✓ To facilitate effective communication and awareness rising of coexistence of Grey and Green Infrastructures in South East Europe.
7. Raising funds to support specific and concrete action:
 - ✓ To facilitate effective cooperation and planning towards identifying fundraising opportunities and proposal development, to support the activities of the Platform to achieve its goals.

More about GreenWeb Platform at:

www.green-web.eu

Contact us by e-mail at:

contact@green-web.eu

Register as a member of the Platform at:

<http://green-web.eu/registration-form/>

Note 1: The statement and general objectives are results of the International Workshop held in Faget, Romania, between 25-27th October 2017, in the framework of the the SEE grants, the RO02 Romanian-Norwegian bilateral funds.

Note 2: The GreenWeb Platform was initiated by a group of Romanian and Greek organizations, with the support of IENE:



Zarand Association (AZ) is a key organization promoting the importance of landscape connectivity, harmonization's of grey and green infrastructure in Romania. AZ members were the first to pioneer the need to safeguard the last viable ecological corridor between the Western and Southern Carpathians as an example of good practice for Romania, as a result, facilitated by AZ members, in 2010 a Statement of Intent has been signed by a number of Romanian and International relevant authorities and organizations stating their support to maintain the functionality of the corridor. AZ experts were responsible for a study commissioned by the Ministry of Environment aiming to identify new Natura 2000 sites that will ensure coherence of the network – as a result, in 2011, the first 12 Natura 2000 sites were designated in Romania with the main aim of ensuring connectivity at regional level. AZ was the lead organization to tackle the Lugoj-Deva motorway by involving national stakeholders, national and international experts and EC in finding an alternative solution to the original project which would have been a barrier for wildlife movement. As a result, the Lugoj-Deva Motorway is the first project in Romania to incorporate mitigation solutions and a potential case-study for the region. AZ was / is partner/contractor in a number of multi-partners / international projects related with connectivity and land management: LIFE Connect Carpathians project aiming to develop regional action plans for bear and wolf addressing connectivity as a particular issue, COREHABS, TRANSGREEN. AZ experts participated in development of guidelines for avoiding fragmentation by transport sector. Since 2014, as custodian of a Natura 2000 site within an ecological corridor, AZ is developing projects and activities related with conservation, sustainable development, capacity building and education (www.zarand.org).



WWF Danube Carpathian Programme Romania (WWF RO). WWF RO is actively dealing with safeguarding the ecological connectivity and sustainable development of transport infrastructure projects since 2010 both at the national and international (Carpathian Ecoregion) levels (www.wwf.ro). In Romania, the main projects and activities related to these topics were mainly focused in Maramures (transboundary area between Romania and Ukraine), the critical ecological corridor between the Western and Southern Carpathians in Romania together with AZ, South-Western Carpathians in Romania, Hartibaciului Plateau Area. As for the international level, WWF RO has been involved in implementing several ecological connectivity related projects in the Carpathian Ecoregion, some of them to support the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and its relevant protocols (e.g. Protected Areas for a Living Planet, Bioregio). WWF RO is currently co-managing the international TransGREEN project focusing on fostering the sustainable development of the infrastructure transport projects in the Carpathian Ecoregion.



Established in 1994, **Egnatia Odos SA (EO SA)** is a dynamic, innovative and reputable organization, responsible for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of one of the most complex and ambitious infrastructure projects in Greece, which consists of the Egnatia Motorway and its vertical axes (www.egnatia.eu). **EO SA** has also been the project manager for programmes concerning the monitoring of the status of big mammals along the motorway, of a total cost of more than €1m. EO SA has 220 highly qualified professionals and an Environment Department with long experience in environmental projects.



ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΕΙΟ
ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ
ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ

The Department of Ecology (DoE), School of Biology at Aristotle University (AUTH), Greece. The DoE is one of the most active research departments in the field of biodiversity protection in Greece, with particular strengths on structure, dynamics, management and conservation of ecosystems and social issues of nature protection (www.bio.auth.gr). Main research areas include: Structure and function of protected areas and ecological management; Human dimension of conservation; Operation and improvement of the European network NATURA 2000; Societal perceptions of environmental issues; Public awareness as applied in nature conservation. DoE has a long experience in many European and national research projects.



UNIVERSITATEA
BABEŞ-BOLYAI

The Babeş-Bolyai University, commonly known after its abbreviation, **UBB**, is a public university in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. With more than 41,000 students in 2015, it is the largest university in the country (www.ubbcluj.ro/en). The Babeş-Bolyai University offers study programmes in Romanian, Hungarian, German, English, and French. It is one of the five members of the Universitaria Consortium (the group of elite Romanian universities). UBB is affiliated, inter alia, to the International Association of Universities, the Santander Group, the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie and the European University Association. Likewise, UBB signed the Magna Charta Universitatum and concluded partnerships with 210 universities in 50 countries, and it is widely considered as one of the most prestigious in Eastern Europe.



IENE
Infra Eco Network Europe

With the support of:

IENE – Infra Eco Network Europe, is a network of experts working with various aspects of transportation, infrastructure and ecology (www.iene.info). The network was initiated in 1996 to provide an independent, international and interdisciplinary arena for the exchange and development of expert knowledge – and with the aim to promote a safe and ecologically sustainable pan-European transport infrastructure. IENE arranges international conferences, workshops and symposia, initiates collaboration projects and helps answering questions that require a joint international expertise.