Good governance for biodiversity

A Policy Brief from the Policy Learning Platform on Environment and resource efficiency

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Interreg Europe
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Introduction

The economic development in Europe in the past century put an **enormous burden on biodiversity**. 'Despite ambitious targets, Europe continues to lose biodiversity at an alarming rate': as a result of human activity, 60 % of species and 77 % of habitats show predominantly unfavourable conservation status.[1] **Pressures** are coming from sectors such as agriculture, industry, fishing to name but a few. These often lead to irreversible consequences such as biodiversity loss, fragmentation and degradation of natural habitats; overexploitation of natural resources; and proliferation of invasive alien species. Climate change additionally aggravates the situation.

At the same time, the **significance of biodiversity and nature is outstanding**. Besides being vital for life and human health, according to the new Biodiversity Strategy 2030, biodiversity and nature are important economic factors with over half of global GDP depending on ecosystem services.

The EU has been active in the area of biodiversity through providing **strategic directions** and through facilitating **Natura 2000 network of protected areas**. Today, 26% of the EU's land area is already protected, with 18% as part of Natura 2000 and 8% under national schemes. Of EU seas, 11% are protected, with 8% in Natura 2000 and 3% under additional national protection. As pointed out in the EU Biodiversity Strategy, 'biodiversity fares better in protected areas' so the benefits are obvious. At the same time, enlarging protected areas also brings economic advantages. The Nature Fitness Check valued Natura 2000 benefits at between EUR 200-300 per year with investment needs 'expecting to support as many as 500,000 additional jobs'.

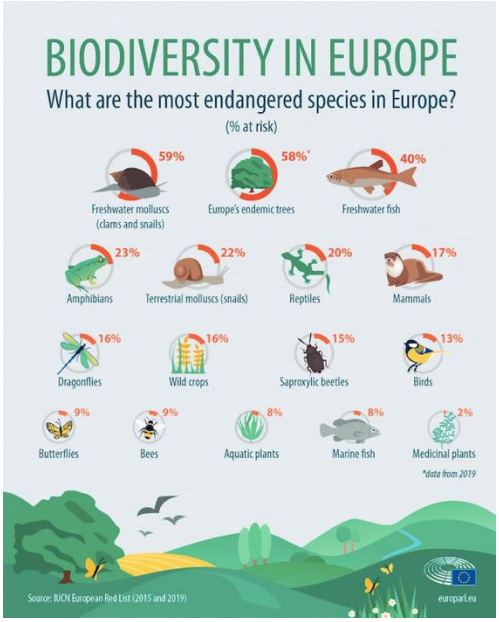

Image credit: European Parliament

Good governance is a catalyst and an enabling condition for the implementation and enforcement of biodiversity protection and conservation policy. In addition to the EU level perspective, good governance is also important for regions and cities when they undertake actions on Natura 2000 management, nature-based solutions, green infrastructure or ecosystem services.

The policy brief analyses good governance in biodiversity preservation with focus on protected areas. It aims to provide inspiration and input to regional and local authorities for managing and planning the next generation of Regional Funds and for the use of the new recovery instrument.

[1] EEA, 2020, State of the Environment Report 2020

The EU strategic policy context and financial instruments

European Green Deal

The European Green Deal stresses the urgency of halting biodiversity loss and highlights that the EU is not meeting some of its most important environmental objectives for 2020, such as the Aichi targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Kunming, China, in October 2020 is an opportunity for the world to adopt a robust global framework to halt biodiversity loss.

EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030

As a core part of the European Green Deal, the European Commission has adopted the new EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and an associated Action Plan. The Strategy is expected to support a green recovery following the pandemic and represents a comprehensive and ambitious plan for protecting nature and reversing the degradation of ecosystems. It aims to build societies' resilience to future threats such as **climate change** impacts, forest fires, food insecurity or disease outbreaks, including by **protecting wildlife** and **fighting illegal wildlife trade**. It acknowledges that in the EU there is currently no comprehensive governance framework to steer the implementation of biodiversity commitments agreed at national, EU or international level. To address the gap, the Commission will set in motion **a new, strengthened governance framework** to ensure better implementation and track progress, improving knowledge, financing and investments and better respecting nature in public and business decision-making. EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 will be EU's cornerstone strategic document in the next 10 years.

EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030: key commitments

1. Legally protect a minimum of 30% of the EU's land area and 30% of the EU's sea area and integrate ecological corridors, as part of a true Trans-European Nature Network.
2. Restore degraded ecosystems at land and sea across the whole of Europe by:
    - Increasing organic farming and biodiversity-rich landscape features on agricultural land;
    - Restoring at least 25 000 km of EU rivers to a free-flowing state;
    - Reducing the use and risk of pesticides by 50% by 2030;
    - Planting 3 billion trees by 2030.
3. Unlock 20 billion EUR/year for biodiversity through various sources, including EU funds, national and private funding. Natural capital and biodiversity considerations will be integrated into business practices.
4. Put the EU in a leading position in the world in addressing the global biodiversity crisis.

Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

In early 2021, the EU intends **to put forward a New Climate Change Adaptation Strategy**. The blueprint of the strategy states the importance of improving knowledge of climate impacts; reinforcing planning and accelerating action. The strategy will be fully aligned with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 and is expected to address the issue of 'more and better data' and 'faster deployment of solutions'.

As noted in the EU 2020 State of the Environment Report, "the broad framework of EU biodiversity policy remains highly relevant and is fit for purpose but the biodiversity challenge is urgent and interlinked with the climate crisis. Targets will not be met without more effective implementation and funding of existing measures in all European environmental policies, as well as greater policy coherence

with respect to biodiversity in agricultural and other sectoral policies. The wider application of ecosystem-based and adaptive management in combination with increased public awareness of society's dependency on biodiversity and nature are important steps forward".[2]

EU financial instruments

Addressing biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystems requires significant public and private investments at national and European level. The European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) provide the main part of EU contribution to financing biodiversity supporting measures that are an integral part of sustainable regional development and contribute to reducing and halting biodiversity loss. Among possible measures that could be supported are such related to addressing knowledge gaps as regards biodiversity and ecosystem services, building capacity, raising public awareness on biodiversity and Natura 2000, etc. European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) as one of the two goals of cohesion policy provides a framework for the implementation of joint actions and policy exchanges between national, regional and local actors also in the field of biodiversity governance.

In addition to the European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF), the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) the following sources of funding are available for biodiversity protection including governance aspects:

- **LIFE Environment sub-programme** funds nature conservation projects in particular in the areas of biodiversity, habitats and species. It provides action grants for best practice, pilot and demonstration projects that contribute to the implementation of the EU's directives on birds and habitats. With regards to environmental governance and information, the programme supports projects in the areas of awareness raising, environmental training and capacity building, legislative compliance and enforcement, knowledge development and public and stakeholder participation.
- The **Natural Capital Financing Facility (NCFF)** combines European Investment Bank (EIB) financing and the EU funding under the LIFE Programme and is implemented by the EIB. There are projects on **Payment for ecosystem services** (e.g. programmes to protect and enhance forestry, biodiversity, to reduce water or soil pollution) and **biodiversity offsets** / compensation beyond legal requirements (e.g. compensation pools for on-site and off-site compensation projects).
- **Horizon 2020 Programme** supports evidence-based biodiversity conservation strategies and ecosystem management in the face of climate change. Models of better accounting for the interactions between biodiversity, ecosystems and the climate system are among the supported activities. To promote the use of nature-based solutions, the programme supports the development of an **effective and self-sustainable multi-stakeholder platform** that fosters dialogue, interactions, knowledge and information sharing. Collaboration and think-and-do-tanks among relevant stakeholders is necessary to support the understanding and speed up market uptake.
- The future **Horizon Europe** (HEU) programme will include a long-term strategic research agenda for biodiversity, including a science-policy mechanism for research-based options for the implementation of biodiversity commitments, with increased funding. HEU's missions will significantly contribute to filling knowledge gaps and finding solutions to improve the health of ecosystems and their contribution to human health.
- As a response to economic and social damage brought by the coronavirus pandemic, on 27 May 2020 the EU presented a **new recovery instrument 'Next Generation EU.** It is a part of the revamped long-term EU budget focusing on green and digital transitions and resilience of national economies. Most of the financial facilities can support protection and restoration of biodiversity and eco-systems. There will be a **15 billion EUR reinforcement for the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)** to support rural areas in making the necessary structural changes

[2] https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/soer-2020

in line with the European Green Deal and achieving the ambitious targets in line with the new Biodiversity and Farm-to-fork strategies.

In addition and to make the most of all relevant EU programmes and financing instruments the overall spending under the EU budget must be **biodiversity-proofed**. This means meeting the requirement that the overall EU spending has no negative impacts on biodiversity. The new EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 calls for ‘strengthening biodiversity proofing to ensure that EU funding supports biodiversity-friendly investments.

What is good biodiversity governance

The issue of good governance for biodiversity protection could be analysed from the point of view of the **governance mechanisms of biodiversity conventions**. Good governance is also often associated with the **rule of law and enforcement of existing legislation** through the inspection systems. The authors have chosen to give this policy brief a focus on **three additional significant aspects of good governance, which are of high relevance to regional and local authorities**.

Multi-stakeholder governance

The best way to deal with biodiversity challenges in a democratic society is involving multiple stakeholders and working in partnerships. Multi-stakeholder Partnerships (MSP) is a concept describing the idea that different groups of stakeholders can share a common problem or objective, at the same time having different interests and stakes in the problem. Although it seems intuitive and logical, experience shows that this is not always the case in practice. Even authorities willing to approach biodiversity governance in a multi-stakeholder, collaborative manner might lack the knowledge and the tools to do so.

Biodiversity data for quality policy making

The role of quality consolidated data for efficient and effective policy making and biodiversity governance is unquestionable. The 2020 EEA State of the Environment report points out that 'there has been a major improvement in the availability, quality and standardisation of information under the Habitats Directive' but 'the level of conformity and the quality of data in national reports varies'. Data on marine habitats and species are largely unavailable. This brings us to the importance of biodiversity data availability and quality.

Biodiversity financing

Innovative financing for the purposes of nature and biodiversity protection and conservation is gaining importance, particularly in diversifying the use of traditional sources of financing (i.e. EU funding programmes). Further uptake of innovative funding instruments on regional and local level contributes to bridging the existing financing gap for biodiversity and achieving the objectives of the Biodiversity Strategy 2030.

Implementation and governance of a Natura 2000 management plan: reflections from the peer review for Nature Park Our (Luxemburg)

The Luxembourgish 'Nature Park Our' is located in the Ardennes, in the border triangle of Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg. It covers an area of 420 km² and 8 municipalities have joined forces with the aim of balancing nature conservation and the economic development of the region. Within the 'Nature Park Our', Natura 2000 zones are covering 167 km² and are run with the help of 6 management plans containing information about habitats, endangered faunal and floral species and possible threats. Every management plan is divided into three main different zones: the alluvial zones, the open landscape and the forests. For each zone, several long-term objectives and operational measures have been foreseen.

In this complex set-up, **good governance is a key to achieving the ambitious goals of the nature park**. The park Steering Committee is expected to ensure the acceptance of the measures to be implemented and the smooth collaboration and participation of a heterogeneous group of local stakeholders. Moreover, the committee needs to work hand-in-hand with other Luxembourgish Steering Committees, the national Ministries involved and cover the Park's cross-border aspects.

To learn from the experiences of other European regions in implementing management plans of Natura 2000 sites, in March 2020 **a two-day peer review** was organised by the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform and hosted by **Nature Park Our**. A team of peers representing Interreg Europe partner regions and stakeholders from the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Greece, Estonia and Romania worked with Nature park Our in tackling the following **challenges**:

- **Managing and coordinating** a large steering committee often having conflicting interests;
- **Stakeholder governance**;
- **Innovative financial instruments** and **low-** or **no-cost solutions** that can help to implement the protection measures and are complementary to the national and European funding sources
- **Cross-border management and monitoring of Natura 2000 areas** with regards to water management in cross-border areas and integrated strategies to deal with invasive species.

Image credit: Nature Park Our

Recommendations for improving stakeholder coordination included the development of an **engagement strategy**, **better stakeholder mapping**, **tailored approach to stakeholders** and **improved communication**. Good examples from the Netherlands served as an inspiration for conflict management.

The Multi-stakeholder Partnership Guide developed by the Wageningen University and highlighted by the BIOGOV project offers an excellent framework for understanding multi-stakeholder partnership and links theory and practice.

The Multi-stakeholder Partnership Guide

The MSP guide deals with questions related to identification of stakeholders; power and power differences; defining a common goal; governance (organisation of collaboration and decision-making; conflict resolution; capacity; tools; and facilitation).

MSPs have several characteristics:

- Shared and defined 'problem situation' and opportunity;
- All the key stakeholders are engaged in the partnership;
- Work across different sectors and scales;
- Follow an agreed but dynamic process and timeframe;
- Involve stakeholders in establishing their expectations for a good partnership;
- Work with power differences and conflicts;
- Foster stakeholder learning;
- Balance bottom-up and top-down approaches;
- Make transformative, institutional change possible.

Stages of the process:

MSPs and the MSP Guide are presented in a video here.

Opportunities for improving biodiversity governance: good examples from Interreg Europe

Local and regional governments play a key role in meeting the objectives of EU nature and biodiversity policy. However, they often face a number of challenges. For example, the involvement of stakeholders in biodiversity preservation on different levels - planners, local and regional politicians, economic actors and local communities - remains difficult. There is insufficient coordination among key actors, adjacent municipalities and the private sector. Several Interreg Europe funded projects already identified good examples and offer insights and inspiration.

Multi-stakeholder governance

Multi-stakeholder governance approach can take a number of forms. While it could simply be shaped like a series of meetings (i.e. the Molise example below) it can also lead to the establishment of formalised institutions and the implementation of a concrete MSP methodology as it is in the example of ENRx in France's Hauts-de-France Region.

Figure 1 Features of a successful MSP

There is also a possibility to engage private institutions in the management of protected areas. This was the case when a local Cooperative in Molise, Italy was created for the management of tourist activities, logistics and administration of a protected territory. This is a positive example of collaboration between two municipalities, universities and WWF in establishing and managing a nature reserve.

Notwithstanding the form of partnership we can distil features of multi-stakeholder partnership presented in Figure 1.

The Interreg Europe IMPACT project has a number of interesting practices in multi-stakeholder partnership for biodiversity, in particular cooperation between institutions; innovative methods of dialogue between biodiversity stakeholders; and public-private collaboration in the management of protected territories.

IMPACT
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Monte Patalecchia: an example of good cooperation among institutions and environmental associations, Italia Nostra Onlus, Molise, Italy

Monte Patalecchia and the foothills of Matese were not considered attractive for nature-based tourism. The process for the creation of small protected areas started with a series of meetings with the inhabitants in order to illustrate the biodiversity wealth of the area and the need to safeguard it. The process included meetings with the municipal administrations to highlight that the establishment of the Natural Area could create employment opportunities. As a result, more than 10 pedestrian routes have been identified, mapped and promoted attracting a total of about 800 visitors per year, a 100% growth compared to the previous years. The practice illustrates how cooperation between several municipalities, environmental associations and other stakeholders can raise awareness and improve the protection of the natural heritage of the territory and at the same time stimulate sustainable economic development. It can be an inspiring example for other regions in Europe with valuable natural assets which can also become a source of economic development.

Further information about the practice is available here.

Open Forum: An innovative method of dialogue between parties interested in the environment, Espaces Naturels Régionaux (ENRx), Hauts de France

ENRx is a public-owned organisation comprised of three regional natural parks working in favour of regional development focusing on biodiversity protection; sustainable territorial development; and agriculture. After the publication of the brochure "Parks and the Relationship between Man and Nature", ENRx brought together interested parties on a voluntary basis to contribute to the development of an action plan to engage the public for the environment. The choice of the "Open Forum" method based on a participatory approach seemed particularly innovative. The 22 activity leaders for the subjects covered during the Open Forum, were invited to make practical proposals for input to the action plan proposed by ENRx and the regional natural Parks within the scope of the IMPACT project. Three tangible results of the Open Forum have been reported:

- Raised awareness of biodiversity of public and private regional partners;
- Increased interest in preserving biodiversity keeping a balance between preservation of natural heritage and the economic activities;
- Reinforced commitment of residents, territorial actors and the regional natural parks to preserve biodiversity.

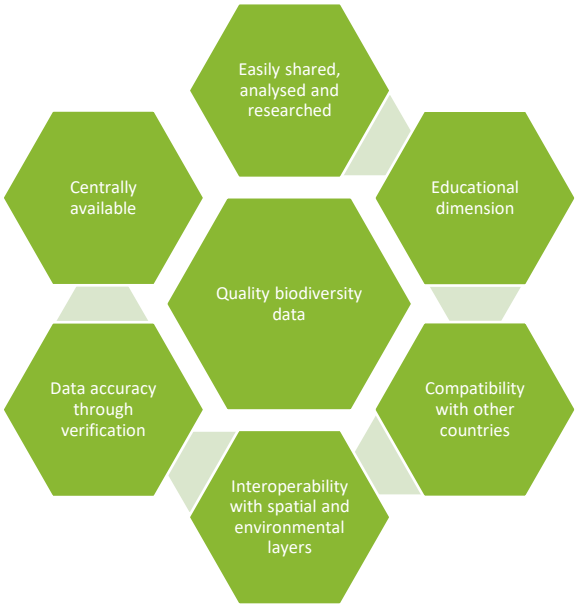
Further information about the practice is available here.

Biodiversity data for quality policy making

Good biodiversity governance is inextricably linked to the issue of **availability of** reliable, robust and well-structured biodiversity data needed for efficient policymaking. However, the Fitness check of the Birds and Habitats Directives identified **inadequate knowledge** and **poor access to data** as obstacles to implementation of environmental policies. Solutions to these challenges were discussed in the Policy Learning Platform's brief on the use of technology for better protection and management of nature and biodiversity.

Good biodiversity data **implies a number of characteristics**. It should be easily shared, analysed and researched by different stakeholders. Data management tools should have a strong educational dimension informing people about the natural world. Integrated databases could include both marine and terrestrial species and users should be able to interrogate species records and download distribution maps.

Figure 2 Characteristics of good biodiversity data



Compatibility of biodiversity data across countries is an important feature allowing users to compare and share data globally. Data integration with other sectors is also possible.

The NBN Atlas is a good case in point. It makes available online data aggregated from multiple sources and allows users to interrogate species records and download distribution maps. The NBN Atlas was based on the Atlas of Living Australia as it provided much of the required functionality including the ability to display species and ecosystem data together; interoperability with spatial and environmental layers; uploading data via web services; the ability to hold image libraries and bibliographies; a powerful interactive mapping tool with multiple filters; a spatial portal that allows detailed analysis and modelling of data. The main stakeholders and beneficiaries are the data providers and data users including government agencies, wildlife and conservation NGOs, museums, academics, volunteer recorders, local environmental record centres and public. The good practice could be of use to national and regional authorities who face the issue of biodiversity data fragmentation.

The NBN Atlas is one of the numerous good practices on biodiversity data and their importance for conservation decision-making processes that were identified by Interreg Europe BID-REX project. Other solutions and successful approaches on this topic are presented in the following documents developed by BID-REX partners: Information needs for decision-makers and Matching information to needs.

Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service, UK

Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service (NBIS) is the Local Environmental Records Centre (LERC) for Norfolk. It acts as a "one stop shop" for biodiversity and other environmental data and information. NBIS holds over 3.5 million species records, mapping of habitats and protected sites, geodiversity and other information. Accuracy of the information is ensured by working with a network of local experts who validate and verify records to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

NBIS provides data to a wide range of users including government agencies, planning authorities, NGOs, consultants, developers and the public. Commercial users are charged for services. NBIS also publishes data to the National Biodiversity Network Atlas from where it is published to GBIF. Most data are provided and verified by volunteers and NBIS actively supports this network by providing funding, training and other services. NBIS has been accredited by the Association of Local Environmental Records Centres (ALERC) after meeting a specified set of criteria that ensure high quality services to users.
Annual cost of NBIS is around £80,000 for staff costs and other expenses. The NBIS continues to grow its resource of data and information demonstrating that there is an effective network of data providers. Commercial income is also growing. Customer satisfaction is high especially due to the speed and quality of the response to enquiries.

The practice is an excellent model for developing an effective central point for biodiversity data at a local or regional level. The approach is interesting with regards to involving a network of local experts who are volunteers to maintain accuracy of information. Collected data are used by a wide spectrum of stakeholders. The fact that the data centre has been designed through a consultation with customers is a guarantee for the quality of its services and their adaptability to customer needs. The good practice could be of interest to national and/or regional authorities who face issues with data fragmentation.
Further information about the practice is available here.

Biodiversity financing

Protected areas play a crucial role for the preservation of biodiversity. Funds needed for the sustainable management of the current network of legally protected areas, including those under strict protection mainly come from public sources, invested by national, regional or local governments. As part of the interregional exchange and learning Interreg Europe project partners are also addressing the issue of biodiversity financing. For example, the Lithuanian partner EUCC Baltic Office (Lithuania), a partner in IMPACT project, has managed to get three projects approved by the “South Baltic Programme Cross-border Cooperation” Operational Programme.

Entrance fees, donations, operation fees (permits and licenses) as well as business and income taxes complete the traditional financing framework (Font et al. 2004). Since these sources are often insufficient to meet the conservation needs, innovative financing instruments and schemes are being developed to complement them.

The importance of **Payment for ecosystem services (PES)** schemes among policymakers is increasing as they **place value on nature** and contribute to reducing the overexploitation of natural resources. Under PES agreements, a user or beneficiary of an ecosystem service provides payments to individuals or communities whose management decisions and practices influence the provision of ecosystem services. PES helps to foster the protection of ecosystems through conservation, and also **provides opportunities for income generation** (Wunder, 2005). "PES provides an opportunity **to put a price on previously unpriced ecosystem services** like climate regulation, water quality regulation and the provision of habitat for wildlife and, in doing so, brings them into the wider economy." (Colin & Walters, 2016). The novelty of PES arises from its focus on the '**beneficiary pays principle**', as opposed to the 'polluter pays principle'.

Partners from Delta Lady project exchange views and ideas on how to implement PES. Examples of approaches identified as a result of interregional exchange is presented below:

Reinvestment of revenues from traditional fishing activities into habitat/species conservation: the case of Po river, Italy

The Comacchio lagoon is an extraordinary habitat for species of both commercial and conservation interest: eels, anchovies, shrimps and mullets. Fishing activities in the lagoon are directly performed by the Po river Delta Park. Particularly, eel fishing is a traditional activity of the local fishermen. The Comacchio lagoon requires a continuous and expensive management of the several water gates by the Po river Delta Park: the gates have to be opened and closed, in order to allow species movement and to supply fresh and sea water for habitat and species conservation.

The income generated by fishing is reinvested by the Park authority in the environmental conservation and management of the lagoon, thus representing an implicit PES scheme which guarantees habitat and fishery conservation. Moreover, part of the catch is directly sold to local population. The revenue generated by fishing activities in 2018 was 185,667 EUR and fishing also creates direct and indirect job positions for the local community.

In addition, the Park combines conservation activities with eco-tourism (e.g. boat trips, birdwatching, cycling and trekking), as well as educational activities in the lagoon. The monitoring activities demonstrated that the management of Comacchio lagoon was effective in conserving habitats and species. Further information about this practice is available here.

Another example of PES implemented in Po river Delta Park includes *mushroom and truffle picking* which is regulated by the Park authority with specific rules (e.g. no picking areas). Pickers pay to obtain authorization for a given period. In 2018 the Park obtained a total income of 9,096 EUR reinvested in the conservation and management of the ecosystem.

Further information about the practices is available here.

Other instruments

There are successful examples of **different tools such as** specific fiscal incentives, charitable tools or sponsorship applied for nature conservation purposes (e. in Norfolk county, UK, a partner in BID-rex project). They are often implemented as complementary means to the traditional types of financial support.

- **Marketed products for biodiversity conservation (MPBC)** aim to allocate part of the revenues from the sale of specific consumer goods to conservation activities and biodiversity-friendly land management. MPBC may include small-scale, local products (e.g. local produce from a national park supporting overall park management costs, local agricultural products) or products that are manufactured on a large scale. The action plan of Molise region (Italy), developed under IMPACT project, envisages the creation of a brand that makes recognizable products (agri-food, handicrafts) and services (hospitality and catering) of the Natura 2000 areas in the region. Partners from WLE project are also focusing on financial models to reinvest income from wildlife economy into nature management and restoration.
- **Tax reliefs** supporting biodiversity conservation are linked to general taxes, such as property, income or inheritance taxes and aim to incentivise general tax-payers to adopt biodiversity-friendly behaviour. Tax-payers who comply with specified requirements receive exemptions or reductions from general taxes. The most developed tax relief system within the EU is in place in France where exemptions are available from e.g. property taxes for undeveloped property on Natura 2000 sites, income taxes for Natura 2000 site management costs, etc.
- **Ecological Fiscal Transfers (EFT)** redistribute tax revenue among government levels and aim to compensate those municipalities that, as a result of the designation of Natura 2000 and other protected areas, may face land-use constraints and/ or missed opportunities for economic development. The instrument is not well-known by local governments. In the EU, fiscal transfers for biodiversity conservation purposes on a broader scale have only been implemented in Portugal.
- **Lottery Funds:** As part of a study visit PERFECT project partners learned about the experience of Woodbury Wetlands which is run by volunteers. The café is an important source of income for the park and six days a year the park is closed off for private use. Investments into the park were financed mainly by private sources (Lottery Fund).

What can cities and regions do next?

Multi-stakeholder governance

- Public authorities need to pay particular attention to the engagement of citizens in biodiversity preservation. Concretely, regions and cities should use multi-stakeholder governance techniques like the ones highlighted in the policy brief for the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030. For example, multi-stakeholder partnerships are especially relevant for raising public awareness of biodiversity assets and finding a balance between their preservation and exploitation.
- Regions and cities should establish solid multi-stakeholder governance structures and processes. They should work across different sectors and scales and should foster stakeholder learning and balance bottom-up and top-down approaches.

Data management

- Regions and cities should make an inventory and review the reliability, robustness and user-friendliness of biodiversity data. After that they should initiate a process of improving aspects of data management which are not up to standard with the goal of responding to the data needs of policy makers and other potential data users.
- Data should be compatible across countries and should be easily shared, analysed and researched by different stakeholders. The framework and the examples shared in the policy brief could be an excellent basis for such an exercise.

Innovative financing

- Regions and cities should diversify the range of different financing instruments in use and improve understanding of the role that they can play in the overall biodiversity protection efforts.
- They should analyse how to apply PES by focusing on preparing an inventory of the ecosystem services relevant for the protected area and identifying opportunities under the different types of PES.

Sources of further information

Policy Learning Platform publications:

- Policy brief on urban ecosystems
- Policy brief on protection and sustainable management of heritage in coastal and fluvial regions
- Policy brief on biodiversity and natural heritage
- Policy brief on ecosystem services: Interregional cooperation for sustaining the European natural capital
- Policy brief on Development of green infrastructure in EU regions
- Thematic workshop on natural heritage, workshop brief
- Thematic workshop on urban ecosystems, workshop brief

Other sources

- EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030
- 2019, IPBES assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystems - summary for policy makers
- Biodiversity Information System for Europe
- EU Business and Biodiversity Platform
- Natural Capital Coalition
- http://www.oppla.eu/ Oppla is a knowledge open platform on ecosystem services, natural capital and nature-based solutions.
- EC, EU Action Plan for nature, people and the economy, 2017

- 2011, IEEP and Milieu, The Guide to Multi-Benefit Cohesion Policy Investments in Nature and Green Infrastructure, A Report for the European Commission, 2013
- EU Guidance on integrating ecosystems and services in decision-making (part 1, part 2, part 3)

#biodiversity, #governance, #financing

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