

# Thematic Assessment on Biodiversity for Moldova

Part of the Green Agenda for Armenia, Georgia,  
Moldova and Ukraine project

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### DISCLAIMER:

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The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Sida, SEI, or any other project partners or stakeholders.

The report is based on information available up to Spring 2024. For the latest data and analysis, please refer to the national green transition assessment report for Moldova.

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## Acronyms

ABS	Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity
ADA	Austrian Development Agency
AFD	French Development Agency
BAU	Business-As-Usual (BAU) Scenario
BioLAB	UN Biodiversity Lab
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBTM	Medium Term Budget Planning
CHM	Clearing House Mechanism
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CoE	Council of Europe
CPB	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EA	Environmental Agency
EC	European Commission
EEA	European Environmental Agency
EGD	European Green Deal
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ENPI	Eastern Neighbourhood Partnership Initiative
EU BDS	EU Biodiversity Strategy
EU4ENFDA	EU4Environment Project
FLEG	Food and Drug Administration Improving Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
G.D.	Governmental Decision
GBIF	Global Biodiversity Information Facility
GBS	Global Biodiversity Strategy
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
GSD	GmbH Global Support and Development
IAS	Invasive alien species
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LIFE - RENATA	Roadmap for the alignment of EMERALD network establishment and management to NATURA 2000 standards in Moldova
LPAs	Local Public Authorities
MEN	Moldovan Emerald Network
MoE	Ministry of Environment of Moldova



NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NDS	National Development Strategy European Moldova
NEF	National Environmental Fund
NEN	National Ecological Network
NFERP	National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme
NGOs	Non-Governmental organizations
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
PAs	Protected Areas
P.D.	Parliament Decision
RM	Republic of Moldova
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling methodology
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UNDP	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value added tax
WB	World Bank
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WDPA	World Database on Protected Areas
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council



# 1. Current state and trends of biodiversity in Moldova

## 1.1 The profile of the thematic area

The Republic of Moldova (hereinafter referred to as “Moldova”) was granted European Union (EU) candidate status in June 2022. In December 2023, EU leaders decided to open accession negotiations. Moldova has taken the EU environmental acquis under the Association Agreement (Association agreement with Moldova, 2014) between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova (RM). Over the past 10 years, the government of Moldova has consistently transposed the relevant EU Acquis into national environmental and biodiversity legislation according to the EU Association Agreement. The Association Agenda until the year 2027 (EU-Republic of Moldova Association Agenda, 2022) and the RM-EU Association Agreement were revised, and the commitments in the chapter "Environment" and the chapter "Climate policies" were updated.

Moldova made a substantial effort to align its biodiversity goals with the European Green Deal (EGD) in recent years. It established a package of policy initiatives covering some environmental aspects. The National Development Strategy (NDS) "European Moldova 2030" (NDS “Moldova Europeana”, 2030), adopted by the Government of the Republic of Moldova aims to increase the area of forested lands and natural areas protected by the state. The Ministry of Environment (MoE) has launched the process of updating the Environmental Strategy for 2024-2030 to ensure sustainable development of the country in line with the European Green Deal and Agenda 2030. The National Biodiversity Strategy (NBSAP) and Action Plan for 2015-2020 (NBSAP, 2020) is also under revision now with an aim to update it in line with four objectives of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the EU Strategy on Biodiversity for 2030 (CBD COP Decision 15/4 KMGBF, 2022; EU Biodiversity strategy for 2030, 2020) and the European Green deal. The draft for the NBSAP for 2025-2030 update has been developed and according to MoE action plan shall be approved in 2025..

Biodiversity in Moldova is increasingly **threatened** nationally because of deforestation, fragmentation, climate change and other stressors. The biodiversity of natural forests is also under significant **pressure** due to various human activities. **Overexploitation of natural ecosystems** through inadequate timber, illegal logging, excessive pasture management practices, etc. represents the major factor that affects biodiversity. **Ineffective management of forests** in the last century caused a decrease in the forest genetic resources of the country's forests.

**Illegal logging** causes the denaturation of habitats and microclimates specific to the forest environment, and as a result, ecosystem changes take place to the detriment of forests (NFERP, 2023). The cumulative volume of illegal logging officially detected in



the period 2010-2022 in the forest fund, public property, managed by the "Moldsilva" Agency or by the administrative-territorial units, constituted about 71 000 m<sup>3</sup>, or an average of 5500 m<sup>3</sup>/year (which constitutes approximately 1% of the average allowed harvests) (FLEG, 2015; Statistic Report, 2023).

Currently, forest vegetation is unevenly distributed and highly **fragmented**, and the Central Moldavian Plateau, with the highest altitude (maximum 429 m), has the most significant areas of forests, called Codrii.

**The invasive alien species** (IAS) in Moldova represent an important challenge for biodiversity conservation and are also a result of climate change. However, not enough legal and administrative measures are currently being developed and implemented.

The current phytosanitary status of forests also confirms **the vulnerability of forests to climate change**. As a result of the recent droughts (years 2007, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2019, 2020, 2022), have led to degradation of forest ecosystems, the reduction of the biological resistance of trees to the action of negative factors, which conditioned the vulnerability of stands, the intensification of drying processes on large surfaces.

### 1.1.1 Nature conservation

The R Moldova territory is composed of two main natural areas: forest-steppe and steppe. Agricultural and urban ecosystems comprise almost 85% of the country's territory, while natural and semi-natural ecosystems comprise about 15%. Moldova's main natural ecosystems are: forest (9.6 - 10.7%), steppe (1.9%), rocky habitats or petrophytes (0.68%), and aquatic (2.8%) (The 6th NR CBD, 2015).

The diversity of **flora species** includes 5,568 plant species. Biodiversity is represented by the following ecosystems: forest, meadow, steppe (petrophytes, aquatic and marshy (NBSAP, 2020). There are more than 30 species of woody plants, which are important sources of livelihood for the rural population, and about 200 species of medicinal plants.

The diversity of **wild fauna species** is also relatively rich, including 55 Ponto-Caspian relict species (of which 10% are endemic to the Black Sea Basin).

Forests are the richest in terms of biodiversity. Due to the planting of acacia species (over 40% of the forests), the initial biodiversity composition of the forest ecosystems was changed. About 500 plant species are typical for forest habitats, of which 172 are rare, and 103 are protected by the state. The country has a very low level of forest cover. The coverage with different categories of forest vegetation is low (13.4%), and the share of forests is even lower (about 11%).





The national forest fund currently constitutes 12.7% of the country's territory. Most of the land covered with forests (87.2%) is owned by the state, the rest by municipalities (12.2%) and only 0.6% by private owners.

The forest sector's direct economic contribution is relatively small at just 0.27% of Gross Domestic Products (GDP) in 2010 (NDS "European Moldova ", 2030). The Forest Research and Management Institute develops and maintains the general Forest Management Plans. Forest biodiversity is increasingly threatened nationally because of deforestation, fragmentation, climate change, invasive alien species, and other stressors. Overexploitation of natural ecosystems through inadequate timber, illegal logging, exceeded pasture management practices, etc. represents the major factor that affects biodiversity. Ineffective management of forests in the last century caused a decrease in the forest genetic resources of the country's forests.

In Moldova, 314 **protected areas (PA)**, 158 sites of centuries-old trees (429 trees), and 472 rare species of flora and fauna are registered. The total area of the State Protected Natural Areas Fund is 210 695.87 ha (2106.96 km<sup>2</sup>) or 5.8% (2018) of the country's total territory. The State Protected Natural Areas Fund includes several categories of PAs: National Park, Biosphere reserve, Scientific reserves, Nature monuments, Nature reserves, Landscape reserves, Natural Recourse reserve, Wetlands of international importance (Ramsar), Multifunctional management areas, Landscape architecture monuments, Dendrological and zoological gardens (Law no. 1538/1998). Two national parks, one UNESCO Biosphere reserve, and five scientific reserves are part of the PA system. The strictly protected (intact) areas of the total area of 2601,7 ha represent part of the Scientific reserves and the National Park Orhei. The **Cadastre of Protected Areas** in Moldova was developed by the Institute of Ecology and Geography (PAs Cadastre, 2014).

According to the requirements of international conventions, the **National Ecological Network (NEN)** was established, covering 11 113 km<sup>2</sup>. The network comprises two component parts: (i) a system of protected areas, which function as "core conservation areas" for the National Ecological Network; and (ii) different categories of productive areas (corridors, restoration areas and buffer zones) under conservation management. The network provides for the designation of 207 002 ha of protected areas. (Law no. 94/2007). A total of 61 sites, 38 natural habitats and 163 species of flora and fauna of **Moldova's Emerald Network (MEN)** of Areas of Special Conservation Interest have been adopted by the Standing Committee of the Berne Convention (Bern Convention, 2022), and approved at the national level through the Law no. 94/2007 on ecological network, Chapter III "Emerald Network", considering it as part of the Pan-European Ecological Network. The Moldova's Emerald Network constitutes approximately 8.0% of the territory of the Republic of Moldova.



### 1.1.2 Species conservation

A key indicator of the biodiversity status is the number of rare and endangered species included in the editions of the **Red Book**: the first edition (year 1978) included 55 species; second edition (year 2002) listed 242 species; and the third edition (year 2015) documented 427 vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered species. The 3rd edition of the Red Book was developed in accordance with Law no. 325/2005 on the Red Book, with its rarity criteria harmonised with those of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List (Red Book, 2015; Law no. 325/2005).

**Invasive alien species** in Moldova represent one of the major challenges for biodiversity conservation. There is no list of invasive plant species developed in Moldova yet. A few scientific papers describe a limited number of plant invasive species, in certain protected areas (e.g. about 15% of the territory (800ha) is affected to a different extent by the American maple tree in "Padurea Domneasca" scientific reserve). The list of invasive animal species was developed and includes 149 species. The list of the most dangerous invasive species of animals for the Republic of Moldova (107 species) was revised (Institute of Zoology, 2014).

The **ichthyofauna** is very diverse, it includes endemic and relict species in the Dniester River basin, the Prut River and the Danube River basin, and the Beleu lake ecosystem, Manta ponds, Costești-Stâncă reservoir. The total area of **water basins** used for fish farming in the Republic of Moldova is 20 507 ha.

### 1.1.3 Nature restoration

**Regeneration and extension of forest areas** are a priority of the national forestry sector. In 2002-2020 the forest regeneration and extension activities covered the area of 137 987 ha, of which 77 146 ha (56 %) covered with regeneration works, and 60 841 ha (44 %) covered with extension works. The reforestation works were carried out within the forest areas managed by the "Moldsilva" Agency. A total area of 56 965 ha (74 %) was naturally regenerated through natural regeneration, and forest tree plantation activities artificially regenerated 20 181 ha (26 %). The total 55 532 ha (91%) were extended by afforestation of degraded lands and, respectively, the creation of protection belts for agricultural fields, owned by local public authorities (LPAs), and 5307 ha or 9% - by afforestation within the forest area managed by the "Moldsilva" Agency.

The National Forests Extension and Rehabilitation Programme (NFERP) for the period 2023-2032 and the Action Plan for its implementation for the period 2023-2027, (G.D.nr.55/2023) foresees extensive activities of planting trees/seedlings and rehabilitation/promotion of forest vegetation on an area of at least 145 thousand hectares for a period of 10 years (NFERP, 2023). Two directions are assumed to achieve the general objective: 1) Extension (through afforestation) – actions to create new



forestry crops at approximately 110 thousand ha. 2) Rehabilitation (mainly through reforestation) – restoration or reconstruction of forested land heavily affected by various forms of degradation, estimated at about 35 thousand ha.

The Republic of Moldova's **water resources** total about 1.32 million m<sup>3</sup> are represented by 3621 rivers and streams with a length of over 16 000 km, 4126 natural lakes, and artificial basins with an area of 40 878 ha. (ESM, 2024)

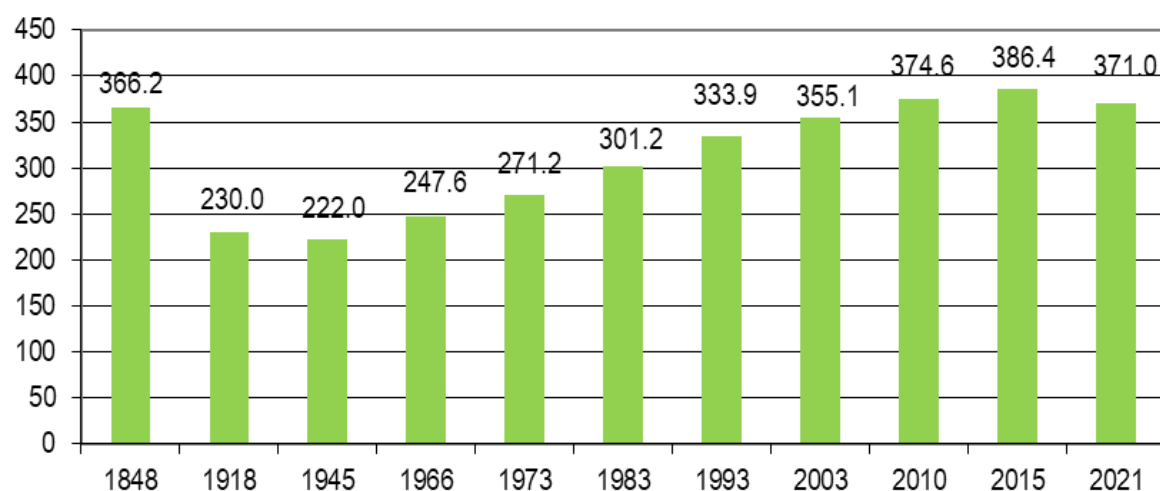
**Water resources.** Moldova (including the territory on the left bank of the Nistru River) is experiencing relatively higher water stress conditions, with an annual water exploitation index of 13% (drinking water, irrigation, hydropower). Moldova is highly dependent on surface water, which makes the country highly dependent on the external inflow in its water balance. Annually, Moldova uses around 800 million m<sup>3</sup> of water, of which 85 % is met from surface water resources. There are two primary sources for water use: the Dniester River, which provides almost 90 % of the water use from surface waters, and the Prut River. There has been a decreasing trend in water use over time. Annual freshwater use had decreased by about 9% in 2017 compared to 2000. The sectors that are the next biggest water users are the water supply industry (15 %) and agriculture (10 %).

Some indicators on nature conservation and restoration in Moldova are presented in Table 1.

### 1.2 Key statistics and trends in biodiversity conservation and restoration

According to the National Development Strategy "European Moldova "), approved by Law no. 315/2022, the **national objective for forest cover** is to reach at least 16.3% of the country's territory forested by 2030. The **protected area extension target** is set at least 8.0% by 2025 and at least 10.0% of the country's territory by 2030.

Currently, forest vegetation is distributed unevenly and strongly fragmented, and the Central Moldavian Plateau, with the highest altitude (maximum 429 m), has the most significant areas of forests. The national forest fund includes and manages most of the forest vegetation. Figure 1 shows the evolution of the surfaces covered with forests in the Republic of Moldova from 1848 to 2021.



**Figure 1. Evolution of areas covered with forests in the Republic of Moldova (thousand ha) (NFERP 2032)**

Forests provide the necessary habitats for biodiversity and other essential **environmental benefits** such as soil protection, water regulation and carbon sequestration. Most sector analyses highlight the underused potential of the forestry sector, which refers to (a) carbon sequestration valued at \$460 000 in 2011, (b) ecotourism, which is valued at \$7.9 mil per annum and employs circa 1400 persons. (WTTC, 2013).

The **forest ecosystems** provide **ecosystem services**, such as non-wood products: wild fruits, berries, seeds, medicinal plants, bee honey, etc. The volumes of harvesting/gathering, processing and marketing non-timber forest products vary according to environmental factors and market demands. The total volume of forest by-products collected/harvested and their commercial value is for wild fruits and berries 597.0 tons, medicinal plants - 64.0 tons, and bee honey - 4.3 tons/year. The value of forest ecosystem services (wood, non-timber forest products (NTFP), etc.) is estimated at \$28.3 million per year. Under the business-as-usual (BAU) scenario, forestry activities may add some \$0.6 million to Moldova's economy over the next 25 years. However, this revenue will disappear after 27 years as the capacity of ecosystems to generate economically valuable wood and NTFP is eroded. This ignores the considerable losses in other forest ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, water and soil erosion regulation, landscape provision and tourism.

The value of ecosystem services in tourism, forestry, agriculture, fishing, water supply, climate change and disaster mitigation is estimated at just under \$ 21 986 million in 2011. In 2011, the quantified value of ecosystem services equated to some 41% of GDP. Both the public and private sectors benefited from ecosystem services values. The carrying capacity is underused, and structural equation modelling (SEM) implies a decrease in the value of food provided by pastures in the short and long term. However, the annual values after 10–15 years are significantly higher than the BAU



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values. In addition, the BAU scenario may sometimes bring irreversible damage to ecosystems. The SEM scenario might significantly increase vegetal production due to the value added by organic products. A continuation of BAU in agriculture could cost Moldova's economy about \$10 695.784 million over the next 25 years (FLEG 2015).

Table 1. Nature conservation and restoration indicators in Moldova

Relevant statistics/ indicators	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Target 2030	Source of verification
Nature conservation							
% of the protected and other conserved terrestrial areas	5.8%	5.8%	5.8%	5.8%	5.8%	NDS European Moldova - National commitment: PAs coverage will be increased by 2025 by at least 8% of the territory, and by 2030 by at least 10% of the territory	The World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) <a href="https://www.protectedplanet.net/en/thematic-areas/wdpa?tab=WDPA">https://www.protectedplanet.net/en/thematic-areas/wdpa?tab=WDPA</a> OECMs are also applicable
% of areas under the Emerald Network areas of special conservation	-	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%	No national target	Statistica.md <a href="https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/en/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator_MED050/MED050400.px/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774">https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/en/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator_MED050/MED050400.px/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774</a>
% of the strictly protected areas (Strictly managed zones in 4 reserves)	1.23%	1.23%	1.23%	1.23%	1.23%	No national target	
Species conservation							
Number of Red Listed species of plants	208	208	208	208	208	A total of 208 species of plants and fungi have been included, with a total of 7 taxonomic groups assessed, including: 150	3rd edition of the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova <a href="https://zoology.md/sites/default/files/inline-">https://zoology.md/sites/default/files/inline-</a>

						species – angiosperms, 1 – gymnosperme species, 14 – pteridophytes species, 7 – bryophytes species, 8 – algae species, 14 – basidiomycetes species, 14 – ascomycetes species.	files/Cartea%20Rosie_Partea%20II%20Animale_0.pdf
Number of Red Listed species of animals	219	219	219	219	219	A total number of 219 species of animal species have been included, total 10 taxonomic groups assessed, including: – 30 – mammals species, 62 – birds species, 9 – reptiles species, 9 – amphibians species, 23 – fish species, 1 – cyclostomes species, 79 – insects species, 1 – colembos species, 1 – crustaceans species, 3 – bivalve species.	GBF 2030 <a href="https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-15/cop-15-dec-04-en.pdf">https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-15/cop-15-dec-04-en.pdf</a>  3rd edition of the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova. <a href="https://zoology.md/sites/default/files/inline-files/Cartea%20Rosie_Partea%20II%20Animale_0.pdf">https://zoology.md/sites/default/files/inline-files/Cartea%20Rosie_Partea%20II%20Animale_0.pdf</a>
Red List Index	0.950	0.950	0.950	0.950	0.950	No national target	Moldova Red List Index  <a href="https://www.ceicdata.com/en/moldova/environmental-red-list-index-annual/red-list-index">https://www.ceicdata.com/en/moldova/environmental-red-list-index-annual/red-list-index</a>

Number of invasive species recorded	149	149	149	149	149	No national target	<p>GBF 2030  <a href="https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-15/cop-15-dec-04-en.pdf">https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-15/cop-15-dec-04-en.pdf</a></p> <p>Rate of invasive species spread  <a href="https://madr.gov.md/sites/default/files/Documente%20atasate%20Avance%20Pagines/Raport%20VI%20cu%20privire%20la%20diversificarea%20biologica%20ENG%20Web%20final.pdf">https://madr.gov.md/sites/default/files/Documente%20atasate%20Avance%20Pagines/Raport%20VI%20cu%20privire%20la%20diversificarea%20biologica%20ENG%20Web%20final.pdf</a></p>
<b>Nature restoration</b>							
Reforestation/afforestation area, ha	4853	4702	4371	3354	3693	<p>NDS Moldova Europeana – afforestation commitment is 14,8% by 2025, and 16,3% by 2030.</p> <p>NFERP - By 2032, Forest extension – up to 15%  Forest extension by 2032 – 110 000ha  Forest restoration by 2032 – 35000ha (on degraded lands)</p>	<p>National Bureau of Statistics. Natural Resources and the Environment.  <a href="https://statistica.gov.md/files/files/publicatii_electronice/Mediu/Resursele_naturale_editia_2023.pdf">https://statistica.gov.md/files/files/publicatii_electronice/Mediu/Resursele_naturale_editia_2023.pdf</a></p> <p>Statistica.md  <a href="https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/en/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator_MED050/MED050400.px/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774">https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/en/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator_MED050/MED050400.px/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774</a></p>
Regeneration of forests (support to the natural regeneration), thousand ha	3410	3110	2899	2184	2125	NDS Moldova Europeana – afforestation commitment is 14,8% by 2025, and 16,3% by 2030.	<p>National Bureau of Statistics  <a href="https://statistica.gov.md/files/files/publicatii_electronice/Anuar_Statistic/2023/1_AS.pdf">https://statistica.gov.md/files/files/publicatii_electronice/Anuar_Statistic/2023/1_AS.pdf</a></p>



						NFERP - By 2032, Forest extension – up to 15% Forest extension by 2032 – 110 000ha Forest restoration by 2032 – 35000ha (on degraded lands)	Statistica.md <a href="https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/en/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator__MED050/MED050400.px/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774">https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/en/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator__MED050/MED050400.px/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774</a>
Area of planting and sowing, ha	-	1228	1076	875	1255	NDS Moldova Europeana – afforestation commitment is 14,8% by 2025, and 16,3% by 2030.  NFERP - By 2032, Forest extension – up to 15% Forest extension by 2032 – 110 000ha	Statistica.md <a href="https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/en/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator__MED050/MED050400.px/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774">https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/en/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator__MED050/MED050400.px/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774</a>
Length of free-flowing rivers, km	-	16 000	16 000	16 000	16 000	No national target	National Bureau of Statistics. Natural Resources and the Environment. <a href="https://statistica.gov.md/files/files/publicatii_electronice/Mediu/Resursele_naturale_editia_2023.pdf">https://statistica.gov.md/files/files/publicatii_electronice/Mediu/Resursele_naturale_editia_2023.pdf</a>
Water fund lands	85.4	86.7	86.9	87.9		No national target	Statistica.md <a href="https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/ro/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator__MED050/MED050100.px/table/tableViewLayout2/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774">https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/ro/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator/10%20Mediul%20inconjurator__MED050/MED050100.px/table/tableViewLayout2/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774</a>



### Main trends and challenges of nature restoration and conservation in the Republic of Moldova:

1. Forest biodiversity is increasingly **threatened** nationally by deforestation, fragmentation, climate change and other stressors. The biodiversity of natural forests is also under significant **pressure** due to various human activities. **Overexploitation of natural ecosystems** is caused by illegal logging (i.e. by private owners), and forest genetic resources are not taken into account in forest management plans. Overgrazing, habitat fragmentation and climate change, etc., are all major factors affecting biodiversity. **Illegal logging** causes the denaturation of habitats and microclimates specific to the forest environment, and as a result, ecosystem changes take place to the detriment of forests.
2. Currently, the forest vegetation is unevenly distributed and highly **fragmented**, and the Central Moldavian Plateau, with the highest altitude (maximum 429 m), has the most significant areas of forests.
3. The **invasive alien species** in Moldova represent an important challenge for biodiversity conservation. However, there are not sufficient legal and administrative measures being developed and in place.
4. The **vulnerability of forests to climate change** is evident by the current phytosanitary status of forests. As a result of the recent droughts, the degradation of forest ecosystems, the reduction of the biological resistance of trees to the action of negative factors, which conditioned the vulnerability of stands, and the intensification of drying processes on large surfaces.

### Barriers to nature conservation and restoration in the Republic of Moldova:

1. The lack of efficient **monitoring, control, and management of invasive alien species** that may affect natural resources and biodiversity is an important obstacle to the efficient conservation of biodiversity.
2. Poor or inadequate **monitoring and management planning for forest and protected areas**, as well as the National Ecological Network and Moldova's Emerald Network, are important obstacles to providing conservation measures and preventing biodiversity loss.
3. An **insufficient legal and institutional framework** is a considerable barrier to ensuring adequate conservation of natural resources and biodiversity conservation in line with the GBF goals.
4. **Insufficiency of financial resources** directly addressed for biodiversity conservation, efficient management of protected areas and forestry fund, climate change adaptation solutions etc.



## 2. Thematic area stakeholders

The main institutional actor in environmental protection and conservation in the Republic of Moldova is the Ministry of the Environment (G.D. no. 145/2021), with the functions of developing and coordinating environmental policies and subordinate administrative authorities and public institutions founded by it. The spectrum of the environmental issues covered by the MoE is shown in the organogram of the Ministry, presented in Figure 9 in Chapter 3.3.2.

The following subdivisions represent the specialised authorities under the Ministry of Environment:

1. The Environmental Agency (G.D. no. 549/2018) – with the functions of implementing environmental policies, evaluating and regulating (through authorization) activities with an impact on the environment, monitoring the quality of environmental components and providing information. The agency has an Environmental Reference Laboratory and two regional subdivisions in the north and south of the country.
2. Inspectorate for Environmental Protection (G.D. no. 548/2018) – with control functions of activities impacting the environment, how the provisions of normative and permissive acts are respected, and the application of contravention sanctions. The inspectorate has subdivisions in every district in the country.
3. Agency "Moldsilva" (G.D. no. 150/2010) - with functions of policy implementation in the fields of forestry and hunting, ensuring the protection and guarding of forests and fauna, maintaining and preserving biodiversity, functions carried out with the support of 26 forestry enterprises and public research institutions.
4. Agency "Apele Moldovei" (G.D. no. 882/2014) - with functions of implementing state policy in water management.
5. Agency for Geology and Mineral Resources (G.D. no. 485/2009) – with the functions of implementing the state policy in the field of geological research, rational use and protection of the subsoil, ensuring the research, recording and regulation of the use of mineral resources.
6. National Agency for the Regulation of Nuclear and Radiological Activities (G.D. no. 458/2015) – with the functions of implementing state policy in the field of nuclear and radiological activities, regulates the use of installations with sources of ionizing radiation and ensures the control and supervision of radioactive activities.
7. State Hydrometeorological Service - with functions of making observations on hydrometeorological and agrometeorological conditions, forecasting meteorological, hydrological and environmental factors, and warning of dangerous hydrometeorological phenomena.
8. Public Institution "National Office for the Implementation of Projects in the Environment" (G.D. no. 1249/2018) - with functions of implementing financial and technical, external



and internal assistance projects in environmental protection and the use of natural resources.

National Agency for Food Security (NAFS) and Customs Control Services (CCS) (G.D. no. 14/2023) follows to enhance their competence in identifying, detecting, and monitoring the transboundary movement of illegal trade in species and IAS as part of an integrated management system for biological resources.

Research institutions in the field of conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, as example Institute of Genetics, Physiology and Plant Protection, Institute of Botany (Botanical Garden) Alexandru Ciobotaru, Institute of Zoology, Institute of Microbiology and Biotechnology, Institute of Ecology and Geography – State Moldovan University, Forest Research and Management Institute, State Agricultural University (now merged with the State Technical University) will benefit from the project activities through the use of their institutional, technical and scientific capacity in the management of protected areas and biodiversity.

Private businesses, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Farmers Federation, Association of Hunters and Fishers from Moldova, Forest Enterprises, Furniture producers, Food processors, etc., will be involved in the consultation and awareness process to establish a dialogue and collaboration in implementing EGD.

Other stakeholders are rural households, farmers, private businesses, rural advisory services, scientific institutes, producers' groups/associations, and local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Schoolteachers and scholars, vulnerable people, women with children, retired people, etc., are important partners for public institutions in their activities to promote nature conservation. Among them are NGOs such as the Ecological Movement, EcoContact, Biotica, ECO TIRAS International association, and Forestry women, who have appropriate experience and qualifications in disseminating public information and training activities to ensure transparency and participation in decision-making. Working closely with the women's civil society and private sector is necessary. The NGOs in this sector, as the Women Association for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, the Women Organization of the Truth and Solidarity Party, the Moldovan Women Association, etc., will focus on gender issues and other activities such as training, public awareness campaigns, educational and facilitative actions, etc. The gender sensitivity and increased role of women in legislative procedures, policy design and capacity building are not sufficiently considered and should be improved.



Non-governmental organizations, local communities, and the academic sector would be the champions of the green transition. Voluntary and practical actions such as tree planting and information and awareness campaigns would help to disseminate biodiversity values and nature conservation benefits to a large population.

Private businesses have not been consulted yet about the green transition. Some opposition is expected from users of natural resources due to the perception that the green transition will constrain their business, requiring additional costs and efforts. An awareness campaign and joint actions would help better understand potential economic benefits and long-term profits.



### 3. Thematic area gap assessment

#### 3.1 Policy and legal framework

##### 3.1.1 Strategic and planning documents, goals and targets

The Republic of Moldova is party to many international conventions (Table 2) and committed to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

**Table 2. International agreements to which Moldova is a party**

International agreement	Date of ratification/adoption by Moldova
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn, 1979),	accessed 2000
Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro, June 1992),	ratified 1993
Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, 1979),	ratified 1993
Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (Hague, 1995),	accessed 1995
Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (25 June 1998, Aarhus, Denmark)	ratified 1999
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Washington, 1973)	ratified 2000
Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (EUROBATS)	adhered 2000
Cartagena Protocol on Biological Security (Montreal, January 29, 2000)	ratified 2002
Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar, 1971)	ratified 2000
Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity (ABS) (Nagoya, 29 October 2010)	ratified 2016
Nagoya Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety	ratified 2018
Amendment to the Convention on Access to Information, Justice and Public Participation in the Adoption of Decisions in the Field of Environment, adopted in Almaty on May 27, 2005	ratified 2007



The first policy document, approved in 2018, supporting the implementation of green economy principles in the Republic of Moldova was the "Green" Economy Promotion Programme for 2018-2020.

Moldova commitment under the Convention on Biological Diversity covers the years 2024 to 2030 and succeeds the first two strategies, covering the periods 2004-2010 and 2015-2020, respectively.

In 2015, in the Republic of Moldova, the Strategy on Biological Diversity for the years 2015-2020 was approved (G.D. no. 274/2015), the general objective of which was to "Reduce the current rate of loss of biodiversity, as a contribution to reducing poverty and for the benefit of all life forms on Earth. The document contains some of the aspirations of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, mainly referring to the extension of the protected areas network as well as to efficient and protective management. The main elements of the latest NBSAP were focused on: a) creation of institutional and legislative framework to stop biodiversity loss; b) conservation of flora and fauna species; c) sustainable extension and management of protected areas; d) protecting genetic resources and sharing benefits of using them; e) creating mechanisms for enabling ecosystem services; f) mobilizing resources for biodiversity conservation.

The NBSAP document for 2015-2020 is now under revision, to update it in line with the four objectives of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the European Green Deal, and the EU Strategy on Biodiversity for 2030.

Several targets proposed by the EU Strategy on Biological Diversity for 2030 are foreseen in the national policies. The set target of at least "15% forest cover", according to the Environment Strategy for 2014-2023 (which is under revision too) and the Action Plan of the Government for the period of 2021-2022 years as stated in the outdated NBSAP document, will remain in the newly planned NBSAP. It will likely be achieved through the National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme (NFERP) approved by the G.D. no. 55/2023.

Moldova intends to increase its protected area network from 5,65% to 8% by 2030 (all NBSAP documents have so far promoted increasing PA in the country). However, the high rate of agriculturalized landscape and unnecessary infrastructure (including those inherited from the Soviet era) pose challenges for conservation under PAs. This implies applying new and innovative approaches, such as the green economy or ecological farming/agriculture.

At the same time, there have been recently a series of changes in the objectives, priorities, directions of action and commitments in the field of biological diversity both at the national, regional and international level, which are not addressed in the policy documents, and which must be reflected and integrated into national strategic planning.



The new processes and developments globally, relevant to the field are:

1. The Kunming-Montreal Global Framework for Biodiversity (KMGBF), which was adopted in December 2022 at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to which the Republic of Moldova is a party. A major goal of the KMGBF is to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and restore levels of biological diversity by 2050. The KMGBF represents "an ambitious way forward for our planet" and provides countries with "the tools to turn the tide" concerning biodiversity loss.
2. The European Green Deal, in support of which the EU has adopted a series of important strategies that take into account the biodiversity component: the "From Farm to Fork" strategy, the new EU strategy on adaptation to climate change, the new EU forest strategy, and Zero Pollution Action Plan the new European soil Strategy as well as the new EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. These are intended to support each other, bringing together nature.

The national policy framework in the field of nature conservation consists of:

1. National Development Strategy "European Moldova 2030"
2. National Programme of forest extension and rehabilitation for the period 2023-2032 and the Action Plan for its implementation during the period 2023-2027
3. Environmental Strategy for the years 2014-2023 and the Action Plan for its implementation
4. The Programme on "Green" economy promotion in the Republic of Moldova for the years 2018-2020 and the Action Plan for its implementation
5. Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).

The Government of the Republic of Moldova has been consistent in transposing the relevant EU Acquis and international environmental and climate legislation according to the EU Association Agreement. Moldova has taken a special commitment to aligning with the EGD and considering the European Biodiversity Strategy 2030 targets.

The Environmental Strategy for 2014-2023 sets strategic targets for the Republic of Moldova on improving the quality of environmental factors and guaranteeing the population's right to a clean, healthy and sustainable natural environment.

The first Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change by 2020 (SACC) and the Action Plan for its implementation, approved by the G. D. no. 1009/2014, identified and provided actions aimed at advancing the climate resilience of the country's social and economic development. The key focus was integrating climate change adaptation issues into agriculture, water resources management, health, forestry, energy and transport sectoral strategies.





The national policy framework, as well as relevant thematic objectives and targets, are presented in Annex 2.

### **3.1.2 Compliance of national legal framework to international obligations/conventions and EU approximation**

The main elements of the EU acquis are enshrined in law, although Moldova needs to achieve further alignment with EU horizontal legislation. Laws on environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment have been amended and aligned with the EU directives (except for provisions specific to EU Member States) and entered into force in 2023. Moldova is a party to the Aarhus and Espoo conventions. Implementing its current environmental strategy is challenged by the lack of funding, low administrative capacity, and heavy reliance on international donors, especially for implementing and enforcing environmental legislation. Moldova lacks provisions on environmental liability and redress. By the Government Decision (G.D.no. 204/2023) the national mechanism on ecolabelling was approved and established. While provisions existed, the mechanism was not functional in practice due to the absence of essential tools for certifying bodies to operationalize it. Therefore, the main issue is about the lack of implementation capacity to ensure a fully functional system.

On nature protection, Moldova is partially aligned with the EU acquis. Moldova needs to pursue its work to identify and designate its Emerald Network to meet the objectives of the Natura 2000 network. The Moldovan Emerald Network only covers 8.0% of the territory, and its sufficiency rate to achieve the network objectives is only 24% (sufficiency index is expressed as a percentage of sufficient conclusions versus all conclusions). There is a need to revise the national biodiversity strategy and action plan and develop an enforcement mechanism for the existing legal provisions on appropriate assessment procedures ( Law no. 86/2014, Law no. 11/2017, and Law no. 94/2007), according to the Art.6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive, specifically on procedures for monitoring and reporting, and other related obligations. It needs to remedy enforcement issues related to the protection of species, sustainable use of resources and management of protected areas and both update and enforce forest policy. Moldova has adopted regulations governing the trade of wild animal species, but they are not aligned with EU regulations. Building administrative capacity and allocating more financial resources to this policy area are necessary.

Gaps in the level of legislative alignment have grown with the expansion and deepening of the EU acquis following the European Green Deal. In general, challenges remain concerning capacities for mainstreaming the environmental acquis and the European Green Deal in all policy areas, as well as for effective implementation and enforcement of legislation. Environmental protection and green transition would benefit from increased political attention and a whole-of-government and whole-of-the-economy approach.



The acquis' Chapter 27, "Environment and Climate Change," comprises over 200 major legal acts covering both horizontal and sectoral legislation (air quality, waste management, water quality, nature protection, industrial pollution control and risk management, chemicals, noise, civil protection and climate change) (Moldova-EU Questionnaire, Part II. 2022).

Law no. 1515/1993 on Environmental Protection is the basic law in the field of environmental protection aiming at: ensuring every human being the right to a healthy and aesthetically pleasing environment; fulfilling the supreme responsibility of each generation for the protection of the environment for future generations; achieving the broadest possible range of use of natural resources without exceeding permissible limits, avoiding their depletion and degradation, risk to human health and other undesirable and unforeseeable consequences; protecting of soil and subsoil, water and air from chemical, physical and biological pollution and other actions disturbing the ecological balance; preserving the biodiversity and the gene pool, the integrity of natural systems, national historical and cultural values; restoring the ecosystems and their components damaged by human activity or natural disasters.

Law no. 148/2023 on access to public interests' information includes provisions on proactive transparency, communication of information of public interest on request, objecting of actions or inactions of information providers, legal (juridical) liability, monitoring and control.

Law no. 1102/1997 on natural resources. Article 11. The basic principles of management: a) ensuring a sustainable use (which does not lead to degradation) of them; b) supporting the activity oriented towards the rational use of renewable natural resources and the saving of non-renewable ones; c) preventing the negative effects of economic activity on natural resources; d) not admitting the accumulation of functions related to the management of natural resources with activities of their use for profit; e) the use of natural resources against payment, except in cases of their regeneration; f) the priority of international law in the field of the use of transboundary natural resources.

The Water Law no. 272/2011 was completed with art. 19<sup>1</sup> Protected zones to continue harmonising with the Directive 2000/60/EC of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for community action in water resources. At the level of each river basin district, the registration of protected zones is carried out through the Register of Protected Zones, part of the State Cadastre of Waters, which includes the following types of protected zones: a) areas intended for the abstraction of drinking water from surface and groundwater, which have an average flow of provide more than 10 m<sup>3</sup> per day as an average or which serve more than 50 persons, as well as from water bodies that may be used in this way in the future those bodies of water intended for such future use; b) areas intended for the protection of aquatic species of economic importance - stagnant water bodies or watercourses, habitats of Indigenous species,



which maintain biodiversity and whose existence is important for the management of water resources; c) water bodies intended for leisure, including those identified as bathing waters; d) nutrient-sensitive areas, including vulnerable and sensitive areas, in particular those in agglomerations without wastewater treatment plants, those where is insufficient or improperly treated wastewater and those where are no systems of biological treatment of wastewater; e) areas intended for the protection of habitats or species, where the maintenance or improvement of water status is an important factor for their protection, including areas important for the Emerald network and wetlands of international importance. At each revision, information on protected areas is included in the River Basin District Management Plan. It is supplemented by maps, indicating the location of each protected zone and the provisions of national law under which those zones have been identified.

Moldova should implement the Bern Convention provisions on strictly controlling the introduction of non-native species, and to align to provisions of the Regulation (EU) no. 1143/2014 on invasive alien species. To be mentioned that Moldovan legislation doesn't provide any specific legal provisions related to invasive species, there are no sufficient capacities for monitoring, risk assessment, detection of such species, as well as no mechanism in place to manage, prevent or combat possible threats posed by non-native species and possible social-economic or environmental damages to ecosystems, biodiversity and human health. Also, the Regulation (EU) no. 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species has not yet been transposed into national legislation. At the level of policy and legislative framework, two outdated strategies (NBSAP for 2015-2020 and Food Safety Strategy for 2011-2015) included provisions for the mitigation of impacts from iIAS as well as several legislations acts (such as Law on Vegetation Kingdom) should be updated. The national legislation will be enhanced and harmonized with the EU approaches and standards for invasive alien species, including a more complex and comprehensive system of fines, penalties and administrative measures. A series of specific mechanisms should be developed: research, monitoring and surveillance of such species should be undertaken at regular base; adopt certain emergency measures based on available scientific evidence; carried out border control on animals and plants to prevent the intentional introduction of invasive alien species; early detection and rapid eradication measures developed that are crucial to prevent their establishment and spread; proportionate restoration measures should be undertaken to strengthen the ecosystems' resilience towards invasions, to repair the damage caused and to enhance the conservation status of species and their habitats.

The Republic of Moldova has committed to fully transposing Directive no. 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds and Directive no. 1992/43/EC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora into national legislation. Law no. 439/1995 on Animal Kingdom proposes measures for the protection and conservation of migratory birds, their breeding areas, resting areas along their migration pathways and



establishes new special avifaunistic protection areas, including preventing pollution and deterioration of habitats of waterfowl. The Law no. 1538/1998 on state natural protected areas was completed with provisions requesting establishing special avifaunistic protected areas in important forest and steppe ecosystems, wetlands (including of international importance), breeding sites, hibernation and migration pathways. All areas of special avifaunistic protection have to be designed based on scientific criteria. These amendments have been approved through Law no. 61/2011 on the modification and completion of some legislative acts.

Law no. 239/2007 on Vegetation Kingdom has been amended with provisions to ensure appropriate measures for protecting and conserving natural habitats and plant species, and establish a strict system of protection for plant species of European interest, applying prohibitions at all stages of the biological cycle.

Law no. 94/2007 on ecological network introduced the definition of Emerald Network of areas of special interest for conservation along with special provisions for establishing the Emerald Network in Moldova and setting attributions for the central environmental authority, scientific institutions and other competent authorities.

The PAs system is mainly regulated by the Law no. 1538/1998 on Fund of natural state protected areas that provides the legal framework for 307 objects under 12 different categories of protected areas: 7 different types (scientific reserve, national park, monument of the nature reserve, nature reserve, landscape reserve, resource reserve, managed area multifunctional) are aligned to IUCN classification, three types are applied at the local scale (dendrological garden, zoo and monuments of landscape architecture, and two types are established by other international regulations - biosphere reserve (UNESCO programme) and area wetland of international importance (Ramsar Convention). The management of certain types of PAs is established by G.D. no.782/2000, which approved national park framework regulations, nature monuments, resource reserves, and biosphere reserves.

The Ministry of Environment plans to review the PA-related legal framework (primarily Law no.1538/1998) and reformulate the PA concept in order to ensure much better conservation of remaining habitats under the updated NBSAP 2030. The new national PAs concept will have to meet both conservation objectives raised by the EU policy and tackle climate change, along with other challenges Moldova faces (such as energy crisis, food chain security, etc.). According to preliminary plans, the reformation of the "Moldsilva" Agency, as well as the creation of separate institutions responsible for the management of the PA, and other state bodies, will envisage an institutional separation of the PA system to improve conservation and reduce illegalities associated with PA sustainable development.



The Emerald Network of Moldova was established by Law No. 94/2007, amended in 2022. It includes 61 Emerald sites, 38 habitats, and 163 species adopted by the Bern Convention.

Law no. 136/2007 on zoos transposes Council Directive no. 1999/22/EC of 29 March 1999 relating to keeping wild animals in zoos. This law also lays down the conditions that zoo administrators must meet in the conservation and maintenance of wild animals, by housing animals under conditions that meet the biological and conservation requirements for the species being maintained.

According to Forest Code No.69/2024, Moldova's forests' primary function is protecting the environment to ensure ecological balance. Wood harvesting is allowed only within the limits set by forest planning operations. Moldova's legislation prohibits any form of illegal logging, from harvesting to placement on markets or import/export activities.

The legal framework of Moldova does not allow any hunting of strictly protected species listed on the Annex IV of the Habitats Directive and the birds not listed in Annex II of the Birds Directive. Law no. 298/2018 on hunting and hunting fund prohibits hunting of strictly protected species. The law is under revision to improve the regulatory framework for hunting activities.

Law no. 86/2014 on environmental impact assessment, which partially transposes Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13.12.2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (codified text) sets the conditions to prevent or minimize impacts on all environmental components, including soil protection, that may occur because of economic activities.

The legal framework and EU environmental axis approximation are presented in Annex 3.

### **3.1.3 Summary of gaps. Bottlenecks and needs**

Several strategic documents are in place or being developed at the national level that are relevant to the EGD biodiversity thematic area. The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2030 is under the development and there is the need to include there the provisions of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the 8th Environment Action Programme (Decision, 2022), specifically on nature restoration, extension of protected land areas and their effective management, inclusive strictly protected areas, reduction in the number of Red List species threatened by invasive alien species, minimisation of the negative impacts on sensitive species and habitats.

A summary of gaps in compliance with the national legal framework to international obligations/conventions and EU approximation is presented in Table 3. Since 2014,



Moldova has been in the process of transposition to the EU acquis. The main national legal framework in the field of nature conservation has been improved and partially aligned with the EU legal framework. There is a further need to align the national legislation with the European Union's legislation in the field of nature conservation, specifically the Bird and Habitat directives, nature restoration legal framework, etc.

**Table 3. Summary of gaps in the Compliance of the national legal framework with international obligations/conventions and EU approximation**

**Are all the thematic areas relevant to the European Green Deal (EGD) subtopics covered by national strategic documents?**

There are strategic documents in place or in the course of development at the national level that are relevant to the EGD biodiversity thematic area:

- **NDS European Moldova, 2030.** The national targets for nature conservation related to afforestation and the extension of protected areas are relevant to the EGD subtopics. The afforestation commitment is 14,8% by 2025 and 16,3% by 2030.
- **National Environment Strategy 2030.** National targets for nature conservation related to the afforestation and extension of protected areas are relevant to the EGD subtopics.
- **National forest extension and Rehabilitation Programme, 2032.** National targets for nature conservation related to the afforestation and extension of protected areas are relevant to the EGD subtopics. By 2032, Forest extension – up to 15%, Forest extension by 2032 – 110 000ha, Forest restoration by 2032 – 35000ha (on degraded lands)
- **NBSAP 2030 (in progress).** National targets for nature conservation related to the afforestation and extension of protected areas are relevant to the EGD subtopics.

**Have the related sector-specific international agreements been honoured? What are the main issues?**

Moldova has joined many international agreements on biodiversity and nature conservation. The Environmental sector mainly meets the requirements of these agreements.

- Moldova is developing the updated **NBSAP for 2030** in line with the KMGBF under the CBD. However, there are limited institutional capacities for monitoring and data management, sufficient to ensure the reporting process to international conventions. Low speed of implementation of international provisions at the national level. International projects usually support the reporting process.
- **Bern Convention (European)**—The Emerald Network for Moldova has been established. However, there are insufficient capacities to support monitoring of species and habitats, data management, and low human and digital capacities to ensure the reporting process.
- **Aarhus Convention**—public access to information, public participation, and access to justice in the field of nature conservation. A national system for public access to information and participation is established and in place. However, more capacities are required to ensure widespread public information and awareness in the field of nature conservation.
- **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, CITES Convention on Trade**, and other relevant conventions in the field of species and habitat conservation – insufficient implementation due to limited financial and human resources.

**Are the current strategic objectives and targets in the thematic area aligned with those of the EGD? How much do they differ?**





The current strategic objectives and targets mainly correspond to those of EGD but do not fully meet them. PAS' coverage is not sufficient, and their system is insufficient; management plans have not yet been established. National legislation largely corresponds to the EU but is transposed partially. The adoption of the EU legal framework for nature restoration needs to be strengthened.

**Has the relevant EU legal framework been transposed in a suitable way relative to the EGD? What are the most significant issues?**

The national legal framework in nature conservation is partially transposed. Several legal documents are in place and partially harmonised with the EU directives in this field. However, further transposition of national legislation is needed. Insufficient human resources and skills are mentioned when transporting EU legislation to the national level.

**Are there ongoing discussions on transposing the EU acquis to align it with national and EGD goals? How far along are they?**

Starting in 2014, Moldova has been in the process of transposing the EU acquis. The main national legal framework in the field of nature conservation has been improved and partially aligned with the EU legal framework. A new phase of legal transpositional work will be undertaken. Insufficient human and financial resources are the limiting factors. On 14 December 2023, the European Council decided to open accession negotiations with Moldova.

The transposition of the EU acquis to align it with national and EGD goals started in 2014. The National Moldovan report on transposition of the EU acquis in the field of Environmental protection was prepared and submitted in 2022.

## 3.2 Instruments for policy implementation

### 3.2.1 Regulatory and economic instruments

Several legally adopted instruments in place to provide a framework of regulatory, economic and voluntary mechanisms that support the green transition:

- Forestry Code (no. 69 of March 28, 2024)
- Law on Protection of the Environment (no. 1515-XII of June 16, 1993)
- Law on natural resources (no. 1102-XIII of February 6, 1997)



- Law on the fund of state-protected natural areas (no. 1538-XIII of February 25, 1998)
- Law on the fish stock, fishing and fish farming (no. 149-XVI of June 8, 2006)
- Law of the Plant Kingdom (no. 239-XVI of 8 November 2007)
- Animal Kingdom Law (no. 439-XIII of April 27, 1995)
- Law on the ecological network (no. 94-XVI of April 5, 2007) Law on regulation and control of GMOs (no.755 of December 21, 2001)
- Law on regulation and control of GMOs (no.152 of June 09, 2022)
- Law on payment for environmental pollution (no.1540 of February 25, 1998)
- Law on environmental impact assessment (no. 86 of May 29, 2014)
- Fiscal code of the Republic of Moldova (no.1163 of April 24, 1997). Title VIII Taxes for natural resources, tax rates
- The Criminal Code of the Republic of Moldova (no. 985 of April 18, 2002)., Chapter VII, articles 86-87, chapter IX in articles 109-158, chapter X article 177; Criminal Code art. 223-235
- Law on green spaces of urban and rural localities (no. 591 of September 23, 1999)
- Law on strategic environmental assessment (no.11 of March 02, 2017)
- Law on the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova no. 325 of December 15, 2005)

The national legal framework for biodiversity conservation includes legislative acts that regulate biodiversity directly or indirectly.

**Forestry Code** (no. 69 of March 28, 2024).

establishes the legal framework regarding the sustainable management of the forest fund, the conservation and restoration of biological diversity, regardless of the type of ownership, as well as the rational use and provision of forest resources for the current and future needs of society. Forestry juridical relations between users of the forest fund are regulated by this code, civil code, land code, environmental legislation and other normative acts in the domain. The objective of forestry legal relations is constituted actions produces by legal entities in relation to the forests, lands of the forest fund and forest vegetation from outside the forest fund. The economic mechanism established by the code is related to use of forest and hunting resources and is carried out against payment. Liability for violation of forestry legislation is referred to illegal cutting and/or damage to trees and shrubs, destruction and/or damage of forest crops, of young trees from natural regeneration, of natural vegetation intended for afforestation and reforestation, etc. The code establish a mechanism for compensation for forest production losses.

**Law on the protection of the environment** (no. 1515-XII of June 16, 1993) has in art. 15 para. e<sup>1</sup>) regulates the organization of the planning, monitoring and reporting system of environmental programmes, the use of budgetary resources in accordance with the principles of good governance, etc. The law constitutes the legal framework and basis for elaborating special normative acts and instructions in special issues from





the field of environmental protection, for the protection of natural resources and biodiversity conservation. This law corresponds to the provisions of the EU directives related to the protection of the environment. It is stipulated in the Association Agreement of the Republic of Moldova with the European Union, as well as all strategies on a national level that create the general framework for this document.

**Law on natural resources** (no. 1102-XIII of February 6, 1997) regulates relations in the field of use, protection and reproduction of natural resources for the purpose of ensuring ecological security and the development sustainability of the country. The law regulates the use of natural resources and establishes the mechanism for the economic management of natural resources. Here, the "user pays" principle is strictly promoted; it establishes that all natural resources can only be used against payment. The legislature establishes the range of payments for the use of natural resources. It is calculated by the user according to the provisions of this law, based on the volume of resources used.

- The procedure for granting the title of use (license) on some concrete natural resources
- The economic management mechanism of natural resources

**Law on the fund of natural areas protected by the state** (no. 1538-XIII of February 25, 1998) establishes the legal bases of the creation and operation of the fund of natural areas protected by the state, its principles, mechanism and method of conservation, as well as the attributions of central and local public authorities, of non-governmental organizations and citizens in this field. The rights and obligations of the holders are regulated in natural areas protected by the state. Title IX of the law provides a list of actions that may trigger civil, administrative or criminal liability, according to the legislation in force.

**Law on the plant kingdom** (no. 239-XVI of November 8, 2007) brings into line with the provisions of the Council Regulation no. 338/97/CE of December 9, 1996 on protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein and with the Directive 92/43/EEC of the Council on conservation of natural habitats and species of flora and fauna. with the purpose of conservation and protection of plant kingdom, the law establishes the legal framework for conservation, protection, restoration and the use of species of the plant kingdom. It also defines the responsibilities of all levels of public authorities and scientific institutions in the field. Additionally, the law sets out economic mechanisms to promote the rational use of the plant kingdom and establishes liability for violations of the related legislation.

**The law regarding the green spaces of urban and rural localities** (no. 591-XIII of 23 September 1999) regulates the relationships in the field of development and protection of green spaces in both urban and rural areas with the purpose of ensuring the right of every human being to a healthy and aesthetically pleasing environment, promoting the practice of tourism and recreational and sports activities in these



spaces. The law conditions the rights and obligations of the parties using green spaces.

**Law of the Animal Kingdom** (no. 439-XIII of 27 April 1995) regulates relations in the field of protection and use of wild animals (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects, crustaceans, molluscs, etc.), which naturally inhabit terrestrial, aquatic, atmospheric or soil environment, and that permanently or temporarily populate the territory of the country. The law also regulates the protection and use of domestic animals, as well as wild animals kept in captivity or semi-captivity for economic, scientific, cultural-educational and aesthetic purposes.

**Law on fish stock, fishing and fish farming** (no. 149-XVI of June 8, 2006) regulates the manner and conditions of creation and protection of the fish stock, of reproduction, growth and acquisition of hydrobionts, of improvement of aquatic fisheries objectives and fish farming development, establishes the activity of public authorities empowered to manage aquatic biological resources. If there is a violation of the provisions of this law, the offender not only pays the fine, but also repairs the damage caused to aquatic biological resources, calculated following Annex no. 2 of the law.

**Law on the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova** (no. 325-XVI of December 15, 2005) regulates social relations in the field of protection, use and restoration of extinct, critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable, rare and undetermined species of plants and animals, included in the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova, in order to prevent their disappearance and ensure the conservation of their genetic background, establishes the legal basis for keeping the Red Book, the attributions of public authorities at all levels and scientific institutions in field. The special use of the Red Book's species is allowed only for scientific and selection purposes, including the purposes of reproduction, propagation, cultivation/growing, acclimatization, as well as for cultural purposes (circus, zoological and botanical exhibitions, aquariums, etc.), for export operations, in cases of mass diseases of plants and animals. Violation of the provisions of this law is the subject of contravention, civil or criminal liability, as well as the limitation of the right to private property

The international agreements underpinning this Law include Convention of Biological Diversity, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), as well as partly the Convention on wetlands of international importance especially as waterfowl habitat (Ramsar, 1971) and the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, 1979).

**The Law on regulation and control genetically modified organisms** (no. 152 of June 9, 2022 ) transposes Directive 2001/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of March 12, 2001 on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms and repealing Council Directive 90/220/EEC, published in the Official Journal of the European Community L 106 of April 17, 2001, as last amended by



Regulation (EU) 2019/1381 of the European Parliament and the Council of 20 June 2019. The law establishes the normative and institutional framework necessary for carrying out the activities of obtaining, testing, using, marketing genetically modified organisms and their import/export operations, in compliance with the precautionary principle, in order to ensure the protection of human health and the environment, taking into account the socioeconomic interests of the population and the country. Liability measures and reparation of damages in case of an accident is established by the law. The costs and expenses, including contingencies, related to the assessment of damages and the undertaking of any appropriate response measures in the event of an accident shall be borne by the person who caused the accident.

**Law on the ecological network** (no. 94-XVI of April 5, 2007)

creates legal framework for establishment and development of the national ecological network, as an integral part of the pan-European ecological network, and local ecological networks. The national ecological network consists of the following functional elements: a) core areas; b) buffer zones; c) ecological corridors; d) areas of ecological reconstruction. The national ecological network includes elements of international, national and, partially, local importance is established on the basis of natural and semi-natural lands to preserving plant and animal populations and all types of landscapes in the territory of the country. The establishment of the Emerald network ensures the conservation of natural habitats and species of wild flora and fauna, subject to special protection at the European level, present on the territory of the Republic of Moldova and in accordance with the Bern Convention. The scientific, technical, organizational and financial aspects of the national ecological network and the local ecological networks is carried out according to the National Programme regarding the establishment of the national ecological network.

**Law on environmental impact assessment** (no. 86 of 29.05.2014) establishes a legal framework for the operation of the environmental impact assessment mechanism of some public and private projects or some types of planned activities, to ensure prevention or minimisation, at the initial stages, of the negative impact on the environment and human health.

**Contraventional Code of the Republic of Moldova no. 218/2008.** This code is a law of the Republic of Moldova that includes legal norms that establish general and special principles and provisions in contraventional matters, determine the facts that constitute contraventions and provide for the contraventional process and contraventional sanctions. Chapter IX CONTRAVENTIONS IN THE FIELD ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION stipulates contravention cases and norms related the damage produced to the biodiversity natural resources, such as forestry, fishery, pastoral resources, natural vegetation, fauna resources etc.

**National Environmental Fund** (NEF) is a financial mechanism established to support LPAs' and NGOs' projects in the field of environmental protection. Following recent



interventions in national environmental legislation, several essential changes have occurred in the content of a series of regulations: the articles regulating the management of the NEF have been modified to optimizing the process of management of this instrument according to the provisions of the Environmental Strategy; the National Ecological Fund, established within the state budget for the purpose of financing programmes in the field of protection the environment according to the areas of use and means of the fund; based on the Law regarding the amendment and completion of some legislative acts (no. 281 from December 16, 2016), managing the calculation, payment and reporting process of taxes for environmental pollution (responsibility for collection and transfer of these means was carried by the Customs Service) and fines in this regard (Inspector State Ecological) were taken over by the State Fiscal Service (SFS), starting with 01.01.2017. With the transition to the administration of the SFS, this type of tax was not adjusted. Thus, the environmental tax includes the same types of payments: (i) payment for stationary source pollutant emissions, (ii) payment for pollutant discharges, (iii) payment for waste storage of production, (iv) payment for goods which, in the process of use, cause pollution to the environment. Quotas for calculating taxes respectively are set according to the type of goods and products, type of packaging, pre- as well as their capacity.

Since the formation of **NEF** was repealed, the State Fiscal Service is entirely responsible for checking the correctness of the calculations and paying taxes for environmental pollution.

**Mechanism for economic management of natural resources:** The "user pays" principle is strictly promoted; it establishes that all natural resources can only be used against payment. The range of payments for the use of natural resources is established by the legislature and calculated by the user according to the provisions of the law, based on the volume of resources used.

**Payments for forest use** are used to stimulate rational economic use, regeneration, guarding, and protection of forests. The measures also specify liability for violation of forestry legislation. Forest use is subject to payment. The revenues generated are allocated for forest protection, quality improvement, development, and to provide financial incentives to landowners whose properties are part of the forest fund. The government has established the procedures and methods for calculating and collecting payments for forest use.

**Economic stimulation** of the rational use, regeneration, guarding and protection of forests includes:

a) the allocation of means for the **implementation of programmes** regarding the use, regeneration, guarding and protection of forests from the state budget, the budgets of administrative-territorial units, and other sources;



- b) payment for forestry measures according to the **differentiated norms (fees)**, as well as the material **stimulation of landowners** from the forestry fund for the qualitative execution of forestry works;
- c) **stimulation of forest landowners** to improve the **quality of forests** and increase their productivity;
- d) **stimulating people** who detected violations of the forestry legislation and ensured the collection of fines, penalties, and compensation for material losses caused to the forestry household.

### **Liability for violation of forestry legislation:**

Chapter XIII Liability for violation forestry legislation of the Forestry Code stipulates, among others the following:

1. Article 72 (1). **Compensation of forest production losses.** The losses of forestry production, caused by the withdrawal of lands from the forest fund and other lands covered with forest vegetation owned by the state for their use for purposes other than forestry, by the limitation of the rights of the owners of lands from the forest fund and other lands covered with forest vegetation owned by the state and by the deterioration of the quality of the forests, as a result of the activity of natural and legal persons, are to be compensated. The compensation of these losses is carried out simultaneously with the reparation of damages.
2. The losses are recovered by the natural and legal persons who are allocated lands from the forest fund and other lands covered with forest vegetation, as well as by the natural and legal persons who, around their objects, have established protection, sanitary and security zones, which leads to the withdrawal of the lands from the forest fund and other lands covered with forest vegetation from the forestry production cycle.

According to the Contravention Code, Chapter IX Contraventions in the field of environmental protection, there is a number of **liability norms** established in the field of biological resources:

1. Violation of the rules for the protection **of fish resources** is sanctioned with a fine from 6 to 12 conventional units applied to person, with a fine from 120 to 180 conventional units applied to the legal person.
2. **Illegal cutting or damage to trees** and shrubs to the extent of stopping their growth or damage to trees and shrubs that does not stop their growth is sanctioned with a fine from 50 to 100 conventional units applied to the natural person or with unpaid work for the benefit of the community from 40 to 60 hours, with a fine from 300 to 500 conventional units applied to the legal person.
3. **Destruction and damage to forest crops**, to young trees produced through natural regeneration, to natural and pre-existing seed is sanctioned with a fine from 50 to 80 conventional units applied to person or with unpaid work for the benefit of the community from 40 to 60 hours, with a fine from 200 to



400 conventional units applied to the person with a responsible position, with a fine from 300 to 500 conventional units applied to the legal person.

4. **Intentional destruction or damage of meadows, pastures**, drainage ditches in forests, drainage systems, roads and engineering installations on the lands of the forest fund is sanctioned with a fine from 80 to 150 conventional units applied to person or with unpaid work for the benefit of the community from 20 to 40 hours, with a fine from 100 to 200 conventional units applied to the legal person.
5. **Grazing of animals on public property** of the administrative-territorial unit in a different period of the year than that established by the local public administration authority, joint grazing of groups of animals of different species, grazing of animals suffering from officially notifiable diseases is sanctioned with a fine of 80 to 150 conventional units applied to the natural person, with a fine of 100 to 200 conventional units applied to person with a liability function.
6. Violation of the provisions of the normative acts regarding the use **and protection of hunting animals**, regarding hunting and other types of use of hunting resources is sanctioned with a fine from 12 to 30 conventional units applied to person, with a fine from 120 to 240 conventional units applied to the person with a responsible position.
7. **Collecting or destroying plants, capturing or destroying animals included in the Red Book** of the Republic of Moldova and in the annexes to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), illegal trading, as well as committing other actions or inactions that may cause the reduction of the number of these plants and animals or their disappearance is sanctioned with a fine of 50 to 100 conventional units.
8. Violation of the rules of **export or import of plant and animal species** included in the **Red Book** of the Republic of Moldova and in the annexes to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is sanctioned with a fine of 100 to 200 conventional units applied to person, with a fine of 300 to 400 conventional units applied to the legal person.

According to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Moldova, a conventional unit represents a fixed value of 50 MDL, or appr. 2.5 EUR.

### **The use of financial resources collected following the recovery of forest production losses:**

1. The financial resources collected following the recovery of forest production losses are used for the regeneration, guarding, protection of forests and increasing their productivity.
2. The method of determining the amount of forestry production losses and of using the financial means collected following the recovery of these losses, as well as the list of enterprises, institutions and organizations





exempted from the recovery of the losses in question, shall be established by the government.

### Principles of good governance

Organization of the planning, monitoring and reporting system is supported by the environmental programmes of the state budgetary and the National Environmental Fund. The National Environmental Fund is a financial mechanism established to support LPAs, NGOs, and various projects in the field of environmental protection.

### Actions that can trigger civil, administrative or criminal liability

An **economic mechanisms of stimulation** of the rational use of flora and fauna biological resources, as well as adequate mechanism of liability and redress may be efficient to preservation of natural resources. for the violation of the legislation. The economic mechanism for the rational use of flora species includes:

1. financing of programmes, strategies, and action plans regarding the rational use of the objects of the Plant kingdom;
2. payment for the use of objects of the Plant kingdom;
3. the economic stimulation of the rational use of the objects of the vegetable kingdom.

#### Economic stimulation:

1. **The economic stimulation of the rational use**, restoration and conservation of objects of the plant kingdom.
2. Stimulation of activities related to the development of programmes for the rational use, restoration and conservation of objects of the plant kingdom from the allocations provided in the state budget, local budgets, as well as from other legal sources;
3. Material stimulation of the owners of land and aquatic objects on which objects of the plant kingdom are located for the qualitative execution of the works;
4. Material stimulation of private and legal persons who take effective measures to guard and protect the objects of the plant kingdom, who have detected violations of the legislation in the field and have ensured the collection of fines and the reparation of the material damage caused to the objects of the plant kingdom.

The law provides not only mechanisms of responsibility for violating the legislation regarding the animal kingdom but also reparation for damages and prejudice caused, according to the principle that "prejudices caused to the environment should be paid."

**Payment for using toxic substances** with effects harmful to the animal kingdom. For the use in agriculture and for other purposes of toxic substances, which harm animals,



a compensation payment is provided, in the manner and amounts established by the legislation.

**The fee for environmental pollution is administered by the** State Fiscal Service. "Tax for environmental pollution" is accumulated directly in the budget. The law on Environmental Impact assessment establishes the procedures and methods applied in the process of assessing the impact on the environment of some public and private projects or some types of planned activity that may have a significant impact on the environment.

**NGOs' involvement** in forest tree planting campaigns, awareness, public information and voluntary participation in different activities. E.g., NGO EcoContact, Biotica NGO, ECO-TIRAS IA, etc.

**National Afforestation Day** – The afforestation campaign is an initiative launched by the government (in the spring and autumn seasons). The campaign runs over two months, November and December. Any effort to afforestation is essential to achieving the government's objective of afforesting the country in the next 10 years, with 145 thousand hectares. More details about the campaign, the available areas and the periods in which anyone can actively participate in the planting can be found via the "Moldsilva" Agency.

**Corporate social responsibility (CSR)**, in the view of social actors, gives the following benefits to the companies:

1. Reduction of production costs;
2. Companies that offer employee benefits (such as flexible working hours, collaboration with professional unions) benefit from a highly motivated staff;
3. International certification, compliance with standards, and adoption of a company-wide code of ethics generate increased technological innovation within the institution;
4. There is also a strong correlation between practising certain CSR activities (code of ethics, external audit) and attracting new customers and partners.

Although CSR is a relatively new concept for the business environment in the Republic of Moldova, many companies declare themselves interested in understanding the concept. Many of them are still at the stage of clarifying the differences between philanthropy and CSR. Like other relevant actors targeted in this study, non-governmental organisations identify CSR as a donation or support activity, financially supporting different events, institutions, or causes, along with applying some ethical principles in business and compliance with the legislation in force. Regardless of the mode of approach to CSR, NGOs could play a significant role in promoting it due to the following factors:

1. **Sectoral expertise** - If CSR means environmental protection, human rights, and anti-corruption, then non-governmental organizations are precisely those institutions that,





along with their experience in approaching the field, are open to collaboration, flexible, and transparent in their activities.

2. **Approaching the community** - Non-governmental organizations are constituted by subjects associated with certain common interests in settling specific problems in the community. This allows the private environment to use NGO resources to identify specific and current societal issues and actively involve them in solving them.

**The capacities of public education, lobbying and specific mobilization** to NGOs could assign a more important role in promoting CSR. The non-governmental organizations can obtain access to various sources of financing to sensitise public opinion, train local companies on the notion of CSR, and promote their pro-active involvement in society (Alexandru Oprunenco, Valeriu Prohnițchi, Mihai Rusu. 2005).

In Moldova, the concept of CSR is still evolving. Many companies primarily associate CSR with philanthropic efforts or compliance with existing legislation. As a result, relatively few have adopted a broader, more integrated approach to social responsibility. While most businesses identify as socially responsible, their activities tend to remain focused on traditional philanthropy (Responsabilitatea socială corporativă în RM, 2011).

The list of main instruments for policy implementation is presented in Annex 4.

3.2.2 Funding and financing

State financing

The National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme 2023-2032 has estimated that 739 212,0 thousand Euros are needed to implement the programme.

Main activities under the sub-programme and medium-term expenditures of the Medium Term Budgetary Framework (CBTM) 2024-2026 (Subprogramme "7005 - Protection and conservation of biodiversity") are represented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Main activities under the sub-programme and medium-term expenditure, thousands of lei/Eur (rate 18.83, as of 01.05.24)**

Activities	2024 (LEI/EUR)	2025 (LEI/EUR)	2026 (LEI/EUR)
Ensuring the current activity of the budgetary authorities/institutions. (Ministry of the Environment)	2000.0/106.2	2000.0/106.1	2000.0/106.2
Projects financed from external sources (Project "Integrated system of management for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and	10 612.0/ 563.6	8165.0/ 433.6	6800.0/ 361.1



equitable sharing of benefits resulting from the use of genetic resources",  The Project "Conservation and sustainable wetland management with emphasis on areas with high natural value from the Prut river basin")			
National Environmental Fund (revenues are coming from the environmental pollution/polluter pays system, penalties for illegal actions, and permits for natural resources use taxes)	21 922.5/ 1164.2	21 922.5/ 1164.2	21 922.5/ 1164.2
Total subprogramme 7005	34 534.5/ 1834.0	32 087.5/ 1704.1	30 722.5/ 1631.6

### Ministry of the Environment:

- Management in the forestry sector - 6584.8 thousand lei
- The development, regeneration, expansion and protection of the national forest fund - 111 000.0 thousand lei
- Development of natural areas protected by the state – 10 000.0 thousand lei
- Protection and conservation of biodiversity - 34 300.5 thousand lei

Total = 168 469 000 lei = 8 683 969 EUR, rate 19.4 (15.01.24)

Table 5 shows state budget allocation for biodiversity protection and conservation.

**Table 5. State budget allocation in the field of biodiversity protection and conservation**

No	Code Programme/ sub-programme	Title Programme / sub-programme	Description	2022 Thousand MDL	2023 Thousand MDL	2024 Thousand MDL
3	70 05	Biodiversity protection and conservation	This sub-programme finances the restoration and conservation of the biodiversity characteristic of the republic's forests and the exploitation of renewable forest resources, sized according to the area's ecological	17 668.9	16 868.9	16 968.9



			sustainability limits.			
13	54 01	Management in the field of forestry	This sub-programme finances actions related to developing, promoting and implementing state policy in forestry and hunting.	6012.1	6025.1	6025.1
		Total		23 681	22 894	22 994

### External financing

The list of projects implemented in Moldova with external financial support is available at the G.D. number. 246/2010 on the application of fiscal facilities and customs related to the realisation of assistance projects, ongoing technical and investment, which fall under the incidence of international treaties to which the Republic of Moldova is a party. It lists the ongoing technical assistance projects, which fall under the scope of international treaties, for the application of exemptions to income tax, excise duties, customs duties, duties for carrying out customs procedures, duties for goods that, in the process of use, cause environmental pollution, as well as the application of the exemption of value added tax (VAT) with the right of deduction for the goods and services intended for them.

Notable sectoral funding and financing policies and initiatives are represented in Table 6.

Table 6. Notable sectoral funding and financing policies and initiatives

Name of the instrument	Description including segment / target groups and the measure it covers	Budget allocation, if any	Level of adoption	Reference
EU Commission funding	EU4ENVIRONMENT  Result 4. Biodiversity and Emerald Network 2023-2024	20.0 mil EUR (total per project per 6 countries, including Result 4)  Nature conservation – N/I	adopted	EU4ENV  <a href="https://www.eu4environment.org/aras-of-work/biodiversity-and-emerald-network/">https://www.eu4environment.org/aras-of-work/biodiversity-and-emerald-network/</a>
State budget 2024	Biodiversity protection and conservation  Management in the field of forestry  Target group - Ministry of Environment/Moldsilva agency	8.68 mil EUR rate 19.4	adopted	Law on State Budget for 2024 file:///C:/Users/angel/OneDrive%20-%20IP%20IIPM/Laptop/Desktop/L_418.2023.ro.anexe.pdf
<b>Medium Term Budgetary Framework (CBTM) 2024-2026</b> - Subprogramme "7005 - Protection and	Ensuring the current activity of the budgetary authorities/institutions (Ministry of the Environment)  Projects financed from external sources (Project "Integrated system of management for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and	2.0 mil EUR, rate 19.4	adopted	MTBF  <a href="https://www.mf.gov.md/ro/buget/cadrul-bugetar-pe-termen-medi">https://www.mf.gov.md/ro/buget/cadrul-bugetar-pe-termen-medi</a>

conservation of biodiversity"	equitable sharing of benefits resulting from the use of genetic resources",  The Project "Conservation and sustainable wetland management with emphasis on areas with high natural value from the Prut river basin" (2.0 mln for 3 years for two projects)			
NEF	There is the overall NEF funding adopted for all types of environmental projects, including nature conservation (CBTM)	3.39 mil EUR , rate 19.4	adopted	Law on State Budget for 2024 <a href="https://mf.gov.md/ro/content/bugetul-de-stat-2024">https://mf.gov.md/ro/content/bugetul-de-stat-2024</a>
NFERP	The National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme 2023-2032, has estimated the needs of 739 212 000 EUR for the implementation of the programme.	739 mil EUR for up to 2030.	Not secured	<a href="https://particip.gov.md/ru/document/stages/proiectul-hotararii-de-guvern-cu-privire-la-aprobarea-programului-national-de-extindere-si-reabilitare-a-padurilor-pentru-perioada-2023-2032-si-planului-de-actiuni-pentru-implementarea-acestui-a-pentru-perioada-2023-2027/9945">https://particip.gov.md/ru/document/stages/proiectul-hotararii-de-guvern-cu-privire-la-aprobarea-programului-national-de-extindere-si-reabilitare-a-padurilor-pentru-perioada-2023-2032-si-planului-de-actiuni-pentru-implementarea-acestui-a-pentru-perioada-2023-2027/9945</a>
Intl UN Programmes (UNEP, UNDP, IFAD,)		3.1 mil USD	adopted	GD nr 246/2010  Annex 1.  <a href="https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=116618&amp;lang=ro">https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=116618&amp;lang=ro</a>

International EU development programmes (ADA, Sweden, IFAD, AFD, Slovakia, Italy, Danube, etc.)	Afforestation, GBF, biodiversity conservation  ADF allocation investment project for afforestation – 40 mil. EUR (not yet secured)	3.1 mil EUR  40.0 mil EUR	Adopted  Planned, not yet adopted	GD nr 246/2010  Annex 1.  <a href="https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=116618&amp;lang=ro">https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=116618&amp;lang=ro</a>
BEI investment project for afforestation – 200 mln. EUR (not yet secured)		200 mil. EUR	Planned, not yet secured	
EU LIFE Programme	<b>“Roadmap for the alignment of Emerald network establishment and management to NATURA 2000 standards in Moldova” (LIFE RENATA) project</b>	1.0 mil EUR (for six partner organisations)	Secured	<a href="https://eu4moldova.eu/the-first-project-supported-under-the-life-programme-launched-in-the-republic-of-moldova/">https://eu4moldova.eu/the-first-project-supported-under-the-life-programme-launched-in-the-republic-of-moldova/</a>



3.2.3 Summary of gaps. Bottlenecks and needs

National instruments are in place to enforce nature conservation and restoration. However, to align with the EGD, the system of taxes and penalties for pollution and excess use of natural resources, as well as the liability and redress mechanism, have to be improved.

The Moldovan Biodiversity Sector faces a notable gap in public finance, hindering its ability to meet the investment needs outlined in the discussions. The existing supply volume of public finance within the sector is insufficient to address critical biodiversity conservation and restoration challenges, posing challenges in aligning with the European Green Deal (EGD) and achieving essential conservation goals.

According to the Law on State Budget of Moldova for 2024, which covers a total amount of 8.86 million EUR (rate 19.4), the budget is addressed to the target groups – the Ministry of Environment and the Moldsilva Agency. It supports two major biodiversity programmes: Biodiversity protection and conservation, and Management in the field of forestry. The National Environmental Fund’s (NEF) funding for all types of environmental projects, including nature conservation, was 3,39 million EUR in 2024.

However, it is still not sufficient compared to the governmental commitments in biodiversity and afforestation. Thus, the National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme 2023-2032 has estimated the need for 739 million Euros to implement the programme.

The existing public financial system is limited and not sufficient to cover the needs for green transition, including a broad spectrum of activities to address the main nature conservation targets according to the EU BD Strategy and the 8th Environment Action Programme, including nature reconstruction, reducing threats, and protecting land and water habitats.

The main findings on gaps and needs are described in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Main findings on gaps and needs

<p><b>Are all key policy and legal areas covered with appropriate regulatory and economic instruments to ensure compliance with EGD?</b></p> <p>Payments for forest use, stimulation of the economic mechanism for rational forest use, liability and redress, compensation for damage, compensation for restoration and rehabilitation measures and programmes, etc., are in place. However, the existing fees are not in line with the EU and do not ensure the achievement of the EGD targets.</p>
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Authorized use of flora and fauna species, Environmental Impact assessment, CITES permit/certificate, administrative or criminal liability, Liability for violations, Repair of damage, Payments for flora plant species uses, stimulation economic mechanism for rational use of flora plant species, liability and redress, compensation for damage, compensation for restoration and rehabilitation measures and programmes are in place. Since November 2023, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures for flora and fauna are in line with the EU Habitat Directive. However, the level of payments should be revised and approximated with the EU approaches, the enforcement and control systems meet insufficient capacities and are not efficient. The species database is missing or insufficient, and human and financial capacities are low. Control and enforcement systems are not entirely in place and are not wholly efficient.

**Are the regulatory and economic instruments sufficient to ensure they lead to tangible and measurable environmental improvements (achieving sectoral EGD goals)?**

The permitting of natural resources (forest, flora, fauna uses, CITES certification) is in place but has not been sufficiently implemented/enforced and does not fully respond to the EGD criteria.

National legislation requires Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); however, institutions lack the capacity to provide and approve EIA.

Liability and redress, tax for pollution and damage, restoration and regeneration, and NEF are in place; however, the mechanism for liability and redress is not sufficiently workable, and the tax rate/offsetting/compensation is usually low.

**Are the regulatory and economic instruments efficient, considering their ability to reduce emissions or promote sustainability while minimizing economic distortions and administrative costs?**

The payments/offsets and tax amount for biologic resource use and pollution are low and insufficient to cover regeneration and restoration measures.

No mechanism has been established to provide compensation, VAT reduction, or exemption for biodiversity conservation (in agriculture), the development of private forests, PA management, etc.

Liability and redress measures are inefficient, and penalties are low and inefficient in preventing the illegal logging or hunting/collection of species.

**Are the sectoral funding and financing instruments realistic relative to the sectoral goals related to the EGD?**

The national funding and financial instruments for forest and protected area management are insufficient. The national Budget covers only the forestry authority – Moldsilva Agency. However, the State forestry enterprises responsible for practical work on forest management are on self-management due to a lack of financial allocation. Lack of a national financial mechanism for Forest enterprises affects the quality of the applied management system. Protected areas have partial financing allocation for administrative needs, which is insufficient to ensure PA management. The funding and financial instruments in the flora plant conservation area are not realistic and sufficient.

**Is funding the sectoral EGD-related goals important to the national government, or does most funding come from outside donors?**

National budget allocations are limited and insufficient. NDS has focused on the afforestation and PAs development.





Most funding for the sectoral EGD-related goals for nature conservation comes from outside donors. The assessment for the financial need to implement the NFERP request is 739 million EUR for 2023-2032. However, budgetary allocations are very limited. Several development partners and donors have agreed to support the Ministry of Environment's afforestation initiatives.

NEF just partly addresses the financing gap for nature conservation projects.

### 3.3 Institutional/governance capacity

#### 3.3.1 Existing institutional set-up

The key government bodies responsible for nature conservation in Moldova are 11 institutions. The Ministry of Environment is the main central public authority responsible for policy formation in biodiversity conservation. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, as well as local public authorities, are responsible for forming policies on land use, agriculture, and economic development at the local level, which are the biggest drivers of biodiversity loss. The Ministry of Economic Development and Digitization and the Ministry of Finance are responsible for coordinating strategic issues of state financing and allocating funds within the country's annual budgets. However, the budget allocations for afforestation, biodiversity conservation, and restoration are limited and insufficient to address the challenges of conservation and restoration.

The institutional set-up for nature conservation in Moldova is presented in Annex 5.

#### 3.3.2 Capacity assessment of existing institutional set-up

**Long-Term Planning** - In Moldova, the long-term 6–8-year strategic planning process in the environmental protection and biodiversity fields is strongly linked with the international strategic planning according to the international conventions and the national development planning. The actual National Development Strategy “Moldova Europeana” has been developed and approved for the period of 2022-2030. The updated National Environmental Strategy will cover the strategic planning period 2024-2030. According to the Global Biodiversity Framework 2030, approved at the COP 15 of the UN CBD Convention, Moldova is engaged to review and update the Moldovan NBSAP 2015-2020, and develop the new National Biodiversity Programme for the period of 2024-2030. It will formulate the national long- and short-term targets in the field of nature conservation and biodiversity preservation in accordance with the GBF targets and priorities. To mention, there is no long-term vision by 2050 established yet. The development strategy and environmental strategy are limited and have not addressed a sufficiently large spectrum of targets in the field of nature conservation and biodiversity. The only two global indicators involved are increasing



forest cover by 15% and increasing coverage of protected areas by 10% by 2030. Current capacities for strategic planning are still developing and may not yet fully align with the requirements of the European Green Deal.

**The extent of the mandates and authority** - The Ministry of Environment has started an institutional revision and reform to make it more efficient. In 2023, the Ministry of Environment was reorganised, and its structure was updated and enlarged, invested with more sector competencies. For example, there is an increased number of specialised divisions – 6 directorates and six sections responsible for various environmental issues. The total number of employed persons will increase from 62 to 96. The subdivisions of the Ministry of Environment are to be reorganised, and several duties will be delegated to the newly established public institutions. However, the main agency for nature conservation, the Moldsilva Agency, has developed its activity mostly based on economic income and is not 100% sure of the budgetary allocation. This fact makes it possible for a disbalanced corporate interest in forest products (timber, firewood, logging, etc.) rather than conservation and afforestation activities. It is recommended to provide a state budgetary revision to ensure full allocation to the forestry authority. The bioinformation and monitoring system is insufficient and needs capacity building and harmonisation with the European and EGD systems.

**Resource Allocation** - The MoE has insufficient human and financial resources to formulate and implement biodiversity conservation policies. Only eight specialists in the Nature Conservation and Biosecurity Policy Directorate, Forestry and Hunting Policies section of the MoE, are currently dealing with nature conservation/biodiversity/biosafety issues. About 14 employees are involved in the forest management and protection areas management within the Moldsilva Agency, about 10 employees are involved in the authorisation and monitoring system within the Environmental Protection Agency and about 10 employees are engaged in the inspection and control services under the Environmental Protection Inspectorate. Other ministries and agencies whose activities affect biodiversity do not have responsible specialists working on biodiversity issues. According to the State budget, limited financial resources are available to address nature conservation and biodiversity. The existing practice is that only a part of the planned budget for nature conservation reaches the destination, while the other part is reallocated for other urgent measures. The NEF mainly addresses water supply and waste management issues, and less of nature conservation and restoration.

**Interagency Coordination** - The inter-departmental cooperation between governmental bodies is achieved mainly through the consultation process, delivering the draft documents to the relevant authorities for their official opinion, and the approval process during the meetings of members of the government (ministers). In case of the approval of legal documents, in addition to the government procedures for consultation and approval, the various specialised Parliamentary commissions are involved to examine the draft documents, providing their conclusions, which are further presented at the plenary session of the Parliament for adoption. The inter-departmental commissions on specific topics are established to provide technical and



scientific conclusions to support the ministry's decision-making process. There is a practice to establish permanent or *ad hoc* inter-institutional working groups on specific topics to discuss issues at the expert level and provide the decision-making bodies with an expert opinion and conclusion. The Ministry appoints national focal points for various international and regional conventions and initiatives.

**Data collection, Monitoring and Reporting** – Data collection and monitoring of nature conservation and restoration efforts are the duty of the Environmental Protection Agency, Moldsilva Agency, supported by the research institution in the field of botany, zoology, forest management, ecology and geography. However, the data management, monitoring, operationalising of bioinformational systems, and reporting capacity are low. Limited human resources are trained in related topics, and the technical and methodological bases are insufficient. Most data in the field of nature conservation are not published, digitised, accessible via the Internet, or open to the public. Most data do not meet the international data management standards and not connected with the global/regional data sources (ex., IUCN, WDPA, WCMC, BioLAB, GBIF, GSD, Global Forest Data, Global Forest Watch, etc.). The data collection and monitoring system does not use new technologies such as satellite imagery, aero-observation (drones), video recording, etc. The national capacity to report to the main international conventions is quite limited. Moldova is ensuring its national reporting to the main conventions (CBD, CPB, ABS, Bern Convention, etc), due to eligible external financial support (UNEP/GEF, CoE/EU). Moldova has developed metadata for the Emerald network under the Bern Convention, with the support of the focused CoE project. However, no sufficient national capacity has been established to maintain and update these data systems. The CBD Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) is not supported and maintained by the national authorities. Therefore, the capacity of the governmental institutions for data collection, monitoring and reporting is highly limited.

**Capacity Building**—National financial, infrastructural, and human capacities are still being strengthened to support adequate training and awareness related to the European Green Deal. Most training workshops are held for various projects financed by external donor organisations. There is a lack of governmental training programmes in biodiversity conservation/nature protection. There is no established institutional body that is duty-bound to provide training on a regular or planned basis. To ensure professional upgrading and improve the skills of various stakeholders, capacity-building efforts and institutionalisation are needed.

**Stakeholder Engagement, Awareness and Communication** – Moldova is a Party to the Aarhus Convention. The internal process of consultation, public involvement, and participation in decision-making is well ensured. Thus, public consultation via special public consultation meetings, publication of draft documents via official webpage is broadly applied, and usually involves other sectoral relevant government authorities, local authorities, academia, NGOs, civil society, civil associations in the field of environment, media, etc. The MoE and its subdivisions publish the draft of decisions via their official web portal and social media, as well as announcements of public hearings, public consultation, thematic meetings, etc. The Ministry and its



subdivisions closely communicate and cooperate with many NGOs. Business involvement is low due to businesses' lack of interest in biodiversity conservation, and they are ignoring opportunities to be involved. The official web portals and social networks are the main channels for raising awareness and communication. However, more awareness and public information capacity are needed to get consensus in EGD and meet the confidence (trust) of the public in the government and its decisions.

**Transparency and Accountability**—Moldova has reduced capacities to ensure transparency and accountability in environmental control and reporting. These capacities should be improved to facilitate the process of integration into the EU.

An assessment of the sufficiency of existing capacities for EGD is presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Assessment of the sufficiency of existing capacities for EGD

	Sufficient	Requires strengthening	Foreseen reforms	Ways for improvement
Long-term planning		x		<p>Made by MoE with the support of EU Projects to raise its own MoE capacity.</p> <p>Better to have a national strategic view before 2050 (at least for several indicators).</p> <p>The national development and environment strategies do not cover all GBF targets on biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>The planning process should be based on a clear relationship between the planned activities and the available budgetary allocation of funding for their implementation.</p>
The extent of the mandates and authority			X	<p>Mandates need to be defined clearly. The MoE plans to create a separate secondary-level authority on protected areas, monitoring and bioinformatics system, afforestation and rehabilitation, National Biodiversity Fund, etc., to implement policies in biodiversity conservation. A reformed institutional body on monitoring and an informational system is expected to be established.</p>
Resource Allocation			X	<p>It is necessary to increase the human capacity and budgetary funding of the field of biodiversity conservation significantly. The recent institutional reform of the Ministry of Environment ensures a larger number of personnel who will be responsible for policy and regulation development. However, there is a need to increase the number of personnel in responsible subdivisions, such as the Environmental Agency, the Moldsilva Agency, and the administration of Protected Areas. It is expected that a new administration on Protected Areas will be established to ensure a joint management of the main categories of Protected areas.</p>



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Interagency Coordination		X		The MoE should increase the institutional capacity to coordinate and mainstream biodiversity conservation into sectoral policies and enhance interdepartmental collaboration and cooperation with other relevant sectors.
Data collection, Monitoring and Reporting		X		A biodiversity monitoring system is being created as part of the state environmental monitoring system. However, the monitoring and informational system is not aligned with global/regional resources, is not available in digital form, and is not in line with the requirements of international/regional conventions.
Capacity Building		X		There is a need to strengthen the capacities of governmental bodies to promote capacity-building and training programmes.
Stakeholder Engagement, Awareness and Communication		X		It is necessary to engage stakeholders to purposefully work with businesses and expand the channels through which communication and awareness raising are carried out.
Transparency and Accountability		X		It is necessary to create mechanisms for transparency and accountability for EGD.

Figure 9 shows the government personnel engaged in nature conservation calculated based on the organogram and the list of personnel available on the institutions' web pages.

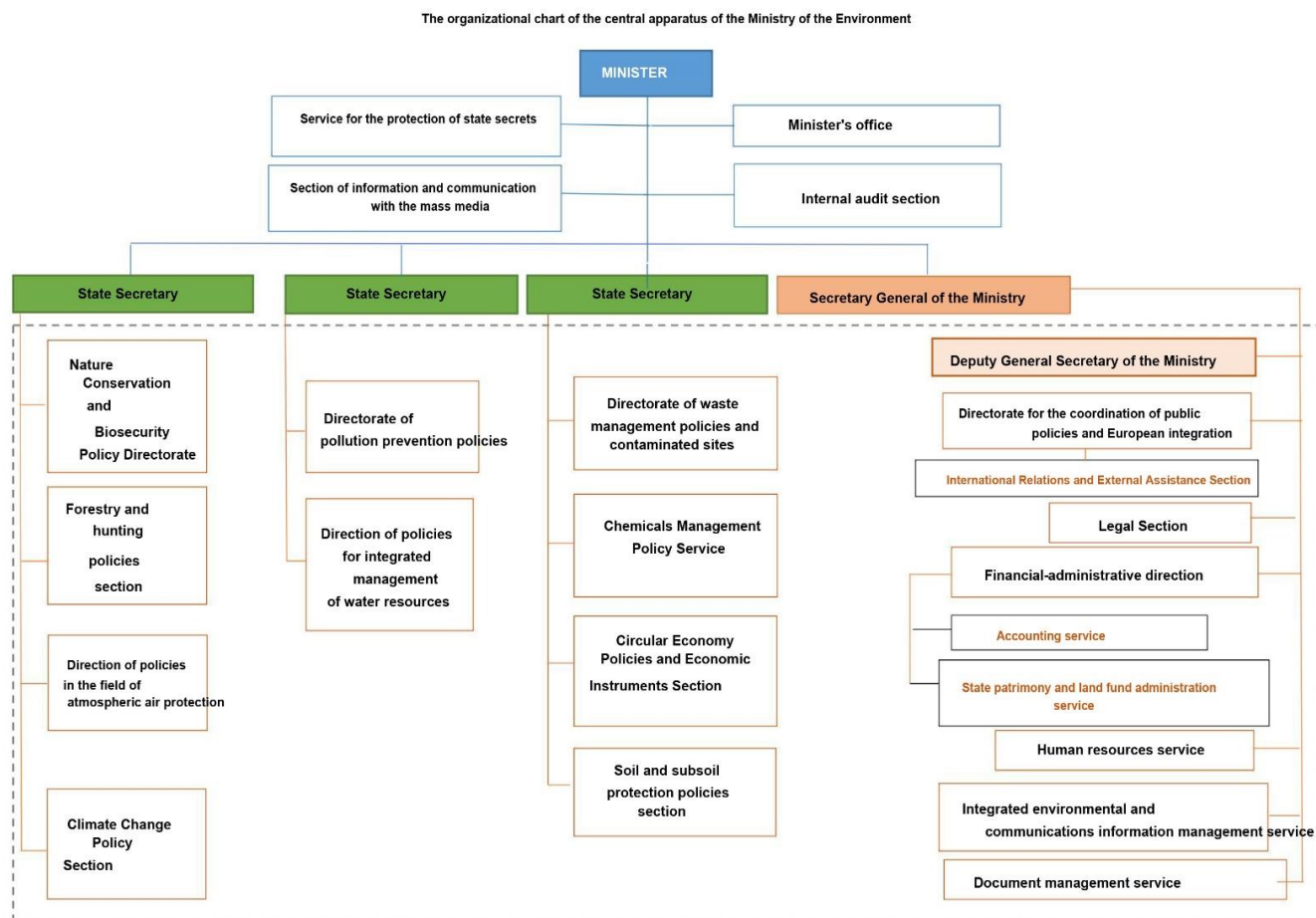


Figure 9. Structure of the Ministry of Environment

1. **MoE** - total 96 persons, women 71%, Inclusive employees for Nature Conservation and Biosecurity Policy Directorate, Forestry and hunting policies section – 8 persons, women 37,5%.
2. **Moldsilva Agency** - total 36, women 11.4%, including 14 specialists of the Directorate of Forest Fund, protected areas and forest regeneration; Forest



- Products and Forest Tourism valorisation service; Hunting and Hunting department, women 14.3%.
3. **Forest Management Research Institute** : The institute has 17 employees, including 10 specialists from the Forest Management Centre and the Centre for Development and Technological Transfer. Women make up 20% of the staff.
  4. **State forest enterprises**—there are 24 enterprises total, with 1772 employees (2.65%/47 women).
  5. **EPA**—Environmental quality monitoring directorate and Directorate of integrated environmental informational management—10 persons, 47% women.
  6. **EPI** - 10 persons involved in the biodiversity issues (Directorate of forest fund control, protected natural areas and green spaces, Directorate for control of hunting and fishing resources), women – 10%
  7. **Total: There are 52 employees of public authorities involved in biodiversity issues, including 25.76% women.**
  8. **State Forest Enterprises** – 1772, including women – 2,65%.

### 3.3.3 Summary of gaps. Bottlenecks and needs

A recent administrative reform of the governmental entities has improved environmental protection capacity. However, the roles and responsibilities of the public institutions are not clearly defined from the perspective of the EGD. The Moldovan relevant institutions don't have sufficient capacity to handle the EGD-related requirements. The relevant institutions do not have transparent and sufficient data collection, monitoring and reporting systems in place. The government supports the stakeholders' engagement and communication activities. However, more communication and engagement are considered.

A new set-up is needed to enhance the green transition: a separate administration for protected areas, monitoring, an integrated informational system, reporting, and administration for afforestation and nature conservation. A Biodiversity Fund could be established.

In Moldova, there is insufficient and inadequate digital infrastructure for forest management and biodiversity monitoring; the limited technical capacity and financial resources hinder developing and maintaining digital tools and platforms for biodiversity management. The digitalization of the data for management of species, including red species and Emerald species and habitats, forest ecosystems, as well as protected areas, will assist a long term data collection, monitoring and reporting processes that will ensure informed decision making, communication, research, civil society participation, integration to the EU data management systems, clearing house mechanism and reporting to the related biodiversity conventions.

Gaps in the existing institutional set-up are presented in Table 10.





**Table 10. Capacity assessment gaps of the existing institutional set-up.**

**Are the roles and responsibilities in the thematic area in the institutions set up clearly from the perspective of the EGD?**

The MoE is the primary institution responsible for biodiversity issues. The State Agencies under the Ministry of Environment are specialised authorities responsible for implementing forestry, hunting, and fishing policies, protected areas, Ecological networks (Emerald Network), vulnerable species, etc.

The agriculture, geology and mining, aquaculture, health care, energy, transport authorities have limited responsibility for biodiversity conservation. Therefore, there is a need to mainstream biodiversity conservation considerations into sectoral policies and practices. A joint EGD platform for collaboration and cooperation should be established.

**Have the proper institutions been given a clear mandate sufficient to reach the EGD-related goals set up in the thematic area?**

The MoE and its subdivisions have a direct mandate to achieve biodiversity targets. Still, a cross-sectoral approach should be applied to ensure clear responsibilities among the other sectors to reach the EGD targets.

Even though the Moldovan government is developing European integration measures, it is in the beginning stage of undertaking the measures to join the Green Deal. The national biodiversity indicators have to be aligned with the goals of the EGD.

**Do the relevant institutions have enough (human) resources to handle the EGD-related requirements?**

The recent institutional reform of the MoE has improved the authority's institutional and human capacities, specifically in biodiversity conservation. Thus, two specific divisions were established, and the number of Ministry employees working in biodiversity conservation increased to 10 people. However, the multitudinous biodiversity-related issues are very large and would require more human resources and capacities.

There may be gaps in the current skills and qualifications of engaged personnel to fully meet EGD-related requirements.

**Do the relevant institutions have transparent and sufficient data collection, monitoring and reporting systems?**

The national capacities for data management in biodiversity/forestry/protected areas are insufficient. The data is not digitised and is not easily accessible. The monitoring and reporting process is usually performed with the support of international funds.

MoE is working on updating the cadastre of protected areas and establishing a national biodiversity monitoring and information system. However, a limited number of IT personnel are involved in the monitoring and Data Management process.

**Do the relevant institutions have sufficient stakeholder engagement and communication activities in place?**

Although the processes are open to stakeholders, businesses, the banking system, and local communities, they are still not sufficiently informed and involved in the relevant biodiversity decision-making processes.

The National Biodiversity communication strategy should be developed and made available to increase the population's awareness and trust in government initiatives. Channels for communication and raising awareness have to be diversified to ensure the larger involvement of stakeholders.



### 3.4 Non-governmental actor capacity

#### 3.4.1 Technical and infrastructure capacity – current capacities and future needs

Non-governmental organizations, local communities, and the academic sector would champion the green transition. Voluntary and practical actions such as planting trees and information and awareness campaigns would help disseminate biodiversity values and nature conservation benefits.

**Private businesses** may oppose green transitions because they perceive green actions as constraining their business and requiring additional costs and efforts.

**Research institutions** in the field of conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, as example Institute of Genetics, Physiology and Plant Protection, Institute of Botany (Botanical Garden) Alexandru Ciobotaru, Institute of Zoology, Institute of Microbiology and Biotechnology, Institute of Ecology and Geography – State Moldovan University, Forest Management Research Institute, State Agricultural University (now merged with the State Technical University) may contribute to the process of integration to the EGD and ensuring the data collection and management, monitoring of species and habitats, scientific analysis and reports, development of Cadastre and scenarios, etc. Academia may advise the national authority on risk assessment and management, monitoring and reporting processes.

**The non-governmental organizations** - Ecological Movement, EcoContact, Biotica , ECO TIRAS International association may support the governmental authorities in the EGD process and disseminate public information and training activities to ensure transparency and participation in decision making. Women's civil society and women´s private sector, such as Women Association for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, the Women Organization of the Truth and Solidarity Party, Moldovan Women Association, etc., develop their capacities on gender issues to conduct training, public awareness campaigns, educational and facilitative actions, etc.

**Hunting public associations** may impact biodiversity on about 2540 thousand ha of forest land, agricultural land, and water, which are recognised as hunting grounds, of which the Moldovan Society of Hunters and Fishermen has been given for use. According to the primary purpose, these lands remain forest, agricultural lands or lands of the water fund. Still, they are used for organising hunting and, to a small extent, for conducting hunting and breeding of hunting animals. There are 15 000 hunters and fishermen in Moldova.

More than 1000 fish farms, eight fish nurseries, and seven breeding complexes with incubators employing more than 4000 people are participating in the freshwater aquaculture sector.



An important group of stakeholders are the **administrations of protected areas**, such as the National Park Orhei, four Scientific reserves – Codrii, Plaiul Fagului, Padurea Domneasca, Prutul de Jos (Biosphere Reserve), which often play a complex and leading role at the local level and work not only on the issue of biodiversity conservation, but also on cultural heritage and socio-economic development of the region. As a rule, PAs have a certain level of technical capacity and management infrastructure, as well as scientific staff who can provide scientific observations and reporting. However, there is an insufficient capacity (human and financial) even for the performance of already existing tasks. Introducing new technologies, like SMART, different drones, special vehicles, and GIS technology, would significantly support the functioning of the biodiversity sector during the war and postwar periods. That would fill the gaps in the human and technical capacities of the non-government and government parts of the sector.

**Local communities and authorities** are the most important stakeholders for implementing the green transition in terms of sufficient biodiversity conservation. The authorities of local communities are responsible for privatization and granting permits for land use, including for the creation of nature conservation areas, in accordance with current legislation. As a rule, the decisions of local authorities are aimed at supporting the development of local businesses through privatization, leasing, lowering or development of lands rich in biodiversity. The technical capabilities of the governing bodies of local communities depend on the region's economy and financial situation.

### 3.4.2 Green skills and awareness

A Biodiversity Communication Strategy should be developed and formalised to increase the national government's capacity to raise awareness and green thinking among many stakeholders. The strategy should be supported by a national education and training programme in nature conservation. Various target groups of the population and stakeholders should also be involved, as diverse capacities and forms of awareness, training, and dissemination should be developed.

Non-governmental organizations have good knowledge and understanding of the green transition issues. NGOs may be partners to the governmental authorities to implement the Green Deal. Their professional expertise in public communication and networking will be helpful and valuable to involve various groups of populations, and specifically those from local communities, farmers' professional groups, business, women's associations, hunter and fishery societies, other NGOs in related cross-cutting areas, educational institutions, media, etc.

Special attention should be given to farmers and local communities, as this group of the population is a majority and lives in close Nationhood with nature. Ecosystem



services and potential benefits from the green transformation should be carefully explained through a successful case study and international experience, and good practices should be disseminated. Specific green skills for agricultural practices and biodiversity have to be replicated and broadly accessible. It ensures that the management and use of wild species are sustainable, providing social, economic and environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations. A better understanding of green transformation will ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, particularly through biodiversity-friendly practices (agroecological and other innovative approaches).

Improving education and access to relevant and accurate information would increase people's trust in governmental initiatives and ensure the reaching of a consensus in decision-making and transformation measures.

Strengthen capacity-building and development, access to and transfer of technology, and promote the development of and access to innovation and technical and scientific cooperation among sectors and academia would facilitate the process of integration into the EU technological process. It is important to ensure that the best available data, information and knowledge are accessible to decision makers, practitioners and the public to guide effective and equitable governance, integrated and participatory management of biodiversity, and to strengthen communication, awareness-raising, education, monitoring, research and knowledge management. A complete, equitable, inclusive, effective, and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making are also imperative and need to be achieved.

### **3.4.3 Stakeholder capacity**

Academia has sufficient human resources to support the government in the green transition, ensuring access to innovations, new technologies, scientific knowledge and the awareness process. The number of research projects is supported by the budget and is ready to provide monitoring and data management for the biodiversity sector.

Several nature conservation NGOs have human and technical resources to support educational, awareness, and training programmes, contribute to a better understanding of the process, and involve many local people in the country.

Farmers and farmers' associations, hunting and fishing organisations, and other professional associations have huge experience and a pool of resources for providing awareness and education. They could support the environmental authority during the green transitional period.

Development partners present in Moldova include a need to support Moldova in environmental and nature conservation as a strategic priority. Several projects and programmes regarding forest extension and restoration, ecosystem-based adaptation,



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nature management, public awareness and education, etc., are intended to be implemented in Moldova.

Main stakeholders' capacities are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. Main stakeholders' capacities

Stakeholder	Long-Term Planning	Mandates and authority	Resource Allocation	Capacity Building	Stakeholder Engagement, Awareness and Communication	Data collection, Monitoring and Reporting	Transparency and Accountability
Forest Management and Research Institute under the Moldsilva Agency	Yes, 10 years of management planning	Governmental specialised enterprise	Budgetary	10 dedicated permanent personnel	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data on forestry and protected areas	Well transparent and accountable, audit
State Forestry Enterprises (24 enterprises)	Yes, strategic directions of activity	State forestry business	Not budgetary	1772	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data and monitoring on forestry, biodiversity, and natural resources	Not well transparent and accountable, audit
Botanical Garden (Institute)	Yes	academia	Budgetary	100	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data and monitoring on forestry, plant biodiversity, and natural resources	Well transparent and accountable, audit
Institute of Zoology	Yes	academia	Budgetary	100	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data and monitoring on forestry, wild animal biodiversity, and natural resources	well transparent and accountable, audit

Institute of Ecology and Geography	Yes	academia	Budgetary	100	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data and monitoring on forestry, biodiversity, and natural resources	well transparent and accountable, audit
NGO BIOTICA	Yes, strategic directions of activity	NGO	Not budgetary. National and foreign financing	7 people	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data and monitoring on forestry, biodiversity, natural resources use, and protected areas	well transparent and accountable, audit
NGO ECO-TIRAS	Not	NGO	Not budgetary. National and foreign financing	10 people	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data on the legal framework, monitoring of forestry, biodiversity, natural resources use, and protected areas	well transparent and accountable, audit
EcoContact	Not	NGO	Not budgetary. National and foreign financing	10 people	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data on the legal framework, monitoring biodiversity, natural resources use, and protected areas	well transparent and accountable, audit

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Moldovan Association for hunters and fishermen	Yes	NGO	Not budgetary, members' fees	15 000	Limited communication	collecting data on biodiversity, hunting and fishery resources	Not accessible
"Aquacultura-Moldova"	Yes	NGO	Not budgetary, business	4 000	Limited communication	collecting data on biodiversityfishery resources	Not accessible
ACVAGENRESURS" Research Center	Yes	Public Institution	budgetary	N/I	Limited communication	collecting data on biodiversityfishery resources	well transparent and accountable, audit
UNDP  Moldova, UN Agency	Yes, available to the public	International NGO	A project-based organization	20 permanent	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data on the sustainable use of natural resources	well transparent and accountable, audits
SIDA, International Fund	Yes, available to the public	International NGO	A project-based organization	20 permanent	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data on the sustainable use of natural resources	well transparent and accountable, audits
ADA Moldova	Yes, available to the public	International NGO	A project-based organization	10 permanent	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data on the sustainable use of natural resources	well transparent and accountable, audits





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FDA	Yes, available to the public	International NGO	A project-based organization	10 permanent	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data on the sustainable use of natural resources	well transparent and accountable, audits
IFAD	Yes, available to the public	International NGO	A project-based organization	20 permanent	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data on the sustainable use of natural resources	well transparent and accountable, audits
WB Moldova	Yes, available to the public	International NGO	A project-based organization	10 permanent	broadly engaged, well-developed communication	collecting data on the sustainable use of natural resources	well transparent and accountable, audits



### 3.4.4 Summary of gaps. Bottlenecks and needs

The biodiversity area has insufficient technical and infrastructure capabilities to reach related national and EGD goals for biodiversity conservation in Moldova. The ongoing capacity-building projects support technical and infrastructure development discussions, focusing on making changes required for the green transition. There is currently a shortage of skilled workers to support the green transition in this thematic area, and further development of government plans and measures could enhance the growth of green skills. The key stakeholders in the thematic area do not have sufficient capacity and resources to implement and support an inclusive transition.

The just transition principle under the green deal must ensure green transition jobs and people's involvement in the job market, including afforestation, agriculture, land use, water management, waste processing, ecosystem services, etc., to reduce environmental impact.

There is a need to increase non-governmental actors' technical, infrastructure, resources, and human capacities to support the green transition and governmental initiatives. A large discussion campaign would be helpful to better understand, raise awareness, and reach consensus, as well as to meet public support for the government's path to green transition.

An assessment of gaps in stakeholders' capacity is represented in Table 12.

**Table 12. Assessment of gaps in stakeholder capacity**

<b>Does the thematic area have sufficient technical and infrastructure capabilities to reach related national and EGD goals?</b>
Based on their previous practices, the non-governmental sector is a valuable partner with practical experience and capacities in public information and awareness. However, there is a need to improve and support NGOs with the necessary technical and infrastructure capabilities to support the achievement of the national and local EGD goals. Achieving EGD's goals requires improving their technical capacities and appropriate infrastructure in monitoring, reporting, accountability, digitalization, data management, risk assessment management planning etc.
<b>Are the discussions related to the technical and infrastructure development focusing on making changes required for the green transition?</b>
The biodiversity staff needs training to understand the practical implementation of the green transition, legal provisions and best practices.
<b>Are there enough skilled workers in the thematic area to support the green transition, and does the government have plans and measures to support the development of green skills?</b>



There is general information and a limited understanding of the green transition among personnel in the forestry, protected areas, and biodiversity conservation sectors. There is a need to increase the knowledge and skills of the involved employees.

Some specific projects address the training and educational process for green transition; however, there is not sufficient governmental infrastructure to ensure this process on a long-term basis.

**Is the sector aware of the changes it needs to make to reach the green transition-related goals and the challenges it needs to overcome?**

The sector mainly focuses on forest extension, protected areas, and restriction mechanisms in nature management. There is limited understanding of EGD transformation. Achieving biodiversity conservation goals largely depends on those sectors where biodiversity is used (forestry, hunting, fishing) or threatens biodiversity (agriculture, energy, infrastructure). Sectoral people should be educated and trained in the spirit of EGD.

**Do the key stakeholders in the thematic area have the capacity and resources to implement and support an inclusive transition?**

Key stakeholders' human and technical capacity and resources are insufficient and should be increased. There is limited understanding of the green transition in biodiversity conservation. An inclusive transition is needed to involve large stakeholders and ensure their proactive participation in the process. The technical capabilities and skills of the stakeholders are limited.



## 4. Overview of crosscutting issues within the thematic area

Mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into sectoral policies for the private and public sectors is at the heart of global, European and national strategic documents and decisions.

The need to step up efforts by addressing the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity and nature loss is recognised, calling for full integration of biodiversity objectives into other sectors, such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

The activities and measures within the Biodiversity Sector, particularly in biodiversity protection and conservation and forest management, are closely linked to several thematic areas, demonstrating the interconnected nature of these sectors with broader environmental and socio-economic priorities. Nature conservation sector directly supports K7: Agriculture, C1: Climate, K6: Pollution thematic areas by enhancing ecosystem services, increasing carbon sequestration and mitigating the impacts of climate change, promoting agroforestry practices, responsible wood use and reduced emissions, promoting climate-smart forestry practices, and waste from forestry activities.

### 4.1 Green transition finances

The Moldovan Biodiversity Sector faces a notable gap in public finance, hindering its ability to meet its investment needs. The existing public finance within the sector is insufficient to address critical biodiversity conservation and restoration requirements, posing challenges in aligning with the European Green Deal (EGD) and achieving essential conservation goals.

Reviewing the Moldovan government's budget for the current and upcoming years, especially the Medium-Term Budgetary Framework, focusing on allocations related to environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, and relevant ministries/agencies, it can be said that the Moldovan Biodiversity Sector currently faces a significant gap in public finance, posing challenges in meeting the investment needs. The existing supply volume of public finance within the sector is insufficient to address the critical requirements for biodiversity conservation, hindering progress towards aligning with the European Green Deal (EGD) and achieving essential conservation goals.

Financial institutions, including banks, do not integrate biodiversity criteria into mainstream financial products, limiting investments in biodiversity conservation. Also, a lack of financial products focused explicitly on biodiversity conservation limited investments in projects implemented by private companies in this field.



There is a need for further development and improvement of financial public allocations to align the EGD targets, including the EU BD Strategy 2030, including:

- Encouraging financial institutions to considerably enlarge the biodiversity consideration in the process of national budget development and approval;
- Developing a mechanism for financial resource mobilization addressed directly to the biodiversity issues under the Green Deal agenda;
- Introducing regulatory measures specifically addressing barriers to sustainable finance in the biodiversity sector.

The state budget allocations demonstrate a limited commitment to environmental protection, including biodiversity conservation, and the research underscores a considerable gap in public finance. External sources, including the European Union and various international development programmes, contribute to project funding, but the need for transition investment capital remains pronounced. To bridge this gap, Moldova should develop a comprehensive funding strategy that combines existing sources, such as the National Environmental Fund, with innovative mechanisms, international partnerships, and the private sector's potential. Contributions from other sectors utilising natural resources for biodiversity conservation should be necessary.

Notable initiatives, such as the National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme 2023-2032 and international development programmes, are crucial in financing biodiversity-related projects. These programmes address afforestation, green biodiversity funds, and conservation efforts, providing substantial funding to support Moldova's environmental goals.

## 4.2 Just transition

The just transition principle must ensure green transition jobs and re-skilling are available for the new labour market, including afforestation, eco-friendly agriculture, land use, water management, waste processing sectors, as well as ecosystem services, etc., aimed at reducing environmental impact. The public sector, private sector, industry and communities should have the opportunity to re-skill and access new jobs if affected by high-carbon-related sectors, etc. However, employment in the biodiversity/forestry sector is insufficient to meet green transition commitments and needs strengthening. In total, the personnel of public authorities involved in the biodiversity issues – 42 employees, including women – 27.2%, State Forest enterprises – 1772 persons, including women – 2,65%.

In the Republic of Moldova, there are no published documents which recognise the multiple dimensions of and interactions between gender equality and climate change/green transition, or that propose an integrated policy framework, taking into account both inclusive growth and environmental considerations at local, national and international levels. There is no statistical data on the correlation between gender and environmental aspects provided by the National Bureau of Statistics. Therefore, room



for improvement of statistical data and performing studies would be needed. In addition, the CSOs and academia could be involved in this analysis process (Country Gender Profile Republic of Moldova, 2021).

A complete, equitable, inclusive, effective, and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making are also imperative and need to be achieved. The gender sensitivity and increased role of women in legislative procedures, policy design and capacity building are not sufficiently considered and should be improved. Women Association for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, the Women Organization of the Truth and Solidarity Party, Moldovan Women Association, etc., will focus on gender issues and other activities such as training, public awareness campaigns, educational and facilitative actions, etc.

PAs and nature allow for (low-entry) jobs. The economic values from nature protection and the existence of protected areas go to the public sector (manager), the business sector and the local community.

Local communities benefit from jobs associated with nature protection (e.g., expert jobs, administrative and technical services, supervision, and management jobs). In rural areas, such jobs are of great importance and can considerably impact retaining young families and supporting the local community. Nature protection also has a major existential value.

Employment in the primary production of forest resources in Moldova is declining. Instead, protected forests offer multiple and diverse jobs in tourism and recreation and products that do not include timber. In these regards, new skills and competences are needed, as well as the new structure of jobs and professions in the PA and forestry sectors.

There is a need for an increased number of jobs for IT workers, communication and PR specialists, data management specialists, monitoring and reporting specialists, nature conservation, and protected areas, needed to ensure the green transition. A new set-up is required to increase capacity and skills for green transition in the Administration for protected areas; the Administration for monitoring, an integrated informational system and reporting; the Biodiversity Fund; and the Administration for afforestation and nature conservation.

There is a lack of systematic national training programmes to support the retraining /reskilling of employees for the green transition. At present, trainings are mostly held with external financial support. Several NGOs support limited training programmes within the project tasks. However, new possibilities may occur due to the green transition process, e.g., new approaches to ecosystem services. Considering the general approaches of Just transition, there is an increased role of the green transition that leaves no one behind, and the high-level educational programmes of the



universities promote a better understanding of the advantages of green transition in the sectoral labour market. More attention should be paid to the reform of the professional education system, including new curricula and short-term training programmes for different stakeholders and people.

There is a need to train the security and protection engineers within the State Forest Enterprises, who ensure plant protection and forest protection against fire and natural calamities.

The green transition is not a direct subject of the MA/PhD programmes. However, few research projects and educational curricula partially support the biodiversity conservation and restoration targets. Several EU environmental programmes are tangentially supporting the training and research in line with the EGD.

### 4.3 Digitalization

Another critical need is to enforce data management and monitoring, protected areas management system, long-term afforestation on degraded lands, conservation of Red Book species, economic and stimulatory mechanisms, development of social and environmental responsibility (private business), communication and awareness, etc.

The digitalisation of biodiversity conservation is an important part of the green transition to ensure access to data, informed decision making, data exchange, and harmonisation among sectors and the European data management system. It includes monitoring and data management, geographical information systems (GIS), satellite imagery, remote sensing technologies, threat detection, etc. However, in Moldova, there is insufficient and inadequate digital infrastructure in forest management and biodiversity monitoring, protected areas, due to the limited technical capacity and financial resources, which hinder the development and maintenance of digital tools and platforms for biodiversity management (biodiversity information system). The NDS Moldova Europeana has stipulated in its art. 5.3. Electronic transformation of government, society and economy, need to promote the complete digitization of public services. Mandatory interconnection and interoperability ensure all authorities have access to administrative data sources.

In Moldova, specific information on digitalization directly related to biodiversity is limited. Integrating existing governmental digital platforms and strategies into biodiversity management would be a step forward, building on the country's general digital progress to address access to information, knowledge management, innovations, and scientific data as specialized needs in environmental and forestry management.

The digitalization of species management, including endangered and Emerald species and habitats, forest ecosystems, and protected areas, will assist long-term data collection, monitoring, and reporting processes that will ensure informed decision



making, communication, research, civil society participation, integration into the EU Data Management systems, clearing house mechanism, and reporting to the related conventions.

### 4.4 Research, development and innovation

Knowledge Management in the biodiversity sector is one of the critical components of the green transition that requires innovative solutions to modernise countries' economy and society and ensure their sustainable future. In recent years, the government has been making scientific institutions more responsive to European targets for biodiversity conservation needs. Thus, the Emerald Network of special conservation areas has been established in line with the Bern Convention, aimed at protecting vulnerable species and habitats of European importance. The government must increase its infrastructure and institutional capacities for accessing European and international funds for biodiversity conservation and nature restoration, including research programmes such as Horizon 2020, LIFE Programme, INTERREG Europe, Black Sea Programme, ENPI, etc.

According to the recent administrative reform in the academic sector, the research and development projects and programmes have been revised to ensure strategic priorities and commitments in nature conservation and biodiversity. However, the scientific community has made little progress in offering innovative solutions and knowledge management to support the green transition, especially for ecosystem reconstruction, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem-based adaptation, etc. Experienced non-governmental organisations are usually more flexible when it comes to R&I solutions for the green transition.

The existing innovations in the biodiversity sector are mostly related to the GIS mapping of PAs, forests, and the Emerald Network. Nature-based solutions are applied to selected protected areas and ecosystems. The clearinghouse mechanism and Forest management planning are based on the digital database system. However, Moldova has a poorly developed monitoring and bio-informational system that would ensure complete digitalisation, compatibility, and access to information. There are no platforms for disseminating Biodiversity Data, making it difficult to access and use.

The government organizations support the existing social innovation process via the official webpages, Facebook and other social platforms. The most active social innovation is developed and maintained by NGOs, such as EcoContact, Biotica, Birds and Nature Protection Society, etc. The national campaign on forest plantation, forest without waste, Birds protection etc. are organized regularly. Private and third-sector actors are involved in R&I in the biodiversity thematic area. Thus, Biotica NGO and EcoTiras Association provide overviews and scientific publications on nature conservation, biodiversity, river ecosystems, etc. They provide scientific argumentation for the designation of new Protected Areas and develop management plans for the





Emerald network and PAs. The NGO Society for Birds and Nature Protection sustains the Bird Index list.

## 5. Summary and conclusions

The scope of the GUMA project is to accelerate the green transformation of Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, and Armenia. This report gives an overview of Moldova's policy and legal frameworks, instruments for their implementation, and public institutions and non-governmental actors' capacity in nature conservation and restoration. It assesses the sector's current situation, identifying enabling conditions, gaps, and needs. The cross-cutting areas' challenges and opportunities within the green transition are based on the findings of this report and are reflected separately.

The biodiversity thematic area should contribute towards the climate neutrality plans of Moldova that would be aligned with the European Green Deal, by looking into the state of nature conservation and restoration policies and actions in the country, and identifying the necessary measures for improvement and better alignment of those with related EU regulations. The biodiversity crisis and climate change are two sides of the same coin, intrinsically linked in contributing to the global environment, as well as in mitigation and adaptation solutions. Hence, the green transition must not neglect nature conservation needs.

While the biodiversity thematic area could consider all aspects that relate to and affect the overall state of nature, in the thematic report we focus on the sub-themes of nature conservation and restoration under two main guiding frameworks - the newly adopted Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 (CBD COP Decision 15/4 KMGBF, 2022; EU Biodiversity strategy for 2030, 2020).

To ensure no priority was left behind, the Climate, Farm to Fork, Industry, and Zero Pollution thematic areas addressed some of the EU biodiversity strategy targets.

### 5.1 Current shape of the green transition

Moldova was granted EU candidate status in June 2022. In December 2023, EU leaders decided to open accession negotiations. Moldova has taken the EU environmental acquis under the Association Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova (RM) (Association agreement with Moldova, 2014). During the last 10 years, the Government of the Republic of Moldova has consistently transposed the relevant EU Acquis into national environmental and biodiversity legislation according to the EU Association Agreement. The Association Agenda until the year 2027 (EU-Republic of Moldova Association Agenda, 2022) and the RM-EU Association Agreement (Association agreement with Moldova, 2014) were revised, and the commitments in



the chapters "Environment", Fishery Policies" and the chapter "Climate policies" were updated.

Moldova made a substantial effort to align its biodiversity goals with the European Green Deal in recent years. The country established a package of policy initiatives covering some environmental aspects. Thus, adopting the National Development Strategy "Moldova Europeana 2030" aims to increase the area of forested lands and natural areas protected by the State. The Environmental Strategy for 2014-2023 sets strategic targets for the Republic of Moldova to improve the quality of life and guarantee the population's right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable natural environment (Environmental Strategy for 2014-2023, 2014). The Ministry of Environment has launched the process of updating the Environmental Strategy to ensure sustainable development of the country in line with the European Green Deal and the United Nations' Agenda 2030. The Strategy is set up to be approved in the first semester of 2024. The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) for 2015-2020 (NBSAP, 2014) is also under revision now with an aim to update it in line with four objectives of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, European Green deal and the EU Strategy on Biodiversity for 2030, expected to be approved in 2024.

Several targets proposed by the EU Strategy on Biological Diversity for 2030 are foreseen in the national policies: the target of at least "15% forest cover" is likely to be achieved through the National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme (NERP) (H.G. Nr. 55 din 17-02-2023), which is now under development and proposing 100,000 ha of new land afforested (or reforested and/or rehabilitated) between 2023-2032. Moldova intends to increase its protected area network from 5,65% now to 8% by 2025, and to 10% by 2030. Now, it's 307 objects under 12 different categories of protected areas (PAs), aligned to IUCN classification (IUCN Green List protected and conserved areas), UNESCO programme (Biosphere reserve) (UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme), and Ramsar Convention (wetlands of international importance) (Ramsar Convention. Republic of Moldova). According to preliminary plans, the reformation of the Forest Agency "Moldsilva" and other state bodies, as well as the creation of separate institutions responsible for the management of the PA, will envisage an institutional separation of the PA system to improve conservation and the sustainable development of protected areas. In a long-term perspective, Moldova intends to increase its forested area by 25%. Moldova has made significant progress in nature conservation. It is partially aligned with the EU acquis. However, it needs to pursue its work to identify and designate the Emerald Network (Emerald Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest) to meet the objectives of the Natura 2000 network (Natura 2000 Network). The Moldovan Emerald Network only covers 8.1% of the territory, and its sufficiency rate to achieve the network objectives is only 24% (Sufficiency index is expressed as a percentage of sufficient conclusions versus all conclusions). Currently, the network includes 61 Emerald sites accepted by the Bern Convention with 38 habitats and 154 species listed in the Resolutions of the Bern Convention (Bern Convention, Reference documents). There is a need to remedy



enforcement issues related to the protection of species, sustainable use of resources, and management of protected areas, as well as to both update and enforce forest policy.

Overall, the national targets are not meeting the EGD ones, specifically those related to protected area coverage, including conservation of primary and old-growth forests, legally binding EU nature restoration targets, habitats and species conservation, reduction in the number of Red List species threatened by invasive alien species, and negative impacts on sensitive species and habitats, including on the seabed through fishing.

The details are provided in Table 13.

**Table 13. EGD objectives/targets and current status/progress in the Biodiversity thematic area**

EGD Target (including EU BD Strategy and 8th EAP)		EU biodiversity strategy indicator (EU Biodiversity Strategy Dashboard (europa.eu))	National target (indicator)
<b>Nature conservation</b>			
1	Legally protect a minimum of 30% of the EU's land area and a minimum of 30% of the EU's sea area, and integrate ecological corridors, as part of a true Trans-European Nature Network.		
1.1	Legally protect a minimum of 30% of the EU's land area	Terrestrial protected area coverage	NDS Moldova Europeana 2030: 10% of the area by 2030, 8% by 2025
		Natura 2000 terrestrial protected area coverage	No national target  NBSAP 2030 is the document that should present the national target for the Emerald Network and the target to ensure connectivity between it and NATURA 2000.
		Nationally designated terrestrial protected area coverage	NDS Moldova Europeana 2030: 10% by 2030
1.2	Legally protect a minimum of 30% of the EU's sea area	Marine protected area coverage	NA
		Natura 2000 marine protected area coverage.	NA
		Nationally designated marine protected area coverage	NA
2	Strictly protect at least a third of the EU's protected areas, including all remaining EU primary and old-growth forests.	Under development	No national target
3	Effectively manage all protected areas, defining	Under development	No national target



	clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately.		NBSAP 2030 is the document which presents the target for PA monitoring
<b>Nature restoration</b>			
4a	Legally binding EU nature restoration targets to be proposed in 2021, subject to an impact assessment. By 2030, significant areas of degraded and carbon-rich ecosystems will be restored.	Nature restoration law is adopted	No national target  NFERP: restoration of 45k ha by 2032 The updated NBSAP 2030 should include the national target
		30% of habitats restored from poor to good condition	No national target  NBSAP 2030 should introduce the target
		National nature restoration plans are being developed.	No national target  NBSAP 2030 will include the target
		30% of drained peatlands are restored (quarter is rewetted)	N/A  There are no peatland ecosystems in Moldova.
4b	Habitats and species show no deterioration in conservation trends and status; at least 30% reach favourable conservation status or show a positive trend.		No national target  The updated Red Book, edition 4th, will be developed in 2024 to indicate the trend in species conservation status.
4b. 1	Species show no deterioration in conservation trends and status	Common bird index by type of species	No National target  Society implements the programme for monitoring common birds in the Republic of Moldova for the Birds and Nature Protection.
4b. 2	Conservation status of species and habitats	Status of forests and wetlands	No national target  NBSAP 2030 will include the target
5	The decline of pollinators is reversed	Grassland butterfly index	No national target.  NBSAP 2030 should include the target
9	Three billion additional trees are planted in the EU, in full respect of ecological principles.	Number of trees planted in the EU as part of the 3 billion Trees Pledge	No national target  NFERP 2032 will contribute to forest extension and rehabilitation, by 2032, afforestation of an area of 110 000 ha, and reforestation of an area of 35 000 ha
		Degree of connectivity of forest ecosystems	No national target  NFERP 2032 will contribute to decreasing the forest fragmentation index by 0.75 units



			by improving ecological connectivity with habitats ensured for biodiversity until 2032.  NFERP 2032 - strengthening the communal forestry sector by expanding the forested areas and rehabilitating the existing ones (85 thousand ha)
10	Significant progress in the remediation of contaminated soil sites	Increase in the number of remediated sites	No national target  NFERP 2032 – is to contribute to the afforestation of the degraded lands at 110 thousand ha and the rehabilitation of forests at 35 thousand ha until 2032;
11	At least 25,000 km of free-flowing rivers are restored	Under development	No national target
12	There is a 50% reduction in the number of Red List species threatened by invasive alien species.	Under development	No national target  NBSAP 2030 will consider the target
16	The negative impacts of fishing and extraction activities on sensitive species and habitats, including the seabed, are substantially reduced.	Proportion of fish stocks sustainably exploited	No national target  NBSAP 2030 should include the target

## 5.2 Summary of the gap assessment

As scenarios for the next century indicate, the Republic of Moldova is very vulnerable to climate change. Among other issues, they forecast the displacement of the longitudinal gradient to the north and the introduction of new species characteristic of the southern areas. The condition of the natural ecosystems will worsen, so the southern part of the country will experience extreme climatic phenomena (high temperatures, low precipitation), and the processes of aridization (desertification) will increase (UNFCCC. Fifth National Communication of the Republic of Moldova, 2023).

Practices such as intensive irrigation, using chemical fertilisers, pesticides, fungicides, heavy agricultural machinery, etc., are leading to degradation, erosion, compaction, and depletion of the soil organic matter of the black soils. Other human activities that affect and disrupt ecosystem services include unauthorised waste disposal, overgrazing, illegal tree cutting, illegal hunting and fishing, and industrial and agricultural pollution, all of which have a negative impact on the functioning of ecosystems to a great extent. Over the past decades, human activities have threatened the country's biodiversity by fragmenting natural areas, resulting in reduced ecological functioning and lost habitats and species. Nature-based adaptation solutions would be



necessary to increase biodiversity conservation and resilience and improve ecosystem capacity for carbon sequestration.

Inadequate management of forests in the last century caused a decrease in forest genetic resources. The total area of the State Protected Natural Areas Fund is insufficient to prevent biodiversity loss. Besides, a roadmap on integrating the Emerald Network in Moldova into the Natura 2000 as part of the Trans-European Nature Network needs to be developed. So does the Nature Restoration Plan. An updated Environmental Strategy 2030 needs approval, which can happen in 2024. It includes specific targets in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030.

Moldova had to implement the Bern Convention and the EU IAS Regulation provisions strictly to control the introduction of non-native species. However, Moldovan legislation related to invasive species is not fully consolidated with threats from non-native species and possible socio-economic or environmental damages. Also, the Regulation on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species has not yet been transposed into national legislation.

There is a gap in legal mechanisms for sustainable forest management, regulatory mechanisms for prevention and control of invasiveness, ecosystem restoration, prevention of species extinction, etc. Moldova's existing regulatory and economic instruments are insufficient to ensure a tangible and measurable environmental improvement. There is a need to improve the existing legal framework in the field of nature conservation with adequate provisions for liability and redress, economic instruments, benefit sharing, compensation for damage and compensation for restoration and rehabilitation.

Available sectoral funding and existing financing instruments are not sufficient and realistic to meet the EGD sectoral goals. The state budget planning process for biodiversity conservation needs to be improved by increasing annual financial allocations for nature restoration and conservation, especially for protected area network development. A fund for restoration activities will be needed, supplied by taxes and payments for damage caused to the environment.

Moldovan institutional capacity does not fully cover the needs of the green transition process. The roles and responsibilities in the nature conservation institutional framework are unclear, and there is insufficient technical capacity and existing infrastructure. There is a need to improve the biodiversity information system to inform conservation and restoration decisions and development planning, and to develop a reporting system in line with the EGD indicators. Capacity building and awareness training must be enhanced to increase new skills and competences for the green transition for sectoral public servants, expert services (IT), and public officials. There is a need to improve communication and awareness of NGOs and increase



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support to NGOs, academia, etc., with necessary technical and infrastructure capabilities to build the partnership for the green transition.

More insights are presented in Table 14 below.

Table 14. Summary of main enabling conditions, gaps and needs

Main elements	Enabling conditions	Key gaps	Needs
EU Strategic framework and Acquis (policy and legal readiness)	<p>In 2023, Moldova was accepted as a Candidate country to join the EU. Moldova is in the process of transposing the EU acquis.</p> <p>Association Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova.</p> <p>National Development Strategy "European Moldova 2030".</p> <p>The National Programme of Forest Extension and Rehabilitation for 2023-2032 and the Action Plan for its implementation during 2023-2027.</p> <p>Environmental Strategy for 2014-2023 and the Action Plan for its implementation.</p> <p>The Programme on "Green" economy promotion in the Republic of Moldova for 2018-2020 and the Action Plan for its implementation.</p> <p>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-</p>	<p>The national strategic documents do not cover all the EGD nature and biodiversity sub-topic targets.</p> <p>No approved strategic documents for Biodiversity conservation, such as the Environmental Strategy and the Strategy on Biological Diversity</p> <p>Not all EGD biodiversity and ecosystem indicators are implemented and covered by statistics and a comprehensive monitoring system in Moldova.</p> <p>The Habitat and Birds directives are partially transposed (only article 6, para 3 and 4) in the national legislation.</p> <p>The government discussions on transposing the EU acquis to align it with national and EGD goals are ongoing, but not fully completed.</p>	<p>An updated Environmental strategy for 2030 needs approval. It will include specific targets in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030.</p> <p>NBSAP needs to be revised and aligned with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 and EGD targets. The national biodiversity indicators must also be aligned with the goals of the EGD and include the Communication Strategy on Biodiversity.</p> <p>A roadmap for the Emerald Network in Moldova needs to be developed and integrated into Natura 2000 as part of the Trans-European Nature Network.</p> <p>A Nature Restoration Plan for Moldova and a new Law on Protected areas should be developed. There is no national informational system on protected areas, species, and habitats with clear zoning and delimitation.</p> <p>Create a responsible institution for the PA as well as for the Emerald Network to ensure needed conservation management and protection.</p> <p>Educational plans and curricula should be aligned with the green transition.</p> <p>A capacity-building training Programme for green transition should be established.</p>



	<p>2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</p> <p>There are statistics on biodiversity and ecosystems available in Moldova</p>		<p>Existing laws in the field of biodiversity conservation should be amended in line with the EU Directives on Habitats and Birds.</p> <p>Further alignment with the EU Acquis is needed:</p> <p>Law on Environmental Protection,</p> <p>Forestry Code (new)</p> <p>Law on Ecological Network</p> <p>Law on Invasive Species (new)</p> <p>Law on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing (new),</p> <p>Law on the eco-labelling system.</p> <p>The system of liability and redress should be improved via revision of economic mechanisms, i.e., taxes for damage, use of natural resources, stimulatory preferences, SER, compensatory mechanism, restoration measures etc. through the amendment of the law on environmental impact assessment, Law on strategic environmental assessment, Law on environmental liability should also be improved.</p> <p>Common bird index indicators should be introduced in the national indicators and reporting system.</p>
Instruments for policy implementation	The existing legal framework in the nature conservation/biodiversity involves policy implementation instruments.	Moldovan policy and legal frameworks are not fully covered by the appropriate regulatory and economic instruments of the EGD. i.e., there is a gap in legal mechanisms for sustainable forest regulation for prevention and control of	Need to improve the existing legal framework in the field of nature conservation with adequate provisions for liability and redress, economic instruments, benefit sharing, compensation for damage and compensation for restoration and rehabilitation.

(implementation readiness)	The national legal framework in civil, administrative, and penal responsibility involves specific provisions for taxation, compensation for damage to natural resources, and responsibility measures.	<p>invasiveness, approximation of the Emerald network to Natura 2000.</p> <p>The existing regulatory and economic mechanisms on liability and redress, including payment for damage, compensation for restoration, and taxes on biodiversity use in Moldova, are not sufficient to ensure a tangible and measurable environmental improvement.</p>	<p>Revised rules for taxes for pollution and damage, compensation or VAT reducing or VAT free for biodiversity conservation (in agriculture)</p> <p>The penalties for using and damaging biodiversity resources need to be revised to introduce a clearer mechanism for liability and redress.</p> <p>There is a need to consider stimulatory mechanisms, social and environmental responsibility (SER), etc.</p>
Financial capacity (implementation/financial readiness)	<p>The law on the State Budget for 2024 allocates biodiversity conservation and restoration funding.</p> <p>The Medium-Term Budgetary Framework (CBTM) for 2024-2026 has been developed.</p> <p>Bilateral agreements of Moldova with the EU, UN, foreign countries, and development agencies (GIZ, ADA, SIDA, USAID, WB, etc.) are in force as the point for the nature conservation and restoration investments.</p>	<p>The existing sectoral funding and financing instruments (for environmental protection, forest management, protected areas, biodiversity conservation, restoration and rehabilitation, forest extension, etc.) are not sufficient and realistic in achieving EGD targets.</p>	<p>Increase financial yearly allocations for nature restoration and conservation, protected area development, etc., to improve the state budget planning process for biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>The medium-term Budgetary Framework (CBTM) needs to be improved to increase national and foreign financial support for nature conservation and biodiversity areas.</p> <p>Build the capacity of government organisations and non-state actors to withdraw funds/increase absorption capacity. Secure co-funding to enlarge access to foreign funds in the field of nature conservation—GEF, Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, GCF, AFD, EU LIFE, EU development programmes, EU ENPI, Black Sea Interreg, etc.</p> <p>Need for a mechanism to mobilize resources and establish the Biodiversity Fund as a financial instrument for nature restoration and biodiversity conservation.</p>
Public capacity (institutional capacity - effectiveness)	The MoE and its subdivisions have a direct mandate to achieve biodiversity targets.	The roles and responsibilities in the nature conservation thematic area in the institutional setup are not clearly defined to ensure the development and	The updated NBSAP-2030 should regulate and apply a cross-sectoral approach to ensure clear responsibilities among the sectors and their subdivisions to achieve the EGD targets.



and efficiency - implementation readiness)	<p>The recent institutional reform of the MoE has improved the institutional and human capacities of the authority, specifically in the biodiversity conservation area.</p>	<p>management of the PA network, forest extension and restoration, prevention and control of Invasive species, etc.</p> <p>The main sectoral responsible institutions have not been given a clear mandate sufficient to reach the EGD-related goals.</p> <p>The technical capacity and existing infrastructure of the MoE and the subordinated agencies have essential limitations. The conservation management measures have limited budgetary funding.</p> <p>The Moldovan relevant institutions don't have enough (human) resources to handle the EGD-related requirements. There are not enough skilled staff who can support the green transition in the thematic area.</p> <p>The relevant institutions do not have transparent and sufficient data collection, monitoring, and reporting systems in place. Thus, the Environmental Agency doesn't have enough capacity to ensure national reporting to biodiversity-related international conventions.</p> <p>National fundraising capacities, project management infrastructure, and human capacities cannot access and assimilate</p>	<p>The public sector's institutional reform must be aligned with the EU BD Strategy and the EGD targets, PA extension and integration with the Natura 2000, forest plantation and restoration, invasive species control, etc.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Information System, established to ensure adequate Data management, Monitoring, digitalisation, and reporting, should be improved in line with the EGD indicators.</p> <p>Enhancing capacity building and awareness training in the field of nature conservation for public officials and specialists, decision-makers, academia, NGOs, etc., is essential.</p>
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		<p>the EU funds allocated for nature conservation (Life programme, etc).</p> <p>Weak public and non-governmental stakeholder communication and engagement in the biodiversity area.</p>	
Non-governmental capacity (implementation readiness)	<p>The law on public information provides for the participation of non-governmental SHs in decision-making.</p> <p>Some specific projects, such as EU4ENV (WB), address the training and educational process for the green transition.</p> <p>The ongoing capacity-building projects support a discussion on technical and infrastructure development, focusing on making changes required for the green transition.</p>	<p>NGOs, academia, and private businesses in the nature conservation/biodiversity area have insufficient technical and infrastructure capabilities to reach related national and EGD goals for biodiversity conservation in Moldova.</p> <p>The non-governmental biodiversity sector is unaware of the changes it needs to make to reach the green transition-related goals and challenges.</p> <p>The non-governmental key stakeholders in the biodiversity thematic area don't have sufficient financial, technical or human capacity or the resources needed to implement and support an inclusive transition.</p>	<p>There is a need to improve and support NGOs with the necessary technical and infrastructure capabilities to support the achievement of the EGD goals at the national and local levels.</p> <p>Capacity-building training is needed to increase personnel's knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities and tasks better and support the green transition in the biodiversity area.</p> <p>For employees to be educated on EGD, capacity-building training is needed for biodiversity-related sectors (e.g., forestry, hunting, fishing) and sectors that impact biodiversity (e.g., agriculture, energy, infrastructure).</p>



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## Annex 1. Detailed information on the key stakeholders

List of stakeholders is not shared due to GDPR.

## Annex 2. Mapping the strategic national documents as well as relevant thematic objectives and targets

Relevant international or EGD policy area/ strategic document	Existing national strategic document	Time of adoption and date of last revision	Legally binding or not	Relevant objectives and targets	Comments
World Charter for Nature (New York, 28 October 1982)	<b>National Development Strategy "European Moldova 2030"</b>	LAW no. 315/ .2022	Legally binding	<p><b>NDS</b> - General objective 10. Ensuring a healthy and safe environment</p> <p>Specific objective 10.1. Improving the quality of water, air and soils</p> <p>Specific objective 10.2. Sustainable growth of the area of forests and protected areas</p> <p>Specific objective 10.3. Ensuring a responsible consumption of natural resources</p> <p>Specific objective 10.4. The active transition to the green and circular economy</p>	

	<p><b>National Programme of Forest Extension and Rehabilitation for period 2023-2032 and the Action Plan for its implementation during the period 2023-2027</b></p>	G.D. no. 55/2023		<p><b>National Programme of forest extension and rehabilitation</b> - The general objective of this Programme is the sustainable development of the forestry sector, through the conservation and expansion of national forest resources, with the aim of increasing climate resilience in the long term and meeting the needs of the country regarding the products and services generated by forests.</p>	
	<p><b>Environmental Strategy for the years 2014-2023 and the Action Plan for its implementation</b></p>	G.D. no 301/2014		<p><b>Environmental Strategy</b>—The general objective of the Strategy is to create an efficient environmental management system, which will contribute to improving the quality of environmental factors and ensuring the population's right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable natural environment. The specific objectives of the Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2) the integration of the principles of environmental protection, sustainable development and green economic development, adaptation to climate change in all sectors of the national economy;</li> <li>4) reducing the negative impact of economic activity on the environment and improving environmental pollution prevention measures;</li> <li>5) creation of the integrated monitoring system and environmental quality control;</li> <li>6) ensuring the rational use, protection and conservation of natural resources through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) improving the quality of at least 50% of surface waters and implementing the watershed management system;</li> <li>b) ensuring access, until 2023, of about 80% of the population to safe water supply access systems and services and of about 65% to sewage systems and services;</li> <li>c) improving the quality of the soils and the</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<p><b>The Programme on "Green" economy promotion in the Republic of Moldova for the years 2018-2020 and the Action Plan for its implementation</b></p>	G.D. no.160/2018	<p>ecological reconstruction of the degraded lands, affected by landslides and of the protection sheets of the agricultural lands in a proportion of 100%;</p> <p>e) the expansion of forest areas up to 15% of the country's territory and the natural areas protected by the state up to 8% of the territory, as well as ensuring the efficient and sustainable management of natural ecosystems;</p> <p>7) creation of the integrated air quality management system, reduction of pollutant emissions in the atmosphere by 30% by 2023 and greenhouse gases by at least 20% by 2020, compared to the baseline scenario;</p>	
	<p><b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b></p>	G.D. no. 274/2015	<p><b>Programme on "Green" economy promotion in the Republic of Moldova</b> - Specific objectives: 1) ensuring, until 2020, the conditions of good governance and strengthening the institutional and management potential in the field of promoting the "green" economy by 30% at the national level;</p> <p><b>NBSAP 2020</b> - Specific objective A. Ensure sustainable management and efficient institutional framework for biodiversity conservation until 2020 through: A1. Developing the normative framework on biodiversity conservation A2. Ensuring an efficient institutional framework for the sustainable management of biodiversity; A3. Ensuring the integration of international treaty requirements into national biodiversity policies.</p>	<p>Drafting Concept Program for the Promotion of the Green and Circular Economy in the Republic of Moldova</p> <p>A revision of the NBSAP, 2030, is under development (expected in 2024)</p>

Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Helsinki, 17 March 1992)	<p><b>Environmental Strategy for the years 2014-2023 and the Action Plan for its implementation</b></p> <p><b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b></p>	<p>G.D. no..301/2014</p> <p>G.D. no. 274/2015</p>	Legally binding	<p><b>ESAP</b> – Specific objective 6. Ensuring the rational use, protection and conservation of natural resources through:</p> <p>a) improving the quality of at least 50% of surface waters and implementing the system of watershed management</p> <p><b>NBSAP 2020</b> - Specific objective C. By 2020, implement measures to stop threats to biodiversity through: C2. Implementing measures to minimize degradation of water resources and aquatic biodiversity, as well as identifying protection measures for them through the development and approval of 2 management plans for aquatic basin districts;</p> <p>Activities: Develop plans for the management of Nistru and Danube-Prut hydrographic basins and the Black Sea; Restore riparian protection belts for rivers and water basins; Develop a study on the anthropogenic impact on biodiversity caused by the change of hydrological regime of water courses of catchment areas</p>	
Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, 19 September 1979)	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	<b>NBSAP</b> - Specific objective B. By 2020, reduce the pressure on biodiversity to ensure sustainable development through: B1. Ensuring the extension of state-protected natural areas to up to 8% of the country's surface area, establishing a national ecological network and developing 44 management plans for protected natural areas B2. Ensuring the conservation of rare, vulnerable and endangered	



				<p>species by restoring the habitats of 5 endangered plant and five endangered animal species</p> <p>Specific objective C. By 2020, implement measures to stop threats to biodiversity through: C1. Implementing measures to stop soil degradation and diminish the effects of climate change by planting 500 ha of degraded areas and improving ecosystems for four local species; C2. Implementing measures to minimize degradation of water resources and aquatic biodiversity and identifying protection measures for them through the development and approval of 2 management plans for aquatic basin districts; C3. Implementing measures to diminish the negative impact of invasive species by developing a study, a programme and practice guidelines for fighting invasive species; C4. Implementing measures to minimize the anthropogenic pressure on vulnerable natural ecosystems by forestry development on 5000 ha of public land.</p> <p>Activities: - Create the “Emerald” network as a part of the Pan-European Ecological Network; -Develop the Cadaster of state protected natural areas; Develop and publish the third edition of the Red Book of Republic of Moldova; Develop and implement an Action Plan on invasive species in accordance with the requirements of Bern Convention; Conduct impact studies for exogenous invasive species; Develop an Action Plan for fighting against American maple (<i>Acer negundo</i>); Develop guidelines on efficient practices to fight invasive species; Train (private, public) land owners on the impact of invasive species and how to combat them</p>	
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Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe, concluded in London on 4 December 1991	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	<p><b>NBSAP</b> - Specific objective B. By 2020, reduce the pressure on biodiversity to ensure sustainable development through: B1. Ensuring the extension of state-protected natural areas to up to 8% of the country's surface area, establishing a national ecological network and developing 44 management plans for protected natural areas B2. Ensuring the conservation of rare, vulnerable and endangered species by restoring the habitats of 5 endangered plant and five endangered animal species</p> <p>Activities: Develop and publish the third edition of the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova</p>	
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals;	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	<p>Specific objective B. By 2020, reduce the pressure on biodiversity to ensure sustainable development through: B1. Ensuring the extension of state-protected natural areas to up to 8% of the country's surface area, establishing a national ecological network and developing 44 management plans for protected natural areas B2. Ensuring the conservation of rare, vulnerable and endangered species by restoring the habitats of 5 endangered plant and five endangered animal species</p> <p>Activities: Develop and publish the third edition of the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova</p>	
Agreement on the Conservation of Birds in Europe (London, 1991) Bird Life International	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	<p>Specific objective B. By 2020, reduce the pressure on biodiversity to ensure sustainable development through: B1. Ensuring the extension of state-protected natural areas to up to 8% of the country's surface area, establishing a national ecological network and developing 44 management plans for protected natural areas B2. Ensuring the conservation of rare,</p>	

				<p>vulnerable and endangered species by restoring the habitats of 5 endangered plant and five endangered animal species</p> <p>Activities: Develop and publish the third edition of the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova</p>	
<p>Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (EUROBATS, 2000).</p>	<p><b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b></p>	<p>G.D. no. 274/2015</p>	<p>Legally binding</p>	<p>Specific objective B. By 2020, reduce the pressure on biodiversity to ensure sustainable development through: B1. Ensuring the extension of state-protected natural areas to up to 8% of the country's surface area, establishing a national ecological network and developing 44 management plans for protected natural areas B2. Ensuring the conservation of rare, vulnerable and endangered species by restoring the habitats of 5 endangered plant and five endangered animal species</p> <p>Activities: Develop and publish the third edition of the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova</p>	
<p>Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (The Hague, 1995), 1995</p>	<p><b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b></p>	<p>G.D. no. 274/2015</p>	<p>Legally binding</p>	<p>Specific objective B. By 2020, reduce the pressure on biodiversity to ensure sustainable development through: B1. Ensuring the extension of state-protected natural areas to up to 8% of the country's surface area, establishing a national ecological network and developing 44 management plans for protected natural areas B2. Ensuring the conservation of rare, vulnerable and endangered species by restoring the habitats of 5 endangered plant and five endangered animal species</p>	

International Plant Protection Convention	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	Activities: Develop and publish the third edition of the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova; develop efficient, harmless, environmentally friendly/green technologies to produce and process agricultural raw materials.	
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), (Washington, 1973), 2000.	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	Activities: Develop and publish the third edition of the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova.	
Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar, 1971), 2001	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	Specific objective C. By 2020, implement measures to stop threats to biodiversity through: C2. Implementing measures to minimize degradation of water resources and aquatic biodiversity, as well as identifying protection measures for them through the development and approval of 2 management plans for aquatic basin districts;	
Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro, June 1992), 1993	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	The Overall Objective of the Strategy. Decrease the current loss rate of biodiversity as a contribution to reducing poverty and as a benefit to all forms of life on earth.  Specific objective A. Ensure sustainable management and efficient institutional framework for biodiversity conservation until 2020 through: A1. Developing the normative framework on biodiversity conservation A2.	Drafting Concept Programme for the Promotion of the Green and Circular Economy in the Republic of Moldova





			<p>Ensuring an efficient institutional framework for the sustainable management of biodiversity; A3. Ensuring the integration of international treaty requirements into national biodiversity policies.</p> <p>Specific objective B. By 2020, reduce the pressure on biodiversity to ensure sustainable development through: B1. Ensuring the extension of state-protected natural areas to up to 8% of the country's surface area, establishing a national ecological network and developing management plans for protected natural areas B2 and ensuring the conservation of rare, vulnerable and endangered species by restoring the habitats of 5 endangered plant and five endangered animal species B3 and implementing biological security measures by developing two risk assessment procedures for introducing genetically modified organisms in the environment and establishing an advisory centre.</p> <p>Specific objective C. By 2020, implement measures to stop threats to biodiversity through: C1. Implementing measures to stop soil degradation and diminish the effects of climate change by planting 500 ha of degraded areas and improving ecosystems for four local species; C2. Implement measures to minimise the degradation of water resources and aquatic biodiversity, and identify protection measures for them by developing and approving two management plans for aquatic basin districts; C3. Implementing measures to diminish the negative impact of invasive species by creating a study, a programme and practice guidelines for fighting invasive species; C4. Implementing measures to minimize the anthropogenic pressure on vulnerable natural</p>	<p>A revision of the NBSAP, 2030, is under development (expected in 2024)</p>
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				<p>ecosystems by forestry development on 5000 ha of public land.</p> <p>Specific objective E. By 2020, provide scientific support for biodiversity conservation, access to information, and promote education for sustainable development through: E1. Promoting scientific research on biodiversity conservation by emphasizing bio-geographic regions, establishing botanical gardens, promoting new technologies and studies on species and ecosystems. E2. Ensuring the educational framework and staff training on biodiversity conservation and biological security by developing a special curriculum, courses and modules, and publishing three good practice guidelines. E3. Raising awareness and informing the general public on biodiversity conservation and biological security by organizing annual events on biodiversity, five contests, 10 seminars and 8 round tables.</p> <p>Specific objective D. By 2020, implement measures to increase the benefits of using natural resources and ecosystem services through: D1. Promoting access to genetic resources and equitable sharing of benefits by developing a study, promoting five genotypes of valuable plants for industrial plantation and developing two projects for local communities; D2. Ensuring the sustainable development of natural ecosystems, which provide services through the development of a study and a methodology, and two pilot projects for promoting ecosystem services.</p>	
Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	Specific objective B. By 2020, the pressure on biodiversity will be reduced to ensure sustainable development through B3. Implementing biological	A revision of the NBSAP, 2030, is under

(Montreal, 2000), 2002	<b>the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>			<p>security measures by developing two risk assessment procedures for introducing genetically modified organisms into the environment and establishing an advisory centre.</p> <p>Activity: Implement the National Framework on Biological Safety by the provisions of the Cartagena Protocol; Develop procedures and strengthen capacities to assess risks/risk management as part of the genetically modified organism's authorization process</p>	development (expected in 2024)
Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro, 5 June 1992), adopted in Nagoya on 15 October 2010	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	<p>Specific objective B. By 2020, the pressure on biodiversity will be reduced to ensure sustainable development through B3. Implementing biological security measures by developing two risk assessment procedures for introducing genetically modified organisms into the environment and establishing an advisory centre.</p> <p>Activity: Develop the liability and redress mechanism for biosafety</p>	A revision of the NBSAP, 2030, is under development (expected in 2024)
Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of benefits arising out of their	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	<p>Specific objective D. By 2020, implement measures to increase the benefits of using natural resources and ecosystem services through: D1. Promoting access to genetic resources and equitable sharing of benefits arising from them by developing a study, promoting five genotypes of valuable plants for industrial</p>	A revision of the NBSAP, 2030, is under development (expected in 2024)

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use (Nagoya, 29 October 2010), 2016				plantation and developing two projects for local communities;  Activities: Conduct a study on access to genetic resources and equitable sharing of benefits from their use (according to the recommendations of Nagoya Protocol); Encourage activities for the maintenance of domestic genetic breeding stock; Implement the requirements of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the Commission of Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture under FAO;	
Convention on the European landscape (Florence, Italy, 2000)	<b>Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (NBSAP).</b>	G.D. no. 274/2015	Legally binding	Specific objective B. By 2020, reduce the pressure on biodiversity to ensure sustainable development through: B1. Ensuring the extension of state-protected natural areas to up to 8% of the surface area of the country, establishing a national ecological network and developing 44 management plans for protected natural areas	

## Annex 3. EU approximation assessment

Relevant EU legal document (only key directives and regulations relevant for the thematic area)	Existing national law	Planned national law (including drafted, but not adopted)	Status of transposition (fully, partially, not transposed)	Further steps in transposition	Competent Authority	Comments: issues/difficulties that can create problems for further transposition
Name of the directive	Name and date of adoption	Name and planned date of adoption				
Directive 2003/4/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2003 on public access to environmental information and repealing Council Directive 90/313/EEC	<p>Forest Code no.887/1996</p> <p>Law no. 1515/1993 on Environmental Protection</p> <p>Law no. 148/2023 on access to public interests information</p>	A new Forestry Code is under development	Partially	<p>In the coming year, the country should, in particular: → strengthen the implementation and enforcement of legislation with a focus on horizontal legislation, nature protection, and water management— allocate the necessary human and financial resources to the Ministry of Environment and subordinated bodies.</p> <p>(COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Republic of Moldova 2023 Report, 2023)</p> <p>To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)</p>	Ministry of Environment	
EIA Directive - Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public	Law on environmental impact	The draft law on the regulation of biodiversity	Partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	

and private projects on the environment	<p>assessment (EIA) no. 86/2014</p> <p>Law no. 11/2017 on Strategic Environmental Assessment</p> <p>Law on state-protected areas no. 1538/1998</p> <p>Law on ecological expertise No. 851/1996</p> <p>Law no. 94/2007 on the ecological network</p>	assessment (appropriate assessment)				
Commission Implementing Decision of 11 July 2011 concerning a site information format for Natura 2000 sites	-		Not transposed	To raise capacity and funds for transposition	Ministry of Environment	
Birds Directive - Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds	<p>Law on Ecological Network No.74/2007.</p> <p>Law no. 298/2018 on hunting and the hunting fund.</p> <p>Law on Animal Kingdom no. 439/1995</p>	<p>The new Hunting Fund and Game Protection Law was approved in 2024.</p> <p>An updated Red Book, edition 4th, is planned to be</p>	Partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	

		developed in 2024				
Habitats Directive - Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora	<p>Law on Ecological Network no.74/2007</p> <p>Law on the Plant Kingdom no. 239/2007</p> <p>Law on Animal Kingdom no. 439/1995</p> <p>Law no. 149/2006 regarding fish stock, fishing and fish farming</p> <p>Law on Red Book of the Republic of Moldova No.235/2005</p> <p>Law on state-protected areas no. 1538/1998</p>	<p>An updated Red Book, edition 4th, is planned to be developed in 2024</p> <p>Draft law on natural areas protected by the state</p> <p>Draft law on protective forest belts</p> <p>Draft law on meadows</p> <p>Draft new Forestry Code</p>	Partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	
Council Regulation 338/97/EC of 9 December 19961 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein	<p>Law on the Plant Kingdom no. 239/2007</p> <p>Law on Animal Kingdom no. 439/1995</p>		Partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	

	Law on Red Book of the Republic of Moldova no.235/2005					
<p>Leghold traps - Council Regulation (EEC) No 3254/91 of 4 November 1991 prohibiting the use of leghold traps in the EU</p> <p>and the introduction into the EU of pelts and manufactured goods of certain wild animal species originating</p> <p>In countries which catch them using leghold traps or trapping methods which do not meet</p> <p>International Humane Trapping Standards</p>	<p>Law on Animal Kingdom no. 439/1995</p> <p>Law no. 298/2018 on hunting and hunting fund</p>		Partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	
ZOO Directive - Council Directive 1999/22/EC of 29 March 1999 relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos	Law on Animal Kingdom no. 439/1995		Partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	



Invasive Alien Species - Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council of 22 October 2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species	Law on Plant Kingdom no. 239/2007  Law on Animal Kingdom no. 439/1995	A new Law on invasive alien species is planned to be developed in 2024	Partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	
FLEGT - 2173/2005 FLEGT 1024/2008 Council Regulation (EC) No 2173/2005 of 20 December 2005 on the establishment of a FLEGT licensing scheme for imports of timber into the European Community (Note: TRADE legal base) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1024/2008 of 17 October 2008 laying down detailed measures for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 2173/2005 on the establishment of a FLEGT 7 licensing scheme for imports of timber into the European Community (idem: TRADE legal base)	Forest Code no.887/1996	A new Forestry code is under development	partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	

EUDR - Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 May 2023 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation and repealing Regulation (EU) No 995/2010 (Text with EEA relevance)	Forest Code no.887/1996	A new Forestry code is under development	partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	
Timber trade - 995/2010 EUTR 607/2012 363/2012 Regulation (EU) 995/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down the obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the market	Forest Code no.887/1996	A new Forestry code is under development	partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	
Water Framework Directive - Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy	-	-	Not transposed	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	

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Restoration Law - COM/2022/304 final: Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on nature restoration	<p>Law on Ecological Network no.74/2007</p> <p>Law on the Plant Kingdom no. 239/2007</p> <p>Law on Animal Kingdom no. 439/1995</p> <p>Law no. 149/2006 regarding fish stock, fishing and fish farming</p> <p>Law on Red Book of the Republic of Moldova no.235/2005</p> <p>Law on state-protected areas no. 1538/1998</p> <p>Forest Code no.887/1996</p>	<p>An updated Red Book, edition 4th, is planned to be developed in 2024</p> <p>Draft law on natural areas protected by the state</p> <p>Draft law on protective forest belts</p> <p>Draft law on meadows</p> <p>Draft new Forestry Code</p>	partially	To raise the capacity and funds for the full transposition (to develop the new roadmap based on the started EU negotiations)	Ministry of Environment	
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## Annex 4. The list of main instruments for policy implementation

Type of instrument	Name of the instrument and brief description	Statutory requirement	Responsible party/target group	Level of its application
Regulatory				
	<p>The central forestry authority approves authorisation and the forestry ticket.</p> <p>Authorization of special use of the objects of the vegetable kingdom (harvesting of wild fruits and berries, nuts, mushrooms, medicinal plants and other plants) is carried out by the competent authorities. To satisfy production or scientific needs, as well as for the purpose of obtaining benefits from the sale of these resources or their products.</p>	Forestry Code (no. 887-XIII of June 21, 1996)	Private and legal persons	In force
	Norms for grass harvesting and cattle grazing on forest land are approved by the government.	<p>The government has approved the regulation regarding grass harvesting and cattle grazing on forest land (G.D.no. 667 of July 23, 2010)</p> <p>Admissible pressure on the pasture:</p> <p>Pasture users must ensure compliance with the admissible pressure on the pasture</p> <p>When determining the admissible pressure on the pasture in the case of other species of animals, it is necessary to apply the data on the daily feed ration for different species of animals,</p>		

		<p>according to annex no. 2 to this Regulation, and the conversion coefficients for other species of animals, according to annex no. 3 to this Regulation.</p> <p>The area required for grazing a herd of cattle is calculated based on the admissible pressure on the pasture.</p> <p>In the northern districts of the republic, the load per 10 ha of pasture must be up to 10 cattle, in the central districts - up to 8 cattle, and in the southern ones - up to 6 cattle.</p> <p>In the case of soil types and subtypes with low productivity (salinized, alkalized, calcareous, sandy soil, etc.), the admissible pressure on the pasture is reduced by 15% in relation to the productivity of the pasture.</p>		
	<p>Rules of liability and redress established.</p> <p>- Suspension of authorisation, limitation or prohibition of the activity of private and legal persons, regardless of the form of ownership, for environmental damage.</p> <p>- Taxes applied to recover damages and prejudices to the environment</p>	<p>Law on Protection of the Environment (no. 1515-XII of June 16, 1993)</p>	<p>Private and legal persons</p>	



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<p>The procedure for granting the title of use (license) on some concrete natural resources</p> <p>The economic management mechanism of natural resources</p> <p>This mechanism works because of politics, financial-crediting, and fiscal-budgetary policies and implies:</p> <p>a) planning and state financing of evidence measures, assessment and preservation of natural objects, restoring natural resources from natural damage or use;</p> <p>b) payment for the use of natural resources use and payment for environmental pollution;</p> <p>c) granting tax and credit facilities to economic agents who modernize their technologies on their own for reducing the consumption of natural resources and the protection of the environment;</p> <p>d) creation of a specialized ecological bank;</p> <p>e) granting fiscal facilities to commercial banks and funds for investments in the case of their participation in the financing of ecological projects in the long term;</p> <p>f) establishing prices for natural resources and including the value of the potential of natural resources in macroeconomic calculations;</p> <p>g) promoting a special investment policy in the field of the use of natural resources, based on the evaluation of the "depreciation" of the potential of natural resources;</p>	<p>The law on natural resources (no. 1102-XIII of February 6, 1997)</p>	<p>Private and legal persons</p>	
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<p>h) adequate accounting records of the usage expenses, natural resources, and environmental protection;</p> <p>i) charging taxes for the use of natural resources with increased content of ecologically harmful components;</p> <p>k) stimulating the regeneration of renewable natural resources.</p> <p>Investment policy in the use of natural resources:</p> <p>(1) A minimum quota of the gross domestic product must be invested in the regeneration of natural resources and environmental protection.</p> <p>(2) The nomenclature of objects and measures that can be financed from the budget establishes the criteria for granting state allowances and the conditions for obtaining them.</p> <p>(3) Payment for the use of natural resources is established as the main source of funds intended for state investments in natural resource regeneration and environmental protection.</p> <p>(5) Accelerated depreciation of fixed nature protection funds and granting facilities to credit long-term investment projects - Stimulating the investment activity of economic agents, oriented towards saving natural resources and their protection.</p> <p>(6) The mode of accelerated depreciation of fixed funds for nature protection and the granting of facilities for the crediting of long-term investment projects is established by the government</p> <p><b>Payment for use of natural resources:</b></p>			
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	<p>- Payment for natural resources is monetary compensation by the beneficiary to a public expense</p> <p>- payment in case of environmental pollution</p> <p>Payment amount</p> <p>The amount paid for using natural resources depends on their state and consumption value, as well as the expenses for restoration or keeping them in usable condition.</p> <p>- The price of natural resources is the expression of their economic value reflected in the financial and extra-economic evaluation, which differs depending on the geographical position and quality of resources.</p> <p>Sources of payment</p> <p>(1) Payment for the limited use of natural resources is included in the cost price of the production (services) manufactured (provided) following the use of natural resources, respectively.</p> <p>(2) Payment for the over-use of natural resources is charged from the payer's net income.</p> <p>The method of calculation, collection and use of the payment</p> <p>(1) The payment for using natural resources is calculated by the payer, who will keep a record of the actual amount of natural resources used and the payment amount.</p>			
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	<p>(2) The revenues obtained as tax for using natural resources shall accrue to the budgets of administrative-territorial units.</p> <p>(3) The method of collection and the fields of use of lease payments or concessions for the use of public property and natural resources are established by the government.</p>			
	<p>Physical damage caused by natural and legal persons to objects and complexes within the protected areas shall be repaired as established by the legislation in force.</p> <p>- The reparation of damages caused to the objects and complexes within the protected areas is carried out voluntarily or by court decision.</p>	Law on the fund of state-protected natural areas (no. 1538-XIII of February 25, 1998)	Private and legal persons	
	The commercial fishing quota/quota award certificate, the format of which is approved by the government	The Law on the fish stock, fishing and fish farming (no. 149-XVI of June 8, 2006)	Private or legal person	In force
	<p>a) rules and norms of conservation and protection;</p> <p>c) rules of preventing, stopping and prohibiting unauthorized use or in violation of the;</p> <p>g) prohibition of unauthorized grass harvesting activities, uncovering of litter, living blanket and fertile soil layer and grazing;</p> <p>h) environmental impact assessment of the planned activities and the state ecological expertise of the project and planning documentation;</p> <p>p) legal liability for violating the rules of conservation, protection and use of plant species.</p>	<p>The law of the vegetable kingdom (no. 239-XVI of 8 November 2007)</p>	private and legal persons	

	<p>Liability for violation of legislation:</p> <p>(1) administrative or criminal liability for violation of the legislation regarding the plant kingdom</p> <p>(2) Reparation of damage caused to the plant kingdom</p> <p>Regeneration of the plant kingdom species and the restoration of their habitats.</p> <p>Reparation of damage caused to plant kingdom species and/or their habitats:</p> <p>(2) The amount of damage is established according to the actual costs of restoring the objects of the plant kingdom, including the loss of income.</p> <p>(4) There is a Penalty for damage caused by the collection and commercialization of the species; the funds collected are transferred to the state budget.</p> <p>- the CITES permit/certificate or the agreement for import or export</p> <p>-authorizing or granting the right to use species of the plant kingdom and keeping the Register of requests</p> <p>- technical, economic and legal norms to comply with the regime of guarding and protection of plant species</p>			
	<p>- administrative or criminal liability for:</p>	<p>The afforestation law</p> <p>of degraded lands (no. 1041-XIV of 15</p>	<p>Private and legal persons</p>	

	<p>a) preventing in any form the works related to the improvement by afforestation of the degraded lands that they own;</p> <p>b) destruction of forest plantations established from the afforestation improvement fund;</p> <p>c) grazing in degraded, forested lands.</p>	June 2000)		
	<p>Administrative and criminal Liability and redress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- non-admission of the unauthorized use of the resources of the animal kingdom;</li> <li>- selected hunting;</li> <li>- fines and compensations for damages caused to animals and their habitat;</li> <li>- CITES permit/certificate for import, export, re-export and transit of animals.</li> <li>-Reparation of damages caused by violating the legislation regarding the protection and use of the resources of the animal kingdom, as well as recovery of lost profit in the manner and amounts established by the legislation.</li> </ul>	The Animal Kingdom Law (No. 439-XIII of April 27, 1995)	Private and legal persons	
	-Environmental Impact Assessment for any activities within the Emerald network. Any policy and planning document and amendments to such documents which, individually or in combination, may significantly impact the Emerald Sites.	Law on the ecological network (no. 94-XVI of April 5, 2007)	Private and legal persons	

	Liability for violations is applied in accordance with the provisions of national legislation.			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A system of economic instruments that prevent inappropriate activity, which may cause damage to the environment;</li> <li>- Ecological funds for finance activity aimed at improving the quality of the environment.</li> <li>- The fee for environmental pollution is administered by the State Fiscal Service.</li> <li>- "Tax for environmental pollution" is accumulated directly in the budget.</li> </ul> <p>TAXES, FINES AND SANCTIONS</p> <p>calculations and paying taxes for environmental pollution</p> <p>The formation of ecological funds was repealed, and responsibility was transferred to the State Fiscal Service.</p>	The law on payment for environmental pollution (from 25.02.1998)	Private and legal persons	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Operation of the mechanism for assessing the environmental impact.</li> <li>- Procedures and methods applied in the process of assessing the impact on the environment.</li> <li>- Issued the permissive act to carry out the planned activity for which an environmental agreement was reached</li> </ul>	The Law on environmental impact assessment (no. 86 of 29.05.2014)	Private and legal persons	In force

	-Eco-label regulation	Drafted in accordance with the EU Regulation 66/2010. To be approved by the GD in 2024	Private and legal persons	In plan
Economic	<p>Mechanism for economic management of natural resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The "user pays" principle is strictly promoted;</li> <li>- Natural resources can only be used against payment. The amount of payments for the use of natural resources is established by the legislature and is calculated by the user according to the provisions of this law, based on the volume of resources used.</li> </ul>	<p>The law on natural resources No. 1102-XIII/1997</p>	Private or legal person	In force
	<p>Payments for forest uses are used to stimulate rational economic use, regeneration, guarding, and protection of forests. The measures also specify liability for violation of forestry legislation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The government has established a method of payment for forestry uses.</li> </ul> <p>Economic stimulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the allocation of funds for the implementation of programmes regarding the use, regeneration, guarding and protection of forests from the state budget, the budgets of administrative-territorial units, and other sources;</li> <li>-Stimulating people who detected violations of the forestry legislation and ensured the collection of fines, penalties, and compensation for material losses caused to the forestry household.</li> </ul> <p>Liability for violation of forestry legislation</p>	Forestry Code (No. 887-XIII of June 21, 1996)	Private and legal persons	In force



	<p>The amount of compensation for the damage caused by the release of wood on foot is calculated according to annex no. 16 to the code.</p> <p>-Damage repair is done in accordance with the law.</p> <p>(4) The sums of the damage caused by the violation of forestry legislation shall be returned to the land owner from the forestry fund.</p> <p>Confiscation of wood production, other illegally obtained forest products</p> <p>each damaged tree * older than 10 years (in minimal salary)</p> <p>1,2 0.8 0.6; each damaged shrub - 0.9 0.6 0.4</p> <p>- Rates for calculating the amount of compensation for the damage caused by illegal cutting and damage to trees and shrubs up to the degree of their growth cessation, from 1.5 to 12.4 times the minimum salary.</p> <p>- Rates for calculating the compensation for the damage caused by the destruction and damage of forest crops, young stands from natural regeneration, and the natural and pre-existing seed in the areas intended for reforestation (1 ha). From 53-65, minimal salary</p> <p>- rates calculation of the amount of compensation for the damage caused by the forest beneficiaries by violating the provisions of the Rules for the release of standing timber in forests - loss or damage of plus trees, seed trees and trees in groups and seed clumps- 15 sizes of timber price per foot for felled or damaged trees</p>			
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	-The financial resources collected following the recovery of forest production losses are used for the regeneration, guarding, protection of forests and increasing their productivity.			
	The National Environmental Fund is a financial mechanism established to support LPAs and NGOs in various projects related to environmental protection.	Law on Protection of the Environment (No. 1515-XII of June 16, 1993)	Private and legal persons	In force
	Actions that can trigger civil, administrative or criminal liability, according to the legislation in force	Law on the fund of state-protected natural areas (no. 1538-XIII of February 25, 1998)	Private and legal persons	In force
	<p>Established the economic mechanisms of stimulation of the rational use of the plant kingdom and the mode of liability for the violation of the legislation.</p> <p>The economic mechanism for the rational use of objects of the vegetable kingdom includes:</p> <p>a) financing of programmes, strategies, and action plans regarding the rational use of the objects of the plant kingdom;</p> <p>b) payment for the use of objects of the plant kingdom;</p> <p>c) the economic stimulation of the rational use of the objects of the vegetable kingdom;</p> <p>Economic stimulation</p>	<p>The law of the vegetable kingdom (no. 239-XVI of 8 November 2007)</p>	Private and legal persons	In force

	<p>(1) The economic stimulation of the rational use, restoration and conservation of objects of the plant kingdom.</p> <p>a) stimulation of activities related to the development of programmes for the rational use, restoration and conservation of objects of the plant kingdom from the allocations provided in the state budget, local budgets, as well as from other legal sources;</p> <p>b) material stimulation of the owners of land and aquatic objects on which objects of the plant kingdom are located for the qualitative execution of the works;</p> <p>c) material stimulation of private and legal persons who take effective measures to guard and protect the objects of the plant kingdom, who have detected violations of the legislation in the field and have ensured the collection of fines and the reparation of the material damage caused to the objects of the plant kingdom.</p>			
	<p>Mechanism of responsibility for violating the legislation regarding the animal kingdom, but also the reparation of damages and prejudice caused, according to the principle "prejudices caused to the environment are paid".</p> <p>Payment for the use of toxic substances with effects harmful to the animal kingdom</p> <p>For the use in agriculture and for other purposes of toxic substances, which harm useful animals, a compensation payment is provided, in the manner and amounts established by the legislation.</p>	The Animal Kingdom Law (No. 439-XIII of April 27, 1995)	Private and legal persons	In force
	The commercial fishing quota/quota award certificate is the format approved by the government. The payment for a commercial fishing quota is 9000 lei.	The Law on the fish stock, fishing and fish farming (no. 149-XVI of June 8, 2006)	Private and legal persons	In force



	In case of violation of the provisions of this law, the offender not only pays the fine, but also repairs the damage caused to aquatic biological resources, and is calculated.			
	Liability for violations is in accordance with the provisions of national legislation.	Law on the ecological network (no. 94-XVI of April 5, 2007)	Private and legal persons	In force
	The fee for environmental pollution is administered by the State Fiscal Service. "Tax for environmental pollution" is accumulated directly in the budget.	The law on payment for environmental pollution (from 25.02.1998)	Private and legal persons	In force
	Procedures and methods are applied in the process of assessing the impact on the environment of some public and private projects or some types of planned activity that may have a significant impact on the environment.	The Law on environmental impact assessment (no. 86 of 29.05.2014)	Private and legal persons	In force
	Resource usage fees -  - tax for wood released per leg	Fiscal code of the Republic of Moldova, Title VIII: Taxes for resources  natural, tax rates are established in the Appendices to this Title.	Private and legal persons	In force
	Fines (offenses)	The Criminal Code of the Republic of Moldova, chapter VII, articles 86-87, chapter IX in articles 109-158, chapter X, article 177; Criminal Code art. 223-235.	Private and legal persons	In force
Voluntary	Environmental management systems (EMAS), eco-labels			

	Voluntary certification and management schemes			
	The National Environmental Fund is a financial mechanism established to support LPAs, NGOs, and various projects in the field of environmental protection:	Law on Protection of the Environment (No. 1515-XII of June 16, 1993)	NGOs, private sector, LPAs, academia etc.	In force
	NGOs' involvement in the forest trees planting campaign, awareness, public information and voluntary participation in actions.	LAW No. 86 from 11-06-2020 regarding non-commercial organizations	NGOs	In force
	National Planting Day – government initiative (in spring and autumn seasons)		Ministry of Environment, Presidency, Parliament, and government	early
	Celebration of World Environment Day – 5 June. Public awareness and information programme		Ministry of Environment	early
	Social and environmental responsibility voluntary programme of the private sector- ex. Orange Moldova, Premier Energy, Premier Capital, Petrom Moldova, Kaufland, Moldcell, Metro, etc.		Private sector	selected

## Annex 5. Institutional setting-up for nature conservation in Moldova

Institution	Role and responsibility	Inter-institutional cooperation for biodiversity	Relationship with the other EGD sectors
Ministry of Environment (MoE)	The Ministry is the central public authority for the environment. It is responsible for developing policy and legislation, action plans, norms and standards, and enforcement mechanisms in the field of the environment. The Directorate of Natural Resources and Biosafety Policies of the MoE has the basic mission to develop and promote the state policy on sustainable use of natural resources, conservation of biodiversity, protected areas, forest management, hunting management, and biological security.	<p>Intersectoral collaboration with:</p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry Policies for the development of organic (ecological) agriculture, agriculture friendly to the environment, afforestation belts in agricultural fields, agro-ecotourism, eco-label of agricultural products, and fishery production</p> <p>The Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalisation influences the formation of policies in all sectors and the strategic financial planning of state expenditures.</p> <p>Ministry of Finance. Annual financial planning and allocation of funds for implementing activities in the field of biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>Ministry of Energy – policies for alternative energy, biofuel, etc.</p> <p>Ministry of Education and Research – research and development programmes and human resources</p> <p>Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development – control pollution, road system development</p> <p>Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency</p> <p>National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova</p> <p>Hunting and Fishermen Society</p>	The Ministry is responsible for developing the environmental policy, climate change adaptation, controlling industrial and domestic pollution, rules for environmental impact assessment, approving norms for natural resources use (hunting, fishery), green taxes, and corresponding fines. The Ministry has promoted mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation into sectoral policies in the fields of energy (bioenergy), transport, agriculture, education, and science.
“Moldsilva” Agency, under the Ministry of Environment	“Moldsilva” Agency is a specialized semi-autonomous forest authority that operates under MoE, is responsible for developing and implementing measures on management, conservation, restoration of forests within the State Forest Fund (public ownership), and management of	<p>Data management and monitoring to:</p> <p>MoE</p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry</p> <p>Ministry of Energy</p> <p>Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization</p> <p>Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development</p> <p>Ministry of Education and Research</p> <p>Apele Moldovei Agency</p> <p>Environmental Protection Agency</p>	The agency is responsible for the forest sector, which is relevant to carbon sequestration and climate change adaptation.

	protected areas. It acts as the agency for the enforcement of legislation in the field of biodiversity conservation, forest management and protected areas. It also keeps the Inventory of natural areas. "Moldsilva" manages approximately 50 % of the state-protected natural areas' total surface. The Agency works with hunting animal species' use and conservation issues and regulates the use of forests and forest resources (including non-timber products).	Environmental Protection Inspectorate Local Public Administration Forest Research and Management Institute Scientific Reserves State Hydrometeorological Service Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova Hunting and Fishermen Society	
Forest Research and Management Institute (FRMI/ICAS), under the Agency "Moldsilva"	FRMI/ICAS is a Public Institution acting under the Moldsilva Agency. The research Institute is responsible for updating forest management planning, monitoring and surveillance of forests and protected areas, data management, and rehabilitation of forests, including agricultural forest belts, road forest belts, protection forests along rivers and water basins, degraded lands, etc.	Data management and monitoring to: MoE Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry Ministry of Energy Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development Ministry of Education and Research Moldsilva Agency Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Protection Inspectorate State Hydrometeorological Service Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova Local Public Administration Scientific reserves	Linked with the agricultural, infrastructure, Local communities, and tourism sectors and related to carbon sequestration and climate change.
Agency "Apele Moldovei", under the Ministry of Environment	The Moldovan Agency "Apele Moldovei" is a specialized water management authority under the MoE, is responsible for the implementation of state policy in the field of water resources; it also maintains the Water inventory,	Inter-Departmental collaboration with: MoE Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry Ministry of Energy Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development Ministry of Education and Research	The agency is responsible for water resources, climate-sensitive resource management needed by the population, agriculture, energy and industry, and can partly influence relevant policies. Data management and monitoring.

	manages the surface water resources, and the hydrotechnical constructions.	Moldsilva Agency Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Protection Inspectorate State Hydrometeorological Service Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova Local Public Administration	
Environmental Protection Inspectorate, under the Ministry of Environment	The Environmental Protection Inspectorate, which is the authority under the MoE, is responsible for ensuring control and supervision of natural resources use, prevention of overexploitation and polluting of resources that provide enforcement of regulations in the field of flora, fauna, forest and hunting management, and protected areas, etc.	Inter-Departmental collaboration with: MoE Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry Ministry of Energy Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development Ministry of Education and Research Moldsilva Agency Apele Moldovei Agency Environmental Protection Agency State Hydrometeorological Service Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova Local Public Administration Scientific Reserves Hunting and Fishermen Society	The State Inspectorate can affect sectors through enforcement activities. Data management on control, damage, or overexploitation of natural resources,
Environment Agency, under the Ministry of Environment	The Environment Agency, under the MoE, is the specialized authority to ensure the authorization process for the use of natural resources, monitoring of the status of water and soil resources, flora and fauna, air pollution, geological elements, and environmental pollution. The agency maintains the national integrated monitoring and	Inter-departmental collaboration with:  MoE Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry Ministry of Energy Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development Ministry of Education and Research Moldsilva Agency Apele Moldovei Agency Environmental Protection Inspectorate	Environmental impact assessment, authorisation, data management, monitoring and certification in agriculture, construction, transport, urban and rural development, forestry development, energy, economy etc.

	informational system, National Cadastre, statistical indicators, and standards in the field of environmental protection.	State Hydrometeorological Service Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova Local Public Administration Scientific Reserves Hunters and Fishermen Society	
State Hydrometeorological Service (SHS), under the MoE	SHS is a specialized subdivision under the MoE - provides observations, monitoring, data management and forecasting of meteorological, hydrological, environmental, and agrometeorological factors. It ensures the system of Early Warning Alert of climatic disasters, dangerous hydrometeorological phenomena, etc.	Inter-departmental collaboration with:  MoE Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry Ministry of Energy Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development Ministry of Education and Research Moldsilva Agency Apele Moldovei Agency Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Protection Inspectorate Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova Local Public Administration Scientific Reserves	Inter-sectoral collaboration, hydro-meteorologic data management, climate change, disaster prevention, weather forecast – agriculture, economy, infrastructure, etc.
National Office for the Implementation of Environmental Projects” (NOIEP)	NOIEP is a Public Authority funded by the MoE and established by GD 1249/2018 (reorganised in 2022). Its mission is to assist the MoE in developing a policy and regulatory framework and capacity building through the implementation of technical assistance and investment programmes/ projects in the field of environmental protection, with national and external financial support.	Inter-departmental collaboration with:  MoE Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry Ministry of Energy Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development Ministry of Education and Research Moldsilva Agency Apele Moldovei Agency Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Protection Inspectorate State Hydrometeorological Service	Climate change adaptation, rehabilitation, afforestation programme, biodiversity conservation, GBF-NBSAP, etc.

	<p>The NOIEP aids in implementing provisions of national policies and international/regional conventions to which Moldova is a Party. The NOIEP administrates the National Environmental Fund, providing methodological support for applicants, selection procedures, monitoring and financial operations of the NEF projects.</p>	<p>Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova Local Public Administration Scientific Reserves</p>	
Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry (MAFI)	<p>The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry is a central public authority responsible for developing policy and regulatory frameworks in the field of agriculture. The MAFI promotes rules for developing organic (ecological) agriculture, agriculture friendly to the environment, afforestation belts in agricultural fields, agro-ecotourism, eco-labelling of agricultural products, fishery production, etc.</p>	<p>Inter-sectoral collaboration with:</p> <p>MoE Moldsilva Agency Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Protection Inspectorate SHS Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova Local Public Administration</p>	<p>The Ministry can indirectly influence the climate and agricultural sectors by regulating fisheries, irrigation and land drainage.</p>
Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency (GCCA)	<p>GCCA is the body of the central public administration, which implements state policy in the field of land relations, cadastre, geodesy, cartography, and geoinformatics. It is also subordinate to the government of the Republic of Moldova.</p>	<p>Inter-departmental collaboration with:</p> <p>MoE Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry Ministry of Energy Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development Ministry of Education and Research Moldsilva Agency Apele Moldovei Agency Forest Research and Management Institute Environmental Protection Inspectorate State Hydrometeorological Service</p>	<p>Land resources are the cornerstone of all EGD sectors, and the State Service can influence policy limitations and implementation.</p>

		National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova Local Public Administration Scientific Reserves Hunters and Fishermen Society	
National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova	The office has the mission of collecting, processing, and disseminating objective, credible, and timely official statistics necessary for substantiating policies and making decisions, as well as for research, forecasting, and general information about society.	Inter-departmental collaboration with:  MoE Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry Ministry of Energy Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development Ministry of Education and Research Moldsilva Agency Apele Moldovei Agency Forestry Research and Management Institute Environmental Protection Inspectorate Environmental Protection Agency State Hydrometeorological Service Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency Local Public Administration	Statistical data and reports in the field of Environmental Protection/Forest management/Water management
Local Public Authorities (LPAs) at the district and village/community levels	The Local Public Authorities are responsible for environmental protection in the area of their juridical ownership: - Management of the protected areas of their territorial jurisdiction, by implementing protection measures and reasonable use of natural resources - Urban planning and management of green spaces of local interest;	Inter-departmental collaboration with:  MoE  Moldsilva Agency Forestry Research and Management Institute Apele Moldovei Agency Environmental Protection Inspectorate Environmental Protection Agency State Hydrometeorological Service NOIEP (NEF) Geodesy Cartography and Cadastre Agency National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova	Biodiversity conservation policy at the local level in connection with development strategies and programmes, rural development, energy, infrastructure, economy, etc. Local communities and the private sector. National Environmental Fund.





Moldova

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- exercising control over the condition, protection and use of the plant kingdom at the local level;</li><li>- Ensures the implementation of state policy in the field of protection and rational use of aquatic biological resources</li></ul>		
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