

COOPERATION AGREEMENT

between

DANUBEPARKS – Danube River Network of Protected Areas, Schloss Orth, 2304 Orth an der Donau, Austria, represented by President Vlatko Rožac

and

Lower Prut Natural Reserve, str. Unirii, 5320 Slobozia Mare, Moldova, represented by Director Vasilica Gheorghe

both entities, sharing common goals for ensuring the integrity of the ecosystems, supporting sustainable management of natural resources, raising awareness and preserving the unique natural and cultural values of the Danube, its adjacent areas and tributary rivers, seeing the need and potential to strengthen their formal cooperation and experience exchange, have agreed to the following:

OBJECTIVES OF COOPERATION

1. To encourage **cooperation in the field of nature protection and future sustainable development** of the Lower Prut Biosphere Reserve and the Association DANUBEPARKS - Danube River Network of Protected Areas, as agreed by the signatories to this Cooperation Agreement.
2. To facilitate the **exchange of experience and successful practices** in Protected Area management, share relevant information, organize joint meetings and study tours, and promote the exchange of experts, mutually beneficial for both the Protected Area and DANUBEPARKS.
3. To cooperate in the **protection of natural and cultural values**, including cultural and historical assets, as acknowledged and agreed upon by the signatories of this Agreement.
4. To address the need for **collaboration in the field of sustainable tourism** development in Protected Areas, including the organization of workshops, seminars, and capacity raising and education programs.
5. To **promote the unique natural and cultural value** of the areas managed by the Protected Area and DANUBEPARKS, thereby raising environmental awareness at local, regional and international level.

6. To develop and implement joint initiatives, strategies, concepts and projects, leveraging the resources and capacities of both the Protected Area and DANUBEPARKS.
7. To replicate the WILDislands initiative for the Lower Prut region, considering the significance of this Danube-wide WILDisland Habitat Corridor concept as best practice for European Green and Blue infrastructure, and to organize joint follow-up actions as foreseen within the LIFE WILDisland project, aiming to make additional funding resources available for preparatory work and implementation of river and island restoration in the Lower Prut region.

The current Cooperation Agreement emphasizes the significance of cross-border and international cooperation between Protected Areas in the Danube catchment area. The trilateral Lower Prut Biosphere Reserve is considered as future lighthouse protected area within the DANUBEPARKS Association, represented by Moldsilva as member in the network.

In this context, the Lower Prut Biosphere Reserve and the DANUBEPARKS Association aims to further strengthen the resources and capacities of both entities, encourage joint cooperation, planning and practical conservation, while also raising environmental awareness on local and regional level.

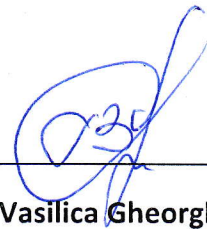
This document signifies the commitment of the signatories to strive towards achieving the objectives outlined in this Agreement to the best of their abilities and in line with their own management plans, strategies and interests.

Place and date: Valeni, Moldova, 31.5.2023



Vlatko Rožac

DANUBEPARKS President



Vasilica Gheorghe

Lower Prut Natural Reserve
Director

