CZU: 581.6/.9(478)

REINTRODUCTION OF *CRAMBE TATARIA* IN THE „LOWER PRUT LAKES" RAMSAR SITE

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Spontaneous vascular plants in Republic of Moldova are under threat with significant loss of plant species and habitat taking place. Local and regional activities on reintroduction of rare and threatened vascular plants in our republic has been started in recent years. The repopulation programs in natural habitats of threatened with extinction species of Community interest and included in international conventions, a rare species in the republic – *Crambe tataria* Sebeók (Brassicaceae), was chosen as one of the objects for study, reproduction and repatriation to nature.

This species, in the region, is protected by the state (category II – endangered), included in the 3rd edition of the Red Data Book of the Republic of Moldova as threatened species (category EN). Internationally protected by the Berne Convention and included in Appendices II and IV of the Habitats Directive. The species is also rare on the territory of Ukraine, where it is included in the Red Book as a vulnerable species.

Crambe tataria is a typical steppe species with a Pontic-Pannonian-Sarmatian disjointed range of distribution. In the Republic of Moldova, it occurs sporadically, except in the north-eastern and southern parts. It grows as part of the grasslands of anthropogenic variants of primary steppes, steppe and limestone slopes, glades and edges of the *Quercus pubescens* forest stands. In order to make available *ex situ* collection of *Crambe tataria* and possible for population recovery and restoration programme into natural habitats, during 2020-21 numerous areas with steppe vegetation were examined, among which we chose „Slobozia Mare – Văleni" natural steppe area.

In June 2021 a number of 15 plantlets obtained from seeds (originally collected from Bugeac steppe plants in August 2020), were planted in the sector of grassland of the

*62C0 (Ponto-Sarmatic steppes) habitat. This habitat is one of the most species-rich plants communities in Europe in terms of the plant species. The location of the sector is: N 45° 35' 30", E 28° 09' 48". The surface area represents a steppic slope of western exposition with steepness of circa 30^0. The plant community is *Festucetum (valesiaca) – stipeto (ucrainica + lessingiana + capillata) herbosum*, with various herbatious vascular plants: *Thymus marschallianus, Salvia nutans, Eryngium campestre, Salvia nemorosa, Euphorbia cyparissias, Poa angustifolia, Artemisia austriaca, Linum austriacum*, etc.

***Acknowledgments*:** The research was supported by the NARD through the Project "Research and conservation of vascular flora and macromycobiota of the Republic of Moldova", 20.80009.7007.22.

Keywords: *Crambe tataria*, threatened species, *ex situ* collection, plantation.