NATURE CONSERVATION AND THE PUBLIC

Many of the protected areas are situated directly in the capital city, what causes the intense visitor attendance for the purpose of recreation. Also therefore the visitors are being informed within the project about the need of nature conservation in these areas and the disturbance caused by men due to the recreation activities is trying to be eliminated. In most threatened localities (e.g. Devínska Kobyla, Ostrovné lúčky, Šúr) regular patrol service is secured. Rangers inform tourists and control respecting of the nature conservation law (entrance of motor vehicles into the protected areas, setting of camp fires). The litter collection actions in protected areas and actions focused on its borders marking are organized regularly. In Devínska Kobyla the nature trail will be renewed and new arbors and benches built. Information panels and wildlife watching hides will be installed in the floodplain forests.

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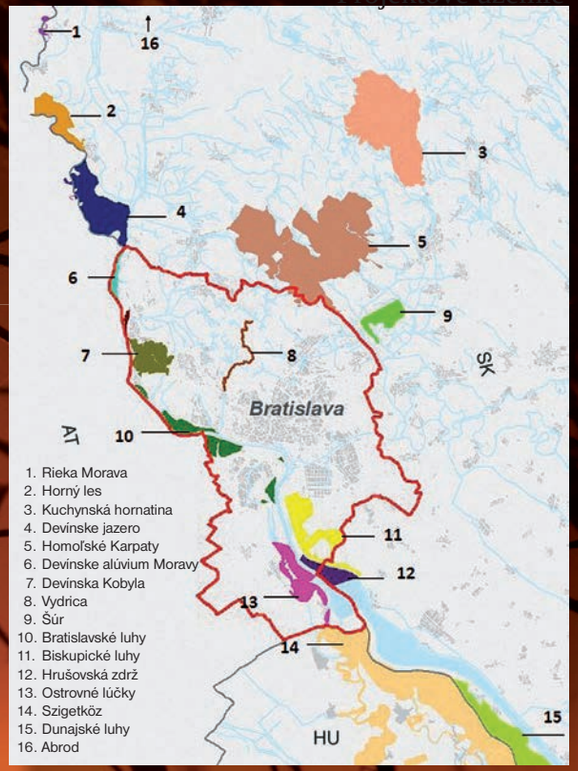
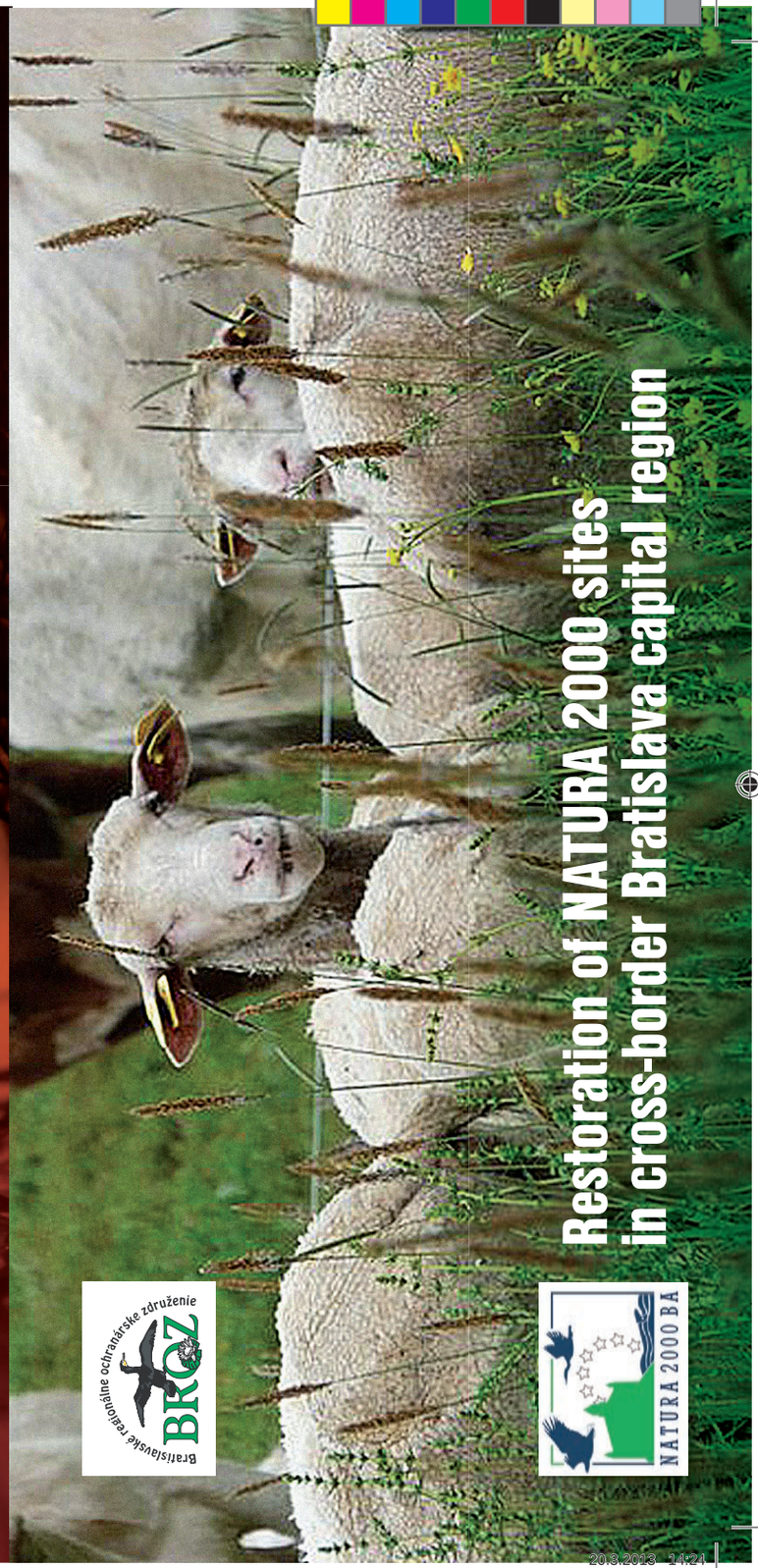
MAP OF THE PROJECT AREA



1. Rieka Morava
2. Horný les
3. Kuchynská hornatina
4. Devínske jazero
5. Homoľské Karpaty
6. Devínske alúvium Moravy
7. Devínska Kobyla
8. Vydrica
9. Šúr
10. Bratislavské luhy
11. Biskupické luhy
12. Hrušovská zdrž
13. Ostrovné lúčky
14. Szigetköz
15. Dunajské luhy
16. Abrod

NATURA 2000 is a network of Special Protection Areas and Sites of Community Importance which is being formed in all territories of the member states of the European Union. The basic purpose of its creation was preservation of the most valuable natural habitats and the most endangered plant and animal species – habitats and species of Community Importance. Inclusion of the area into the NATURA 2000 network means acknowledgement of its natural values and expression of interest of the European Union to preserve this area as a part of the European natural heritage.

Project LIFE10 NAT/SK/080 Restoration of NATURA 2000 sites in cross-border Bratislava capital region was supported by the European Commission within the LIFE+ Nature Programme.



Restoration of NATURA 2000 sites in cross-border Bratislava capital region

NATURE IN BRATISLAVA

Lot of people think of Bratislava as of city built out of concrete with very busy traffic. But directly in the city we can find spacious forests, rivers and wetlands, forest steppes, rocky steppes and caves. The colourful world of Bratislava nature is a home of many valuable plant and animal species. For the sake of their protection there were established many protected areas of national as well as European importance. However protected areas and their inhabitants are under constant pressure of expanding construction, forestry and elemental recreation. In many cases their protection depends also on restoration of the traditional land use. Therefore NGO Regional Association for Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development (BROZ) together with partners implement since 2012 project focused on conservation of valuable natural localities directly in Bratislava and its near surrounding. The main goal of the project is the active protection and restoration of Sites of Community Importance included within the NATURA 2000 network.

MANAGEMENT OF THE TARGET HABITATS

Forest Habitats

The forest habitats are affected by excessive timber logging and spreading of non-native tree species. One of the solutions of this problem can be restoration of forests by implementing the measures focused on increase of the native trees ratio in forests along with biodiversity support. The invasive and non-native tree species will be removed on the size of 420 ha.

Tree species composition of monocultures will be enriched by planting of 45.000 seedlings of native trees as poplars, ashes, alders or oaks. Old hollow and dying trees represent a home for many birds (woodpeckers, owls), bats or insects (Stag Beetle, Rosalia alpina) and therefore the co-operation of nature conservationists and foresters aims at protection of at least 9.000 of these valuable trees before logging.

Grassland Habitats

Grasslands rich in species with valuable plants and animals were formed by the influence of long-term mowing and grazing. After abandonment of grazing activities in Devínska Kobyla, Ostrovné lúčky, Šúr, Biskupické luhy and other places in the surrounding of Bratislava the meadows and forest steppes started to overgrow by pioneer and invasive species (Hawthorn, Acacia, Alianthus, Canada Goldenrod). After their removal these sites should be treated by regular mowing or grazing of livestock.

Sheep, goats and also cows will start again to graze on places abandoned by shepherds decades ago. Thanks to grazing, optimal conditions will be restored for living of rare butterfly species (e.g. family *Lycaenidae*) and plants, e.g. family *Orchidaceae* (Adriatic Lizard Orchid or Military Orchid). The total area of restored grasslands will equal 150 ha, forest steppes 115 ha, grazed areas 185 ha.

Water Habitats

Extensive water management interventions into the hydrological regime of the Danube left deep scars on the nature. Their remedy or at least partial improvement will not be possible without larger technical measures. River side arms of the Danube were divided by the forestry roads and filled with the rests of the tree trunks, soil or gravel without the possibility of free water flowing. Some of the branches are still partially filled with water but the dynamics of water regime, supply of nutrients and migration possibilities were disturbed. By restoration of several Danube side arms we will improve the conditions for the Danube fish species. And by creation of several smaller wetlands we will enable reproduction of endangered amphibians (e.g. tree frogs, *Bombina sp.*, spadefoots and newts).