

## PROMoting the Governance of Regional Ecosystem Services

# Action Plan in Catalonia

March 2022



**CREAF**



SEVERO  
OCHOA  
EXCELLENCE

## Summary

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Summary.....  | 2  |
| 1 General Information.....  | 3  |
| 1.1 PROGRESS project: a summary .....                                 | 4  |
| 2 The policy context.....   | 6  |
| 2.1 The potential actions .....                                       | 26 |
| 2.2 First steps for action from phase 1 .....                         | 26 |
| 3 Action Plan 2021-22 in Catalonia .....                              | 28 |
| Action 1 – Drafting of the Conservation of Wild Pollinators Plan..... | 29 |
| Action 2 – Political will for the Green Office .....                  | 30 |
| 4 Concluding remarks.....   | 31 |



## 1 General Information

### INTERREG EUROPE PROGRESS PROMoting the Governance of Regional Ecosystem Services

Partner responsible for this Action Plan:



ACTION PLAN IN CATALONIA

March 2022

**Country:** Spain  
**NUTS2 region:** Cataluña  
**Contact person:** Enrique Doblas  
**Email address:** [e.doblas@creaf.uab.cat](mailto:e.doblas@creaf.uab.cat)  
**Contact phone:** 935814664

**Coordination and preparation of this action plan:**  
Enrique Doblas · Centre for Ecological Research and Forestry Applications (CREAF)

**Photo credits:**  
Lluís Brotons

**Special thanks:**  
To be members of the Local Stakeholder Group (LSG) for their valuable contributions during the several workshop sessions developed during this PROGRESS project · To the officers at the different Ministries of the Government of Catalonia engaged in the policy impact activities.

Interreg Europe PROGRESS project  
***PRO*moting the **G**overnance of **R**egional **E**cosystem **S**ervices**  
aims to initiate a process of policy change towards the  
conservation of biodiversity and the maintenance of nature's  
capacity to deliver the goods and services that we all need.

This Action Plan in Catalonia aims to impact the Policy Instrument NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030, derived from the "Priority Investment 6 from Catalan ERDF Operational Programme: Protecting environment and promoting resource efficiency", which is a European Structural and Investment Fund.

## 1.1 PROGRESS project: a summary

Under the global **aim of PROGRESS stated above**, the project develops a series of own activities, and networks with others over its lifespan, as shown on the following diagram.

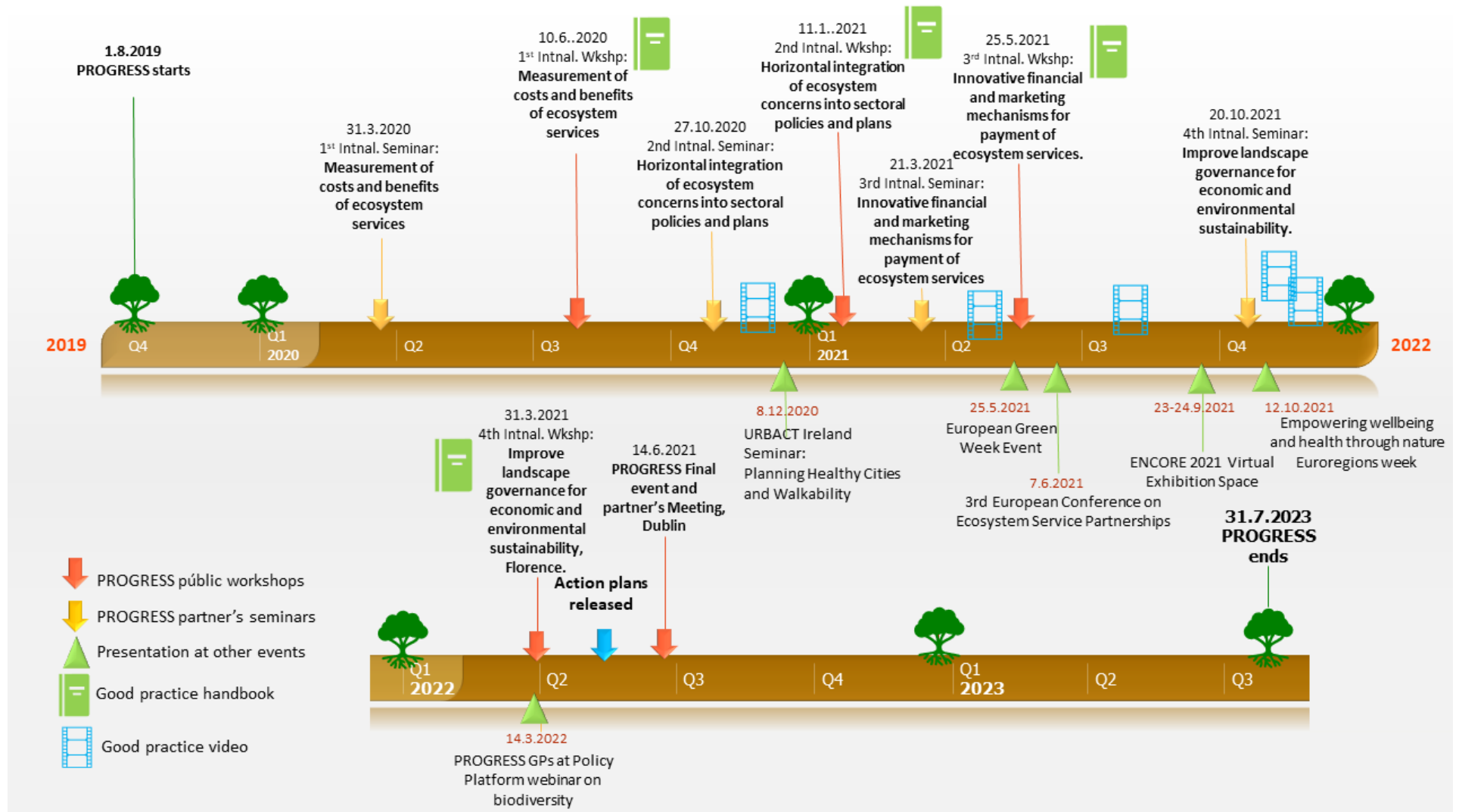
The policy instruments tackled by the project are the ERDF Operational Plans at regional or national level, and other strategies dealing with the protection and valuing of biodiversity and ecosystem services. The approach proposed by the project is based on policy learning and capacity building of the partner organizations and relevant stakeholders of the concerned policy subsystems, as it stimulates a collective multidimensional and dynamic exchange of experience.

The four objective areas towards **change** in policy areas related to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services are as follows. These themes have also structured the shared and compared analysis between partners and stakeholders, as well as the four international workshops organised by the project.

### OBJECTIVE AREAS OF PROGRESS

1. Promote the **measurement of the costs and benefits of ecosystem services** derived from land use.
2. Support the **horizontal integration of the ecosystem concerns into the sectoral policies** and plans .
3. Explore innovative financial and marketing **mechanisms for payment for ecosystem services**.
4. Improve **landscape governance** for economic and environmental sustainability.

# PROGRESS Time frame



## 2 The policy context

First of all, a list of the more significant Good Practices outlines during the project is presented, relating their relevance to the Catalonian context. Two are considered very relevant, and therefore were selected to be transferred into the Region. Some of them have a potential to be transferred and CREA will keep in mind the possibility during conversations with the Government. Finally, the many of them that have strong similarities with Good Practices already developed in Catalonia and the few of them with low interest for the region were discarded.

In the following forms, the selected Good Practices to be transferred into the Catalonian Region are described, followed by the description of the Transfer Project, which includes information about:

- Why is it important for the Catalonia Region
- Pre-conditions to apply the GP
- Potential advantages for the Catalonia region
- Actors to engage during implementation of GP
- Potential GP users
- Relation of the GP with the NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030

| PROGRES S THEME  | Name of GP   | Country | Relevance to this Action Plan |
|--|--|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Measurement of Ecosystem Services                             | All Ireland Pollinator Plan Framework  | Ireland | Very relevant                 |
|  | National Ecosystem and Ecosystem Service Mapping Pilot                                     | Ireland | Similar to regional GP        |
|  | Territorial Information System for the Network of Open Areas in the province of Barcelona  | Spain   |                               |
|  | Ecosystem Services Assessment Methodology (ESAM)   | Latvia  | Similar to regional GP        |
|  | Guidelines for assessing soil ecosystem services in urban environment and their management | Italy   | Similar to regional GP        |
| 2. Integration of ecosystems into sectoral policies and plans at | Dublin Mountains Makeover  | Ireland | Potential                     |
|  | Forest Ecosystem Services Mapping and Assessment Methodology                               | Latvia  | Similar to regional GP        |
|  | Definition and indicators for the characterization of the Agricultural Areas               | Spain   |                               |

|  |   |         |                        |
|--|---|---------|------------------------|
|  | Catalan Forest Laboratory   | Spain   |                        |
|  | Citizen Council for Sustainability (Barcelona)  | Spain   |                        |
|  | Conservative management of habitats ROSCI0129 4070 and 9260 in the North West of Gorj, in Gorj County         | Romania | Low                    |
|  | Protecting of the English oak in the cross-border area (Oak protection/ Hungarian – Croatian border area)     | Hungary | Low                    |
|  | Introducing airborne imaging technologies in forest management near the Drava River (RedFaith)                | Hungary | Similar to regional GP |
| 3. Payment for Ecosystem Services  | Natural Capital Ireland Framework   | Ireland | Similar to regional GP |
|  | Protecting Farmland Pollinators   | Ireland | Similar to regional GP |
|  | Community supported afforestation (MyForest)  | Hungary | Potential              |
|  | Community supported agriculture (MyFarm Harta)  | Hungary | Similar to regional GP |
|  | Sincere-Forests for Water in Catalonia  | Spain   |                        |
|  | Greenhous Gas and Ammonia Emmision Reduction Tool   | Latvia  | Low                    |
| 4. Improve landscape governance for economic and environmental sustainability. | Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Webtool to Support Strategic Environmental Assessment and Plan-making | Ireland | Similar to regional GP |
|  | Landscape Charters  | Spain   |                        |
|  | Forest Restoration and Amelioration Program   | Spain   |                        |
|  | The Green Office  | Hungary | Very relevant          |
|  | Community for Food  | Italy   | Similar to regional GP |

| A- GENERAL GOOD PRACTICE FORM |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Title (and acronym)</b>    | All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP) Framework                  |
| <b>Website</b>                | <a href="https://pollinators.ie/">https://pollinators.ie/</a> |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>GP Holder</b>                      | National Biodiversity Data Centre (IE)   |
| <b>Short description</b>              | <p>The loss of natural and semi-natural habitats has been a key driver in pollinator declines. However, in an era of increased agricultural mechanisation &amp; intensification, urbanisation and commercialisation, this is often not a clearly communicated message. The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP) and its framework is an island-wide (Ireland and Northern Ireland) attempt to reverse declines in pollinating insects (primarily bees and hoverflies). In providing targeted and actionable information that can be used to sell a biodiversity message to a very wide audience, it has been developed in recognition that the decline of pollinators is a serious problem which requires immediate attention to ensure the sustainability of our food production, avoid additional economic impact on the agricultural sector and protect the health of the environment.</p>      |
| <b>Methodology / Approach applied</b> | <p>The AIPP has 4 strategic objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Making Ireland pollinator friendly by focusing on actions that can be taken on farmland (4 targets &amp; 12 actions), public land (3 targets &amp; 22 actions) and private land (2 targets &amp; 5 actions), to achieve a joined-up network of diverse and flower-rich habitats to support pollinators across Ireland (1 target &amp; 3 actions);</li> <li>2) Raising awareness of pollinators and how to protect them (3 targets &amp; 11 actions);</li> <li>3) Managed pollinators – supporting beekeepers and growers to achieve healthy, sustainable populations of managed pollinators that can play a full role in delivering pollination services (4 targets &amp; 7 actions);</li> <li>4) Expanding our knowledge of pollinators and pollination services (4 targets &amp; 11 actions).</li> </ol> |
| <b>Baseline data</b>                  | <p>In Ireland, pollinators are estimated to contribute €59 million/annum to the economy. Within the last 10 years, the value of soft fruit, field vegetable, and apple production has increased by 17%, 21% and 24% respectively with most pollination of crops and wild plants carried out by bees. Despite this, due to biodiversity loss, one third of Ireland's 98 wild bee species are threatened with extinction. At its core, the AIPP is about providing food and shelter across all types</p>   |



|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>of land so that pollinators can survive and thrive. It creates a framework to bring together pollinator initiatives across borders (Ireland and Northern Ireland) through coordination and cooperation. Without the pollination service freely provided by bees and hoverflies, it would be increasingly difficult and expensive for farmers to produce some crops at current scales and could result in a loss of consumer choice for locally grown products. The beauty of the landscape would also be affected without pollinators to maintain the diversity of wild plants and support healthy ecosystems.</p> <p>On 1 June 2018, the European Commission adopted a Communication on the first ever EU initiative on pollinators. The Initiative sets strategic objectives and a set of actions to be taken by the EU and its Member States to address the decline of pollinators in the EU and contribute to global conservation efforts. It sets the framework for an integrated approach to the problem and a more effective use of existing tools and policies. Drawing directly on the AIPP, the initiative sets actions under three priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving knowledge of pollinator decline, its causes and consequences;</li> <li>• Tackling the causes of pollinator decline, and;</li> <li>• 3) Raising awareness, engaging society-at-large and promoting collaboration. In this way the AIPP framework has provided a basis for the strategic abatement of pollinator decline in Europe</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Application scale</b></p>          | <p>Regional to national level, for periods of 5 years.</p>  |
| <p><b>Products derived of the GP</b></p> | <p>According to the AIPP Year 4 Progress Report (10th December 2019), the AIPP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is supported by 108 governmental and nongovernmental organisations and over 230 businesses across the island of Ireland.</li> <li>• Of the 81 actions in the Plan, 96% are now either completed or ongoing through collaboration with wide-ranging project partners.</li> <li>• The AIPP has directly influenced the development of pollinator strategies published in Scotland (2017), Norway (2018) and the Netherlands 2018)</li> <li>• The AIPP team continues to collaborate with the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP)</li> </ul>   |



|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
|                                      | <p>to provide free resources to EU regions and states who are developing pollinator strategies in line with the EU Pollinator Initiative (2018):<br/> <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/pollinators/index_en.htm">https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/pollinators/index_en.htm</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In March 2019, a structured framework where Councils (local authorities) sign-up as formal partners of the Plan was established. In so-doing, they agree to support the core ethos; take at least four pollinator friendly actions within the following five years (one in the first year) and report annually on the positive pollinator actions planned, implemented or maintained. This allows for the measurement of concrete results.</li> <li>• More broadly, full adoption of the online mapping system - ‘Actions for Pollinators’ which is designed to track actions for pollinators and record pollinator sightings and monitor known populations - is facilitating the quantification of wider concrete results.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Users of the GP</b></p>        | <p>Across all sectors (farmers, councils, transport authorities, local communities, faith communities, businesses, schools, gardeners), the number of individuals and organisations engaging with the Plan and taking actions to help pollinators continues to increase.</p>   |
| <p><b>Funding resources used</b></p> | <p>The AIPP was developed without funding by a fifteen-member steering group comprising experts from universities, relevant government departments, local authorities and interest groups. The National Biodiversity Data Centre contributed €2,000 for document (graphic) design and a limited print run.</p> <p>There is no fixed implementation budget for the AIPP. In 2020, the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine provided a small budget to develop resources (€15,000), while 100+ partners fund their own actions. Others (mainly partnering local authorities) fund print runs and dedicated activities such as awards and videos.</p> <p>There is no dedicated permanent staff for the AIPP, with the steering group chair (project manager) dedicating 1.25 days/week within their existing role, while a dedicated project officer position is subject to external funding. In 2020, funding for a project officer was secured from a partner organisation - SuperValu (a supermarket chain) - to the value of €55,000 including</p>   |



|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <p>travel and subsistence. Funding for implementation of this GP in 2020 was approximately €70,000.</p>   |
| <p><b>Potential challenges</b></p>            | <p>Key challenges for implementation are: 1) reluctance to change – planting regimes, pesticide use, mowing etc. Partnership by local councils doesn't necessarily mean that external contractors will operate according to the GP. Furthermore, there are some parts of society who disagree with a new (less tidy) management approach, thereby, highlighting the need for continued awareness raising; 2) Despite the many successes, limited resourcing for implementation of the GP (funding and personnel) has, to some extent, negatively impacted upon its overall effectiveness.</p>   |
| <p><b>Other countries applying the GP</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the actions of the EU Pollinator Initiative (2018) is to encourage all member states to develop national pollinator strategies and the AIPP was selected as the template for this activity.</li> <li>• Successfully informed pollinator strategies in three European jurisdictions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Scotland – Scottish Government (2017) – All 4 NUTS 2 Regions</li> <li>○ Norway – National Government – 8 Ministries (2018) – All 7 NUTS 2 Regions</li> <li>○ The Netherlands – National Government and 35 initial partners (2018) – All 12 NUTS 2 Regions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The AIPP team worked with the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) to develop an updated template and agreed to add a toolkit section to the AIPP website (<a href="http://www.pollinators.ie">www.pollinators.ie</a>) to provide relevant resources for other EU member states.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>References available</b></p>            | <p>Since its publication, the AIPP has been promoted in this manner via more than 450 published articles, interviews, and other events. In 2019, this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38 published newspaper articles</li> <li>• 15 radio interviews</li> <li>• 3 TV interviews</li> <li>• 37 articles (blogs, websites, newsletters, magazines)</li> <li>• 22 presentations at events</li> <li>• 9 presentations at conferences</li> </ul>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Events (panel events/stands at 3rd party events, including Bloom in the Park, Electric Picnic, etc.)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>B- DESCRIPTION OF THE TRANSFER PROJECT</b>              |   |
| <p><b>Why is it important for the Catalonia Region</b></p> | <p>The decline of pollinators populations all-over the world is jeopardizing the survival of plant species, the sustainability of agriculture, and, therefore, our own quality of life. Nine out of every ten plants need an insect in order to bear fruit and seeds, and it is calculated that 75% of food produced around the world depends on insect pollination.</p> <p>Incorporating the AIPP approach, focused on communication and constant engagement with the sectors involved, has been one of the keys to the success of the Irish Pollinators Plan 2015-2020. Catalonia wants to integrate communication and actor's engagement immediately before the drafting of the <b>Conservation of Wild Pollinators Plan</b> (part of the <b>NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030</b>) begins.</p> <p>This transfer activity of a communicative nature and of bottom-up citizen involvement is totally opportune in order to complement the technical diagnosis that is carried out in the same period of time (see <i>Relation of the GP with the NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030</i>). Also, it will generate a public opinion on the subject in Catalonia, which <b>ensures better participation</b> (both in terms of the quality and quantity of proposed actions) during the process of drawing up the Plan to be carried out by the Generalitat during the spring of 2022.</p> |
| <p><b>Pre-conditions to apply the GP</b></p>               | <p>In Ireland, the process began directly with the drafting of the Pollinators Plan 2015-2020 and in Catalonia we will take their <b>experience to implement it at an earlier stage, prior to the drafting of the plan</b>. The transfer will thus establish stable bridges between the Irish and Catalan experience, and prepare a solid knowledge and community base for drafting of the final Plan (on which we will fully implement the transferred good practices throughout the territory of Catalonia).</p> <p>The Conservation of Wild Pollinators Plan will be aligned with the <b>National Strategy for the Conservation of Pollinators</b>, approved by the Government of Spain in 2020. It is, therefore, a key moment for Catalonia on this subject and an optimal time to be inspired by the best</p>   |



|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>European practices that have already started this path successfully.</p> <p>The process of elaboration of the Plan begun last year with the elaboration of a <b>Diagnosis Report</b> on the situation of wild pollinators in Catalonia commissioned by the CREA research centre. With this diagnosis, it is planned to obtain an assessment of the conservation status of pollinators in the region, identify existing information gaps about their biodiversity and the role they play as ecosystem services, and define the priority action guidelines for the Conservation of Wild Pollinators Plan. In addition, this report will summarize the existing scientific knowledge base that exists on the main threats affecting pollinator populations locally and globally, and the different management practices that can help to maintain them.</p> <p>In short, with the application of the lessons learned from the case of Ireland, Catalonia will be able to be more effective and strategic in defining and implementing the Conservation of Wild Pollinators Plan.</p> |
| <p><b>Potential advantages for the Catalonia region</b></p> | <p>On the one hand, (1) society and key actors will be better informed and sensitized and will be able to make better contributions in the drafting of the Plan during 2022. We know, from the experience of AIPP, that this previous work will <b>facilitate the stakeholders' involvement</b>, which will make more ambitious commitments to take concrete action. (2) Government measures will be supported while new initiatives may spread. Therefore, the governmental Plan will be <b>better integrated to societal needs</b>, more accepted, and most likely more successful. On the other hand, in the long term, communication campaigns directed to the whole society and also tailored to specific sectors may result in a necessary societal change to ecosystem services valorisation. Pollinator conservation and the services they provide are enhanced if citizens are aware of their real value. In the end, (3) we all are beneficiaries of a <b>healthy environment supporting the provision of ecosystem services</b>.</p>                                      |
| <p><b>Actors to engage during implementation of GP</b></p>  | <p>Generalitat de Catalunya, University, Provinces, Municipalities, Managing Bodies of Protected Areas...</p>  |
| <p><b>Potential GP users</b></p>                            | <p>Farmers, Councils, Local communities, Land owners, Rural associations, Businesses, Schools, Gardeners...</p>  |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Relation of the GP with the NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030</b></p> | <p>The <b>NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030</b> was approved by the Generalitat de Catalunya in 2018 and included the 2019–2022 Action Plan. The Strategy sets out the strategic objectives to guide the work of the Generalitat towards the conservation of nature until 2030, identifies the priorities that must be addressed in the coming years to reverse the deterioration of the natural heritage, and establishes a general framework of reference for undertaking the necessary conservation initiatives for the country. Its ultimate aim is to curb the degradation of natural heritage and the loss of biodiversity in Catalonia, to ensure its sustainable use and to guarantee the provision of the ecosystem services on which we depend.</p> <p>In AREA 4. Integration of natural heritage in sectoral policies. Strategic objective 4.1. Improve the contribution of agricultural, livestock and forestry policies to the conservation of the natural heritage and biodiversity, it is included Action line 35. Draw up a <b>Conservation of Wild Pollinators Plan</b>. Action 35 states: The plan will be implemented in accordance with the results of the reports by the Intergovernmental Science–Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Its objective is to ensure the conservation of wild pollinators and to maintain the role and productivity of agrarian ecosystems, using a range of measures aimed at restoring edge areas among other issues, fostering useful fauna in crops and raising awareness of the services and benefits those pollinators provide.</p> <p><b>The Plan, however, was not conceived to include any communication campaign or consider the integration of citizens concerns.</b> Even if, in AREA 6 of the 2030 Strategy, “Society engagement in the conservation of natural heritage”, it is mentioned that there is still a great deal of ignorance about environmental goods and services, including the pollination of edible vegetables and fruit trees by thousands of insect species.</p> <p>Without any doubt, Ireland and the AIPP are a key best practise example, a pioneer in Europe. It has allowed the development of the Ireland Pollinator Conservation Plan with a great social, environmental and territorial impact. Such success is expected and needed in Catalonia, and could be achieved thanks to this planned transfer.</p> |
|--|---|





| A- GENERAL GOOD PRACTICE FORM   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Title</b>  | The Green Office   |
| <b>Website</b>  | <a href="https://zold.hegyvidek.hu/about-us">https://zold.hegyvidek.hu/about-us</a>  |
| <b>GP Holder</b>  | Green Office of Municipality of Budapest, 12th District (Hungary)  |
| <b>Short description</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>GP</b></span> | <p>This good practice presents the possibility of setting up a team, dedicated to protect and maintain the ecosystem of a given geographical area within a city. The role of the Green Office is to carry out administrative environmental tasks, import successful ecosystem management practices and raise awareness of the importance of responsible use of the local ecosystem.</p> <p>To understand the need for its establishment, we should be familiar with the local geographical and governmental circumstances. Budapest has a dual management system: in addition to the central government, the 23 districts of the city are managed by their local governments. The 12<sup>th</sup> district, called Hegyvidék (Highlands), is the greenest district in the capital. Its territory is a hilly, partly suburban, area. The per capita green area is about 170 m<sup>2</sup> and the total population is about 58,000 inhabitants. Hegyvidék can be divided into three zones: a densely built-up zone in the center, a mostly residential zone, and a forest zone called Normafa. As the greenest part of the city, Hegyvidék has a huge responsibility to maintain the green space, to communicate properly with the population and to raise awareness of environmental issues and climate change. Due to its privileged environmental position, the office should serve as a good practice for other districts and settlements.</p> <p>To meet this need, the Green Office was established in 2016 as a department of the municipality. The good practice also shows how the capacity of the team has been increased over the last 5 years and what financial resources have been mobilized to achieve the goals, where the financial and professional contribution of international projects has played a key role.</p> |





|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>The mission of the Office is to cooperate closely with the citizens instead of simply operating an administrative unit.</p>  |
| <p><b>Methodology / Approach applied</b></p> | <p>Hegyvidék is the greenest district of Hungary's capital, a desirable place for habitation and also popular destination for other citizens and tourists. The maintenance of its environmental quality is a great responsibility. The office needs to coordinate actions in a complex environment where lot of actors have different interests: in addition to Normafa, a large green area, lot of fragmented green spaces are also located in the 12<sup>th</sup> district, which are owned by different actors. Involving these actors to decision making, harmonizing their needs are tasks that have strategic relevance.</p> <p>Also, the operation of the office is in line with the priorities set in different environmental regulations, they deliver tasks defined in the Environmental Program 2017-2022, and manage the elaboration of a well-cadastre and tree-cadastre. Their activities support the achievement of the goals set in the SECAP of the district, which has joined the Covenant of Mayors in 2016. In the forthcoming years, the implementation of the Climate Strategy (in progress) will be their new duty. Harmonizing the operation of the office with the above-mentioned strategies is also important from financial aspects, as remarkable part of the operational expenditures are covered by international projects, and the funding programmes require the correspondence to local, regional and national level strategic documents. Also, these considerations guarantee that the day-to-day activities won't only serve ad-hoc interests and administrative duties, but they are integrated parts of long-term, legitimized processes.</p> |
| <p><b>Baseline data</b></p>                  | <p>The capacity and knowledge of the team makes it possible to properly manage all legal/administrative duties: half of the staff is working on tasks related to abandoned waste treatments, noise and vibration protection issues, logging activities, ragweed and allergic weed control tasks. The office also collects hazardous waste once a year for free.</p> <p>Regarding organization of awareness raising and motivational programs for residents and addressing local needs, the regularity of these events and the networks established show visible results. The regular</p>  |



|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>community programs with the citizens, such as trainings and networking events, are also great examples.</p> <p>The office also recognized the need of exchanging experiences with other departments, experts and municipalities of other districts, therefore they launched the so-called KöZöld Forum in 2017, where predefined topics (regulations, projects, technical questions) are discussed among the members regularly. This event became a tradition.</p> <p>Regarding investments, the office also reached remarkable results: in TOGETHER project several public buildings were equipped with smart meters to measure the electricity and heat consumption, identify leakages and lavish use of energy. The system contributes to save energy at the municipality, which also makes it possible to use the saved financial sources for developments (e.g. by establishing a revolving fund).</p>   |
| <p><b>Application scale</b></p>          | <p>Local, from city districts to villages.</p>   |
| <p><b>Products derived of the GP</b></p> | <p>The office's activities deliver official tasks, takes part in several international projects, and in addition capitalizes from the knowledge gained from these co-operations by organizing awareness raising events for residents and developing expert platforms.</p> <p>The office was involved into several international co-operations, such as the TOGETHER project (Interreg CENTRAL), BeePathNet (URBACT), and also became coordinator in the Urban Green Belts project (Interreg CENTRAL), Health&amp;GreenSpace (URBACT) and a recently approved LIFE proposal. This development shows the staff became more experienced in project writing and management. Also, during the past years, the staff gained expertise in wide-range of interventions: community involvement, green space management, energy efficiency in public buildings, smart metering, DSM tools (demand-side management), green roofs, awareness-raising programs and activities, festival events, street actions, educational programs and competitions, climate change, SECAP, green and communal waste management, biodiversity in the urban area, planting trees and tree saplings, pollinator-friendly gardens and trees application, urban-beekeeping, health-responsive green space planning and management, multilevel governance, networking with</p> |



|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
|                               | <p>other municipalities and universities, NGOs, business sectors.</p> <p>Probably the most obvious evidence for success is that many other districts visit them to learn about the processes, everyday operation. This shows that the office gained a great reputation in the past years.</p>   |
| <b>Users of the GP</b>        | <p>The office organizes forums, trainings for citizens, establishes links between entrepreneurs and the residents to raise awareness on eco-friendly products, and they also started to build network among different municipal departments and authorities to consult on ecosystem issues.</p>   |
| <b>Funding resources used</b> | <p>Before the establishment of the office, only 1 person worked on green tasks, mainly focused on administrative issues. In 2016, two international projects gave a push to set up the team with 5 employees. The staff increased continuously as new tasks appeared since today the office employs 9 persons, and 1 international project manager from the Municipality supports their work.</p> <p>The budget of the office consists of the contribution of the municipality and the budget of thematic projects. The latter source provides an opportunity to motivate employees with bonuses.</p> <p>For special thematic tasks, the office regularly involves external experts as well.</p>  |
| <b>Potential challenges</b>   | <p>Other regions might learn from the composition of the team, that is composed of enthusiastic members with diverse qualifications and skills. The size of the office may vary from city to city - 9 employees are not initially required. As the workload increases, the size of the office can be slowly increased by involving new financial resources and projects. However, it is very important to employ staff members, who have a deep knowledge on the district/area. This is important on one hand for the preparation of decisions, on the other hand it increases the creditability of the office.</p> <p>The office needs to put special emphasis on day-to-day communication with the public, but it also needs to communicate regularly with the management of the municipality and other relevant departments to harmonize activities and create consensus for different interventions.</p> <p>Political will is inevitably important for the sound operation. It can be gained by introducing the sound communication with citizens, the successes of</p> |



|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <p>international co-operations, the integration of new approaches, and the prestige that was created in the past 5 years by the above-mentioned factors.</p>  |
| <p><b>Other countries applying the GP</b></p> | <p>Their extra-regional impact is provided by the successful international co-operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health&amp;Greenspace as Lead Partner in URBACT-APN (2019-2022) - health-responsive green space planning and management</li> <li>• BeePathNet as Project Partner in URBACT-TN (2018-2021) – urban-beekeeping, biodiversity, educational programmes</li> <li>• Urban GreenUP as Associated Partner in Horizon2020 (2020-) – nature-based solutions</li> <li>• UGB as Lead Partner in Interreg-CE (2016-2019) – green space management using GIS, and participatory approach</li> <li>• TOGETHER as Project Partner in Interreg-CE (2016-2019) – increasing public building energy efficiency with soft solutions</li> </ul> <p>These projects provide possibility to invite foreign, recognized speakers for awareness raising events, and set up networks such as BeePathNet. On the other hand, they share their green space management experiences and citizen involvement approach with their partners.</p>   |
| <p><b>References available</b></p>            | <p>Visibility and communication is probably the strongest skill of the office.</p> <p>The main communication channel is the webpage of the office (<a href="https://zold.hegyvidek.hu/about-us">https://zold.hegyvidek.hu/about-us</a>). In addition to posting news and introducing their services, their projects, events are also described, and the office provides different guidelines – e.g. for waste management at home (<a href="https://www.hegyvidek.hu/download.php?docID=55387">https://www.hegyvidek.hu/download.php?docID=55387</a>)</p> <p>They are also active in the social media site of the district (<a href="https://www.facebook.com/Hegyvidek">https://www.facebook.com/Hegyvidek</a>), and also in the online and offline version of the local gazette, Hegyvidék Újség (<a href="https://www.hegyvidekujsag.hu/">https://www.hegyvidekujsag.hu/</a>).</p> <p>Some examples for awareness raising programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composting programme, where residents also attend at trainings.</li> <li>• Residential shredding, where 4300 m<sup>3</sup> branches (green waste) are shredded annually.</li> <li>• Protecting horse chestnut trees by spraying 400 trees/year and injecting 200 trees/year. This</li> </ul> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>program provides pest control of these trees for a reduced (50%) price.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Small Green Space Stewardship program support residents to take care of public green spaces.</li> <li>• By the development of bee pastures, the office provides a colourful blend of pollen and nectar flowers to offer forage for honey bees, bumblebees, and other pollinators. At this program the adequate signing has a special importance, otherwise the citizens do not recognize the function of these green areas.</li> <li>• Programs in kindergartens: Kindergartens are regulated by municipality directive (schools are maintained in a different system, municipality cannot influence their operation – even though, they contribute to the organisation of online sustainability competitions). The office organises education in high gardens, honey breakfasts.</li> <li>• Thematic walks – where they explain the importance of different plants, pollinators, and motivate residents to get involved into the maintenance of the ecosystem.</li> </ul> <p>International projects also provide a great communication possibility towards foreign institutions, national level organisations and the wider public.</p> |
| <b>B- DESCRIPTION OF THE TRANSFER PROJECT</b>              |  |
| <p><b>Why is it important for the Catalonia Region</b></p> | <p>At local scales, city districts, villages and municipalities provide a very interesting opportunity to enhance the value of natural heritage and biodiversity. At such scale, local planning and management are easier to carry out. Equally, a more direct relationship with the local agents in the region is facilitated.</p> <p>In Catalonia, <b>municipalities can assume competences for the conservation of natural heritage and biodiversity</b>, and adopt initiatives in this field based on two main regulations. First, there is the Local Government Regulatory Law 7/1985, which stipulates that by means of delegated powers (from the Spanish Government or the Government of Catalonia), municipalities may take responsibility for environmental quality and protecting the natural environment. Second, there is the Urban Planning Law, which provides for the protection of natural assets by legal and planning structures not specifically designed for that purpose,</p>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>such as municipal urban development plans, which incorporate protection of natural heritage in the classification and regulation of non-buildable land. Also, through the participation in management consortia of protected areas, resources have been distributed and coordinated actions have been taken among the various municipalities that share a natural area.</p> <p>However, the reform of Law 7/1985 by means of Law 27/2013, for the streamlining and sustainability of local government, has introduced restrictive criteria for the implementation of consortia, as they must be affiliated to a higher level of government. Another difficulty is that the economic crisis has forced municipalities to prioritise social services, reducing their room for manoeuvre as regards the protection of natural heritage. Finally, <b>more local entities at the village or city district are not contemplated.</b></p> <p>In the face of such difficulties, the Green Office offers the possibility of setting up a team, dedicated to protect and maintain the ecosystem of a given geographical area within a city or a municipality. The role of the Green Office is to carry out administrative environmental tasks, import successful ecosystem management practices and raise awareness of the importance of responsible use of the local ecosystem. <b>The office's activities could deliver official tasks</b>, take part in several <b>international projects</b>, and in addition could capitalize from the knowledge gained from these co-operations by organizing <b>awareness raising events</b> for residents and developing expert platforms.</p> |
| <p><b>Pre-conditions to apply the GP</b></p> | <p>The initial team must be composed of enthusiastic members with diverse qualifications and skills. The size of the office may vary from city to city. However, it is very important to employ <b>staff members who have a deep knowledge on the district/area</b>. This is important on one hand for the preparation of decisions, on the other hand it increases the creditability of the office.</p> <p>The office needs to put special emphasis on day-to-day communication with the public, but it also needs to communicate regularly with the management of the municipality and other relevant departments to harmonize activities and create consensus for different interventions.</p> <p><b>Political will</b> is inevitably important for the sound operation.</p>   |





|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Potential advantages for the Catalonia region</p>  | <p>Some municipalities have begun to adopt specific tax instruments and measures to promote projects for conserving biodiversity, either in the form of direct grants or by allocating a percentage of their taxes to these areas. In addition, municipalities located in protected areas or in areas of special landscape or natural interest can obtain value from the environmental services provided by these areas, by establishing fees for access or for sports or leisure activities carried out there. Some municipalities have already taken steps to do so, and the revenues they obtain are assigned to the conservation and management of the natural areas involved. However, <b>there are very few of them</b>, and they are still very isolated cases.</p> <p>Some provincial councils also allocate structures and resources to developing a policy for the conservation of natural heritage and biodiversity. The mission of provincial councils' departments of environment and the territory is to apply sustainability policies at the municipal level, and to work on the conservation of biodiversity, management of protected areas, natural heritage information systems, and environmental education, among other areas. Their work involves supporting the conservation of natural heritage and directly managing some areas.</p> <p>The Green Office may <b>facilitate the labour of provincial councils</b> but, even better, focus the mentioned missions at lower scales, <b>smoothing the participation of stakeholders</b> and increasing awareness in the process.</p> |
| <p>Actors to engage during implementation of GP</p>   | <p>Generalitat de Catalunya, Municipalities, Managing Bodies of Protected Areas...</p>   |
| <p>Potential GP users</p>   | <p>Local citizens, entrepreneurs, municipal departments and authorities...</p>   |
| <p>Relation of the GP with the NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030</p> | <p>The <b>NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030</b> was approved by the Generalitat de Catalunya in 2018 and included the 2019–2022 Action Plan. The Strategy sets out the strategic objectives to guide the work of the Generalitat towards the conservation of nature until 2030, identifies the priorities that must be addressed in the coming years to reverse the deterioration of the natural heritage, and establishes a general framework of reference for undertaking the necessary conservation initiatives for</p>  |



|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>the country. Its ultimate aim is to curb the degradation of natural heritage and the loss of biodiversity in Catalonia, to ensure its sustainable use and to guarantee the provision of the ecosystem services on which we depend.</p> <p>In AREA 5. Administrative organisation, legal framework and taxation, within Strategic objective 5.1 “Adapt instruments for governing natural heritage to new conservation challenges and make them more effective”, there is the Operational objective 5.1.4. <b>Strengthen the role of local administration in the governance of natural heritage.</b> Local government bodies have considerable scope for action as regards governance of the protected areas in their municipalities, and the conservation of natural heritage and biodiversity in general, due to their geographical proximity. They play an active role in local governance, and have considerable potential for involvement in the conservation of natural heritage. Likewise, local authorities can carry out initiatives for the protection and conservation of small natural areas that can be very important for creating a resilient territory, always with the involvement of the most immediate neighbourhood.</p> <p>Action line 71, <b>Promote collaboration agreements with local bodies</b>, specifies that relations between the Government of Catalonia and the local authorities will be reinforced in order to establish new cooperation agreements that will enable progress to be made on the conservation of natural heritage at the local level.</p> <p><b>The Action was not conceived to create any new office.</b> However, in AREA 6 of the 2030 Strategy, “Society engagement in the conservation of natural heritage”, it is mentioned that <b>organised initiatives by civil society are essential</b> for raising awareness of the importance of conserving natural heritage and biodiversity, and for sharing common objectives with other local stakeholders and sectors. One of the driving forces for achieving this is voluntary work for the conservation of nature. It is important to align these initiatives with the strategic conservation goals that are established in this Strategy, to take advantage of efforts and broaden public support for measures aimed at conservation of the natural environment.</p> <p>Hungary and the Green Office are a key best practise example of such engagement. It has allowed the</p> |
|--|---|





|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>development of many local actions with a great social, environmental and even economic impact. Such success is expected and needed in Catalonia, and could be achieved thanks to this planned transfer.</p> |
|--|--|



## 2.1 The potential actions

Looking at the Policy Instrument (PI) challenges and the Good Practices, the main actions necessary to overcome the challenges are the following;

In relation to the AIPP:

The main idea is to take the experience from Ireland and implement it prior to the drafting of the Conservation of Wild Pollinators plan. The transfer will thus establish stable bridges between the Irish and Catalan experience, and prepare a solid knowledge and community base for drafting of the final Plan.

The process of elaboration of the Plan begun last year with the elaboration of a Diagnosis Report on the situation of wild pollinators in Catalonia commissioned by the CREAM research centre. With this assessment of the status of pollinators in the region, it will be easier to identify existing information gaps about the role they play as ecosystem services in order to be transferred to the citizens. In addition, this report will summarize the main threats affecting pollinator populations locally and the different management practices that can help to maintain them, which could therefore be included in the transference process.

In relation to the Green Office:

Political will is inevitably important for the sound operation. However, in this case, no previous steps have been carried out to inform and obtain the support of the corresponding authorities.

Therefore, the main actions should be related to contacting and convincing the appropriate ministries and policy makers, in order to favour the creation of a first pilot of Green Offices in several districts and/or villages.

Later on, the office needs to put special emphasis on day-to-day communication with the public, but it also needs to communicate regularly with the management of the municipality and other relevant departments to harmonize activities and create consensus for different interventions.

## 2.2 First steps for action from phase 1

During Phase 1 of the project, CREAM met several times with the Government of Catalonia.

CREAM met with the Ministry of Climate Action, Food and Rural Agenda of Catalonia, promoter of the drafting and implementation of the The Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Strategy of Catalonia 2030. Specifically with Santiago Pérez, of the General sub-directorate of Biodiversity and Natural Environment (General Directorate of Environmental Policy, Department of Environment and Sustainability) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March, 19<sup>th</sup> of April and 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2021.



They informed us that the Biodiversity 2030 includes an Action to Draw up a Conservation of Wild Pollinators Plan to ensure the conservation of wild pollinators and to maintain the role and productivity of agrarian ecosystems. However, it was not conceived to include any communication campaign or consider the integration of citizens concerns. We therefore discussed that, considering that AIPP the has allowed the development of the Ireland Pollinator Conservation Plan with a great social, environmental and territorial impact, Policy Change thanks to the import of such Good Practice would be totally opportune.

With this in mind, we met with the General Directorate for Economic Promotion, Competition and Regulation of Catalonia, in charge of the ERDF Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020 of Catalonia Region, the 13<sup>rd</sup> of May. They totally supported us to change the previous Policy instrument to facilitate the envisaged Policy Change.



### 3 Action Plan 2021-22 in Catalonia

This section develops into actions the policy developments outlined in the previous section.

According to PROGRESS planning the action plan will run approximately from April 2022 to the end of the project in July 2023.

Each action is next described in a specific table consisting of:

- **Title:** concise description of the action.
- **Relevance to the project:** explains how the proposed action arises from or is sustained by contributions made during phase 1 of the project dedicated to learning and exchange of experiences (either in the framework of the international seminars and workshops or working sessions of the local stakeholder group -LSG-).
- Nature of the action:** Describes the steps to follow to implement the action.
- Responsible:** identifies the project partner or other main stakeholder who should lead and be responsible for the implementation of the action.
- **Other stakeholders involved / Role:** other stakeholders are mentioned who should also be involved and collaborate in the implementation of the action, and what role they will play in the implementation (support, advocacy, technical advisor, networking, etc.).
- **Indicative costs:** specify human, economic or material resources that are necessary for the implementation of the action.
- **Funding sources:** institutions, entities or economic and/or financial instruments that could be used to finance the action.
- **Implementation calendar:** the period during which the action should be executed. This section also specifies whether it is desirable or even imperative that the action be continued beyond July 2022.



| Action 1 – Drafting of the Conservation of Wild Pollinators Plan |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Relevance to the project</b>                                  | <p>Due to the opportunity offered by the Pilot action program, we developed an interchange of experiences between IMRA and CREAM. To export a Catalonian Good Practice selected in the second semester, The SITxell geographical information tool about regional ecosystem services, to Ireland. And to import from the same region to Catalonia the All Ireland Pollination Plan (AIPP), also selected during the second semester among the best practices.</p> <p>The Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Strategy of Catalonia 2030 (Biodiversity 2030) aim is to curb the degradation of natural heritage and the loss of biodiversity in Catalonia, to ensure its sustainable use and to guarantee the provision of the ecosystem services on which we depend. It includes an Action to Draw up a Conservation of Wild Pollinators Plan to ensure the conservation of wild pollinators and to maintain the role and productivity of agrarian ecosystems.</p> <p>The Plan, however, was not conceived to include any communication campaign or consider the integration of citizens concerns. Considering that the AIPP has allowed the development of the Ireland Pollinator Conservation Plan with a great social, environmental and territorial impact, Policy Change thanks to the import of such Good Practice is totally opportune.</p> <p>Although the Pilot Action to import the AIPP was not finally granted (we succeed with the export of SITxell, though), this interchange provided stronger collaborations between CREAM and the Catalonian government and opened the door for further sharing. Not only with the Ministry of Climate Action, Food and Rural Agenda of Catalonia, promoter of the drafting and implementation of the Biodiversity 2030, but also with the General Directorate for Economic Promotion, Competition and Regulation of Catalonia, in charge of the ERDF Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020 of Catalonia Region.</p> |
| <b>Nature of the action</b>                                      | <p>CREAM will participate in the different worktables planned by the General sub-directorate of Biodiversity and Natural Environment in order to draft the Conservation of Wild Pollinators Plan. Our role is to transfer the Good Practice of the AIPP in order to include communication campaigns and consider the integration of citizens concerns.</p> <p>Several reports and other kind of documents will be prepared for the members of the worktables in order to assure the transfer of the Good Practice</p>  |
| <b>Responsible</b>   | CREAM  |
| <b>Other stakeholders involved / Role</b>                        | <p>Ministry of Climate Action, Food and Rural Agenda of Catalonia, General Directorate of Environmental Policy, Department of Environment and Sustainability, General sub-directorate of Biodiversity and Natural Environment. In charge of the drafting of Plan.</p> <p>Other Stakeholders invited by them to be part of the worktables in order to draft the Plan</p>  |
| <b>Indicative costs</b>  | Only personal to be present in the different worktables  |
| <b>Funding sources</b>   | CREAM  |
| <b>Implementation calendar</b>                                   | Between April 2022 and July 2023, CREAM will be available to participate in any necessary worktable  |



| Action 2 – Political will for the Green Office |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Relevance to the project</b>                | <p>The Green Office was one of the latest Good Practices presented to the project, during the 4<sup>th</sup> International Seminar 4 about Improve landscape governance for economic and environmental sustainability on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021. However, the ideas presented were impressive and really appealing for the Catalonia Region.</p> <p>This good practice presents the possibility of setting up a team, dedicated to protect and maintain the ecosystem of a given geographical area within a city. The role of the Green Office is to carry out administrative environmental tasks, import successful ecosystem management practices and raise awareness of the importance of responsible use of the local ecosystem.</p> <p>In Catalonia, municipalities can assume competences for the conservation of natural heritage and biodiversity, and adopt initiatives in this field based on existing regulations. However, the Law includes restrictive criteria for the implementation of consortia, as they must be affiliated to a higher level of government. Moreover, very local entities at the village or city district are not contemplated.</p> <p>Therefore, the Green Office offers the possibility of deliver official tasks, take part in several international projects, and in addition could capitalize from the knowledge gained from these cooperations by organizing awareness raising events for residents and developing expert platforms.</p> |
| <b>Nature of the action</b>                    | <p>It is imperative first to look for the governmental branch in charge of the AREA 5 of The NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030, Administrative organisation, legal framework and taxation. The Area includes the strategic objective 5.1 “Adapt instruments for governing natural heritage to new conservation challenges and make them more effective”, with the Operational objective 5.1.4. Strengthen the role of local administration in the governance of natural heritage. In fact, Action line 71, Promote collaboration agreements with local bodies, specifies that relations between the Government of Catalonia and the local authorities will be reinforced in order to establish new cooperation agreements that will enable progress to be made on the conservation of natural heritage at the local level. Although the Action was not conceived to create any new office, in AREA 6 of the 2030 Strategy, “Society engagement in the conservation of natural heritage”, it is mentioned that organised initiatives by civil society are essential for raising awareness of the importance of conserving natural heritage and biodiversity, and for sharing common objectives with other local stakeholders and sectors. CREA F can make good use of their contacts with the Barcelona City Council in order to facilitate the necessary agreements with city districts prone to collaboration.</p>   |
| <b>Responsible</b>                             | CREAF  |
| <b>Other stakeholders involved / Role</b>      | Generalitat de Catalunya, in charge of the NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030<br>Barcelona City Council and other city councils and villages, which may be interested to implement Green Offices.  |
| <b>Indicative costs</b>                        | Only personal to realize the first contacts and motivate political will  |
| <b>Funding sources</b>                         | CREAF  |
| <b>Implementation calendar</b>                 | Between April and May 2022, CREA F will look for the necessary contacts, while from June to July 2023, we will try to inspire the necessary political will to initiate future implementation.  |

## 4 Concluding remarks

The NATURAL HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF CATALONIA 2030 was approved by the Generalitat de Catalunya in 2018 and included the 2019-2022 Action Plan. Just one year before, PROGRESS began its path to initiate a process of policy change towards the conservation of biodiversity and the maintenance of nature's capacity to deliver the goods and services that we all need.

The Biodiversity Strategy sets out the strategic objectives to guide the work of the Generalitat towards the conservation of nature until 2030, identifies the priorities that must be addressed in the coming years to reverse the deterioration of the natural heritage, and establishes a general framework of reference for undertaking the necessary conservation initiatives for the country. Its ultimate aim is to curb the degradation of natural heritage and the loss of biodiversity in Catalonia, to ensure its sustainable use and to guarantee the provision of the ecosystem services on which we depend.

It is thus the perfect time for collaboration and the lesson learned by PROGRESS may contribute to facilitate or even enhance the fulfilment of the objectives of the Catalanian Strategy towards nature conservation. We hope to contribute with this action Plan to such great aims.

