

Project code:
04151113



2014

Monitoring Important Bird Areas in Moldova to Improve Conservation Management



Authors: Vitalie AJDER, Igor ROȘCA, Vasili CRUDU, Lucian Eugen BOLBOACĂ, Viorel POCORA, Larisa BOGDEA, Natalia VASIŁAȘCU, Laurențiu PETRENCU, Lucian FASOLĂ, Constantin ION, Nicolai CRUDU, Constantin SANDU, Ion GROSU, Vlad CIOFLEC, Emanuel Ștefan BALTAG

iba.moldova@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/IBAMoldova>

<http://www.iba-moldova.com/>

Foreword

Important Bird Areas are designated to outline sites which are highly important for bird species conservation. These sites are evaluated by BirdLife International together with national NGO's or other specialists.

In the Republic of Moldova are 12 Important Bird Areas, but five of them do not have the species list and for others the list is incomplete. The numbers of birds which are in these areas are not available for none of them. The lack of information about Important Bird Areas and other sites with high bird concentrations is preventing the effective conservation (i.e. protection and management) of these key sites. Also, this is hampering the work to inform the wider public and enthuse them.

The present project will contribute to the Important Bird Areas network developing in Eastern Europe, contributing to EMERALD Network establishment. During the project we reevaluated the Important Bird Area Network from the Republic of Moldova, but also we identified new sites which are suitable to protect large bird populations. A good development of these sites will facilitate the establishment of this Pan-European Ecological Network in our country.

Vitalie AJDER, Igor ROȘCA, Vasile CRUDU, Lucian Eugen BOLBOACĂ, Viorel POCORA, Larisa BOGDEA, Natalia VASILĂȘCU, Laurențiu PETRENCU, Lucian FASOLĂ, Constantin ION, Nicolai CRUDU, Constantin SANDU, Ion GROSU, Vlad CIOFLEC, Emanuel Ștefan BALTAG (2014) Monitoring Important Bird Areas in Moldova to Improve Conservation Management – Final Report, Chișinău, Republic of Moldova.

Table of Content

Acknowledgements	3
Summary	4
Introduction	5
Project members	7
Aim and objectives	15
Methodology.....	16
Outputs and Results	18
Achievements and Impacts	20
Conclusion	22
Problems encountered and lessons learnt	23
In the future	25
Annex I.....	26
Annex II.....	32
Annex III.....	34
Annex IV	35
Annex V	37
Annex VI	38

Acknowledgements

Important Bird Areas Network from Republic of Moldova were designated for bird species conservation, thanks to the national researchers and BirdLife International efforts. These areas represent one of the first evidences for our national biodiversity importance.

Without the financial support of Conservation Leadership Programme and the important advices of his staff the project would not have had a real impact at national level. Their advices and the training for the project planning and implementation improved our knowledge in this field and reshaped our project in order to achieve a better collaboration with the local communities and to be more efficient in our actions.

During the project we received important advices from the Romanian Ornithological Society, Sistemis Group Association and researchers from “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi.

The project benefits from the volunteers involvement. We thank them very much for their efforts during the field studies, educational activities and the project reports writing.

Summary

Important Bird Areas are sites which provide a conservation strategy for the conservation of bird species. During the present project we updated the informations for the Important Bird Areas from the Republic of Moldova, but also we prepared the proposals for new Important Bird Areas.

During 01.05.2013 – 25.04.2014 we have collected information monthly from all 12 Important Bird Areas from the Republic of Moldova, but also from other areas with high birds concentration that we found them suitable to be designated as new Important Bird Areas. We have conducted surveys in 15 new sites that are not Important Bird Areas and we select three of them which are suitable to be designated. The field surveys were conducted each month for one year of study.

We informed the local population which lives near the Important Bird Areas about the importance of these sites. In order to increase the visibility of the project, we have held presentations at Faculties of Biology from two different Universities and we organized a photo exhibition in the National Museum of Natural History and Ethnography from Chişinău. Due to our efforts we were invited to be part of the working group of the National Strategy and Action Plan regarding Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2014–2020.

Introduction

The Republic of Moldova is a small country at the eastern border of the European Union, where the environmental issues are not in the first line of the governmental development. Our biodiversity is still at a high level due to the widespread of the traditional agricultural practices and a good representativity of the natural and semi-natural habitats. The country covers an area of 33 843 km² in a hilly region of the Eastern Europe. Beside the importance of those species which have found here suitable places for breeding, our country is crossed by two main migration routes: Prut Vally and Nistru Valey. In these areas we can identify important sites for bird migration (stop over sites). Also, during winter we can find lakes or river sectors which get frozen quite late or never freeze.

In 2000, BirdLife International designated 12 Important Bird Areas in the Republic of Moldova using data collected by local ornithologists. The aim of these sites is to protect the areas with large population of bird species. The Important Bird Area Network does not have a legal protection according to the national and international laws but, these sites are used to be designated as Natura 2000 Special Protected Areas or Emerald Sites. Also, these sites are promoted by BirdLife International as areas with a high interest for conservation.

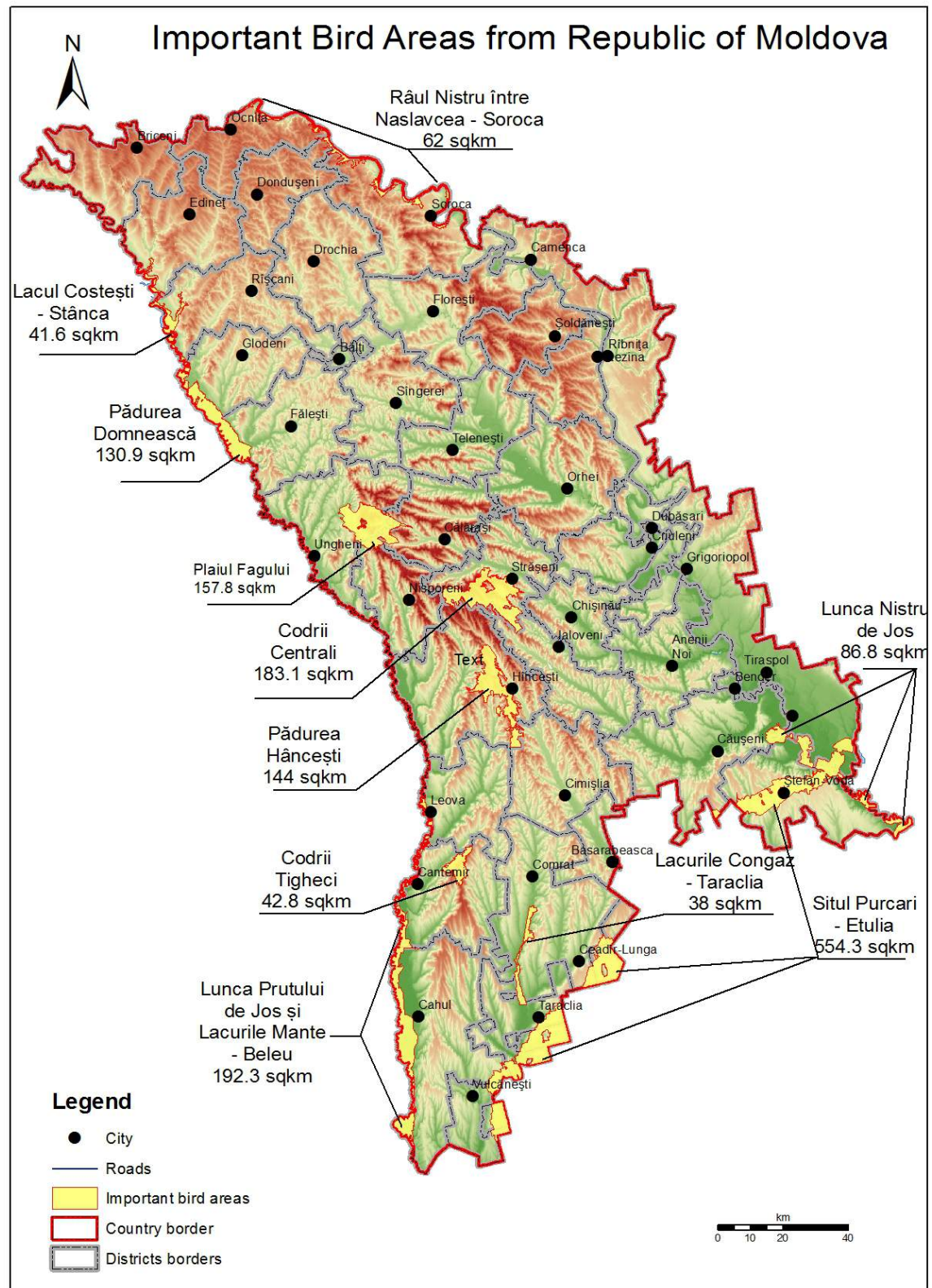
During the Important Bird Areas designation in the Republic of Moldova, the national data regarding bird species distribution and populations was very poor. Many of these sites were established without a complete bird species and habitat lists. Even if many years have passed since the designation (more than 14 years), until now, the Important Bird Areas from the Republic of Moldova were not reevaluated. The lack of data made us to cover urgently these sites, in order to keep an updated information system for the Important Bird Area Network.

Without comprehensive data collected in the field it is impossible to come up with an efficient plan for conservation of bird species. But this plan should include all the important sites for certain species which live in a specific area. If some important areas for birds nesting, wintering and migration remain unprotected, these areas could disappear in time.

The aim of the project is to reevaluate the Important Bird Areas which were designated in 2000, in order to achieve data on species composition and habitat structure, but also to identify new important sites which require protection with a good strategy for bird species conservation. The evaluation of Important Bird Areas will be based on studies, using monitoring protocols

specially designated for certain bird species. Also, the new sites which will be proposed as Important Bird Areas will be subject of the same evaluation. The new sites will be submitted to BirdLife International to be evaluated by an independent commission made up of specialists.

This project is the first one which covers the entire Important Bird Area Network from the Republic of Moldova.



Project members

The project activities were conducted by seven researchers and 8 volunteers. In the following pages we will provide a brief presentation for each team member.

Name: Vitalie AJDER

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Republic of Moldova, Romanian

Age: 29

Education with highest level completed: Master

When acquired and previous education experience: Bachelor in Biology: Ecology and Environment Protection - 2008 Master in Biology - 2010

Current Employer: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi, Laboratory of Natural and anthropic ecosystem, Institute of Ecology and Geography of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova, Chisinau.

Current Job Title: Researcher

Team Role: field activity, educational activities, database records, team coordinator

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: For this project I will take part mostly on surveys and database records. I have 3 years of experience on field activities and 1 year on database administration.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: This project gives me the possibility to learn more about birds and how they interact with anthropogenic action and to specialize in this field. I have learned to organize and analyse data obtained from the field work and to formulate conclusions. Also through this project I improved my knowledge about the Important Bird Areas network and I got more experience on birds distribution and habitat management.

Name: Igor ROȘCA

Position: GIS expert

Nationality: Republic of Moldova, Romanian

Age: 33

Education with highest level completed: Master

When acquired and previous education experience: Bachelor in Geography - 2007, Master in Geography - 2009

Current Employer: ÎM Trimetrica SRL

Current Job Title: GIS Industry Manager

Team Role: GIS expert

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: : I work with GIS softwares for the data on biodiversity and human impact analysis. My experience helped us to analyse the data in GIS and to design the IBA limits.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: Due to this project I got more experience in multidisciplinary analysis and especially in integrating protected species measures in environmental risks assessment. I have learned to organize and analyse the data obtained from field work and to formulate conclusions.

Name: Vasile CRUDU

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Republic of Moldova

Age: 24

Education with highest level completed: Master

When acquired and previous education experience: Bachelor in Biology - 2011, Master in Biology - 2013

Current Employer: Ornithology Laboratory, Moldavian Academy of Science

Current Job Title: researcher

Team Role: ornithologist, field studies, database records, educational activities.

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: I have experience in birds of prey studies from the Republic of Moldova.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: I graduated the Master school studies with the dissertation on Moldavian Birds of Prey. This project helped me in my Master school thesis.

Name: Lucian-Eugen BOLBOACĂ

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Romanian

Age: 28

Education with highest level completed: Ph.D.

When acquired and previous education experience: Ph.D. in Ornithology - 2013

Current Employer: „Vasile Goldiș” West University of Arad

Current Job Title: researcher

Team Role: ornithologist, field studies and meetings with the stakeholders, database records.

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: I have a long experience in bird studies and protected areas management. I was involved in 5 monitoring projects and in Natura 2000 species surveys. I have 3 years of experience on field activities and 1 year on database administration.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: Through this project I have gained more experience on bird species and their relations with habitats management in areas with a traditional management. Beside this, I have managed to update my information and collect good data on owls for this country.

Name: Viorel POCORA

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Romanian

Age: 37

Education with highest level completed: Ph.D.

When acquired and previous education experience: Ph.D. in Ornithology - 2010

Current Employer: Freelancer

Current Job Title: Freelancer

Team Role: ornithologist, field studies and meetings with the stakeholders, database records.

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: I have a long experience in bird studies and protected areas management. I was involved in many monitoring projects and in Natura 2000 species surveys.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: My Ph.D. studies are on forest birds. This experience has helped me to understand better the relations between birds distribution and different management types.

Name: Larisa BOGDEA

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Republic of Moldova

Age: 43

Education with highest level completed: Ph.D.

When acquired and previous education experience: PhD in Ornithology - 2009

Current Employer: Ornithology Laboratory, Moldavian Academy of Science

Current Job Title: researcher

Team Role: ornithologist, field studies and meetings with the environment authorities, educational activities.

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: For this project I will take part mostly on surveys and educational activities. I have experience in field ornithology and in protected area network management due to my attending on international meetings for different working groups.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: This project helped me to understand better the interactions between our protected areas and governmental authorities which should implement the conservation measures.

Name: Natalia VASILĂȘCU

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Romanian

Age: 34

Education with highest level completed: Ph.D.

When acquired and previous education experience: PhD in Ornithology - 2007

Current Employer: Ornithology Laboratory, Moldavian Academy of Science

Current Job Title: researcher

Team Role: field activity, educational activities.

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project:: I have experience on bird studies and on anthropogenic impact on their populations.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: Through this project I have gained more experience on international networks for birds protection and on monitoring programs.

Volunteers:

Name: Laurențiu PETRENCU

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Romanian

Age:25

Education with highest level completed: Master

When acquired and previous education experience: Master in Biology - 2013

Current Employer: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi

Current Job Title: researcher

Team Role: field activity, educational activities, database records

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: For this project I took part mostly on surveys, database records and educational activities.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: Through this project I have gained more experience on birds species and their relations with habitats management in areas with a traditional management.

Name: Lucian FASOLĂ

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Romanian

Age: 36

Education with highest level completed: Bachelor

When acquired and previous education experience: Bachelor in Biology - 2012

Current Employer: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi

Current Job Title: researcher

Team Role: field activity, database records

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: For this project I will collect the data for the database, participate to the monthly surveys and to educational activities.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: This project gave me the possibility to learn more about birds, monitoring programs and to specialize in this field technique.

Name: Constantin ION

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Romanian

Age: 37

Education with highest level completed: Ph.D.

When acquired and previous education experience: PhD in Ornithology - 2007

Current Employer: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi

Current Job Title: researcher and lecturer

Team Role: field activity, educational activities, database records

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: For this project I will take part mostly on surveys and database records and due to the experience with the students I will work a lot in the education activities.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: This project has helped me to improve my knowledge on the birds from the Republic of Moldova and I have experimented different cultural aspects with the students and pupils from this country.

Name: Nicolai CRUDU

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Republic of Moldova

Age: 22

Education with highest level completed: High School

When acquired and previous education experience: High School - 2011

Current Employer: Ornithology Laboratory, Moldavian Academy of Science

Current Job Title: researcher

Team Role: field activity

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: For this project I took part mostly on surveys.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: This project gives me the possibility to learn more about birds, monitoring programs and to specialize in this field technique.

Name: Constantin SANDU

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Republic of Moldova

Age: 22

Education with highest level completed: Bachelor

When acquired and previous education experience: Bachelor in Biology - 2013

Current Employer: Ornithology Laboratory, Moldavian Academy of Science

Current Job Title: researcher

Team Role: field activity

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: For this project I took part mostly on surveys.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: This project gives me the possibility to learn more about birds, monitoring programs and to specialize in this field technique.

Name: Ion GROSU

Position: WildLife Photographer

Nationality: Republic of Moldova

Age: 33

Education with highest level completed: Master

When acquired and previous education experience: Master in philosophy - 2006

Current Employer: Freelancer

Current Job Title: Freelancer

Team Role: field activity

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: For this project I took part mostly on surveys and made photos of the sites and

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: This project gives me the possibility to learn more about birds and on monitoring programs and to specialize in this field technique.

Name: Vlad CIOFLEC

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Romanian

Age: 32

Education with highest level completed: Master in biology

When acquired and previous education experience: Master in Biology - 2005

Current Employer: Romania Ornithological Society Member

Current Job Title: Freelancer

Team Role: field activity, educational activities

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: For this project I took part mostly on surveys.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: This project gave me the possibility to learn more about birds, monitoring programs and to specialize in this field technique.

Name: Emanuel Ștefan BALTAG

Position: Biologist

Nationality: Romanian

Age: 28

Education with highest level completed: Ph.D.

When acquired and previous education experience: Ph.D. - 2013

Current Employer: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi

Current Job Title: researcher

Team Role: field activity, monitoring protocols, database records

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project: For this project I took part mostly on surveys and database records, but also in monitoring protocols design. I have 11 years of experience on field activities and 3 year on database administration.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project: This project gave me the possibility to learn more about bird species from the Republic of Moldova and how they interact with anthropogenic actions. During this project I learned about the Republic of Moldova Important Bird Areas and about the conservation strategy of this sites.

Aim and objectives

The aim of the project is to identify the bird species and populations from the designated Important Bird Areas from the Republic of Moldova and to identify new sites.

The objectives are:

1: Updating the information for Important Bird Areas from the Republic of Moldova.

We have developed a survey system using data forms regarding studied species, habitats and threats. We calculated populations' size for each Important Bird Areas, reevaluate and trace limits according to the BirdLife International recommendations.

2: Identification of new Important Bird Areas and preparing the proposal.

We evaluated our National Protected Areas, areas which are highlighted in The Atlas of the Breeding Birds of the Republic of Moldova and areas where we found high populations or important species in previous years. We conducted surveys in each area to collect new data which was analysed and we calculated the bird populations.

3: Public awareness and authorities lobby to ensure their protection.

We have promoted the Important Bird Areas protection through posters, leaflets and a photo exhibition. We established meetings with the environment authorities, stakeholders and students in order to make lobby for the sites protection and to establish a good volunteer system. We also conducted meetings with the romanian ornithologists for experience exchange.

Methodology

In order to gather good and objective information from the field we made and used data forms. They contained information regarding studied species, populations, habitat characteristics and threats which we identified or which had a high potential in the future. In order to collect good data for our study areas we have developed a survey system based on transects and stationary points. The survey transects and points were randomly selected using GIS software and they covered all the suitable habitats from each area. The surveys were done monthly, regarding of season, in good weather conditions. For bird observations we used Binoculars and telescopes. For counting woodpeckers we used playback method, which consists of broadcasting for a period of 5 minutes the calls and drumming of a species, followed by a period of 5 minutes of silent listening for the response of the actual bird. The stations were separated by a distance of 400 Meters. This protocol was used during spring, when woodpeckers are highly territorial.

For the Owls study we also used playback method (Bibby et al. 1992). We have selected 29 observation stations. The observation stations were situated at a distance of 1.5 km one from each other. For each station, we considered a buffer area of 750 m radius from the observation point in which birds can be acoustically detected. At each observation station, we played specific sounds of owl species for a period of 2 minutes (for each species), followed by a period of 5 minutes in which we waited for response in silence from the target species. We appreciated the distance and direction of owl response, and we mapped the location. The counting were conducted during December 2013. The playback counting were conducted in good weather conditions, in nights without wind or precipitations, starting half hour after sunset. We also gather data regarding habitat conditions. We selected some observation stations outside of forests where there are suitable areas for Eagle Owl (*Bubo bubo*), with rocky slopes and karst landforms.

All the data gathered during the field studies was integrated in a SQL DataBase using PostgreSQL software. The GPS points and tracks were included using PostGIS plugin.

Using this database we calculated populations' size for each currently declared Important Bird Area and we reevaluated each limit according to the BirdLife International recommendations. We took into consideration not only the present data but also the information which is in the scientific literature, but no older than 5 years.

Our observations were conducted also in other areas with high biodiversity levels. Beside the National Protected Areas we have developed surveys in other areas which are highlighted in The Atlas of the Breeding Birds of the Republic of Moldova (Munteanu et al. 2010) and also in areas where we found high number of birds or important species in previous studies. For some Important Bird Areas, which were designated in 2000, we increased the counting surface, including areas which are close to these sites.



Field activity – Owl monitoring in Nistru River Valley

Outputs and Results

The results of this project brought new and better information about the Important Bird Areas from the Republic of Moldova. We tried to design a better Important Bird Areas Network where we included all those areas which are suitable to be carefully protected. The second type of result was the local community educations which were informed about the Important Bird Areas protection and benefits. Also we tried to involve them in the Important Bird Areas protection. The third type of results is represented by the governmental lobby for the Important Bird Areas protection.

During the project field activity we conducted surveys in 12 Important Breeding Areas and in other 15 areas with a high level of biodiversity. Using these data we have builded the first complex and updated the database for the Republic of Moldova. Some of the Important Bird Areas were extended to include high bird diversity and good habitat areas. Thus, the name of these areas was changed: MD001 is now named Naslavcea – Soroca, MD003 Pădurea Domnească, MD006 Pădurea Codrii Centrali, MD009 Nistrul de Jos, MD011 Prutul Inferior, MD012 Bazinul Congaz – Taraclia. The name of these sites was changed because the area was significant modified (increased). During our study we came to the conclusion that 3 Important Bird Areas do not reach any qualification criteria. These are: MD007 Golful Goieni, MD008 Lacul Sălaș and MD010 Bazinul Cuciurgan. Out of the 15 new area, four qualify as Important Bird Areas. These are: Middle Prut River Basin that qualifies for C6 and B2 for *Picus canus* and *Alcedo atthis* but this one was united with Manta flood-plain-Beleu. Pădurea Hâncești, that qualifies under C6 criteria for *Dendrocopos medius*, *Ficedula parva* and *Ficedula albicollis* and B2 criteria for *Lullula arborea*. Codrii Tigheciilor, that qualifies under C6 criteria for *Dendrocopos syriacus*, *Lullula arborea*, *Ficedula parva* and *Ficedula albicollis* and Purcari – Etulia. The last site qualifies under C1 criteria for *Falco vespertinus*, *Falco cherrug* and *Coracias garrulus* and C6 criteria for *Circus aeruginosus*, *Lanius minor* and *Emberiza hortulana*. In order to start the protection of our Important Bird Areas we had over 24 meetings with environmental agencies and the local authorities. During these meetings we discussed about the problems which we recorded on the field.

Also, we conducted/participated at 3 meetings with students from the Faculty of Biology to draw new volunteers in ornithology (285 students). To grow the public awareness we prepared 2000 leaflets and 300 posters which were distribute to over 1800 persons. In order to grow the project visibility and to promote bird protection we organized one photo exhibition in the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History from Republic of Moldova, Chişinău (21 November - 21 December 2013) and we participated at the NGOs Festival for Youth in Iasi (6 - 7 December 2013). These two events were very popular because we had more than 5000 participants. Also, we participate at the IV-th National Jamboree with a presentation about the bird species from Moldova, at which we had 500 participants.

The project scientific results were presented in one article and three presentation at international conferences.

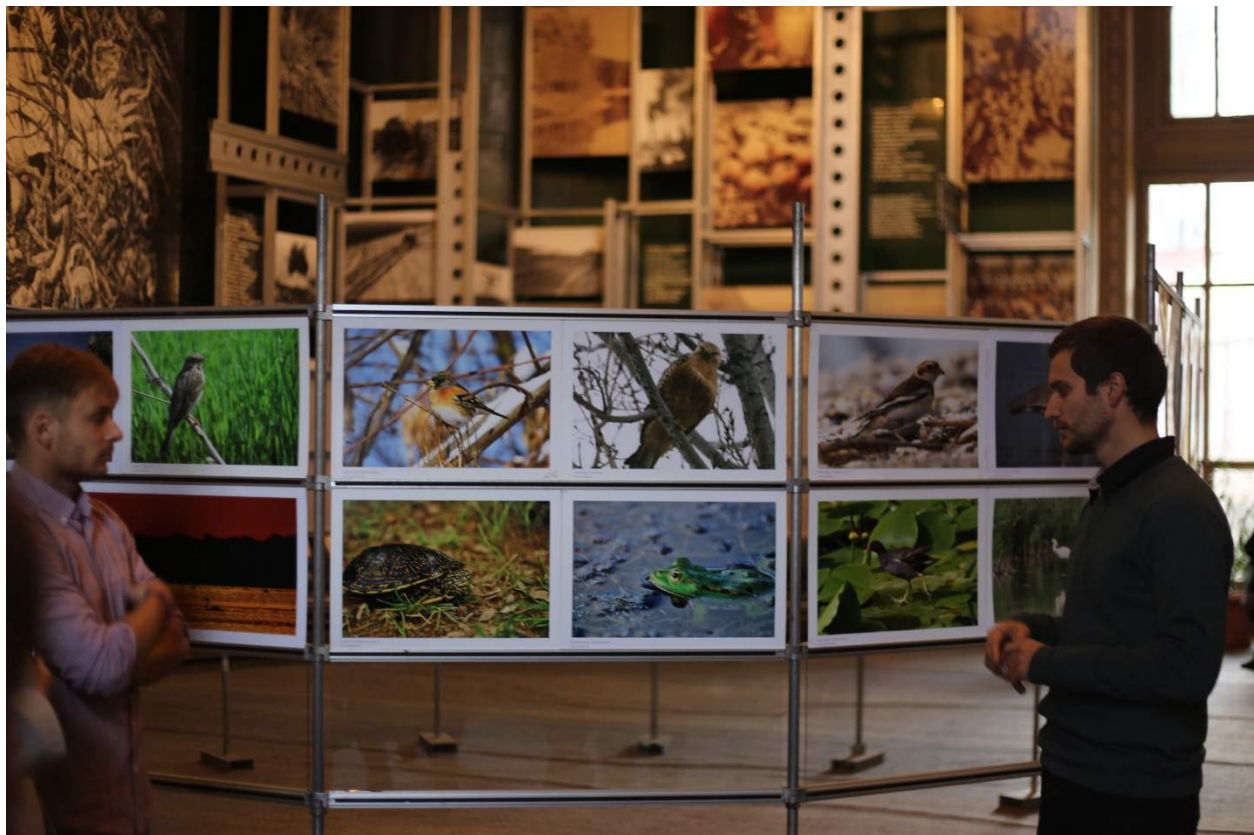


Photo exhibition in the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History
from Republic of Moldova, Chişinău

Achievements and Impacts

Analysing the achievements and impacts we see the project as a success for the Republic of Moldova bird species conservation. The project covered the revaluation of Important Bird Areas from the Republic of Moldova, the identifying new areas which will be proposed as Important Bird Areas to BirdLife International, but also a public awareness for these sites protection.

The entire project database will be offered to BirdLife International for future management of information but also for a better promoting of Important Bird Areas outside the Republic of Moldova.

The 12 Important Bird Areas which are reevaluated are: MD001 Otaci – Holoșnița (Bazinul Dubăsari), MD002 Costești – Stâncă, MD003 Balatina, MD004 Plaiul Fagului, MD005 Bazinul Ghidighici, MD006 Codrii, MD007 Golful Goieni, MD008 Lacul Sălaș, MD009 Copanca – Talmaz, MD010 Bazinul Cuciurgan, MD011 Manta flood-plain-Beleu, MD012 Bazinul Taraclia. During the project we conducted surveys in all these 12 areas in order to achieve important results which will clarify the status of the Important Bird Areas from the Republic of Moldova. However, 3 of the Important Bird Areas are not qualifying to keep this status. Beside these areas we surveyed other 15 sites. From these sites, only three are qualifying to be proposed as Important Bird Areas. The other ones, which are not qualified, are: Caplani - Carahasani areas, which was surveyed for *Falco vespertinus* and *Crex crex*. Volintiri Lakes was surveyed for *Coracias garrulus*, *Crex crex* and *Falco subbuteo*, for none of this was qualified. Dubasari Lake is not qualifying for criteria B1i. In the Forest Nature Reserve Șaptebani and nerest quarry was not confirmed breeding for *Bubo bubo*. The same situation was in the canion between Druță and Horodiște villages, in the Geological and Paleontological Monuments "Grotele Brânzeni", "Recifele Brânzeni" and "Defileul Fetești" and nerest landscape Reserves "Zăbriceni", "La Castel" and "Fetești" where even the habitat is suitable for breeding of *Bubo bubo* was not confirmed.

Due to our lobby, developed in this project we participated at the Preparatory Biogeographical Seminar for Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation and Ukraine - 6 and 7 November 2014, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. This meeting was very important for the Emerald network from the Republic of Moldova and we made lobby to include our Important Bird Areas in this network. Most of the Important Bird Areas will be included in the Emerald Network.

On 26 of November 2014 we participated at the Emerald Network ("Rețeaua Emerald") Round Table organized by the Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Moldova at the Faculty of Biology and Pedology - Moldova State University. We held a presentation named "Important Bird Area - part of Emerald Network".

A great impact of our project was on local communities. During the meetings and presentations in schools we presented them the importance of the Important Bird Area Network. For the majority, these information were new. The public awareness rising activities were completed by photos exhibitions, NGO's meetings and Youth Festival. At these events we had a high public participation, more than 7000 peoples attended to them.

The project scientific results were presented in one article and three presentation at international conferences. The first conference was the Global Multidisciplinary Academic Meeting (GAM2014), 27 – 30 March 2014, Praia, Cape Verde. For these conference we received a Conservation Leadership Programme Alumni Travel Grant. Also, we presented some results at the Annual Scientific Meeting of Faculty of Biology, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania, 24 – 26 October 2013 and participated with a presentation at the National Conference at the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History from Republic of Moldova. This publications reveals important data for bird populations from the Republic of Moldova.

Conclusion

Important Bird Area from the Republic of Moldova project investigate 27 areas with a high biodiversity values. Out of these, 12 Important Bird Area were designated in 2000 by BirdLife International. The other 15 areas were potentially suitable for Important Bird Area proposal. To be able to evaluate the bird population from the studied areas we conducted surveys in each month for each area. During the surveys we applied specific protocols in order to evaluate certain species or group of species for each studied area.

Analysing the field data we confirm the achievement of the Important Bird Areas criteria for 8 sites and unfortunately, we have to recommend the exclusion of 4 sites from this network. These four Important Bird Areas could not qualify under any criteria. Regarding the new surveyed sites we identified three new sites which meet the Important Bird Area criteria.

During the project we conducted educational awareness activities in schools, high schools, universities, museums and local communities. At these events we had a high participation with more than 7000 peoples. These activities had a great impact in local communities because for the overwhelming majority this was the first time when they meet with an environmental protection activity. Even most of them live near Important Bird Areas they did not know the importance of those areas.

We made lobby to include the Important Bird Areas under Emerald Network through two meetings with the government authorities. Also, we shared the project results through three international conferences and one scientific article.

Problems encountered and lessons learnt

The biggest challenge of this project was to make it visible for people and local authorities. To make the project and the problems regarding wildlife and habitats conservation more popular, we have organized on the 1st of April with the celebration of Birds Day a bird photo exhibition at the National Museum of History and Ethnography, Chişinău. At this event we invited one television channel and two local newspapers, students, and everyone who wanted to see nature through the eyes of the photographers. After this event we held presentations in schools, high schools and universities, gave leaflets and T-shirts as a prize for the most active during this events. All this efforts were made to increase the popularity of the project. Beside this, we made a web site www.iba-moldova.com and a Facebook page www.facebook.com/IBAMOLDOVA to help the people know more things about nature, birds and the Important Bird Areas from the Republic of Moldova and also the team behind this project which can help them in any problems regarding wildlife and habitat conservation.

Another problem was the bad road network from the Republic of Moldova. Due to this inconvenient we spend more days on the field in order to achieve all the project activities. For some areas we travelled great distances on foot to be able to reach those sites which sustain high number of bird species and individuals. But, for most of the field surveys we benefited of a great support from our colleagues from Romania. They came each month with their field cars and we could cover large areas of our study sites. There were some cases when we got stuck in mud and we had to call tractors to take us out. On the whole, we had great adventure during the field surveys even if sometimes we spend many hours in blizzard or snow storms, at low temperatures.

Other important challenges were the discussions with the Environmental Minister to promote the Important Bird Areas as Emerald Sites. Our relation with the Republic of Moldova authorities was hampered by the low field data on bird species. Because the publication on birds distribution and numbers are very old, it was quite difficult to find explain the big difference comparing with our data. If we consider that the old data on bird species and distribution were collected with more than 10 years ago, these differences became understandable. During the last meeting we declared our readiness to provide them with recent data and to help them with our expertise on bird distribution and numbers.

On the whole, the project was developed according to the proposed schedule and the expected results were achieved. All the encountered problems were solved in time and without affecting the project development.



Field problems



Field problems

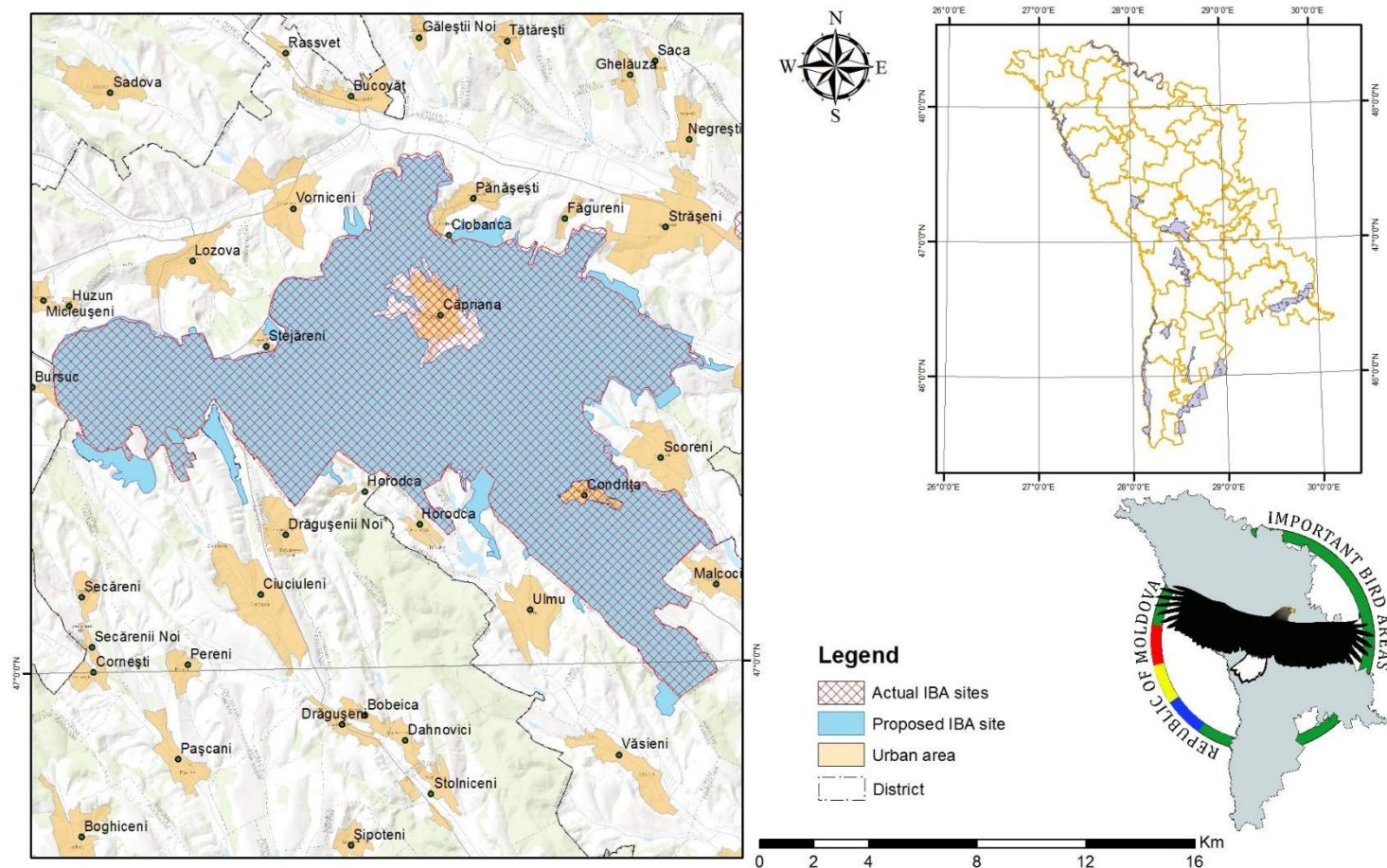
In the future

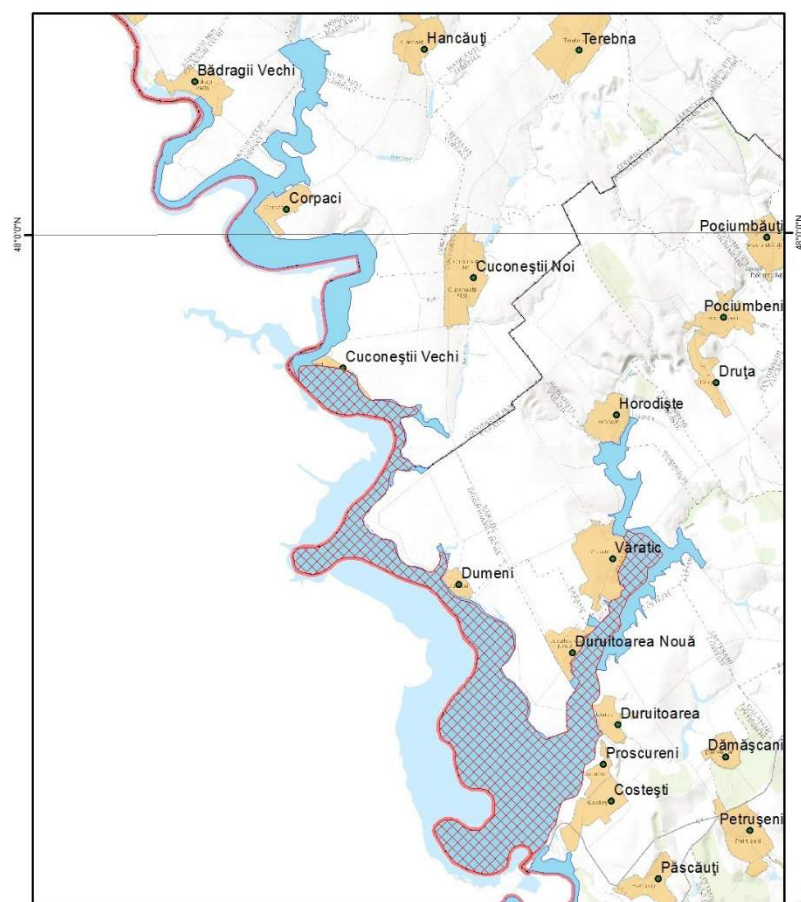
For the next period, we will continue the survey of the Important Bird Area from Republic of Moldova. We developed some monitoring schemes, especially for water birds and passerines (Common Bird Monitoring). Also, we were involved in some international monitoring schemes, as White stork nest monitoring, Midwinter Count and Red Breasted Goose Monitoring. For the next year we plan to develop another two monitoring schemes, one on woodpecker and another one on bird of prey. These monitoring programmes will contribute substantially to our bird species distribution and ecology knowledge.

Probably the most challenging objective which we assume during the present project is to find new birdwatchers and ornithologists and to involve them in the bird monitorings and studies. To achieve this, we start, in the present project, some meetings with students at the Faculty of Biology, but also during the education awareness activities we militate for this wonderful hobby, birdwatching.

Also, we will apply for other project in order to continue our activity in the Republic of Moldova and to support the further monitoring of the Important Bird Area Network. The present project give us confidence that we can ensure a suitable management for our high biodiversity areas.

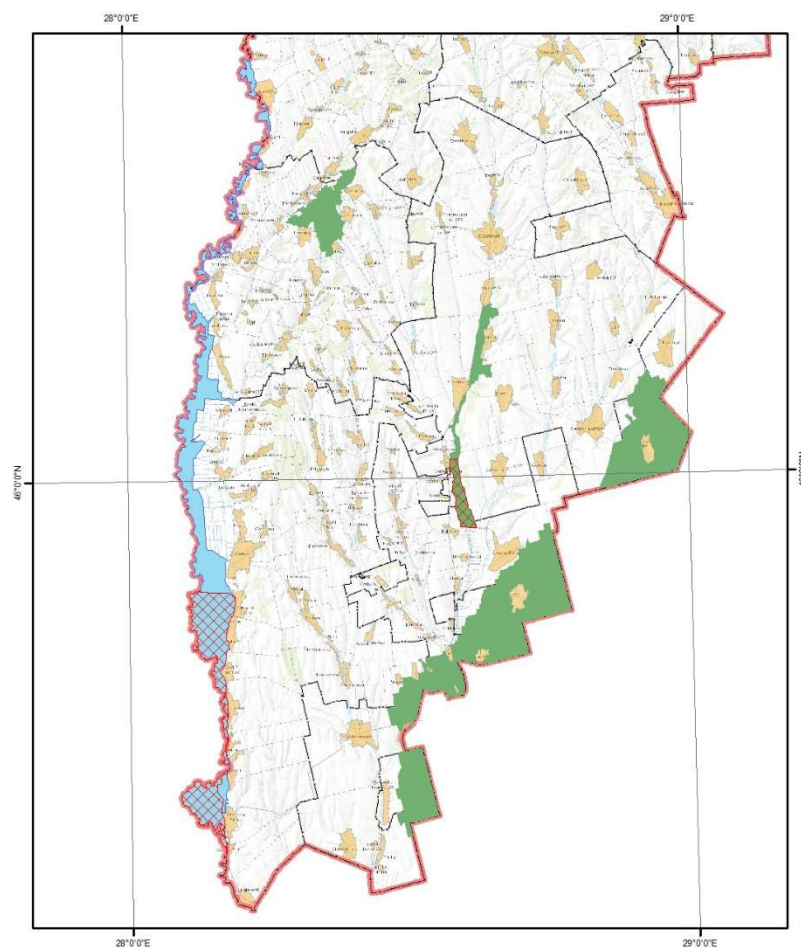
Important Bird Areas Maps





Legend

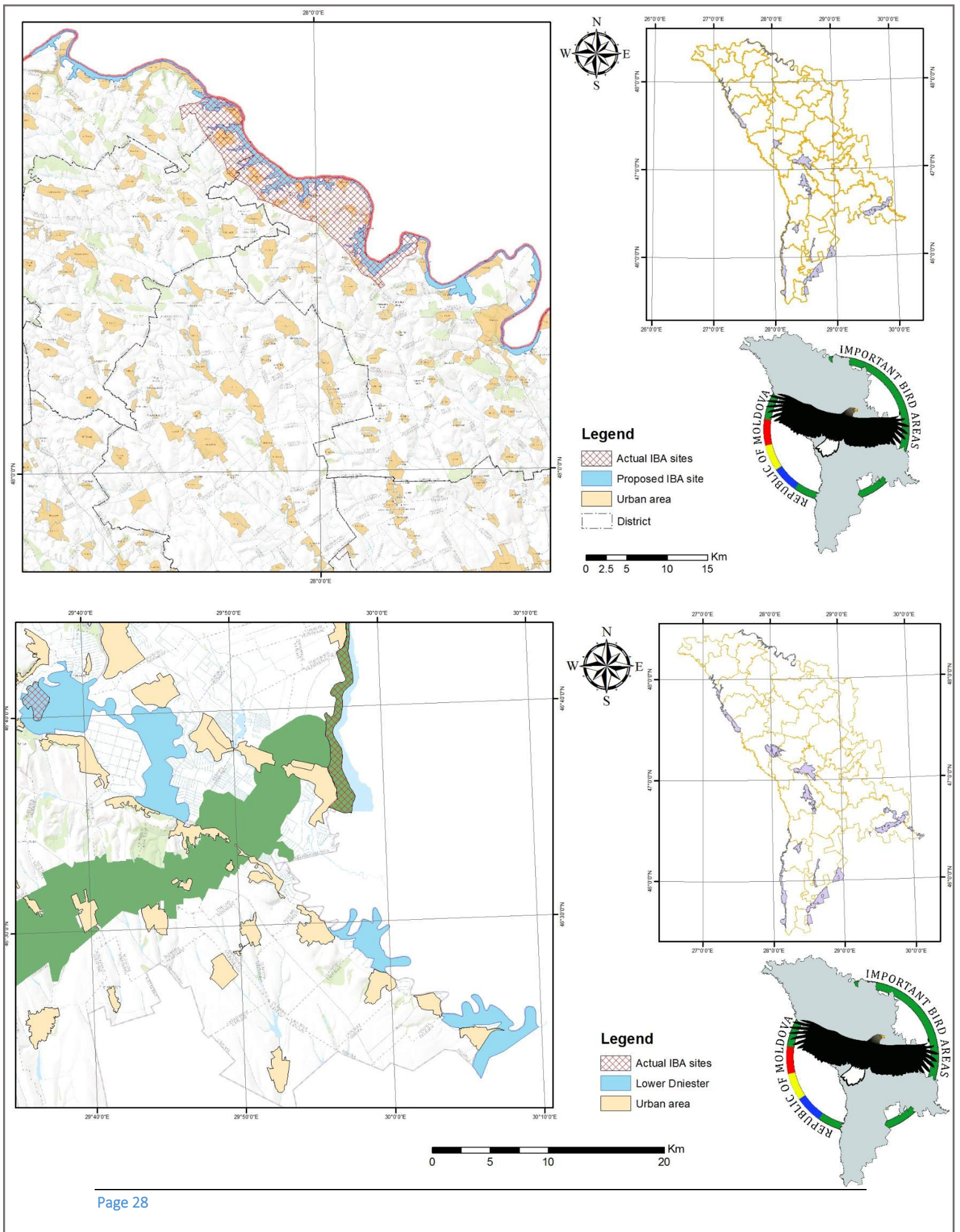
- Actual IBA sites
- Proposed IBA site
- Urban area
- District

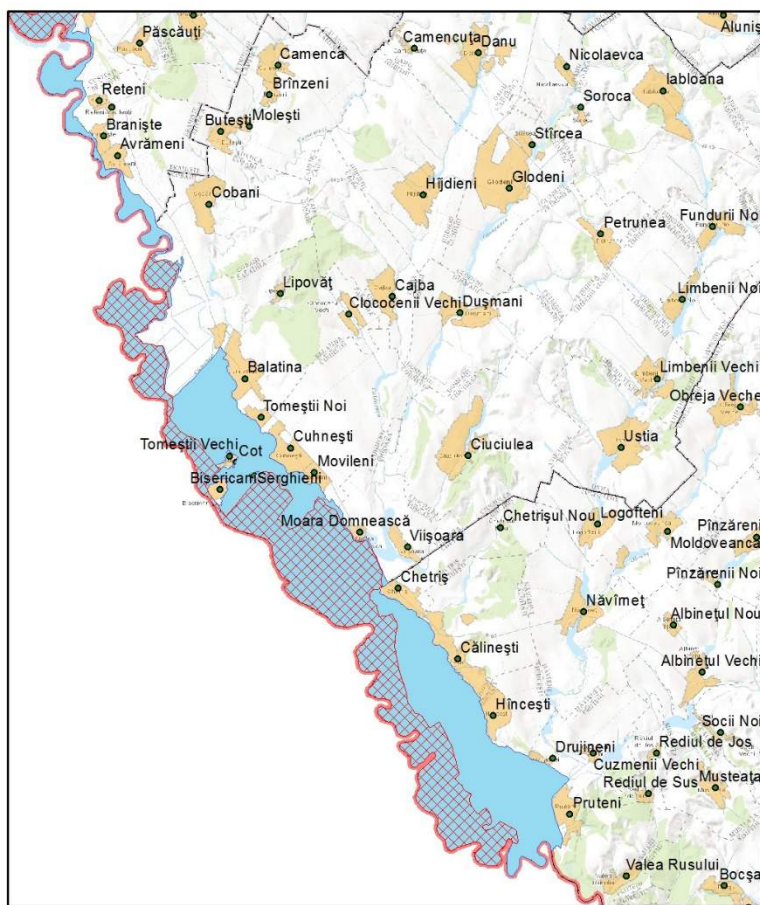


Legend

- Actual IBA sites
- Proposed IBA site
- Urban area
- District

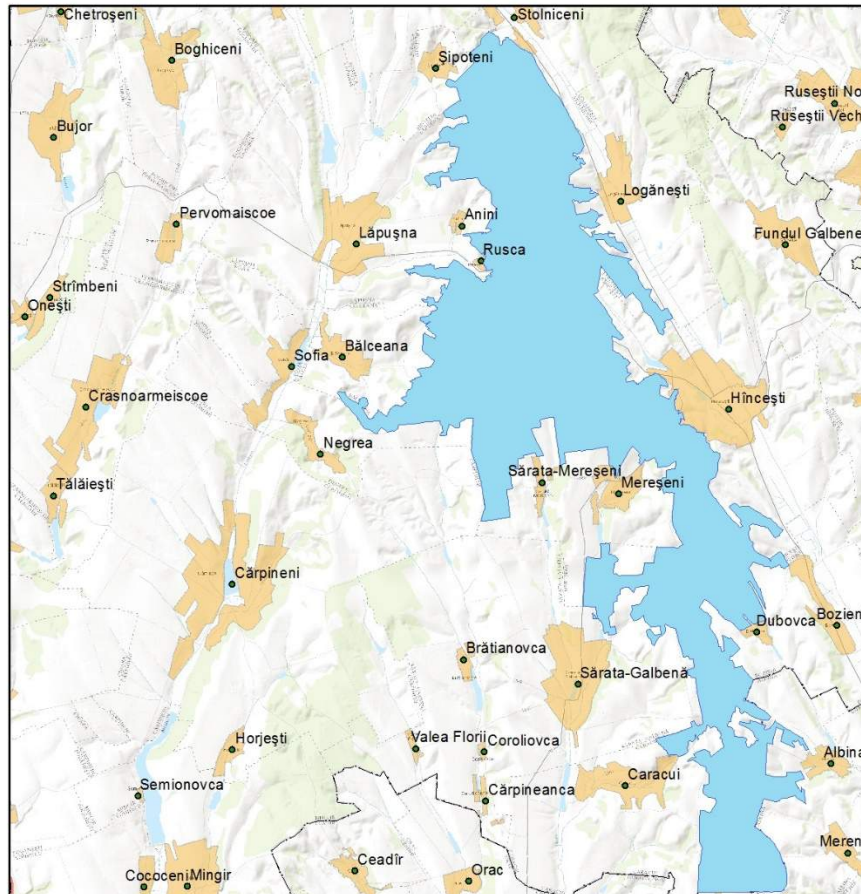






Legend

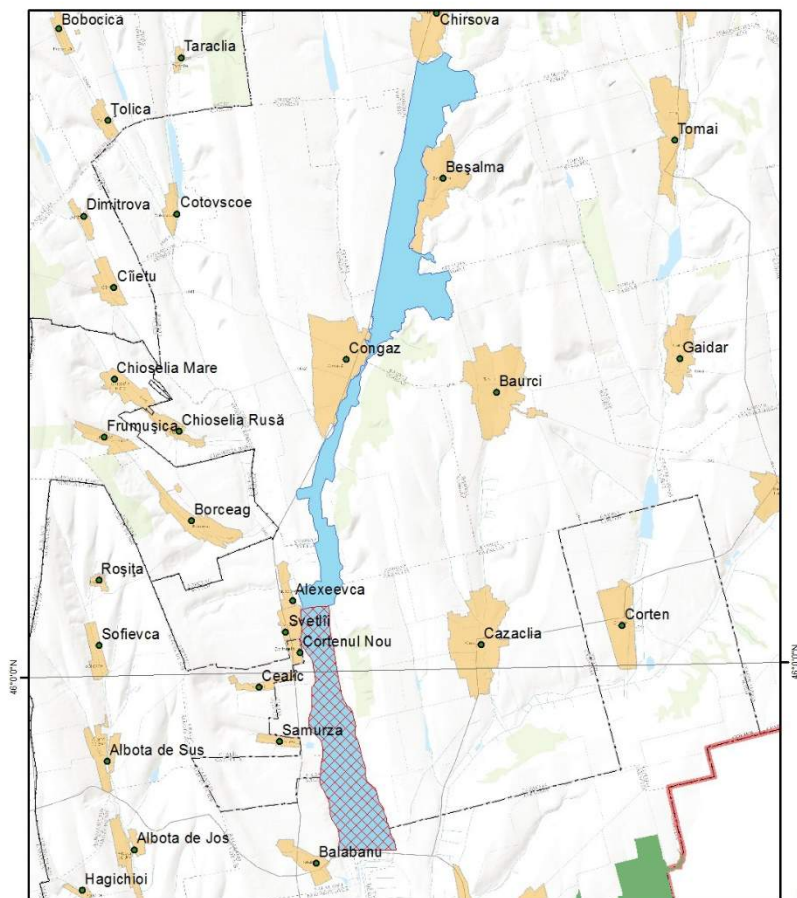
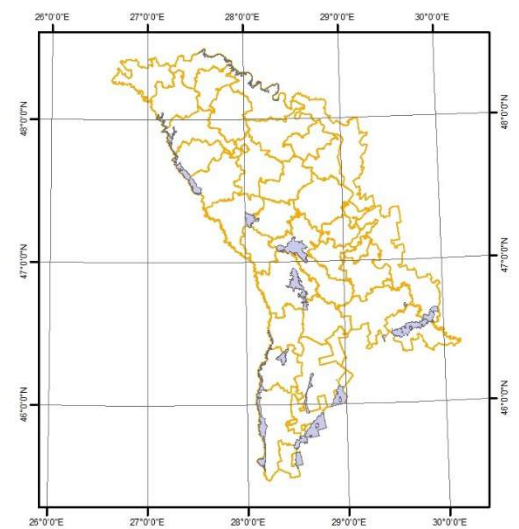
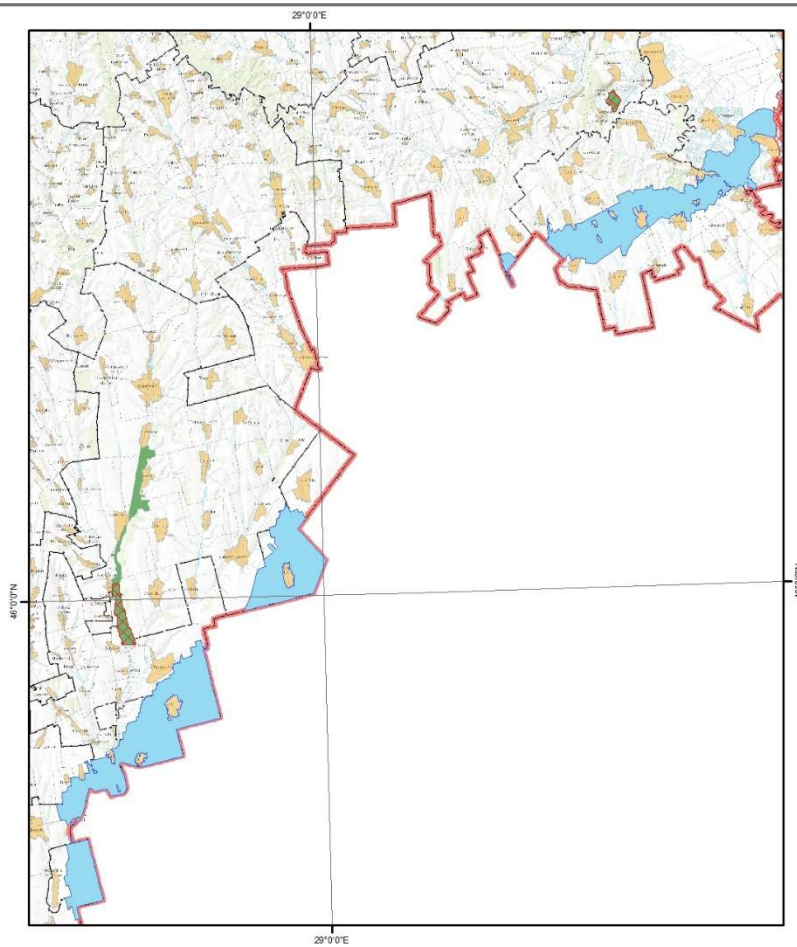
- Actual IBA sites
- Proposed IBA site
- Urban area
- District

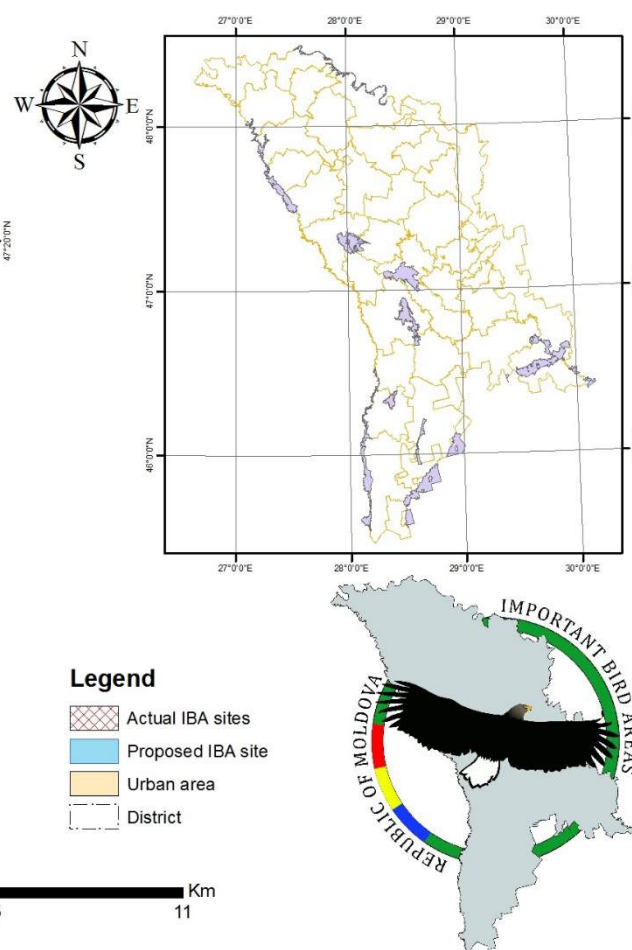
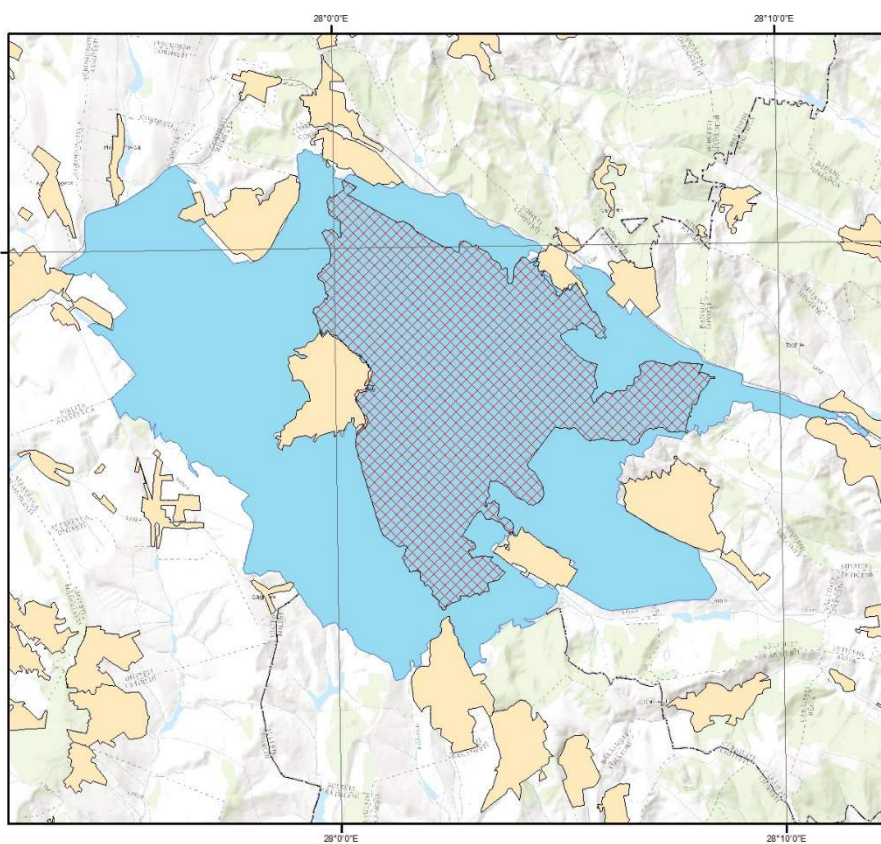
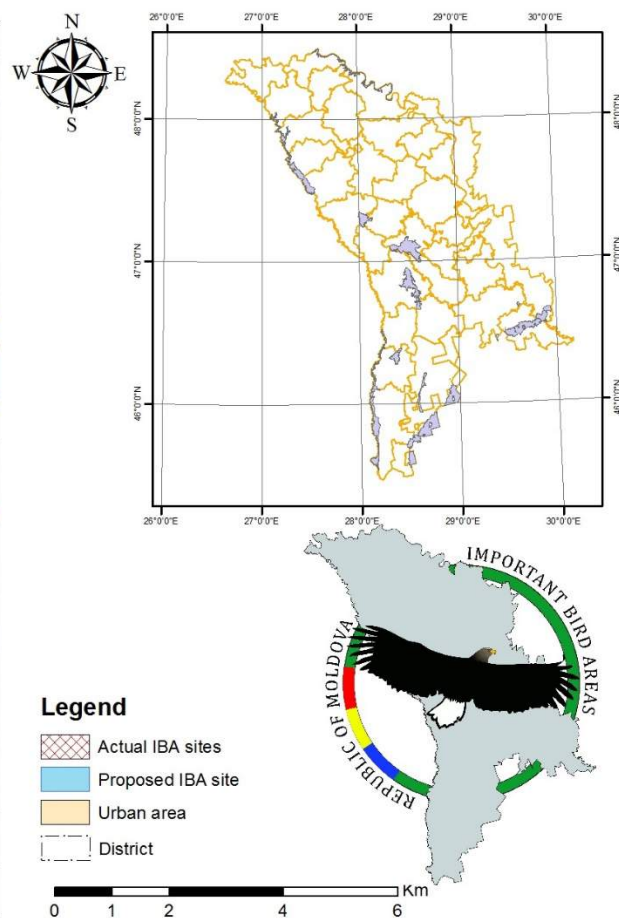
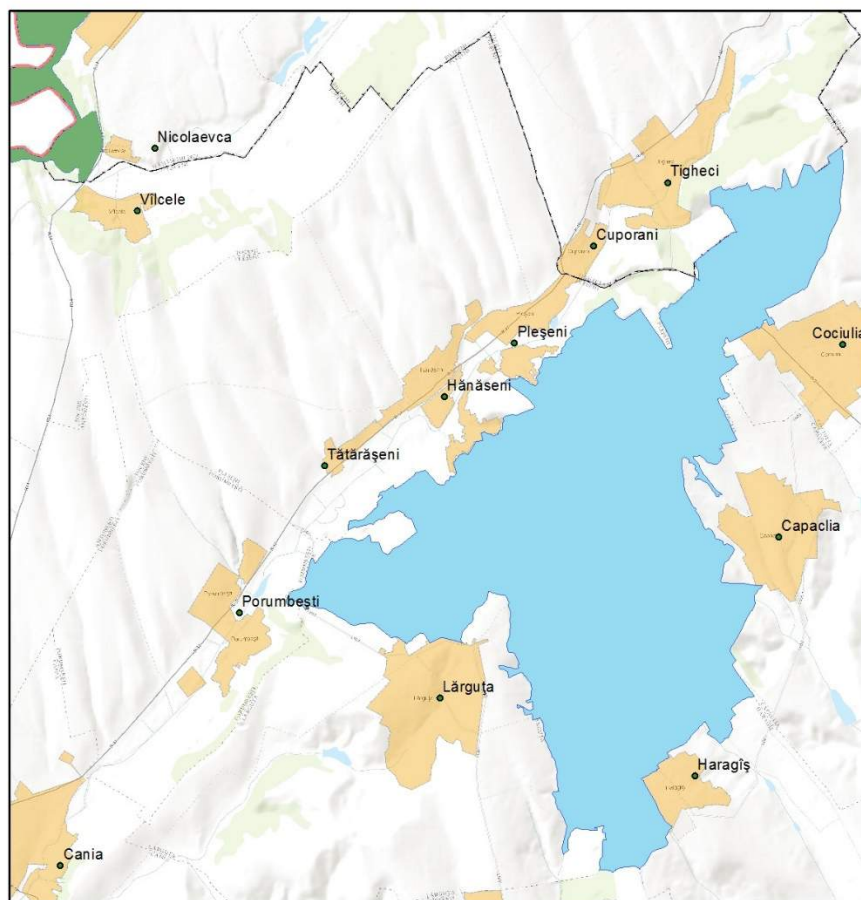


Legend

- Actual IBA sites
- Proposed IBA site
- Urban area
- District









**JOINT COUNCIL OF EUROPE/EUROPEAN UNION PROGRAMME
"EMERALD NETWORK OF NATURE PROTECTION SITES, PHASE II"
(DCI-ENV/2012/289-173)**

**CONVOCATION
TO THE PREPARATORY BIOGEOGRAPHICAL SEMINAR
FOR BELARUS, REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND UKRAINE
6 NOVEMBER 2014 (09H00) – 7 NOVEMBER 2014 (17H00)**

Dear Mr Ajder,

The Secretariat of the Bern Convention has the honour of inviting you to the Preparatory Biogeographical Seminar for Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation and Ukraine. The meeting will be held from 6 November 2014 (09h00) until 7 November 2014 (17h00) in Chisinau.

The meeting takes place in the frame of the EU/CoE Joint Programme Emerald Network Phase II. The event will gather representatives of national authorities and NGOs from the four targeted countries and international scientific experts. It will aim at presenting and testing the methodology of the Emerald biogeographical evaluation process, also using a simulation exercise for a selection of species and habitats to be protected by the Emerald Network.

The draft agenda of the seminar is attached to this invitation.

Date and time of the opening of the meeting:
Date and time of the closing of the meeting:
Place:

**Thursday, 6 November 2014 at 09.00
Friday, 7 November 2014 at 17.00
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova**

Documents for this meeting will be available on the webpage of the project:
<http://pip-eu.coe.int/en/web/emerald-network/home>

Specific travel related risks are covered by a **CHARTIS** insurance policy (number **2.004.761**), which provides cover for persons up to their 76th birthday. The following help line: **CHARTIS Assistance 24 Hours** can be called in case of need: **(32) 3 253 69 16**. It is not necessary to take out a supplementary insurance policy and such a policy will not be reimbursed by the Council of Europe.

Please bring this letter convening the meeting with you during your mission, together with your passport and valid visa, if applicable.

/.

Mr Vitalie Ajder
ajder.vitalie@gmail.com
Republic of Moldova

For any further information or question, please contact:

Ms Iva Obretenova (Administrator)

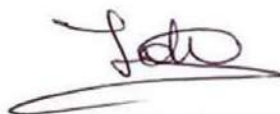
Tel: +33 (0) 3 90 21 58 81

Fax: +33 (0) 3 88 41 37 51

Email: iva.obretenova@coe.int

Biological Diversity Unit
Council of Europe
F-67075 STRASBOURG Cedex
France

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ivana', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Ivana D'Alessandro
Head of the Biological Diversity Unit
Secretary of the Bern Convention

Enclosed: Draft agenda of the meeting
Rules concerning the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses



**European Union/ Council of Europe Joint Programme
“Emerald Network of Nature Protection Sites, Phase II”**

**Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova
State University of Moldova**

ROUND TABLE

Emerald Network in the Republic of Moldova – progress and challenges

Chisinau, 26 November 2014

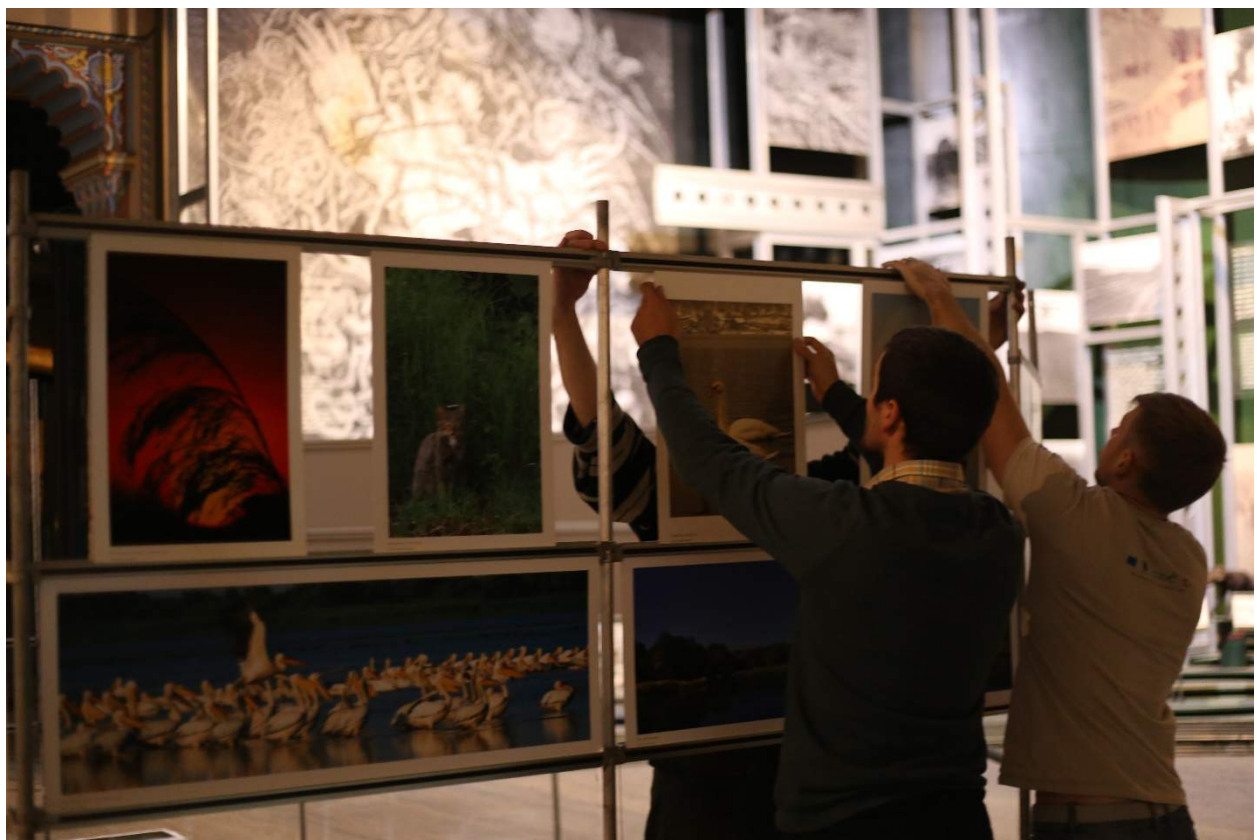
AGENDA

Venue: SUM, Faculty of Biology and Soil Sciences,
Str. Kogalniceanu 65A, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Wednesday, 26 November 2014

Registration	11:30 - 12:00
1. Opening remarks Mihai Lesanu – Faculty of Biology and Soil Sciences, SUM Veronica Josu – Ministry of Environment	12:00 - 12:10
2. Bern Convention on conservation of vulnerable species and habitats – European efforts to protect biodiversity. National policies and regulations in the field of nature conservation. Veronica Josu, Ministry of Environment	12:10 - 12:20
3. Review of university programmes and scientific work of the students in line with the Bern Convention Mihai Lesanu, Faculty of Biology and Soil Sciences, SUM	12:20 - 12:30
4. Emerald Network in Moldova – continue efforts to join the Natura-2000 European Ecological Network Angela Lozan, Faculty of Biology and Soil Sciences, SUM	12:30 - 12:40
5. Birds species – national database of Emerald Network Vitalie Ajder, Emerald expert, PhD candidate at Iasi University, Inst. Ecology and Geography	12:40 - 12:50
6. GIS maps of Emerald network, new additional sites to ensure species survival. Ion Cotofana, biodiversity expert, Biodiversity Office	12:50 - 13:00
Coffee break	





Project brochure

Lansat de BirdLife International (1989) - primul inventar european IBA, acest program reprezintă un mod eficient de a identifica prioritățile de conservare în zone cheie. Program acceptat de către Uniunea Europeană ca fiind de o importanță foarte mare pentru conservarea și protejarea păsărilor sălbatice și a habitatelor acestora, acesta este utilizat pentru a ghida acțiunile de management pe acele suprafețe importante pentru cuibăritul, migrația, hrănirea și iernarea populațiilor de păsări. Pentru a fi declarate IBA acestea trebuie să întrunească mai mult sau mai puțin următoarele condiții:

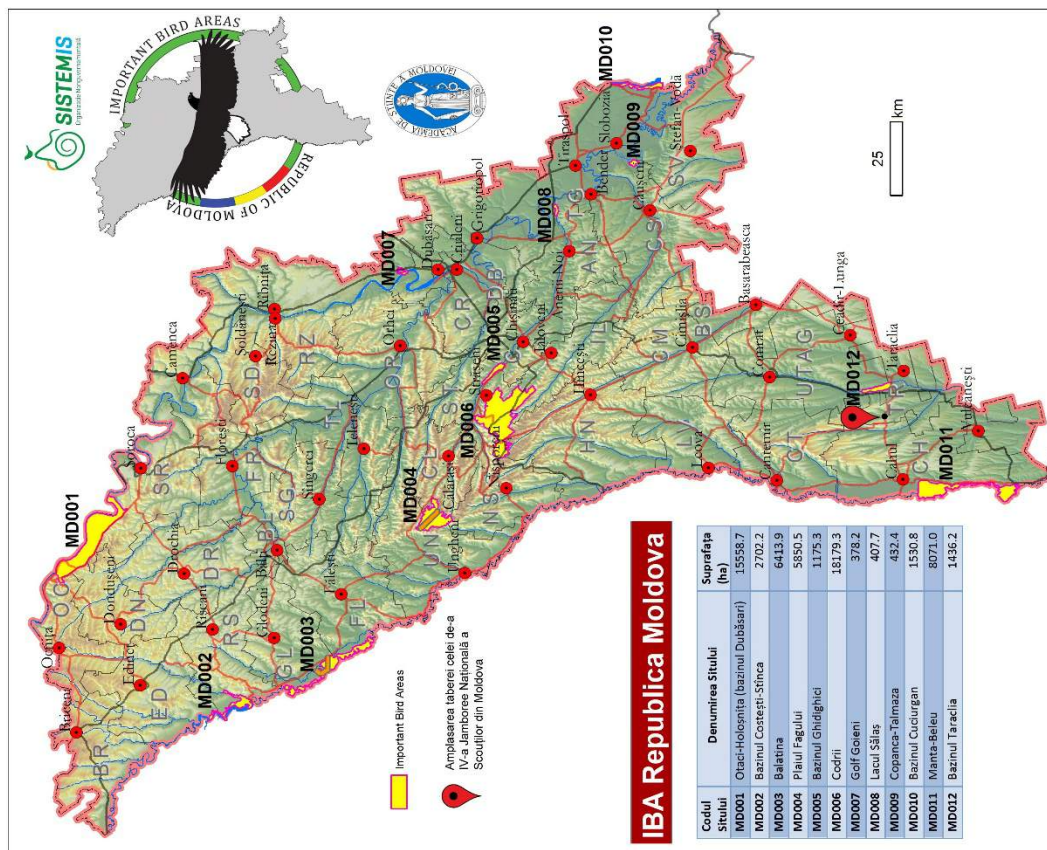
- să găzduiască efective semnificative ale uneia sau mai multor specii amenințate la nivel global;
- să facă parte dintr-o serie de arii care conțin o gamă de specii cu distribuție restrânsă;
- să găzduiască efective deosebit de mari de păsări migratoare sau gregare.

Acest proiect a fost posibil datorită "Conservation Leadership Programme" care este un parteneriat ce include patru organizații de conservare - BirdLife International, Conservation International, Fauna & Flora International, Wildlife Conservation Society.

Ariile de importanță avifaunistică din Republica Moldova – Important Bird Areas in Republic of Moldova (IBA)

Ne puteți contacta pe:
iba.moldova@gmail.com
sau pe
pagina de facebook unde ne puteți ajuta cu un like:
<http://www.facebook.com/IBAMoldova>

Ariile de Importanță Avifaunistică (Important Bird Area) - reprezintă un efort la nivel mondial de a identifica cele mai importante arii pentru menținerea populațiilor de păsări sălbatice și de a concentra activitățile de conservare pentru protecția acestora.



Project t-shirt

