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| **1st Open Call – Biodiversity** |
| **Project code & acronym** | ROHU00273 – Closer to nature |
| **Project title** | Improving cross-border capacity for conservation and protection of nature, biodiversity, green and blue infrastructure in the Bihor - Hajdú-Bihar Euroregion. |
| **Priority** | P1 - Cooperation for a green and more resilient cross-border area between Romania and Hungary |
| **Specific Objective** | RS02.7 - Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution |
| **Implementation period** | 24 months (10 March 2025 – 9 March 2027) |
| **Objective** | Improve biodiversity conservation and protection of green and blue infrastructure in the Bihor - Hajdú-Bihar Euroregion. |
| **Partnership** | **Lead Partner:** Military Unit 0657 - Bihor County Gendarmeria Inspectorate (Romania) |
| **Project Partner:** PP2 HU:Hajdú-Bihar County Develeopment Agency (Hungary) |
| **Total budget** | EUR 849.637,00, out of which ERDF EUR 679.709,60  |
| **Summary** | The overall objective is to implement coordinated law enforcement measures for the surveillance, control, conservation and protection of ecosystems, biodiversity and forestry in the Romanian-Hungarian cross-border area.The project addresses the pressing challenge of biodiversity and environmental decline in the Bihor - Hajdú-Bihar Euroregion, exacerbated by factors such as: - illegal fishing, poaching and habitat destruction.Through this collaboration the partners aim to bring about a positive change in the current situation by:1. Develop a joint action plan to encourage coordinated efforts between Romania and Hungary.2. Increase public awareness and involvement to promote responsible environmental practices and support for biodiversity conservation.3. Strengthen the operational capacity of partner institutions to prevent and combat illegal activities that damage biodiversity.The novelty of the project lies in the integrated approach to biodiversity conservation, which combines the development of a joint action plan, awareness raising among the population of the Bihor - Hajdú-Bihar Euroregion, capacity building and also building on previous experiences to adapt a comprehensive strategy for biodiversity protection in this Euroregion. |
| **Main results** | The project aims to achieve several key results:1. Optimising the cross-border strategy by developing a joint action plan to strengthen and protect natural resources, biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure in the Bihor - Hajdú-Bihar Euroregion. Two joint workshops will take place, one on each side of the border, where partners will focus on emerging trends and priorities in terms of prevention of environmental crime, thus developing for the first time a set of common methods and procedures dedicated to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure in protected areas.
2. Prevention of crime in protected natural areas, with the aim of raising awareness of at least 200 people on the importance of environmental protection, to prevent fish and game poaching and to prevent illegal logging. 5 awareness/information events will be organized (3 events in Bihor county organized by LP1 and 2 events in Hajdu-Bihar county organized by PP2).
3. Strengthening cross-border capacity to conserve and protect nature, biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure in the Bihor - Hajdú-Bihar Euroregion.

The operational capability of LP1 will be strengthen by purchasing specialized observation equipment: 2 thermal imaging drones, 10 camouflaged surveillance cameras, 10 thermal imaging binoculars and mobility equipment: 2 UTVs, 1 4x4 off-road vehicles, 1 inflatable motor boat and 1 snowmobiles, a mobile command post and a truck to transport the mobile command post.The operational capacity of PP2 will be strengthen by purchasing: 2 hybrid 4x4 vehicle, 20 mountain bikes, 20 laptops and 20 trees. The equipment will be used in the framework of events carried out by PP2 in order to enhance biodiversity and prevent environmental degradation. 1. Cooperation across borders to implement the activities from the joint action plan in joint exercises and trainings. 3 joint exercise will be organized by the partners in the protected natural areas of Hajdú-Bihar county and in areas with blue infrastructure and in protected natural areas of Bihor county with the use of the surveillance equipment and mobility equipment on watercourses and the surveillance and ground mobility equipment purchased.

This equipment will be used also to conduct awareness raising campaigns through 2 summer camps organized by PP2 where specialists from LP1 will participate to conduct training events on environmental protection.1. Developing an agreement for the continuation of joint solutions and strategies implemented in joint exercises through a partnership agreement to upscaling joint solutions by organising events in the first year after the end of the project.
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