



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

FROM BIODIVERSITY DATA TO DECISIONS: ENHANCING NATURAL VALUE THROUGH IMPROVED REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

BID- REX aims to enhance natural value preservation through improved regional development policies by creating/reinforcing the link between relevant biodiversity data and conservation decision-making processes. More specifically, it aims to **facilitate the use of biodiversity information and increase the impact of ERDF allocation in the preservation of the European natural heritage** by providing decision-making processes with appropriate biodiversity information.



DURATION: 5 years (April of 2016–March of 2021)

- PHASE 1: Interregional learning process (3 years)
- PHASE 2: Monitoring of the Action Plan Implementation (2 years)

TOTAL BUDGET: 1.609.294 €
(85% funded by ERDF)

7 EUROPEAN REGIONS FROM 6 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

9 PARTNERS

- 5 public authorities
- 4 research institutions

7 POLICY INSTRUMENTS TO ADDRESS

- 4 Regional ERDF Operational Programmes 2014–2020
- 3 Other regional policy instruments

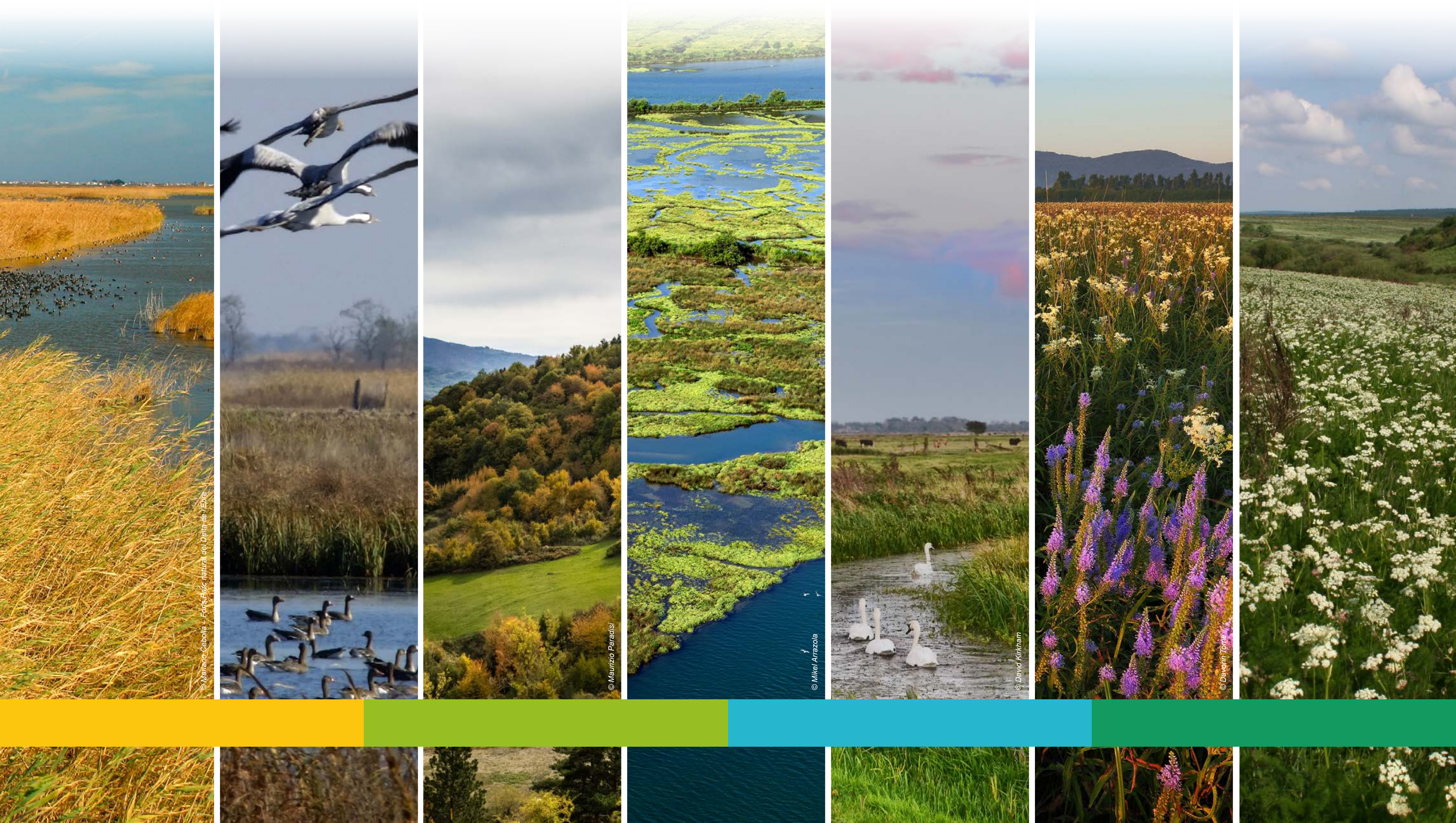
The BIDREX project will develop an **interactive interregional learning process to explore and exchange best practices** based on thematic workshops and involving local stakeholders, with the aim of preparing regional Action Plans to address the Policy Instrument of each region.

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Partners



Lead Partner





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CATALONIA (ES)

Catalan ERDF Operational Programme 2014 - 2020
AXIS 6: Protecting the Environment and Promoting Resource Efficiency

Catalonia has chosen Axis 6 (Protect the environment and promote resource efficiency) from OP 2014-2020 as one of the priorities for EDRF. Within Axis 6, there are 2 strategic objectives (SO) directly related to protection, development and management of natural areas. Catalan OP defines SO 6.3.2 like an opportunity to create and preserve adequate infrastructures in natural areas to preserve and reinforce their touristic potential. Moreover, this SO proposes the valorisation of natural and rural areas to improve their socioeconomic development. Likewise, SO 6.4.1 has focused on to the preservation of natural heritage in rural areas through the development of green infrastructure, restoration and management of habitats and a better dissemination of the protected areas natural values to citizens. Most of these activities are directly influenced by our knowledge of the current status of biodiversity in these areas to achieve more sustainable activities and enterprises in rural and natural areas.

OBJECTIVES:

- improve the creation of the Catalan **Observatory of Natural Heritage**, as tool to integrate biodiversity information and generate products to help decision making processes.
- **introduce new workflows and information** in the management of the policy instrument in order to improve nature conservation objectives.
- **improve the prioritization and application of actions** defining **new criteria and methodologies** to enhance natural values to be financed by public budgets.
- improve technical and societal **governance among regional actors**, by improving biodiversity information accessibility.



Prat de Comte
Parc Natural dels Ports



Larus audouinii
Parc Natural del Delta de l'Ebre



Euproctus asper
Parc Natural del Cadí-Moixeró



Estany de Romedo de Dalt
Parc Natural de l'Alt Pirineu

Proud of our natural heritage

Near the 32% of the
Catalan territory covered
by protected areas

1 National Park and
14 Natural Parks

117 Natura 2000 sites

94 habitats and 140 species
of under EU Directives
(Birds and Habitats)

523 different natural
and semi-natural habitats
identified

31.205 known species
of all groups



Government of Catalonia is responsible for sustainable development and protected natural areas management and management of fauna and flora and also the Natura 2000 areas. So, it has been developing all tasks related to the management of sites and the management and monitoring of species related to application of the policy instrument in natural areas. Moreover, it is responsible for generation of biodiversity information for local agents and for the whole society.

Partners



CTFC is a public research institution and it has been active in the field of nature conservation planning and provided a link between the Catalan administration and nature conservation science. CTFC adopts scientific methods to plan and manage endangered species and natural areas of conservation (Natural Parks, Natura 2000 sites). All this incorporating innovative tools to manage biodiversity data and generate species distribution models aiming to optimize conservation policies implementation.



Llacuna del Clot de l'Encanyissada (Amposta) – Parc Natural del Delta de l'Ebre



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BASQUE COUNTRY (ES)

ERDF Operative Program for the Basque Country (OP) PO6 «Conserve
and protect the environment and promote resources efficiency»

OBJECTIVES:

- Cooperation between different stakeholders to build a **network of knowledge and a Community of Interest** for the greater understanding of the links between biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services and social and economic development and for the co-responsibility required to use and enhance the natural value.
- **Standardised monitoring system** based on scientific techniques to measure objectively the state of biodiversity.
- **Clear guidance, case studies and best practices to highlight** how financing projects with a biodiversity and nature conservation focus can also achieve economic and social benefits, particularly to local economies.
- **Open public accessible information system** to assist project development and evaluation.



Wetlands
Lagoons of Laguardia



Mountain areas
Urkiola



Rock birds
Gypaetus barbatus



Extensive livestock farming
Aizkorri-Aratz

Proud of our natural heritage

Surface area: 7,235 km², 20,5%
Natura 2000 sites, 184 species
under the Birds Directive, 144
species and 75 habitats under
the Habitats Directive

Regional Biodiversity Strategy
to 2030

Mapping and Assessment of
Ecosystems and their Services in
collaboration with the University of
the Basque Country: Main services
(water, wood and food provision,
carbon storage, pollination, recreation)
and contribution to conservation
of natural diversity. Aplicability and
mechanisms of integration of
results in management

Nature Information System, sharing
data with ornitho.eus and GBIF:
more than 500.000
species-occurrence data recorded

Integration of nature, green
infrastructure and ecosystem
services in the Territorial Planning
Guidelines

Regional contribution to European
indicators: Common birds,
Grassland butterflies

Partner



The Basque Country is one of the seventeen Autonomous Communities that make up Spain. Its organisation is based on its Statute of Autonomy approved in 1979, and it has its own institutions such as the Government and Parliament.

Among the competences and duties of the Basque Government are: 1) Creation of legally binding protected natural areas, 2) Definition, promotion and administration of Nature 2000 areas within the Basque Autonomous Community, 3) Planning of the high ecological valued and fragile ecosystems, 4) Administration and management of the Basque Catalogue of Threatened Species, 5) Elaboration of plans for managing marine and land natural resources, 6) Elaboration of studies, plans and strategies for the conservation and protection of the biodiversity), 7) Elaboration of plans for education, training and raising of awareness in matters of environment and 8) Management of environmental information and promotion of public participation in this area.



Urdaibai



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NORFOLK (UK)

ERDF for England 2014-2020
PRIORITY AXIS 6: Preserving and Protecting the Environment and Promoting
Resource Efficiency

ERDF for England 2014 to 2020 2.A4 INVESTMENT PRIORITY 6d Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including Natura 2000 (N2K) and green infrastructure.

Objective 6.1 of the ERDF promotes Investment in green infrastructure (GI) and actions to support provision of ecosystem services to increase local natural capital and support sustainable economic growth. These activities aim to reverse decline in, restore and enhance degraded ecosystem services, and halt biodiversity loss. The improved local environment will serve as a catalyst to economic growth.

The United Kingdom is below trajectory for achieving Biodiversity 2020 targets of 50% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) to be in favourable condition by 2020 with a consequent impact on the condition of the Natura 2000 network. Targets for the policy are an increase of GI area and surface area of habitats supported in order to attain a better conservation status.

There is also an opportunity to improve environment protection through investments in green and blue infrastructure to develop more efficient use of natural and manmade capital. Currently however, implementation of the policy instrument often encounters problems with the type and accessibility of data for targeting GI, informing management and for decision-making.

OBJECTIVES:

- An improved and strategic approach to GI planning based on improved access to data
- Better promotion of online systems to deliver data, tools and services to decision makers and planners
- Increased and improved use of data to inform management of Natura 2000 sites
- Improved prioritisation of projects to deliver efficient use of public and developer funding to protect, enhance and create ecosystem services and natural capital



Hunstanton Cliffs



Swallowtail



Blakeney Point Nature Reserve,
Norfolk



Redgrave Fen

Proud of our natural heritage

116012 ha of protected
areas (21% of Norfolk)

48750 ha of Natura 2000
sites (9% of Norfolk)

20 Natura 2000 sites

1 National Park

52 species of community
interest have been recorded

1 European Marine Site



Norfolk County Council is responsible for planning decisions and takes a lead role on GI planning within the region. It is also host to Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service who are responsible for gathering and mobilising biodiversity data at local and national level. Through partnership working it delivers strategic targeting of action and resources to improve management of sites, to undertake species protection action and to provide information resources for decision-making.

Partners



University of East Anglia is a research institution active in developing evidence-based nature conservation approaches. UEA have used biodiversity data to inform new approaches to site management at a local and regional scale. Novel biodiversity audit approaches within the region have demonstrated innovative ways of using data to better understand particular habitats and species communities, and to enhance management of sites providing more cost efficient and positive outcomes.



Grazing marsh, Norfolk Broads



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MARCHE REGION (IT)

Marche Region Ecological Network (REM)

Marche Region has addresses the Regional Ecological Network (REM) as the political instrument to preserve biodiversity and the care of landscape as shared values for the benefits of the community. REM has been defined at regional level for implementing recommendations on development of ecological functioning. It is, therefore, necessary to deepen at local level the knowledge and management tools, in particular those referred to the “nodes” of Network made of ecosystems and habitats of species protected at EU level. Detailing the REM through monitoring results allows the updating and further implementation of the informative system (SIT Biodiversità), and permit to implement REM among Public Deciders, policy makers and environmental stakeholders. Thanks to the project it will be possible to create a methodology for sharing biodiversity information with policy makers to have an impact on regional policies in different sectors: from agriculture to territorial planning, tourism, all linked to the ERDF and/or EARDF resources, so to integrate existing policies, having a leverage effect on the resources employed.

OBJECTIVES:

- to improve **Marche Region Ecological Network** effectiveness as a strategic tool;
- to design new projects in different, but interrelated, fields of action of the Environment Department to develop a unique **strategy based on the preservation of biodiversity** in the region;
- to facilitate changes in **strategic focus of ERDF priorities**, according to the thematic objective 6 of the EU reg. 1301/2013 on the preservation of natural heritage as a territorial asset for growth and jobs. This objective will be pursued thanks to the direct **involvement of policy-makers in project actions**.



Macerata dolci colline



Riserva Naturale Statale Gola del Furlo



Sirolo Conero



Ussita monti sibillini

Proud of our natural heritage

89.557 ha
of protected areas

12 Natural Parks
(Natural Parks and Protected areas)

136.900 ha
of Natura 2000 sites

104 Natura 2000 sites

70 species of community
interest

57 habitats of community
interest



Partner

Marche Region is the Managing Authority of the ERDF funds. Therefore, the outputs of the project related to the SIT Biodiversità system and the implementation of the REM, as well as the main findings and recommendations resulting from the mutual learning activities at interregional level, will be brought within the Regional Council and submitted to the Regional entity approval to give useful tools for the implementation of ERDF policies.

Marche Region have competences in adoption of biodiversity conservation policies and animal and plant species and their habitats protection. This regional structure coordinates the Regional Observatory for Biodiversity and it has already promoted initiatives together with the Protected areas and other territorial managing bodies in order to realize projects with regional and national funds.

Marche Region is also in charge of organizing strategies for the implementation of the REM Network.



Montemonaco



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LJUBLJANA MARSH (SI)

Regulation on Ljubljana Marsh Nature Park

Regulation on Ljubljana Marsh Natural Park is a keystone legal document establishing the area, nature conservation goals, rules and regulations for obtaining those goals and long-term development strategies of the Park. Regulation foresees implementation of measures for long-term conservation of species and habitats within the Ljubljana Marsh Nature Park (Natura 2000 area) where conservation mainly depends on sustainable agricultural practices. Ljubljana Marsh Nature Park covers Slovenia's largest complex of wet, traditionally managed grasslands with hedges and forests, shrubs and watercourses. The area is well-known for its rich biodiversity, which is the result of specific cultivation practices which are no longer economically viable. However, limited nature conservation resources and user conflicts call for establishment of a clear and inclusive prioritization process based on well-structured biodiversity information and exchange of knowledge on agricultural practices, which will identify priority sites, optimal agricultural practices and financial instruments for implementation.

The Ljubljana Marsh has been identified as one of the priority areas in the Natura 2000 Management programme for Slovenia for the period 2014-2020 (PUN2000).

However, the suggested measures have a focus on qualification Natura 2000 species in terms of the Bird and Habitat Directive implementation, but a wider biodiversity frame is necessary to achieve effective sustainable measures. The need for prioritization and knowledge exchange on agricultural practices was also identified in the draft of Ljubljana Marsh Nature Park management plan, which is under preparation and which can be largely improved by broader biodiversity views.

OBJECTIVES:

- **get experiences** about management of protected areas from other European countries
- **propose key areas of the Park** to be strictly protected areas (possible according to Slovenian legislation)
- **promote non-Natura 2000 species with great value for nature conservation** at Ljubljana Marsh
- **spread information about the importance of preserving biodiversity** among dwellers in Natural Park



Coenonympha oedippus



Floods on Ljubljana Marsh



Emys orbicularis



Ljubljana Marsh

Proud of our natural heritage

135 km² of area with high
potential for nature
conservation

largest complex of wet
grasslands with hedges in
Slovenia

legally protected as
Protected landscape and
as Natura 2000 site

59 valuable natural features,
9 natural monuments
6 nature reserves

1 plant and 27 animal
species with an international
protection status

over 100 species of birds
breed regularly

one of the southern most breeding sites of Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) in Europe,
and the only in SE Europe

NIB

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGY

Partner

National Institute of Biology is Slovenian research institution with one of the scopes being studies and implementation of those at the field of conservation biology. It has been cooperating closely with the Ljubljana Marsh Natural Park since its establishment preparing several conservation expertises for the area. Several of these expertise are included in the draft management plan. Several science projects considering different groups of species, especially of birds, mammals and insects, conducted by NIB were carried out in the area of Ljubljana Marsh Natural Park and is therefore very familiar with the nature conservation issues in this area and with the relevant stakeholder groups.



Wet grassland



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NORTH GREAT PLAIN REGION (HU)

Hungarian Environment and Energy Efficiency
Operational Program (EEEOP) 2014-2020

Hungary elaborated its Environment and Energy Efficiency Operational Program 2014-2020 (EEEOP) aiming to implement economic growth based on the high added value production and job creation in accordance with the protection of human life and environmental elements. From its 5 priority axes, Priority Axis 4 is tackled in the project: 'Nature protection and wildlife protection related developments' with the objective of protecting biodiversity and soil, promoting ecosystem services e.g. through Natura 2000 and green infrastructures. The EEEOP is related to EU 2020 thematic objectives 4, 5 and 6 and is fully funded by ERDF. We deal with Measure 3 from Priority Axis 4 titled: 'Strategic studies for the national implementation of the long term conservation and development of natural values of community interest and the objectives of EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020'. In recent years, there has been a concrete demand on behalf of developers to have adequate tools and applying new data and information and to integrate those to support the decision making process. The definition and planning of priorities are strongly required during the development activities using ERDF sources. Resulting in new synergies, an improved, more efficient decision making process will provide a better environment for updated governance.

OBJECTIVES:

- **Improve the technical and social cooperation** among the actors of the different sectors in the field of development program and project for successful biodiversity enhancement.
- Assessing the current practice and situation aiming to develop a method and material to calculate and apply the newly available data and information.
- Significantly support the decision making for the definition and planning of priorities (prioritizing necessary measures) at medium and long term.
- Help the **prioritization of national strategic tasks** related to the ecologic systems' structures and functions.
- **Improving data sources new data, data flow and results** (social information, biodiversity related but still not applied data of sectors other than nature protection) which will support new synergistic added values **ensuring a more efficient decision making process**.
- Building new synergistic impacts to support and serve the implementation of Measure 3 and further measures of Priority Axis 4.
- **Incorporate new agri-biogeographical data from CAP greening**



Egyek-Pusztaköcs wetland



Alkali soil micro formation winter



Grey cattle



Traditional draw well at Hortobágy

Proud of our natural heritage

366 981 ha
of Natura 2000 sites

1 Natural Park

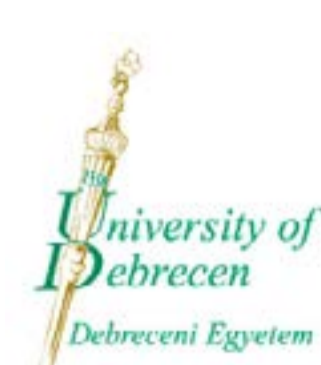
1 Starry Sky Park

130 Natura 2000 sites

81 658,53 ha
of protected areas

7 616,7 ha
of nature reserve

Hortobágy National Park -
the Puszta (World Heritage title)



Partner

University of Debrecen Centre for Environmental Management and Policy's (UD CEMP) activities include: education, research, consultancy and development program at local, regional, national and at international level. The most relevant competences of UD CEMP gained in:

- Environmental Indicators for Sustainable Agriculture (ELISA project in FP4)
- Definition of a common European analytical framework for the development of local agri-environmental programs for biodiversity and landscape conservation (AEMBAC project in FP5)
- Governance and Ecosystems Management for the Conservation of Biodiversity (GEM-CON-BIO project in FP6)
- Landscape-scale reconstruction plan of wetlands, special focus on enhancing biodiversity (SIGMA for Water project, Interreg IVC)

UD CEMP also took part in the action plan development of relevant Operational Programs (Regional Development OP, Environment and Energy OP) of the former period 2007-2013 as well as in the assessment of large projects to be selected.

UD CEMP has been participating in and contributing to the formulation and evaluation of the former period's Environment and Energy Operational Program 2007-2013 (Action Plan development, assessment of large projects, participation in the evaluating committee, etc.). During the implementation of the Environment and Energy Efficiency Operational Program 2014-2020, UD CEMP will take part in relevant professional background, consultancy and evaluation work contributing to the successful implementation.





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WALLONIA (BE)

The Regional Policy Statement for Wallonia (RPSW) 2014-2019

The Regional Policy Statement for Wallonia (RPSW) 2014-2019 aims clearly under the point XXI /2 the strengthening of biodiversity and nature conservation through the development of nature reserves, the Natura 2000 program and European nature restoration LIFE projects by improving the partnership dynamics between public authorities, associations, owners and managers of the sites, by evaluating management measures, simplifying procedures and adapting them to local and economic realities. On 20th July 2015, the EC has adopted the Walloon rural development program (PWDR), which means Wallonia need to improve all measures described inside. Particularly, the measure 7.6 “Restoration of the natural heritage and preserving biodiversity” aims to implement the goals of the policy instrument RPSW. DGO3 is responsible for this implementation. The Walloon Government has also agreed upon the PWDR on July 23th, giving an additional instrument to nature conservation.

OBJECTIVES:

- encourage the **inclusion of environmental policy** as early as possible in projects set up ;
- **coordinate** environmental plans as well as **the Walloon sustainable development strategy with other Walloon plans**, especially the Marshall Plan;
- develop tools for **consultation of relevant and validated biological information** available to policy makers and public managers;
- **exchange experiences and good practices** related to management of natural areas.



River Lesse



Meadow of Narthecium ossifragum



Lucanus cervus



Alcedo atthis

Proud of our natural heritage

474 nature
protected areas

12 800 ha of nature
protected areas

240 Natura 2000 sites

10 natural parks

5 538 ha of strict forest
reserves

220 000 ha
of Natura 2000 sites



Partner

Public Service of Wallonia, General Directorate of Agriculture, natural resources and Environment (DGO3) is a public administration under the authority of Walloon Government, responsible for Nature conservation policy and management. Its competences encompass the Natura 2000 network management and the implementation of measures related to the Walloon Nature conservation Law including natural reserves.

