



Romania: Microhydropower vs.  
Natural rivers

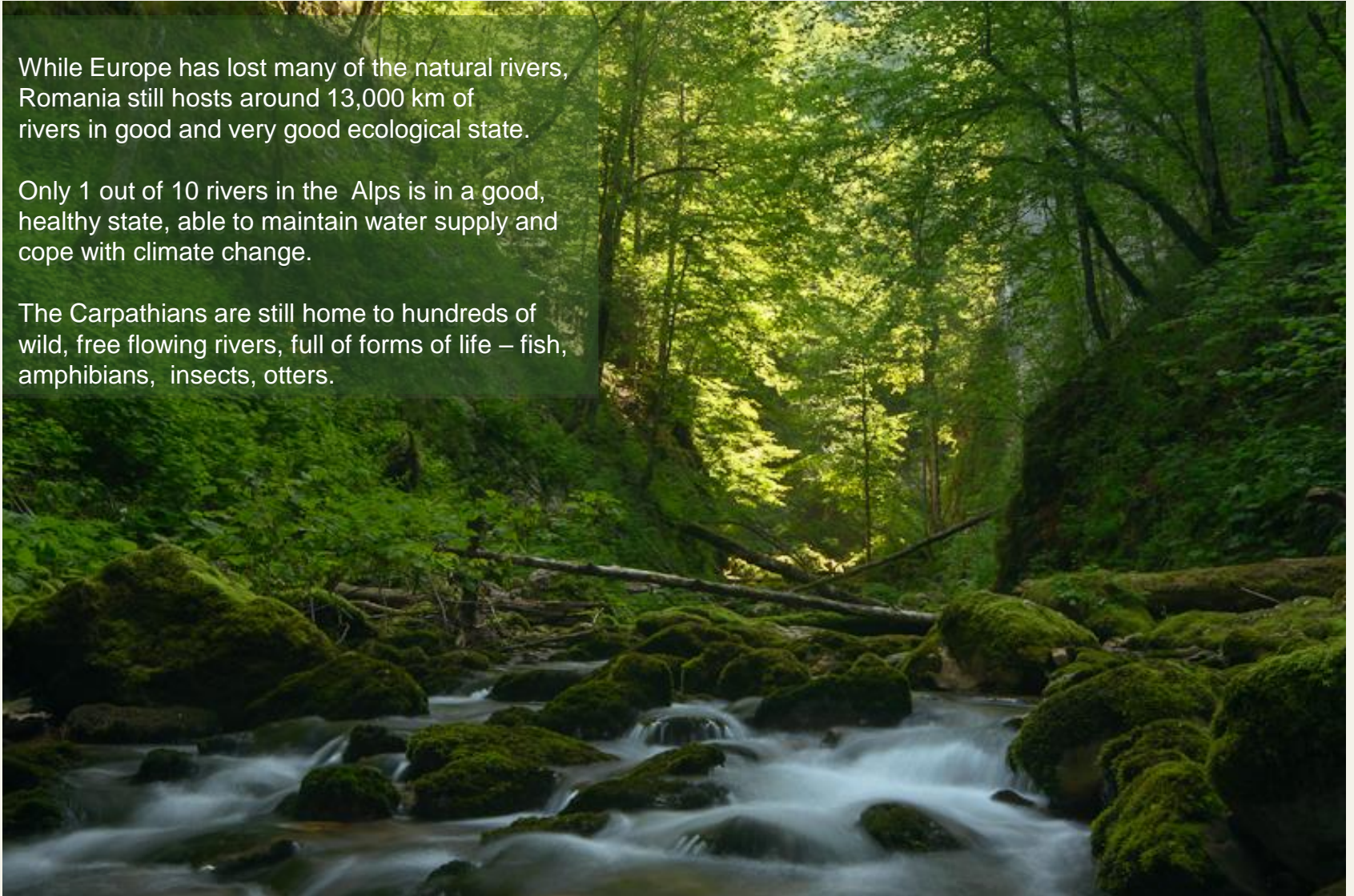
Magor Csibi  
Director  
WWF-Romania



While Europe has lost many of the natural rivers, Romania still hosts around 13,000 km of rivers in good and very good ecological state.

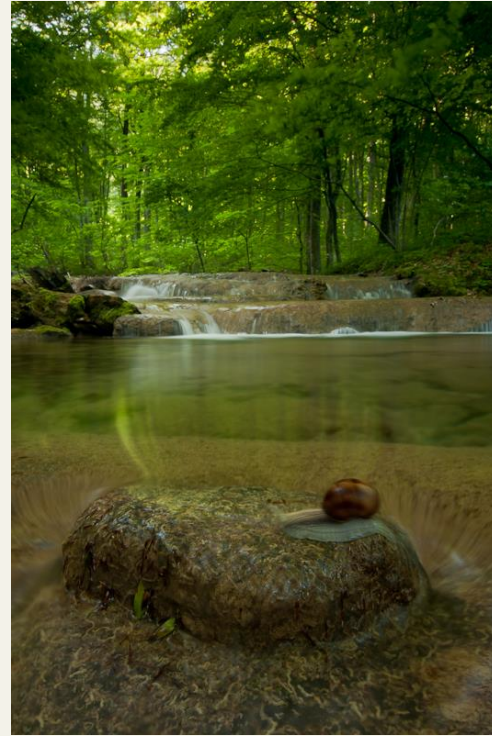
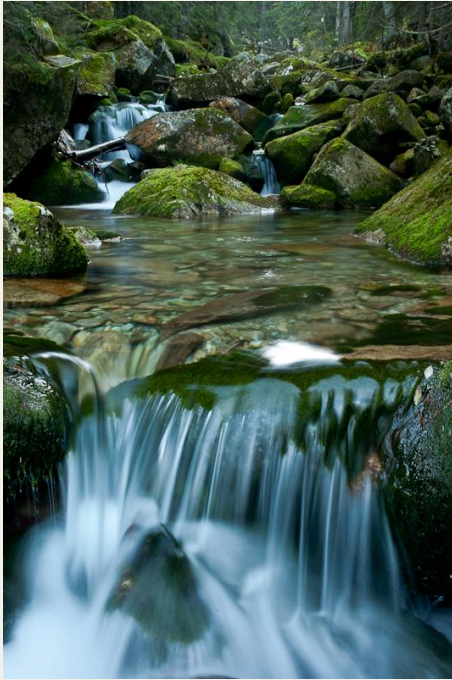
Only 1 out of 10 rivers in the Alps is in a good, healthy state, able to maintain water supply and cope with climate change.

The Carpathians are still home to hundreds of wild, free flowing rivers, full of forms of life – fish, amphibians, insects, otters.









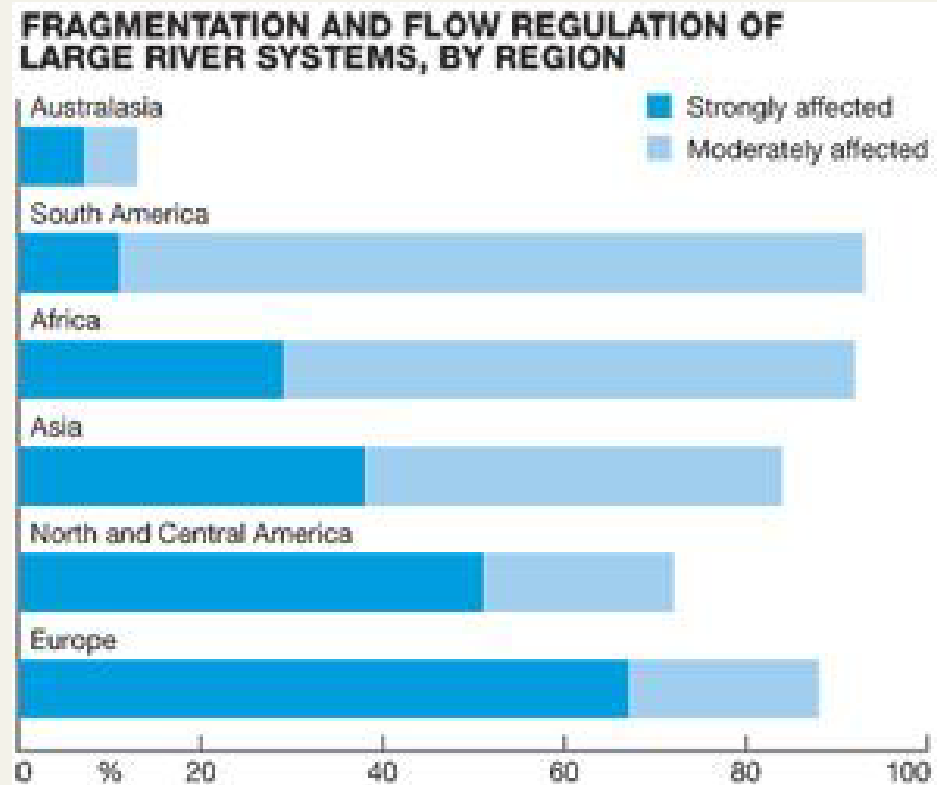


## The threat and what is at stake

W-Europe: 10% of rivers of "very high conservation value"

Balkan region: 35%  
(Albania, Montenegro: 50%)

EU freshwater ecosystems in critical state





Alternate link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETXKI6qQIVM>



## The threat and what is at stake

1000 HPP plants in Balkan region,

app. 10.000 In Danube basin,

small HPP also of high impact

and more to come!

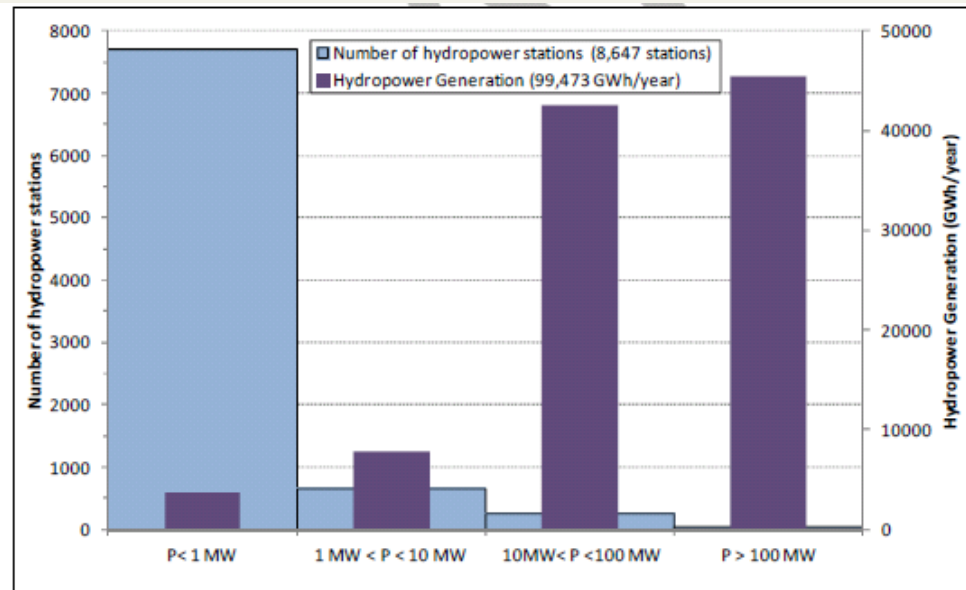


Figure 30: Relation between number of hydropower stations and hydropower generation, in GWh/year (Source: Replies to the Danube Questionnaire, Question 3.5).

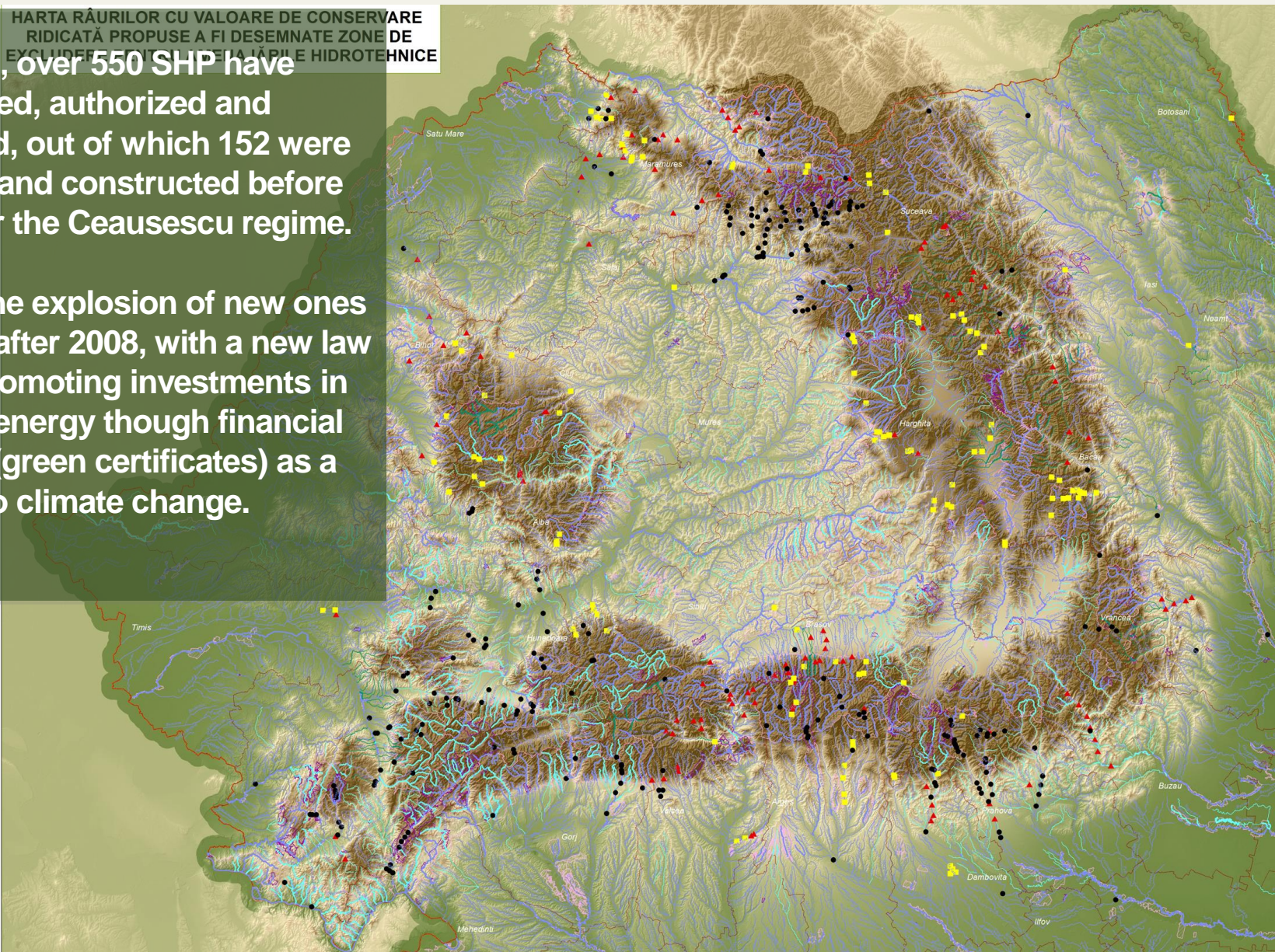




HARTA RÂURILOR CU VALOARE DE CONSERVARE  
RIDICATĂ PROPUSE A FI DESEMNAȚE ZONE DE  
EXCLUZIE ÎN TULUI DE LA RÂPILOR HIDROTEHNICE

In Romania, over 550 SHP have been planned, authorized and constructed, out of which 152 were authorized and constructed before 1990, under the Ceausescu regime.

However, the explosion of new ones took place after 2008, with a new law (no. 220) promoting investments in renewable energy though financial incentives (green certificates) as a response to climate change.





## The drivers

---

EU climate policy (20-20-20)

Development objectives

Investment patterns (financial crisis!)

Feed-in tariffs, EU funds, IFI investments without biodiversity safeguards

Weak governance structures (capacity gaps, corruption...)

Poor economies



## Legislative gaps

---

Lack of **strategic planning** (River Basin Management Plans vs other plans)

Lack of **transparency/ public consultation** for authorizations

Efficiency of the measures to reduce impacts is **not monitored/evaluated** and there are no sanctions for non-compliance

In 99% of SHP cases, the authorities **do not require a full environmental** impact assessment, deciding that a study is not needed

Through the new SHP development, the ecological status of rivers is even more altered, which leads to the impossibility to reach the „good status” objective of the Water Framework Directive.



## Infringement precedent

---

2012-2014: local activists and NGO`s filed complaints to the European Commission, providing evidence related to SHP investments in 3 Natura 2000 sites in Romania, indicating a systemic breach of EU legislation (especially Water Framework Directive and Habitats Directive)

**The Commission started the infringement procedure against Romania in May 2015.**

The EC confirmed that Romanian **authorities did not fulfilled their obligations deriving from the Water Framework Directive (especially Art. 4 (1) (a) and Art.4 (7)), as well as those deriving from the Habitats Directive (especially Art. 6.3.-6.4.).**



## CAPRA, BUDA AND OTIC RIVERS



The aquatic fauna in one of the N2000 sites – ROSCI0122 Făgăraș Mountains was negatively impacted on a total surface of **125 square km, 6,3% of the total surface of the site.**

According to the Commission, the deterioration of a 6,3% from the potential species **represents a significant damage of the whole integrity of the N2000 site.**





## DEJANI RIVER





# TAIA RIVER





## VISTISOARA RIVER







## WWF`s recommendations

---

WWF asks for immediate solutions, taking into consideration that any delay leads to major costs on behalf of European biodiversity and water quality.

- **Pre- planning mechanism**
- **Designation of NO GO areas**
- **Enforcement of the legislation**



# Thank you

---

[www.panda.org](http://www.panda.org)

