

## PRomoting the Governance of Regional Ecosystem ServiceS

# Action Plan in Hungary

March 2022



## Summary

Summary.....	2
1 General Information.....	3
1.1 PROGRESS project: a summary .....	4
2 The policy context.....	6
2.1 The Policy Instrument .....	6
2.2 The Good Practices .....	6
2.3 The potential actions .....	8
2.4 First steps for action from phase 1.....	9
3 Action Plan 2021-22 in Hungary.....	10
Action 1 – Adaptation of pollinator protection measures as a horizontal principle in EEEOP Plus (based on the AIPP) .....	10



## 1 General Information

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

Partner responsible for this Action Plan:



ACTION PLAN IN HUNGARY

May 2022

**Country:** Hungary  
**NUTS2 region:** Dél-Dunántúl  
**Contact person:** Balázs Kiss  
**Email address:** [kiss.balazs@tmfu.hu](mailto:kiss.balazs@tmfu.hu)  
**Contact phone:** +3670 947 0830

**Coordination and preparation of this action plan:**  
Borkovits Balázs, Kiss Balázs · TCDA Tolna County Development Agency

**Photo credits:**  
Kiss Balázs

**Special thanks:**  
To be members of the Local Stakeholder Group (LSG) for their valuable contributions during workshop sessions developed during this PROGRESS project · To the officers at the Ministry of Innovation and Technology, Managing Authority of the Environmental and Energy Efficiency Operational Programme, the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary who also engaged in our activities, the colleagues who work on the "Strategic Assessments supporting the long term conservation of natural values of community interest as well as the national implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020" projects in different positions.

Interreg Europe PROGRESS project  
***P*ROmoting 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 Hungary aims to impact the Policy Instrument for the 2021-2027 programming period “Environmental and Energy Efficiency Operational Programme Plus”. Although a very similar policy instrument was targeted originally, since the funds are already allocated within the policy instrument, TCDA and the Ministry for Innovation and Technology, the Managing Authority of the respective policy instrument decided to improve the new policy instrument instead.

## 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.

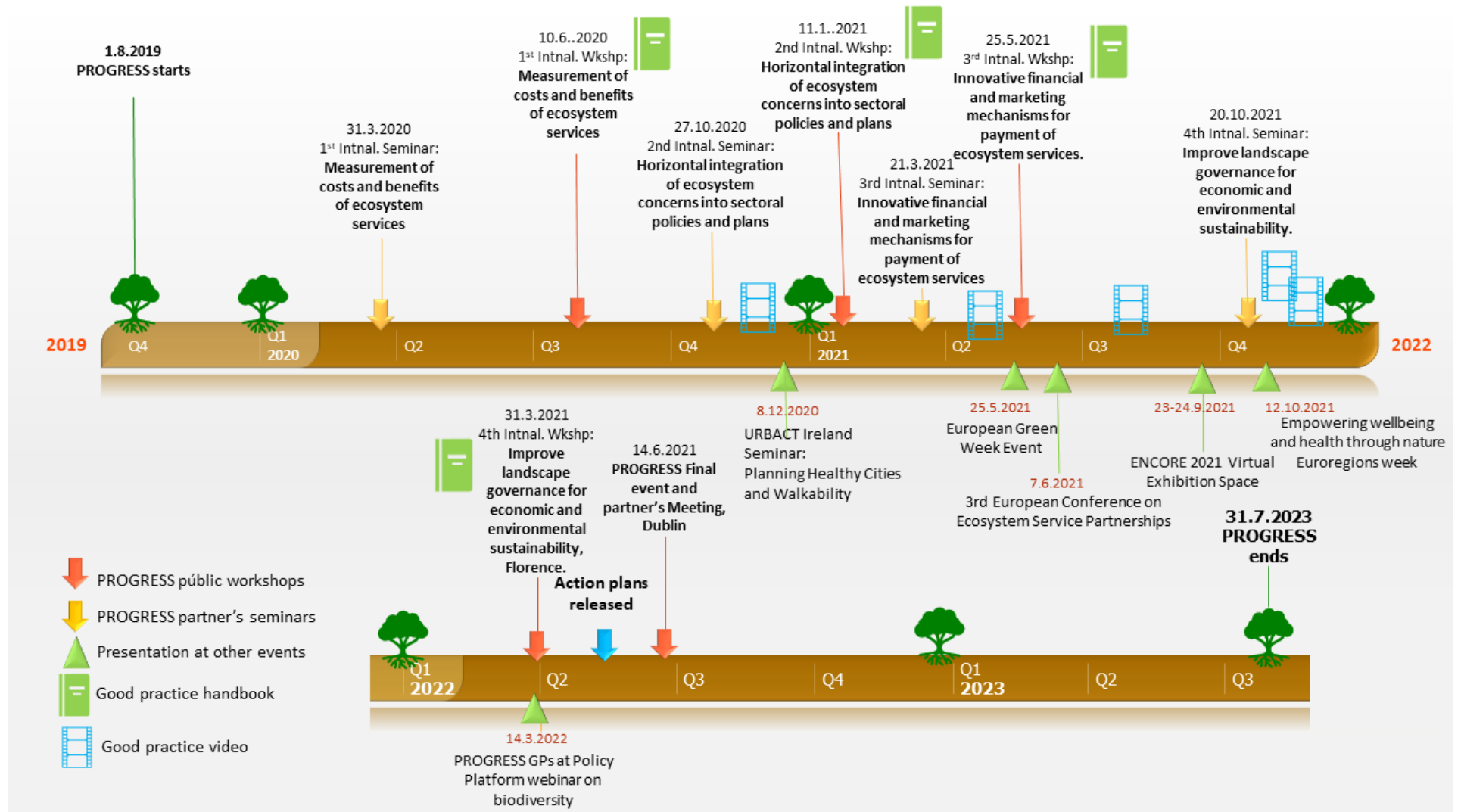
The policy instruments tackled by the project are the ERDF Operational Plans at regional or national level, and other strategies dealing with the protection and valuing of biodiversity and ecosystem services. The approach proposed by the project is based on policy learning and capacity building of the 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

### 2.1 The Policy Instrument

The programme aims to support sustainable growth and contribute to achieving the Europe 2020 targets for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It improves flood protection, provides better waste and wastewater management services and good quality drinking water to more residents, help protect natural habitats and species, and it should improve energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources. The programme focuses among others on adaptation to climate change impacts, development of water supply, wastewater disposal and cleaning, nature protection and wildlife protection. The OP targets the development of green infrastructure and restoration of degraded ecosystems and protected natural values and areas of Community importance in order to improve its nature conservation status. It plays a significant role in the conservation and development of key ecosystem services, both in terms of sustainable economic growth and the quality of life of the population, through the restoration of 5% of the degraded ecosystems as well as the protection and conservation of Natura 2000 sites preserving jobs and creating of new ones. The aim of this priority has to be supported by a permanent decision-supporting system that harmonize the different investment plans of the given territory with the principal of protecting the ecosystem-services as usually short run economic objectives have priority in the decision making process, which hinders the implementation of this principle.

### 2.2 The Good Practices

PROGRESS THEME	Name of GP	Country	Relevance to this Action Plan
1. Measurement of Ecosystem Services	All Ireland Pollinator Plan Framework	Ireland	Strong, very much attached to the protection of one ecosystem services and protects species from extinction
	National Ecosystem and Ecosystem Service Mapping Pilot	Ireland	Strong, but already implemented in EEEOP to some degree
	Territorial Information System for the Network of Open Areas in the province of Barcelona	Spain	Average, somewhat already linked to EEEOP
	Ecosystem Services Assessment Methodology (ESAM)	Latvia	Weak, mostly linked to coastal ecosystem missing in Hungary,

			implemented in EEEOP
	Guidelines for assessing soil ecosystem services in urban environment and their management	Italy	Weak, focuses on one ecosystem and already realized in EEEOP to some extent
2. Integration of ecosystems into sectoral policies and plans at regional and national level	Dublin Mountains Makeover	Ireland	Strong, but limited intervention area
	Forest Ecosystem Services Mapping and Assessment Methodology	Latvia	Strong, but limited intervention area, already implemented in EEEOP to some extent
	Definition and indicators for the characterization of the Agricultural Areas	Spain	Limited to agricultural areas, not linked to EEEOP
	Catalan Forest Laboratory	Spain	Strong, but limited intervention area, already implemented in EEEOP to some extent
	Citizen Council for Sustainability (Barcelona)	Spain	Not necessarily applicable in relation to the PI
	Conservative management of habitats ROSCI0129 4070 and 9260 in the North West of Gorj, in Gorj County	Romania	Strong, but very specific
3. Payment for Ecosystem Services	Natural Capital Ireland Framework	Ireland	Strong, but limited intervention area, already implemented in EEEOP to some extent
	Protecting Farmland Pollinators	Ireland	Strong, very much attached to the protection of one ecosystem service, but not directly linked to out Policy Instrument. Indirect influence for adaptation as a

			project proposal
	Sincere-Forests for Water in Catalonia	Spain	Average, somewhat already linked to EEEOP
	Greenhous Gas and Ammonia Emmision Reduction Tool	Latvia	Not necessarily applicable in relation to the PI
4. Improve landscape governance for economic and environmental sustainability.	Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Webtool to Support Strategic Environmental Assessment and Plan-making	Ireland	Strong, but already implemented in EEEOP to some degree
	Landscape Charters	Spain	Not necessarily applicable in relation to the PI

### 2.3 The potential actions

During the discussion of these topics 19 Good Practices were identified and presented within the partnership. We are focusing on one which can feed in to the Environmental and Energy Efficiency Operational Programme Plus as there is a strong link between the GP and the priorities of the policy instrument. The current version of EEEOP Plus was delivered to be subject of public dialogue and its 1<sup>st</sup> priority (water management and mitigation of disaster risks) and 4<sup>th</sup> priority (renewable energy) are strongly linked to ecosystem services. In the period between 2013 and 2020, the EEEOP 4.3.0-CHOP 15-2016-00001 already made a thorough analysis of ecosystem services in Hungary, and international Good Practices were also discovered within that project related to green infrastructure that reoccured in PROGRESS as well, such as SITxell.

Seeing the EEEOP Plus in its current state, protection of species, protecting them from extinction is an important goal of the new policy instrument. The Action Plan contributes to these goals by supporting them with concrete, actionable information on Good Practices and assisting in adapting them to the intervention logic of the EEEOP Plus, also in the same time considering the different actors that might or might not play a part in the implementation of such actions. The most important Good Practice in this regard is the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, as it provides a concise set of tools that have been proven to be effective.



## 2.4 First steps for action from phase 1

During the first Phase, TCDA was involved not only in an early Action Planning process, but also developed a closer relationship with the Managing Authority of the Environmental and Energy Efficiency Plus Operation Programme as well as the lead Beneficiary and consortium leader of the EEEOP 4.3.0-CHOP 15-2016-00001 project, “Strategic Assessments supporting the long term conservation of natural values of community interest as well as the national implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020”, the Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Environmental Protection.

Strictly speaking about the Action Plan, this is a period of closure regarding the original Policy Instrument, the EEEOP of 2013-2020, as well as a period of planning of the new Policy Instrument. We have therefore been involved in the planning process to some degree having received the actual working version of the new, EEEOP Plus documentation which already lists all priorities and the specific actions without the indicators or the allocated funds. That already outlines the main development directions of the policy instrument, and allows TCDA to establish links between the results of local and interregional exchange of experience done in PROGRESS.

Moreover, not directly linked to the Action proposed in this plan, the relationship between TCDA and the Ministries yielded valuable connections to professionals and researchers dealing with ecosystem services, and there is a prospect of developing local proposals and projects in Tolna County, and also involving local stakeholders in a more practice-oriented implementation of such projects.

### 3 Action Plan 2021-22 in Hungary

Action 1 – Adaptation of pollinator protection measures as a horizontal principle in EEEOP Plus (based on the AIPP)	
Relevance to the project	<p>The proposed Action is based on the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and seeing that there is lack of coordinated action or a national-level forum on pollinators. The adaptation of the AIPP would be an adequate answer to the dwindling numbers of pollinators, however the focus of the policy instrument is to support investments into green and blue infrastructure, support National Parks in their investments, and contribute to necessary infrastructure is several risk-mitigation areas, such as inland water, or floods. It is important to note here that there is no strong basis for nature-based solutions, green and blue infrastructure, there are a limited number of engineering firms able to plan such actions and Municipalities and other beneficiaries are inexperienced in leading such a project, therefore smaller steps need to be taken.</p>
Nature of the action	<p>As mentioned earlier, EEEOP supports environmental investments on a quite large spectrum. These include, but not limited to risk mitigation, such as flood prevention embankments, related industrial works, improving water quality, eliminating pollution, dredging, riverbed reconstruction, canal construction; it also supports sewage systems (not all settlements are provided with sewage in Hungary) and drinking water systems (construction and refurbishment), waste management, etc.</p> <p>These constructions, new infrastructures mean the working sites are cleaned of vegetation at least partly during the projects, implying that one of the last steps in finishing these will be the restoration of the green spaces that were affected by the work carried out on these sites. While it clear that the policy instrument is not suited for supporting a large-scale national programme, certain elements can be evaluated and worked in specific calls that can support pollinators and using the guidelines as a baseline for them also can provide practical guidelines for beneficiaries carrying out the investments.</p> <p>The main activity proposed by our Action Plan is the inclusion of certain pollinator protection elements either as conditions in the projects supported by the Policy Instrument where it is applicable, or adding optional activities that can provide small funds for these additional actions. This has to be reviewed by the MA so it can be implemented where feasible and does not interfere with the legal frameworks regulating technical requirements in certain areas (such as water management, green infrastructure management, etc.). <b>Therefore we are proposing that pollinator friendly measures in relation to the green space restoration, construction or when restoring working and staging areas to be added as an evaluation criteria to the proposals.</b></p> <p>As there are no calls for proposals at the moment (13.05.2022.) and no Partnership Agreement for the Operational Programme has been signed, our timeline should respect that.</p>
Responsible	<p>EEEOP MA – responsible for calls for applications TCDA – supporting pollinator protection measure inclusion</p>
Other stakeholders involved / Role	

<b>Indicative costs</b>	n.a.
<b>Funding sources</b>	
<b>Implementation calendar</b>	<p>Planned timeline as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Until March 2023: development of calls for applications. Selection of suitable calls supporting activities where pollinator protection measures can be reasonably included. Exploration and identification of suitable measures (adding extra activities to support physical interventions, infrastructure development or adding appropriate evaluation criteria). Collection of suitable supporting materials for applicants similarly to the guidelines supported by the AIPP.</li> <li>- Until June 2023: Implementation of the additional measures supported by the Action Plan.</li> </ul> <p>If possible, all actions will be done earlier depending on the Partnership Agreement on the OP. Until that, the MA and PP4 are continuously in contact to establish the exact timing.</p>

