

Kogayon Association

Activity report
2009



Kogayon Association is an environmental non-governmental organization based in Costești, Vâlcea County, Romania. The association was founded in 2004 and presently has over 150 volunteer members.

The main fields of activity of our association are: protected area management, biodiversity and geodiversity conservation, ecotourism, environmental education, information dissemination and awareness raising, the sustainable development of the region, research activities.

The association had a decisive contribution to the establishment of Buila-Vânturarița National Park and it is mostly within its boundaries that we carry out our activities, together with the park's adjacent area, as well as at the national level.

Kogayon Association is the partner of RNP Romsilva (the National Forestry Administration) in the administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park and a custodian of the "Muzeul Trovantilor" Nature Reserve in Costești.

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The main achievements of Kogayon Association to this day are:

- founding Buila-Vânturarița National Park;
- involvement in the administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park by implementing over 10 projects, with a cumulated value of over 250,000 euro, dealing with: developing and improving the touristic infrastructure throughout the park territory, environmental education programs (Junior Ranger and summer camps), species monitoring, studies and research, capacity building of the park administration and training of park personnel, promoting the park, dissemination of information and awareness raising;
- involvement in environmental awareness raising projects at the national level: Project Focus: Ecology - in collaboration with the Czech Cultural Centre in Bucharest;
- involvement in dealing with relevant issues at the national level (Campaign against hunting in national parks etc.).

Kogayon Association is a member of:

- CERI - Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative
- Romanian Natura 2000 NGO Coalition
- National Coalition for Protected Areas
- Olt River Basin Committee.



1. Junior Rangers - friends of Buila-Vânturarița National Park (I)

Implementation period: April - October 2009

Beneficiaries: pupils attending schools located in the park area, local communities, tourists

Financing body: Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation and MOL Romania, the “Green Spaces” program (17,985 RON)

Value: 27,715 RON

Partners: Administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park, Vâlcea School Inspectorate

Objectives:

- * Providing basic knowledge about conservation of the park’s geodiversity and biodiversity for pupils enrolled in local schools, by means of presentations, outdoor classes and nature camps and by involving them in practical activities in Buila-Vaturarita National Park;
- * Awareness raising among the local population living in the park area regarding the importance of conserving the geodiversity and biodiversity found in the park by organizing the Day of Buila-Vânturarița National Park and of related events with the help of association members, park administration personnel and, last but not least, Junior Rangers;
- * Building and equipping an educational pavilion in the Poiana Prislop, necessary in order to hold outdoor classes and activities;
- * Setting up an educational theme trail to be used in the outdoor activities carried out with the Junior Rangers.

Results:

1. Building and equipping an educational pavilion in Poiana Prislop, with 10 information panels.



1. Junior Rangers - friends of Buila-Vânturarița National Park (II)

Implementation period: April - October 2009

Beneficiaries: pupils attending schools located in the park area, local communities, tourists

Financing body: Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation and MOL Romania, the “Green Spaces” program (17,985 RON)

Value: 27,715 RON

Partners: Administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park, Vâlcea School Inspectorate

2. Developing a thematic trail in the park, including creating and setting up nine information panels (100x80 cm) in key spots along the trail that provide information about geology, flora, forest, fauna etc.



1. Junior Rangers - friends of Buila-Vânturarița National Park (III)

Implementation period: April - October 2009

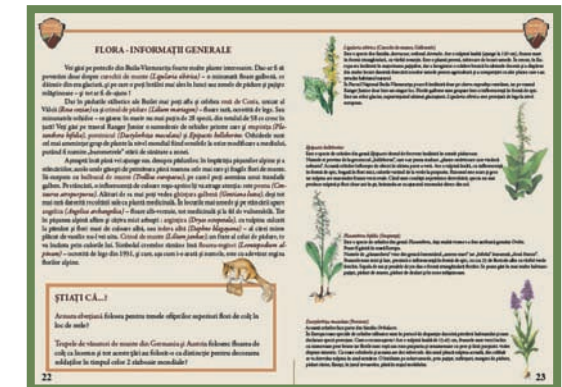
Beneficiaries: pupils attending schools located in the park area, local communities, tourists

Financing body: Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation and MOL Romania, the “Green Spaces” program (17,985 RON)

Value: 27,715 RON

Partners: Administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park, Vâlcea School Inspectorate

3. Editing and printing 300 brochures and 3.000 fliers entitled “How to become a Junior Ranger of Buila-Vânturarița National Park”. Purchasing and personalizing hats, badges and scarves for the Junior Rangers.



1. Junior Rangers - friends of Buila-Vânturarița National Park (IV)

Implementation period: April - October 2009

Beneficiaries: pupils attending schools located in the park area, local communities, tourists

Financing body: Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation and MOL Romania, the “Green Spaces” program (17,985 RON)

Value: 27,715 RON

Partners: Administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park, Vâlcea School Inspectorate

4. Organizing a series of Junior Ranger presentations, nature lessons and camps for the participating pupils from local schools.



1. Junior Rangers - friends of Buila-Vânturarița National Park (V)

Implementation period: April - October 2009

Beneficiaries: pupils attending schools located in the park area, local communities, tourists

Financing body: Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation and MOL Romania, the “Green Spaces” program (17,985 RON)

Value: 27,715 RON

Partners: Administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park, Vâlcea School Inspectorate



5. Organizing the Day of Buila-Vanturarița National Park on October 3, 2009.



2. Rebuilding the Curmatura Builei Tourist Shelter (I)

Implementation period: May - July 2009

Beneficiaries: the national park, tourists, local communities

Financing body: Kogayon Association (21,000 RON - raised during the national campaign “2% of income taxes” in 2008)

Value: 50,000 RON

Partners: Administration of Buila-Vânturarița NP, the Moșneni Community of Bărbătești

This project was implemented with the support of the over 90 volunteers, either independent or representing several organizations (Kogayon Association, ATC Vânturarița-Râmnicu Vâlcea, “Pași Mărunți” Bucharest, Râmnicu Vâlcea Mountain Rescue Service - Salvamont, Romanian Scouts Râmnicu Vâlcea, Caraiman Tourism Club, Râmnicu Vâlcea Technical Forestry College). They helped with the transportation of building materials up the mountain to Curmatura Builei and with building the shelter. During a total of 152 transports/ person each lasting roughly 2h, bare handed or using backpacks the volunteers carried the following: 5,900 wooden shingles, 450 wooden boards, 100 kg nails and other necessary materials.



Curmatura Builei mountain shelter before the rebuilding and restoration



demolishing the old and ramshackle construction



selecting materials that were still in a good state to be reused for the new construction



building the new structure

2. Rebuilding the Curmatura Builei Tourist Shelter (II)



The result is a mountain shelter permanently open for tourists, with a capacity of 20 places in bunk beds, in two rooms (3.5x3 m and 3.5x4.5 m) and a porch (3.5x1.5 m). Inside the shelter a small information spot was created, where visitors can use the touristic guide and map of the park and other informative material. We also prepared a guestbook and questionnaires for tourism monitoring that visitors can fill out, thus helping to improve the touristic infrastructure inside the park.



“transportation” of the new materials up the mountain



...almost ready, the last day of working at the roof



finishing last details and putting up a “thank you” plaque



setting up a small “tourist information corner”, containing: leaflets, brochures, tourist questionnaires and a large scale map of the National Park

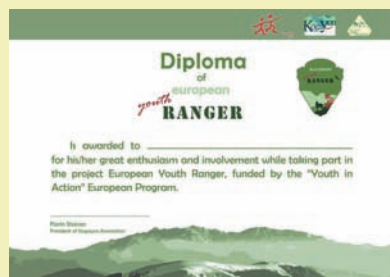
3. European Youth Ranger



Implementation period: September - October 2009
Beneficiaries: youth from 6 countries: Italy, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Turkey and Romania
Financing body: European Commission (Youth in Action Program) through the National Agency for Community Programmes in the Field of Education and Vocational Training
Value: 15,700 euro
Partners: Administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park

Objectives:

- * Training and involving youth in the management of natural protected areas;
- * Identifying solutions to efficiently promote ecotourism in areas with high natural value
- * Promoting the national park.



presentation and workshop focusing on protected areas management. Study case: Buila-Vânturarița National Park



field trip and lecture at the Junior Ranger environmental education wooden tower at Poiana Prislop



field trip on the Ecotourist Trail Buila-Vânturarița National Park



the young participants from the 6 countries of the programme. Poiana Prislop. P.N. Buila-Vânturarița

4. Volunteer project in collaboration with Bouworde Association

Implementation period: 2007 - present day

Beneficiaries: the national park, tourists, local communities

Financing body: Bouworde Association (Belgium)

Partners: Administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park

During the last three years, Codric Hut - located in Buila-Vânturarița National Park - was renovated as a result of the collaboration with Bouworde Association (Belgium). Moreover, in the course of the last three summers, the Bouworde volunteers helped with maintenance and repair works of the touristic infrastructure on the territory of the park.

During the summer of 2009, a group of 5 Italian volunteers (from Cooperativa Sociale ONLUS, Brescia, Italy) also joined the Belgian team and Kogayon members.



*repair and maintenance work inside Codric mountain hut.
Buila-Vânturarița National Park*



volunteers that helped with the maintenance of the tourist guiding signs and panels in Buila-Vânturarița



*repair and reconditioning works at Codric mountain hut.
Buila-Vânturarița National Park*



*repair and reconditioning works at Codric mountain hut.
Buila-Vânturarița National Park*

5. Move4Nature Training - UNEP

Implementation period: January - May 2009

Beneficiaries: teaching staff from schools located in the vicinity of protected areas in Vâlcea County

Financing body: UNEP

Value: 1,000 euro

Partners: Administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park, Vâlcea School Inspectorate

Objectives:

* Training and involving teaching staff in environmental education activities carried out the park;

* Promoting the national park.

6. Training targeting the BVNP Administration

The project aimed to provide training for the park administration personnel on climbing gear and techniques, on giving first aid and on participating in mountain rescue activities.



organizing seminars for presentations and involvement of the local teachers in the Move4Nature program



organizing seminars for presentations and involvement of the local teachers in the Move4Nature program



training for the APNBV staff



training for the APNBV staff

7. The trail “Tales of the forest” in Buila-Vânturarița National Park

Implementation period: October 2009 - March 2010

Beneficiaries: pupils from schools located in the park area, local communities, tourists;

Financing body: NatuRegio - Trainees for nature;

Value: 3,000 euro;

Partners: Administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park, Vâlcea School Inspectorate.

Objectives:

- * Establishing an educational trail about the forest ecosystem, in order to improve the infrastructure needed to carry out educational activities inside the park.
- * Informing and educating pupils from schools in the park area on the importance of conserving the geodiversity and biodiversity found in the park.



Introduction panel of the nature trail “Tales of the Forest” in Buila-Vânturarița National Park

8. Founding cross-border volunteer clubs in Buila-Vânturarița National Park and Vrachansky Balkan Natural Park (Bulgaria)

Project implemented by the Administration of Vrachansky Balkan Natural Park (Bulgaria).

Implementation period: October 2009 - March 2010

Beneficiaries: pupils and teaching staff from schools located in the area of the two protected areas;

Financing body: NatuRegio - Trainees for nature;

Value: 13,600 euro;

Partners: Kogayon Association and the Administration of Buila-Vânturarița National Park.

Objectives:

- * Involving youth from Vâlcea County (Romania) and Vratsa District (Bulgaria) in nature protection activities carried out at the local level;
- * Increasing the students' level of knowledge and involvement in environmental protection;
- * Promoting the two natural protected areas and their activities in conservation and environmental education in the two target regions.



establishing the Green Future Eco-club by Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park Administration



working session with the volunteers, held by Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park Administration



the web platform for communication between the volunteers and dissemination of the results www.greenfutureclubs.com



presentation session for selecting the local Romanian volunteers of the Eco-club. Horezu Highschool

Awards at the Civil Society Awards Gala 2009

In 2009, Kogayon Association received 3 awards in the Civil Society Awards Gala, for a campaign carried out in 2008 entitled "Stop hunting in national parks!": Great Gala Award, First Prize in the Environmental Protection section, First Prize in the Budget/Efficiency section.

We thank all those who stood by us during this campaign! The award equally belongs to all who opposed the bill that would have allowed hunting in national parks.



A few of the things we set out to do in 2010...

- to rebuild the Piscul cu Brazi shelter;
- to preserve the trail markers and the tourist infrastructure inside Buila-Vânturarița National Park (information points, shelters, trails, camping spaces, chalets);
- to set up a small park and an information point at Grusetu Church in Costești;
- to continue the educational program Junior Ranger of BVNP: presentations, environmental education classes, hikes and camps for pupils attending local schools;
- to continue the partnership with the Administration of Vrachansky Balkan National Park; to support and give our assistance for the good functioning of the newly created eco-clubs;
- any other funny ideas (concerning environmental education, awareness raising regarding environmental issues or conservation by means of protected areas) we come up with throughout the year...



We also thank all those who supported the activities carried out in Buila-Vânturarița National Park by directing 2% of your income taxes to Kogayon Association.

Name of NGO: ASOCIATIA KOGAYON

Tax identification code: 16132059

Bank account (IBAN): RO51 RNCB 0265 0061 3421 0001

How can you continue to support us?

* by participating in the 2% campaign
(details on www.kogayon.ro, www.buila.ro)

* by supporting our projects through partnerships, sponsorships, collaborations;

* by joining our team with enthusiasm and good humor :)

* by applying the principle: Respect for Nature and People!

Financing bodies and sponsors:

Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation,
Environment Fund Administration,
National Forestry Agency (Romsilva),
Vâlcea County Council,
Kepler Rominfo, Edelweiss Travel,
Arnota SRL Costești, UNEP,
NatuRegio - Trainees for nature,
European Commission (Youth in Action Program)



Partners and collaborators:

Administration of BVNP, Costești Town Hall, Bărbătești Town Hall, Băile Olanești Town Hall, Vâlcea School Inspectorate and schools in the adjacent park area, the Moșneni Community of Bărbătești, Vâlcea Mountain Rescue Service (Salvamont), Czech Cultural Centre, ATC Vânturarița, Association of Horezu Depression, the monasteries and hermitages in the park area, TinEcoArt Association in Horezu and other NGOs, Econatur Travel;