KRESNA TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

"Challenges & opportunities for the conservation of reptiles and large carnivores during linear infrastructure development in South-East Europe: a case study for the Kresna area, Bulgaria"

22-24 April 2024, Sandanski, Bulgaria

Invitation

Hosting a wide range of important species, from invertebrates to large carnivores, and being a critical ecological corridor in the Southwestern Bulgaria region, the Kresna area, including the Kresna Gorge along with the Struma River, is one of the key biodiversity hot spots in the Balkans and Europe.

At the same time, the Kresna Area is intersected by one of the most important European transport routes for the Orient/East-Mediterranean Corridor, and at present new and/or upgrading infrastructure projects are being discussed for the area.

In order to exchange experience and best practices on the sustainable and integrated development of transport corridors by responding to the needs of ensuring ecological connectivity, conserving biodiversity and achieving resilience to climate change challenges,

- the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and Infrastructure and Ecology Network Europe (IENE)

in cooperation with

- the Ministry of Environment and Water of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Bulgarian NGO BALKANI Wildlife Society

and

- the possible support of other relevant institutions such as JASPERS, CEDR, etc.,

is pleased to invite experts, organisations, and institutions which are technically competent in the fields of study, to participate at the Technical Workshop on "**Challenges & opportunities for the conservation of reptiles and large carnivores during linear infrastructure development in South-East Europe: a case study for the Kresna area**".

The workshop will take place in the town of Sandanski, Bulgaria, on 22-24 April 2024 and will include:

Day 1 - 22nd April: Introduction to the area and presentations of challenges and experience from a local and European perspective on the conservation of reptiles, large carnivores, and strategic planning during the development of linear infrastructure projects

Day 2 - 23rd April: Field visit to the Kresna area and applied discussions

Day 3 - 24th April: Round table discussions on best practices relevant for the local context and joint conclusions

A **concept note** including a preliminary draft agenda is attached.

Registration to the workshop is free of charge. The language of the workshop will be English and Bulgarian, with simultaneous interpretation. The workshop will be organised in a hybrid format giving the opportunity to have online participation, though in-person participation is encouraged as far as possible in order to facilitate productive exchanges.

Registration will be open until 31st March, please use the following link:
https://forms.office.com/r/JtDLekyksr?origin=lprLink.

If you are interested in participating as a **presenter**, please note that you will be requested to submit an **abstract** in English, which will be reviewed by the Organisers.

The topics of the presentations, template for the abstract, and further instructions such as information about travel and logistics are available on the dedicated Workshop webpage of the Bern Convention (https://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/-/kresna-technical-workshop) and website of IENE (https://www.iene.info/).

Abstracts can be submitted until **5th April** and a Book of Abstracts will be prepared and published online after the Workshop in cooperation with Infrastructure and Ecology Network Europe (IENE).

A detailed agenda of the workshop will be shared in April to registered participants.

For general and practical queries, please contact the Bern Convention secretariat:
Mr. Eoghan KELLY - Eoghan.KELLY@coe.int, *with bern.convention@coe.int in copy.*

For queries related to the submission of abstracts, please contact:
Mr. Lazaros GEORGIADIS (lazgeo36@gmail.com) and Mr. Radu MOT (greenlightserv@gmail.com) *with bern.convention@coe.int in copy.*