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## PRESS INVITATION

### **Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>/Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010 – Launch of the ‘Caviar Road’ tour and release of endangered beluga sturgeon with satellite transmitters into the Danube**

Beluga sturgeon are the largest freshwater fish in the world and produce the planet’s most prized caviar on the planet, which can fetch \$1,000 for just 100g.

Now you can follow the path of these living dinosaurs – which grow up to 6 metres long and can live for 100 years – along the Danube through the fascinating Romanian countryside. The launch of the Caviar Road tour is part of wider efforts to protect the future of these precious fish, which are highly endangered. In the Danube, the last remaining stronghold of the species in Europe, numbers have tragically declined to just a tenth of those 50 years ago.

Join us as we follow the route of the beluga’s spawning migration from the Black Sea along the Danube. Visit a sturgeon hatchery, feel the sturgeon’s rough skin in our touch aquarium, enjoy a stopover at Sfântu Gheorghe a beautiful sturgeon fishermen’s village in the heart of the Danube delta and experience the Roman forts of Carsium and Noviodunum whose fallen ruins in the Danube are now used by sturgeon for spawning.

We will mark the launch of this exciting new travel experience with a two day event. On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May we will tag four 2+ metre-long beluga sturgeon with satellite transmitters and release them into the Danube. These tags will record the beluga’s as-yet unknown travels before ‘phoning home’ via satellite, providing scientists with the sturgeon’s migration and ‘trip itinerary’ as they return from spawning in the Danube to feed in the Black Sea. On Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May you are invited to join us at the Sfântu Gheorghe sturgeon fishermen’s festival where we will officially launch Caviar Road. Sfântu Gheorghe, situated deep in the Danube delta where the river meets the Black Sea, is a destination along the Caviar Road guided tour itinerary. This festival attracts several thousand tourists every year to attend the traditional church service, witness the competitions between the fishermen and eat the famous, traditional fish dishes before joining in the festivities and fireworks in the evening.

## 5<sup>th</sup> /6<sup>th</sup> May 2010 Caviar Road launch programme

### **5<sup>th</sup> May – Release of endangered beluga sturgeon into the Danube**

- Events start at 11:00
- Tagging of beluga with satellite transmitters at Tămădău / Călărași
- Interview with the Romanian and Norwegian officials and the Best Combat scientists. Buffet lunch offered by Beluga Farm, owner of the Tămădău sturgeon hatchery.
- Travel to Stelnica / Fetești
- Stelnica / Fetești – Release of beluga into the Danube.

*During the event there will be good photo opportunities with the sturgeon, including close-ups and their release into the Danube.*

### **6th May – The Sfântu Gheorghe village fishermen’s festival**

- Events start at 10:00 in Sfântu Gheorghe.
- Festival church service
- Ceremonial lunch in the village (including traditional fish dishes)
- Speech presenting the Best Combat project to fishermen, tourists and tourism organisations
- Launch of ‘Caviar Road’
- Sports contests (e.g. fishermen rowing competition)
- Concert by the fishermen’s wives choir
- Late night celebrations and fireworks

*During the event you can experience community tourism in the Danube Delta with photo opportunities of the beautiful UNESCO world heritage site.*

**In order to arrange travel by boat to Sfântu Gheorghe we need to know numbers in advance. Please contact Carolyn or Radu if you are planning to attend.**

**We suggest that people overnight in Tulcea as travel to Sfântu Gheorghe begins directly from there.**

Additional information and travel details can be found on the website or by calling the contacts below.

<http://www.bestcombat.cc-intro.info/>

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