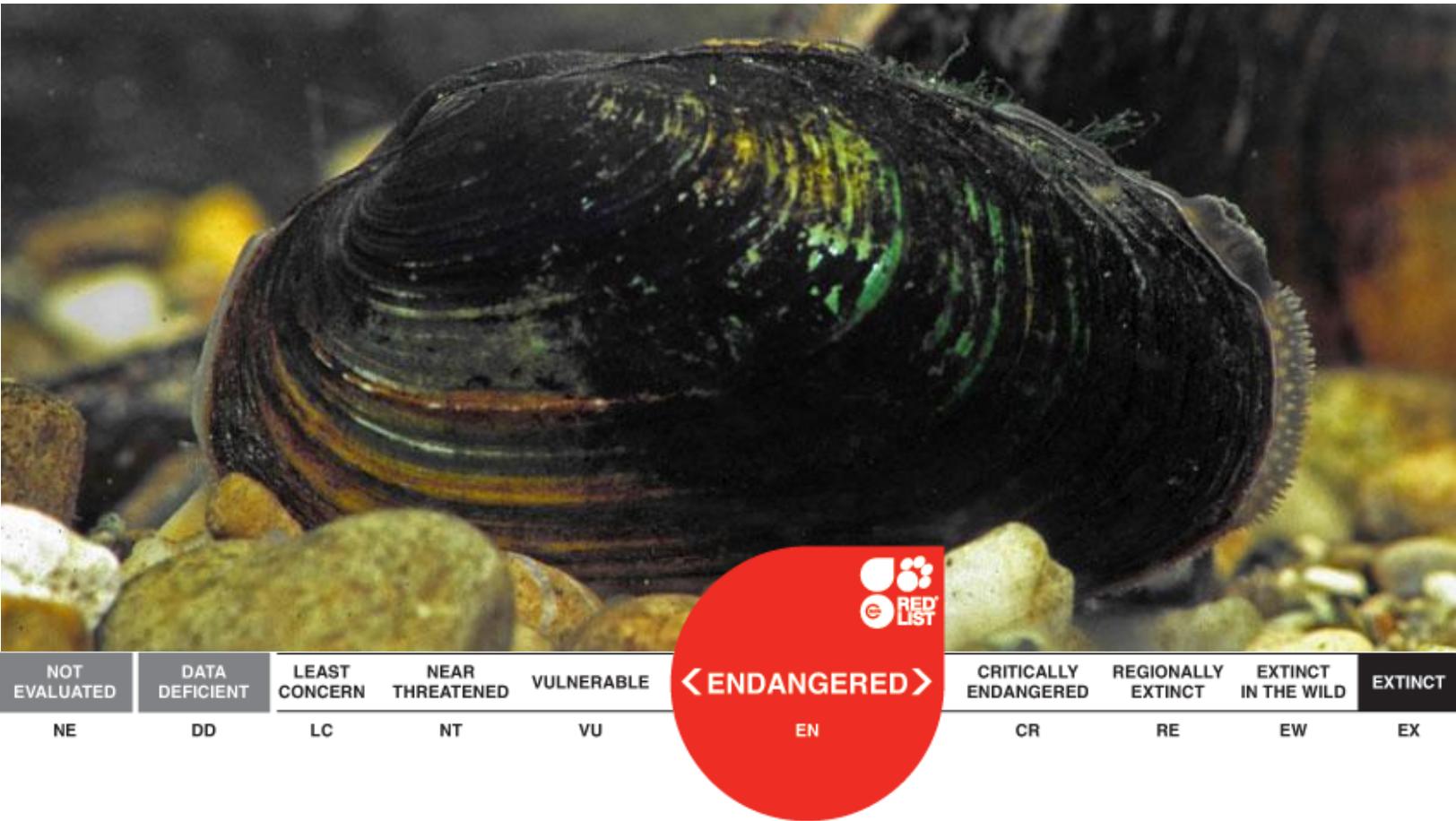


Romania's biodiversity at risk

A call for action



NOT EVALUATED	DATA DEFICIENT	LEAST CONCERN	NEAR THREATENED	VULNERABLE	< ENDANGERED >	CRITICALLY ENDANGERED	REGIONALLY EXTINCT	EXTINCT IN THE WILD	EXTINCT
NE	DD	LC	NT	VU	EN	CR	RE	EW	EX

Romania hosts a significant proportion of the species that are threatened at the European level, and has the important responsibility for protecting these species within its territory. Species in Romania require greater action to improve their status. While many species already receive some conservation attention, others do not. Species can be saved from extinction but this requires a combination of sound research and carefully coordinated efforts. Romania as an EU Member State has committed to halting biodiversity loss by 2020 but urgent action is needed to meet this target and better monitoring capacity is required to measure if the target is met.

Considerable conservation investment is needed from Romania to ensure that the status of European species improves in the long term. This document provides an overview of the conservation status of species in Romania based on the results of all European Red Lists completed to date. It does not provide the status of the species in the country, therefore we invite the reader to cross check national and sub-national Red Lists. Together, they can be used to help guide policies and local conservation strategies.

The European Red List

The European Red List of Species is a review of the conservation status of around 6,000 species in Europe according to the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria and the regional Red Listing guidelines. It identifies species that are threatened with extinction at the European level so that appropriate conservation actions can be taken to improve their status. The geographical scope is continent-wide, including European parts of the Russian Federation and Turkey as well as the Macaronesian Islands. The Caucasus region is not included.

To date, European regional assessments have been completed for all mammals, reptiles, amphibians, butterflies, dragonflies, freshwater fishes and freshwater molluscs and a selection of saproxylic beetles, terrestrial molluscs, and vascular plants. Assessments of pollinators, medicinal plants, birds and marine fishes are currently under development.

The European Red List is compiled by IUCN Global Species Programme, with funding from the European Commission.

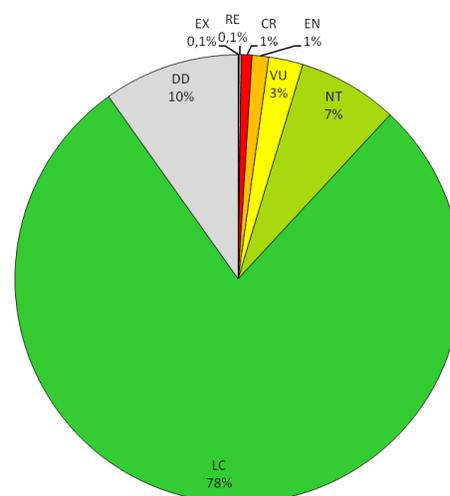
Conservation status

Romania is host to an estimated 37,502 species of animals and plants. This number represents 24% of the total species described for Europe and could represent more than 2% of the species in the world. According to the table below, approximately 24% of the species assessed by the European Red List of Species are present in Romania. For some of the taxonomic groups, the percentages of European species that occur in Romania are particularly high; such as dragonflies, saproxylic beetles, mammals and butterflies.

Of the 1,408 species assessed that occur in Romania, the groups comprising the highest number of species are vascular plants, saproxylic beetles and butterflies. Of the total number of species assessed in the country 5%* are considered threatened and at least 7% are Near Threatened at the European level, and two species are already Extinct. Many of these species are endemic to Europe and are found nowhere else in the world.

Species that are considered threatened at the European level and occur in Romania are found mostly in wetlands, forests and grasslands. These ecosystems require particular attention in order to ensure the habitats of these sensitive species remain.

European status of species in Romania



Number of species assessed within each IUCN Red List category at the European level

Species group	No. of sp. in Europe	No. of sp. in Romania	% of European sp. occurring in Romania	No. of threatened sp. in Romania (status at European level)		
				CR	EN	VU
Mammals	233	95	41%	1	1	8
Reptiles	140	24	17%	0	0	2
Amphibians	83	19	23%	0	0	0
Freshwater fishes	522	108	21%	8	2	4
Butterflies	435	181	41%	0	3	7
Dragonflies	137	67	49%	0	1	2
Saproxylic beetles**	431	209	48%	0	6	2
Terrestrial molluscs**	1,233	121	10%	0	0	4
Freshwater molluscs	854	76	9%	2	2	4
Vascular plants**	1,826	508	28%	0	2	2
TOTAL	5,894	1,408	24%	11	17	35

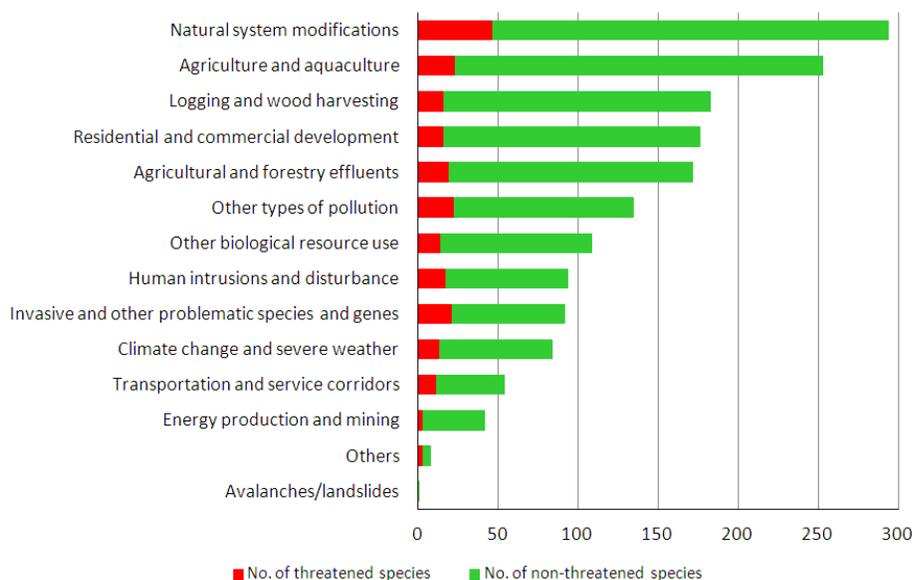
**Not comprehensively assessed, selected species only.

This table does not include the Not Applicable (NA) species in Europe (species introduced after AD 1500 or species of marginal occurrence). The data are based on the results of the European Red List (European region wide assessment).

Major threats

Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation are the most significant threats at the European level to species that occur in Romania. For freshwater species, major threats include the over-extraction of water, which in many cases is further exacerbated by increasing droughts due to climate change, pollution and the introduction of alien species. Other major threats come from farming and ranching as a result of agricultural expansion and intensification, consumptive use of biological resources, urbanization and tourism.

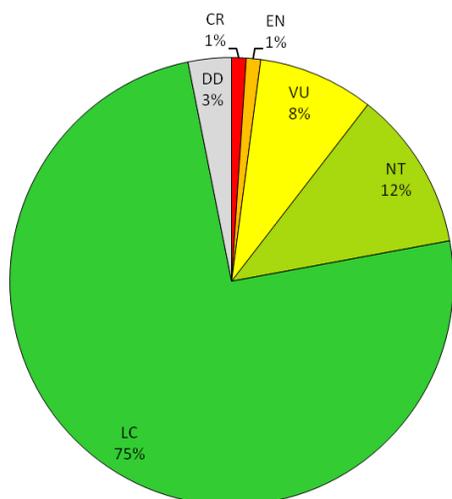
Major threats at the European level to species occurring in Romania



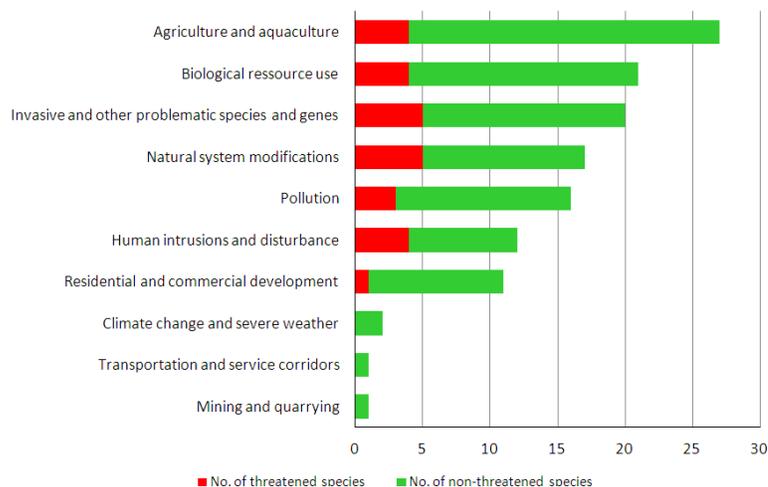
Mammals

Romania hosts 41% of all the mammals that occur in Europe. Of these 95 species of mammals, 11%* are threatened at the European level and at least an additional 12% are considered Near Threatened. The major threats at the European level that can possibly (or potentially) affect mammals in Romania is farming and ranching as a result of agricultural expansion and intensification. Hunting, trapping, logging and wood harvesting as well as invasive and other problematic species, both native and non-native also pose serious threats to mammals in the country.

Status at European level



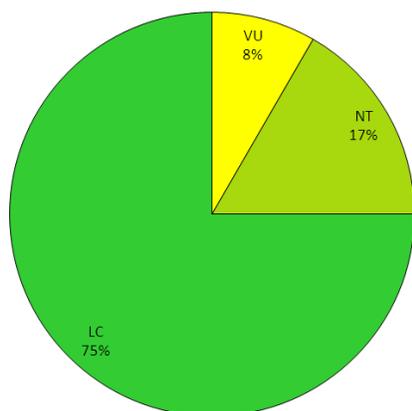
Threats at European level



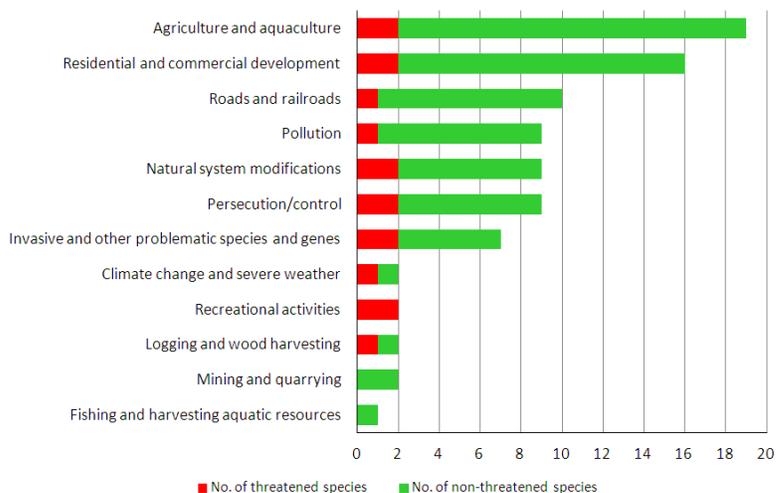
Reptiles

Reptile species in Romania represent 17% of all the reptiles in Europe. Eight percent* of the reptiles in Romania are considered threatened at the European level and the group shows the highest species richness in the Balkan Peninsula, as well as a high number of endemic species in this area. Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation especially due to agricultural intensification and urbanization are the main threats to this group at the European level. It is also interesting to note that around 38% of the reptile species in Romania may be threatened by human persecution and control, especially snakes and vipers.

Status at European level



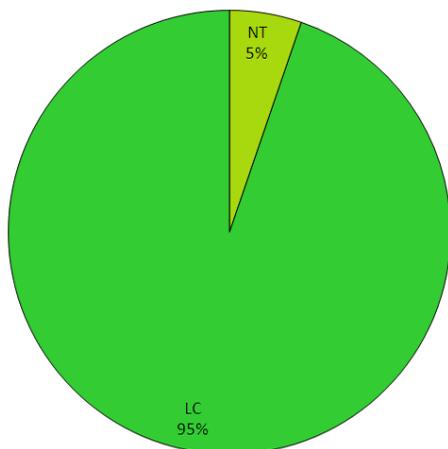
Threats at European level



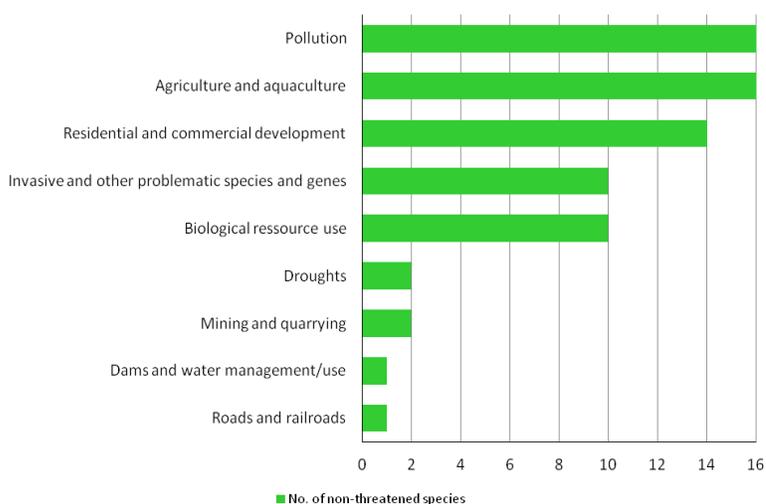
Amphibians

Amphibians in Romania represent 23% of all amphibians occurring in Europe. The conservation status of amphibians in Romania based on the European Red List data is relatively good since none of the species present in the country are listed under a threatened category and only 5% of the species are classified as Near Threatened. The main threat to this group at the European level is the loss and degradation of suitable breeding habitat mainly due to water pollution by agrochemicals and other agricultural activities such as excessive water withdrawal.

Status at European level



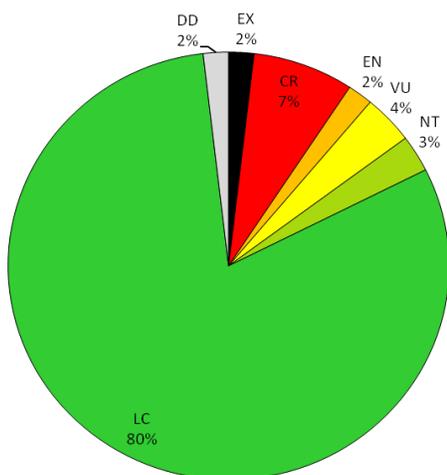
Threats at European level



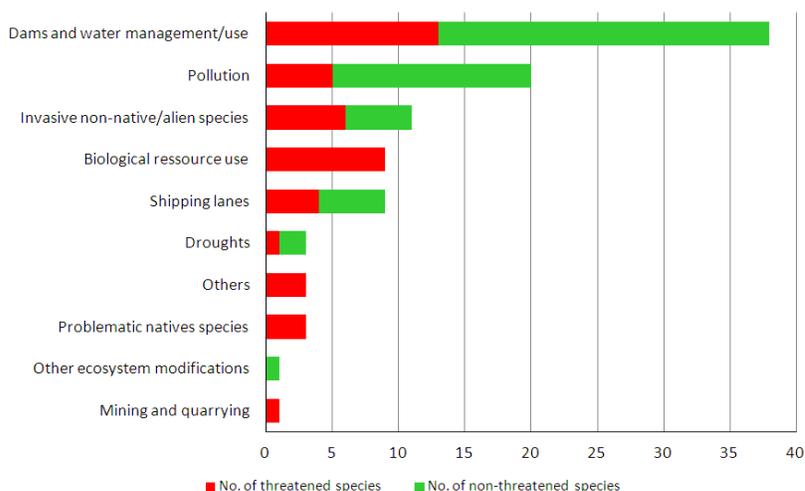
Freshwater fishes

Freshwater fishes are one of the most threatened groups at the European level. Thirteen percent* of the species that occur in Romania are threatened at the European level and two species, *Gasterosteus crenobiontus* and *Romanogobio antipai*, have already gone Extinct. Additionally areas with the highest species richness clearly coincide with the lower parts of large rivers flowing to the Black and Caspian Seas. The most important threat to this group at the European level is the change of water flow patterns due to dam construction and operation and the abstraction of water from underground or from the streams and rivers themselves. Declining water quality in freshwater rivers also poses serious problems.

Status at European level



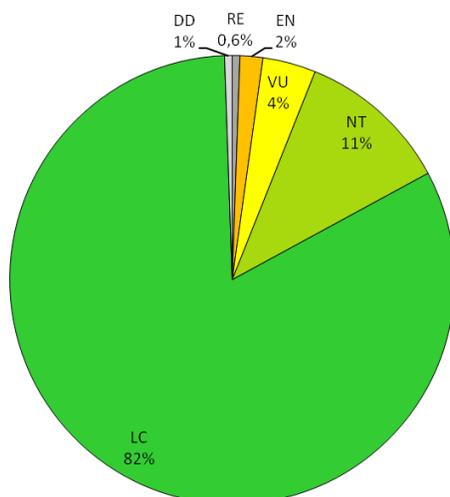
Threats at European level



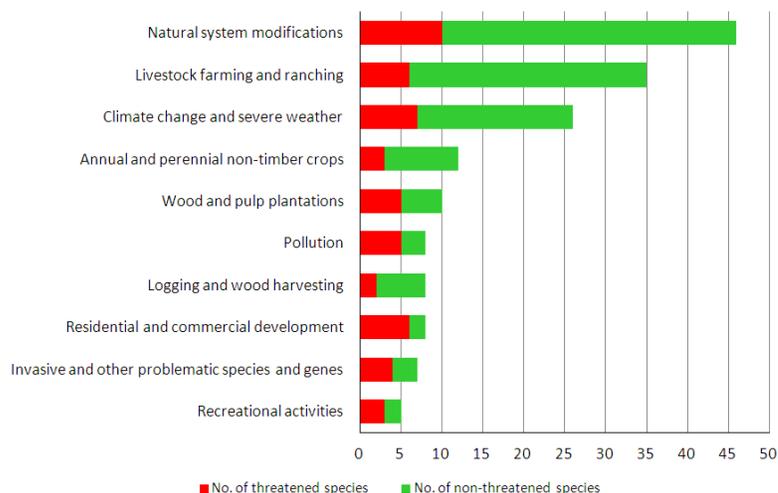
Butterflies

Romania hosts 41% of all butterfly species in Europe and 6%* of them are considered threatened at the European level. The mountainous areas of the country have a rich variety of butterfly species as well as a high number of endemic species, but areas like the Romanian Carpathians show a high number of threatened species. Butterflies have very specific food and habitat requirements at different stages of their life cycle so they are very sensitive to changes in their environment, especially to habitat management such as overgrazing, undergrazing or changes in forestry practices.

Status at European level



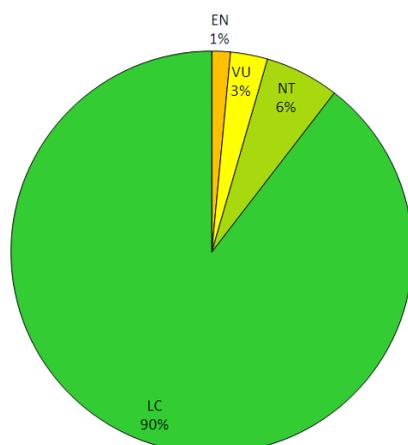
Threats at European level



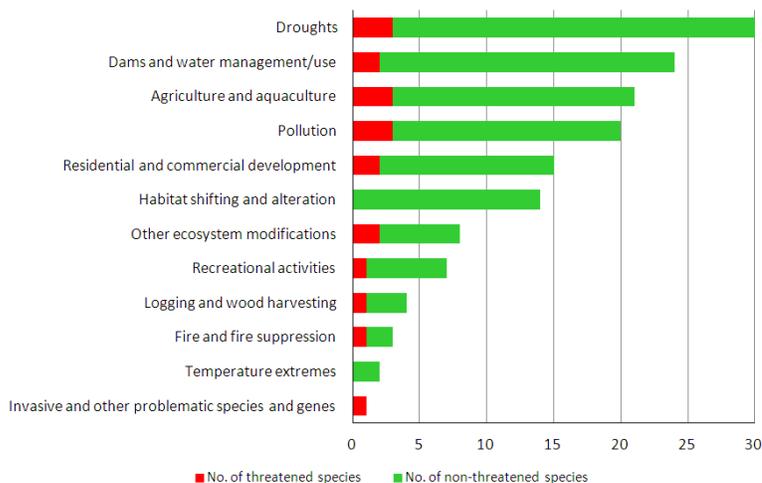
Dragonflies

Forty-nine percent of all the dragonflies in Europe are present in Romania. As part of the Balkans, Romania is home to large number of endemic species, but hosts also a large number of threatened species at the European level. In this country, 4%* of dragonflies species are considered threatened at the European level. This group is adversely affected by desiccation caused by dry weather, fires and increased water extraction for irrigation and human consumption. River species are also affected by ecosystem modifications such as the construction of dams and reservoirs and water quality deterioration.

Status at European level



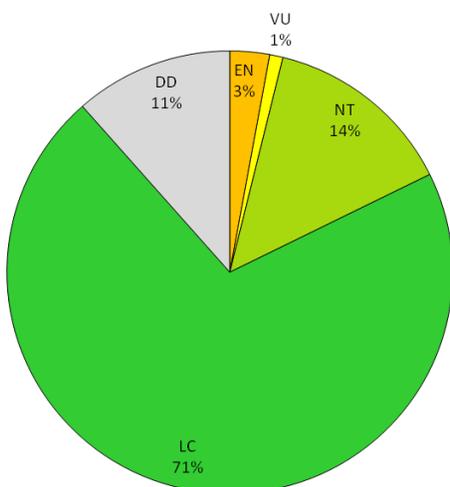
Threats at European level



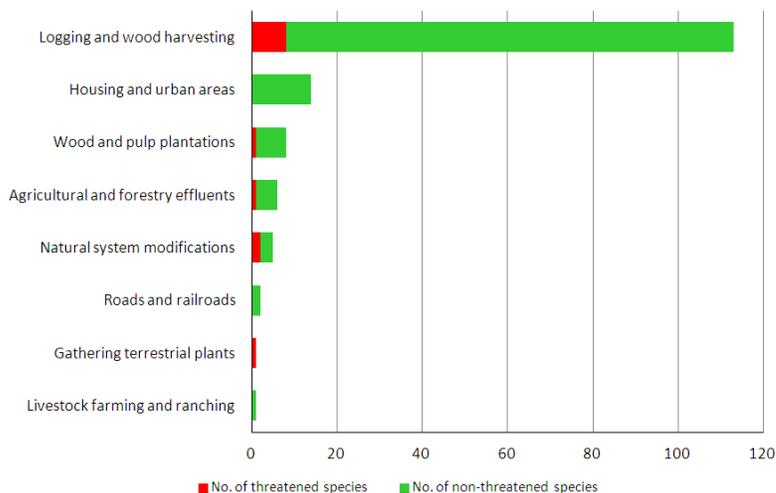
Saproxylic beetles

Forty-eight percent of the beetle species assessed by the European Red List are present in Romania. Approximately 4%* of the species in this group are considered threatened at the European level, and none of them are Critically Endangered. Fourteen percent of them are considered as Near Threatened. The species in this group are very dependent on the dynamics of tree aging and wood decay processes. The major threat to this group is logging and wood harvesting; therefore these beetles require sensitive conservation management of tree populations irrespective of their situation.

Status at European level



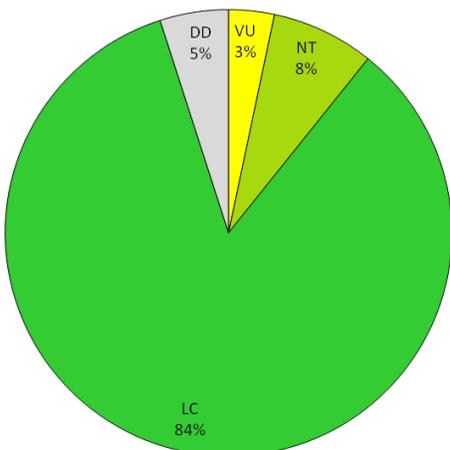
Threats at European level



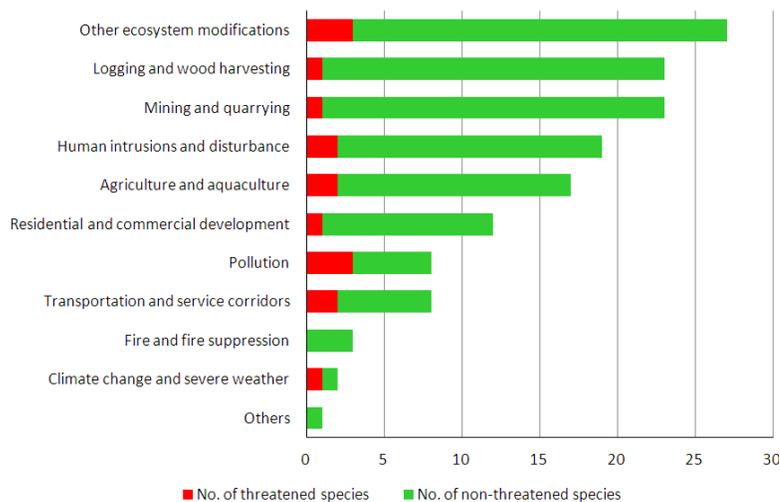
Terrestrial molluscs

Three percent* of the terrestrial molluscs assessed that are present in Romania are threatened and 8% are Near Threatened at the European level. The major threat to this group at the European level is continuous destruction or degradation of suitable habitat from inappropriate management of natural or semi natural ecosystems and the harvesting of trees and other woody vegetation for timber, fibre or fuel.

Status at European level



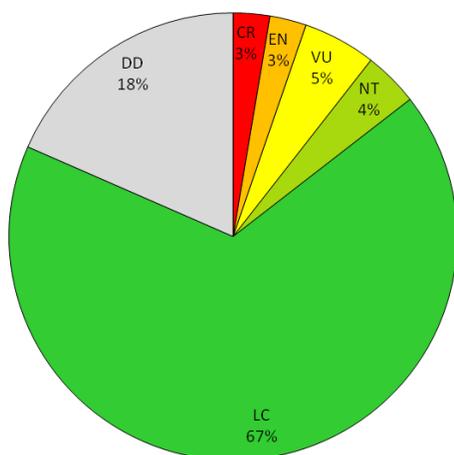
Threats at European level



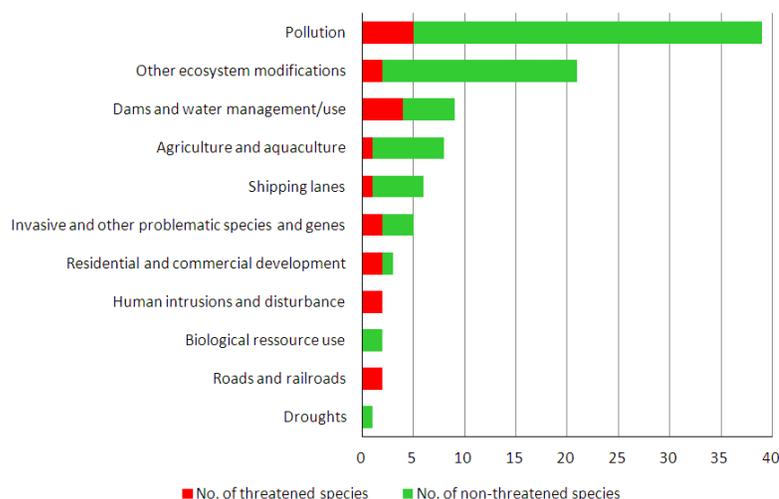
Freshwater molluscs

Thirteen percent* of freshwater molluscs that occur in Romania are threatened at the European level. Declining water quality in freshwater rivers and lakes caused mainly by agricultural activities and domestic and urban wastewater is the main threat to this group at the European level. Conversion and degradation of the habitat caused by inappropriate ecosystem management and the change of water flow patterns due to dam construction and operation are also other of the major threats to this group.

Status at European level



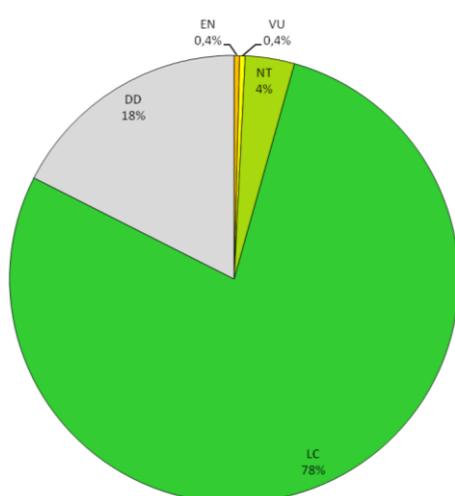
Threats at European level



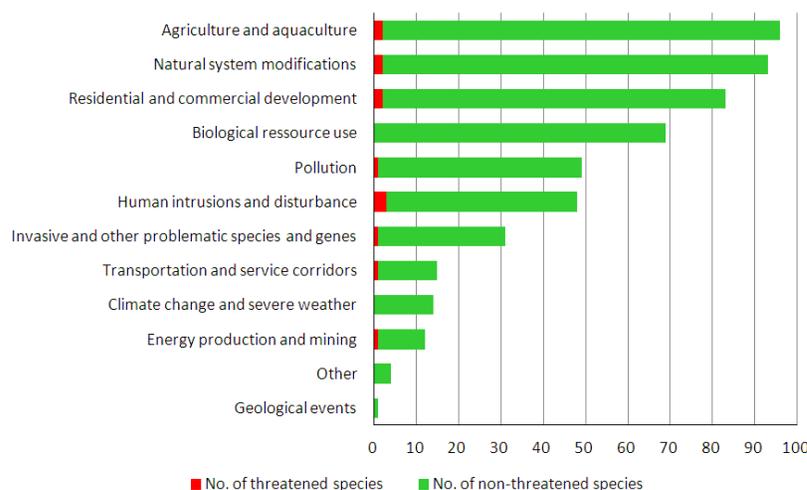
Vascular plants

At European level, priority crop wild relatives, aquatic plants and all species included in the annexes of the Habitats Directive, Bern Convention and CITES have been assessed. A total of 508 species are found in Romania, which represent 28% of the total of species assessed in Europe. One percent* of the 508 vascular plant species assessed in Romania are considered threatened at the European level. For terrestrial plants, intensified livestock farming, especially intensive grazing activities have the worst impacts. For aquatic species, direct habitat loss caused by draining for development, agriculture and pasture is the main threat.

Status at European level



Threats at European level





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<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/redlist> and
<http://www.iucnredlist.org/europe>

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Cover photo by Andreas Hartl (*Unio crassus*)

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*The proportion of threatened species in this document is calculated as follows: (EW + CR + EN + VU) / (total number of species assessed - EX - RE - DD). Since the number of threatened species is often uncertain because it is not known whether DD species are actually threatened or not, this formula considers that DD species are equally threatened as data sufficient species.