Partnerská smlouva
číslo: 101216157 – 3
číslo: SON/OZZL/126/25

k projektu
101216157 - LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest s názvem
" Model care for forest habitats and species associated with forest habitats and trees"

Tato partnerská smlouva (dále „Smlouva") byla uzavřena podle ustanovení § 1731 a násl. zákona č. 89/2012 Sb., občanský zákoník, ve znění pozdějších předpisů (dále jen „Občanský zákoník") a podle příslušných právních předpisů souvisejících.

I. Smluvní strany

ZO ČSOP Onyx, pobočný spolek
Panská 363/9, 60200 Brno, Česká republika
IČ: 75103397
DIČ: CZ75103397
zastoupený ve věcech smluvních: Markem Fügnerem, předsedou pobočného spolku
dále jen „koordinující příjemce"

a

Jihočeský kraj
sídlo: U Zimního stadionu1952/2, 370 76 České Budějovice
zastoupen MUDr. Martinem Kubou, hejtmanem Jihočeského kraje
IČ: 70890650
DIČ: CZ70890650
bankovní spojení: ČSOB a. s., České Budějovice
číslo účtu €: [redacted]
zastoupený ve věcech smluvních: MUDr. Martinem Kubou
zastoupený ve věcech technických: Ing. Zdeňkem Klimešem, na základě plné moci ze dne 31. 3. 2025
dále jen „přidružený příjemce"

koordinující příjemce a přidružený příjemce dále též společně jako „smluvní strany".

II. Předmět smlouvy

Tato partnerská smlouva se uzavírá v souvislosti s projektem LIFE „**Model care for forest habitats and species associated with forest habitats and trees** ", jak je popsán v dotační smlouvě **101216157 - LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest**, podepsané dne **27.5.2025** (dále též „Grantová dohoda") a tvořící nedílnou přílohu této smlouvy.

Grantová dohoda (a jakékoli její dodatky), podepsaná mezi koordinujícím příjemcem a Evropskou agenturou (dále jen „Agentura"), jejíž součástí jsou Zvláštní podmínky a Obecné podmínky v Příloze I Grantové dohody LIFE (zde dále nazývané „Obecné podmínky"), celý návrh projektu a ostatní přílohy tvoří nedílnou součást této partnerské dohody. Není-li výslovně stanoveno jinak, jsou pro koordinujícího příjemce i přidruženého příjemce relevantní, a vztahují se na oba, všechny části Obecných podmínek. V případě, že se přidružený příjemce neměl možnost s dodatky seznámit, nenese odpovědnost za případné nedodržení povinností z nich vyplývajících.

Ustanovení Grantové dohody, včetně mandátu, kterým přidružený příjemce zplnomocňuje koordinujícího příjemce, aby ho zastupoval v jednání ve vztahu k Agentuře, mají přednost před jakoukoli jinou dohodou mezi přidruženým příjemcem a koordinujícím příjemcem, která může mít vliv na realizaci výše zmíněné Grantové dohody, uzavřené mezi koordinujícím příjemcem a Agenturou.

III. Trvání smlouvy

a) Tato partnerská smlouva nabývá platnosti dnem podpisu oprávněnými zástupci smluvních stran a účinnosti dnem zveřejnění v registru smluv dle zákona č. 340/2015 Sb., o zvláštních podmínkách účinnosti některých smluv, uveřejňování těchto smluv a o registru smluv (zákon o registru smluv), ve znění pozdějších předpisů. Smluvní strany se dohodly, že uveřejnění v souladu se zákonem provede přidružený příjemce.
b) Platnost smlouvy vyprší pět let po datu úhrady zůstatku (dále též „vyrovnávací platby") ze strany koordinujícího příjemce příjemci přidruženému.

IV. Úloha a povinnosti koordinujícího příjemce

a) Koordinující příjemce poskytne přidruženému příjemci kopie technických a finančních výkazů předkládaných Agentuře, jakož i o odezvě Agentury na tyto dokumenty. Koordinující příjemce bude pravidelně informovat přidruženého příjemce o komunikaci s Agenturou ohledně daného projektu;
b) Při uplatnění mandátu, který mu přidružený příjemce udělil k jednání jeho jménem, bude koordinující příjemce brát náležitě v úvahu zájmy a záležitosti přidruženého příjemce, s nímž bude koordinující příjemce vždy, když je to patřičné, konzultovat, zvláště předtím, než požádá o jakoukoli úpravu Grantové dohody;
c) Koordinující příjemce převede přidruženému příjemci poměrnou část předfinancování a to:
    1. u prvního předfinancování ve výši 30 % unijního příspěvku připadajícího na přidruženého příjemce do 30 dnů od přijetí prvního předfinancování na účet koordinujícího příjemce nebo do 30 dnů od účinnosti této partnerské smlouvy, podle toho, která skutečnost nastane později;
    2. u druhého předfinancování ve výši 25 % unijního příspěvku připadajícího na přidruženého příjemce do 30 dnů od přijetí druhého předfinancování na účet

koordinujícího příjemce nebo do 30 dnů od vyčerpání prvního předfinancování přidruženým příjemcem, podle toho, která skutečnost nastane později;

3. u třetího předfinancování ve výši 25 % unijního příspěvku připadajícího na přidruženého příjemce do 30 dnů od přijetí druhého předfinancování na účet koordinujícího příjemce nebo do 30 dnů od vyčerpání prvního předfinancování přidruženým příjemcem, podle toho, která skutečnost nastane později;

d) Vyrovnávací platba bude koordinujícímu příjemci vyplacena na základě přijetí odsvědčení o finančních výkazech a účetnictví projektu („osvědčení o finančních výkazech"), přidruženému příjemci bude převedena do 30 dnů od přijetí platby na účet koordinujícího příjemce.

V. Úloha a povinnosti přidruženého příjemce

a) Při realizaci projektu se přidružený příjemce řídí platnými právními předpisy České republiky, přímo použitelnými právními předpisy Evropské unie, touto smlouvou, projektem (Příloha č. 1 Grantové dohody), Společnými ustanoveními Grantové dohody mezi koordinujícím příjemcem a Evropským společenstvím (dále jen „Společenství"), pokyny manažera projektu, řídící komise a pokyny koordinujícího příjemce.

b) Přidružený příjemce se zavazuje v rámci realizace projektu zabezpečit pro koordinujícího příjemce v souladu se schváleným časovým harmonogramem projektových činností, který je součástí Grantové dohody tyto činnosti:

1. Plně nebo částečně zajistit ve stanoveném čase, za užití stanovených finančních prostředků a v požadované kvalitě realizaci nejrůznějších aktivit a opatření napříč projektem, především v rámci pracovních balíčků WP 1, WP2, a WP 4, a to především, nikoli však výhradně, lokalizovaných na území České i Polské republiky (podrobně viz Příloha č. 1 Grantové dohody).
2. Pro splnění svých povinností v rámci projektu zaměstnat Science Section Coordinator, Nature and Landscape Conservation Expert.
3. Dohlédnout na realizaci a často také sám realizovat všechny dílčí podaktivity a opatření, o kterých je tak uvedeno v Příloze č. 1 Grantové dohody, případně za tímto účelem poskytovat potřebnou podporu ostatním projektovým partnerům, mezi jeho zvlášť důležité povinnosti patří zajištění splnění dílčích projektových milníků a konkrétních výstupů.
4. V rozsahu stanoveném v Příloze č. 1 Grantové dohody, případně po dohodě s koordinujícím příjemcem, je přidružený příjemce rovněž povinen průběžně monitorovat a vyhodnocovat průběh a dopady vybraných realizovaných aktivit a tyto informace průběžně poskytovat koordinujícímu příjemci.

c) Přidružený příjemce se zavazuje realizovat v rámci projektu činnosti dle článku V odst. b) této smlouvy, a to v rozsahu a kvalitě, specifikované v této smlouvě a v projektu, a realizovat je v souladu s akčním plánem realizace projektových činností, který bude navržen manažerem projektu a odsouhlasený řídící komisí projektu.

d) Přidružený příjemce je povinen jednat způsobem, který neohrožuje realizaci projektu a zájmy koordinujícího příjemce a ostatních partnerů a poskytovat součinnost koordinujícímu příjemci a ostatním partnerům projektu k naplňování cíle projektu.

e) Přidružený příjemce se zavazuje průběžně a flexibilně komunikovat s koordinujícím příjemcem a manažerem projektu a spolupracovat s ostatními partnery.
f) Přidružený příjemce je povinen na žádost koordinujícího příjemce bezodkladně poskytnout požadované doplňující informace související s realizací projektu.
g) Přidružený příjemce má právo na veškeré informace týkající se projektu, zejména jeho finančního řízení a dosažených výsledků projektu.
h) Koordinující příjemce je oprávněn kontrolovat provádění projektu a zjistí-li, že přidružený příjemce provádí projekt v rozporu se svými povinnostmi, ihned informovat přidruženého příjemce o zjištěných nedostatcích a žádat po přidruženém příjemci odstranění vad vzniklých vadným prováděním projektu a jeho další provádění řádným způsobem.
i) Přidružený příjemce se zavazuje neprodleně, nejpozději však do 7 dnů informovat koordinujícího příjemce o veškerých změnách, které u něho nastaly ve vztahu k projektu nebo změnách souvisejících s činnostmi, které realizuje dle této smlouvy.
j) Před každou zamýšlenou změnou, související s projektem, zejména změnou v rozpočtu, změnou v realizaci činností podle článku V smlouvy apod., požádat koordinujícího příjemce o předchozí souhlas. V případě, že se bude jednat o změnu, ke které je nutný předchozí písemný souhlas Agentury, zavazuje se přidružený příjemce neprovádět zamýšlenou změnu dříve, než koordinující příjemce obdrží písemné vyjádření Agentury.
k) Přidružený příjemce se zavazuje ustanovit a vysílat svého zástupce na setkání řídící komise projektu. Hlavní úkoly tohoto orgánu jsou definovány v projektu.
l) Přidružený příjemce je povinen viditelně uvádět na všech dokumentech, které souvisejí s propagací projektu a také při všech jiných formách jeho propagace skutečnost, že jde o projekt, který byl spolufinancován Evropskou unií. Veškeré výstupy z projektu a z jednotlivých aktivit projektu označit logem LIFE a logem Natura 2000.
m) Přidružený příjemce zajistí, aby faktury vydané subdodavateli obsahovaly jednoznačný odkaz na projekt (budou označeny názvem a číslem projektu, jak je uveden v článku II této smlouvy) a dostatečně podrobné údaje, které umožní identifikaci každé položky poskytnuté služby. Přidružený příjemce musí archivovat faktury, veškeré údaje o dodaných službách a veškerou dokumentaci, která vedla k výběru subdodavatele.
n) Veškeré platby projektu realizované prostřednictvím bankovního účtu budou označovány specifickým symbolem tak, aby bylo zajištěno oddělení prostředků na projekt od ostatních finančních prostředků přidruženého příjemce, nebo přidružený příjemce může zřídit zvláštní účet výhradně pro tento projekt.
o) Přidružený příjemce je povinen vést aktualizované účetnictví v souladu s běžnými účetními postupy, které pro partnera platí podle existujících právních předpisů. Z důvodu zpětné sledovatelnosti se zavede analytická účetní soustava (popř. účetnictví nákladových středisek) nebo průkazné označování veškerých dokladů stanoveným číselným označením podle organizačního třídění („ORG“) a účelovými znaky („ÚZ“). Partner bude uchovávat veškeré příslušné doklady o všech výdajích, příjmech a výnosech souvisejících s projektem. Tato dokumentace musí být úplná, průkazná a srozumitelná.
p) Přidružený příjemce je povinen při výběru dodavatelů služeb hrazených z prostředků na projekt postupovat v souladu s příslušnými zákony o veřejných zakázkách platných pro daný stát, ve kterém bude výběrové řízení zadáváno, a v souladu se směrnicí Společenství

o zadávacích řízeních. Pravidla platná pro zadávací řízení se použijí také v případě nákupu zboží dlouhodobé spotřeby.

q) Přidružený příjemce musí uchovat účetní a jiné doklady týkající se předmětu smlouvy minimálně po dobu 5 let od ukončení financování projektu nebo po konečné platbě příspěvku Společenství, pokud příslušné právní předpisy nestanoví dobu archivace delší.
r) Přidružený příjemce je povinen umožnit Agentuře provedení finančního auditu v rámci projektu, a to kdykoli během trvání smlouvy a v období do 5 let po dokončení projektu nebo po konečné platbě příspěvku Společenství.
s) Přidružený příjemce je povinen umožnit Evropskému účetnímu dvoru (dále jen „Účetní dvůr"), Agentuře nebo jakémukoli oprávněnému zástupci přístup ke všem dokladům, které jsou nezbytné pro posouzení způsobilosti nákladů účastníků projektu. Přidružený příjemce se zavazuje poskytnout součinnost všem orgánům oprávněným k provádění kontroly, příp. jejich zmocněncům. Přidružený příjemce má dále povinnost zajistit, aby obdobné povinnosti ve vztahu k projektu plnili také jeho případní dodavatelé.
t) Přidružený příjemce musí zajistit, aby každý subdodavatel výslovně umožnil Agentuře a Účetnímu dvoru provádět kontroly dokladů týkajících se projektu a kontroly na místě u každého subdodavatele, který obdržel platbu z prostředků Společenství.
u) Přidružený příjemce nese vůči třetím stranám výlučnou odpovědnost, včetně odpovědnosti za škody jakéhokoli druhu, které třetí strany utrpěly při provádění projektu.
v) Přidružený příjemce nese odpovědnost za škodu vzniklou příjemci v důsledku porušení povinností Partnera vyplývajících z této smlouvy a z dalších dohod a předpisů uvedených v čl. V odst. b) této smlouvy.

VI. Společné povinnosti koordinujícího příjemce i přidruženého příjemce

Smluvní strany zajistí dle potřeby, minimálně však jednou ročně účast oprávněných zástupců na jednání řídící komise projektu.

VII. Vykazování technických činností

a) Přidružený příjemce je povinen poskytovat koordinujícímu příjemci jakékoli relevantní informace v dostatečném předstihu před předkládáním výkazů Agentuře a být k dispozici k doplnění informací v případě, že o to Agentura požádá.
b) Harmonogram předkládání výkazů z tohoto projektu je následující:
    1. průběžná technická zpráva (výkaz) – nejpozději do: **31.12.2025**,
    2. průběžná technická zpráva (výkaz) – nejpozději do: **31.12.2026**,
    3. průběžná technická zpráva (výkaz) – nejpozději do: **31.12.2027**,
    4. průběžná technická zpráva (výkaz) – nejpozději do: **31.12.2028**,
    5. průběžná technická zpráva (výkaz) – nejpozději do: **31.12.2029**,
    6. průběžná technická zpráva (výkaz) – nejpozději do: **31.12.2030**,
    7. průběžná technická zpráva (výkaz) – nejpozději do: **31.12.2031,**
    8. technická zpráva vykazovaná po konci projektu – nejpozději do: **31.5.2032**.
c) Technické zprávy budou obsahovat popis všech činností ve vztahu k cílům projektu a k akčnímu plánu realizace projektových činností, který bude navržen manažerem projektu a schválen řídící komisí. V příloze budou obsahovat fotodokumentaci nebo mapy, ilustrující hlavní činnosti a výsledky projektu.

d) Technické zprávy budou předány koordinujícímu příjemci v elektronické verzi.

VIII. Finanční vykazování

a) Přidružený příjemce je povinen vykazovat náklady, jak je stanoveno Obecnými podmínkami a Grantovou dohodou.
b) V souvislosti s finančním soupisem výdajů a příjmů je přidružený příjemce povinen předložit koordinujícímu příjemci datovaný a podepsaný "shrnující přehled účastnických nákladů" nejdéle 30 dnů před termínem pro předložení závěrečné zprávy Agentuře.
c) Konečný termín, kdy je přidružený příjemce povinen předložit koordinujícímu příjemci střednědobou finanční zprávu, je 30 dnů před konečným termínem pro předložení střednědobé zprávy Agentuře.
d) Postup pro pravidelný sběr dat a jejich směrování prostřednictvím koordinujícího příjemce je:
    1. V průběhu realizace projektu se přidružený příjemce zavazuje poskytovat koordinujícímu příjemci jedenkrát ročně finanční zprávu vztahující se k danému kalendářnímu roku, nejpozději do 20 dnů od konce příslušného roku.
    2. Finanční zprávy musí být podloženy dokumentací, kterou představují pracovní výkazy a kopie všech účetních dokladů, vztahujících se k jednotlivým platbám za uplynulý rok a budou obsahovat údaj o výši částek v eurech, dle směnného kurzu Evropské centrální banky k prvnímu dni měsíce, ve kterém přidružený příjemce odevzdá finanční zprávu koordinujícímu příjemci.
    3. Finanční zprávy budou předány koordinujícímu příjemci v elektronické verzi. Tištěná podoba finanční zprávy bude předána v jednom vyhotovení.
    4. Přidružený příjemce zodpovídá za správnost všech údajů uvedených v technických a finančních zprávách, správnost a úplnost pracovních výkazů a doložených účetních dokladů. V případě zjištěných nedostatků je Partner povinen do 7 pracovních dnů poskytnout koordinujícímu příjemci součinnost při jejich odstranění.

IX. Odhadované způsobilé náklady a finanční příspěvek přidruženého příjemce do projektu

a) V souladu s „prohlášením přidruženého příjemce“ realizuje přidružený příjemce akce za odhadovaných celkových nákladů ve výši 290 355,20 eur.
b) Přidružený příjemce přispěje ze svých vlastních finančních zdrojů nebo z jiných zdrojů částkou 116 142,08 eur.
c) Na základě výše uvedených částek přidružený příjemce od koordinujícího příjemce obdrží jakožto podíl na příspěvku EU nejvýše částku 174 213,12 eur.
d) Celkové odhadované náklady, vynaložené přidruženým příjemcem, podléhají v průběhu projektu pravidelné revizi.
e) Po domluvě s koordinujícím příjemcem (který vezme v úvahu celkové náklady projektu, jak budou vynaloženy všemi účastníky), je možné částky uvedené v tomto článku upravit, avšak za předpokladu, že jsou takové úpravy ohledně projektového rozpočtu v souladu s Grantovou dohodou. Za předpokladu, že k těmto úpravám dojde v mezích pravidel

stanovených Grantovou dohodou, není pro jejich provedení vyžadováno uzavření dodatku k této dohodě.

f) Konečné vypořádání se bude zakládat na posouzení závěrečného výkazu výdajů a příjmů Agenturou a přesněji na přijatých uznatelných nákladech projektu.

X. Platební podmínky

a) Nepožádá-li písemně přidružený příjemce jinak, provede koordinující příjemce všechny úhrady na následující bankovní účet přidruženého příjemce, číslo účtu: **174806960/0300,** IBAN: CZ07 0300 0000 0001 7480 6960, BIC: CEKOCZPP.

b) Předpokládané platební schéma mezi koordinujícím příjemcem a přidruženým příjemcem je (maximální možné částky):

   1. 52 263,94 eur, u prvního předfinancování ve výši 30% unijního příspěvku připadajícího na přidruženého příjemce
   2. 43 553,28 eur, u druhého předfinancování ve výši 25% unijního příspěvku připadajícího na přidruženého příjemce
   3. 43 553,28 eur, u třetího předfinancování ve výši 25% unijního příspěvku připadajícího na přidruženého příjemce
   4. 34 842,62 eur, u závěrečné úhrady připadající na přidruženého příjemce

   Jednotlivé platby budou převáděny v termínech dle článku IV. této smlouvy.

c) Koordinující příjemce a přidružený příjemce souhlasí, že jsou všechny úhrady považovány za úhrady předběžného financování až do té doby, kdy Agentura schválí finanční technické a finanční výkazy a převede koordinujícímu příjemci závěrečnou úhradu.

d) Koordinující příjemce převede podíl na závěrečné úhradě přidruženému příjemci poté, kdy Agentura provedla závěrečnou platbu.

e) Koordinující příjemce může po přidruženém příjemci vymáhat jakékoli částky, které mu byly uhrazeny neoprávněně, a to včetně uhrazených částek, které byly určeny jako neoprávněné při ex-post auditu provedeném Agenturou.

XI. Ostatní ujednání

a) Smluvní strany berou na sebe práva a povinnosti z této smlouvy pro ně vyplývající, a pokud by mezi nimi vznikly spory o těchto právech a povinnostech, budou řešeny přednostně vzájemnou dohodou smluvních stran.

b) Jakékoliv změny této smlouvy lze provádět pouze na základě dohody smluvních stran formou písemných dodatků podepsaných oprávněnými zástupci smluvních stran.

c) Tuto smlouvu není možné jednostranně vypovědět.

d) Je-li tato smlouva uzavřena v listinné podobě, je vyhotovena ve dvou vyhotoveních s platností originálu, z nichž každá ze smluvních stran obdrží jedno vyhotovení. Je-li tato smlouva uzavřena elektronicky, obdrží obě smluvní strany její elektronický originál opatřený elektronickými podpisy.

e) Tato smlouva je sjednána v jazyce českém s výjimkou přílohy č. 1, která je pořízena v jazyce anglickém.

f) Pokud je nebo bude jakékoliv ustanovení této smlouvy neplatné nebo nevymahatelné, je plně oddělitelné od ostatních ustanovení této smlouvy a taková neplatnost nebo nevymahatelnost nebude mít žádný vliv na platnost a vymahatelnost jakýchkoliv ostatních

ustanovení této smlouvy. Smluvní strany se zavazují nahradit toto neplatné nebo nevymahatelné ustanovení novým, platným a vymahatelným ustanovením, jehož předmět bude v nejvyšší možné míře odpovídat předmětu původního odděleného ustanovení.

g) Smluvní strany jsou povinny zajistit, aby v případě jejich rozdělení, sloučení, jakékoliv jiné přeměně nebo převodu práv na dceřiné společnosti byl právní nástupce zavázán stejně jako smluvní strana této smlouvy a aby v takovém případě nedošlo ke zkrácení práv druhé smluvní strany.
h) Smluvní strany potvrzují, že si tuto smlouvu před jejím podpisem přečetly, porozuměly jejímu obsahu, uzavírají ji svobodně a vážně a na důkaz toho připojují své podpisy.
i) Smluvní strany výslovně souhlasí se zveřejněním této smlouvy a prohlašují, že neobsahuje údaje, které tvoří předmět jejich obchodního tajemství ve smyslu § 504 Občanského zákoníku.
j) Osobní údaje obsažené v této smlouvě budou přidruženým příjemcem zpracovávány pouze pro účely plnění práv a povinností vyplývajících z této smlouvy; k jiným účelům nebudou tyto osobní údaje přidruženým příjemcem použity. Přidružený příjemce při zpracovávání osobních údajů dodržuje platné právní předpisy.
k) Doložka platnosti právního jednání dle § 23 zákona č. 129/2000 Sb., o krajích (krajské zřízení), ve znění pozdějších předpisů:

   K uzavření této smlouvy má přidružený příjemce souhlas Rady kraje udělený usnesením č. 1104/2025/RK-23 ze dne 25. 9. 2025.

XII. Doložka o soudní příslušnosti

a) V případě, že smírné řešení jakéhokoli sporu nebylo úspěšné, je soudem s výhradní soudní příslušností k rozhodování sporů mezi smluvními stranami v souvislosti s touto smlouvou Soud České republiky.
b) Legislativa platná pro tuto smlouvu je legislativa České republiky.

Za koordinujícího příjemce
V Brně

dne:

Marek Fügner
Digitálně podepsal Marek Fügner
Datum: 2025.10.09 08:51:55 +02'00'

.....
Marek Fügner
předseda pobočného spolku

Za přidruženého příjemce
V Českých Budějovicích

dne:

Elektronický podpis: 13.10.2025
Certifikát autora podpisu:
Jméno: MUDr. Martin Kuba
Vydal: PostSignum Qualified CA 4
Platnost do: 27.1.2028 12:29 +01:00

.....
MUDr. Martin Kuba
hejtman Jihočeského kraje

Příloha:
Dotační smlouva (grantová dohoda) LIFE, podepsaná mezi Evropskou agenturou a koordinujícím příjemcem, včetně všech jejích příloh.

EUROPEAN CLIMATE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT EXECUTIVE AGENCY (CINEA)

CINEA.D – Natural resources, climate, sustainable blue economy and clean energy
D.2 – LIFE Environment (Nature & Circular Economy)

GRANT AGREEMENT

Project 101216157 — LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest

PREAMBLE

This **Agreement** ('the Agreement') is **between** the following parties:

on the one part,

the **European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and

on the other part,

1. 'the coordinator':

ZO CSOP Onyx (ONYX), PIC 872740720, established in PANSKA 363/9, BRNO 602 00, Czechia,

and the following other beneficiaries, if they sign their 'accession form' (see Annex 3 and Article 40):

2. **PETRKLIC HELP ZS (PEH)**, PIC 947999140, established in CAPKOVA 13/12, CESKY TESIN 73701, Czechia,

3. **JIHOCESKY KRAJ (SBR)**, PIC 923643701, established in U ZIMNIHO STADIONU 1952/2, CESKE BUDEJOVICE 370 76, Czechia,

4. **KRAJSKE SKOLNI HOSPODARSTVI, CESKE BUDEJOVICE, U ZIMNIHO STADIONU 1952/2 (RSE)**, PIC 888402243, established in U ZIMNIHO STADIONU 1952/2, CESKE BUDEJOVICE 370 76, Czechia,

5. **Moravskoslezsky kraj (MSR)**, PIC 885596712, established in 28. října 2771/117, Ostrava 702 00, Czechia,

6. **INSTYTUT BADAWCZY LESNICTWA (IBL)**, PIC 998921715, established in UL BRACI LESNEJ 3 SEKOCIN STARY, RASZYN 05-090, Poland,

Unless otherwise specified, references to 'beneficiary' or 'beneficiaries' include the coordinator and affiliated entities (if any).

If only one beneficiary signs the grant agreement ('mono-beneficiary grant'), all provisions referring

to the 'coordinator' or the 'beneficiaries' will be considered — mutatis mutandis — as referring to the beneficiary.

The parties referred to above have agreed to enter into the Agreement.

By signing the Agreement and the accession forms, the beneficiaries accept the grant and agree to implement the action under their own responsibility and in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

The Agreement is composed of:

Preamble

Terms and Conditions (including Data Sheet)

Annex 1 Description of the action[1]

Annex 2 Estimated budget for the action

Annex 2a Additional information on unit costs and contributions (if applicable)

Annex 3 Accession forms (if applicable)[2]

Annex 3a Declaration on joint and several liability of affiliated entities (if applicable)[3]

Annex 4 Model for the financial statements

Annex 5 Specific rules (if applicable)

[1] Template published on Portal Reference Documents.
[2] Template published on Portal Reference Documents.
[3] Template published on Portal Reference Documents.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DATA SHEET

1. General data

Project summary:

Project summary
The project's primary goal is to establish a comprehensive model for the care of diverse forest habitats and the species associated with them, in collaboration with forest owners, site administrators, regions, municipalities and the involvement of volunteers. The aim is to improve the conservation status of 11 habitats (3 priority) and 12 species (3 priority) within 20 SCIs/SCAs in 2 EU countries (The Czech Republic, Poland) with spillover effects into Austria and replication of results in other countries. Specific issues addressed within the project include low species and age diversity in forests, the shortage of veteran trees, declining and dead trees, the spread of invasive non-native plant and animal species, and insufficient awareness among key stakeholders and the public. The total area of habitats included in the project is 19 km2 (1/3 of which are priority habitats), plus an additional 36 km2 where management will be implemented to support species, especially priority insect and plant species. Eradication of invasive plant species will also take place outside the project areas for maximum effectiveness, and a four-language methodology for the removal of IAS plants, including potentially very dangerous Echinocystis lobata, will be created and publicly disseminated for further use. The project boasts a strong consortium of conservation and research organizations (ONYX, IBL), regions (managers of project sites - SBR, MSR), and organizations working with volunteers (PEH, NSB). Attention will be focused on the following: - Forest habitats: *91D0, *91E0, *9180, 9110, 9130, 9170, 9190, 91F0, 91T0, 91U0, peat bog habitat: 7140 - Species: *1084 Osmoderma eremita, *1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria, *4094 Gentianella bohemica, 1079 Limoniscus violaceus, 1083 Lucanus cervus, 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus, 4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus, 4014 Carabus variolosus, 1193 Bombina variegata, 1180 Bombina bombina, 1166 Triturus cristatus, 1381 Dicranum viride.

Keywords:

- forest, saproxylic insects, model care

Project number: 101216157

Project name: Model care for forest habitats and species associated with forest habitats and trees

Project acronym: LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest

Call: LIFE-2024-SAP-NAT

Topic: LIFE-2024-SAP-NAT-NATURE

Type of action: LIFE Project Grants

Granting authority: European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency

Grant managed through EU Funding & Tenders Portal: Yes (eGrants)

Project starting date: first day of the month following the entry into force date

Project end date: starting date + months of duration

Project duration: 84 months

Consortium agreement: Yes

2. Participants

List of participants:

N°	Role	Short name	Legal name	Ctry	PIC	Total eligible costs (BEN and AE)	Max grant amount
1	COO	ONYX	ZO CSOP Onyx	CZ	872740720	4 017 913.64	2 410 748.18
2	BEN	PEH	PETRKLIC HELP ZS	CZ	947999140	1 085 137.70	651 082.62
3	BEN	SBR	JIHOCESKY KRAJ	CZ	923643701	290 355.20	174 213.12

N°	Role	Short name	Legal name	Ctry	PIC	Total eligible costs (BEN and AE)	Max grant amount
4	BEN	RSE	KRAJSKE SKOLNI HOSPODARSTVI, CESKE BUDEJOVICE, U ZIMNIHO STADIONU 1952/2	CZ	888402243	1 037 224.83	622 334.89
5	BEN	MSR	Moravskoslezsky kraj	CZ	885596712	198 335.20	119 001.12
6	BEN	IBL	INSTYTUT BADAWCZY LESNICTWA	PL	998921715	2 064 087.78	1 238 452.67
7	AP	ONLN	Österreichischer Naturschutzbund Landesgruppe Niederösterreich	AT	884790254	0.00	0.00
Total						8 693 054.35	5 215 832.60

Coordinator:

– ZO CSOP Onyx (ONYX)

3. Grant

Maximum grant amount, total estimated eligible costs and contributions and funding rate:

Total eligible costs (BEN and AE)	Funding rate (%)	Maximum grant amount (Annex 2)	Maximum grant amount (award decision)
8 693 054.35	60	5 215 832.60	5 215 832.60

Grant form: Budget-based

Grant mode: Action grant

Budget categories/activity types:

- A. Personnel costs
  - A.1 Employees, A.2 Natural persons under direct contract, A.3 Seconded persons
  - A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries
  - A.5 Volunteers
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
  - C.1 Travel and subsistence
  - C.2 Equipment
  - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- D. Other cost categories
  - D.1 Financial support to third parties
  - D.2 Land purchase
- E. Indirect costs

Cost eligibility options:

- Standard supplementary payments
- Limitation for subcontracting
- Travel and subsistence:
  - Travel: Actual costs
  - Accommodation: Actual costs
  - Subsistence: Actual costs

- Equipment: full costs and depreciation for listed equipment
- Costs for providing financial support to third parties (actual cost; max amount for each recipient: EUR 20 000.00)
- Indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
- VAT: Yes
- Other ineligible costs

Budget flexibility: Yes (no flexibility cap)

4. Reporting, payments and recoveries

4.1 Continuous reporting (art 21)

Deliverables: see Funding & Tenders Portal Continuous Reporting tool

4.2 Periodic reporting and payments

Reporting and payment schedule (art 21, 22):

Reporting					Payments	
Reporting periods			Type	Deadline	Type	Deadline (time to pay)
RP No	Month from	Month to				
					Initial prefinancing	30 days from entry into force/ financial guarantee (if required) – whichever is the latest
1	1	24	Additional prefinancing report	60 days after end of reporting period	Additional prefinancing	60 days from receiving additional prefinancing report/ financial guarantee (if required) – whichever is the latest
2	25	60	Additional prefinancing report	60 days after end of reporting period	Additional prefinancing	60 days from receiving additional prefinancing report/ financial guarantee (if required) – whichever is the latest
3	61	84	Periodic report	60 days after end of reporting period	Final payment	90 days from receiving periodic report

Prefinancing payments and guarantees:

Prefinancing payment		Prefinancing guarantee		
Type	Amount	Guarantee amount	Division per participant	
Prefinancing 1 (initial)	1 564 749.78	n/a	1 - ONYX	n/a
			2 - PEH	n/a
			3 - SBR	n/a

Prefinancing payment		Prefinancing guarantee		
Type	**Amount**	**Guarantee amount**	**Division per participant**	
			4 - RSE	n/a
			5 - MSR	n/a
			6 - IBL	n/a
Prefinancing 2 (additional)	1 303 958.15	n/a	1 - ONYX	n/a
			2 - PEH	n/a
			3 - SBR	n/a
			4 - RSE	n/a
			5 - MSR	n/a
			6 - IBL	n/a
Prefinancing 3 (additional)	1 303 958.15	n/a	1 - ONYX	n/a
			2 - PEH	n/a
			3 - SBR	n/a
			4 - RSE	n/a
			5 - MSR	n/a
			6 - IBL	n/a

Reporting and payment modalities (art 21, 22):

Mutual Insurance Mechanism (MIM): No

Restrictions on distribution of initial prefinancing: The prefinancing may be distributed only if the minimum number of beneficiaries set out in the call condititions (if any) have acceded to the Agreement and only to beneficiaries that have acceded.

Interim payment ceiling (if any): 90% of the maximum grant amount

No-profit rule: No

Late payment interest: ECB + 3.5%

Bank account for payments:

CZ3801000001157619560257 KOMBCZPPXXX

Conversion into euros: Double conversion

Reporting language: Language of the Agreement

4.3 Certificates (art 24):

Certificates on the financial statements (CFS):

Conditions:

Schedule: interim/final payment, if threshold is reached

Standard threshold (beneficiary-level):

- financial statement: requested EU contribution to costs ≥ EUR 500 000.00

4.4 Recoveries (art 22)

First-line liability for recoveries:

Beneficiary termination: Beneficiary concerned

Final payment: Coordinator

After final payment: Beneficiary concerned

Joint and several liability for enforced recoveries (in case of non-payment):

Limited joint and several liability of other beneficiaries — up to the maximum grant amount of the beneficiary

Joint and several liability of affiliated entities — n/a

5. Consequences of non-compliance, applicable law & dispute settlement forum

Applicable law (art 43):

Standard applicable law regime: EU law + law of Belgium

Dispute settlement forum (art 43):

Standard dispute settlement forum:

EU beneficiaries: EU General Court + EU Court of Justice (on appeal)

Non-EU beneficiaries: Courts of Brussels, Belgium (unless an international agreement provides for the enforceability of EU court judgements)

6. Other

Specific rules (Annex 5): Yes

Standard time-limits after project end:

Confidentiality (for X years after final payment): 5

Record-keeping (for X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

Reviews (up to X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

Audits (up to X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

Extension of findings from other grants to this grant (no later than X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

Impact evaluation (up to X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

CHAPTER 1 GENERAL

ARTICLE 1 — SUBJECT OF THE AGREEMENT

This Agreement sets out the rights and obligations and terms and conditions applicable to the grant awarded for the implementation of the action set out in Chapter 2.

ARTICLE 2 — DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Agreement, the following definitions apply:

Actions — The project which is being funded in the context of this Agreement.

Grant — The grant awarded in the context of this Agreement.

EU grants — Grants awarded by EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies (including EU executive agencies, EU regulatory agencies, EDA, joint undertakings, etc.).

Participants — Entities participating in the action as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties.

Beneficiaries (BEN) — The signatories of this Agreement (either directly or through an accession form).

Affiliated entities (AE) — Entities affiliated to a beneficiary within the meaning of Article 190 of EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509[4] which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries (obligation to implement action tasks and right to charge costs and claim contributions).

Associated partners (AP) — Entities which participate in the action, but without the right to charge costs or claim contributions.

Purchases — Contracts for goods, works or services needed to carry out the action (e.g. equipment, consumables and supplies) but which are not part of the action tasks (see Annex 1).

Subcontracting — Contracts for goods, works or services that are part of the action tasks (see Annex 1).

In-kind contributions — In-kind contributions within the meaning of Article 2(38) of EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509, i.e. non-financial resources made available free of charge by third parties.

[4] For the definition, see Article 190 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) ('EU Financial Regulation') (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024): "**affiliated entities** [are]:
(a) entities that form a sole beneficiary [(i.e. where an entity is formed of several entities that satisfy the criteria for being awarded a grant, including where the entity is specifically established for the purpose of implementing an action to be financed by a grant)];
(b) entities that satisfy the eligibility criteria and that do not fall within one of the situations referred to in Article 138(1) and 143(1) and that have a link with the beneficiary, in particular a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation".

Fraud — Fraud within the meaning of Article 3 of EU Directive 2017/1371[5] and Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995[6], as well as any other wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in financial or personal gain.

Irregularities — Any type of breach (regulatory or contractual) which could impact the EU financial interests, including irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EU Regulation 2988/95[7].

Grave professional misconduct — Any type of unacceptable or improper behaviour in exercising one's profession, especially by employees, including grave professional misconduct within the meaning of Article 138(1)(c) of EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509[8].

Applicable EU, international and national law — Any legal acts or other (binding or non-binding) rules and guidance in the area concerned.

Portal — EU Funding & Tenders Portal; electronic portal and exchange system managed by the European Commission and used by itself and other EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies for the management of their funding programmes (grants, procurements, prizes, etc.).

CHAPTER 2 ACTION

ARTICLE 3 — ACTION

The grant is awarded for the action **101216157 — LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest** ('action'), as described in Annex 1.

ARTICLE 4 — DURATION AND STARTING DATE

The duration and the starting date of the action are set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 1).

CHAPTER 3 GRANT

ARTICLE 5 — GRANT

[5] Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2017 on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (OJ L 198, 28.7.2017, p. 29).

[6] OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.

[7] Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1).

[8] 'Professional misconduct' includes, in particular, the following: violation of ethical standards of the profession; wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility; breach of generally accepted professional ethical standards; false declarations/misrepresentation of information; participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition; violation of IPR; attempting to influence decision-making processes by taking advantage, through misrepresentation, of a conflict of interests, or to obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain an advantage; incitement to discrimination, hatred or violence or similar activities contrary to the EU values where negatively affecting or risking to affect the performance of a legal commitment.

5.1 Form of grant

The grant is an action grant[9] which takes the form of a budget-based mixed actual cost grant (i.e. a grant based on actual costs incurred, but which may also include other forms of funding, such as unit costs or contributions, flat-rate costs or contributions, lump sum costs or contributions or financing not linked to costs).

5.2 Maximum grant amount

The maximum grant amount is set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 3) and in the estimated budget (Annex 2).

5.3 Funding rate

The funding rate for costs is 60% of the action's eligible costs.

Contributions are not subject to any funding rate.

5.4 Estimated budget, budget categories and forms of funding

The estimated budget for the action is set out in Annex 2.

It contains the estimated eligible costs and contributions for the action, broken down by participant and budget category.

Annex 2 also shows the types of costs and contributions (forms of funding)[10] to be used for each budget category.

If unit costs or contributions are used, the details on the calculation will be explained in Annex 2a.

5.5 Budget flexibility

The budget breakdown may be adjusted — without an amendment (see Article 39) — by transfers (between participants and budget categories), as long as this does not imply any substantive or important change to the description of the action in Annex 1.

However:

- changes to the budget category for volunteers (if used) always require an amendment
- changes to budget categories with lump sums costs or contributions (if used; including financing not linked to costs) always require an amendment
- changes to budget categories with higher funding rates or budget ceilings (if used) always require an amendment
- addition of amounts for subcontracts not provided for in Annex 1 either require an amendment or simplified approval in accordance with Article 6.2

[9] For the definition, see Article 183(2)(a) EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509: '**action grant**' means an EU grant to finance "an action intended to help achieve a Union policy objective".

[10] See Article 125 EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509.

- other changes require an amendment or simplified approval, if specifically provided for in Article 6.2

- flexibility caps: not applicable.

ARTICLE 6 — ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE COSTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

In order to be eligible, costs and contributions must meet the **eligibility** conditions set out in this Article.

6.1 General eligibility conditions

The **general eligibility conditions** are the following:

(a) for actual costs:

(i) they must be actually incurred by the beneficiary

(ii) they must be incurred in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of costs relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be incurred afterwards; see Article 21)

(iii) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2

(iv) they must be incurred in connection with the action as described in Annex 1 and necessary for its implementation

(v) they must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular recorded in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with the accounting standards applicable in the country where the beneficiary is established and with the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices

(vi) they must comply with the applicable national law on taxes, labour and social security and

(vii) they must be reasonable, justified and must comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency

(b) for unit costs or contributions (if any):

(i) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2

(ii) the units must:

- be actually used or produced by the beneficiary in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of units relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be used or produced afterwards; see Article 21)

- be necessary for the implementation of the action and

(iii) the number of units must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular supported by records and documentation (see Article 20)

(c) for flat-rate costs or contributions (if any):

(i) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2

(ii) the costs or contributions to which the flat-rate is applied must:

- be eligible
- relate to the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of costs or contributions relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be incurred afterwards; see Article 21)

(d) for lump sum costs or contributions (if any):

(i) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2

(ii) the work must be properly implemented by the beneficiary in accordance with Annex 1

(iii) the deliverables/outputs must be achieved in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of deliverables/outputs relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be achieved afterwards; see Article 21)

(e) for unit, flat-rate or lump sum costs or contributions according to usual cost accounting practices (if any):

(i) they must fulfil the general eligibility conditions for the type of cost concerned

(ii) the cost accounting practices must be applied in a consistent manner, based on objective criteria, regardless of the source of funding

(f) for financing not linked to costs (if any): the results must be achieved or the conditions must be fulfilled as described in Annex 1.

In addition, for direct cost categories (e.g. personnel, travel & subsistence, subcontracting and other direct costs) only costs that are directly linked to the action implementation and can therefore be attributed to it directly are eligible. They must not include any indirect costs (i.e. costs that are only indirectly linked to the action, e.g. via cost drivers).

6.2 Specific eligibility conditions for each budget category

For each budget category, the **specific eligibility conditions** are as follows:

Direct costs

A. Personnel costs

A.1 Costs for employees (or equivalent) are eligible as personnel costs, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are related to personnel working for the beneficiary under an employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and assigned to the action.

They must be limited to salaries, social security contributions, taxes and other costs linked to the

remuneration, if they arise from national law or the employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and be calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred, in accordance with the following method:

{daily rate for the person

multiplied by

number of day-equivalents worked on the action (rounded up or down to the nearest half-day)}.

The daily rate must be calculated as:

{annual personnel costs for the person

divided by

215}.

The number of day-equivalents declared for a person must be identifiable and verifiable (see Article 20).

The total number of day-equivalents declared in EU grants, for a person for a year, cannot be higher than 215.

The personnel costs may also include supplementary payments for personnel assigned to the action (including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature), if:

- it is part of the beneficiary's usual remuneration practices and is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required

- the criteria used to calculate the supplementary payments are objective and generally applied by the beneficiary, regardless of the source of funding used.

A.2 and **A.3 Costs for natural persons working under a direct contract** other than an employment contract and costs for **seconded persons by a third party against payment** are also eligible as personnel costs, if they are assigned to the action, fulfil the general eligibility conditions and:

(a) work under conditions similar to those of an employee (in particular regarding the way the work is organised, the tasks that are performed and the premises where they are performed) and

(b) the result of the work belongs to the beneficiary (unless agreed otherwise).

They must be calculated on the basis of a rate which corresponds to the costs actually incurred for the direct contract or secondment and must not be significantly different from those for personnel performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary.

A.4 The work of **SME owners** for the action (i.e. owners of beneficiaries that are small and medium-sized enterprises[11] not receiving a salary) or **natural person beneficiaries** (i.e. beneficiaries that are

[11] For the definition, see Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC: micro, small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) are enterprises

- engaged in an economic activity, irrespective of their legal form (including, in particular, self- employed persons and family businesses engaged in craft or other activities, and partnerships or associations regularly engaged in an economic activity) and

natural persons not receiving a salary) may be declared as personnel costs, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are calculated as unit costs in accordance with the method set out in Annex 2a.

A.5 The work of **volunteers** for the action (i.e. persons who freely work for an organisation, on a non-compulsory basis and without being paid) may be declared as personnel costs, if and as declared eligible in the call conditions, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are calculated as unit costs in accordance with the method set out in Annex 2a.

They:

- may not exceed the maximum amount for volunteers for the action (which corresponds to 50% of the total (ineligible and eligible) project costs and contributions estimated in the proposal)
- may not exceed the maximum amount for volunteers for each beneficiary set out in Annex 2
- may not make the maximum EU contribution to costs higher than the total eligible costs without volunteers.

If also indirect costs for volunteers are declared eligible in the call conditions, the amount of indirect costs may be added to the volunteers costs category in Annex 2, at the flat-rate set out in Point E.

B. Subcontracting costs

Subcontracting costs for the action (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible or non-refundable value added tax (VAT)) are eligible, if they are calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred, fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are awarded using the beneficiary's usual purchasing practices — provided these ensure subcontracts with best value for money (or if appropriate the lowest price) and that there is no conflict of interests (see Article 12).

Beneficiaries that are 'contracting authorities/entities' within the meaning of the EU Directives on public procurement must also comply with the applicable national law on public procurement.

Subcontracting may cover only a limited part of the action.

The tasks to be subcontracted and the estimated cost for each subcontract must be set out in Annex 1 and the total estimated costs of subcontracting per beneficiary must be set out in Annex 2 (or may be approved ex post in the periodic report, if the use of subcontracting does not entail changes to the Agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants; 'simplified approval procedure').

C. Purchase costs

Purchase costs for the action (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible or non-refundable value added tax (VAT)) are eligible if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are bought using the beneficiary's usual purchasing practices — provided these ensure purchases with

- employing fewer than 250 persons (expressed in 'annual working units' as defined in Article 5 of the Recommendation) and which have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million.

best value for money (or if appropriate the lowest price) and that there is no conflict of interests (see Article 12).

Beneficiaries that are 'contracting authorities/entities' within the meaning of the EU Directives on public procurement must also comply with the applicable national law on public procurement.

C.1 Travel and subsistence

Purchases for **travel, accommodation** and **subsistence** must be calculated as follows:

- travel: on the basis of the costs actually incurred and in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel
- accommodation: on the basis of the costs actually incurred and in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel
- subsistence: on the basis of the costs actually incurred and in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel .

C.2 Equipment

Purchases of **equipment, infrastructure or other assets** specifically for the action (or developed as part of the action tasks) may be declared as full capitalised costs if they fulfil the eligibility conditions applicable to their respective cost categories.

'Capitalised costs' means:

- costs incurred in the purchase or for the development of the equipment, infrastructure or other assets and,
- which are recorded under a fixed asset account of the beneficiary in compliance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices.

If such equipment, infrastructure or other assets are rented or leased, full costs for **renting or leasing** are eligible, if they do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment, infrastructure or assets and do not include any financing fees.

C.3 Other goods, works and services

Purchases of **other goods, works and services** must be calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred.

Such goods, works and services include, for instance, consumables and supplies, promotion, dissemination, protection of results, translations, publications, certificates and financial guarantees, if required under the Agreement.

D. Other cost categories

D.1 Financial support to third parties

Costs for providing financial support to third parties (in the form of **grants, prizes** or similar forms of support; if any) are eligible, if and as declared eligible in the call conditions, if they fulfil the

general eligibility conditions, are calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred and the support is implemented in accordance with the conditions set out in Annex 1.

These conditions must ensure objective and transparent selection procedures and include at least the following:

(a) for grants (or similar):

  (i) the maximum amount of financial support for each third party ('recipient'); this amount may not exceed the amount set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 3) or otherwise agreed with the granting authority

  (ii) the criteria for calculating the exact amount of the financial support

  (iii) the different types of activity that qualify for financial support, on the basis of a closed list

  (iv) the persons or categories of persons that will be supported and

  (v) the criteria and procedures for giving financial support

(b) for prizes (or similar):

  (i) the eligibility and award criteria

  (ii) the amount of the prize and

  (iii) the payment arrangements.

D.2 Land purchase

Costs for land purchase from private entities (or long-term lease of land or one-off compensations for land use rights) are eligible, if and as declared eligible in the call conditions, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions, are calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred and:

(a) the purchase will contribute to improving, maintaining and restoring the integrity of the Natura 2000 network set up pursuant to Article 3 of Directive 92/43/EEC, including through improving connectivity by the creation of corridors, stepping stones, or other elements of green infrastructure

(b) land purchase is the only or most cost-effective way of achieving the desired conservation outcome

(c) the land purchased is reserved in the long term for uses consistent with the specific objectives of the LIFE Programme

(d) the Member State concerned ensures, by way of transfer or otherwise, the long-term assignment of such land to nature conservation purposes and the beneficiary documents this by ensuring that:

  (i) the entry into the land register includes a condition that the land will be assigned definitively to nature conservation

  (ii) or, if there is no land register or such a condition is not possible under national law, that

such a condition is either included in the land sale contract or guaranteed by equivalent means

(e) for land purchases by private entity beneficiaries: the beneficiaries ensure the long-term conservation by ensuring that:

(i) the entry into the land register includes a condition that, in case of their dissolution or incapacity to manage the land according to nature conservation requirements, the property will be transferred to an entity primarily active in the field of nature protection

(ii) or, if there is no land register or such a condition is not possible under national law, that such a condition is either included in the land sale contract or guaranteed by equivalent means

(f) for purchases of partial rights: the entry into the land register duly reflects the long-term nature conservation objectives and the requirements set out in this Article

(g) for land purchased to be exchanged at a later date for another parcel on which the action will be undertaken: the exchange is carried out before the end of the action and the land exchanged complies with the requirements set out in this Article

(h) for long-term leases: the lease is of at least 20 years and includes provisions and commitments that ensure the achievement of its objectives in terms of habitat and species protection.

This cost will not be taken into account for the indirect cost flat-rate.

Indirect costs

E. Indirect costs

Indirect costs will be reimbursed at the flat-rate of 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any).

Contributions

Not applicable

6.3 Ineligible costs and contributions

The following costs or contributions are **ineligible**:

(a) costs or contributions that do not comply with the conditions set out above (Article 6.1 and 6.2), in particular:

(i) costs related to return on capital and dividends paid by a beneficiary

(ii) debt and debt service charges

(iii) provisions for future losses or debts

(iv) interest owed

(v) currency exchange losses

(vi) bank costs charged by the beneficiary's bank for transfers from the granting authority

(vii) excessive or reckless expenditure

(viii) deductible or refundable VAT (including VAT paid by public bodies acting as public authority)

(ix) costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during grant agreement suspension (see Article 31)

(x) in-kind contributions by third parties

(b) costs or contributions declared under other EU grants (or grants awarded by an EU Member State, non-EU country or other body implementing the EU budget), except for the following cases:

(i) Synergy actions: not applicable

(ii) if the action grant is combined with an operating grant[12] running during the same period and the beneficiary can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any (direct or indirect) costs of the action grant

(c) costs or contributions for staff of a national (or regional/local) administration, for activities that are part of the administration's normal activities (i.e. not undertaken only because of the grant)

(d) costs or contributions (especially travel and subsistence) for staff or representatives of EU institutions, bodies or agencies

(e) other :

(i) country restrictions for eligible costs: not applicable

(ii) costs or contributions declared specifically ineligible in the call conditions.

6.4 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary declares costs or contributions that are ineligible, they will be rejected (see Article 27).

This may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4 GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 1 CONSORTIUM: BENEFICIARIES, AFFILIATED ENTITIES AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS

ARTICLE 7 — BENEFICIARIES

[12] For the definition, see Article 183(2)(b) EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509: '**operating grant**' means an EU grant to finance "the functioning of a body which has an objective forming part of and supporting an EU policy".

The beneficiaries, as signatories of the Agreement, are fully responsible towards the granting authority for implementing it and for complying with all its obligations.

They must implement the Agreement to their best abilities, in good faith and in accordance with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

They must have the appropriate resources to implement the action and implement the action under their own responsibility and in accordance with Article 11. If they rely on affiliated entities or other participants (see Articles 8 and 9), they retain sole responsibility towards the granting authority and the other beneficiaries.

They are jointly responsible for the *technical* implementation of the action. If one of the beneficiaries fails to implement their part of the action, the other beneficiaries must ensure that this part is implemented by someone else (without being entitled to an increase of the maximum grant amount and subject to an amendment; see Article 39). The *financial* responsibility of each beneficiary in case of recoveries is governed by Article 22.

The beneficiaries (and their action) must remain eligible under the EU programme funding the grant for the entire duration of the action. Costs and contributions will be eligible only as long as the beneficiary and the action are eligible.

The **internal roles and responsibilities** of the beneficiaries are divided as follows:

(a) Each beneficiary must:

(i) keep information stored in the Portal Participant Register up to date (see Article 19)

(ii) inform the granting authority (and the other beneficiaries) immediately of any events or circumstances likely to affect significantly or delay the implementation of the action (see Article 19)

(iii) submit to the coordinator in good time:

- the prefinancing guarantees (if required; see Article 23)
- the financial statements and certificates on the financial statements (CFS) (if required; see Articles 21 and 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3)
- the contribution to the deliverables and technical reports (see Article 21)
- any other documents or information required by the granting authority under the Agreement

(iv) submit via the Portal data and information related to the participation of their affiliated entities.

(b) The coordinator must:

(i) monitor that the action is implemented properly (see Article 11)

(ii) act as the intermediary for all communications between the consortium and the granting authority, unless the Agreement or granting authority specifies otherwise, and in particular:

- submit the prefinancing guarantees to the granting authority (if any)
- request and review any documents or information required and verify their quality and completeness before passing them on to the granting authority
- submit the deliverables and reports to the granting authority
- inform the granting authority about the payments made to the other beneficiaries (report on the distribution of payments; if required, see Articles 22 and 32)

(iii) distribute the payments received from the granting authority to the other beneficiaries without unjustified delay (see Article 22).

The coordinator may not delegate or subcontract the above-mentioned tasks to any other beneficiary or third party (including affiliated entities).

However, coordinators which are public bodies may delegate the tasks set out in Point (b)(ii) last indent and (iii) above to entities with 'authorisation to administer' which they have created or which are controlled by or affiliated to them. In this case, the coordinator retains sole responsibility for the payments and for compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

Moreover, coordinators which are 'sole beneficiaries'[13] (or similar, such as European research infrastructure consortia (ERICs)) may delegate the tasks set out in Point (b)(i) to (iii) above to one of their members. The coordinator retains sole responsibility for compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

The beneficiaries must have **internal arrangements** regarding their operation and co-ordination, to ensure that the action is implemented properly.

If required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 1), these arrangements must be set out in a written **consortium agreement** between the beneficiaries, covering for instance:

- the internal organisation of the consortium
- the management of access to the Portal
- different distribution keys for the payments and financial responsibilities in case of recoveries (if any)
- additional rules on rights and obligations related to background and results (see Article 16)
- settlement of internal disputes
- liability, indemnification and confidentiality arrangements between the beneficiaries.

The internal arrangements must not contain any provision contrary to this Agreement.

ARTICLE 8 — AFFILIATED ENTITIES

[13] For the definition, see Article 190(2) EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509: "Where several entities satisfy the criteria for being awarded a grant and together form one entity, that entity may be treated as the **sole beneficiary**, including where it is specifically established for the purpose of implementing the action financed by the grant."

Not applicable

ARTICLE 9 — OTHER PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN THE ACTION

9.1 Associated partners

The following entities which cooperate with a beneficiary will participate in the action as 'associated partners':

- **Österreichischer Naturschutzbund Landesgruppe Niederösterreich (ONLN)**, PIC 884790254

Associated partners must implement the action tasks attributed to them in Annex 1 in accordance with Article 11. They may not charge costs or contributions to the action and the costs for their tasks are not eligible.

The tasks must be set out in Annex 1.

The beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 11 (proper implementation), 12 (conflict of interests), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping) also apply to the associated partners.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the associated partners.

9.2 Third parties giving in-kind contributions to the action

Other third parties may give in-kind contributions to the action (i.e. personnel, equipment, other goods, works and services, etc. which are free-of-charge), if necessary for the implementation.

Third parties giving in-kind contributions do not implement any action tasks. They may not charge costs or contributions to the action and the costs for the in-kind contributions are not eligible.

The third parties and their in-kind contributions should be set out in Annex 1.

9.3 Subcontractors

Subcontractors may participate in the action, if necessary for the implementation.

Subcontractors must implement their action tasks in accordance with Article 11. The costs for the subcontracted tasks (invoiced price from the subcontractor) are eligible and may be charged by the beneficiaries, under the conditions set out in Article 6. The costs will be included in Annex 2 as part of the beneficiaries' costs.

The beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 11 (proper implementation), 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping) also apply to the subcontractors.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the subcontractors.

9.4 Recipients of financial support to third parties

If the action includes providing financial support to third parties (e.g. grants, prizes or similar forms of support), the beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping)also apply to the third parties receiving the support (recipients).

The beneficiaries must also ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the recipients.

ARTICLE 10 — PARTICIPANTS WITH SPECIAL STATUS

10.1 Non-EU participants

Participants which are established in a non-EU country (if any) undertake to comply with their obligations under the Agreement and:

- to respect general principles (including fundamental rights, values and ethical principles, environmental and labour standards, rules on classified information, intellectual property rights, visibility of funding and protection of personal data)
- for the submission of certificates under Article 24: to use qualified external auditors which are independent and comply with comparable standards as those set out in EU Directive 2006/43/EC[14]
- for the controls under Article 25: to allow for checks, reviews, audits and investigations (including on-the-spot checks, visits and inspections) by the bodies mentioned in that Article (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.).

Special rules on dispute settlement apply (see Data Sheet, Point 5).

10.2 Participants which are international organisations

Participants which are international organisations (IOs; if any) undertake to comply with their obligations under the Agreement and:

- to respect general principles (including fundamental rights, values and ethical principles, environmental and labour standards, rules on classified information, intellectual property rights, visibility of funding and protection of personal data)
- for the submission of certificates under Article 24: to use either independent public officers or external auditors which comply with comparable standards as those set out in EU Directive 2006/43/EC[15]
- for the controls under Article 25: to allow for the checks, reviews, audits and investigations

[14] Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts (OJ L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 87).

[15] Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts (OJ L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 87).

by the bodies mentioned in that Article, taking into account the specific agreements concluded by them and the EU (if any).

For such participants, nothing in the Agreement will be interpreted as a waiver of their privileges or immunities, as accorded by their constituent documents or international law.

Special rules on applicable law and dispute settlement apply (see Article 43 and Data Sheet, Point 5).

10.3 Pillar-assessed participants

Pillar-assessed participants (if any) may rely on their own systems, rules and procedures, in so far as they have been positively assessed and do not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries.

'Pillar-assessment' means a review by the European Commission on the systems, rules and procedures which participants use for managing EU grants (in particular internal control system, accounting system, external audits, financing of third parties, rules on recovery and exclusion, information on recipients and protection of personal data; see Article 157 EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509).

Participants with a positive pillar assessment may rely on their own systems, rules and procedures, in particular for:

- record-keeping (Article 20): may be done in accordance with internal standards, rules and procedures
- currency conversion for financial statements (Article 21): may be done in accordance with usual accounting practices
- guarantees (Article 23): for public law bodies, prefinancing guarantees are not needed
- certificates (Article 24):
    - certificates on the financial statements (CFS): may be provided by their regular internal or external auditors and in accordance with their internal financial regulations and procedures
    - certificates on usual accounting practices (CoMUC): are not needed if those practices are covered by an ex-ante assessment

and use the following specific rules, for:

- recoveries (Article 22): in case of financial support to third parties, there will be no recovery if the participant has done everything possible to retrieve the undue amounts from the third party receiving the support (including legal proceedings) and non-recovery is not due to an error or negligence on its part
- checks, reviews, audits and investigations by the EU (Article 25): will be conducted taking into account the rules and procedures specifically agreed between them and the framework agreement (if any)
- impact evaluation (Article 26): will be conducted in accordance with the participant's internal rules and procedures and the framework agreement (if any)

- grant agreement termination (Article 32): the final grant amount and final payment will be calculated taking into account also costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination takes effect, if the contract was entered into before the pre-information letter was received and could not reasonably be terminated on legal grounds

- liability for damages (Article 33.2): the granting authority must be compensated for damage it sustains as a result of the implementation of the action or because the action was not implemented in full compliance with the Agreement only if the damage is due to an infringement of the participant's internal rules and procedures or due to a violation of third parties' rights by the participant or one of its employees or individual for whom the employees are responsible.

Participants whose pillar assessment covers procurement and granting procedures may also do purchases, subcontracting and financial support to third parties (Article 6.2) in accordance with their internal rules and procedures for purchases, subcontracting and financial support.

Participants whose pillar assessment covers data protection rules may rely on their internal standards, rules and procedures for data protection (Article 15).

The participants may however not rely on provisions which would breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries or call into question the decision awarding the grant, such as in particular:

- eligibility (Article 6)

- consortium roles and set-up (Articles 7-9)

- security and ethics (Articles 13, 14)

- IPR (including background and results, access rights and rights of use), communication, dissemination and visibility (Articles 16 and 17)

- information obligation (Article 19)

- payment, reporting and amendments (Articles 21, 22 and 39)

- rejections, reductions, suspensions and terminations (Articles 27, 28, 29-32)

If the pillar assessment was subject to remedial measures, reliance on the internal systems, rules and procedures is subject to compliance with those remedial measures.

Participants must inform the coordinator without delay of any changes to the systems, rules and procedures that were part of the pillar assessment. The coordinator must immediately inform the granting authority.

Pillar-assessed participants that have also concluded a framework agreement with the EU, may moreover — under the same conditions as those above (i.e. not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries) — rely on the provisions set out in that framework agreement.

SECTION 2 RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION

ARTICLE 11 — PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION

11.1 Obligation to properly implement the action

The beneficiaries must implement the action as described in Annex 1 and in compliance with the provisions of the Agreement, the call conditions and all legal obligations under applicable EU, international and national law.

11.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 12 — CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

12.1 Conflict of interests

The beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the Agreement could be compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect interest (‘conflict of interests’).

They must formally notify the granting authority without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

The granting authority may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

12.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28) and the grant or the beneficiary may be terminated (see Article 32).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 13 — CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY

13.1 Sensitive information

The parties must keep confidential any data, documents or other material (in any form) that is identified as sensitive in writing (‘sensitive information’) — during the implementation of the action and for at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6).

If a beneficiary requests, the granting authority may agree to keep such information confidential for a longer period.

Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use sensitive information only to implement the Agreement.

The beneficiaries may disclose sensitive information to their personnel or other participants involved in the action only if they:

(a) need to know it in order to implement the Agreement and

(b) are bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

The granting authority may disclose sensitive information to its staff and to other EU institutions and bodies.

It may moreover disclose sensitive information to third parties, if:

(a) this is necessary to implement the Agreement or safeguard the EU financial interests and

(b) the recipients of the information are bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

The confidentiality obligations no longer apply if:

(a) the disclosing party agrees to release the other party

(b) the information becomes publicly available, without breaching any confidentiality obligation

(c) the disclosure of the sensitive information is required by EU, international or national law.

Specific confidentiality rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

13.2 Classified information

The parties must handle classified information in accordance with the applicable EU, international or national law on classified information (in particular, Decision 2015/444[16] and its implementing rules).

Deliverables which contain classified information must be submitted according to special procedures agreed with the granting authority.

Action tasks involving classified information may be subcontracted only after explicit approval (in writing) from the granting authority.

Classified information may not be disclosed to any third party (including participants involved in the action implementation) without prior explicit written approval from the granting authority.

Specific security rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

13.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 14 — ETHICS AND VALUES

[16] Commission Decision 2015/444/EC, Euratom of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

14.1 Ethics

The action must be carried out in line with the highest ethical standards and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles.

Specific ethics rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

14.2 Values

The beneficiaries must commit to and ensure the respect of basic EU values (such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).

Specific rules on values (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

14.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 15 — DATA PROTECTION

15.1 Data processing by the granting authority

Any personal data under the Agreement will be processed under the responsibility of the data controller of the granting authority in accordance with and for the purposes set out in the Portal Privacy Statement.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission, an EU regulatory or executive agency, joint undertaking or other EU body, the processing will be subject to Regulation 2018/1725[17].

15.2 Data processing by the beneficiaries

The beneficiaries must process personal data under the Agreement in compliance with the applicable EU, international and national law on data protection (in particular, Regulation 2016/679[18]).

They must ensure that personal data is:

- processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subjects
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes

[17] Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

[18] Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (‘GDPR’) (OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1).

- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed

- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date

- kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed and

- processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the data.

The beneficiaries may grant their personnel access to personal data only if it is strictly necessary for implementing, managing and monitoring the Agreement. The beneficiaries must ensure that the personnel is under a confidentiality obligation.

The beneficiaries must inform the persons whose data are transferred to the granting authority and provide them with the Portal Privacy Statement.

15.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 16 — INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR) — BACKGROUND AND RESULTS —ACCESS RIGHTS AND RIGHTS OF USE

16.1 Background and access rights to background

The beneficiaries must give each other and the other participants access to the background identified as needed for implementing the action, subject to any specific rules in Annex 5.

‘Background’ means any data, know-how or information — whatever its form or nature (tangible or intangible), including any rights such as intellectual property rights — that is:

(a) held by the beneficiaries before they acceded to the Agreement and

(b) needed to implement the action or exploit the results.

If background is subject to rights of a third party, the beneficiary concerned must ensure that it is able to comply with its obligations under the Agreement.

16.2 Ownership of results

The granting authority does not obtain ownership of the results produced under the action.

‘Results’ means any tangible or intangible effect of the action, such as data, know-how or information, whatever its form or nature, whether or not it can be protected, as well as any rights attached to it, including intellectual property rights.

16.3 Rights of use of the granting authority on materials, documents and information received for policy, information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes

The granting authority has the right to use non-sensitive information relating to the action and materials and documents received from the beneficiaries (notably summaries for publication, deliverables, as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material, in paper or electronic form) for policy, information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes — during the action or afterwards.

The right to use the beneficiaries' materials, documents and information is granted in the form of a royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable licence, which includes the following rights:

(a) **use for its own purposes** (in particular, making them available to persons working for the granting authority or any other EU service (including institutions, bodies, offices, agencies, etc.) or EU Member State institution or body; copying or reproducing them in whole or in part, in unlimited numbers; and communication through press information services)

(b) **distribution to the public** (in particular, publication as hard copies and in electronic or digital format, publication on the internet, as a downloadable or non-downloadable file, broadcasting by any channel, public display or presentation, communicating through press information services, or inclusion in widely accessible databases or indexes)

(c) **editing or redrafting** (including shortening, summarising, inserting other elements (e.g. meta-data, legends, other graphic, visual, audio or text elements), extracting parts (e.g. audio or video files), dividing into parts, use in a compilation)

(d) **translation**

(e) **storage** in paper, electronic or other form

(f) **archiving**, in line with applicable document-management rules

(g) the right to authorise **third parties** to act on its behalf or sub-license to third parties the modes of use set out in Points (b), (c), (d) and (f), if needed for the information, communication and publicity activity of the granting authority

(h) **processing**, analysing, aggregating the materials, documents and information received and **producing derivative works**.

The rights of use are granted for the whole duration of the industrial or intellectual property rights concerned.

If materials or documents are subject to moral rights or third party rights (including intellectual property rights or rights of natural persons on their image and voice), the beneficiaries must ensure that they comply with their obligations under this Agreement (in particular, by obtaining the necessary licences and authorisations from the rights holders concerned).

Where applicable, the granting authority will insert the following information:

> "© – [year] – [name of the copyright owner]. All rights reserved. Licensed to the [name of granting authority] under conditions."

16.4 Specific rules on IPR, results and background

Specific rules regarding intellectual property rights, results and background (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

16.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such a breach may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 17 — COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY

17.1 Communication — Dissemination — Promoting the action

Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, the beneficiaries must promote the action and its results by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in accordance with Annex 1 and in a strategic, coherent and effective manner.

Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the beneficiaries must inform the granting authority.

17.2 Visibility — European flag and funding statement

Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, communication activities of the beneficiaries related to the action (including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), dissemination activities and any infrastructure, equipment, vehicles, supplies or major result funded by the grant must acknowledge EU support and display the European flag (emblem) and funding statement (translated into local languages, where appropriate):

Funded by the
European Union

Co-funded by the
European Union

The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text.

Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support.

When displayed in association with other logos (e.g. of beneficiaries or sponsors), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos.

For the purposes of their obligations under this Article, the beneficiaries may use the emblem without first obtaining approval from the granting authority. This does not, however, give them the right to exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

17.3 Quality of information — Disclaimer

Any communication or dissemination activity related to the action must use factually accurate information.

Moreover, it must indicate the following disclaimer (translated into local languages where appropriate):

> "Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or [name of the granting authority]. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them."

17.4 Specific communication, dissemination and visibility rules

Specific communication, dissemination and visibility rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

17.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 18 — SPECIFIC RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION

18.1 Specific rules for carrying out the action

Specific rules for implementing the action (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

18.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such a breach may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

SECTION 3 GRANT ADMINISTRATION

ARTICLE 19 — GENERAL INFORMATION OBLIGATIONS

19.1 Information requests

The beneficiaries must provide — during the action or afterwards and in accordance with Article 7 — any information requested in order to verify eligibility of the costs or contributions declared, proper implementation of the action and compliance with the other obligations under the Agreement.

The information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

19.2 Participant Register data updates

The beneficiaries must keep — at all times, during the action or afterwards — their information stored in the Portal Participant Register up to date, in particular, their name, address, legal representatives, legal form and organisation type.

19.3 Information about events and circumstances which impact the action

The beneficiaries must immediately inform the granting authority (and the other beneficiaries) of any of the following:

(a) **events** which are likely to affect or delay the implementation of the action or affect the EU's financial interests, in particular:

(i) changes in their legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation (including changes linked to one of the exclusion grounds listed in the declaration of honour signed before grant signature)

(ii) linked action information: not applicable

(b) **circumstances** affecting:

(i) the decision to award the grant or

(ii) compliance with requirements under the Agreement.

19.4 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 20 — RECORD-KEEPING

20.1 Keeping records and supporting documents

The beneficiaries must — at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6) — keep records and other supporting documents to prove the proper implementation of the action in line with the accepted standards in the respective field (if any).

In addition, the beneficiaries must — for the same period — keep the following to justify the amounts declared:

(a) for actual costs: adequate records and supporting documents to prove the costs declared (such

as contracts, subcontracts, invoices and accounting records); in addition, the beneficiaries' usual accounting and internal control procedures must enable direct reconciliation between the amounts declared, the amounts recorded in their accounts and the amounts stated in the supporting documents

(b) for flat-rate costs and contributions (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove the eligibility of the costs or contributions to which the flat-rate is applied

(c) for the following simplified costs and contributions: the beneficiaries do not need to keep specific records on the actual costs incurred, but must keep:

(i) for unit costs and contributions (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove the number of units declared

(ii) for lump sum costs and contributions (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove proper implementation of the work as described in Annex 1

(iii) for financing not linked to costs (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove the achievement of the results or the fulfilment of the conditions as described in Annex 1

(d) for unit, flat-rate and lump sum costs and contributions according to usual cost accounting practices (if any): the beneficiaries must keep any adequate records and supporting documents to prove that their cost accounting practices have been applied in a consistent manner, based on objective criteria, regardless of the source of funding, and that they comply with the eligibility conditions set out in Articles 6.1 and 6.2.

Moreover, the following is needed for specific budget categories:

(e) for personnel costs: time worked for the beneficiary under the action must be supported by declarations signed monthly by the person and their supervisor, unless another reliable time-record system is in place; the granting authority may accept alternative evidence supporting the time worked for the action declared, if it considers that it offers an adequate level of assurance

(f) additional record-keeping rules: not applicable

The records and supporting documents must be made available upon request (see Article 19) or in the context of checks, reviews, audits or investigations (see Article 25).

If there are on-going checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or other pursuits of claims under the Agreement (including the extension of findings; see Article 25), the beneficiaries must keep these records and other supporting documentation until the end of these procedures.

The beneficiaries must keep the original documents. Digital and digitalised documents are considered originals if they are authorised by the applicable national law. The granting authority may accept non-original documents if they offer a comparable level of assurance.

20.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, costs or contributions insufficiently

substantiated will be ineligible (see Article 6) and will be rejected (see Article 27), and the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 21 — REPORTING

21.1 Continuous reporting

The beneficiaries must report on the progress of the action (e.g. **deliverables, milestones, outputs/ outcomes, critical risks, indicators,** etc; if any), in the Portal Continuous Reporting tool and in accordance with the timing and conditions it sets out (as agreed with the granting authority).

Standardised deliverables (e.g. progress reports not linked to payments, reports on cumulative expenditure, special reports, etc; if any) must be submitted using the templates published on the Portal.

21.2 Periodic reporting: Technical reports and financial statements

In addition, the beneficiaries must provide reports to request payments, in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2):

- for additional prefinancings (if any): an **additional prefinancing report**
- for interim payments (if any) and the final payment: a **periodic report**.

The prefinancing and periodic reports include a technical and financial part.

The technical part includes an overview of the action implementation. It must be prepared using the template available in the Portal Periodic Reporting tool.

The financial part of the additional prefinancing report includes a statement on the use of the previous prefinancing payment.

The financial part of the periodic report includes:

- the financial statements (individual and consolidated; for all beneficiaries/affiliated entities)
- the explanation on the use of resources (or detailed cost reporting table, if required)
- the certificates on the financial statements (CFS) (if required; see Article 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3).

The **financial statements** must detail the eligible costs and contributions for each budget category and, for the final payment, also the revenues for the action (see Articles 6 and 22).

All eligible costs and contributions incurred should be declared, even if they exceed the amounts indicated in the estimated budget (see Annex 2). Amounts that are not declared in the individual financial statements will not be taken into account by the granting authority.

By signing the financial statements (directly in the Portal Periodic Reporting tool), the beneficiaries confirm that:

- the information provided is complete, reliable and true

- the costs and contributions declared are eligible (see Article 6)
- the costs and contributions can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documents (see Article 20) that will be produced upon request (see Article 19) or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Article 25)
- for the final periodic report: all the revenues have been declared (if required; see Article 22).

Beneficiaries will have to submit also the financial statements of their affiliated entities (if any). In case of recoveries (see Article 22), beneficiaries will be held responsible also for the financial statements of their affiliated entities.

21.3 Currency for financial statements and conversion into euros

The financial statements must be drafted in euro.

Beneficiaries with general accounts established in a currency other than the euro must convert the costs recorded in their accounts into euro, at the average of the daily exchange rates published in the C series of the *Official Journal of the European Union* (ECB website), calculated over the corresponding reporting period.

If no daily euro exchange rate is published in the *Official Journal* for the currency in question, they must be converted at the average of the monthly accounting exchange rates published on the European Commission website (InforEuro), calculated over the corresponding reporting period.

Beneficiaries with general accounts in euro must convert costs incurred in another currency into euro according to their usual accounting practices.

21.4 Reporting language

The reporting must be in the language of the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

21.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a report submitted does not comply with this Article, the granting authority may suspend the payment deadline (see Article 29) and apply other measures described in Chapter 5.

If the coordinator breaches its reporting obligations, the granting authority may terminate the grant or the coordinator's participation (see Article 32) or apply other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 22 — PAYMENTS AND RECOVERIES — CALCULATION OF AMOUNTS DUE

22.1 Payments and payment arrangements

Payments will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

They will be made in euro to the bank account indicated by the coordinator (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2) and must be distributed without unjustified delay (restrictions may apply to distribution of the initial prefinancing payment; see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

Payments to this bank account will discharge the granting authority from its payment obligation.

The cost of payment transfers will be borne as follows:

- the granting authority bears the cost of transfers charged by its bank
- the beneficiary bears the cost of transfers charged by its bank
- the party causing a repetition of a transfer bears all costs of the repeated transfer.

Payments by the granting authority will be considered to have been carried out on the date when they are debited to its account.

22.2 Recoveries

Recoveries will be made, if — at beneficiary termination, final payment or afterwards — it turns out that the granting authority has paid too much and needs to recover the amounts undue.

The general liability regime for recoveries (first-line liability) is as follows: At final payment, the coordinator will be fully liable for recoveries, even if it has not been the final recipient of the undue amounts. At beneficiary termination or after final payment, recoveries will be made directly against the beneficiaries concerned.

Beneficiaries will be fully liable for repaying the debts of their affiliated entities.

In case of enforced recoveries (see Article 22.4):

- the beneficiaries will be jointly and severally liable for repaying debts of another beneficiary under the Agreement (including late-payment interest), if required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.4)
- affiliated entities will be held liable for repaying debts of their beneficiaries under the Agreement (including late-payment interest), if required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.4).

22.3 Amounts due

22.3.1 Prefinancing payments

The aim of the prefinancing is to provide the beneficiaries with a float.

It remains the property of the EU until the final payment.

For **initial prefinancings** (if any), the amount due, schedule and modalities are set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

For **additional prefinancings** (if any), the amount due, schedule and modalities are also set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2). However, if the statement on the use of the previous prefinancing payment shows that less than 70% was used, the amount set out in the Data Sheet will be reduced by the difference between the 70% threshold and the amount used.

Prefinancing payments (or parts of them) may be offset (without the beneficiaries' consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

22.3.2 Amount due at beneficiary termination — Recovery

In case of beneficiary termination, the granting authority will determine the provisional amount due for the beneficiary concerned. Payments (if any) will be made with the next interim or final payment.

The **amount due** will be calculated in the following step:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the 'accepted EU contribution' for the beneficiary for all reporting periods, by calculating the 'maximum EU contribution to costs' (applying the funding rate to the accepted costs of the beneficiary), taking into account requests for a lower contribution to costs and CFS threshold cappings (if any; see Article 24.5) and adding the contributions (accepted unit, flat-rate or lump sum contributions and financing not linked to costs, if any).

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting amount is the 'total accepted EU contribution' for the beneficiary.

The **balance** is then calculated by deducting the payments received (if any; see report on the distribution of payments in Article 32), from the total accepted EU contribution:

{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary

minus

{prefinancing and interim payments received (if any)}}.

If the balance is **positive**, the amount will be included in the next interim or final payment to the consortium.

If the balance is **negative**, it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the amount due, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received), it will confirm the amount to be recovered and ask this amount to be paid to the coordinator (**confirmation letter**).

The amounts will later on also be taken into account for the next interim or final payment.

22.3.3 Interim payments

Interim payments reimburse the eligible costs and contributions claimed for the implementation of the action during the reporting periods (if any).

Interim payments (if any) will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Payment is subject to the approval of the periodic report. Its approval does not imply recognition of compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of its content.

The **interim payment** will be calculated by the granting authority in the following steps:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 2 — Limit to the interim payment ceiling

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will calculate the 'accepted EU contribution' for the action for the reporting period, by first calculating the 'maximum EU contribution to costs' (applying the funding rate to the accepted costs of each beneficiary), taking into account requests for a lower contribution to costs and CFS threshold cappings (if any; see Article 24.5) and adding the contributions (accepted unit, flat-rate or lump sum contributions and financing not linked to costs, if any).

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions from beneficiary termination (if any). The resulting amount is the 'total accepted EU contribution'.

Step 2 — Limit to the interim payment ceiling

The resulting amount is then capped to ensure that the total amount of prefinancing and interim payments (if any) does not exceed the interim payment ceiling set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Interim payments (or parts of them) may be offset (without the beneficiaries' consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

22.3.4 Final payment — Final grant amount — Revenues and Profit — Recovery

The final payment (payment of the balance) reimburses the remaining part of the eligible costs and contributions claimed for the implementation of the action (if any).

The final payment will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Payment is subject to the approval of the final periodic report. Its approval does not imply recognition of compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of its content.

The **final grant amount for the action** will be calculated in the following steps:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 2 — Limit to the maximum grant amount

Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the 'accepted EU contribution' for the action for all reporting periods, by calculating the 'maximum EU contribution to costs' (applying the funding rate to the total accepted costs of each beneficiary), taking into account requests for a lower contribution to costs, CFS threshold cappings (if any; see Article 24.5) and adding the contributions (accepted unit, flat-rate or lump sum contributions and financing not linked to costs, if any).

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting amount is the 'total accepted EU contribution'.

Step 2 — Limit to the maximum grant amount

If the resulting amount is higher than the maximum grant amount set out in Article 5.2, it will be limited to the latter.

Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule

If the no-profit rule is provided for in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2), the grant must not produce a profit (i.e. surplus of the amount obtained following Step 2 plus the action's revenues, over the eligible costs and contributions approved by the granting authority).

'Revenue' is all income generated by the action, during its duration (see Article 4), for beneficiaries that are profit legal entities.

If there is a profit, it will be deducted in proportion to the final rate of reimbursement of the eligible costs approved by the granting authority (as compared to the amount calculated following Steps 1 and 2 minus the contributions).

The **balance** (final payment) is then calculated by deducting the total amount of prefinancing and interim payments already made (if any), from the final grant amount:

{final grant amount

minus

{prefinancing and interim payments made (if any)}}.

If the balance is **positive**, it will be **paid** to the coordinator.

The final payment (or part of it) may be offset (without the beneficiaries' consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

If the balance is **negative**, it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the coordinator:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the final grant amount, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received), it will confirm the amount to be recovered (**confirmation letter**), together with a **debit note** with the terms and date for payment.

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the granting authority will **enforce recovery** in accordance with Article 22.4.

22.3.5 Audit implementation after final payment — Revised final grant amount — Recovery

If — after the final payment (in particular, after checks, reviews, audits or investigations; see Article 25) — the granting authority rejects costs or contributions (see Article 27) or reduces the grant (see Article 28), it will calculate the **revised final grant amount** for the beneficiary concerned.

The **beneficiary revised final grant amount** will be calculated in the following step:

Step 1 — Calculation of the revised total accepted EU contribution

Step 1 — Calculation of the revised total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the 'revised accepted EU contribution' for the beneficiary, by calculating the 'revised accepted costs' and 'revised accepted contributions'.

After that, it will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting 'revised total accepted EU contribution' is the beneficiary revised final grant amount.

If the revised final grant amount is lower than the beneficiary's final grant amount (i.e. its share in the final grant amount for the action), it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The **beneficiary final grant amount** (i.e. share in the final grant amount for the action) is calculated as follows:

{{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary

divided by

total accepted EU contribution for the action}

multiplied by

final grant amount for the action}.

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received), it will confirm the amount to be recovered (**confirmation letter**), together with a **debit note** with the terms and the date for payment.

Recoveries against affiliated entities (if any) will be handled through their beneficiaries.

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the granting authority will **enforce recovery** in accordance with Article 22.4.

22.4 Enforced recovery

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the amount due will be recovered:

(a) by offsetting the amount — without the coordinator or beneficiary's consent — against any amounts owed to the coordinator or beneficiary by the granting authority.

In exceptional circumstances, to safeguard the EU financial interests, the amount may be offset before the payment date specified in the debit note.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, debts may also be offset against amounts owed by other Commission services or executive agencies.

(b) by drawing on the financial guarantee(s) (if any)

(c) by holding other beneficiaries jointly and severally liable (if any; see Data Sheet, Point 4.4)

(d) by holding affiliated entities jointly and severally liable (if any, see Data Sheet, Point 4.4)

(e) by taking legal action (see Article 43) or, provided that the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, by adopting an enforceable decision under Article 299 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 100(2) of EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509.

The amount to be recovered will be increased by **late-payment interest** at the rate set out in Article 22.5, from the day following the payment date in the debit note, up to and including the date the full payment is received.

Partial payments will be first credited against expenses, charges and late-payment interest and then against the principal.

Bank charges incurred in the recovery process will be borne by the beneficiary, unless Directive 2015/2366[19] applies.

[19] Directive (EU) 2015/2366 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on payment services in the internal market, amending Directives 2002/65/EC, 2009/110/EC and 2013/36/EU and Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010, and repealing Directive 2007/64/EC (OJ L 337, 23.12.2015, p. 35).

For grants where the granting authority is an EU executive agency, enforced recovery by offsetting or enforceable decision will be done by the services of the European Commission (see also Article 43).

22.5 Consequences of non-compliance

22.5.1 If the granting authority does not pay within the payment deadlines (see above), the beneficiaries are entitled to **late-payment interest** at the rate applied by the European Central Bank (ECB) for its main refinancing operations in euros ('reference rate'), plus the rate specified in the Data Sheet (Point 4.2). The reference rate is the rate in force on the first day of the month in which the payment deadline expires, as published in the C series of the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

If the late-payment interest is lower than or equal to EUR 200, it will be paid to the coordinator only on request submitted within two months of receiving the late payment.

Late-payment interest is not due if all beneficiaries are EU Member States (including regional and local government authorities or other public bodies acting on behalf of a Member State for the purpose of this Agreement).

If payments or the payment deadline are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30), payment will not be considered as late.

Late-payment interest covers the period running from the day following the due date for payment (see above), up to and including the date of payment.

Late-payment interest is not considered for the purposes of calculating the final grant amount.

22.5.2 If the coordinator breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28) and the grant or the coordinator may be terminated (see Article 32).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 23 — GUARANTEES

23.1 Prefinancing guarantee

If required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2), the beneficiaries must provide (one or more) prefinancing guarantee(s) in accordance with the timing and the amounts set out in the Data Sheet.

The coordinator must submit them to the granting authority in due time before the prefinancing they are linked to.

The guarantees must be drawn up using the template published on the Portal and fulfil the following conditions:

(a) be provided by a bank or approved financial institution established in the EU or — if requested by the coordinator and accepted by the granting authority — by a third party or a bank or financial institution established outside the EU offering equivalent security

(b) the guarantor stands as first-call guarantor and does not require the granting authority to first have recourse against the principal debtor (i.e. the beneficiary concerned) and

(c) remain explicitly in force until the final payment and, if the final payment takes the form of a recovery, until five months after the debit note is notified to a beneficiary.

They will be released within the following month.

23.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If the beneficiaries breach their obligation to provide the prefinancing guarantee, the prefinancing will not be paid.

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 24 — CERTIFICATES

24.1 Operational verification report (OVR)

Not applicable

24.2 Certificate on the financial statements (CFS)

If required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.3), the beneficiaries must provide certificates on their financial statements (CFS), in accordance with the schedule, threshold and conditions set out in the Data Sheet.

The coordinator must submit them as part of the periodic report (see Article 21).

The certificates must be drawn up using the template published on the Portal, cover the costs declared on the basis of actual costs and costs according to usual cost accounting practices (if any), and fulfil the following conditions:

(a) be provided by a qualified approved external auditor which is independent and complies with Directive 2006/43/EC[20] (or for public bodies: by a competent independent public officer)

(b) the verification must be carried out according to the highest professional standards to ensure that the financial statements comply with the provisions under the Agreement and that the costs declared are eligible.

The certificates will not affect the granting authority's right to carry out its own checks, reviews or audits, nor preclude the European Court of Auditors (ECA), the European Public Prosecutor’s Office (EPPO) or the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) from using their prerogatives for audits and investigations under the Agreement (see Article 25).

If the costs (or a part of them) were already audited by the granting authority, these costs do not need to be covered by the certificate and will not be counted for calculating the threshold (if any).

24.3 Certificate on the compliance of usual cost accounting practices (CoMUC)

Not applicable

[20] Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts (OJ L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 87).

24.4 Systems and process audit (SPA)

Not applicable

24.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary does not submit a certificate on the financial statements (CFS) or the certificate is rejected, the accepted EU contribution to costs will be capped to reflect the CFS threshold.

If a beneficiary breaches any of its other obligations under this Article, the granting authority may apply the measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 25 — CHECKS, REVIEWS, AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS — EXTENSION OF FINDINGS

25.1 Granting authority checks, reviews and audits

25.1.1 Internal checks

The granting authority may — during the action or afterwards — check the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement, including assessing costs and contributions, deliverables and reports.

25.1.2 Project reviews

The granting authority may carry out reviews on the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement (general project reviews or specific issues reviews).

Such project reviews may be started during the implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

If needed, the granting authority may be assisted by independent, outside experts. If it uses outside experts, the coordinator or beneficiary concerned will be informed and have the right to object on grounds of commercial confidentiality or conflict of interest.

The coordinator or beneficiary concerned must cooperate diligently and provide — within the deadline requested — any information and data in addition to deliverables and reports already submitted (including information on the use of resources). The granting authority may request beneficiaries to provide such information to it directly. Sensitive information and documents will be treated in accordance with Article 13.

The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may be requested to participate in meetings, including with the outside experts.

For **on-the-spot visits**, the beneficiary concerned must allow access to sites and premises (including to the outside experts) and must ensure that information requested is readily available.

Information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

On the basis of the review findings, a **project review report** will be drawn up.

The granting authority will formally notify the project review report to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned, which has 30 days from receiving notification to make observations.

Project reviews (including project review reports) will be in the language of the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

25.1.3 Audits

The granting authority may carry out audits on the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

Such audits may be started during the implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the beneficiary concerned and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

The granting authority may use its own audit service, delegate audits to a centralised service or use external audit firms. If it uses an external firm, the beneficiary concerned will be informed and have the right to object on grounds of commercial confidentiality or conflict of interest.

The beneficiary concerned must cooperate diligently and provide — within the deadline requested — any information (including complete accounts, individual salary statements or other personal data) to verify compliance with the Agreement. Sensitive information and documents will be treated in accordance with Article 13.

For **on-the-spot** visits, the beneficiary concerned must allow access to sites and premises (including for the external audit firm) and must ensure that information requested is readily available.

Information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

On the basis of the audit findings, a **draft audit report** will be drawn up.

The auditors will formally notify the draft audit report to the beneficiary concerned, which has 30 days from receiving notification to make observations (contradictory audit procedure).

The **final audit report** will take into account observations by the beneficiary concerned and will be formally notified to them.

Audits (including audit reports) will be in the language of the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

25.2 European Commission checks, reviews and audits in grants of other granting authorities

Where the granting authority is not the European Commission, the latter has the same rights of checks, reviews and audits as the granting authority.

25.3 Access to records for assessing simplified forms of funding

The beneficiaries must give the European Commission access to their statutory records for the periodic assessment of simplified forms of funding which are used in EU programmes.

25.4 OLAF, EPPO and ECA audits and investigations

The following bodies may also carry out checks, reviews, audits and investigations — during the action or afterwards:

- the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) under Regulations No 883/2013[21] and No 2185/96[22]
- the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) under Regulation 2017/1939
- the European Court of Auditors (ECA) under Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 263 of EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509.

If requested by these bodies, the beneficiary concerned must provide full, accurate and complete information in the format requested (including complete accounts, individual salary statements or other personal data, including in electronic format) and allow access to sites and premises for on-the-spot visits or inspections — as provided for under these Regulations.

To this end, the beneficiary concerned must keep all relevant information relating to the action, at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (Point 6) and, in any case, until any ongoing checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or other pursuits of claims have been concluded.

25.5 Consequences of checks, reviews, audits and investigations — Extension of results of reviews, audits or investigations

25.5.1 Consequences of checks, reviews, audits and investigations in this grant

Findings in checks, reviews, audits or investigations carried out in the context of this grant may lead to rejections (see Article 27), grant reduction (see Article 28) or other measures described in Chapter 5.

Rejections or grant reductions after the final payment will lead to a revised final grant amount (see Article 22).

Findings in checks, reviews, audits or investigations during the action implementation may lead to a request for amendment (see Article 39), to change the description of the action set out in Annex 1.

Checks, reviews, audits or investigations that find systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations in any EU grant may also lead to consequences in other EU grants awarded under similar conditions ('extension to other grants').

Moreover, findings arising from an OLAF or EPPO investigation may lead to criminal prosecution under national law.

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[21] Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 September 2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1074/1999 (OJ L 248, 18/09/2013, p. 1).

[22] Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities (OJ L 292, 15/11/1996, p. 2).

25.5.2 Extension from other grants

Results of checks, reviews, audits or investigations in other grants may be extended to this grant, if:

(a) the beneficiary concerned is found, in other EU grants awarded under similar conditions, to have committed systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant and

(b) those findings are formally notified to the beneficiary concerned — together with the list of grants affected by the findings — within the time-limit for audits set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6).

The granting authority will formally notify the beneficiary concerned of the intention to extend the findings and the list of grants affected.

If the extension concerns **rejections of costs or contributions**: the notification will include:

(a) an invitation to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings

(b) the request to submit revised financial statements for all grants affected

(c) the correction rate for extrapolation, established on the basis of the systemic or recurrent errors, to calculate the amounts to be rejected, if the beneficiary concerned:

(i) considers that the submission of revised financial statements is not possible or practicable or

(ii) does not submit revised financial statements.

If the extension concerns **grant reductions**: the notification will include:

(a) an invitation to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings and

(b) the **correction rate for extrapolation**, established on the basis of the systemic or recurrent errors and the principle of proportionality.

The beneficiary concerned has **60 days** from receiving notification to submit observations, revised financial statements or to propose a duly substantiated **alternative correction method/rate**.

On the basis of this, the granting authority will analyse the impact and decide on the implementation (i.e. start rejection or grant reduction procedures, either on the basis of the revised financial statements or the announced/alternative method/rate or a mix of those; see Articles 27 and 28).

25.6 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, costs or contributions insufficiently substantiated will be ineligible (see Article 6) and will be rejected (see Article 27), and the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 26 — IMPACT EVALUATIONS

26.1 Impact evaluation

The granting authority may carry out impact evaluations of the action, measured against the objectives and indicators of the EU programme funding the grant.

Such evaluations may be started during implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the coordinator or beneficiaries and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

If needed, the granting authority may be assisted by independent outside experts.

The coordinator or beneficiaries must provide any information relevant to evaluate the impact of the action, including information in electronic format.

26.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the granting authority may apply the measures described in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5 CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

SECTION 1 REJECTIONS AND GRANT REDUCTION

ARTICLE 27 — REJECTION OF COSTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

27.1 Conditions

The granting authority will — at beneficiary termination, interim payment, final payment or afterwards — reject any costs or contributions which are ineligible (see Article 6), in particular following checks, reviews, audits or investigations (see Article 25).

The rejection may also be based on the extension of findings from other grants to this grant (see Article 25).

Ineligible costs or contributions will be rejected.

27.2 Procedure

If the rejection does not lead to a recovery, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator or beneficiary concerned of the rejection, the amounts and the reasons why. The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may — within 30 days of receiving notification — submit observations if it disagrees with the rejection (payment review procedure).

If the rejection leads to a recovery, the granting authority will follow the contradictory procedure with pre-information letter set out in Article 22.

27.3 Effects

If the granting authority rejects costs or contributions, it will deduct them from the costs or

contributions declared and then calculate the amount due (and, if needed, make a recovery; see Article 22).

ARTICLE 28 — GRANT REDUCTION

28.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at beneficiary termination, final payment or afterwards — reduce the grant for a beneficiary, if:

(a) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:

(i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or

(ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), failure to cooperate with checks, reviews, audits and investigations, etc.), or

(b) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (see Article 25).

The amount of the reduction will be calculated for each beneficiary concerned and proportionate to the seriousness and the duration of the errors, irregularities or fraud or breach of obligations, by applying an individual reduction rate to their accepted EU contribution.

28.2 Procedure

If the grant reduction does not lead to a recovery, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator or beneficiary concerned of the reduction, the amount to be reduced and the reasons why. The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may — within 30 days of receiving notification — submit observations if it disagrees with the reduction (payment review procedure).

If the grant reduction leads to a recovery, the granting authority will follow the contradictory procedure with pre-information letter set out in Article 22.

28.3 Effects

If the granting authority reduces the grant, it will deduct the reduction and then calculate the amount due (and, if needed, make a recovery; see Article 22).

SECTION 2 SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION

ARTICLE 29 — PAYMENT DEADLINE SUSPENSION

29.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at any moment — suspend the payment deadline if a payment cannot be processed because:

(a) the required report (see Article 21) has not been submitted or is not complete or additional information is needed

(b) there are doubts about the amount to be paid (e.g. ongoing audit extension procedure, queries about eligibility, need for a grant reduction, etc.) and additional checks, reviews, audits or investigations are necessary, or

(c) there are other issues affecting the EU financial interests.

29.2 Procedure

The granting authority will formally notify the coordinator of the suspension and the reasons why.

The suspension will **take effect** the day the notification is sent.

If the conditions for suspending the payment deadline are no longer met, the suspension will be **lifted** — and the remaining time to pay (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2) will resume.

If the suspension exceeds two months, the coordinator may request the granting authority to confirm if the suspension will continue.

If the payment deadline has been suspended due to the non-compliance of the report and the revised report is not submitted (or was submitted but is also rejected), the granting authority may also terminate the grant or the participation of the coordinator (see Article 32).

ARTICLE 30 — PAYMENT SUSPENSION

30.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at any moment — suspend payments, in whole or in part for one or more beneficiaries, if:

(a) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed or is suspected of having committed:

  (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or

  (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), failure to cooperate with checks, reviews, audits and investigations, etc.), or

(b) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant.

If payments are suspended for one or more beneficiaries, the granting authority will make partial payment(s) for the part(s) not suspended. If suspension concerns the final payment, the payment (or recovery) of the remaining amount after suspension is lifted will be considered to be the payment that closes the action.

30.2 Procedure

Before suspending payments, the granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to suspend payments and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the suspension (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

At the end of the suspension procedure, the granting authority will also inform the coordinator.

The suspension will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent.

If the conditions for resuming payments are met, the suspension will be **lifted**. The granting authority will formally notify the beneficiary concerned (and the coordinator) and set the suspension end date.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid to the beneficiaries concerned. For interim payments, the periodic reports for all reporting periods except the last one (see Article 21) must not contain any financial statements from the beneficiary concerned (or its affiliated entities). The coordinator must include them in the next periodic report after the suspension is lifted or — if suspension is not lifted before the end of the action — in the last periodic report.

ARTICLE 31 — GRANT AGREEMENT SUSPENSION

31.1 Consortium-requested GA suspension

31.1.1 Conditions and procedure

The beneficiaries may request the suspension of the grant or any part of it, if exceptional circumstances — in particular *force majeure* (see Article 35) — make implementation impossible or excessively difficult.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the date the suspension takes effect; this date may be before the date of the submission of the amendment request and
- the expected date of resumption.

The suspension will **take effect** on the day specified in the amendment.

Once circumstances allow for implementation to resume, the coordinator must immediately request another **amendment** of the Agreement to set the suspension end date, the resumption date (one day after suspension end date), extend the duration and make other changes necessary to adapt the action to the new situation (see Article 39) — unless the grant has been terminated (see Article 32). The suspension will be **lifted** with effect from the suspension end date set out in the amendment. This date may be before the date of the submission of the amendment request.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid. Costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during grant suspension are not eligible (see Article 6.3).

31.2 EU-initiated GA suspension

31.2.1 Conditions

The granting authority may suspend the grant or any part of it, if:

(a) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed or is suspected of having committed:

  (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or

  (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), failure to cooperate with checks, reviews, audits and investigations, etc.), or

(b) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant

(c) other:

  (i) linked action issues: not applicable

  (ii) additional GA suspension grounds: not applicable.

31.2.2 Procedure

Before suspending the grant, the granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the coordinator:

- formally notifying the intention to suspend the grant and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the suspension (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

The suspension will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent (or on a later date specified in the notification).

Once the conditions for resuming implementation of the action are met, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator a **lifting of suspension letter**, in which it will set the suspension end date and invite the coordinator to request an amendment of the Agreement to set the resumption date (one day after suspension end date), extend the duration and make other changes necessary to adapt the action to the new situation (see Article 39) — unless the grant has been terminated (see Article 32). The suspension will be **lifted** with effect from the suspension end date set out in the lifting of suspension letter. This date may be before the date on which the letter is sent.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid. Costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during suspension are not eligible (see Article 6.3).

The beneficiaries may not claim damages due to suspension by the granting authority (see Article 33).

Grant suspension does not affect the granting authority's right to terminate the grant or a beneficiary (see Article 32) or reduce the grant (see Article 28).

ARTICLE 32 — GRANT AGREEMENT OR BENEFICIARY TERMINATION

32.1 Consortium-requested GA termination

32.1.1 Conditions and procedure

The beneficiaries may request the termination of the grant.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the date the consortium ends work on the action ('end of work date') and
- the date the termination takes effect ('termination date'); this date must be after the date of the submission of the amendment request.

The termination will **take effect** on the termination date specified in the amendment.

If no reasons are given or if the granting authority considers the reasons do not justify termination, it may consider the grant terminated improperly.

32.1.2 Effects

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit a **periodic report** (for the open reporting period until termination).

The granting authority will calculate the final grant amount and final payment on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before the end of work date (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after the end of work are not eligible.

If the granting authority does not receive the report within the deadline, only costs and contributions

which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

Improper termination may lead to a grant reduction (see Article 28).

After termination, the beneficiaries' obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

32.2 Consortium-requested beneficiary termination

32.2.1 Conditions and procedure

The coordinator may request the termination of the participation of one or more beneficiaries, on request of the beneficiary concerned or on behalf of the other beneficiaries.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the opinion of the beneficiary concerned (or proof that this opinion has been requested in writing)
- the date the beneficiary ends work on the action ('end of work date')
- the date the termination takes effect ('termination date'); this date must be after the date of the submission of the amendment request.

If the termination concerns the coordinator and is done without its agreement, the amendment request must be submitted by another beneficiary (acting on behalf of the consortium).

The termination will **take effect** on the termination date specified in the amendment.

If no information is given or if the granting authority considers that the reasons do not justify termination, it may consider the beneficiary to have been terminated improperly.

32.2.2 Effects

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit:

(i) a **report on the distribution of payments** to the beneficiary concerned

(ii) a **termination report** from the beneficiary concerned, for the open reporting period until termination, containing an overview of the progress of the work, the financial statement, the explanation on the use of resources, and, if applicable, the certificate on the financial statement (CFS; see Articles 21 and 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3)

(iii) a second **request for amendment** (see Article 39) with other amendments needed (e.g. reallocation of the tasks and the estimated budget of the terminated beneficiary; addition of a new beneficiary to replace the terminated beneficiary; change of coordinator, etc.).

The granting authority will calculate the amount due to the beneficiary on the basis of the report

submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before the end of work date (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after the end of work are not eligible.

The information in the termination report must also be included in the periodic report for the next reporting period (see Article 21).

If the granting authority does not receive the termination report within the deadline, only costs and contributions which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/ contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

If the granting authority does not receive the report on the distribution of payments within the deadline, it will consider that:

- the coordinator did not distribute any payment to the beneficiary concerned and that
- the beneficiary concerned must not repay any amount to the coordinator.

If the second request for amendment is accepted by the granting authority, the Agreement is **amended** to introduce the necessary changes (see Article 39).

If the second request for amendment is rejected by the granting authority (because it calls into question the decision awarding the grant or breaches the principle of equal treatment of applicants), the grant may be terminated (see Article 32).

Improper termination may lead to a reduction of the grant (see Article 31) or grant termination (see Article 32).

After termination, the concerned beneficiary's obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

32.3 EU-initiated GA or beneficiary termination

32.3.1 Conditions

The granting authority may terminate the grant or the participation of one or more beneficiaries, if:

(a) one or more beneficiaries do not accede to the Agreement (see Article 40)

(b) a change to the action or the legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation of a beneficiary is likely to substantially affect the implementation of the action or calls into question the decision to award the grant (including changes linked to one of the exclusion grounds listed in the declaration of honour)

(c) following termination of one or more beneficiaries, the necessary changes to the Agreement (and their impact on the action) would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants

(d) implementation of the action has become impossible or the changes necessary for its

continuation would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants

(e) a beneficiary (or person with unlimited liability for its debts) is subject to bankruptcy proceedings or similar (including insolvency, winding-up, administration by a liquidator or court, arrangement with creditors, suspension of business activities, etc.)

(f) a beneficiary (or person with unlimited liability for its debts) is in breach of social security or tax obligations

(g) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has been found guilty of grave professional misconduct

(h) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed fraud, corruption, or is involved in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking

(i) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) was created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin (or created another entity with this purpose)

(j) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:

  (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or

  (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), failure to cooperate with checks, reviews, audits and investigations, etc.)

(k) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings from other grants to this grant; see Article 25)

(l) despite a specific request by the granting authority, a beneficiary does not request — through the coordinator — an amendment to the Agreement to end the participation of one of its affiliated entities or associated partners that is in one of the situations under points (d), (f), (e), (g), (h), (i) or (j) and to reallocate its tasks, or

(m) other:

  (i) linked action issues: not applicable

  (ii) additional GA termination grounds: not applicable.

32.3.2 Procedure

Before terminating the grant or participation of one or more beneficiaries, the granting authority will send **a pre-information letter** to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to terminate and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the termination and the date it will take effect (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

For beneficiary terminations, the granting authority will — at the end of the procedure — also inform the coordinator.

The termination will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent (or on a later date specified in the notification; 'termination date').

32.3.3 Effects

(a) for **GA termination**:

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit a **periodic report** (for the last open reporting period until termination).

The granting authority will calculate the final grant amount and final payment on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before termination takes effect (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination are not eligible.

If the grant is terminated for breach of the obligation to submit reports, the coordinator may not submit any report after termination.

If the granting authority does not receive the report within the deadline, only costs and contributions which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

Termination does not affect the granting authority's right to reduce the grant (see Article 28) or to impose administrative sanctions (see Article 34).

The beneficiaries may not claim damages due to termination by the granting authority (see Article 33).

After termination, the beneficiaries' obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

(b) for **beneficiary termination**:

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit:

(i) a **report on the distribution of payments** to the beneficiary concerned

(ii) a **termination report** from the beneficiary concerned, for the open reporting period until termination, containing an overview of the progress of the work, the financial statement, the explanation on the use of resources, and, if applicable, the certificate on the financial statement (CFS; see Articles 21 and 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3)

(iii) a **request for amendment** (see Article 39) with any amendments needed (e.g. reallocation of the tasks and the estimated budget of the terminated beneficiary; addition of a new beneficiary to replace the terminated beneficiary; change of coordinator, etc.).

The granting authority will calculate the amount due to the beneficiary on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before termination takes effect (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination are not eligible.

The information in the termination report must also be included in the periodic report for the next reporting period (see Article 21).

If the granting authority does not receive the termination report within the deadline, only costs and contributions included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/ contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

If the granting authority does not receive the report on the distribution of payments within the deadline, it will consider that:

- the coordinator did not distribute any payment to the beneficiary concerned and that
- the beneficiary concerned must not repay any amount to the coordinator.

If the request for amendment is accepted by the granting authority, the Agreement is **amended** to introduce the necessary changes (see Article 39).

If the request for amendment is rejected by the granting authority (because it calls into question the decision awarding the grant or breaches the principle of equal treatment of applicants), the grant may be terminated (see Article 32).

After termination, the concerned beneficiary's obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

SECTION 3 OTHER CONSEQUENCES: DAMAGES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS

ARTICLE 33 — DAMAGES

33.1 Liability of the granting authority

The granting authority cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the beneficiaries or to third parties as a consequence of the implementation of the Agreement, including for gross negligence.

The granting authority cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the beneficiaries or other participants involved in the action, as a consequence of the implementation of the Agreement.

33.2 Liability of the beneficiaries

The beneficiaries must compensate the granting authority for any damage it sustains as a result of the implementation of the action or because the action was not implemented in full compliance with the Agreement, provided that it was caused by gross negligence or wilful act.

The liability does not extend to indirect or consequential losses or similar damage (such as loss of profit, loss of revenue or loss of contracts), provided such damage was not caused by wilful act or by a breach of confidentiality.

ARTICLE 34 — ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES

Nothing in this Agreement may be construed as preventing the adoption of administrative sanctions (i.e. exclusion from EU award procedures and/or financial penalties) or other public law measures, in addition or as an alternative to the contractual measures provided under this Agreement (see, for instance, Articles 137 to 148 EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509 and Articles 4 and 7 of Regulation 2988/95[23]).

SECTION 4 FORCE MAJEURE

ARTICLE 35 — FORCE MAJEURE

A party prevented by force majeure from fulfilling its obligations under the Agreement cannot be considered in breach of them.

‘Force majeure’ means any situation or event that:

- prevents either party from fulfilling their obligations under the Agreement
- was unforeseeable, exceptional situation and beyond the parties’ control
- was not due to error or negligence on their part (or on the part of other participants involved in the action) and
- proves to be inevitable in spite of exercising all due diligence.

Any situation constituting force majeure must be formally notified to the other party without delay, stating the nature, likely duration and foreseeable effects.

The parties must immediately take all the necessary steps to limit any damage due to force majeure and do their best to resume implementation of the action as soon as possible.

[23] Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1).

CHAPTER 6 FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 36 — COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PARTIES

36.1 Forms and means of communication — Electronic management

EU grants are managed fully electronically through the EU Funding & Tenders Portal ('Portal').

All communications must be made electronically through the Portal, in accordance with the Portal Terms and Conditions and using the forms and templates provided there (except if explicitly instructed otherwise by the granting authority).

Communications must be made in writing and clearly identify the grant agreement (project number and acronym).

Communications must be made by persons authorised according to the Portal Terms and Conditions. For naming the authorised persons, each beneficiary must have designated — before the signature of this Agreement — a 'legal entity appointed representative (LEAR)'. The role and tasks of the LEAR are stipulated in their appointment letter (see Portal Terms and Conditions).

If the electronic exchange system is temporarily unavailable, instructions will be given on the Portal.

36.2 Date of communication

The sending date for communications made through the Portal will be the date and time of sending, as indicated by the time logs.

The receiving date for communications made through the Portal will be the date and time the communication is accessed, as indicated by the time logs. Formal notifications that have not been accessed within 10 days after sending, will be considered to have been accessed (see Portal Terms and Conditions).

If a communication is exceptionally made on paper (by e-mail or postal service), general principles apply (i.e. date of sending/receipt). Formal notifications by registered post with proof of delivery will be considered to have been received either on the delivery date registered by the postal service or the deadline for collection at the post office.

If the electronic exchange system is temporarily unavailable, the sending party cannot be considered in breach of its obligation to send a communication within a specified deadline.

36.3 Addresses for communication

The Portal can be accessed via the Europa website.

The address for paper communications to the granting authority (if exceptionally allowed) is the official mailing address indicated on its website.

For beneficiaries, it is the legal address specified in the Portal Participant Register.

ARTICLE 37 — INTERPRETATION OF THE AGREEMENT

The provisions in the Data Sheet take precedence over the rest of the Terms and Conditions of the Agreement.

Annex 5 takes precedence over the Terms and Conditions; the Terms and Conditions take precedence over the Annexes other than Annex 5.

Annex 2 takes precedence over Annex 1.

ARTICLE 38 — CALCULATION OF PERIODS AND DEADLINES

In accordance with Regulation No 1182/71[24], periods expressed in days, months or years are calculated from the moment the triggering event occurs.

The day during which that event occurs is not considered as falling within the period.

'Days' means calendar days, not working days.

ARTICLE 39 — AMENDMENTS

39.1 Conditions

The Agreement may be amended, unless the amendment entails changes to the Agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

Amendments may be requested by any of the parties.

39.2 Procedure

The party requesting an amendment must submit a request for amendment signed directly in the Portal Amendment tool.

The coordinator submits and receives requests for amendment on behalf of the beneficiaries (see Annex 3). If a change of coordinator is requested without its agreement, the submission must be done by another beneficiary (acting on behalf of the other beneficiaries).

The request for amendment must include:

- the reasons why
- the appropriate supporting documents and
- for a change of coordinator without its agreement: the opinion of the coordinator (or proof that this opinion has been requested in writing).

The granting authority may request additional information.

If the party receiving the request agrees, it must sign the amendment in the tool within 45 days of receiving notification (or any additional information the granting authority has requested). If it does

[24] Regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 1182/71 of the Council of 3 June 1971 determining the rules applicable to periods, dates and time-limits (OJ L 124, 8/6/1971, p. 1).

not agree, it must formally notify its disagreement within the same deadline. The deadline may be extended, if necessary for the assessment of the request. If no notification is received within the deadline, the request is considered to have been rejected.

An amendment **enters into force** on the day of the signature of the receiving party.

An amendment **takes effect** on the date of entry into force or other date specified in the amendment.

ARTICLE 40 — ACCESSION AND ADDITION OF NEW BENEFICIARIES

40.1 Accession of the beneficiaries mentioned in the Preamble

The beneficiaries which are not coordinator must accede to the grant by signing the accession form (see Annex 3) directly in the Portal Grant Preparation tool, within 30 days after the entry into force of the Agreement (see Article 44).

They will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of its entry into force (see Article 44).

If a beneficiary does not accede to the grant within the above deadline, the coordinator must — within 30 days — request an amendment (see Article 39) to terminate the beneficiary and make any changes necessary to ensure proper implementation of the action. This does not affect the granting authority's right to terminate the grant (see Article 32).

40.2 Addition of new beneficiaries

In justified cases, the beneficiaries may request the addition of a new beneficiary.

For this purpose, the coordinator must submit a request for amendment in accordance with Article 39. It must include an accession form (see Annex 3) signed by the new beneficiary directly in the Portal Amendment tool.

New beneficiaries will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of their accession specified in the accession form (see Annex 3).

Additions are also possible in mono-beneficiary grants.

ARTICLE 41 — TRANSFER OF THE AGREEMENT

In justified cases, the beneficiary of a mono-beneficiary grant may request the transfer of the grant to a new beneficiary, provided that this would not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

The beneficiary must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with

- the reasons why
- the accession form (see Annex 3) signed by the new beneficiary directly in the Portal Amendment tool and
- additional supporting documents (if required by the granting authority).

The new beneficiary will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of accession specified in the accession form (see Annex 3).

ARTICLE 42 — ASSIGNMENTS OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT AGAINST THE GRANTING AUTHORITY

The beneficiaries may not assign any of their claims for payment against the granting authority to any third party, except if expressly approved in writing by the granting authority on the basis of a reasoned, written request by the coordinator (on behalf of the beneficiary concerned).

If the granting authority has not accepted the assignment or if the terms of it are not observed, the assignment will have no effect on it.

In no circumstances will an assignment release the beneficiaries from their obligations towards the granting authority.

ARTICLE 43 — APPLICABLE LAW AND SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

43.1 Applicable law

The Agreement is governed by the applicable EU law, supplemented if necessary by the law of Belgium.

Special rules may apply for beneficiaries which are international organisations (if any; see Data Sheet, Point 5).

43.2 Dispute settlement

If a dispute concerns the interpretation, application or validity of the Agreement, the parties must bring action before the EU General Court — or, on appeal, the EU Court of Justice — under Article 272 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU).

For non-EU beneficiaries (if any), such disputes must be brought before the courts of Brussels, Belgium — unless an international agreement provides for the enforceability of EU court judgements.

For beneficiaries with arbitration as special dispute settlement forum (if any; see Data Sheet, Point 5), the dispute will — in the absence of an amicable settlement — be settled in accordance with the Rules for Arbitration published on the Portal.

If a dispute concerns administrative sanctions, offsetting or an enforceable decision under Article 299 TFEU (see Articles 22 and 34), the beneficiaries must bring action before the General Court — or, on appeal, the Court of Justice — under Article 263 TFEU.

For grants where the granting authority is an EU executive agency (see Preamble), actions against offsetting and enforceable decisions must be brought against the European Commission (not against the granting authority; see also Article 22).

ARTICLE 44 — ENTRY INTO FORCE

The Agreement will enter into force on the day of signature by the granting authority or the coordinator, depending on which is later.

SIGNATURES

For the coordinator

Marek Fügner with ECAS id n0026gc9 signed in the Participant Portal on 27/05/2025 at 12:48:12 (transaction id SigId-13046-YB8cXuYjpEVSYzIJrOf0DIv8zVeaXKSw7fTsfY7mW8UBlCjYxDtzj88Kkfzw07oqpJyPcaCBkG8ucN6E0OEWmO0-rS0vSrmBGYC9fvh5JEPA3y-N3qAJNlBDX3aDzYmzzcX7Rt3zJrYf4zNeZ1Wxv8WPdzxbXj9mpeU9RikQQbeHx5bpEYCnM0bEvDzrNxP3aRO6VaO). Timestamp by third party at 2025.05.27 12:48:17 CEST

For the granting authority

Signed by Anne BURRILL with ECAS id burrian as an authorised representative on 27-05-2025 14:41:27 (transaction id SigId-14503-p5BCQnBzKpzQOLoVxLzzrmXWdJieDHfTkDc4RfO7MbkX5eJFtRLO31SG7Jmd6dviXBUJEfxJ3TizIFoVQzlerHza-rS0vSrmBGYC9fvh5JEPA3y-AUzK5bSBf55zh4jtTJfg2ZDXnMoY60U74hzS7VyAWT5iomHzi8szj1kjzKsjknfqEKILUKBROq7dxFmRzUvY28Oy)
2025.05.27 14:41:33 CEST

ANNEX 1

Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)

Description of the action (DoA)

Part A

Part B

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION (PART A)

COVER PAGE

Part A of the Description of the Action (DoA) must be completed directly on the Portal Grant Preparation screens.

PROJECT *Grant Preparation (General Information screen) — Enter the info.*	
Project number:	101216157
Project name:	Model care for forest habitats and species associated with forest habitats and trees
Project acronym:	LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest
Call:	LIFE-2024-SAP-NAT
Topic:	LIFE-2024-SAP-NAT-NATURE
Type of action:	LIFE-PJG
Service:	CINEA/D/02
Project starting date:	first day of the month following the entry into force date
Project duration:	84 months

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project summary

Grant Preparation (General Information screen) — Provide an overall description of your project (including context and overall objectives, planned activities and main achievements, and expected results and impacts (on target groups, change procedures, capacities, innovation etc)). This summary should give readers a clear idea of what your project is about.

Use the project summary from your proposal.

The project's primary goal is to establish a comprehensive model for the care of diverse forest habitats and the species associated with them, in collaboration with forest owners, site administrators, regions, municipalities and the involvement of volunteers. The aim is to improve the conservation status of 11 habitats (3 priority) and 12 species (3 priority) within 20 SCIs/SCAs in 2 EU countries (The Czech Republic, Poland) with spillover effects into Austria and replication of results in other countries. Specific issues addressed within the project include low species and age diversity in forests, the shortage of veteran trees, declining and dead trees, the spread of invasive non-native plant and animal species, and insufficient awareness among key stakeholders and the public. The total area of habitats included in the project is 19 km2 (1/3 of which are priority habitats), plus an additional 36 km2 where management will be implemented to support species, especially priority insect and plant species. Eradication of invasive plant species will also take place outside the project areas for maximum effectiveness, and a four-language methodology for the removal of IAS plants, including potentially very dangerous Echinocystis lobata, will be created and publicly disseminated for further use.
The project boasts a strong consortium of conservation and research organizations (ONYX, IBL), regions (managers of project sites - SBR, MSR), and organizations working with volunteers (PEH, NSB). Attention will be focused on the following:
- Forest habitats: *91D0, *91E0, *9180, 9110, 9130, 9170, 9190, 91F0, 91T0, 91U0, peat bog habitat: 7140
- Species: *1084 Osmoderma eremita, *1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria, *4094 Gentianella bohemica, 1079 Limoniscus violaceus, 1083 Lucanus cervus, 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus, 4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus, 4014 Carabus variolosus, 1193 Bombina variegata, 1180 Bombina bombina, 1166 Triturus cristatus, 1381 Dicranum viride.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS

Grant Preparation (Beneficiaries screen) — Enter the info.

Number	Role	Short name	Legal name	Country	PIC
1	COO	ONYX	ZO CSOP Onyx	CZ	872740720
2	BEN	PEH	PETRKLIC HELP ZS	CZ	947999140
3	BEN	SBR	JIHOCESKY KRAJ	CZ	923643701
4	BEN	RSE	KRAJSKE SKOLNI HOSPODARSTVI, CESKE BUDEJOVICE, U ZIMNIHO STADIONU 1952/2	CZ	888402243
5	BEN	MSR	Moravskoslezsky kraj	CZ	885596712
6	BEN	IBL	INSTYTUT BADAWCZY LESNICTWA	PL	998921715
7	AP	ONLN	Österreichischer Naturschutzbund Landesgruppe Niederösterreich	AT	884790254

LIST OF WORK PACKAGES

Work packages

Grant Preparation (Work Packages screen) — Enter the info.

Work Package No	Work Package name	Lead Beneficiary	Effort (Person-Months)	Start Month	End Month	Deliverables
WP1	Project management and coordination	1 - ONYX	232.77	1	84	D1.1 – Employment contracts D1.2 – Audit Report D1.3 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2025 D1.4 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2026 D1.5 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2027 D1.6 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2028 D1.7 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2029 D1.8 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2030 D1.9 – Final report on cumulative expenditure – 2031
WP2	Expert studies on restoration management	6 - IBL	185.72	1	12	D2.1 – Expert study for habitats D2.2 – Expert study for species D2.3 – Expert study for IAS plants
WP3	Conservation actions	1 - ONYX	1122.69	10	81	D3.1 – Documentation of work progress
WP4	Monitoring and evaluation	6 - IBL	246.02	4	84	D4.1 – Annual target habitats and species, IAS monitoring reports, final report D4.2 – A methodology for the eradication of IAS includes Echinocystis lobata D4.3 – KPI Extract Report - Month 9

Work packages

Grant Preparation (Work Packages screen) — Enter the info.

Work Package No	Work Package name	Lead Beneficiary	Effort (Person-Months)	Start Month	End Month	Deliverables
						D4.4 – Mid-term and final report on of project impact in dissemination actions D4.5 – Final KPI Extract Report - Month 84
WP5	Sustainability, replication and exploitation of project results	1 - ONYX	106.72	1	84	D5.1 – Communication Plan D5.2 – Project Website D5.3 – Printed materials, promotional items D5.4 – Noticeboards on the sites D5.5 – After – LIFE plan D5.6 – Layman’s report

Associated with document Ref. Ares(2025)4268473 - 27/05/2025

Work package WP1 – Project management and coordination

Work Package Number	WP1	Lead Beneficiary	1 - ONYX
Work Package Name	Project management and coordination		
Start Month	1	End Month	84

Objectives

Objectives:
• Project Oversight - Efficiently manage and allocate project resources, including finances, personnel, and time, to ensure the successful execution of all project phases.
• Timeline Coordination - Develop a detailed project timeline that outlines key milestones, tasks, and deadlines, facilitating a well-organized workflow throughout the project's duration.
• Stakeholder Communication - Establish clear lines of communication with all stakeholders, including partners, beneficiaries, and relevant authorities, to provide regular updates and gather feedback.
• Risk Management - Identify potential risks and challenges that could impact project progress or outcomes, and implement strategies to mitigate these risks effectively.
Results:
• Monitoring and Evaluation - Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track project advancement, assess the achievement of objectives, and adapt strategies if needed.
• Reporting and Documentation - Prepare comprehensive reports at key project junctures to showcase progress, expenditures, challenges faced, and lessons learned, ensuring transparency and accountability.
• Cross-functional Collaboration - Foster collaboration and information sharing among different project teams and departments, promoting a unified approach to achieving project goals.
• Adaptive Management - Remain flexible to incorporate new insights and respond to changing circumstances, adjusting project strategies while keeping the focus on the ultimate objectives.

Description

T.1.1 [Project Management and Reporting] (ONYX, all participants cooperate - PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR, IBL, NSB):
The project staff will remain employed throughout the entire duration of the project. External subcontractors, suppliers of goods, and services will be selected through public tenders in accordance with the project implementation schedule. Project staffing will encompass the following positions, with their associated responsibilities and job descriptions:
To ensure the successful implementation of the project, it is imperative to establish an effective project management framework. Once EU funding for the application has been approved, the following activities will be carried out:
• Appointment of a Project Manager by the Chairperson of the beneficiary organization.
• Execution of partnership agreements by all collaborating partners.
• Appointment of other key project staff (Coordinators, PR manager, etc.).
For the successful execution of the project, an efficient project management framework will be established, ensuring that the appropriate personnel are assigned to each role. This will contribute to the streamlined implementation of the project's objectives and activities. The responsibility for supervising the comprehensive implementation of the project will be assigned to a Project Steering Committee. This committee will consist of representatives from all project partners and the Ministry of the Environment CZ, and its formation will take place at the inception of the project. The committee convenes on an annual basis to deliberate upon critical decisions, address significant scientific, managerial, and financial aspects, and enhance the execution of key topics, including the integration of conservation considerations into pertinent policies. The Steering Committee will hold its first and concluding meetings in person, with one meeting taking place in the Czech Republic and the other in Poland. To optimize cost efficiency and promote eco-friendly practices, the remaining meetings will be conducted online. This approach aligns with the project's commitment to minimizing expenses and contributing to environmental sustainability.
Listed below are the positions, their responsibilities, and job descriptions, along with the abbreviation of the partner and the full-time equivalent (FTE) allocation for each role (see in detail chapter 4.2.):
Project Manager (ONYX – 1 FTE)
In this pivotal role, the Project Manager oversees a comprehensive range of responsibilities to ensure the successful execution of the project. The Project Manager's role is instrumental in driving the project towards success, fostering efficient collaboration among team members, and ensuring the project's smooth progression according to established plans and quality standards.
Site Managers (RSE - 1 FTE, ONYX – 1 FTE)

As highly skilled Site Managers, these individuals are entrusted with ensuring the seamless technical execution of specific conservation actions within the project. With a comprehensive understanding of all project sites, they play a pivotal role in overseeing on-site operations, meticulously managing fieldwork, and supervising the implementation of conservation initiatives. Responsible for ensuring the technical execution of specific conservation actions. They supervise machine operators, field workers and volunteers.

Science Section Coordinator (ONYX - 1 FTE, IBL - 0.7 FTE, SBR - 0.7 FTE, MSR - 0.7 FTE)

The Science Section Coordinators, distributed across multiple partner organizations, play a pivotal role in overseeing the scientific aspects of the project, spanning various work packages. With their diverse expertise, they ensure the seamless planning, execution, and coordination of activities related to expert studies, restoration management, and monitoring of target species, habitats, and IAS. With their specialized knowledge, coordination skills, and dedication to scientific excellence, the Science Section Coordinators contribute significantly to the achievement of project goals, maintaining the highest standards of scientific rigor and impact.

Research Expert (IBL – 5,5 FTE)

The Research Experts form a proficient team dedicated to executing critical field research and contributing to the scientific foundation of the project. With their extensive expertise and collaborative approach, they play a vital role in various work packages, ensuring the generation of valuable insights and comprehensive reports. Through their dedication to meticulous research, reporting, and collaboration, the Research Experts significantly contribute to the scientific integrity and success of the project. Their collective efforts bolster the project's impact, underpinning the development of evidence-based strategies for conservation and restoration.

Project Coordinator (PEH – 1 FTE)

The role of a Project Coordinator for beneficiary PEH entails overseeing various aspects of the project's life cycle, from its initiation and planning stages through execution, monitoring, reporting, presentation of results, evaluation, and final closure. Project Coordinators play a central role in ensuring that projects are completed on time, within budget, and with all objectives met. They act as the primary link between the project team and higher management, facilitating communication and alignment of efforts to achieve project goals.

Educator (PEH - 0.5 FTE)

The Educator plays a critical role in ensuring the protection of the area while also guaranteeing the successful execution of volunteer work tasks. They report to the Project Manager and Coordinator and collaborate closely with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteer Coordinator (PEH - 1 FTE)

The role is instrumental in managing all aspects related to volunteer engagement within a project. This position focuses on planning, organizing, and overseeing volunteer events, ensuring that volunteers are effectively coordinated and supported in their roles. Volunteer Coordinators play a crucial part in building a network of volunteers, organizing their activities, facilitating their transportation to project sites, and ensuring a smooth volunteer experience. They work in close collaboration with the Project Manager, Coordinator for PEH, and the contact person of the NSB beneficiary.

PR Managers (ONYX – 0.3 FTE) and PR Assistant (PEH – 0.25 FTE)

The PR Manager and PR Assistant form a dynamic duo responsible for the strategic communication and administrative aspects of the project. With their combined expertise, they ensure the project's message reaches the right audience and that administrative tasks are effectively managed. Under the guidance of the Project Manager and Coordinator, the PR Manager and PR Assistant play a pivotal role in ensuring effective communication, administrative efficiency, and successful implementation of the project's communication and dissemination goals.

Field Workers (ONYX - 4 FTE, RSE - 3 FTE) for a duration of 6.5 years from 1/2026 to 6/2032

Our dedicated team of Field Workers forms the backbone of hands-on implementation for the project. Their technical skills and expertise are instrumental in carrying out restoration actions and tasks within the project's scope. Throughout the project's duration, our skilled and dedicated Field Workers will work tirelessly to bring the restoration actions to life, ensuring the project's success on the field.

T.1.2 [Project Bookkeeping, Financial Management] (ONYX, cooperate - PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR, IBL)

To ensure the successful financial management of the project, a robust framework will be established. Key roles and responsibilities for this task are as follows:

Financial Manager (ONYX – 0.3)

An adept financial manager with proven experience in accounting and bookkeeping practices at both the Member State and EU levels will be an integral part of the project team. Throughout the project's duration, this role will be responsible for the comprehensive financial oversight and management of the project. With a keen eye for financial details and a robust understanding of financial regulations, the Financial Manager plays a crucial role in maintaining the project's financial integrity, transparency, and adherence to fiscal guidelines throughout the project lifecycle.

Project Audit and Monitoring Strategy

To ensure transparency and accountability, a thorough project audit process is in place. An impartial auditor, selected by the coordinating beneficiary, will meticulously review the financial statements submitted to the contracting authority

during the final report submission. This audit report, detailing the project's financial statements and expenditures, will be attached to the project's final report.
Our comprehensive monitoring strategy encompasses the following elements: Regular updates from project partners will showcase tangible progress made towards expected outcomes and project performance indicators. External monitoring teams will conduct on-site visits to evaluate project implementation and adherence to set goals. A detailed list of deadlines, milestones, and deliverables will be maintained to monitor the timely completion of tasks. The Steering Committee's involvement will serve as a robust monitoring mechanism, ensuring alignment with project objectives. Continuous exchange of information between the Project Manager, partners, and project staff will facilitate real-time progress assessment. This combined approach of rigorous audit and vigilant monitoring guarantees the project's successful advancement and adherence to established standards.

WP1, T1.1, T1.2 (ONYX, IBL, PEH, MSR, SBR, RSE):
The project envisions the acquisition of specific equipment to facilitate its operation and management:
- Office equipment such as laptops, software, printers, etc., which all will be covered by overhead costs.

Work package WP2 – Expert studies on restoration management

Work Package Number	WP2	**Lead Beneficiary**	6 - IBL
Work Package Name	Expert studies on restoration management		
Start Month	1	**End Month**	12

Objectives

Objectives:
• Comprehensive Site Overview - Gather current and detailed information on the condition of individual project sites, including forest habitats, species presence, and invasive alien species.
• Expert Studies for Restoration - Conduct expert studies within WP2 to address the restoration needs of target forest habitats (T.2.1), target species (T.2.2), and invasive alien species (T.2.3).
• Informing WP3 Implementation - Utilize the findings from the expert studies as a foundation for the effective planning and execution of conservation actions within WP3.
• Monitoring Area Design - Develop monitoring areas based on the outcomes of the studies to assess the impacts of project interventions on target species and habitats (WP4, T4.1).
• Stakeholder Involvement - Engage relevant stakeholders, including local communities, forestry agencies, and conservation organizations, in the expert study processes to integrate local knowledge and perspectives.
Results:
• Expert Studies and Proposals: Completion of expert studies for restoration, including T.2.1 for target forest habitats, T.2.2 for target species, and T.2.3 for invasive alien species. - Creation of distribution maps for relevant species. Proposal for the optimal location of restoration measures, considering ecological requirements and stakeholder input.
• WP3 Implementation: Successful execution of conservation actions outlined in WP3, guided by the insights and recommendations from the expert studies.
• Enhanced Conservation Planning: Empower decision-makers and land managers with scientifically informed data and recommendations for improved restoration strategies and management practices.
• Improved Permitting Process: Facilitate the permitting process by providing comprehensive studies that include the necessary documentation for permits related to restoration activities.
• Informed Monitoring Strategy: Development of a robust monitoring strategy (WP4, T4.1) based on the expert study results, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of the project's impact on target species and habitats.

Description

The main responsibility for this task lies with the IBL beneficiary. This includes work of the sites in Poland (7 SCIs) and all Moravian sites in the Czech Republic (7 SCIs).
In addition, SBR, as the beneficiary, will oversee the sites located in the South Bohemian Region, encompassing 6 SCIs. Furthermore, the IBL will function as the expert authority in this region. Activities in this region are planned based on expert studies conducted for the priority species 1084 Osmoderma eremita and 4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica. These studies were carried out as part of project LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001 CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE and will be revised and expanded upon.

Associated with document Ref. Ares(2025)4268473 - 27/05/2025

Specific segments of the expert studies will be outsourced to subcontractors, chosen through a rigorous tender process. The contract terms will necessitate close consultation of work progress and outcomes with the beneficiary IBL.
Mitigation and adaptation to climate change, achieved by enhancing forest health and bolstering resilience against climate impacts, will be considered in the expert studies conducted under Work Package 2. It's important to note that the current information relies on input from site managers, which may not always encompass all pertinent details.

T.2.1 [Expert studies for habitats] (IBL, SBR, MSR, ONYX):
In strict alignment with the overarching project strategy, which places a clear emphasis on priority species or habitats, this task will holistically address the imperative for focused actions. The project's fundamental design revolves around explicitly targeting priority species or habitats with the aim of delivering direct, tangible advantages to these crucial ecological elements.
To further enrich the monitoring strategy for forest habitats, particularly in line with ensuring long-term effectiveness, the following aspects will be included:
Soil and Hydrological Monitoring:
- Monitoring soil composition, moisture levels, and overall hydrological conditions will be essential, particularly in the context of disturbed hydrological systems. By assessing changes in soil and water table levels, the project can better understand the impact of habitat restoration efforts, especially in areas where water management is crucial for forest regeneration and health (e.g., in wetland-adjacent habitats).
Biodiversity and Indicator Species:
- The monitoring framework will include periodic surveys of biodiversity within the monitored habitats, focusing on the presence and health of indicator species that reflect habitat quality. For instance, species of fungi, lichens, and invertebrates could serve as indicators of forest ecosystem health, particularly in the context of dead wood availability and overall forest regeneration. Changes in these species' populations can indicate shifts in habitat conditions and management success.
Vegetation Dynamics and Succession:
- Regular assessments of the vegetation layers (understory, shrub, and canopy) within both priority and non-priority habitats will be part of the monitoring. The succession stages and species composition can give critical insights into the regeneration process, the success of management interventions, and the recovery trajectory of these habitats.
Climate Change Resilience Assessment:
- Given the increasing pressures of climate change, the monitoring will incorporate elements that track the resilience of forest habitats. This will include documenting how temperature, precipitation patterns, and extreme weather events are affecting forest dynamics, as well as how successfully restoration efforts are building climate resilience into these ecosystems.
This more detailed and integrated approach ensures that the monitoring system is not only tracking short-term successes but also providing the data necessary for adaptive management in the long term.
Within this framework, an expert study concentrating on the optimal management of forest habitats will be meticulously prepared. This study will intricately encapsulate:
1. Optimal Management Plan for Priority Forest Habitats:
   - Crafting a meticulous and tailored optimal management plan that centres on priority forest habitats within the project's purview.
   - Formulating a comprehensive strategy to maximize the conservation impact on *91D0 in CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, *91E0 in CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry, PLH160018 Rozumicki Las, PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe, and *9180 in CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, all totalling 617,88 ha.
2. Status Overview of Priority and Non-priority Habitats:
   - Conveying a detailed, nuanced picture of the status of both priority and non-priority forest habitats, but with a prime focus on the former. While our main emphasis remains on priority habitats, we are also taking steps to address non-priority habitats, acknowledging the interconnectedness of various habitat types within the landscape. This approach is a direct response to the intricate ecological challenges that both Czech and Polish forests are confronting. Moreover, it underscores our dedication to comprehensive and forward-thinking conservation efforts.

Integral to this endeavour is the project's unequivocal commitment to direct engagement and advancements for the designated priority species or habitats. The expert study will essentially serve as the guiding light for channelling concerted efforts toward their preservation and revival, firmly setting the stage for the purposeful execution of WP3 (T3.1).
Moreover, these expert studies will inherently pave the way for the development of an effective monitoring strategy,

aimed at gauging the ongoing success of the project's interventions on forest habitats. The meticulous methodology for annual impact assessment, a crucial component of WP4 (T4.1), will be a direct outcome of these studies.
In tandem with these initiatives, the project will solidify its commitment by designating permanent monitoring areas, carefully pinpointed through GPS coordinates:
- Monitoring Plots for Priority Forest Habitats:
  - Each set will encompass three plots measuring 10 m x 10 m for every 25 ha of priority forest habitat within a single SCI/SAC, thereby ensuring a laser-sharp focus on these pivotal areas.
- Monitoring Plots for Non-priority Forest Habitats:
  - A complementary set of three plots measuring 10 m x 10 m for every 50 ha of non-priority forest habitat within a single SCI/SAC.

T.2.2 Expert studies for target species (IBL, MSR, SBR, ONYX):
Aligned with the project's steadfast commitment to elevate priority species and habitats, this task operates with laser precision to engender transformative outcomes for these focal points.
Amphibian Species Study:
A detailed expert study is meticulously designed to unlock the optimal management strategies for target amphibian species. The focal species, 1193 Bombina variegata, 1188 Bombina bombina and 1166 Triturus cristatus, are uniquely emblematic of this endeavor. The study's meticulous focus is channeled towards especially the priority habitats of CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe and also the habitats of CZ0713827 Stará Červená voda - lesní komplex.
The methodology is set and will be based on individual counting (observations, counting calling individuals during the mating season). The amphibian monitoring methodology is carefully designed to gather comprehensive data on population size, distribution, and reproductive success. It will be based on several key approaches:
- Individual Counting by Visual Observations: Regular field surveys will be conducted during key activity periods (e.g., during migration, breeding, or feeding times). Researchers will observe and count individual amphibians in their natural habitats, with special attention given to both adults and juveniles to assess population dynamics.
- Auditory Surveys (Calling Counts): During the mating season, many amphibian species produce distinct vocalizations to attract mates. Auditory monitoring will involve counting the number of calling males at designated breeding sites. This method is particularly useful for species that are otherwise difficult to detect visually. The surveys will be conducted in the evening or night, when calling activity is highest, and will follow standardized protocols to ensure reliable data.
- Transect and Quadrat Surveys: In selected habitats, systematic transects (linear paths through the habitat) or quadrats (defined areas) will be established for detailed searches. This method helps to capture data on both visible amphibians and those hidden under vegetation or debris. Transects and quadrats will be used across different habitat types to provide a more complete picture of amphibian distribution.
- Pitfall Traps with Drift Fences: In some areas, pitfall traps with drift fences will be employed. These fences guide amphibians into traps for counting and release. This method is particularly useful for terrestrial amphibians and provides valuable data on migration patterns and population density.
- Egg Mass Surveys: For species that lay conspicuous egg masses (such as frogs and toads), these will be counted in breeding ponds. Egg masses can provide an estimate of breeding success and the number of reproductive females in a population.
- Longitudinal Monitoring: The methodology will be repeated at regular intervals throughout the breeding season and across several years to track population trends over time. This will allow for the detection of long-term changes in amphibian populations and help assess the effectiveness of conservation measures.
All data collected will be systematically recorded, analyzed, and compared with baseline data to detect population trends, habitat preferences, and potential threats to amphibian species in the monitored areas.
This all-encompassing study aims to provide:
Optimal Management Blueprint for Amphibians:
  - Devising an intricately tailored management plan that is singularly dedicated to enhancing and safeguarding the pivotal 1193 Bombina variegata, 1188 Bombina bombina and 1166 Triturus cristatus species. These endeavours resonate at the core of WP3 (T2.2).
Methodology for Annual Impact Assessment:
  - Craftsmanship of a comprehensive methodology to holistically gauge the project's influence on amphibian species, a decisive aspect of WP4 (T4.1).
Baseline Overview of Current Status:
  - Inclusion of a comprehensive snapshot capturing the current status and abundance of the amphibian species across individual project sites. This baseline serves as a pivotal reference point for gauging the project's advancements, especially before the commencement of WP3 (T3.2).
Insect Species Study:

Running in parallel, the specialized study on insect species seamlessly aligns with the project's steadfast focus on priority aspects. Centred on designated priority species within diverse sites, this study bears significant significance:

Developing Optimal Management Strategies for Priority Insects:

- The study will primarily address the needs of priority insect species, namely *1084 Osmoderma eremita and *1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria, within the specified locations. It's important to note that other insect species inhabiting these areas will also derive benefits from this study. *1084 Osmoderma eremita acts as a typical exemplar of an umbrella species. This species is closely associated with old deciduous trees and is considered an umbrella species due to conservation efforts directed towards these trees. The protection of *1084 Osmoderma eremita and its habitat inadvertently safeguards various other species that share the same ecosystem. (Umbrella species have a profound impact on an ecosystem, as their protection indirectly contributes to the preservation of the entire ecological balance.) This approach aids in safeguarding entire ecological communities by ensuring the well-being of specific key species, thereby leading to the overall preservation of the ecosystem. In the case of Osmoderma, the knowledge and experience from the project LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001, where ONYX is a beneficiary and Osmoderma is target species, will be used.

To ensure the long-term viability of their populations, we will implement permanent monitoring of suitable habitats and create adaptive management strategies to support veteran trees and decaying wood, essential for saproxylic species. The adaptive management plan will focus on restoring and maintaining tree habitat continuity, ensuring that as old trees die, younger generations of potential veteran trees are maintained. Additionally, specific actions will be taken to protect the nesting and feeding habitats of 1084 Osmoderma eremita and 1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria, including habitat connectivity and the provision of dead wood.

Furthermore, this study will serve as a blueprint for similar insect conservation projects in other European countries. It will emphasize cross-border collaboration, ensuring that knowledge from this project, as well as from LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001, is shared and applied in future conservation efforts throughout the region.

These species occur in the localities of: CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry. These are mainly priority habitats, see above, and also an area in CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory of 3260.65 ha.

- Weaving a comprehensive methodology into the project's fabric, with a vision to annually measure the project's influence on insect species within the SCIs/SACs, a vital facet of WP4 (T4.1).

Establishing a Baseline of Current Status:

- Inclusion of an overarching snapshot that encapsulates the present status and abundance of the identified insect species across individual project sites. This baseline forays into pivotal benchmarking, squarely ahead of the initiation of WP3 (T3.2).

This meticulous approach resonates with the project's unwavering drive to usher in concrete, direct benefits to the marked priority species and habitats, cementing the project's dedication.

Plant Species Study:

This chapter outlines the preparatory study aimed at identifying the requirements for the successful restoration management of specific plant species within designated SCI/SAC areas. The study primarily focuses on two Czech sites: CZ0314044 Opolenec (comprising 3 micro localities of priority species *4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica) and CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory (covering both banks of the Vltava River with the occurrence of 1381 Dicranum viride in 21 microlocalities). Additionally, the study encompasses Polish sites: PLH240005 Beskid Śląski and PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, where the target species Dicranum viride is also present.

Detailed Methodology for Monitoring Plant Species:

- Initial Survey: Conduct comprehensive field surveys to document the current distribution, population size, and health of *4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica and 1381 Dicranum viride in the designated sites. This includes mapping micro-localities and assessing habitat conditions.
- Environmental Factors: Evaluate key environmental factors such as soil composition, moisture levels, light availability, and existing vegetation, as these elements are crucial for understanding the habitat needs of the target species.

Development of Monitoring Protocols:

- Species-Specific Indicators: Develop and apply specific monitoring indicators for each target species. For *Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica, this may involve tracking flowering rates, seed production, and recruitment success. For Dicranum viride, monitoring might focus on moss cover, growth rates, and substrate conditions.
- Monitoring Frequency: Establish a regular monitoring schedule, typically at least twice a year, to track seasonal changes and assess the effectiveness of restoration measures.

Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:

- Leveraging Past Experiences: Utilize valuable experience and outcomes from the project LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001, in which ONYX participated as a beneficiary, to inform current strategies. This includes adopting best practices and lessons learned to enhance the effectiveness of the restoration management plan.
- Cross-Border Coordination: Facilitate collaboration with Polish partners and other stakeholders to align

conservation efforts and share insights. This cross-border approach ensures that strategies are harmonized and benefits are maximized across the region.

By implementing these methodologies, the study aims to ensure the successful restoration and long-term conservation of the priority plant species within the designated SCI/SAC areas, benefiting both Czech and Polish sites.

T.2.3 Expert study for invasive alien species (IBL, SBR, MSR, ONYX)

Accurate mapping of invasive alien plant species in SCIs/SACs will occur: CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice, Nature Monument Niva Olše - Věřňovice (16 ha outside target habitats) and locality V Lyngu (12 ha), CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry (54 ha, also outside target habitats), CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex (sites with the occurrence of Bombina variegata and suitable for this species, according to forest paths, approx. 27 ha), and CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice (80 ha), CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk (52 ha), CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka (217 ha), CZ0314044 Opolenec (5,8 ha), CZ0310067 Ryšovy (16 ha) CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice (approx. 30 ha, spreading along the stream and overgrowing the valley floodplain, Reynoutria spp.), CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj (min. 15 ha, the highly desirable reduction of invasive woody plants such as Robinia pseudoacacia), CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy (min. 30 ha the spread of invasive tree species or ruderal, expansive and invasive plants (ruderalisation due to game animals), PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry (42 ha), PLH160007 Góry Opawskie (117 ha), PLH240005 Beskid Śląski (10 ha).

Mapping refers to the following invasive alien species: Reynoutria spp., Solidago spp., Echinocystis lobata, Helianthus tuberosus, Ailanthus altissima, Impatiens glandulifera, Acer negundo, Robinia pseudoacacia. Aster lanceolatus. In case of occurrence of other invasive alien plants species, these will also be included in the expert study.

A dedicated methodology will be meticulously crafted to effectively eradicate the invasive alien species including Echinocystis lobata. This comprehensive strategy finds its purpose not only in WP3 (T3.3) but also aligns with the project's greater goal. Its implementation will extend to CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice, CZ0814093 Hraniční Meandry Odry and PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry, where the invasive species (especially E. lobata) has been confirmed from previous years. The methodology's validation will be augmented by insights from WP4 (T4.1), followed by its availability in Czech, English, Polish and German on the project website. Additionally, it will be shared during discussions with forest landowners (WP5, T5.3) and electronically disseminated to contacts acquired during project implementation. Aligned with the project's commitment to address IAS, this expert study embarks on formulating an optimal elimination strategy. This strategy becomes pivotal not only for WP3 (T3.1) but also as a foundational approach for addressing the menace across the designated SCIs/SACs. The study unfolds with:

Crafting a robust methodology that facilitates the annual monitoring and evaluation of project impacts on forest habitats within the SCIs/SACs. This dynamic strategy emerges as a cornerstone within WP5 (T4.1). To facilitate accurate tracking and effective management of invasive alien species (IAS), the following methodology will be employed:

Establishment of Permanent Monitoring Areas:

- Strategic Plot Selection: Permanent monitoring areas will be strategically chosen to represent the spread and impact of IAS within designated Sites of Community Importance (SCI). These areas will be carefully selected based on the distribution and density of IAS occurrences to ensure comprehensive coverage.
- GPS Targeting: Each monitoring area will be precisely located using GPS technology. This ensures accurate and consistent tracking of IAS populations and facilitates the assessment of changes over time.

Monitoring Plot Specifications:

- Plot Dimensions: Monitoring plots will be established with dimensions of 5 x 5 meters. This size is optimal for detailed observations and assessments of IAS within localized areas.
- Plot Density: For every 25 hectares of IAS occurrence and eradication within a single SCI, one 5 x 5 meter monitoring plot will be set up. This density ensures that each plot provides a representative sample of the IAS population within the larger area.

Data Collection and Analysis:

- Frequency of Monitoring: Monitoring will be conducted at regular intervals, ideally twice a year, to capture seasonal variations and assess the effectiveness of eradication efforts. Additional surveys may be scheduled if significant changes are detected or if urgent intervention is required.
- Data Parameters: Key data parameters to be collected include IAS density, distribution patterns, and the effectiveness of control measures. Observations will also include habitat conditions and potential impacts on native species.
- Documentation: Detailed records of each monitoring visit will be maintained, including GPS coordinates, plot conditions, and IAS status. This documentation will support ongoing analysis and reporting.

Integration with Management Actions:

- Adaptive Management: Monitoring results will be used to adapt and refine IAS management strategies. If IAS populations persist or spread despite eradication efforts, management plans will be adjusted accordingly to enhance effectiveness.
- Reporting: Regular reports summarizing monitoring findings, management actions, and any changes in IAS populations will be produced. These reports will be shared with project stakeholders and used to inform future actions.

Coordination and Collaboration:

- Stakeholder Engagement: Coordination with local authorities, conservation groups, and other stakeholders will ensure that monitoring efforts are integrated with broader conservation and management activities. This collaborative approach enhances the overall effectiveness of IAS management strategies.
- Knowledge Sharing: Insights gained from monitoring will be shared with other projects and initiatives addressing IAS, contributing to a broader understanding and more effective management of invasive species across regions.

By implementing this methodology, the project aims to provide a robust framework for tracking and managing IAS, ensuring that eradication efforts are targeted, effective, and adaptable to changing conditions. For a comprehensive understanding, detailed insights into monitoring project activities will be unveiled in WP4 (T4.1). This task fundamentally underscores the project's resolute commitment to counter invasive alien species while ensuring a focused and tangible impact on priority species and habitats, a hallmark of the project's mission.

WP2, T2.1, T2.2, T2.3, Equipment (IBL):
5 tablets (10 research experts are involved in project, 1 tablet for each 2-person research team) with numerical map software necessary for field research (navigation and mapping of target habitats, species, IAS)
2 cameras with a macro lens for photographic documentation of target species identification features as well as habitat conservation status.
All this equipment will also be used in WP4.

Work package WP3 – Conservation actions

Work Package Number	WP3	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Work Package Name	Conservation actions		
Start Month	10	**End Month**	81

Objectives

Objectives:
▪ Improve the condition of 11 habitats (10 forests habitats – of which 3 are priority, 1 bog habitat)
▪ Improve the conservation status of 11 target species (2 amphibians, 7 insects – of which 2 are priority, 2 plants – of which 1 is priority)
▪ Improve the ecosystem functions and socio-economic benefits of restored habitats
▪ Engage volunteers in project activities
Results:
▪ Enhance the condition of forest habitats, covering an area of at least 1900 hectares, and non-forest habitats, covering an area of at least 26 hectares
▪ Achieve a minimum 5% increase in populations of target species
▪ Improve ecosystem functions and socio-economic benefits on at least 1900 hectares of restored habitats
▪ Successfully eradicate invasive alien species from a minimum of 700 hectares
▪ Organize 50 volunteer events (10 per year in the period 2026-2031)

Description

ONYX assumes overall responsibility and oversees T3.1, T3.2, and T3.3 in the Olomouc Region across 2 SCIs: CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice. Additionally, ONYX, in collaboration with MSR, manages these tasks in the Moravian Silesian Region across 5 SCIs: CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice, CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj, CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy, CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry. IBL, in cooperation with ONYX, is responsible for implementation of T3.1, T3.2, and T3.3 activities in the Dolnośląskie region across 1 SCI: PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika; the Opolskie Region across 3 SCIs: PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, PLH160018 Rozumicki Las; the Śląskie Region across 3 SCIs: PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry, PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski. A part of forestry and technical work will be outsourced to qualified external companies. RSE, in cooperation with SBR, takes charge of T3.1, T3.2, and T3.3 in the South Bohemian Region encompassing 6 SCIs: CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka, CZ0310067 Ryšovy, CZ0314044 Opolenec, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory. This is due to the follow-up to the previous project LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001 CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE. PEH is responsible for all volunteer-related activities in collaboration with NSB (for areas in the border

region Austria/CZ). The involvement of over 400 volunteers is a key component of the project, especially in WP3 and WP4 (partly in WP2), when volunteers will play an essential role in tasks such as habitat restoration, species monitoring, and data collection. The costs associated with their involvement primarily cover travel expenses, subsistence allowances, and training costs.

T.3.1 [Restauration management for habitats] (ONYX, IBL, PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR, NSB):
The primary emphasis of T3.1 is to enhance the condition and prospects of priority forest habitats in the project area. All measures to protect and improve the conditions of the target habitats will be implemented based on the results of the preparatory work carried out under WP2. Restauration management for habitats will be implemented in 18 SCI/ SACs, where the habitats are protected by the Habitats Directives: CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka, CZ0314044 Opolenec, CZ0310067 Ryšovy, CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk, CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice, CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj, CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika
PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, PLH160018 Rozumicki Las, PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry, PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski.
Project activities the project activities will be based for each SCI/SAC on WP2, T 2.1:
- Release of target (deciduous) species: Non-native tree species such as Pinus strobus, Pinus nigra, Larix decidua, Robinia pseudoacacia, Acer negundo and Ailanthus altissima will be eliminated. Picea abies will be removed in favour of broadleaved trees (Fagus sylvatica, Acer pseudoplatanus, Prunus avium, Ulmus spp., Quercus spp.) and Abies alba
- Planting of native tree species (e.g., Fagus sylvatica, Acer pseudoplatanus, Prunus avium, Ulmus spp., Quercus spp., Salix alba, Populus nigra, Abies alba, Pinus rotundata) and shrubs, at least 150 000 pc. ensuring adequate watering. Importance will be focused on protecting suitable seed trees and fencing will be created around seedlings from natural regeneration.
- Preservation of exhibition trees suitable for sowing
- Collection of appropriate seed material (Abies alba, Pinus rotundata), seed sowing, and cultivation of genetically indigenous seedlings (Abies alba, Pinus rotundata) for subsequent planting during the AFTER-LIFE phase.
- Establishment of protective fencing (collective protection) for seedlings against game, covering a minimum of 5,000 meters.
- Individual protection of seedlings through measures like railings, tubes, cages, chemical and biological protection (e.g., sheep's wool), for a minimum of 9,500 seedlings.
- Weed control (Calamagrostis epigejos, Rubus spp., etc.) across at least 10 hectares.
- Clearing and maintaining forest-free areas in habitat 7140.
These activities are targeted at the specific restoration of priority species and habitats, which is a crucial element of the project.

T.3.2 Restauration management for target species (ONYX, IBL, PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR, NSB):
Restauration management for habitats will be implemented in 14 SCI/SACs: CZ0314044 Opolenec, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika, PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, PLH160018 Rozumicki Las, PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry, PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski.
The aim of T3.2 is to enhance the status and prospects of the populations of the 11 target species (2 amphibians, 7 insects – of which 2 are priority, 2 plants – of which 1 is priority) in the project area.
- Implementation of measures to protect and enhance target species based on findings from expert studies from WP2.
- Restoration management actions will be carried out across all SCI/SACs:
    - For amphibians and insects, this involves actions such as habitat enhancement, planting of native vegetation, and measures to control invasive species.
    - For priority insects, specific measures will be tailored to their habitat requirements.
    - For plants (especially priority), efforts will focus on creating suitable conditions and habitats for their growth.
- Implementation of habitat-specific restoration strategies, including habitat restoration and conservation activities.
- Collaboration with relevant stakeholders, experts, and local communities to ensure a comprehensive approach.
The measures taken within T3.2 align with the project's core focus on priority species and habitats, ensuring their direct benefits through well-defined restoration activities.

T.3.2.1 Restauration management for amphibians
Restauration management for 1193 Bombina variegata or 1188 Bombina bombina will be implemented in SCI/SACs: CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice, Nature Monument Niva Olše - Věřňovice (16 ha) and locality V Lyngu (12 ha), CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry (54 ha – pools are also outside the forest habitat), CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex (332 ha), PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka (32 ha), PLH160007 Góry Opawskie (217 ha), PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe (208 ha), PLH240005 Beskid Śląski (296 ha).

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Restauration management for 1166 Triturus cristatus will be implemented in CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex (332 ha), PLH160007 Góry Opawskie (217 ha), PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe (208 ha), PLH240005 Beskid Śląski (296 ha), the same area as above.
Other amphibian species benefiting from protection management:
1209 Rana dalmatina, Bufo bufo, 2353 Triturus alpestris, Triturus vulgaris, 1213 Rana temporaria, 1203 Hyla arborea
The following activities will be implemented:
1) Maintenance and restoration of existing amphibian breeding pools:
- Ensure appropriate shading and water surface conditions for breeding pools.
  - Adaptation of pool environments to meet species-specific requirements:
  - Bombina variegata and Bombina bombina pools will be shaded, and aquatic vegetation will be minimized.
  - Triturus cristatus pools will be semi-shaded (50% shade), with careful aquatic vegetation management.
- Optimal water column height maintained (30-90 cm) across at least 10 ha of habitat.
- Activities include shrub cutting, removal of invasive alien species (T3.3.), elimination of aquatic plants, and creation of wintering sites from removed infestations.
2) Site preparation for the new amphibian pools:
- Following guidelines from WP2, T2.2, preparation of areas for new pool implementation.
- Implementation of new pools will be financed through national sources (e.g., Operational Programme Environment).
- Activities involve shrub cutting, eradication of invasive alien species, and establishment of wintering areas from removed infestations.
3) Supporting Activities:
- Species benefiting from habitat management include 1209 Rana dalmatina, Bufo bufo, 2353 Triturus alpestris, Triturus vulgaris, 1213 Rana temporaria, 1203 Hyla arborea.
- Activities focus on optimizing breeding and wintering habitats for these species.
- Shrub cutting, invasive species removal, and establishment of wintering areas will be integral to these efforts.
The restoration efforts under T3.2.1 emphasize the creation and maintenance of suitable habitats for target amphibian species. These activities directly contribute to the project's overarching goal of improving the conservation status of these species and their habitats.

T.3.2.2 Restauration management for insect species
T3.2.2 aims to enhance the habitats and conditions for the target insect species within selected SCIs/SACs. The focus lies on preserving and improving habitats that support the unique and priority insect species listed below. The main objective is implementing restoration measures to enhance the habitats and quality of life for target insect species in specific SCIs/SACs, emphasizing the improvement of conditions for priority species.
Restauration management for saproxylic insects will be implemented in SCI/SACs:
CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice: *1084 Osmoderma eremita and 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus
CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: *1084 Osmoderma eremita and 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus
CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory: *1084 Osmoderma eremita, 1083 Lucanus cervus, 1079 Limoniscus violaceus and 4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus.
PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry: *1084 Osmoderma eremita and 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus
PLH240005 Beskid Śląski: *1084 Osmoderma eremita
As Osmoderma eremita is an “umbrella species”, meaning that its protection allows hundreds of other protected insect species to live, we expect that restoration management targeting Osmoderma eremita under WP3, T3.2, will lead to improved quality of life for other insect species as well.
Restauration management for other insect species will be implemented in SCI/SACs
CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice: *1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria and 4014 Carabus variolosus
CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice *1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria
PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika: 4014 Carabus variolosus
PLH240005 Beskid Śląski: 4014 Carabus variolosus
The following activities will be implemented:
1. Preservation of Natural and Semi-Natural Forests:
   - Maintaining diverse age structures, native tree species, and mature decaying trees (refer to T.3.1).
2. Enhancing Dead Wood Quantity:
   - Retaining standing dead trees, professionally pruned for durability, at least 50 m3.
3. Planting of Species-Appropriate Trees:
   - Establishing coppices and avenues of broadleaved trees, including oaks, beeches, limes, elms, willows, and selected fruit trees.
   - Planting at least 200 trees, ensuring necessary watering.
4. Riparian Vegetation Management:
   - Thinning and treatment of riparian vegetation along pond embankments.

- Pruning of willows to encourage growth.

5. Protection of Old Trees and Hollows:
   - Stabilizing and protecting old trees, particularly their torsos, by professional treatments and elimination of Viscum album.
   - Preserving at least 1400 trees.
6. Mosaic Mowing and Vegetation Regulation:
   - Creating and maintaining a mosaic of openings, clearings, and forest edges.
   - Focusing on areas with *1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria.
7. Eradication of Invasive Alien Species (IAS):
   - Ensuring the removal of IAS plants, providing sunlight to old trees (see T.3.3).

Through targeted habitat improvements and species-specific management, T3.2.2 aligns with the project's commitment to enhance the conservation status of priority insect species while fostering a healthier ecosystem overall.

T.3.2.3 Restauration management for plant species

T3.2.3 focuses on restoring habitats for specific plant species within designated SCIs/SACs. The restoration management is tailored to improve the conditions for priority plant species mentioned below. The Objective is to implement restoration measures to enhance the habitats and prospects for priority plant species in selected SCIs/SACs.

Restoration Management for Plant Species:
- Implemented in SCI/SACs: CZ0314044 Opolenec (3 micro localities), CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory (both banks of the Vltava River), PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie.
- Management focuses on priority *4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica (Opolenec) and 1381 Dicranum viride (Hlubocké obory, Beskid Śląski, Góry Opawskie).

Key Activities:

1. Regular Management of G. bohemica Site:
   - Annual spring cutting with clearcutting and biennial autumn cutting with thorough clearcutting for *4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica.
   - Hand raking with iron or vertical rake after seeding, reducing larger trees if needed.
   - Site lightening and suppressing rejuvenating brush clearance with a brush cutter.
2. Preservation of Natural and Semi-Natural Forests:
   - Maintaining diverse age structures, autochthonous tree species, and mature decaying trees (refer to T.3.1).
3. Monitoring and Protection of Dicranum viride:
   - Monitoring localities of 1381 Dicranum viride without harvesting its host species.

Through these tailored activities, T3.2.3 contributes to the overall conservation efforts by creating suitable conditions for the mentioned priority plant species.

T.3.3 Elimination of IAS species (ONYX, IBL, PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR, NSB)

T3.3 aims to eradicate invasive alien species (IAS) within specific SCIs/SACs, targeting various identified IAS plants. The restoration management focuses on removing these invasive species to restore the natural balance of the ecosystems. The objective of T3.3 is to implement measures to eliminate invasive alien species and restore the ecological balance in designated SCIs/SACs. Outbreaks of IAS will be actively sought out, and if identified outside the project area, their eradication will be carried out in coordination with the affected landowners and land managers.

Elimination of IAS species will be implemented in those SCI/SACs: CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice, Nature Monument Niva Olše - Věřňovice (16 ha outside target habitats) and locality V Lyngu (12 ha), CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry (54 ha, also outside target habitats), CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex (sites with the occurrence of Bombina variegata and suitable for this species, according to forest paths, approx. 27 ha), and CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice (80 ha), CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk (52 ha), CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka (217 ha), CZ0314044 Opolenec (5,8 ha), CZ0310067 Ryšovy (16 ha) CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice (approx..30 ha, spreading along the stream and overgrowing the valley floodplain, Reynoutria spp.), CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj (min. 15 ha, the highly desirable reduction of invasive woody plants such as Robinia pseudoacacia), CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy (min. 30 ha the spread of invasive tree species or ruderal, expansive and invasive plants (ruderalisation due to game animals), PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry (42 ha), PLH160007 Góry Opawskie (117 ha), PLH240005 Beskid Śląski (10 ha).

Elimination of IAS species will be implemented at least on 700 ha. Outbreaks of IAS will be actively sought out, and if identified outside the project area, their eradication will be carried out in coordination with the affected landowners and land managers. The following IAS plants will be eradicated: Reynoutria spp., Solidago spp., Echinocystis lobata, Helianthus tuberosus, Ailanthus altissima, Acer negundo, Impatiens glandulifera, Robinia pseudoacacia. Aster lanceolatus. In case of occurrence of other invasive alien plants species, these will also be eradicated.

The following activities will be implemented:

- Robinia pseudoacacia, Acer negundo, Ailanthus altissima will be eliminated (cutting and careful localized application of herbicides to prevent contamination of other species in accordance with the site management plan for individual SCI/SAC)

- Reynoutria spp., Solidago spp., Impatiens glandulifera, Aster lanceolatus, Helianthus tuberosus will be eliminated by careful and localized application of herbicides to prevent contamination of other species in accordance with the site management plan for individual SCI/SAC)
- Echinocystis lobata will be eliminated in the base of expert study for the eradication of Echinocystis lobata WP2, T2.3, The experience with this IAS and others will be recorded annually and included in the methodology. At the end of the project Methodology for the eradication of the invasive alien species including Echinocystis lobata will be created.

The targeted elimination of IAS is critical to maintaining the ecological integrity of the SCIs/SACs. These species pose significant threats to native biodiversity and ecosystem health, necessitating effective management strategies to control their spread. The use of herbicides, when applied carefully and localized, presents a viable solution for several reasons:

- Precision Application: Herbicides enable precise targeting of specific invasive species, minimizing the impact on surrounding native vegetation. By applying herbicides directly to the invasive plants, we can effectively suppress their growth and prevent them from outcompeting native species for resources.
- Efficient Eradication: For species like Reynoutria spp. and I. glandulifera, which have aggressive growth habits and can quickly dominate an area, herbicides offer a rapid and effective means of control. This is particularly important for species that have already established a significant presence and are difficult to manage through manual removal alone.
- Localized Treatment: Herbicides will be applied in a localized manner according to the specific site management plan for each SCI/SAC. This approach ensures that only the targeted invasive species are affected, reducing the risk of unintended damage to native flora and fauna.
- Selective Formulations: The choice of herbicide formulations will be carefully considered to select products with minimal environmental impact. Selective herbicides that specifically target the invasive species while sparing native plants will be used whenever possible.

Restoration and Recovery:

- Facilitating Native Regeneration: By controlling invasive species through herbicide application, we can create conditions conducive to the recovery and regeneration of native plant communities. This is essential for restoring the ecological balance and enhancing habitat quality for native wildlife.

In summary, the careful and localized application of herbicides is justified as a necessary measure to manage and eradicate invasive species effectively. By targeting specific plants, minimizing non-target impacts, and integrating with site management plans, herbicides will play a crucial role in safeguarding the ecological health of SCI and SAC areas.
In the case of herbicides, a spot application will be employed, ensuring they are not used in close proximity to aquatic environments. If intervention against IAS near aquatic environments becomes necessary, only targeted methods, such as injection, will be utilized. For the removal of IAS, proven methods developed in the implementation of the LIFE06 NAT/CZ/000121 | Acronym: MORAVKA, will be used, (see chapter 1.5 Upscaling results of other EU funded projects).
Before application, occurrences of invasive species will be mapped, especially during the preparatory study phase. Each species will have a designated eradication method. Since some interventions will take place near water bodies, eradication methods will be chosen with water protection in mind.
Within 5–10 meters of the shoreline (depending on slope), foliar spraying will not be used. Instead, control methods will include manual removal, mowing, grazing, or stem injection techniques (e.g., drilling, peeling, or injections).
Beyond 10 meters, mechanical backpack sprayers will be used appropriately, for example, to control Japanese knotweed (Reynoutria sp.).
Sprayers will be equipped with anti-drift nozzles and protective shields for targeted application.
Treatments will be carried out only in wind speeds below 3 m/s and at a maximum spray height of 1.5 meters.
Mixing and filling of herbicides will take place at least 200 meters from the shoreline, using a spill containment system.
Cleaning will be conducted outside the intervention site, primarily at the organization’s facilities.
Only registered herbicides will be used.
The application will be performed by certified personnel with Level II or III certification.
These measures ensure that herbicide use minimizes any potential negative impact on water ecosystems.

WP3, T3.1, T3.2, T3.3 Equipment (ONYX):
Tractor 4X4 150PS with forestry body. It is a special tractor suitable for the implementation of the proposed types of measures in the project's hardly accessible areas (mountainous, forested terrain). The tractor will be used for the implementation of most of the WP3 works in all project areas.
Container carrier 6x6 35 t, hydraulic arm 10 m, 5 tons. It is a truck suitable for ensuring the transport of necessary materials. A low floor tandem trailer with a capacity of 30 t will be purchased for the vehicle, the tri-axle will be used to transport a walking excavator due to the size of the individual territories.
The following small equipment will be used: chainsaw, scrubber, sprinklers, protective equipment according to the Czech Labour Code.
WP3, T3.1, T3.2, T3.3 Equipment (SBR, RSE): SBR, RSE already owns the basic equipment (purchased from project

LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001) that will be used during the project (truck, wheeled tractor with balancer and forestry attachments, hand chainsaws). The project budget is calculated only with operation costs for these current machines.
A 19 m long work platform for specific management and treatment of trees that are home to saproxylic insects, T3.2) will be purchased as part of this project.
WP3, T3.1, T3.2, T3.3 Other goods, works and services (ONYX, SBR, RSE, IBL):
Operating costs of machines and company vehicles (fuel, oil., etc.), Protective work equipment, Material for fencing, Seedlings for planting native tree species, Material for individual protection of seedlings, Material for the eradication of invasive species. A part of forest and technical work on Polish sites will be outsourced by qualified external companies.

Work package WP4 – Monitoring and evaluation

Work Package Number	WP4	**Lead Beneficiary**	6 - IBL
Work Package Name	Monitoring and evaluation		
Start Month	4	**End Month**	84

Objectives

Objectives:
▪ Establish baseline, identify intermediate and final status of target species and habitats (T.4.1)
▪ Use LPIs to determine the impact of the project (T.4.2)
▪ Determine the impact of PR activities (T.4.3) Establish baseline, identify intermediate and final status of target species and habitats using scientifically rigorous methods (T.4.1)
▪ Use a comprehensive set of Life Project Indicators (LPIs) to systematically determine the impact of the project on biodiversity and ecosystem services (T.4.2)
▪ Assess the effectiveness and reach of Public Relations (PR) activities in raising awareness and engagement (T.4.3)
Results:
▪ Final monitoring report on the impact of project measures on the population of target species and the state of target habitats, providing a detailed assessment of changes over the project duration (T.4.1)
▪ Develop a methodology for the eradication of the invasive alien species include Echinocystis lobata (Task 4.1.3)
▪ Evaluation of project impact on LIFE Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) elaborated and provided with project reports, demonstrating the project's contribution to broader conservation goals (T.4.2)
▪ Report of dissemination activities, highlighting the scope, methodologies, and outcomes of PR efforts, assessing their effectiveness in promoting project objectives (T.4.3)

Description

T4.1 Monitoring of project impact on target species and habitats (IBL, ONYX)
To assess the project's impact on target species and habitats, we will build upon the findings of WP2, specifically T.2.1 Expert studies for habitats, T.2.2 Expert studies for target species, and T.2.3 Expert study for invasive alien species. This continuous monitoring effort will focus on individual target habitats, species (including target amphibians and saproxylic insects), and invasive alien species (IAS) plants. Specific monitoring parameters will be derived from these expert studies. Our approach and monitoring areas will be guided by WP2's methodology.
The scientific coordinator of the project (IBL) will oversee the Monitoring of Project Impact on target habitats, species and IAS.

T4.1.1. Monitoring of project impact on target habitats (IBL, ONYX)
In this task, we will establish permanent monitoring areas targeted via GPS coordinates.
1 set of monitoring plots will include 3 plots of 10 m x 10 m for every 20 ha of priority forest habitat within 1 SAC. These monitoring plots will be implemented in 11 SCI/SACs.
CZ0314021 Borkovická blata: *91D0 – 5 sets of monitoring plots
CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice: *9180–1 set of monitoring plots
CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: *91E0 – 1 set of monitoring plots
CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, locality V Lyngu: *91E0 – 1 set of monitoring plots
PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika: *91D0 - 1 set of monitoring plots, *91E0 - 1 set of monitoring plots, *9180 - 3 sets of monitoring plots
PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka: *91E0 – 1 set of monitoring plots

PLH160007 Góry Opawskie: *91E0 - 3 sets of monitoring plots, *9180 - 1 set of monitoring plots
PLH160018 Rozumicki Las: *91E0 – 1 set of monitoring plots
PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry: *91E0 – 1 set of monitoring plots
PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe: *91E0 – 1 set of monitoring plots
PLH240005 Beskid Śląski: *91D0 - 2 sets of monitoring plots, *91E0 - 4 sets of monitoring plots, *9180 - 2 sets of monitoring plots
Monitoring plots in total by priority habitats: *91D0: 8 sets of monitoring plots, *9180: 7 set of monitoring plots *91E0: 12 sets of monitoring plots
The monitoring of habitat conditions will focus on assessing structure, species composition, and dynamics. The primary method will be field measurements on permanent and temporary monitoring plots of various sizes (10 × 10 m, 1.5 × 1.5 m, circular plots, etc.). A regular network of points will be established and stabilized in the field. We will monitor the representation of tree species, age and spatial structure of stands, deadwood volume, and the presence of typical indicator species. Monitoring will also include the presence of non-native species and disruptive factors (logging, eutrophication, erosion, drought). Data will be recorded using phytosociological surveys and GIS technologies. Aerial imagery and remote sensing (LiDAR) will be used to assess stand structure and diversity. Monitoring will be conducted annually, with results analyzed using statistical (multivariate analysis) and GIS programs. Outputs will include tables, graphs, and maps. Each set of monitoring plots will contain 3 10X10 m plots with different management or without management. The management for each individual set will be listed in Expert studies for habitats (WP2, T2.1) For example: CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice, locality V Lyngu: *91E0 - 1 set of monitoring plots: 1st plot: mechanical protection of seedlings, 2nd plot: chemical protection of seedlings, 3rd plot: seedlings without protection. Each plot will be evaluated 1-3 times per year, according to WP2, T2.1.
The monitoring will focus on the different effectiveness of individual protection of seedlings and seedlings against biting by wild animals (chemical, mechanical - tubes, biological - sheep wool, no protection), and on the effectiveness of group protection (fences). For individual protection, the growth and possible deformation of seedlings and saplings will also be considered. Species, number, increment, mortality and, where relevant, herbage cover will be recorded. The output will be an annual summary monitoring report. Findings over the life of the project will be summarized in a final report. The results of the monitoring will be regularly reported on the project website. 1 set of monitoring plots will include 3 plots of 10 m x 10 m for every 50 ha of no priority forest habitat within 1 SCI/SAC. These monitoring plots will be implemented in 18 SCI/SACs.
CZ0314021 Borkovická blata: 91T0 – 1 set of monitoring plots, 7140 – 1 monitoring plot
CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk: 9110 – 3 sets of monitoring plots
CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka: 9110 – 1 set of monitoring plots, 9130 – 1 set of monitoring plots
CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice: 9130 –1 set of monitoring plots, 91F0 - 1 monitoring plot
CZ0310067 Ryšovy: 91U0: 1 set of monitoring plots
CZ0314044 Opolenec: 91U0: 1 set of monitoring plots
CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: 91F0 – 1 monitoring plot
CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice: 9130 - 1 set of monitoring plots
CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj: 9170 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9190 - 1 monitoring plot
CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy: 9130 1 monitoring plot, 9170 - 2 sets of monitoring plots
PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika: 9110 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9130 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 7140 - 1 set of monitoring plots
PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka: 9110 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9170 - 1 set of monitoring plots
PLH160007 Góry Opawskie: 9110 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9170 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9190 - 1 set of monitoring plots
PLH160018 Rozumicki Las: 91F0 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9170 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9190 - 1 set of monitoring plots
PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry: 91F0 - 1 set of monitoring plots
PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe: 9110 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9130 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9170 - 2 sets of monitoring plots
PLH240005 Beskid Śląski: 9110 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9130 - 1 set of monitoring plots, 9170 - 1 set of monitoring plots
Monitoring plots in total by habitats: 91T0: 1 set of monitoring plots, 7140: 2 monitoring plots, 9110: 9 sets of monitoring plots, 9130: 7 sets of monitoring plots, 91U0: 2 sets of monitoring plots, 9170: 9 sets of monitoring plots, 91F0: 4 sets of monitoring plots, 9190: 3 sets of monitoring plots.

T4.1.2. Monitoring of project impact on target species (IBL, ONYX)
Building upon the findings of WP2, specifically T2.2, we will conduct expert studies on the optimal management of target species, including amphibians and saproxylic insect species. These studies will encompass methodologies for

monitoring these species within specific SCI/SACs. The task of monitoring target species will be entrusted to experts specialized in the respective species.
Amphibian Monitoring:
Our monitoring efforts for amphibians will center on evaluating the optimal management (WP3, T2.2) of 1193 Bombina variegata, 188 Bombina bombina and 1166 Triturus cristatus. Regular monitoring will occur in SCIs CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski (296 ha). This initiative will encompass assessing the current status and abundance of target amphibian species, as well as evaluating the impact of project measures (WP3, T3.2) on amphibian populations. Additional amphibian species will also be documented as part of the monitoring. The data gathered will guide the creation of new pools for post-project care under the AFTER-LIFE phase. Annual summary monitoring reports will be produced, with findings integrated into a final report. Monitoring outcomes will be routinely shared on the project website.
Other amphibian species will also be recorded as part of the monitoring, and any changes in their occurrence (numbers, densities) over the project duration will be reported. Within each SAC, an inventory of existing pools and trenches suitable for amphibians will be carried out, with a special focus on target species. The methodology will rely primarily on live trapping methods, which are safe and utilize pheromone traps or other types of traps (e.g., barrier traps, emergence traps) with a high probability of survival for individuals. This method allows verification of species occurrence and estimation of population sizes.
Insect Monitoring:
Similarly, we will evaluate the optimal management (WP3, T2.2) for insect species (with a special focus on priority insect species) in various areas:
- CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice and Nature Monument Niva Olše – Věřňovice
- CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: focusing on *1084 Osmoderma eremita and 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus
- CZ0314126 Hlubocké Obory: focusing on *1084 Osmoderma eremita, 1083 Lucanus cervus, 1079 Limoniscus violaceus, and 4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus
- CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice: focusing on *1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria and 4014 Carabus variolosus
- CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice: focusing on *1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria
- PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry: focusing on *1084 Osmoderma eremita and 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus
- PLH240005 Beskid Śląski: focusing on *1084 Osmoderma eremita and 4014 Carabus variolosus
- PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika: focusing on 4014 Carabus variolosus

For insects, our monitoring will encompass assessing current occurrences and abundances at project sites, along with evaluating the impact of project measures (WP3, T3.2) on insect populations. Annual summary monitoring reports will be generated, with comprehensive results featured in a final report. Regular updates on monitoring outcomes will be shared on the project website.
The monitoring of invertebrates will require a combination of methods targeting different life stages and habitat types. Specific methods will include pheromone traps for selected species, emergence traps placed on deadwood to capture species developing within the substrate, and window traps to record actively moving flying insects. Additionally, active surveys of individuals in tree cavities, under bark, and on wood surfaces will be conducted. The monitoring will consider different tree species and decay stages. It will be performed annually at multiple time points to track different developmental stages. Control plots will be used to assess intervention impacts. The detailed methodology will be defined during project preparation. The specific parameters to be monitored will be based on expert studies and referenced published methods (e.g., Manual for Monitoring Biological Elements and Classification of Ecological Status by the Chief Inspectorate of Environmental Protection).
For some saproxylic insects monitoring will involve searching for adults in deadwood. Deadwood meeting species-specific habitat requirements will be randomly selected in the field. The transect method will be used to estimate deadwood volume at the beginning and end of the project to assess changes in habitat availability for saproxylic insects.
Plant Monitoring:
The evaluation of optimal management (WP3, T2.2) will extend to plant species in specific areas:
- CZ0314044 Opolenec: *4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica
- CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory: 1381 Dicranum viride
- PLH160007 Góry Opawskie: 1381 Dicranum viride
- PLH240005 Beskid Śląski: 1381 Dicranum viride

Plant monitoring will encompass assessing the occurrence and abundance of monitored plants at project sites, alongside evaluating the impact of project measures (WP3, T3.2) on their populations. Annual summary monitoring reports will be produced, and the cumulative findings will be encapsulated in a final report. Monitoring results will be consistently shared on the project website.
The occurrence and abundance of monitored plant species at individual project sites will be assessed, including evaluating the impact of conservation measures (WP3, T3.2) on their populations in the final project stages. Permanent observation plots will be used to track plant occurrence.

T4.1.3. Monitoring of project impact on invasive alien species

Aligned with the objectives of WP2, particularly T2.3, an exhaustive mapping and formulation of eradication methodologies for individual Invasive Alien Species (IAS) and specific SCIs will be conducted. The devised eradication strategies will conform to recommended measures for distinct SCI/SACs and will be harmonized, where applicable, with management plans. Simultaneously, designated permanent monitoring zones of 10x10 meters will be established using GPS technology. The number of plots will be contingent upon the extent of IAS presence, ranging from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 5 for each SCI/SAC. Routine monitoring will be conducted in each designated plot both prior to and at least two weeks subsequent to any intervention—this translates to a minimum of two monitoring sessions per year, with more frequent assessments if deemed necessary. Parameters such as IAS coverage, species composition, vigor, and any deformities (post herbicide application) will be scrutinized. Following this, observations will encompass the emergence of herbaceous and woody cover, encompassing species composition, abundance, growth (in the case of seedlings), and the presence of any deformities.

One of the invasive species present at our project sites is Echinocystis lobata. This plant is listed among the 100 most dangerous invasive species in Europe and falls into the category of "transformers" - plants that can significantly impact affected ecosystems. Thanks to its incredibly rapid growth capability, it can create dense patches and rapidly infest extensive areas, resulting in significant deterioration of light conditions and physical deformation of native species. This process can lead to the disappearance of native plants and permanent changes in entire communities. This unfavourable situation also affects protected Natura 2000 natural habitats, including the priority habitat type *91D0. While in Poland, a methodology for the eradication of this dangerous invasive plant has been developed recently (since 2022), such a methodology is currently lacking in the Czech environment. Therefore, our project aims to develop and refine a methodology for the effective eradication of invasive species at our sites, with a specific focus on E. lobata. We will utilize all available resources and experiences. The developed procedures will be carefully tested in practice and adjusted for effectiveness. Our goal is to create a comprehensive and efficient methodology that will serve as a valuable tool in the fight against invasive species. One of our top priorities is to make this methodology accessible to a wide range of people. Hence, we will prepare it in four language versions - English, Czech, Polish, and German. This will ensure its availability and usability for experts, enthusiasts, and practitioners from various countries and regions. As a result, our methodology will have a significant impact not only on our project but also on the broader effort to protect natural sites from invasive species.

To further justify the need for developing a methodology for the eradication of Echinocystis lobata in the Czech Republic, it is important to highlight that this invasive species is spreading rapidly in riparian and floodplain habitats, where it poses a serious threat to native biodiversity. The absence of a Czech-specific methodology means that land managers lack tailored guidance for effectively managing or eradicating this species under local environmental conditions. Although Poland has published a control compendium, Czech ecosystems have often different hydrological, climatic, and soil characteristics, which require a localized approach. Developing a Czech methodology will not only fill this gap but also contribute to harmonized management efforts across Central Europe, benefiting broader conservation objectives. The methodology will be tested within the project to ensure its effectiveness and relevance before being made available in multiple languages. Particular emphasis will be placed on the management of IAS Echinocystis lobata within CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice and PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry. The knowledge and insights gained from addressing this IAS will be consistently documented and integrated into the methodology by the project's conclusion.

Annual summary monitoring reports will be generated, and cumulative findings will be incorporated into a comprehensive final report. Regular updates on monitoring outcomes will be disseminated through the project website.

T4.2 LIFE Key Performance indicators monitoring (PEH)

This endeavour is geared towards the meticulous tracking of the project's influence in relation to key performance indicators that align with nature and biodiversity, ecosystem functionalities, socioeconomic effects, and other predefined targets, as delineated in the Key Performance Indicators table (KPI). The KPI table encompasses anticipated outcomes grounded in an appraisal of the initial state within project areas, as well as the potential for enhancements pertaining to overarching project objectives. Although nearly all indicators have been populated using the provided template, an additional indicator has been introduced to monitor the expected positive impacts of the project:

Policies: Integration of nature conservation objectives into a minimum of 2 regional or national policies. Subsequently, WP5, T5.1, and T5.2 are structured to leverage these experiences and best practices, assimilating pertinent objectives into policies that are poised for updates during the project's implementation timeframe and within the project's geographic scope.

Continuous KPI monitoring will be undertaken, spanning the project's inception to its culmination. The initial phase of KPI monitoring is scheduled for first year of the project, entailing an assessment of the initial state corresponding to relevant KPIs. Baselines will be established to facilitate the evaluation of anticipated qualitative and quantitative changes within the ambit of KPIs. Subsequent monitoring will juxtapose the outcomes achieved through project actions against the initial baselines. In-depth analyses will focus on attained results and any deviations encountered or expected in

relation to the original estimations or inputs in the KPI Webtool. These findings will be conveyed alongside each project report to provide a comprehensive understanding of the project's performance. The monitoring process will be entrusted to external experts, responsible for delivering monitoring outcomes. Collaboratively, site managers and senior ecologists will liaise with these experts, supplying up-to-date information on the progress of project actions that are projected to influence performance indicators. Additionally, this collaboration will extend to assessing the project's impact on target habitats (WP4, T4.1), optimizing synergy to enhance cost-effectiveness.
Inclusion within the monitoring scope is the assessment of project actions' impact (WP3, T3.1, T3.2, T3.3) on target habitats. These habitats often manifest in a mosaic-like pattern across project sites, featuring gradual transitions between them as well as intermingling with plant communities of diverse habitat types. Consequently, an accurate assessment of the impact and precise area for each individual habitat is possible primarily through expert estimation (also founded on WP4, T4.1 monitoring outcomes). This specific habitat evaluation will be encompassed within the final evaluation of the project's impact on KPIs at its culmination.

T.4.3 Monitoring of dissemination actions (PEH)
This facet revolves around evaluating the efficacy and influence of dissemination activities (WP5) in relation to project performance indicators. Comprehensive monitoring and reporting of both quantitative and qualitative outcomes, as well as impacts of dissemination activities on the intended target audience, will be conducted:
- Quantitative Evaluation: Quantitative aspects of project dissemination actions will be meticulously monitored and juxtaposed against anticipated outcomes. For instance, metrics such as the number of event participants, website visits, and the tally of media outputs will be scrutinized and compared. The outcomes will be seamlessly integrated into each project report. The quantification of participants will be substantiated by attendance lists and website traffic analytics. Likewise, media outputs will be substantiated through a curated list of hyperlinks to online articles, copies of printed materials, and archived videos for ease of sharing, alongside retaining copies for archival purposes.
- Qualitative Impact Assessment: The qualitative resonance within the target audience will be thoroughly evaluated and reported, particularly for pertinent sub-actions within dissemination (WP5, T5.1, T5.2). This assessment will be accomplished by gauging the engagement and feedback from participants partaking in excursions, field trips, meetings, and workshops.
Two assessment mechanisms will be employed to gauge the interest and feedback from participants. Firstly, a comprehensive evaluation of questionnaires, completed by a representative sampling of attendees from relevant project events (with a minimum of 100 questionnaires in total), will be undertaken. This evaluative report, constituting an integral part of the final project report, will encompass an introduction outlining the purpose and inquiries being explored, a description of the evaluative methodology employed, as well as the collated results, conclusions, and recommendations. Secondly, a feedback collection approach will be employed, encompassing the recording of key insights that could lead to the enhancement of communication tools tailored to the target audience. A distinct report encapsulating these pivotal feedback points garnered from the aforementioned events will be crafted and included within the final project report. This document will also encompass an analysis of plausible reasons (or those identified by participants) for the feedback, and, in instances of constructive criticism or pertinent negative comments, will proffer conceivable solutions and recommendations aimed at refining communication practices for analogous future situations or events. The amassed feedback will be continuously taken into consideration, and pertinent observations will be channelled towards updating the project's Communication Plan. Whenever opportune, the Public Relations (PR) manager will engage in discussions with other members of the project team to deliberate over proposals for meaningful enhancements. The results and impacts arising from project dissemination activities will be collated and assessed by the project coordinator (PEH) and the respective beneficiary coordinators. The comprehensive compilation and reporting of these outcomes, both within project reports and a dynamic performance indicators database, will be spearheaded by the coordinator (PEH).

WP4, T4.1, T4.2, T4.3, Equipment (IBL):
5 tablets (10 research experts are involved in project, 1 tablet for each 2-person research team) with numerical map software necessary for field research (navigation and mapping of target habitats, species, IAS)
2 cameras with a macro lens for photographic documentation of target species identification features as well as habitat conservation status.
This is the same equipment that will be purchased for WP2 and reused in WP4.

Work package WP5 – Sustainability, replication and exploitation of project results

Work Package Number	WP5	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Work Package Name	Sustainability, replication and exploitation of project results		
Start Month	1	**End Month**	84

Objectives

Objectives:
• Foster effective communication among project beneficiaries, key stakeholders, professionals, and the public.
• Cultivate mutual understanding and harmony between the organization and the environment, ensuring regular project promotion in the media.
• Provide ample information to the public and essential stakeholders.
• Maximize the replicability of best practices and demonstration methods developed within the project.
• Successfully organize a final conference.
• Establish a functional and efficient networking and After-Life plan.
Results:
• Development of an effective communication plan.
• Creation, maintenance, and continuous promotion of the project website in two languages, attracting a minimum of 5,000 unique visitors.
• Generation of media outputs, including at least 5 press releases and a minimum of 20 features in local, regional, national, and international media (print, radio, TV), reaching a total audience of at least 2,000,000. Additionally, 2,000 USB flash disks containing project information will be distributed, with appearances on TV and online platforms.
• Installation of notice boards across all 13 project sites (total 13 boards).
• Production of printed materials and promotional items: two editions of calendars (300 pcs each), two-year diaries (300 pcs each), and promotional items such as chocolates, bags, mobile phone and laptop covers, and t-shirts (2000 pcs).
• Execution of a minimum of 10 educational excursions for schools and the public on project sites, involving at least 100 participants.
• Presentation of 10 theatre performances in primary schools and socio-cultural events, with online distribution of videos.
• Organization of three 2-day field workshops, with a minimum of 50 participants each, involving key stakeholders from the project.
• Conducting a minimum of 20 in-person meetings with interested stakeholders in the Czech Republic, with participation ranging from 2 to 4 participants per meeting, engaging key stakeholders from the project.
• Hosting two conferences and four seminars.
• Holding two 1-day field workshops for key stakeholders outside project areas.
• Facilitating a minimum of 30 individual communications with key stakeholders, engaging at least 90 individuals (3 to 5 participants per meeting) located outside project areas.
• Establishment of 4 focal points for target topics, with a total of at least 40 consultations.
• Development and replication of 3 best practice/demonstrative methodologies from the project in a minimum of 2 different sites/entities each, totaling at least 12 replications.
• Organization of a minimum of 20 networking trips/events.
• Successful organization of a final international conference, featuring a minimum of 50 participants from 3 different countries.
• Formulation and implementation of an After-Life plan.

Description

All the project associated beneficiaries have already addressed the issues our project addresses before it starts and will continue to address them after it ends. The project will create a new level of quality that we would not have achieved without LIFE support. The quality level will be maintained after the end of the project. To this end, we will have developed a realistic strategy for sustaining the results/outputs of the project, including the identification of resources, in detail see chapter 2.3 Sustainability of project results.
T.5.1 Awareness raising - public (ONYX, IBL, PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR, NSB):
Task T.5.1 is dedicated to fostering public awareness, with a particular focus on forest owners, as a means to directly address Threat 5: Lack of public and key stakeholder awareness. It encompasses a comprehensive set of measures designed to disseminate information, create awareness, promote the project, and raise general awareness about the significance of the LIFE and Natura 2000 programs. This task involves multi-level communication utilizing diverse channels to reach forest owners, residents, and the wider public. The branding of all informational materials will prominently feature the LIFE and Natura 2000 logos. The initiation of all sub-actions will be swift, ensuring continuous implementation throughout the project duration and beyond. Specifically, the project website will be maintained for a minimum of 5 years post-project. The PR manager (ONYX) will oversee the strategic coordination and execution of the action, with support from the PR assistant (PEH) and other management team members (such as project coordinators and department heads) as needed.
Sub actions:
1 Creating a communication plan (ONYX)

A comprehensive communication plan will be developed by the project manager (ONYX) to facilitate effective coordination among partners. The plan will outline strategies for sharing important project results with the public and conveying crucial information to key stakeholders. It will also detail methods for promoting best practice methodologies that can be replicated (T.5.3).

2 Project website and social media (ONYX, IBL, PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR, NSB)

The website for project presentation will be created as a subpage on the existing ONYX coordinator's website, www.csoponyx.cz . Additionally, project information will be shared on ONYX's existing social media accounts. Other beneficiaries will link to this subpage and share it on their own websites or social media platforms. This approach will eliminate the need for a separate project website and associated costs. Regular updates will be conducted throughout the project to ensure up-to-date information. The website aims to attract a minimum of 5,000 unique visitors by the project's completion. Its content will cover project details, site descriptions, target species and habitats, environmental challenges, and comprehensive information about LIFE and Natura 2000. Social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter will also be leveraged to extend outreach. All project partners will contribute to the dissemination of project activities on their respective websites.

3 Promotion in media, film (ONYX, IBL, PEH)

Promotion of the project's goals, methodologies, and conservation achievements will occur through diverse media channels such as print, radio, and TV. Press releases, interviews, field reports, and expert articles will be utilized to provide detailed coverage across local, regional, national, and international media outlets. Additionally, a film showcasing target habitats, species, and project activities will be created, available in Czech with English subtitles. This film will be distributed through various media channels, on the project website, and shared on Facebook, with TV broadcasts scheduled twice.

4 Notice Boards (ONYX, IBL, PEH)

Noticeboards will be strategically installed across all 20 project sites to offer essential information about the site's ecological values, target habitats/species, implemented conservation measures, and their significance. Panels will be produced and installed after first year of the project. Bilingual boards (Czech and Polish) will be placed for sites near the Czech-Polish border.

5 Printed materials, promotional items (ONYX, IBL, PEH)

Printed materials and promotional items will be designed and distributed during the project. These materials, sourced responsibly from renewable materials (e.g., FSC certified paper), will serve both as communication tools with the public and as an initial point of contact with significant stakeholders. The distribution process will be targeted, minimizing waste and overuse. The PR manager (ONYX) will oversee the creation and distribution of these materials, ensuring alignment with green procurement principles.

Materials will be distributed in a targeted manner and only to those who can use them/the information contained. This will avoid waste and overconsumption. Printed and promotional materials will be prepared by the PR manager (ONYX), assisted by the project manager, individual coordinators, and scientific manager etc. (RSE, SBR, PEH, MSR) on relevant topics. Graphic design, photography, proofreading, translation, cartoons, and printing will be outsourced. For example: calendars (2x 300 pcs), two-year diary (2x300 pcs), promotional items (chocolates, bags, mobile phone, and laptop covers, t-shirts). Materials and items produced are listed in the 3.6. Communication, dissemination, and visibility of funding.

6 Excursions for local schools and public (ONYX, IBL, PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR, NSB)

A minimum of 10 educational excursions to project sites will be organized, catering to schools and the general public. These excursions will provide participants with expert-guided tours and informative presentations on the initiatives for nature conservation. The objective is to engage a minimum of 150 participants, offering an insightful experience in nature.

7 Theatre performances (ONYX, PEH)

As part of PR, we choose an original form of promotion in the form of a cheerful, original theatrical performance. It will be inspired by the classic fairy tale of Sleeping Beauty, but we will include the realities of our project in the plot. The audience will thus learn about invasive plant species and be introduced to the basic ideas behind our project. The introduction will always be a short, erudite lecture about our project and a competition for promotional items. (See more at part 3.6).

This adapted fairy tale incorporating elements of invasive alien species (IAS) and a castle overgrown by these species provides an excellent opportunity for raising awareness and educating the public about IAS in an entertaining and engaging manner. This approach will achieve several significant objectives:

1. Engaging Communication Format: Classic fairy tales have the ability to captivate and appeal to not only children but also adults. The inclusion of a castle overrun by invasive species will create an emotionally charged story that easily captures the attention of a wide range of people.

2. Entertaining Educational Method: The fairy tale will offer a means of educating the public about IAS in an enjoyable format. The complex issue of invasive species can be challenging for many to comprehend, but a fairy tale narrative can simplify this matter and make it accessible to all age groups.

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3. Building Awareness of the Issue: The fairy tale about a castle engulfed by IAS can generate awareness about how rapidly and inconspicuously invasive species can impact the environment. The fairy tale's story will illustrate how these species spread and how they can endanger native biodiversity.
4. Increasing Motivation for Collaboration: When the prince in the fairy tale decides to rid the castle of IAS, it will symbolize the necessity of collective efforts in combating these species. This motivation will stimulate greater public interest in nature conservation and participation in IAS management measures.
5. Expanding Project Awareness: The fairy tale will be accompanied by information about a specific project or initiative focused on combating IAS. This will enhance awareness of specific actions and the significance of nature conservation.
Overall, it can be concluded that this adapted fairy tale offers a unique opportunity for promoting the significant issue of IAS and disseminating it to the wider public through an attractive and compelling form.
An innovative approach to promotion will involve 10 theatre performances at schools and another 10 during socio-cultural events. These performances will creatively weave project-related content into an engaging storyline, inspired by the Sleeping Beauty fairy tale. Theatregoers will not only enjoy the performance but also learn about invasive plant species and the project's core concepts. The performances will be followed by brief, educational lectures on the project and interactive competitions. The goal is to reach around 1,000 children and teachers through school performances and a wider audience during cultural and social events.

T.5.2 Awareness raising - key stakeholders (in the project areas) (ONYX, IBL, PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR)
The action will directly address Threat 5: Lack of public and key stakeholder awareness. The objectives of the action and the key stakeholder groups it will target are:
• Increase awareness among key stakeholders of best practice methods and appropriate management of target habitats.
• Increase their motivation to participate in the project (e.g., small forest owners, municipalities, etc.).
• Gain wider support and understanding of the IAS issue - enabling the issue to be addressed at a broader level.
• To pave the way for integrating conservation objectives into regional policies.
The target group of T5.2 will be mainly local foresters, representatives of municipalities, regional authorities and other policy makers, and representatives of institutions responsible for landscape management. Education and training of key actors on the above-mentioned topics will be implemented through field trips, seminars and personal meetings and discussions. During the field trips, participants will be introduced to the target habitats, their natural values and ecosystem services, as well as appropriate measures for their restoration. Field trips will be organized mainly to the project area, but also to other protected areas in the Czech Republic where important positive examples and lessons learned can be presented. The field trips will focus on topics related to the project - e.g., cooperation of forest owners in nature protection in protected areas, effective removal of invasive plant species etc.
Sub actions:
1 Field workshops (for Key stakeholders participated in project)
A series of field workshops, consisting of at least three 2-day sessions, will be conducted with participation from key stakeholders across the country, totaling a minimum of 50 participants. These workshops will provide attendees, particularly those who participate in planned excursions and seminars, with hands-on exposure to conservation management practices within comparable natural and socio-economic contexts. Participants will be encouraged to actively engage in discussions, contributing their insights toward identifying optimal management measures aligned with project objectives. The workshops will also offer a platform for stakeholders to provide input on post-project conservation planning and potential future collaborations among beneficiaries, project partners, local stakeholders, relevant institutions (forestry, agriculture, water management), and municipalities. While primarily targeting local stakeholders, participation in excursions and meetings will be open to interested parties from various regions and countries, facilitating the replication of effective management practices in analogous European locations.
2 Personal meetings with interested stakeholders
Throughout the project, a minimum of 20 personalized meetings will be arranged with forest owners in the project area. These meetings, attended by key stakeholders in groups of 2-4 participants per session, will offer comprehensive consultations on ongoing project management (WP3), monitoring efforts (WP2), and the resultant partial and overall project outcomes.
3 Conferences and seminars (conference 1, seminars 4 events)
Preparation, promotion, and execution of educational events, including logistics (transport, facilities, technical support), will be managed under this sub-action. Conferences are scheduled for the project's commencement and conclusion, while seminars, likely conducted online to mitigate risks, are anticipated as well. Participants will comprise regional and supra-regional stakeholders, including nature protection authorities and forest landowners.
By engaging key stakeholders through these sub-actions, the task aims to not only raise awareness and understanding but also to foster active involvement and support for the project's goals within the local and broader community.

T.5.3 Replication toolkit (outside of project areas) (ONYX, IBL, PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR, NSB):
The primary aim of Task T.5.3 is to enhance the replicability of the exemplary practices and demonstration methods developed within the project. This is intended to facilitate their dissemination and application not only within the project

regions but also in broader contexts. The task intends to establish a minimum of 3 best practice/demonstration areas, focusing on various aspects of conservation and management, to be replicated in multiple entities:
• Removal of invasive non-native plant species, including a comprehensive invasion prevention and mitigation strategy and methodology for the removal of Echinocystis lobata to be developed under WP2, T2.3 and WP4, T4.1.
• Optimal management of priority habitats: *91E0, *91D0, *9180 (see WP2, T2.1. and WP4, T4.1)
• Optimal management of saproxylic insects and amphibian species (see WP2, T2.2. and WP4, T4.1)
We anticipate that each of the above methods (or their key points) will be replicated with at least two (but optimally more) other entities, so that they can be used to treat target (or similar) habitats beyond the project sites.
The sub-activities comprise a set of activities aimed at maximizing replication potential. Network pathways will also be used to facilitate this activity. For each of the best practice approaches, a different stakeholder group will be approached, and an appropriate approach/strategy selected.
These will be as follows:
• Removal of invasive non-native plant species authorities responsible for the management of forest land, watercourses, road networks and highways will be approached.
Optimal management for target habitats *9180, *91D0, *9180: authorities responsible for the management of forest land, large and small forest landowners (municipal forests, forest administrations, private owners)
• Optimal management of saproxylic insects and amphibian species (see WP2, T2.2. and WP4, T4.1): authorities responsible for the management of forest land, large and small forest landowners (municipal forests, forest administrations, private owners), NGO dealing with nature conservation.
1 Workshops for key stakeholders (outside of project areas)
A series of workshops, comprising at least two 1-day sessions, will be conducted with the participation of at least 30 attendees from across the country. These workshops will primarily engage forest landowners and regional stakeholders. The workshops will serve to:
- Analyse the baseline situation and present the relevant methodologies along with their application and outcomes (WP2, T2.1, T2.2, T2.3).
- Showcase the approaches and tangible positive outcomes achieved on project sites (WP3, T3.1, T3.2, T3.3).
- Facilitate workshops aimed at seeking optimal solutions adaptable to the conditions of the involved entities (WP5, T.5.3).
2 Individual communication with key stakeholders (outside of project areas)
Direct interactions with pertinent stakeholders, such as representatives of regional institutions, NGOs, foresters, and landscape management firms, will be conducted through face-to-face meetings. The PR manager (ONYX) will play a mediating role in establishing connections with regional authorities, forest administrations, site administrators, and other pertinent entities. A minimum of 30 in-person meetings with relevant stakeholders (3-5 participants per meeting) will be undertaken.
3 Information focal points
In the Czech Republic within the Olomouc Regions (NUTS II Central Moravia), the Moravian-Silesian Region (NUTS II Moravia-Silesia), the South Bohemian Region (NUTS II South-West), designated members of the project team or local government, as indicated in the Letters of Support, will serve as information focal points. Also in Poland, designated members of the project team or Regional Directorate of State Forests in Wrocław and Katowice will serve as information focal points within regions (NUTS II) Dolnośląskie, Opolskie and Śląskie.
These focal points will address inquiries related to habitat management or employed methodologies. Consultations will be conducted via email, telephone, or personal meetings, and the utilization of these focal points will be promoted through various events organized by WP5. The contact details of these focal points will also be prominently featured on the project website and endorsed by work group members. The expected outcome is a minimum of 40 individual consultations.
4 Final Conference
The culmination of the project will feature a final international conference, inviting a minimum of 50 participants from 3 countries, predominantly from the professional realm. This conference will provide a platform to present and deliberate the project's successful outcomes, exemplary methods, positive instances of collaboration with local stakeholders, and more. Invitations will extend to media and pertinent stakeholders, fostering the promotion of best practice methods. The conference coordination will rest with the project manager (ONYX), in close consultation with other beneficiaries (IBL, SBR, RSE, PEH, MSR, NSB). Coordinators and site managers will coordinate contacts within the target group. Logistics for larger events, encompassing transport, lodging, and catering, will be facilitated through external assistance. Given the expectation of continued replication beyond the project's conclusion, crucial information contacts and their details will be preserved. Further support for this endeavor will be outlined within the After-LIFE communication plan.

T.5.4 Networking with other LIFE and non-LIFE projects (ONYX, IBL, PEH, SBR, MSR, RSE, NSB)
Task T.5.4 aims to establish a robust and active network of high-quality connections within the project's sphere. This network will be developed through strategic actions that foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the dissemination

of successful methodologies and practices. The task will enable the project to benefit from the experiences of other projects while also contributing its own achievements to the wider community.
Sub-Actions:
1. Learning from Successful Projects
The task involves engaging with and visiting successful projects that share similar thematic focuses. By closely observing and analyzing the lessons learned and effective methodologies of these projects, collaborative opportunities will be explored to integrate their methods into our project. This approach not only enhances the project's efficiency and cost-effectiveness but also offers inspiration for innovative solutions.
2. Sharing Project Methodologies
Whenever feasible, the project's successful methodologies will be presented to other organizations. Practical advice on implementing these methodologies effectively will also be provided. This process aids the replication of best practices developed under the project, particularly those outlined in T5.3 Replication Toolkit. The networking events, platforms, and working groups established through T5.3 will facilitate these connections. The network formed will consist of organizations tackling similar challenges, fostering the utilization of this project's best practices.
3. Networking Trips and Events
A minimum of 20 networking trips/events will be organized, involving relevant institutions and projects. These partners will encompass nature conservation authorities, educational and research institutions, NGOs, and successful LIFE projects focused on habitat restoration or addressing similar threats.
Examples of Networking Partners:
- Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic
- Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic
- Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic
- Czech Union of Nature Conservationists (NGO)
- Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection in Poland
- The State Forests National Forest Holding in Poland
- Universities and others educational institutions in CZ and PL
- Successful LIFE projects in the wider region
- Projects addressing comparable situations or threats (LIFE13 NAT/DE/000091, LIFE17 NAT/DE/000497, LIFE19 NAT/DE/000087, LIFE18 NAT/SI/000711, LIFE04 NAT/AT/000003, LIFE17 NAT/BE/000445, LIFE19 NAT/FR/000728, LIFE20 NAT/ES/000021, LIFE17 NAT/ES/000568, LIFE17 NAT/PL/000011, LIFE17 NAT/GR/000511, and more).
Through these networking efforts, the project seeks to forge mutually beneficial collaborations, facilitate knowledge exchange, and contribute to the broader conservation landscape. This will amplify the impact of the project's methodologies and lessons learned, while also enriching the project team's understanding through the insights of others.

T.5.5 After-LIFE Conservation plan (ONYX, IBL, PEH, SBR, RSE, MSR)
Task T.5.5 is dedicated to ensuring the continuation and development of conservation actions beyond the project's lifespan. The creation of the After-LIFE Conservation Plan will guarantee the sustained implementation of project-initiated actions and the long-term management of project sites. The plan will outline practical steps, responsible parties, timelines, and funding sources for post-project activities.
Sub-Actions:
1. Development of the After-LIFE Conservation Plan
The After-LIFE Conservation Plan will be presented as a separate annex within the Final Report. It will articulate a comprehensive strategy for the ongoing execution and enhancement of conservation actions initiated during the project. Detailed provisions will specify which actions are feasible, the timeline for execution, the designated responsible parties, and the funding mechanisms. Furthermore, the plan will encompass a segment dedicated to the replication of project-introduced demonstration and best practice methods beyond the project's conclusion. This will involve identifying focal points for communication with interested stakeholders and entities.
2. Elaboration Timeline
The formulation of the After-LIFE Conservation Plan will commence 15 months prior to the project's conclusion. This timeline will allow for meticulous compilation, review, and adjustment, ensuring that the plan is robust and well-structured. The ultimate goal is to provide a seamless transition from the project phase to the post-project phase, minimizing disruptions in conservation efforts.
The After-LIFE Conservation Plan will be submitted alongside the project's Final Report. Its comprehensive content will offer a blueprint for the continuity of project-initiated actions, management of project sites, and the replication of successful methodologies.

WP5, T5.1, T5.2, T5.3, T.5.4, T5.5 (ONYX, IBL, PEH, MSR, SBR, RSE):
To ensure effective communication and information management, basic office equipment such as laptops, software and a

printer will be provided, all purchased from overhead as in WP1. Equipping the project team with the necessary resources will increase the operational efficiency of the project and contribute to its overall success.

STAFF EFFORT

Staff effort per participant

Grant Preparation (Work packages - Effort screen) — Enter the info.

Participant	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5	Total Person-Months
1 - ONYX	100.84	21.01	478.36	31.06	33.61	664.88
2 - PEH	42.02	42.02	264.03	92.27	42.02	482.36
3 - SBR	29.41	14.71		14.71		58.83
4 - RSE			318.12			318.12
5 - MSR	29.41	14.71		14.71		58.83
6 - IBL	31.09	93.27	62.18	93.27	31.09	310.90
Total Person-Months	232.77	185.72	1122.69	246.02	106.72	1893.92

LIST OF DELIVERABLES

Deliverables

Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.

The labels used mean:

Public — fully open (⚠ automatically posted online)
Sensitive — limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement
EU classified —RESTREINT-UE/EU-RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIEL-UE/EU-CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET-UE/EU-SECRET under Decision 2015/444

Deliverable No	Deliverable Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Dissemination Level	Due Date (month)
D1.1	Employment contracts	WP1	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	5
D1.2	Audit Report	WP1	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	84
D1.3	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2025	WP1	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	7
D1.4	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2026	WP1	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	19
D1.5	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2027	WP1	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	31
D1.6	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2028	WP1	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	43
D1.7	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2029	WP1	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	55
D1.8	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2030	WP1	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	67
D1.9	Final report on cumulative expenditure – 2031	WP1	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	79
D2.1	Expert study for habitats	WP2	3 - SBR	R — Document, report	PU - Public	12

Deliverables

Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.

The labels used mean:

Public — fully open (⚠ automatically posted online)
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Deliverable No	Deliverable Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Dissemination Level	Due Date (month)
D2.2	Expert study for species	WP2	3 - SBR	R — Document, report	PU - Public	9
D2.3	Expert study for IAS plants	WP2	3 - SBR	R — Document, report	PU - Public	9
D3.1	Documentation of work progress	WP3	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	PU - Public	81
D4.1	Annual target habitats and species, IAS monitoring reports, final report	WP4	6 - IBL	R — Document, report	PU - Public	84
D4.2	A methodology for the eradication of IAS includes Echinocystis lobata	WP4	6 - IBL	R — Document, report	PU - Public	80
D4.3	KPI Extract Report - Month 9	WP4	2 - PEH	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	9
D4.4	Mid-term and final report on of project impact in dissemination actions	WP4	2 - PEH	R — Document, report	PU - Public	84
D4.5	Final KPI Extract Report - Month 84	WP4	2 - PEH	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	84
D5.1	Communication Plan	WP5	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	PU - Public	4
D5.2	Project Website	WP5	1 - ONYX	DEC —Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	PU - Public	4
D5.3	Printed materials, promotional items	WP5	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	PU - Public	13
D5.4	Noticeboards on the sites	WP5	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	PU - Public	13
D5.5	After – LIFE plan	WP5	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	PU - Public	84
D5.6	Layman’s report	WP5	1 - ONYX	R — Document, report	PU - Public	84

Deliverable D1.1 – Employment contracts

Deliverable Number	D1.1	Lead Beneficiary	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Employment contracts		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	5	Work Package No	WP1

Description
Documents in the national language of the key employers (COO and BEN), sent digitally

Deliverable D1.2 – Audit Report

Deliverable Number	D1.2	Lead Beneficiary	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Audit Report		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	84	Work Package No	WP1

Description
Document in Czech with English summary, sent digitally

Deliverable D1.3 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2025

Deliverable Number	D1.3	Lead Beneficiary	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2025		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	7	Work Package No	WP1

Description
Annual financial report summarising cumulative expenditure for the calendar year 2025. Submitted digitally in PDF format in December 2025.

Deliverable D1.4 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2026

Deliverable Number	D1.4	Lead Beneficiary	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2026		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	19	Work Package No	WP1

Description
Annual financial report summarising cumulative expenditure for the calendar year 2026. Submitted digitally in PDF format in December 2026.

Deliverable D1.5 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2027

Deliverable Number	D1.5	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2027		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	31	**Work Package No**	WP1

Description
Annual financial report summarising cumulative expenditure for the calendar year 2027. Submitted digitally in PDF format in December 2027.

Deliverable D1.6 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2028

Deliverable Number	D1.6	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2028		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	43	**Work Package No**	WP1

Description
Annual financial report summarising cumulative expenditure for the calendar year 2028. Submitted digitally in PDF format in December 2028.

Deliverable D1.7 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2029

Deliverable Number	D1.7	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2029		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	55	**Work Package No**	WP1

Description
Annual financial report summarising cumulative expenditure for the calendar year 2028. Submitted digitally in PDF format in December 2029.

Deliverable D1.8 – Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2030

Deliverable Number	D1.8	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Annual report on cumulative expenditure – 2030		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	67	**Work Package No**	WP1

Description
Annual financial report summarising cumulative expenditure for the calendar year 2030. Submitted digitally in PDF format in December 2030.

Deliverable D1.9 – Final report on cumulative expenditure – 2031

Deliverable Number	D1.9	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Final report on cumulative expenditure – 2031		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	79	**Work Package No**	WP1

Description
Final financial report summarising cumulative expenditure for the entire project duration. Submitted digitally in PDF format in December 2031.

Deliverable D2.1 – Expert study for habitats

Deliverable Number	D2.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	3 - SBR
Deliverable Name	Expert study for habitats		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	12	**Work Package No**	WP2

Description
Electronic document in pdf, prepared in Czech, Polish with English summary

Deliverable D2.2 – Expert study for species

Deliverable Number	D2.2	**Lead Beneficiary**	3 - SBR
Deliverable Name	Expert study for species		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	9	**Work Package No**	WP2

Description
Electronic document in pdf, prepared in Czech, Polish with English summary

Deliverable D2.3 – Expert study for IAS plants

Deliverable Number	D2.3	**Lead Beneficiary**	3 - SBR
Deliverable Name	Expert study for IAS plants		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	9	**Work Package No**	WP2

Description
Electronic document in pdf, prepared in Czech, Polish with English summary

Deliverable D3.1 – Documentation of work progress

Deliverable Number	D3.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Documentation of work progress		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	81	**Work Package No**	WP3

Description
Photo documentation of work progress, signed protocol of the completed works, sent digitally

Deliverable D4.1 – Annual target habitats and species, IAS monitoring reports, final report

Deliverable Number	D4.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	6 - IBL
Deliverable Name	Annual target habitats and species, IAS monitoring reports, final report		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	84	**Work Package No**	WP4

Description
An annual summary monitoring report will be prepared for target habitats, target amphibians, and target saproxylic insects. Three reports in total will be produced: the first after one year of monitoring, the second after three years of monitoring, and the final report at the end of the project. Reports will be available in Polish and Czech, with an English summary

Deliverable D4.2 – A methodology for the eradication of IAS includes Echinocystis lobata

Deliverable Number	D4.2	**Lead Beneficiary**	6 - IBL
Deliverable Name	A methodology for the eradication of IAS includes Echinocystis lobata		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	80	**Work Package No**	WP4

Description
Electronic document in pdf, prepared in Czech, Polish, German and English News on the project website

Deliverable D4.3 – KPI Extract Report - Month 9

Deliverable Number	D4.3	**Lead Beneficiary**	2 - PEH
Deliverable Name	KPI Extract Report - Month 9		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	9	**Work Package No**	WP4

Description

An electronic document in PDF format containing an evaluation and analysis of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at the 9th month of the project. This report will include an extract of the KPI data at that point.

Deliverable D4.4 – Mid-term and final report on of project impact in dissemination actions

Deliverable Number	D4.4	**Lead Beneficiary**	2 - PEH
Deliverable Name	Mid-term and final report on of project impact in dissemination actions		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	84	**Work Package No**	WP4

Description
2 Electronic documents in pdf, in Czech, Polish with English summary

Deliverable D4.5 – Final KPI Extract Report - Month 84

Deliverable Number	D4.5	**Lead Beneficiary**	2 - PEH
Deliverable Name	Final KPI Extract Report - Month 84		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	84	**Work Package No**	WP4

Description
An electronic document in PDF format containing the final evaluation and analysis of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at the end of the project. This report will include a final extract of the KPI data.

Deliverable D5.1 – Communication Plan

Deliverable Number	D5.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Communication Plan		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	4	**Work Package No**	WP5

Description
E- document in pdf, Czech

Deliverable D5.2 – Project Website

Deliverable Number	D5.2	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Project Website		
Type	DEC —Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	4	**Work Package No**	WP5

Description
Link to the project website, in both Czech and English, information about project on the partners websites in their national languages + English summary

Deliverable D5.3 – Printed materials, promotional items

Deliverable Number	D5.3	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Printed materials, promotional items		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	13	**Work Package No**	WP5

Description
T-shirts, printed materials such as flyers, newsletter, calendar, etc. will be sent digitally including photos, promotional items will be photographed and actually shown/given to the monitor during the monitoring visit.

Deliverable D5.4 – Noticeboards on the sites

Deliverable Number	D5.4	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Noticeboards on the sites		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	13	**Work Package No**	WP5

Description
Photo documentation sent digitally, boards will have text in national languages: CZ or PL, in the border area in both

Deliverable D5.5 – After – LIFE plan

Deliverable Number	D5.5	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	After – LIFE plan		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	84	**Work Package No**	WP5

Description
E-document in pdf, Czech, Polish

Deliverable D5.6 – Layman’s report

Deliverable Number	D5.6	**Lead Beneficiary**	1 - ONYX
Deliverable Name	Layman’s report		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	84	**Work Package No**	WP5

Description
E-document in pdf, CZ, PL, ENG

LIST OF MILESTONES

Milestones

Grant Preparation (Milestones screen) — Enter the info.

Milestone No	Milestone Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Means of Verification	Due Date (month)
1	Employment of Project Manager and financial manager	WP1	1 - ONYX	Signed employment contract, pdf	1
2	Employment of partner coordinators and other key staff (PR manager, Site managers etc.)	WP1	1 - ONYX	Signed employment contract, pdf	1
3	1st Steering Committee meeting	WP1	1 - ONYX	Meeting attendance list, pdf	14
4	Independent external auditing company nominated	WP1	1 - ONYX	Signed contract agreement, pdf	5
5	Concluding contracts with subcontractors	WP2	1 - ONYX	Signed contracts	5
6	Beginning of Restoration management for habitats	WP3	1 - ONYX	Start of field work - photo documentation News on the project website	13
7	Beginning of Restauration management for target species		1 - ONYX	Start of field work - photo documentation News on the project website	10
8	Beginning of Elimination of IAS species	WP3	1 - ONYX	Start of field work - photo documentation News on the project website	10
9	End of Restauration management for habitats	WP3	1 - ONYX	Signed protocol of the completed works, photo documentation News on the project website	81
10	End of Restauration management for target species	WP3	1 - ONYX	Signed protocol of the completed works, photo documentation News on the project website	81
11	End of Elimination of IAS species	WP3	1 - ONYX	Signed protocol of the completed works, photo documentation News on the project website	81
12	Start of target habitats and species, IAS monitoring	WP4	6 - IBL	Start of field work - photo documentation	10

Milestones

Grant Preparation (Milestones screen) — Enter the info.

Milestone No	Milestone Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Means of Verification	Due Date (month)
13	Start of KPI monitoring	WP4	2 - PEH	Initial screening, input data specification	4
14	Start of Monitoring of impacts of dissemination actions	WP4	2 - PEH	Collection of monitoring data, initial data processing	4
15	End of target habitats and species, IAS monitoring	WP4	6 - IBL	Final monitoring report including photo documentation, PDF News on the project website	84
16	End of KPI monitoring	WP4	2 - PEH	Data output, final KPI report	84
17	End of dissemination actions monitoring	WP4	2 - PEH	Final report of dissemination impacts	84
18	Communication Plan	WP5	1 - ONYX	Communication plan in pdf	4
19	Project website	WP5	1 - ONYX	Project website as a subpage on www.csoponyx.cz	4
20	Press release	WP5	1 - ONYX	A copy (or print screen) of the press release printed in the media (or published on the internet)	4
21	LIFE information Notice Boards		1 - ONYX	Photos, News on the project website	13
22	Excursion for schools and public	WP5	1 - ONYX	Minutes or attendance list/photo, News on the project website	10
23	Theatre performance	WP5	1 - ONYX	News and short video on the project website, FB	13
24	Seminars for key stakeholders	WP5	1 - ONYX	Minutes or attendance list/photo, News on the project website	14
25	Individuals' meetings for stakeholders	WP5	1 - ONYX	Minutes or attendance list/photo, News on the project website	14
26	Replication workshop abroad	WP5	1 - ONYX	Minutes or attendance list/photo, News on the project website	32
27	Replication meetings for stakeholders in Czech Republic and Poland	WP5	1 - ONYX	Minutes or attendance list/photo, News on the project website	22

Milestones

Grant Preparation (Milestones screen) — Enter the info.

Milestone No	Milestone Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Means of Verification	Due Date (month)
28	Printed materials, promotional items	WP5	1 - ONYX	photo documentation, samples of items	13
29	Networking trips	WP5	1 - ONYX	photo documentation, samples of items Minutes or attendance list/photo, News on the project website	22
30	Focal points	WP5	1 - ONYX	News on the project website	10
31	Final international conference	WP5	1 - ONYX	Attendance list, circulars/photo, News on the project website	82
32	After – LIFE plan	WP5	1 - ONYX	Pdf document, News on the project website	84
33	Submission of updated SDFs for relevant Natura 2000 sites	WP3	1 - ONYX	Copies of the updated SDFs or confirmation of submission to the European Environment Agency (or respective national databases)	81

LIST OF CRITICAL RISKS

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
1	Inadequate communication with landowners and site administrators, or unexpected changes in land ownership (such as sale, inheritance, or restitution) could lead to difficulties in accessing project sites, implementing measures, and monitoring. This	WP3, WP4, WP2	Early Communication: Initiate early and continuous communication with landowners and site administrators to establish a strong working relationship and keep them informed about project activities. Alternative Sites: Identify and assess potential alternative sites for monitoring and implementing measures in case issues arise with the original sites.

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
	may result in a failure to achieve the desired outputs of the project. Impact: Failure to achieve project outputs, delays in project implementation. Likelihood: Medium		Letters of Support: Utilize the obtained Letters of Support from landowners and site administrators as a commitment to their collaboration and approval of the project activities. Secure Permits: Collaborate closely with the relevant regional authorities (South Bohemia, Moravia-Silesia, Olomouc) to secure all necessary permits and approvals for project activities. Contingency Plan: Develop a contingency plan that outlines steps to be taken in case of unexpected changes in land ownership or unanticipated communication challenges. Framework Conditions and Barriers: Regulatory Compliance: Adhere to all relevant laws, regulations, and standards governing land ownership, access, and conservation activities. Stakeholder Engagement: Continuously engage with landowners, site administrators, and regional authorities to ensure their support and cooperation throughout the project duration. Community Engagement: Involve local communities and stakeholders in project activities to build a sense of ownership and support for the project goals. By proactively addressing the risk of poor communication and changes in land ownership, the project will be better equipped to navigate potential challenges and ensure the successful achievement of its objectives.
2	Unpredictable unfavourable weather conditions and potential COVID-19 (or any other epidemic) related restrictions could hinder fieldwork activities, leading to a smaller number of measures being monitored and implemented. This may result in delays and potential disruptions to the project timeline. Impact: Reduced number of monitored and implemented measures, delays in project activities. Likelihood: Low	WP3, WP4, WP2	Diverse Field Staff: Have a diverse team of field staff with flexible schedules to accommodate varying weather conditions and potential restrictions. Protective Equipment: Provide necessary protective equipment to field staff to ensure safe work practices and compliance with health and safety guidelines. Contingency Timeline: Develop a contingency timeline that allows for potential delays due to weather or epidemic restrictions. Adaptation of Activities: Plan activities that can be adapted to different weather conditions or can be conducted in smaller groups to comply with epidemic regulations. Remote Activities: Identify activities that can be conducted remotely or virtually to minimize the impact of restrictions. Framework Conditions and Barriers: Health and Safety Regulations: Stay informed about health and safety regulations related to COVID-19 and ensure compliance in all fieldwork activities.

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
			Adaptive Planning: Develop a flexible project plan that can accommodate changes in weather and unexpected events, such as pandemic-related restrictions. By considering the potential impact of unfavorable weather and COVID-19 restrictions and implementing the necessary precautions, the project can mitigate disruptions and ensure that a substantial number of measures are still effectively monitored and implemented.
3	Insufficient interest from the target groups in participating in the planned activities, which could lead to a failure to achieve the desired project outputs. This may be due to lack of awareness, competing priorities, or other factors. Impact: Failure to achieve desired project outputs and outcomes. Likelihood: Low	WP5	Engagement Strategy: Develop a comprehensive engagement strategy that identifies the key needs and interests of the target groups and tailors project activities to address those needs. Stakeholder Involvement: Involve target group representatives in the planning process to ensure that activities align with their preferences and requirements. Communication Approach: Use a variety of communication channels and approaches to effectively reach and engage the target groups, including online platforms, workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns. Feedback Mechanism: Establish a feedback mechanism to continuously gather input from the target groups and make necessary adjustments to project activities. Framework Conditions and Barriers: Competing Priorities: Be aware of other commitments or initiatives that may compete for the target groups' attention, and adjust the project schedule or approach accordingly. Cultural Sensitivity: Consider cultural and regional factors that may influence the level of interest and engagement from different target groups. Communication Strategy Evaluation: Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the communication strategy and make adjustments based on feedback and engagement levels. By actively involving the target groups in the planning process, tailoring activities to their needs, and employing a flexible communication approach, the project can increase the likelihood of generating sufficient interest and participation, thereby ensuring the achievement of desired project outputs.
4	The employees crucial to the project may terminate their employment before the project's completion due to reasons such as notice periods, maternity leave, or retirement. This could lead to a shortage of labour and disruption in project activities. Impact: Labor shortage leading to potential delays and	WP5, WP3, WP1, WP4, WP2	Succession Planning: Develop a succession plan that identifies potential replacements for key project personnel in advance. Cross-Training: Ensure that team members have a basic understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities to facilitate smoother transitions. Regular Communication: Maintain open lines of communication with employees to anticipate any potential changes in employment status.

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
	disruption in project implementation. Likelihood: Medium		Immediate Replacement Process: In case of unexpected departure, initiate the replacement process promptly using the previously identified succession plan. Framework Conditions and Barriers: Human Resource Policies: Be familiar with the organization's human resource policies and procedures related to hiring and replacing employees. Contractual Agreements: Ensure that employment contracts include appropriate notice periods and provisions for maternity leave and retirement. Collaboration Network: Develop relationships with potential candidates or collaborators to expedite the replacement process if needed. While the project team has previous positive experiences with most employees and anticipates good cooperation, it's essential to have a contingency plan in place to address any unexpected departures. By proactively planning for potential workforce changes, the project can minimize disruptions and ensure the timely and successful completion of activities.
5	Changes in legislation or unexpected political shifts that could impact the project's objectives, activities, or funding. Impact: Potential failure to achieve project outputs due to changes in legal or political landscape. Likelihood: Low	WP5, WP3, WP4, WP2	Continuous Monitoring: Regularly monitor legislative and political developments at both national and EU levels to anticipate any potential changes. Adaptability: Design the project with flexibility and adaptability in mind, allowing for adjustments in response to changing conditions. Advocacy and Communication: Maintain strong relationships with relevant governmental bodies and stakeholders to advocate for the project's goals and highlight its importance. Contingency Planning: Develop contingency plans that outline potential steps to take in case of legislative or political changes that impact the project. Framework Conditions and Barriers: EU Policies: Align the project's goals and activities with broader EU policies related to green economy and nature conservation to ensure continued support. Stakeholder Engagement: Engage with stakeholders and partners to build a network of support that can help navigate potential challenges. Legal Expertise: Have legal experts as part of the project team to quickly analyze and respond to any legislative changes. While the likelihood of unexpected political or legislative changes is low, it's prudent to have strategies in place to mitigate their potential impact. By closely monitoring developments,

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
			maintaining open communication with relevant stakeholders, and planning for contingencies, the project can be better prepared to navigate any unforeseen challenges that may arise.
6	The restoration measures implemented may not yield the expected response from the target habitats and species. Impact: Potential failure to achieve project outputs due to the ineffective response of target habitats and species to restoration measures. Likelihood: Low	WP3, WP4	Continuous Monitoring: Implement rigorous and continuous monitoring of the restoration measures to assess their effectiveness over time. Adaptive Management: Design the project with an adaptive management approach, allowing for adjustments based on real-time monitoring data. Expert Consultation: Engage experts and scientists in the field to ensure that restoration measures are well-designed and aligned with the needs of target habitats and species. Research and Analysis: Conduct thorough research and analysis before implementing restoration measures to ensure they are based on best practices and scientific knowledge. Collaboration: Collaborate closely with project partners and experts to share experiences and knowledge to enhance the success of restoration measures. Framework Conditions and Barriers: Scientific Input: Involve scientific experts in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of restoration measures to ensure their effectiveness. Funding Flexibility: Allocate a portion of the project budget for potential adjustments or improvements of restoration measures if needed. Stakeholder Engagement: Engage local communities and stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation process, creating a sense of ownership and responsibility for the success of restoration measures. While the likelihood of low response from target habitats and species is low, it's crucial to have a robust monitoring and adaptive management strategy in place. By continuously assessing the effectiveness of restoration measures and making necessary adjustments, the project can enhance the chances of achieving its intended outputs and conservation goals.
7	Lack of sufficient co-financing sources to support the project's budget, leading to potential failure in achieving project outputs. Impact: Potential failure to achieve project outputs due to insufficient funds for project implementation. Likelihood: Low	WP5, WP3, WP1, WP4, WP2	Realistic Budgeting: Develop a comprehensive and realistic budget during project preparation, taking into account all expected costs and contingencies. Diverse Funding Portfolio: Coordinator and partners have a broad portfolio of activities funded from various sources, reducing the reliance on a single funding stream. Stable Partners: Ensure that project partners are financially stable and have a proven track record of managing projects funded from multiple sources.

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
			Public Institution Participation: Partners include regional authorities with approved financial participation in the project, minimizing the risk of inadequate co-financing. Support from Government Bodies: Obtain declarations of financial support from relevant government bodies, such as the Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic, to demonstrate commitment to the project's success. Cash-Flow Planning: Develop a detailed cash-flow plan that outlines the timing of expenditures and expected income, allowing for effective financial management. Framework Conditions and Barriers: Diverse Funding Streams: Identify and secure additional potential sources of co-financing to provide a safety net in case of unexpected funding shortfalls. Emergency Reserves: Allocate a portion of the budget as contingency reserves to address unforeseen financial challenges. Flexibility in Budget Allocation: Design the budget with flexibility to allocate funds to priority activities and adjust expenditure as needed. While the likelihood of lacking co-financing sources is low, it's essential to have a solid financial management plan in place. By ensuring a diverse funding portfolio, stable partners, and realistic budgeting, the project can effectively manage potential financial challenges and mitigate the risk of not achieving its intended outputs.
8	A potential risk of not being able to meet the commitments outlined in the AFTER-LIFE plan due to financial constraints. Impact: Potential failure to achieve the sustainability commitments outlined in the AFTER-LIFE plan, leading to a gap in the continuity of project activities. Likelihood: Low	WP5	Stable Participating Organizations: The participating organizations have a strong history of dealing with nature protection and a well-defined long-term strategy. This stability enhances their ability to continue funding and sustaining project activities. Alignment with Strategies: The project aligns with the long-term strategies and financial plans of the participating organizations, ensuring that the project's activities are integrated into their ongoing efforts. Multi-Source Funding: The project is actively focused on securing funding from multiple sources, reducing reliance on a single funding stream and enhancing financial sustainability. Lobbying and Fundraising: Initiative is dedicated to lobbying for increased national support for similar activities and actively engaging in fundraising efforts, especially for local activity sustainability. Volunteer System: The established volunteer system contributes to the project's sustainability by involving local communities and increasing engagement in nature protection efforts.

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
			Partnership Development: Further develop fundraising partnerships to diversify income streams and enhance financial stability. Framework Conditions and Barriers: Continued Lobbying and Advocacy: Continue advocating for increased national support for nature protection activities to ensure a conducive financial environment. Diversified Funding Streams: Explore and secure funding from various sources, including grants, donations, and public-private partnerships. Monitoring and Evaluation: Regularly monitor financial sustainability progress and adjust strategies as needed based on outcomes. While the likelihood of not meeting sustainability commitments is low, ensuring financial sustainability is crucial for the long-term success of the project. By leveraging stable participating organizations, aligning with strategic plans, diversifying funding sources, and actively engaging in lobbying and fundraising efforts, the project can significantly enhance its ability to sustain activities beyond the project's duration.
9	Non-engagement or resignation of any of the project beneficiaries, which could result in a lack of resources, manpower, and ultimately impact the project's ability to achieve its objectives. Impact: Lack of necessary resources, shortage of personnel, and potential failure to meet the project's objectives. Likelihood: Low	WP5, WP3, WP1, WP4, WP2	Complementary Skills and Competences: Beneficiaries are selected based on their complementary skills and competences, ensuring a well-rounded team that can collectively address project challenges. High Integration and Interaction: The project's success hinges on the high level of integration between different tasks and frequent interaction among beneficiaries. This collaboration enhances project cohesion and knowledge sharing. Full/Partial Responsibility: Each beneficiary holds full or partial responsibility for managing and finalizing specific project outputs. This shared responsibility promotes active engagement and commitment. Past Collaboration: Beneficiaries have a history of successful cooperation in previous projects and proposal preparation, which contributes to a strong working relationship and shared dedication to project success. Design Involvement: All associated beneficiaries have been actively involved in the design of the LIFE Model Forest, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment. Replacement Mechanism: In case of any beneficiary's non-engagement or resignation, another beneficiary can step in to assume the responsibilities, ensuring continuity of project activities.

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
			Framework Conditions and Barriers: Project Governance: Establish clear governance structures that outline roles, responsibilities, and mechanisms for addressing any unexpected changes within the beneficiary team. Open Communication: Maintain open and transparent communication channels among beneficiaries to address any potential concerns or challenges promptly. Monitoring and Reporting: Regularly monitor beneficiary engagement levels and promptly address any issues to prevent them from escalating. While the likelihood of beneficiaries not engaging or resigning is low, the project's approach of emphasizing complementary skills, close collaboration, shared responsibility, and a clear replacement mechanism will help mitigate this risk. Maintaining a strong focus on effective project governance and open communication will further contribute to the project's resilience in the face of unexpected challenges.
10	Difficulties or delays in completing individual project tasks, which could result in delays in overall project progress. Impact: Delays in the completion of specific project tasks, potentially affecting the overall project timeline. Likelihood: Medium	WP5, WP3, WP1, WP4, WP2	Task Monitoring and Evaluation: The partner responsible for each activity will regularly monitor the progress of their respective tasks. They will evaluate whether milestones are being achieved on time according to the established timetable. Timetable Supervision: The Project Coordinator will provide general oversight of the project timetable, ensuring that tasks are progressing as planned. Early Detection of Delays: If any partner identifies delays or anticipates the non-achievement of expected interim outcomes, all partners will be promptly informed. Mitigation Measures: Partners will collaborate to develop and agree on mitigating measures to address delays and ensure that the project gets back on track. Partnership Agreement: A clear guideline regarding the reporting of delays and the implementation of mitigating measures will be included in the Partnership Agreement, ensuring a unified approach. Framework Conditions and Barriers: Proactive Communication: Establish a culture of proactive communication among partners, ensuring that any potential delays are identified and addressed in a timely manner. Flexibility: Be prepared to adapt the project plan, if necessary, with the goal of minimizing the impact of delays on the overall project timeline. Contingency Planning: Consider incorporating contingency plans into the project schedule to account for unexpected delays.

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
			While the likelihood of delays in completing project tasks is medium, the proactive approach of regular monitoring, timely reporting of potential delays, and collaborative development of mitigating measures will contribute to keeping the project on track. The inclusion of these measures in the Partnership Agreement will further solidify the commitment to addressing challenges promptly and collectively.
11	Possible changes in priorities or commitments of individual partners during the course of the project present a potential risk to the project's smooth implementation. Such changes could have a significant impact on partner engagement, potentially leading to delays in project tasks or even withdrawal from the project. Impact: Delays in project tasks, potential partner withdrawal, disruption of project workflow. Likelihood: Low	WP5, WP3, WP1, WP4, WP2	To mitigate this risk, the project should maintain a clear and open line of communication among all partners. Regular partner meetings or updates can serve as a platform to discuss any emerging changes in priorities or commitments. Including contingency plans for partner withdrawal or reduced engagement in the project's partnership agreement can provide a framework for addressing unexpected shifts. Additionally, having a mechanism for involving backup or replacement partners, if necessary, can ensure the continuity of project activities. Maintaining a strong connection between partners and the main project coordinator, ONYX, will enable swift decision-making and adaptation to any unforeseen partner-related challenges. Framework Conditions and Barriers: The risk of changes in partner priorities or commitments is inherent in any collaborative project. Factors such as organizational restructuring, funding constraints, or changes in strategic direction could contribute to this risk. While this risk is assessed as low, the project's partnership agreement should stipulate clear expectations for partner involvement and provide provisions for addressing potential shifts. The engagement of backup or replacement partners may require legal, administrative, and logistical considerations. By anticipating this risk and putting the necessary mechanisms in place, the project can continue to progress even in the face of unexpected partner-related challenges.
12	At the biological level, the project faces several risks associated with IAS, particularly the potential for re-invasion. The risk of re-invasion involves the possibility that previously eradicated IAS may reappear and spread, undermining ongoing conservation and management strategies. Impact: IAS can disrupt ecosystems by outcompeting native	WP3, WP4	Enhanced Surveillance and Monitoring: Implement comprehensive and continuous monitoring programs to detect early signs of IAS re-invasion. This includes establishing permanent monitoring plots and employing advanced tracking technologies. Regular field surveys and remote sensing can help in identifying potential re-invasion areas promptly. Integrated Management Approach:

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
	species and altering habitats, leading to further degradation. Re-invasion may strain resources, delay restoration goals, and compromise project efficiency and conservation targets. Likelihood: Medium		Develop and enforce an integrated management plan that includes preventive measures to mitigate the risk of IAS re-invasion. This plan should incorporate strategies for habitat management, restoration, and active control of IAS. Collaborate with local stakeholders and experts to ensure that all aspects of IAS management are addressed effectively. Preventive Measures: Apply preventative treatments and barriers to reduce the likelihood of IAS reintroduction. This may include physical barriers, chemical treatments, and habitat modifications. Conduct risk assessments and implement protocols to minimize the chances of IAS being reintroduced through human activities, such as soil movement or plant transportation. Public Awareness and Training: Engage in public education campaigns to raise awareness about the risks of IAS and encourage community involvement in reporting and managing invasive species. Provide training for field staff and local stakeholders on the identification and management of IAS to ensure timely and effective responses. Adaptive Management and Review: Regularly review and update the IAS management strategies based on monitoring data and feedback from stakeholders. Adaptive management allows for adjustments and improvements in response to emerging threats and new information. By implementing these risk-mitigation measures, the project aims to minimize the potential impact of IAS re-invasion and ensure the long-term success of conservation efforts.

ANNEX 1

Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)

Description of the action (DoA)

Part B

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. RELEVANCE

*Fill in **only** sections 1.1-1.4 at stage 1 (concept note). Fill in **all sections** at stage 2 (full proposal).*

1.1 Background and general project objectives

Background and general project objectives

Explain the problem and the needs to be addressed in the project. Describe the background, starting point / quantified baseline of the project.

Please explain in which location and/or sector the main activities of the project will take place and justify that choice.

For Nature and Biodiversity:

Provide a clear and quantified description of the conservation issue and threats targeted, as well as relevant background information and quantified figures defining the baseline to justify the proposed Interventions by

At stage 1 (concept note) when relevant, describe the main species/habitats directly targeted by the project: scientific name; refer to the Annex(es) of the EU Birds or Habitats Directive where they are listed; population size within each project area; conservation status; habitat name and Natura 2000 code; % of the cover within each project area; conservation status.

At stage 2 (full proposals), when relevant, provide a brief description of the areas where conservation actions will be implemented and main species and / or main habitats directly targeted by the project, and submit the following annexes:

- *maps*
- *description of sites*
- *description of species and habitats*

Describe the previous conservation efforts in the project area or for the habitats/species targeted.

For Circular Economy and Quality of Life (n/a to Environmental governance topics):

Describe the previous technical preparatory work and results of previous research and development activities, showing the status of technical development achieved for the proposed solution, including the technical readiness level (TRL) where relevant and proving its technical feasibility.

Explain the scale at which such results have been obtained and if prototypes have been already developed and tested. Their scale/dimension and relevant results and conclusions have to be clearly presented. Illustrate available best practices in the relevant sector (state of the art) and clearly and concisely explain the environmental, technical and economical improved performances/ advantages introduced by the proposed solution in case this is claimed to be innovative/ demonstrative.

Background of the project

This is the first LIFE project in the Czech Republic comprehensively focused on forest habitats. In Poland a few LIFE projects focused on forest habitat were already conducted, e. g. LIFE+ In harmony with nature, LIFE+ ForBioSensing. However, no similar projects have been implemented within the southern part of Poland.

Most activities will be implemented on forest land. The total area of forest land (forest habitats) included in the project is more than 1900 ha (of which 618 ha are priority habitats) plus more than 3600 ha, where management to support saproxylic insect's species, other insect, plants and amphibians, including priority species will be implemented. Forest ecosystems include not only forest stands but also other valuable habitats, especially water-dependent habitats such as peat bogs. These habitats are also considered in the project. The total area of forest-free areas included in the project is 26,4 ha.

The project also focuses on the issue of increasing the volume of deadwood in forests, measures for light-demanding species, controlling the density of game (reducing damage to stands) and the eradication of invasive plant species. All of this is negotiated with the majority owners of the land on which the project SCIs lie and all sites were selected for the project in accordance with these criteria, see subchapter Location of the project below.

Forests in the Czech Republic

Forests, covering a substantial portion of the Czech Republic's landscape, are a vital component of its natural heritage. However, despite their historical significance and efforts towards conservation, these forests face a multitude of threats that challenge their ecological stability and long-term sustainability. One of the most prominent issues is the historical introduction of spruce and pine monocultures. These monocultures, established centuries ago, have persisted into the present day, significantly simplifying the species composition within these forests. This reduction in species diversity not only diminishes the natural values of the forests but also has adverse consequences for their ecological stability. Moreover, the spatial structure of these forests has been compromised due to the application of pasture management, further exacerbating the challenges faced by these ecosystems. The disrupted hydrology in Czech forests is often the result of historical interventions such as drainage, logging, construction of forest roads, and

agricultural activities. These actions have altered natural water flows, reduced the forest's ability to retain water, and led to quicker runoff from the landscape. The consequences are drier soils, lower biodiversity, and decreased forest resilience to drought, floods, and other climatic fluctuations.

Additionally, the neglect of the original gene pool of woody plants has contributed to the declining health of Czech forests. The limited genetic diversity within these forests hinders their ability to adapt to changing environmental conditions, making them more susceptible to diseases, pests, and climatic fluctuations. In summary, while Czech forests remain a critical part of the nation's natural heritage, the persistence of historical monocultures, degradation of spatial structures, and neglect of genetic diversity pose significant threats to their ecological stability and long-term viability. Addressing these challenges is crucial to ensuring the continued health and sustainability of these invaluable ecosystems. The volume of standing or dead wood in Czech forests is estimated to be in the range of 22 m3/ha. However, the volume of standing timber is strongly dependent on forest type, stand age, relief, etc. The proportion relative to the stand stock varies with the developmental stage of the forest. The proportion of dead trees to the total stock is reported to be between 7%-10% of the total stand stock. Deciduous wood has a positive effect on forest regeneration and the preservation of the stability and continuity of the forest ecosystem. From the perspective of forest continuity, it is of particular importance in extreme conditions, when standing logs and stumps provide favourable conditions for natural regeneration. Leaving dead, dying, fallen, decaying or decomposed trees in the forest is of great ecological importance for the whole habitat. The dead and decaying woody matter left in place not only supports the maintenance of biodiversity and the balance of biocenosis, but also the stability of the forest, its regeneration (natural rejuvenation on the smouldering substrate) and permanence.

In the Czech forests, about 1500 species of fungi and over 1300 species of insects can live on dead trees, of which about 2/3 are endangered species, which find it difficult to find an ecological niche and food base in traditional farm forests. Along with these organisms, dead wood is also an important substrate for bacteria, bryophytes, lichens, mosses, ferns, shrubs and tree seedlings, ringworms, spiders, snails, reptiles, amphibians and even birds and mammals. Next to the soil, dead wood is thus the most species-rich niche of the forest ecosystem. The volume of standing or dead wood in Czech forests is estimated to be in the range of 50 - 200 m3/ha. However, the volume of standing timber is strongly dependent on forest type, stand age, relief, etc. The proportion relative to the stand stock varies with the developmental stage of the forest. The proportion of dead trees to the total stock is reported to be between 8.6%-47% of the total stand stock. The minimum amount of dead wood can be considered to be about 20% of the stand stock. The optimum proportion of dead wood is between 30-40% of the stand stock for stands in the optimum stage of development. WWF suggests increasing the volume of dead wood in boreal and temperate forests to 20-30 m3/ha by 2031. A desirable part of the project is the creation of a network of trees that will be left to natural processes within the existing stands and that will be provided with individual protection. These trees will, among other things, act as nursery trees, sources of diaspores for the regeneration of non-economically preferred tree species. At the same time, they will serve the function of trees that can be expected to live well beyond the normal age of the surrounding vegetation and the biological function of trees that can be expected to be infected with wood fungi and colonised by wood-boring insects during their lifetime. Their trunks will then be left to decompose naturally after death without any further intervention.

Hunting, while a traditional activity, is not without its challenges and concerns. Over the decades, there has been a noticeable decline in small game populations since the 1960s, which has raised concerns within the hunting community. Simultaneously, significant increases in game populations have occurred due to shifts in the social and natural environment. These changes have sometimes fuelled anti-hunting sentiment among the general public, including certain environmental movements. One of the persistent issues in many areas is the difficulty of maintaining wild game populations at reasonable levels. This imbalance often stems from a subset of hunters who prioritize maximizing their hunting yield without always considering the broader needs of forest management and ecosystem health. Striking an optimal balance between the interests of forestry and hunting has become an urgent and long-term challenge.

Moreover, in several locations, the condition of the forest has been negatively impacted by the overabundance of game, hindering the natural regeneration of trees. Addressing these complexities and finding sustainable solutions that harmonize the interests of both hunting and forestry is an imperative task that demands immediate attention and a forward-looking approach.

The Czech project sites are located in 3 regions of the Czech Republic (out of a total of 14), which

have some of the highest game numbers (data as of 31 March 2024, source Statistical Office of the Czech Republic, see https://csu.gov.cz/produkty/zakladni-udaje-o-honitbach-stavu-a-lovu-zvere-od-1-4-2023-do-31-3-2024:

Region	Game (number of individuals)					
	deer	fallow deer	mouflons	roe deer	wild boar	hares
South Bohemia	3 357	2 765	2 017	33 826	4 101	47 811
Olomouc	2 926	1 522	1 043	18 131	2 936	19 860
Moravian-Silesian	2 991	2 620	1 013	21 826	3 186	14 797
Czech Republic total	32 839	46 914	23 067	298 635	67 462	256 692

The project encompasses a series of critical initiatives, including consultations with administrators of individual hunting grounds. These discussions aim to address the pressing issue of controlling excessive game density. Additionally, strategies like fencing measures and protective coatings for trees are under consideration as part of the comprehensive effort.

Another substantial challenge arises from the increasing recreational use of forests. To effectively address contemporary societal needs and the evolving ecological landscape, current forest management practices must undergo a profound transformation. Shifting away from a historical emphasis on wood production and sales, there is a growing imperative to embrace sustainable management practices that prioritize nature-friendly approaches. This paradigm shift is essential for bolstering ecological stability and optimizing the multifaceted roles of forests, encompassing production, water management, soil preservation, ecological conservation, and facilitating recreational experiences.

Forests in Poland overgrow 9.1 million hectares which is 29.4% of the territory of Poland. The vast majority of this area are forests owned by the state, out of which almost 7.6 million hectares are under the State Forests Holding management.

There are more and more forests in Poland. The forest cover increased from 21% in 1945 to 29.4% at present. From 1995 to 2014 the forest area was enlarged by 504 thousand of hectares. The basis for the afforestation works in Poland is the *National Programme for the Augmentation of Forest Cover* with the assumption to increase the forest cover up to 30% in 2020 and up to 33% in 2050. Poland's forests are rich in flora, fauna and fungi; 65% of species occurring in Poland live there. The forests in Poland grow on the poorest soils, mostly as a result of developing farming in the previous centuries. This also affects the spatial distribution of forest site types in Poland. Coniferous forests occur in more than 55% of the total forest area. The remaining part is taken by the broadleaved, mostly mixed. The small part is occupied by alder and riparian sites – a little more than 3%.

In the lowland and upland areas, the most frequent species is pine. It overgrows 64.3% of the forest area in the State Forests Holding and 57.7 % of private and commune-owned forests. In the mountains spruce is predominant (western part) and spruce with beech (eastern part). The domination of pine in the forest stands is the result of the past forest management practice. Previously, monoculture (one-species cultivation) was the forestry's answer to the expanding industrial needs for timber. Such forests, however, were less resistant to climatic factors and were falling victim to pests more easily. In Polish forests, the share of other (mostly broadleaved) tree species grows systematically. The foresters do not practice monocultures any more, instead they adjust the species composition of stands to that occurring naturally in a particular area. Therefore, the area of broadleaved stands in the State Forests increased from 13% to more than 28.2% in the years 1945-2014. The abundant tree broadleaved species are oak, ash, maple, sycamore, elm but also birch, beech, alder, poplar, hornbeam, aspen, linden and willow.

Forest stands aged from 40 to 80 years occur most frequently in Poland, and the average age of forest stands is 60. There are more and more big 80-year-old trees. Their area has increased from 0.9 million hectares to almost 1.85 million hectares since the end of World War II. The average volume of deadwood in Polish forests is about 5,7 m^3/ha and is spatially various. 40% of this volume are standing dead trees.

Location of the project:

The project will be implemented in a total of 20 SCIs/SACs, of which 13 are in the Czech Republic and 7 in Poland. Detailed information is mentioned in annexes **Description of sites** and **Maps**.

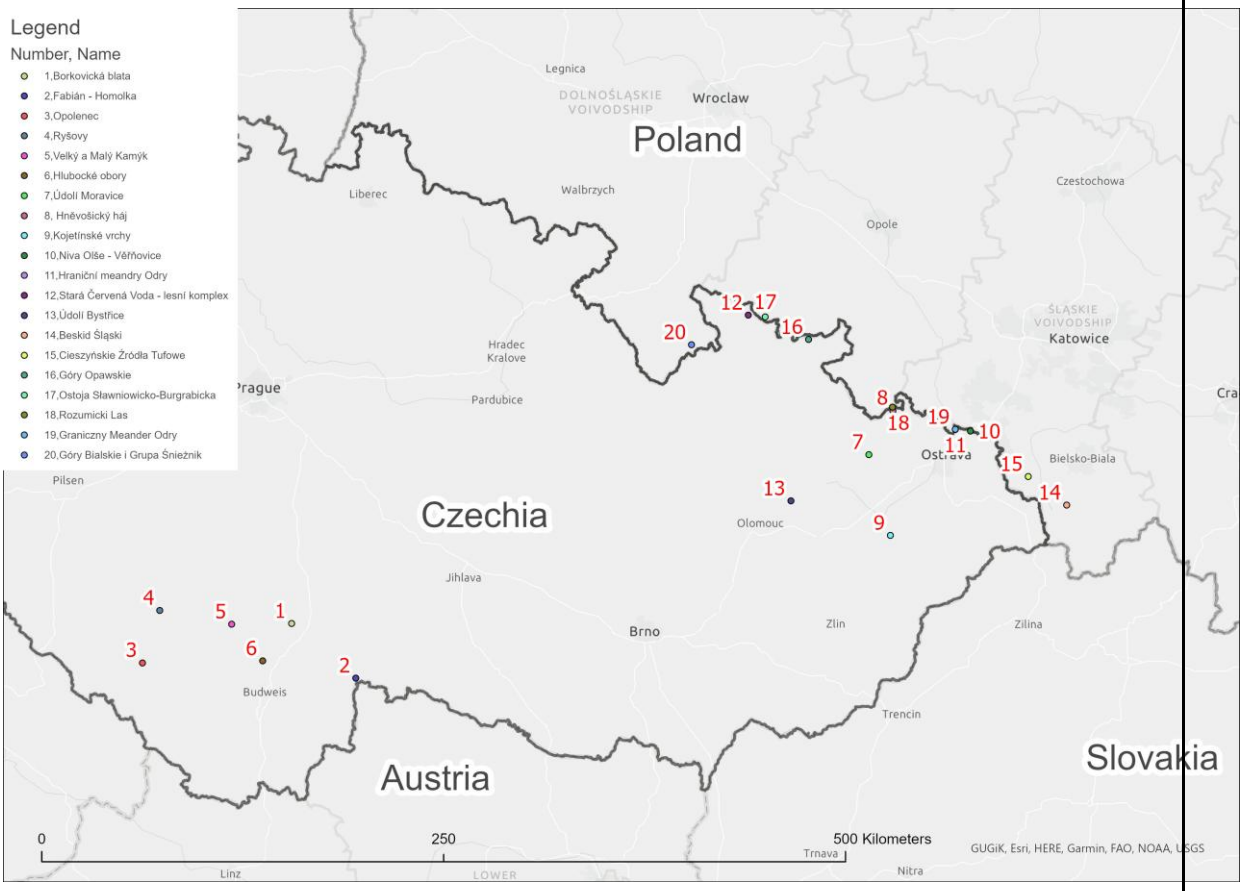
SCIs/SACs are on the 3 territories of the 3 NUTS II regions of the **Czech Republic**: in Olomouc Region (NUTS II Central Moravia) there are 2 sites, in the Moravian-Silesian Region (NUTS II

Moravia-Silesia) 5 sites and in the South Bohemian Region (NUTS II South-West) 6 sites.

SCIs/SACs are on the 3 territories of the 3 NUTS II regions of **Poland**: in NUTS II Dolnośląskie (subregion NUTS III Wałbrzyski) there is 1 site, in NUTS II Opolskie (subregion NUTS III Nyski) 3 sites and in NUTS II Śląskie (subregion NUTS III Rybnicki - 1 site, subregion NUTS III Bielski - 2 sites) 3 sites.

Sites in other EU countries than CZ and PL are not part of the project, however some SCIs are so close to the border that sites in neighboring countries will be affected anyway. This is the case of CZ0310001 Fabián - Homolka (number 02 on the map below, near the border with **Austria**), where we especially count on the involvement of the Austrian associated partner Naturschutzbund Niederösterreich, which will provide volunteers and subsequently use the experience with the management of the area on the Austrian sites.

Some of the project SAC/SCIs in CZ and PL are directly neighbouring each other and the habitats and objects of conservation are identical. The same problem exists with the invasive plant Echinocystis lobata (it spreads on both sides of the border, along both rivers - the border between the Czech Republic and Poland is formed by the Oder and Olza rivers). The methodology for eradicating Invasive Alien Species (IAS), including E. lobata, will be comprehensively documented in four language versions (English, Czech, Polish, German). These resources will be distributed to the organizations responsible for managing the project area on the Polish and Austrian sides. The noteworthy cross-border synergy and robust transnational collaboration with our Polish and Austrian partners constitute one of the project's significant advantages. This means that the project's outcomes will have broader applicability beyond our immediate territory and can benefit other member countries as well.



Czech Republic

South Bohemian Region:

CZ0314021 Borkovická blata

The priority habitat ***91D0** is in SAC Borkovická blata represented by habitats L10.2 (*Vaccinio uliginosi-pinetum sylvestris*) and L10.4 (*Pino rotundatae-Sphagnetum*) and their successive stages. *Pino rotundatae-Sphagnetum* is the most valuable type of peat forests in the Czech Republic, where the focus is on their occurrence. Since 1953, large-scale industrial extraction of

peat (so-called milling) has been started using heavy techniques. In total, about 400 ha of the original peat bog were mined, i.e., 1,700,000 tons of peat. The devastation of the chief peat bog deposits stopped at the very border of today's remnant of *Pino rotundatae-Sphagnetum* in natural reservation Borkovická blata and significantly affected its further development. There has been a significant drop in groundwater levels,caused by the construction of a system of drainage drains (channels) up to several meters deep. After milling in addition, the terrain level of the excavated part is reduced by an average of 1 - 2 m. At present, peat is occasionally mined within the SCI only in the Komárovského blata for spa purposes (Bechyně Spa). Due to the low intensity of mining and only fragmentary and small-scale occurrences of natural habitats, there is no significant impact on the objects of protection.

CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka

It is a valuable set of natural mixed stands of acidophilic beeches with numerous species of avifauna and characteristic entomofauna, linked to the developmentally older stages of forest stands. These are very valuable forests, included in the Database of Natural Forests of the Czech Republic managed Department of Forest Ecology VÚKOZ, v.v.i. (see www.pralesy.cz). Forest stands are included in the gene base No. 24 Vojířov (declared for beech, oak, fir, pine, and spruce). This location also holds strategic importance for our Austrian partner. Being situated near the border, it offers an excellent opportunity for the exchange of experiences and knowledge between the Czech and Austrian teams. These mutual experiences can be immensely valuable for other Austrian projects, especially concerning similar sites on the Austrian side of the border. This collaboration will contribute to a richer and more comprehensive understanding of issues with cross-border implications and enable both teams to develop more effective and efficient solutions for nature and environmental conservation in the region.

CZ0314044 Opolenec

It is a species-diverse complex of forest, meadow and rock habitats on limestone and silicate subsoil with a rich occurrence of important and specially protected species of plants, animals and paleontological finds; protection of species and habitats of European importance (SAC). The selection of this locality follows on from the CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE project, which is being addressed by ***4094 *Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica*** and its habitats 6110. Interventions aimed at restoring forest habitats of type 91U0 will have a positive impact on the priority species Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica, which is an endemic species of the Czech Massif. According to botanical records, this taxon was relatively abundant in the central part of its range until the 1930s. The decline in the number of occurrence sites and their sizes is likely primarily associated with landscape management changes, especially the cessation of sheep and goat grazing, habitat overgrowth, deliberate afforestation of sites, and eutrophication. The gentians are known in this local reserve from three small isolated micro-locations. The population size has been monitored since 2000 and is quite variable. In 2024, 278 individuals were found here, along with additional hybrids with Gentianella amarella.

CZ0310067 Ryšovy

The goal of caring for the natural monument of Ryšovy is the gradual transformation of forests' culticenoses on stands with nature closer to the species composition and fragmented spatial structure and to save the remnants of the 91U0 habitat, which is in poor condition in the past due to forestry management. The shrub layer is also species-rich here, as is the herbaceous layer, with a characteristic presence of orchids and dry grassland species. Secondary growths of forest-steppe pine woods also deserve protection, as they serve as a habitat for many endangered plant and invertebrate species. Threats to habitat diversity include shrub encroachment and the decline of light-demanding species. Negative impacts also involve the transformation of stands with suitable species composition into plantations of non-native trees and the spread of invasive species. Some sites are experiencing ruderalization and the expansion of invasive plants. High populations of cervids have an influence on stand structure and natural regeneration, as is the case in most Czech forests.

CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk

Velký Kamýk is a natural growth of acid beeches (9110) of lower positions on less nutritious rocks, representative of the southern part of the Písek Mountains. Malý Kamýk - protection of a natural stand of acid beeches (9110) of lower positions on less nutritious rocks, completely representative of the southern part of the Písek Mountains. It is a model stand in terms of forestry research. The entire SCI area is taken up in gene base No. 42 Všeteč, declared for *Fagus sylvatica* and *Quercus*

petraea. The project includes the most valuable parts of SCI: the Velký a Malý Kamýk Nature Reserves (49,90 ha) and the Manda site (2,5 ha). Nature-friendly stands (in the sense of Decree No. 64/2011 Coll.) Of acidophilic beeches (9110) on the western slopes of Malý Kamýk (part of the existing nature reserve) are included in the Database of Natural Forests of the Czech Republic (see www.pralesy.cz)

CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory

SAC Hlubocké obory represents a completely unique area, especially in terms of the occurrence of many species tied to old trees and dead wood. Most of the territory of SAC Hlubocké obory includes two separate game Reserve north of Hluboká nad Vltavou, namely the so-called Stará obora on the left bank of the Vltava and the Nová (Poněšická) obora on the right bank. The first historical mention of the field comes from 1480. It is therefore one of the oldest field farms in Bohemia. Since 1771, Stará Obora has existed in approximately the same area and borders as today. Thanks to this, it is a unique habitat, with many old trees, which are home to, among other things, rare saproxylic insect species include ***1084 Osmoderma eremita.*** At least 750 trees are located on an area of 3260.65 ha.

Moravian-Silesian Region:

CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice

An important, isolated site of the otherwise mountainous species of the ground beetle species *4014 Carabus variolosus*, a site of the occurrence of priority Jersey tiger (***1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria***). Due to the forested nature of the site, the most serious problem for the whole area is forestry management. Although beech successfully rejuvenates in most stands (habitat 9130), it is usually replaced with spruce after felling. Fir, which is still healthy and fertile in several places, is not planted anywhere. In several places, beech and oak-hornbeam have been preserved in a relatively natural state; old and dead trees, so important for ornitofauna, entomofauna, and mycoflora, are missing in most stands. Outbreaks of hogweed and knotweed pose a great danger, mainly because they are in places where they can quickly spread spontaneously.

CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj

Although the SCI forest stands overlap with the Hněvošický háj natural monument, the vast majority of them are classified as economic forests. The tree composition consists of geographically native deciduous trees in the vast majority of the area. Only sporadically are geographically non-native or habitat-unsuitable tree species mixed into the mix of deciduous trees, either individually or in groups (*Robinia pseudoacacia, Larix decidua, Picea abies*). The stands show only limited spatial and age structure. Only in a few places is natural regeneration of trees being carried out by means of small-scale restoration elements, and group replanting of deciduous trees and fir as well as spruce has been carried out. The area is also used for hunting, as evidenced by several feeding facilities located directly in the SCI, which has the effect of game into the SCI and preventing natural regeneration of trees. SCI is in close proximity to the Polish site PLH160018 Rozumicki Las. This geographical proximity underscores its importance for collaboration with our Polish partner and the transfer of knowledge and experiences between the two sites. This close connection between the Czech and Polish teams enables effective sharing of insights and best practices, fostering a strong cooperative approach to nature and environmental conservation. It facilitates cross-border synergy, allowing both teams to learn from each other's experiences and work together more efficiently towards common conservation goals.

CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy

The SCI area includes forest stands classified mainly as economic forests. Habitat 9170 has been managed in the past in traditional ways (low and medium forest forms). Much of the younger stands (30-40 years old) were created by afforestation of agricultural land. It is in these stands that spruce tends to be the predominant tree species, with varying mixtures of other species present. Stands over 100 years old, on the other hand, have a tree composition that is mostly close to nature or natural and are thus the most important component of both forest conservation objects. Only in places in the SCI area is there an effort to restore the natural tree species composition of the trees represented, which would have a beneficial effect on the conservation objects. However, a number of forest stands are being artificially restored, and on a significant area even with spruce, despite the fact that beech, oak, hornbeam and other native tree species have ideal habitat conditions. The limiting factor for natural regeneration is mainly the pressure of game, which prevents the regrowth of the young. It is probably for these reasons that artificial regeneration,

which has a clearly negative effect on both conservation objects, is preferred. In the case of both objects of protection of forest habitats, the main negative impact is the restoration with habitat-unsuitable or geographically non-native tree species (*Picea abies, Larix decidua*).

CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice

According to old maps from the first half of the 19th century, there was an extensive pond system in Dolní Lutyně (currently large, cultivated fields between Dolní Lutyně and Věřňovice). The largest of the ponds - Nerad - was more than 300 ha in size. Until the present day remains of pond dykes with stands of old trees (mainly oaks) have been preserved in this place, which form an important habitat of priority insect ***1084 *Osmoderma eremita*** in North Moravia. Location V Lyngu: This is a floodplain forest (priority habitat ***91E0**) in the floodplain of the Olza River (Olše) with several rare animal species such as *Bombina variegata*. The entire site is situated along the Olše River, which serves as a border river between the Czech Republic and Poland. Consequently, this location holds significant importance for international collaboration, mutual knowledge exchange, replication of valuable practices, and the utilization of project outcomes. Its position on the border facilitates cross-border cooperation, enabling the sharing of experiences and the dissemination of successful project methodologies between the two nations. This cross-border synergy promotes effective collaboration, the transfer of best practices, and the maximization of project results for the benefit of both countries.

CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry

This is a preserved, unique in Central Europe, section of the meandering course of the Odra River on the Czech-Polish border from the confluence with the Olše to Starý Bohumín, about 7 km long, with natural floodplain vegetation (priority habitat ***91E0**), permanent and periodic water areas, including several rare species of plants and animals associated with these biotopes. It is also a priority species ***1084 *Osmoderma eremita*** site with a confirmed occurrence of approximately 130 individuals. On the Polish side the SCI 'Graniczny Meander Odry' PLH240013 is connected. This connection presents an opportunity for addressing common challenges, protecting the same species and habitats, and mutually enriching the Czech and Polish efforts. Collaboration between the two countries allows for the sharing of knowledge and resources, facilitating the preservation of shared natural assets, and promoting cross-border conservation strategies. This synergy enhances the overall impact of conservation efforts, benefiting both the Czech and Polish sides in their endeavours to safeguard their natural heritage.

Olomouc Region:

CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex

This is one of the most important breeding sites of *Bombina variegata* in the Olomouc Region. The site represents a unique mosaic of lowland deciduous forests with a rich occurrence of hard grasslands (91F0) and oak woodlands (9170) in the middle of an intensively agricultural landscape. Among the target species of saproxylic insect, the occurrence of 1086 *Cucujus cinnaberinus* was also confirmed (2015, one dead individual under the bark of a felled poplar tree on the sunny edge of the forest path). Among other specially protected species, *Bombina bombina, Tritus vulgaris*, *Bufo bufo* and *Rana temporaria* were confirmed here in 2006. The SCI is close to the border with Poland, where there are other project sites. The SCI is situated in proximity to the border with Poland, where other project sites like PLH020016 'Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika' and PLH160004 'Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka' are located. This geographical closeness fosters an excellent opportunity for sharing project outcomes and collaborating with neighboring EU states, such as Poland. Partnering with a neighbouring country not only promotes cross-border cooperation but also enables the exchange of valuable experiences, expertise, and best practices in conservation. This collaboration contributes to the broader conservation goals of the European Union, reinforcing the collective efforts to protect and preserve our shared natural heritage across borders.

CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice

In the nature reserve there are well-preserved habitats 9130 and ***9180**, aged 160-190 years, which have been logged at most once in the past and, thanks to subsequent restoration through natural regeneration, have maintained developmental continuity with the original forest stands. Parts of the SCI are significantly influenced by commercial forestry activities. The species, age, and spatial structure of beech forests, and occasionally scree forests (especially in more accessible areas), are often simplified. Most stands are still predominantly composed of native tree species (beech, maple, lime, oak, hornbeam, and others), but in some places, stands with an

unnatural and prominent predominance of spruce have been artificially planted. In terms of protecting ***1078 Callimorpha quadripunctari**a, forest edges and open areas with nectar-bearing and host plants are also significant. However, most open areas on the site suffer from a lack of regular maintenance. As a result, a large portion of these areas is overgrown by invasive plant species, and a significant part of the open land is also affected by the proliferation of volunteer trees (the widespread overgrowth of newly sown trees or the expansion of forest edges).

Poland

Dolnośląskie Region:

PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika

In the area of PLH020016, 22 different habitats have been identified, all of which have been recognized as objects of protection in the area. The SCI encompasses three priority forest habitats, which are of primary interest to our project: ***91D0**, ***91E0**, and ***9180**. These habitats hold a central focus within our project's objectives, emphasizing their conservation and restoration as a pivotal component of our conservation efforts. The inventory also confirmed 17 species of animals (16 as the subject of protection) included in Annex II of the Habitats Directive. An area with a very low degree of development, which allowed the preservation of fragments of natural forests. Upper montane forests and acid beech forests are particularly richly represented. Perfectly preserved forest flora, an important connecting area where elements of the Sudeten and Carpathian flora intertwine.

The activities of the project will cover target habitats in the Puszcza Śnieżnej Białki Reserve and a similar area of those habitats in managed forests. This will allow to compare the state of habitats in areas with different protection status.

Opolskie Region

PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka

It is an agricultural region with small patches of forest on the higher elevations. The activities of the project will cover only forest sites managed by State Forests. The preservation state of forest habitats is average, possible to be restored with average expenditure of resources. Habitat structure is partially degraded due to the presence of geographically and ecologically alien elements as well as disturbances in the age and spatial structure of the stand (habitat 9110), presence of invasive species in the undergrowth and a very low share of *Carpinus betulus* (9170), reduced share of *Fraxinus excelsior* in the stand and increased role of *Alnus glutinosa* (priority ***91E0**). An important area for *Bombina variegata*, one of the two species' sites in the Sudetes. These are its westernmost sites in Poland (on the edge of the species' range). Local population is significant in the region.

PLH160007 Góry Opawskie

There are well-preserved forest habitats 9110 (Luzulo-Fagetum) and priority ***9180** (Tilio plathyphyllis-Acerion pseudoplatani). Habitat 9170 is represented by Tilio-Carpinetum association, with stands dominated by *Tilia cordata* and minor share of *Quercus robur* and *Carpinus betulus*. The area is an important refuge of habitat 9190 in the country, represented by 2 communities Luzulo-luzuloidis-Quercetum petraeae and Molinio arundinaceae-Quercetum. The priority habitat ***91E0**, consisting of alder and ash riparian forests belonging to the Alnion association, occupies small areas in the valleys of watercourses and in spring areas. The project area is an important refuge of 1381 *Dicranum viride* in south-west Poland (Góry Opawskie are the only range of the Sudetes where this species occurs). The activities of the project will cover target habitats in the Olszak Reserve and the Cicha Dolina Reserve as well as similar areas of those habitats in managed forests. This will allow to compare the state of habitats in areas with different protection status.

PLH160018 Rozumicki Las

Rozumicki Forest is an isolated forest complex located in the southern part of Opole Silesia on the border with the Czech Republic. It is a very important area from the phytosociological point of view, covered to a large extent by very well-developed communities of Tilio-Carpinetum Forest with most of the characteristic taxa. Also, other types of vegetation, particularly Carici remotae-Fraxinetum and Molinio arundinaceae-Quercetum forests, are peculiarities of Polish flora of supra-regional importance. The rich and natural flora of the area contains about 20 species that are endangered or under legal protection. The Rozumicki Forest area is one of the most important forest ecosystems in Opole Silesia with priority habitat ***91E0**.

Śląskie Region:

PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry

The area is concentrated around the valley of the strongly meandering Odra River, bordering directly on the Czech CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry. The entire area is occupied by a potential habitat of Salici-Populetum and Ficario-Ulmetum typicum riparian forests. In fact, fragments of these complexes have been preserved only on relatively small surfaces, where they are characterized by a significant degree of distortion. Degeneration of habitats is primarily the result of the progressive invasion of species of foreign origin. The mass occurrence of *Reynoutria spp*. significantly limits the regeneration of the stand, which threatens its progressive thinning and partial disappearance. The area is very important for the maintenance of *Cucujus cinnaberinus* and priority ***1084 Osmoderma eremita** population, both in southern Poland (nationally) and in the historical region of Upper Silesia (internationally). The habitat of the species are forest habitats (priority ***91E0** and 91F0) and woodlots on the river bank (a total of approx. 35 ha). The forest habitats and woodlots occupied by the species are largely degenerated due to the mass occurrence of invasive plant species, in particular from the genus.*Reynoutria sp*p., which practically prevents the renewal of the tree stand. Consequently, the continuity in the dead wood supply may not be ensured.

PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe

The refuge consists of four isolated areas of currently active springs with calcareous sinter deposits. The forested, gentle hills are cut by numerous deep valleys with permanent or intermittent streams flowing at the bottom. The slopes of the hills are covered with various deciduous forests, which, depending on the level of humidity, form riparian forests (in stream valleys), oak-hornbeam forests and beech forests (on elevations). The undergrowth contains numerous species of protected and rare plants. In order to protect well-preserved, natural, multi-species stands of deciduous forests with a wealth of herbaceous plants and interesting elements of the fauna, including protected and rare species, 2 reserves were established here in 1996. In the area, 8 types of habitats from Annex I of Council Directive 92/43/EEC were found include priority ***91E0**.

PLH240005 Beskid Śląski

An area of great importance for the preservation of biodiversity. Several types of habitats from Annex I of Council Directive 92/43/EEC have been identified here. Plants and animal species listed in Annex II of Council Directive 92/43/EEC have been found here as well. It is a sanctuary of the Carpathian Forest typical fauna. There are many sites of rare and endangered plants and invertebrates in the area. Forests are represented by various types of habitats; the largest area is occupied by acid beech forests (9110). In the vicinity of Istebna, there is a lower montane forest on peat Bazzanio-Piceetum, one of the forms of priority habitat ***91D0**. Sycamore forests with *Lunaria rediviva* Lunario-Aceretum (priority ***9180**) developed in the northern part of the Silesian Beskids. There is also a significant representation of another priority habitat ***91E0**. It's also worth noting that this site hosts the priority insect species ***1084 Osmoderma eremita**, commonly known as the hermit beetle. As an umbrella species, the conservation of O. eremita contributes significantly to the protection of numerous other wildlife species, making it a key element in our conservation efforts with potential benefits for a wide range of biodiversity. The activities of the project will cover target habitats in the Czantoria Reserve and similar area of those habitats in managed forests. This will allow to compare the state of habitats in areas with different protection status.

The sites selected for this project adhere to specific criteria that make them representative and well-suited for our conservation efforts. These sites have been carefully chosen due to their exposure to various human activities, providing an ideal opportunity to introduce innovative measures in collaboration with land managers and landowners. Additionally, a significant landowner of the forest in the Czech Republic, namely the state enterprise Lesy České republiky (**Forests of the Czech Republic**), has demonstrated its endorsement for the project through a formal letter of support, as indicated in the annex **Letters of Support**.

Furthermore, our project is in close partnership with two key stakeholders, the **South Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia regions**. These regions not only oversee the management of the selected project sites but also play a pivotal role in regional policy decisions. Their active involvement as associated beneficiaries underscore the project's regional significance and its alignment with regional policy objectives. Moreover, the **Olomouc Region**, where some of the project sites are situated, has also conveyed its support for the project's objectives and initiatives, as evident from

the annex Letters of Support. This broad regional endorsement underscores the collaborative nature of our project and its potential to make a positive impact across multiple regions. In Poland, the sites were selected to meet the following criteria: (1) close proximity to PL/CZ borderline and (2) we will have easy access (by law) to the habitats and conduct our measures and other practices with cooperation mostly with **Polish State Forests**. Most of the area of selected sites is under the management of State Forests, which have expressed their will and readiness to cooperate and to support the project - see the annex **Letters of Support**.

We have also received support from other main owners, as can be seen from the above-mentioned annex. Many discussions with these stakeholders have already taken place during the project preparation. Demonstration areas will be created in these selected sites where we will show how to implement these measures in planned workshops for the target group. The project areas will be pilot areas and after the project is over, we will aim to have the relevant managers continue to expand the measures to support the target species and habitats. The project is long enough to see if the chosen approach will contribute to improving the status of the target habitats and the living conditions of the target species. The main goal of the project is to improve the conservation status of these habitats and their associated protected species. It goes without saying that by improving the condition of habitats, biodiversity will be promoted (conditions for plants and animals living here will be improved). However, the condition of some populations (saproxylic insect and amphibians) is so poor that special measures are needed to support and rescue them. These special managements are targeted at these main species. Detailed information is mentioned in the annex **Description of species and habitats**.

Target habitats:

The project's primary objective is the enhancement of the conservation status of 11 diverse habitats, among which 3 are of paramount importance and collectively constitute nearly a third of the entire project's target habitat area, spanning two European Union member states. The selection of these habitats aims to encompass a wide array of forested environments, rendering this initiative a truly comprehensive endeavour with a specific focus on forest habitats. Notably, the project places significant emphasis on the revitalization of these three priority habitats, for which tailored restoration measures will be meticulously developed to elevate their overall ecological condition.

			Habitats										
Code	**Name of SCI/SAC**	**Hectares**	***91D0**	***91E0**	***9180**	91F0	91T0	91U0	9110	9130	9170	9190	7140
CZ0314021	Borkovická blata	123,32	106,14				16,18						,00
CZ0310001	Fabián - Homolka	217,72							189,12	28,60			
CZ0314044	Opolenec	5,80						5,80					
CZ0310067	Ryšovy	16,10						16,10					
CZ0310020	Velký a Malý Kamýk	52,40							52,40				
CZ0813474	Udolí Moravice	97,01								97,01			
CZ0810423	Hněvošický háj	68,36									51,89	16,47	
CZ0810035	Kojetínské vrchy	111,04								20,29	90,75		
CZ0813457	Niva Olše - Věřňovice	12,00		12,00									
CZ0814093	Hraniční meandry Odry	36,74		36,74									
CZ0714772	Udolí Bystřice	80,57			26,75				0,47	53,35			
PLH020016	Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika	222,51	24,75	11,42	64,04				85,67	11,23			25,40
PLH240005	Beskid Śląski	295,73	52,81	79,22	52,81				52,81	47,52	10,56		
PLH160004	Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka	31,69		10,76					5,94		14,99		
PLH160007	Góry Opawskie	216,65		71,49	5,82				38,18		21,53	79,63	
PLH240013	Graniczny Meander Odry	41,61		34,54		7,07							
PLH160018	Rozumicki Las	96,58		1,90		4,57					85,38	4,73	
PLH240001	Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe	208,18		26,69					18,68	40,04	122,77		
% of total habitat area			9,50%	14,72%	7,73%	0,60%	0,84%	1,13%	22,92%	15,41%	20,57%	5,21%	1,37%
area of each habitat		**ha**	**183,70**	**284,76**	**149,42**	**11,64**	**16,18**	**21,90**	**443,27**	**298,04**	**397,87**	**100,83**	**26,40**
area of priority habitat		ha	**617,88**	**31,95%**									
area of non-priority habitat		ha	1 316,14										
area of habitats in total		**ha**	**1 934,02**										

Forests habitats – Forests of temperate Europe:

***91D0 Bog – Woodland**, Unfavourable-Inadequate, CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski. Total ha in the project: 183,7 ha (% representation in the total area of target habitats of the project is 9,5%)

***91E0 Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)**, Unfavourable-Bad, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, locality V Lyngu, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika,

PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry, PLH160018 Rozumicki Las, PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe. Total ha in the project: 284,76 ha (14,72%)

***9180 Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines**, Unfavourable-Inadequate, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie. Total ha in the project: 149,42 ha (7,73%)

91F0 Riparian mixed forests of Quercus robur, Ulmus laevis and Ulmus minor, Fraxinus excelsior or Fraxinus angustifolia, along the great rivers (Ulmenion minoris), Unfavourable-Inadequate. Total ha in the project: 11,64 ha (0,6%)

91T0 Central European lichen scots pine forests, Unfavourable-Bad. Total ha in the project: 16,18 ha (0,84%)

91U0 Sarmatic steppe pine forest, Unfavourable-Inadequate. Total ha in the project: 21,91 ha (1,13%)

9110 Luzulo-Fagetum beech forests, Unfavourable-Bad, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka (189,19 ha) and CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk (52,40 ha), Total ha in the project: 241,29 ha (22,01%)

9130 Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests, Unfavourable-Inadequate. Total ha in the project: 443,27 ha (22,92%)

9170 Galio-Carpinetum oak-hornbeam forests, Unfavourable-Inadequate. Total ha in the project: 397,87 ha (20,57%)

9190 Old acidophilous oak woods with Quercus robur on sandy plains, Unfavourable-Bad. Total ha in the project: 100,83 ha (5,21%)

No Forests habitats - Raised bogs and mires, and fens habitats:

7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs: continental - Unfavourable-Inadequate. Total ha in the project: 26,4 ha (1,37%).

Species:

The overarching goal of the project is to enhance the conservation status of 12 target species, encompassing 3 amphibians, 7 insects (including 2 priority species), and 2 plants (one of which is a priority) found within (SCIs/SACs in two European Union member states. It's worth noting that the project's measures will be distinctly tailored to prioritize the enhancement of the priority species, with the added benefit of positively impacting other species within these areas. These species inhabit not only the target habitats but also extend their presence beyond them, covering an additional area of approximately 3600 hectares. This extra territory will also be subject to restoration measures, aimed at benefiting the species and their ecosystems.

		Species												
		Amphibians			Invertebrates							Plants		
Code	Name of SCI/SAC	1193 Bombina variegata	1188 Bombina bombina	1166 Triturus cristatus	*1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria	4014 Carabus variolosus	1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus	*1084 Osmoderma eremita	1083 Lucanus cervus	1079 Limoniscus violaceus	4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus	1381 Dicranum viride	*4094 Gentianella bohemica	
CZ0314044	Opolenec												3,5	
CZ0314126	Hlubocké obory							3 260,65						
CZ0813474	Údolí Moravice													
CZ0813457	Niva Olše - Věřňovice						16,07							
CZ0814093	Hraniční meandry Odry													
CZ0713827	Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex	331,97												
CZ0714772	Údolí Bystřice													
PLH020016	Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika													
PLH240005	Beskid Śląski													
PLH160004	Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka													
PLH160007	Góry Opawskie													
PLH240013	Graniczny Meander Odry													
PLH160018	Rozumicki Las													
PLH240001	Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe													

total area with species outside habitats 3 612,19 ha

Amphibians:

1193 Yellow-bellied toad - Bombina variegata, Unfavourable – Inadequate, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice: in 2010, the population size at the site was estimated to be in the lower hundreds based on a census of vocalizing males (Set of recommended measures for the Moravian-Silesian Region), CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: lower hundreds of specimens (year 2008, Set of recommended measures for the Moravian-Silesian Region), CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex: there are lower dozens of individuals of B. variegata here, currently breeds in the SAC only in a few sub-locations. Status in PL: VU. PLH160007 Góry Opawskie – up to 190 individuals, PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka – up to 390 individuals, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski - confirmed occurrence (exact numbers not defined).

1188 Fire-bellied toad - Bombina bombina, status in PL: VU. PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe - population present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024, no fresh data available).

1166 Crested newt – Triturus cristatus, Status: CZ: Strong endangered (114/1992 Sb. and regulation 395/1992 Sb.), Endangered in Red list of CZE IUCN: LC, BERN II, NATURA 2000 (92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992), Habitat Directive annex II, IV, EU Conservation status in CZ - Unfavourable-Bad, CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, there are lower dozens of individuals of T. cristatus here, but it is not is not included in the SDF. Status in Poland: NT. PLH160007 Góry Opawskie – up to 20 individuals, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski – present (exact numbers not defined), PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024).

Invertebrates:

***1084 Osmoderma eremita**, Unfavourable – Inadequate, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory: isolated occurrence (cavities of old deciduous trees), CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice: In 2010, the occurrence of the Osmoderma was verified in 23 trees based on feces, chitin fragments of dead individuals or larvae, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: 133 individuals confirmed in 2008. Status in PL: VU. PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024), PLH240005 Beskid Śląski - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024).

***1078 Jersey Tiger – Callimorpha quadripunctaria**, NATURA 2000 (92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992), Habitat Directive annex II, Conservation status in CZ – Unfavourable – Inadequate, CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice - a hundred imagoes, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice - confirmed occurrence, size population size is unknown.

1079 Limoniscus violaceus (Violet Dickbettle): continental - Unfavourable-Bad, SAC: CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, currently unconfirmed, however, it is probable.

1083 Lucanus cervus (European Stag Beetle): continental - Unfavourable-Inadequate, SAC: CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, rare occurrence.

1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus, Near Threatened, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice: dozens of larvae, larvae found under bark of dead willows and poplars in the alluvial vegetation of the Olše River, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: confirmed occurrence, size population size is unknown. Status in Poland: Near Threatened. PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024).

4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus: continental - Unfavourable-Bad, SAC: CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, individual findings, after population apparently vital and relatively stable.

4014 Carabus variolosus, Strong Endangered (114/1992 Sb.and regulation 395/1992 Sb.), Near Threatened in Red list of CZ IUCN: NT, BERN II, NATURA 2000 (92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992), Habitat Directive annex II, IV, EU Conservation status in CZ – Unfavourable – Inadequate, CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice – verified occurrence in the lower to upper tens of individuals. Status in Poland: not listed on red lists. PLH240005 Beskid Śląski - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024), PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika – present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024).

Plants:

***4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica**, Critical Endangered (114/1992 Sb. and regulation 395/1992 Sb.), Critically Endangered in Red list of CZ IUCN: CR, BERN II, NATURA 2000 (92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992), Habitat Directive annex II, IV, EU Conservation status in CZ – Unfavourable – Bad, CZ0314044 Opolenec: permanent population of about 280 individuals

(counting in 2024).

1381 Dicranum viride: continental - Unfavourable – Inadequate, SAC: CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, detected in a few micro-sites, population vital. Status in Poland: R. PLH240005 Beskid Śląski - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024), PLH160007 Góry Opawskie – confirmed in one locality (updated in 2024).

Specific problems and threats of forest habitats solved within the project:

Threat 1: Low species and age diversity of forests

Even well-preserved forests with a close wood composition suffer from a limited number of native species. The shrub layer is then very poor, or even missing. The big problem is especially the rejuvenation, either due to the high game abundance or due to the lack of seedlings of specific species, which are not profitable for the forest industry.

Threat for these habitats and species: 9110, 9130, 9170, *9180, *91E0, 91F0, 91T0, 91U0, 1079 Limoniscus violaceus, 1083 Lucanus cervus, *1084 Osmoderma emerita, 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus,

Threat 2: Lack of veteran, decaying and dead trees in the forest

Lack of veteran and decaying trees is a problem even in semi-natural forests as dead and decaying wood is often removed for safety reasons (especially in parks and urban habitats) or as part of standard forest management practices and for reasons of forest health protection. The volume of standing or dead wood in Czech forests is estimated to be in the range of 50 - 200 m3/ha. However, the volume of standing timber is strongly dependent on forest type, stand age, relief, etc. The proportion relative to the stand stock varies with the developmental stage of the forest. The proportion of dead trees to the total stock is reported to be between 8.6%-47% of the total stand stock. The minimum amount of dead wood can be considered to be about 20% of the stand stock. The optimum proportion of dead wood is between 30-40% of the stand stock for stands in the optimum stage of development. WWF suggests increasing the volume of dead wood in boreal and temperate forests to 20-30 m3/ha by 2031. At the same time, these trees are extremely valuable, for the occurrence of rare species of birds, as well as an ecotype of invertebrates (saproxylic insect) or wintering ground of amphibians. This applies not only to forests, but also to linear woody stands, for example on the dikes of ponds or by roads.

Threat for these habitats and species: 9110, 9130, 9170, ***9180, *91E0**, 91F0, 91T0, 91U0, 1079 Limoniscus violaceus, 1083 Lucanus cervus, ***1084 Osmoderma emerit**a, 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus, 1193 Bombina variegata, 1188 Bombina bombina, 1166 Triturus cristatus, 4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus.

Threat 3: Spread of invasive species of non-native plants and trees

Invasive species spread very quickly, creating dense vegetation, and changing environmental conditions. They prevent the natural regeneration of native tree species, displace native plant species, and cause shading. It completely changes the character of the habitat. The most common problem is Reynoutria spp., Impatiens glandulifera and Solidago spp. and Acer negundo in ***91E0** and 91F0, Robinia pseudoacacia in 91T0, 91U0, Pinus nigra in 91U0 and Pinus strobus in 91T0. Invasive species are also a problem for saproxylic insects and amphibians because they cause shading (tree trunks and water surface) and total change of habitat.

Threat for these habitats and species: 9110, 9130, 9170, ***9180, *91E0**, 91F0, 91T0, 91U0, 1079 Limoniscus violaceus, 1083 Lucanus cervus, ***1084 Osmoderma emerita**, 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus, 1193 Bombina variegata, 1188 Bombina bombina, 1166 Triturus cristatus, 4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus.

Threat 4: Threat to small-scale valuable non-forest habitats

Forest ecosystems include not only forest habitats but other valuable habitats. Among the most valuable are water-bound habitats, such as 7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs with the occurrence of other objects of protection, such as invertebrates or amphibians These habitats are often neglected due to their small size, although they are irreplaceable in terms of biodiversity. A negative effect on the biodiversity of the habitat, identified in the context of current management, is the deposition of excised biomass in the surface drainage system, leading to the loss of habitat suitable for breeding amphibians, invertebrates tied to aquatic environment (dragonflies, Dytiscus) and for the existence of rare aquatic macrophytes (e.g., Utricularia minor, Sparganium natans, etc.).

Threat for these habitats and species: 7140, 1193 Bombina variegata, 1188 Bombina bombina,

1166 Triturus cristatus.

Threat 5: Lack of awareness of key stakeholders or the public

Despite the outstanding natural values of target habitats and occurrence of unique species on project sites, this special status is not well-known among the inhabitants and local stakeholders. Cooperation with forest owners is essential for habitat protection. Cooperation with private forest owners is generally more promising if a compromise can be found despite difficult negotiations. Or where conservation requirements do not restrict forest production. Or where the limitation of forest production is compensated for in the form of monetary compensation. Sometimes the situation can be improved if society can benefit from conservation measures, either directly through the implementation of the measures, or in the context of PR with positive conservation promotion.

WP5, T5.1 and T5.2 contain a set of specific activities to increase awareness of public and key stakeholders, to address this threat. They will also prepare better conditions for implementing conservation measures and cooperation with forest owners.

T5.1 included: communication plan, project website, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, promotion in media (printed, radio and TV at local, regional, national, and international level), Noticeboards (1 for each SCI/SAC) with information on the natural values of the project site, target habitats/species and the conservation measures implemented under the project and the reasons for their necessity, printed materials, promotional items (chocolates, bags, mobile phone, and laptop covers, t-shirts, diary, calendars), excursions for local schools and public.

T5.2. includes: field workshops for key stakeholders participating in the project, personal meetings with interested stakeholders, conferences, and seminars.

Threat 6: Disrupted hydrology in forests

Disrupted hydrology in Czech forests is another significant threat, primarily caused by historical interventions such as drainage, construction of forest roads, and logging practices. These activities have altered natural water cycles, leading to reduced water retention in the soil, faster runoff, and drying of wetland areas. As a result, forest ecosystems become more vulnerable to droughts, floods, and climatic variability. This also affects the habitat quality for many species, particularly those dependent on wet or moist conditions. Restoring natural water regimes is essential to improve biodiversity and overall forest resilience. Our project includes measures to mitigate these hydrological disruptions, such as blocking drainage channels, restoring small aquatic pools, and re-establishing natural water flow patterns to retain moisture in the soil and improve habitat quality for both flora and fauna.

Threat for these habitats: 9110, 9130, 9170, *9180, *91E0, 91F0, 91T0, 91U0, 1079

1.2 Specific project objectives

Specific project objectives

Describe the specific objectives of your project (clear, measureable, realistic and achievable within the duration of the project).

1 Improvement the condition of forest habitats on an area of at least 1900 ha and non-forest habitats on an area of at least 26 ha

Thanks to the implementation of WP3 Conservation measures, T3.1 Habitat restoration management and T3.3 Elimination of invasive non-native species, the condition of forest habitats will be improved in an area of min. 1900 ha on SCIs in 2 EU countries on 11 habitats, 3 priority (***91E0, *91D0 and *9180**) and 8 non-priority (9110, 9130, 9170, 91F0, 91T0, 91U0, 9190, 7140).

Increase age and species diversity of forest habitats:

- Planting of at least 180,000 native tree and shrub species in min. 12 SCIs.
- Individual protection of seedlings (both planted and from natural regeneration) of at least 18 000 trees. Importance will be focused on protecting suitable seed trees and fencing will be created around seedlings from natural regeneration.
- installation of fencing (collective protection of seedlings from game) of at least 7 000 m
- collection of suitable seed material, sowing on 116 ha (mainly *Pinus rotundata* and *Abies alba*).
- cutting of weed species (*Calamagrostis epigejos, Rubus spp*., etc.) on at least 10 ha per year.
- Eradication of invasive non-native plants on at least 700 ha.
- Cutting of woody plants on at least 100 ha.

Cutting and maintenance of treeless areas on site 7140 over an area of at least 26 ha.

For each of the priority habitats (*91E0, *91D0, and *9180*), a specific performance indicator (KPI) will be established: *Area of habitats where loss of biodiversity is being halted and reversed*. The initial value will be 0, while the final value will be the total area of each priority habitat where the loss of biodiversity has been halted and reversed due to our project. This indicator will demonstrate the positive impact of the implemented measures on biodiversity at the end of the project.

So, for each priority habitat it will look like this:

***91E0** Initial Value: 0, final Value: 2,85 km²

***91D0** Initial Value: 0, final Value: 1,84 km²

***9180** Initial Value: 0, final Value: 1,49 km²

2 Increases of populations of target species at least 5%

Due to the improvement of the living conditions of the target species through activities WP3, T3.2 and T3.3, we expect an increase of at least 5% in the populations of these species. This will be achieved:

- Maintenance or restoration of small aquatic pools, covering a total area of at least 20 ha, with a combined water surface of approximately 2 ha.

- By increasing the amount of dead wood to at least 50 m3 in forest habitats. The amount of compensation for damage resulting from leaving the forest or its parts to develop spontaneously (including leaving dead wood) is determined by Annex 3 to Decree No. 335/2006 Coll., which establishes the conditions and method of providing financial compensation for damage resulting from restrictions on forest management. The Decree was issued by the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic.

- Planting of draws and avenues of species-appropriate deciduous trees of at least 200 trees suitable for saproxylic insects and their possible watering.

- Preservation of old trees (or their torsos) with cavities, their professional treatment of at least 1 400 trees.

3 Improvement of ecosystem functions and socio-economic benefits at least 1900 ha of restored habitats, WP3, WP4, WP5

This project is the first LIFE project focused on forest habitats in the Czech Republic and Poland. One of the objectives of the project is to ensure the functioning of basic ecosystem functions in selected SCIs. This project has a high socio-economic impact through volunteer work where people build a relationship with the local area. The sites that will be cared for will increase their economic value. This increase will be caused in two ways. Firstly, by replacing paid work with volunteer work, these are WP3, T3.1, T3.2 and T3.3. The second way of increasing value will be through PR activities that communicate the importance of particular sites, valuable forest habitats and priority species.

4 Creation of model care for diverse forest habitats with a positive impact on non-forest habitats, and promoting sustainable tourism especially in cooperation with forest owners and with the support of volunteers, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP5

Development of a volunteering system: a functional system of regular annual volunteering by Czech, Polish and foreign participants (European Solidarity Corps through PEH, Austrian volunteers of the NSB associated partner) will be created to support the management of the sites and ensure its sustainability while minimizing costs. The proposal does envisage transnational cooperation to guarantee the achievement of the project objectives.10 volunteer campaigns per year are planned. It is also envisaged that volunteers will subsequently support the promotion of the SCIs they look after.

5 Demonstration and replication of new solutions in the region (e.g., effective removal of invasive alien species), WP2, WP4, WP5

In the framework of WP2, T 2.3 and WP4, T4.1 a methodology for the eradication of *Echinocystis lobata* will be developed. There is currently no methodology for the elimination of this species in the Czech Republic. In 2022 Polish General Directorate for Environmental Protection published A *Echinocystis lobata* control compendium for Poland. This methodology will be tested as a part of the project and then it will be freely available on the project website not only in Czech but also in English and Polish.

To further justify the need for developing a methodology for the eradication of *Echinocystis lobata* in the Czech Republic, it is important to highlight that this invasive species is spreading rapidly in riparian and floodplain habitats, where it poses a serious threat to native biodiversity. The absence of a Czech-specific methodology means that land managers lack tailored guidance for effectively managing or eradicating this species under local environmental conditions. Although Poland has published a control compendium, Czech ecosystems have often different hydrological, climatic, and soil characteristics, which require a localized approach. Developing a Czech methodology will not only fill this gap but also contribute to harmonized management efforts across Central Europe, benefiting broader conservation objectives. The methodology will be tested within the project to ensure its effectiveness and relevance before being made available in multiple languages.

At the same time, this methodology will be sent to the landowners and also to the site administrators (in terms of nature conservation) on whose land the occurrence of *Echinocystis lobata* will be confirmed in the framework of invasive species mapping in T2.3. Their interest was confirmed at the preparatory meetings for the project and is expressed in the annex Letters of Support (in particular the majority owners of the affected site Forestry of CZ, the Czech Union for Nature Conservation and the Odra River Basin). The site administrator is the Moravian-Silesian Region (MSR), which is an associated beneficiary of the project, so the applicability of the methodology is directly set here. In addition, it will continue to provide it to other regions where the occurrence of this potentially dangerous plant is currently confirmed, including confirmed results in practice. These are in particular the South Moravian, Central Bohemia and West Bohemia regions. Their representatives will also be invited to field trips where they can see the results in the field for a first-hand experience. In the South Bohemian region, the occurrence of this invasive species has been detected only sporadically, but in case of a larger spread, the associated beneficiary of the SBR project will have it at its disposal and can nip the danger in the bud.

The methodology will be provided to the Polish organisations managing the affected land on the other side of the border, which have confirmed their interest on the basis of preliminary personal discussions. The distribution will be carried out by the Polish beneficiary IBL and the Czech PEH, which has long-standing links in the border area.

1.3 Compliance with LIFE programme objectives and call topic

Compliance with LIFE Programme objectives

Explain how the project contributes to the specific objectives of the LIFE Programme and the sub-programme targeted by the call (Nature and Biodiversity, Circular Economy and Quality of Life, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation or Clean Energy Transition).

The project contributes to these specific objectives set out in Article 3 of the LIFE Programme:

“To contribute to the shift towards a resource-efficient, low- carbon and climate- resilient economy, to the protection and improvement of the quality of the environment and to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, including the support of the Natura 2000 network and tackling the degradation of ecosystems”.

The Article 11 Specific objectives for the priority area Nature and Biodiversity lists the objectives that our project also fulfils:

“To support the further development, implementation and management of the Natura 2000 network set up under Article 3 of Directive 92/43/EEC, in particular the application, development, testing and demonstration of integrated approaches for the implementation of the prioritized action frameworks prepared on the basis of Article 8 of that Directive”

Those specific objectives of the sub-programme ‘Nature and Biodiversity’ are the also fulfilling:

- to develop, demonstrate, promote and stimulate scale up of innovative techniques, methods and approaches (including nature-based solutions and ecosystem approach) for reaching the objectives of the EU legislation and policy on nature and biodiversity, and to contribute to the knowledge base and to the application of best practices, including through the support of the Natura 2000

- to support the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of EU legislation and policy on nature and biodiversity, including by improving governance at all levels, in particular through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society, also taking into due consideration the possible contributions provided by citizen science

- to catalyse the large-scale deployment of successful solutions/approaches for implementing EU

legislation and policy on nature and biodiversity, by replicating results, integrating related objectives into other policies and into public and private sector practices, mobilising investment and improving access to finance.

Our project aims to enhance the condition of these habitats, thereby fostering biodiversity and improving the living conditions for the plants and animals inhabiting them. For some populations, especially saproxylic insects and amphibians, their status is so dire that we need to implement specialized measures to support and rescue them. These key species are the primary focus of our tailored management strategies (see WP3, T3.1, and T3.2 for detailed information). In addition to forest habitats, our project encompasses other ecologically valuable habitats. Among the most noteworthy are aquatic environments, including transitional mires and quaking bogs (7140), which also harbour other protected species like invertebrates and amphibians. Unfortunately, these habitats are often overlooked due to their modest size, despite their irreplaceable role in biodiversity conservation.

Methodology of elimination of *Echinocystis lobata* and other IAS plants will be developed within WP 2, T 2.3 and WP4, T4.1. This methodology will be freely available on the project website in Czech, Polish, German and in English (the occurrence of Echinocystis lobata has been confirmed in the SAC Hraniční meandry Odra, so its occurrence in the SCI 'Graniczny Meander Odra' PLH240013, which is directly adjacent to the SAC Hraniční meandry Odra on the Polish side). At the same time, this methodology will be sent to landowners and also to site administrators (from the point of view of nature conservation), on whose land the occurrence of *Echinocystis lobata* will be confirmed within the framework of invasive species mapping in T2.3.

The basic European document that the project respects is Council Directive 92/43 / EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, which aims to contribute to the safeguarding of biodiversity in the European Union and establishes the Natura 2000 network.

The project is in line with Decision 93/626 / EEC, which confirms the commitment of EU countries to implement the provisions of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity signed in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 by the European Community (now the EU).

Furthermore, the planned measures are related to EU Regulation No. 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, which aims to minimize and mitigate the adverse effects of invasive alien species on EU biodiversity and ecosystems and on human health and the economy.

The overall objective of the LIFE Program is to contribute to the transition to a sustainable, circular, energy-efficient, and renewable economy. Which is resilient to climate change and leads to the protection, restoration, and improvement of the quality of the environment, including air, water, and soil, and to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity and address ecosystem degradation, inter alia by supporting the implementation and management of the Natura 2000 network, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

The Nature and Biodiversity sub-programme will aim at the protection and restoration of Europe’s nature and halting and reversing biodiversity loss.

The presented project is directly focused on improving biodiversity in SCI (localities of the Natura 2000 site system), both by improving the status of valuable habitats and by measures aimed at supporting specific protected and priority species. See list of habitats and species in annex Description of species and habitats.

Compliance with the call topic

Indicate the call topic to which your proposal relates, and explain how the proposed project addresses the scope of the topic description in the Call document.

Strengthening NATURA 2000 network, EU biodiversity strategy. The project will significantly contribute to EU environmental policies – both on National and EU level. Its implementation will contribute to meeting targets of following EU strategies and directives: LIFE regulation, EU Habitats directive, EU Biodiversity strategy to 2020, (Targets 1 and 2).

The Model Forest project falls under this sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity. All its objectives and activities (WP2-5) fulfil this subprogramme.

The solutions proposed by the project are in line with EU Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species. (WP2, T2.3, WP3, T3.3, WP5 T5.2, T5.3).

The project falls under both intervention areas of the Nature and Biodiversity call:

"Space for Nature".

The project's core objective is to enhance the environmental conditions conducive to the well-being and proliferation of various species and habitats. This will be accomplished through a series of targeted interventions executed at specific sites. These interventions encompass a spectrum of activities, ranging from the implementation of protective measures to the meticulous management of restoration processes. Additionally, the project will focus on ecosystem revitalization efforts, all geared towards creating a more hospitable and sustainable environment for the targeted species and habitats.

The project is primarily aimed at improving the status of 12 target species (3 amphibians, 7 insects – of which 2 are priority, 2 plants – of which 1 is priority):

2 amphibians: 1193 Bombina variegata, 1188 Bombina bombina, 1166 Triturus cristatus

5 saproxylic insects:

***1084 Osmoderma eremita, 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus, 1083 Lucanus cervus, 1079 Limoniscus violaceus and 4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus**

2 other insects:

***1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria, 4014 Carabus variolosus**

2 plants: *4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica, 1381 Dicranum viride

of 11 habitats:

3 priority forest habitats: *91E0, *91D0, *9180

7 no-priority forest habitats: 9110, 9130, 9170, 91F0, 91T0, 91U0, 9190

1 no-priority bog habitat: 7140

The project targets **20 sites, all at SCI or SCA level**, in 3 regions of Czech Republic and 3 regions of Poland**:**

Czech Republic

South Bohemian (6):

CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka, CZ0314044 Opolenec, CZ0310067 Ryšovy, CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory

Moravian-Silesian (5):

CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice, CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj, CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry

Olomouc (2):

CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice

Poland

Dolnośląskie (1):

PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika

Opolskie (3):

PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, PLH160018 Rozumicki Las

Śląskie (3):

PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry, PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski

"Safeguarding our species"

The project aims to improve the status of the target species mentioned above and, in the case of invasive non-native plant species, to reduce their impact both by direct eradication, by developing a methodology (as in the case of Echinocystis lobata and other IAS plants) and by raising public and stakeholder awareness. By implementing a combination of protective and restorative measures, the project aims to enhance the natural conditions of ecosystems situated within established protected areas. Moreover, the project serves as a testing ground for novel site management approaches and the provision of support to target species, as elaborated in subsequent sections. Detailed insights into the specific threats faced by individual species and habitats can be found in the supplementary document, 'Description of Species and Habitats,' included in the annex.

The project focuses on the described habitats or species in unfavourable or declining conservation status based on the most recent assessments of Article 17 reports:

Habitats:

Forests habitats – Forests of temperate Europe:

***91D0 Bog – Woodland**, Unfavourable-Inadequate, CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski. Total ha in the project: 183,7 ha (% representation in the total area of target habitats of the project is 9,5%)

***91E0 Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae**), Unfavourable-Bad, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, locality V Lyngu, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry, PLH160018 Rozumicki Las, PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe. Total ha in the project: 284,76 ha (14,72%)

***9180 Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines**, Unfavourable-Inadequate, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice, PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie. Total ha in the project: 149,42 ha (7,73%)

91F0 Riparian mixed forests of Quercus robur, Ulmus laevis and Ulmus minor, Fraxinus excelsior or Fraxinus angustifolia, along the great rivers (Ulmenion minoris), Unfavourable-Inadequate. Total ha in the project: 11,64 ha (0,6%)

91T0 Central European lichen scots pine forests, Unfavourable-Bad. Total ha in the project: 16,18 ha (0,84%)

91U0 Sarmatic steppe pine forest, Unfavourable-Inadequate. Total ha in the project: 21,91 ha (1,13%)

9110 Luzulo-Fagetum beech forests, Unfavourable-Bad, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka (189,19 ha) and CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk (52,40 ha), Total ha in the project: 241,29 ha (22,01%)

9130 Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests, Unfavourable-Inadequate. Total ha in the project: 443,27 ha (22,92%)

9170 Galio-Carpinetum oak-hornbeam forests, Unfavourable-Inadequate. Total ha in the project: 397,87 ha (20,57%)

9190 Old acidophilous oak woods with Quercus robur on sandy plains, Unfavourable-Bad. Total ha in the project: 100,83 ha (5,21%)

No Forests habitats - Raised bogs and mires, and fens habitats:

7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs: continental - Unfavourable-Inadequate. Total ha in the project: 26,4 ha (1,37%).

Species:

Amphibians:

1193 Yellow-bellied toad - Bombina variegata, Unfavourable – Inadequate, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice: in 2010, the population size at the site was estimated to be in the lower hundreds based on a census of vocalizing males (Set of recommended measures for the Moravian-Silesian Region), CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: lower hundreds of specimens (year 2008, Set of recommended measures for the Moravian-Silesian Region), CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex: there are lower dozens of individuals of B. variegata here, currently breeds in the SAC only in a few sub-locations. Status in PL: VU. PLH160007 Góry Opawskie – up to 190 individuals, PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka – up to 390 individuals, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski - confirmed occurrence (exact numbers not defined).

1188 Fire-bellied toad - Bombina bombina, status in PL: VU. PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe - population present (exact numbers not defined) (updated in 2024, no fresh data available).

1166 Crested newt – Triturus cristatus, Status: CZ: Strong endangered (114/1992 Sb. and regulation 395/1992 Sb.), Endangered in Red list of CZE IUCN: LC, BERN II, NATURA 2000 (92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992), Habitat Directive annex II, IV, EU Conservation status in CZ - Unfavourable-Bad, CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, there are lower dozens of individuals of T. cristatus here, but it is not is not included in the SDF. Status in Poland: NT. PLH160007 Góry Opawskie – up to 20 individuals, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski – present (exact numbers not defined), PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe - present (exact numbers not

defined, updated in 2024).

Invertebrates:

***1084 Osmoderma eremita**, Unfavourable – Inadequate, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory: isolated occurrence (cavities of old deciduous trees), CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice: In 2010, the occurrence of the Osmoderma was verified in 23 trees based on feces, chitin fragments of dead individuals or larvae, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: 133 individuals confirmed in 2008. Status in PL: VU. PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024), PLH240005 Beskid Śląski - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024).

***1078 Jersey Tiger – Callimorpha quadripunctaria**, NATURA 2000 (92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992), Habitat Directive annex II, Conservation status in CZ – Unfavourable – Inadequate, CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice - a hundred imagoes, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice - confirmed occurrence, size population size is unknown.

1079 Limoniscus violaceus (Violet Dickbettle): continental - Unfavourable-Bad, SAC: CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, currently unconfirmed, however, it is probable.

1083 Lucanus cervus (European Stag Beetle): continental - Unfavourable-Inadequate, SAC: CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, rare occurrence.

1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus, Near Threatened, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice: dozens of larvae, larvae found under bark of dead willows and poplars in the alluvial vegetation of the Olše River, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: confirmed occurrence, size population size is unknown. Status in Poland: Near Threatened. PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024).

4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus: continental - Unfavourable-Bad, SAC: CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, individual findings, after population apparently vital and relatively stable.

4014 Carabus variolosus, Strong Endangered (114/1992 Sb.and regulation 395/1992 Sb.), Near Threatened in Red list of CZ IUCN: NT, BERN II, NATURA 2000 (92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992), Habitat Directive annex II, IV, EU Conservation status in CZ – Unfavourable – Inadequate, CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice – verified occurrence in the lower to upper tens of individuals.Status in Poland: not listed on red lists. PLH240005 Beskid Śląski - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024), PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika – present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024).

Plants:

***4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica**, Critical Endangered (114/1992 Sb. and regulation 395/1992 Sb.), Critically Endangered in Red list of CZ IUCN: CR, BERN II, NATURA 2000 (92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992), Habitat Directive annex II, IV, EU Conservation status in CZ – Unfavourable – Bad, CZ0314044 Opolenec: permanent population of about 280 individuals (counting in 2024).

1381 Dicranum viride: continental - Unfavourable – Inadequate, SAC: CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, detected in a few micro-sites, population vital. Status in Poland: R. PLH240005 Beskid Śląski - present (exact numbers not defined, updated in 2024), PLH160007 Góry Opawskie – confirmed in one locality (updated in 2024).

IAS plants:

Accurate mapping of invasive alien plant species in SCIs/SACs will occur: CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice, Nature Monument Niva Olše - Věřňovice (16 ha outside target habitats) and locality V Lyngu (12 ha), CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry (54 ha, also outside target habitats), CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex (sites with the occurrence of Bombina variegata and suitable for this species, according to forest paths, approx. 27 ha), and CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice (80 ha), CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk (52 ha), CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka (217 ha), CZ0314044 Opolenec (5,8 ha), CZ0310067 Ryšovy (16 ha) CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice (approx. 30 ha, spreading along the stream and overgrowing the valley floodplain, *Reynoutria spp.*), CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj (min. 15 ha, the highly desirable reduction of invasive woody plants such as Robinia pseudoacacia), CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy (min. 30 ha the spread of invasive tree species or ruderal, expansive and invasive plants (ruderalisation due to game animals). Echinocystis lobata occurs on PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry mostly in floodplain forests (91E0 - 34.5 ha).

Basic information regarding invasive species and their presence in the areas adjacent to the

project sites is currently not available and will be supplemented during the course of work in WP2, T3.3.

Mapping refers to the following invasive alien species: *Reynoutria spp., Solidago spp., Echinocystis lobata, Helianthus tuberosus, Ailanthus altissima, Impatiens glandulifera, I. capensis, I. parviflora, Acer negundo, Robinia pseudoacacia. Aster lanceolatus*.

#§PRJ-OBJ-PO§# #@CON-MET-CM@#

1.4 Concept and methodology

Concept and methodology

Describe the overall intervention logic of the project, including the main idea and assumptions (i.e. how are the proposed activities and steps of your project expected to lead to the intended changes in terms of outcomes and impacts).

Explain the methodology, i.e. the main tools, techniques, methods and procedures you will use to implement the technical part of your project. Justify why the proposed methodology is the most suitable for achieving the project's objectives.

For Clean Energy Transition:

Describe the market barriers, the needs and constraints of market actors, and how your concept will address them concretely.

For Circular Economy and Quality of Life (n/a to Environmental governance topics):

Describe the technical details of the proposed solution (process, material, product etc.) using a flowchart and including, where possible, the general mass and energy balance. Explain how you plan to establish your supply chain.

Specify the scale (e.g. production capacity) and output of the project (e.g. quantity produced/sold during the project). The chosen technical scale should be one that allows the evaluation of the technical and economic viability of the proposed solution. In case of close-to-market conditions the target should be industrial/commercial scale already during the project.

1 Improvement the condition of forest habitats on an area of at least 1900 ha and non-forest habitats on an area of at least 26 ha

Threat 1: Low species number and age diversity of forests

Reasons of the problem:

- inappropriate tree species composition (Sprues and non-native tree species instead of deciduous species)

- missing natural rejuvenation shrub floor caused too high state of the game

Methods and procedures used in the project to change the problems (WP2, T2.1, WP3, T3.1):

- release of target (deciduous) species: non – native tree species as *Pinus strobus, Pinus nigra, Larix decidua, Robinia pseudoacacia, Acer negundo* and *Ailanthus altissima*) will be eliminated. Spruces *Picea abies* will be in some part of project area will be delayed in favor of deciduous trees (*Fagus sylvatica, Acer pseudoplatanus, Prunus avium, Ulmus spp., Quercus spp*.) and *Abies alba*

- planting of native tree species (*Fagus sylvatica, Acer pseudoplatanus, Prunus avium, Ulmus spp., Quercus spp., Salix alba, Populus nigra, Abies alba* etc.) and shrubs, Because of the dry springs and autumns, we expect to water the planted trees if necessary.

- preserving exhibitions trees (trees suitable for sowing)

- collection of suitable seed material, sowing (*Pinus rotundata, Abies alba*)

- installation of fences (collective protection of seedlings from game)

- individual protection of seedlings (railings, tubes, cages, chemical protection, and biological protection by sheep wool)

- cutting weed species (*Calamagrostis epigejos, Rubus spp*., etc.)

Threat 2: Lack of veteran, decaying and deed trees in the forest

Reasons of the problem:

- dead and decaying wood is often removed for safety reasons (especially in parks and urban habitats)

- dead and decaying wood is often removed as part of standard forest management practices

Methods and procedures used in the project to change the problems (WP2, T1, T2.2, WP3, T3.2):

- professional care about senescent trees to preserve them as habitats of saproxylic insects so that they are not a threat to humans (in parks and human habitats). A professional treatment (eradication of Viscum album), stabilization of trees, leaving dead and decaying wood in the forest is planned, as well as creating snags and leaving logs and/or a proportion of tree trunk standing after felling. For O. eremita we plan to take care of the minimum number of veteran oaks (at least

10 within a site) and distance to each other (min 250 m), which makes their populations stable.

- plantings and alleys of species-suitable deciduous trees as *Prunus spp., Ulmus spp., Quercus spp., Malus spp., Pyrus spp.*). Because of the dry springs and autumns, we expect to water the planted trees if necessary.

Threat 3: Spread of invasive species of non-native plants and trees

Reasons of the problem:

- overpopulation of the game makes ruderalization herbal palate and spread invasive plants as *Impatiens parviflora*

- the spread of invasive alien species of plants such as *Reynoutria spp., Solidago spp., Impatiens glandulifera, Aster lanceolatus, Helianthus tuberosus*, especially along watercourses and paths

- planting of non-native tree species (as *Pinus strobus, Pinus nigra*) in the past and their uncontrollable spread in the present (*Robinia pseudoacacia, Acer negundo, Ailanthus altissima)*

- Invasive alien plants displace native plant species, and cause shading. It completely changes the character of the habitat, the most common are *Reynoutria spp., Solidago spp., Impatiens glandulifera, Aster lanceolatus, Helianthus tuberosus*

- *Echinocystis lobata* is a currently neglected invasive species, but one of the 100 most dangerous invasive species in Europe (according to the Global Invasive Species Information Network).
Methods and procedures used in the project to change the problems (WP2, T2.3, WP3, T3.3, WP4, T4.1):

- *Robinia pseudoacacia, Acer negundo, Ailanthus altissima* will be eliminated (cutting and applying herbicides in accordance with the site management plan. In the case of herbicides, a spot application will be employed, ensuring they are not used in close proximity to aquatic environments. If intervention against IAS near aquatic environments becomes necessary, only targeted methods, such as injection, will be utilized)

- *Reynoutria spp., Solidago spp., Impatiens glandulifera, Aster lanceolatus, Helianthus tuberosus* will be eliminated (cutting and applying herbicides in accordance with the site management plan)

- *Echinocystis lobata* is considered an invasive plant in the Czech Republic, Poland and Europe, taking advantage of the almost complete absence of natural enemies. It occurs in natural habitats as well as in places altered by human activities. This neophyte was first registered in the territory of the present Czech Republic in 1911. At present it is not yet enemy No. 1, but is considered a potentially dangerous species. It is ranked among the 100 most dangerous invasive species in Europe. There is currently no methodology for the elimination of this species in the Czech Republic. In 2022 Polish General Directorate for Environmental Protection published “A *Echinocystis lobata* control compendium” for Poland. This methodology will be tested as a part of the project. This methodology will be developed within the project and made freely available for replication to other entities in the CZ, PL and abroad.

To further justify the need for developing a methodology for the eradication of *Echinocystis lobata* in the Czech Republic, it is important to highlight that this invasive species is spreading rapidly in riparian and floodplain habitats, where it poses a serious threat to native biodiversity. The absence of a Czech-specific methodology means that land managers lack tailored guidance for effectively managing or eradicating this species under local environmental conditions. Although Poland has published a control compendium, Czech ecosystems have often different hydrological, climatic, and soil characteristics, which require a localized approach. Developing a Czech methodology will not only fill this gap but also contribute to harmonized management efforts across Central Europe, benefiting broader conservation objectives. The methodology will be tested within the project to ensure its effectiveness and relevance before being made available in multiple languages.

Outbreaks of IAS will be actively sought out, and if identified outside the project area, their eradication will be carried out in coordination with the affected landowners and land managers.

Threat 4: Threat to small-scale valuable non-forest habitats

Threat 6: Disrupted hydrology in forests

Reasons of the problem:

- Small non-forest habitats as a part of large forest habitats are often overlooked. At the same time, they are an irreplaceable part of the mosaic of biological diversity

- Small non – forest habitats need often very specific management, that can be too expensive for owners or territory administrators

- Small water habitats are endangered wild boars or can be damaged by logging (small forest pools, Petrifying springs with tufa formation)

- Thanks absence of management is endangered by overgrowth (small forest pools, active raised bogs)

Methods and procedures used in the project to change the problems (WP3, T3.1):

- Cutting and maintaining forest-free in habitat 7140

- Maintain or restore small water pools: cutting trees and brushes make shadow of water level (pools should be penumbra)

- Measures to mitigate hydrological disruptions, such as restoring small aquatic pools, and re-establishing natural water flow patterns to retain moisture in the soil and improve habitat quality for flora and fauna.

2 Increases of populations of target species at least 5%

Threat 1: Low species and age diversity of forests (describe above)

Threat 2: Lack of veteran, decaying and deed trees in the forest (especially for saproxylic insects, (describe above)

Methods and procedures used in the project to change the problems (WP3, T3.2):

- Maintain natural and semi-natural forests: with a diverse age structure, autochthonous tree species and enough mature and decaying old trees at different stages of senescence.

- Increase amount of deadwood: artificially by creating snags and leaving logs and/or a proportion of tree trunk standing after felling

- Planting of draws and alleys of species-suitable deciduous trees include oaks (Quercus spp.), Beeches (Fagus sylvatica), lindens (Tilia spp.), Elms (Ulmus spp.), Willows (Salix spp.) some fruit trees, including plums (Prunus spp.), pear (Pyrus spp.) and apple tree (Malus domestica).

- Preservation of old trees (n. their torsion) with cavities, their professional treatment (elimination of Viscum album), tree stabilization.

Threat 3: Spread of invasive species of non-native plants and trees (describe above)

Methods and procedures used in the project to change the problems (WP3, T3.3):

- Elimination of invasive species, ensuring the sun exposure of old trees.

- In the case of herbicides, a spot application will be employed, ensuring they are not used in close proximity to aquatic environments. If intervention against IAS near aquatic environments becomes necessary, only targeted methods, such as injection, will be utilized.

Threat 4: Threat to small-scale valuable non-forest habitats

Reasons of the problem:

- Loss of suitable habitats for saproxylic insect and amphibians

- Forestry work during reproduction of amphibians

Methods and procedures used in the project to change the problems (WP3, T3.1):

- Maintain or restore breeding ponds in forest, ponds should be sunny and with little aquatic vegetation. Preferably, several ponds should occur in a network to enable dispersal and increase breeding success.

- Ponds should be sunny (Bombina variegata, B. bombina) or penumbra (50% of sunny, Triturus cristatus) and with little aquatic vegetation. The ideal height of the water column is 30-90 cm.

- Avoid forestry work during reproduction: Protection of reproduction habitat with fences.

The basic equipment for the implementation of WP3 will be a tractor 4X4 150PS with a forestry body. It is a special tractor suitable for the implementation of the proposed types of measures in the project's hardly accessible areas (mountainous, forested terrain). The tractor will be used for the implementation of most of the WP3 works in all project areas. Container carrier 6x6 35 t, hydraulic arm 10 m, 5 tons. It is a truck suitable for ensuring the transport of necessary materials. A low floor tandem trailer with a capacity of 30 t will be purchased for the vehicle, the tri-axle will be used to transport a walking excavator due to the size of the individual territories. The following small equipment will be used: chainsaw, scrubber, sprinklers, protective equipment according to the Czech Labour Code.

Other goods, works and services: Operating costs of machines and company vehicles (fuel, oil., etc.), Protective work equipment, Material for fencing, Seedlings for planting native tree species,

Material for individual protection of seedlings (tubes, fences, chemical and biological protection - sheep wool).

3 Improvement of ecosystem functions and socio-economic benefits at least 1900 ha of restored habitats, WP3, WP4

Reasons of the problem:

- underestimation of ecosystem services (most people are not aware of them at all or take them automatically

- imperfect scientific and economic understanding of the extent of ecosystem services

Methods and procedures used in the project to change the problems (WP3, WP4, T4.3):

- Creation of local communities for nature protection and involvement of voluntary work

- large socioeconomic impact through voluntary work where there are people built their relationship with local area

- support of people from social disadvantage area with their inclusion through to sheltered work in these locations

- intergenerational cooperation where there will be some areas working local volunteers across the ages. They will work on basic protective work families where parents will teach children to protect areas and vice versa.

- It is expected that at least in 5 areas a small non-formal group will care about the location also in the future.

- It is expected that at least 400 volunteers will be working on protection on areas

- Sustainable tourism and new job opportunities

- sustainable tourism will be supported appropriate landscape management WP3

- through PR activities that communicate the importance of the sites WP5

- new opportunities and jobs will be created especially in more remote areas. This will help to tackle problems resulting from isolation and social exclusion.

- Creating sustainable jobs and opportunities will also increase motivation of local people to stay in their communities and work for their enhancement, instead of emigrating into cities or abroad.

- Ecosystem services

- Although WP3 is primarily aimed to improve the conservation status of target habitats and species, significant impact on ecosystem services is expected as well.

- The expert studies (WP2) will already consider ecosystem services and recommend solutions that will maximize their positive impacts.

- Protecting actions will restore min 1900 ha of habitats and secure their long-term management.

It is expected that following ecosystem services will be restore in these areas:

- Increasing biodiversity ecological stability of landscape.

- Science and education (e.g., more representative examples of restored habitats.

- Increasing and restoring ecosystem functions/services will be one of the priorities when planning and implementing protecting actions. Also, the feedback, preliminary results and recommendations resulting from assessment of project impacts on ecosystem function (WP4) will be used to adjust the conservation action, so that the project's impact can be as positive as possible.

4 Creation of model care for diverse forest habitats with a positive impact on non-forest habitats, and promoting sustainable tourism especially in cooperation with forest owners and with the support of volunteers

Reasons of the problem:

- Despite the outstanding natural values of target habitats and occurrence of unique species on project sites, this special status is not well-known among the inhabitants, owners, and local stakeholders.

- There are two main reasons for insufficient or inappropriate care of habitats: lack of information (the owner does not "how to do it right") and lack of funds (lack of funds for special care or not financially advantageous for the owners).

Methods and procedures used in the project to change the problems (WP5, T5.1, T5.2, T5.5):

- Development of the volunteering system: A functional system of regular annual volunteering of

Czech, Polish and foreign participants (European Solidarity Corps through PEH, Austrian volunteers of the NSB associated partner) will be created, which will support the management of localities and ensure its sustainability while minimizing costs.

- A set of awareness-raising events will be implemented to increase the awareness of the public, owners, and key stakeholders.

- Awareness and support of local public, municipalities and stakeholders is crucial for implementing key project actions and securing sustainability of their results. Also, it is important for involving nature conservation needs to local/regional policies and effective cooperation with local foresters.

- Actions WP3 will improve the condition of valuable habitats. This will increase not only their natural values, but also the attractiveness of the project area – creating significant potential for tourism.

- Actions WP5, T5.1, T5.2, T5.5 will be used to raise awareness on ecosystem functions, so that their value can be better understood and appreciated in the project area, especially by local people (Scholl and students' excursions). After LIFE plan will disseminate the best practice methods introduced by the project, to spread solutions friendly to ecosystem functions also to other subjects, that can adopt them as well

5 Demonstration and replication of new solutions in the region (e.g. effective removal of invasive alien species)

Reasons of the problem:

- This problem is quite closely related to the previous objective of the project. To implement new solutions to the problems, the most often lacking are finances (especially small owners), knowledge and often, especially in the "conventional forestry", the desire to try "something new". That is why it is not enough to invent new solutions. It is necessary to demonstrate them and specially to put them into practice.

Methods and procedures used in the project to change the problems (WP2, T2.3, WP4, WP5, T5.2 T5.3, T5.5):

- The project includes a comprehensive strategy for maximising the potential for replication, positive impact on ecosystem functions and socio-economic benefits. Specific measures are included in the WP4 and WP5 actions and their complementarity and synergy will be used.

- Replication toolkit (WP5, T5.3, T5.5) is specifically designed for increasing the potential of the introduced best practice methods for replication. Replication is expected also after the project ends and specific measures will be included in After-LIFE communication plan.

- Work package 2, T2.3 will not only propose the most appropriate methods for IAS removal (this has already been successfully developed and tested within the Czech LIFE Morávka and LIFE Subpannonic projects, where our organization (or its employees) was involved) but will also provide a methodology for the elimination of Echinocystis lobata, which is currently not available in the Czech Republic. In the Czech Republic, the occurrence of *Echinocystis lobata* is recorded in southwestern Bohemia, the Polabí region, the Berounka area and south-eastern Moravia. However, not all locations of occurrence are precisely known, which is due to the rapid spread and the little professional attention paid to this species so far. In the project area, the occurrence of Echinocystis lobata is confirmed in the Moravian-Silesian region in the SCI Hraniční meandry Odry. We expect that during invasive plant species mapping under T2.3 it will be discovered in other localities, also in Poland.

In Poland it is most often found in the valleys of large rivers and their tributaries, along which its positions can be arranged in linear sequences, e.g., in the valleys of the Biebrza, Bug, Warta, Wisła and Odra rivers. Larger concentrations of the species are also noted in large cities (e.g., Warsaw, Kraków, Poznań, Łódź, Białystok) and around them. This is due to the fact that this species uses river valleys for invasion, and at the same time it is still often cultivated in home and allotment gardens as a decoration plant. *E. lobata* finds favourable conditions for its development in many places throughout Poland - both in lowlands and in lower mountain locations. It is commonly found in anthropogenic habitats, near places of previous cultivation, from where it spreads further to semi-natural and natural habitats. Most often, however, it grows in river valleys and in ruderal communities, i.e., along ditches, canals, roads and in rubbish dumps.

Outbreaks of IAS will be actively sought out, and if identified outside the project area, their eradication will be carried out in coordination with the affected landowners and land managers.

This methodology will then be freely available for replication (T5.3) in the Czech Republic and abroad (on the project website in Czech, Polish, German and English).

- Work package 5, T5.3 will be used to raise awareness of these stakeholders, including presenting cost-effective methods of removal, used, and demonstrated on project sites by action WP3 T3.3. By addressing the surrounding stakeholders and users of land, this concept can be spread on a broader area in the region.

- Task T5.2 is designed to involve the solutions proposed by WP2, successfully tested by WP3, and disseminated by WP5 into suitable regional policies (e.g., Forest management plans).

Especially T5.3: Replication toolkit is designed to maximise the potential for replication. It contains a set of sub-actions and communication tools/channels, which are specifically targeted for stakeholders, where highest potential of replication is expected. These include e.g., workshops and field excursions (e.g., for farmers, foresters), individual meetings. Final conference (T5.2) will be used not only to gather relevant experts and important stakeholders, but also to present the positive results and impacts of the solutions developed by the project – e.g., also in regional media. Networking will be used not only for study trips, but also to visit entities interested in replication. This will bring a very important possibility to see their specific baseline situation, discuss the potentials and possible risks and to recommend solutions, tailored for their specific conditions. We expect that the replication will continue also after the end of the project. Therefore, all important communication points will be available to interested entities after the end of the project (e.g., on the project website, Methodology of elimination of Echinocystis lobata for example, also available in Polish, German and English). Finally – for successful replication and to attract the interest of local subjects it is most of all important to offer solutions that are working, affordable and efficient.

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1.5 Upscaling results of other EU funded projects *(n/a for concept note)*

Upscaling results of other EU funded projects *(n/a for concept note)*

Explain if and how the proposal builds on or up-scales results of other EU funded projects.

The project builds on the ongoing projects:

LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001, Acronym: CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE, Optimalization of Natura 2000 sites management delivery in the South Bohemia Region and the territory of South Slovakia

duration of the project: 1. 9. 2017 – 30. 6. 2024, Coordinating Beneficiary: South Bohemia Region (SBR is also an associated beneficiary of this LIFE ModelForest project)

While CZ-SK South Life is focused primarily on grasslands habitats, this project primarily solves forest habitats often connected to meadow habitats. Some of SCI directly complements the follow-up care for forest habitats: SAC Hlubocké obory: will be linked to the acquired experience, working technologies and methods monitoring success, which result from the implementation of the CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE project. Experience from the site with *Osmoderma eremita* will be used, as well as trained staff who, after the end of the "CZ-SK South LIFE" project, will apply the much-gained experience and purchased technology in the LIFE Model Forest. The working group created in CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE, after the end of this project will be employed in LIFE Model Forest on C activities implemented in the South Bohemian Region. 4 trained employees will be able to apply their experience and pass it on to their potential new colleagues.

CZ0314021 Borkovická blata: this project addresses a forest habitat that was not addressed in CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE.

CZ0314044 Opolenec: Follow-up to the CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE project, which solves *Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica* and habitats 6110. Interventions for the restoration of forest habitats 91U0 Sarmatic steppe pine forest will have a positive effect on the *4094 *Gentianella praecox subsp.bohemica*).

NAT/CZ/000121 | Acronym: LIFE MORAVKA, Preservation of alluvial forest habitats in the Morávka river basin

duration of the project: 1. 1. 2007 – 31. 12. 2010, Coordinating Beneficiary: Moravian-Silesian Region (MSR) is also an associated beneficiary of this LIFE Model Forest project)

The LIFE Morávka project pioneered a methodology for controlling invasive species, particularly Reynoutria spp., and subsequently restoring affected habitats. Our project will draw valuable insights from this methodology and its tangible outcomes. We intend to adopt, refine, and field-test this approach, augmenting it with practical wisdom gathered from other locations. Project Model

Forest uses experience and builds on LIFE06 NAT/CZ/000121 in actions WP3, T3.3 Elimination of Invasive alien species in habitats *91E0 and 9170.

Interreg AT-CZ ConNat 45 (Natural reservation Kozohlůdky, part of CZ0314021 Borkovická blata) duration of the project: 01.10.2017 - 30.06.2021, lead partner: National Park Thayatal (Austria)

SBR and NSB were collaborative partners in this project, allowing us to leverage their expertise in the Czech-Austrian border region. Specifically, we will capitalize on the experience gained in implementing 'gates' during this project. It has become evident that 'gates' play a crucial role in maintaining a consistent water level in the area, which is essential for habitat conservation and amphibians. Consequently, the LIFE Model Forest initiative will extend the outcomes of the aforementioned Interreg project. We have designed the project's activities to meticulously avoid any redundancy or double financing.

LIFE16 NAT/LT/000701 | Acronym: LIFE OSMODERMA - Ecological network for Osmoderma eremita and other species dependent on veteran trees. Our main objective is to foster knowledge exchange among experts in insect species conservation and to share practical experience in habitat restoration. We aim to utilize this knowledge in our own project, building upon it and further developing it for application on our target sites.

LIFE17 NAT/PL/000011 | Acronym: Emys_PL_LIFE - Active protection of the Bombina bombina on the Natura 2000 sites in Poland and Dennmark. The aim of the Emys_PL_LIFE project is to address problems related to the decline of fire-bellied toad (Bombina bombina) populations, in five Natura 2000 sites in Poland and Denmark, to improve the conservation status of these species. We are in contact with its coordinator, Wojewdztwo Warmisko-Mazurskie, and we have arranged for mutual consultations, sharing of experiences and using the project results in networking.

LIFE19 NAT/PL/000746 | Acronym: Kampinos WetLIFE - Protection and restoration of wetlands in "Puszcza Kampinoska" Natura 2000 site including habitats 7140, 91E0, 9170, 9180. The project involved activities such as restoring water flow in riparian forests, enhancing moisture levels in wetlands, eradicating invasive species, and bolstering populations of newts and fire-bellied toads. We will leverage the project's outcomes for our target sites, subjecting them to testing and adapting them to suit specific conditions.

Some other LIFE projects solve similar theme, we asked beneficiaries for cooperation and networking:

LIFE11 NAT/PL/000431 | Acronym: Ostoja Wigierska - Endangered species and habitats protection of the Natura 2000 "Ostoja Wigierska" site. The project included measures to reduce amphibian mortality, improve habitat quality (including 91D0) through acquisition of private land, mowing and trimming of shrubs, construction of walkways, and reduction of the population of an invasive alien plant species - Impatiens grandulifera - in selected areas.

LIFE12 NAT/PL/000081 | Acronym: LIFE/BESKIDY "PL" - Protection of non-forest habitats in the Beskid Landscape Parks. The project improved enforcement of the EU’s Habitats Directive in Poland through implementation of conservation actions identified in the guidelines for the management plans of Beskid Śląski and Beskid Żywiecki Natura 2000 sites.

LIFE12 NAT/PL/000034 | Acronym: LIFE Pieniny PL - Nature mosaics - protection of species and habitats in Natura 2000 site "Pieniny" the project included measures for restitution and renaturation of valuable natural habitats through land acquisition, introduction of extensive use, cessation of agricultural use in valuable natural parts of beech forests 9130, removal of knotweed in riparian forests (91E0) in the Dunajec valley, protection of amphibian breeding sites (1193 Bombina variegata).

LIFE13 NAT/PL/000032 | Acronym: LIFE - Lasy Janowskie PL - In harmony with nature- Life + for Janowskie Forest. The main objective of the LIFE for Janowskie Forest project was to improve the conservation status of peatland habitats (7110, 7140 and 7150) on 94 ha, Stopped or significantly reduced the outflow of water from peat bogs, Improved the conservation status of ‘Bog woodland’ (91D0) and ‘Galio-Carpinetum oak-hornbeam forests’ (9170) on 30 ha; Restored two water reservoirs to maintain habitats for species associated with aquatic ecosystems, including birds and amphibians (1188 Bombina bombina, 1166 Triturus cristatus).

LIFE13 NAT/DE/000091, Acronym: LIFE Feuchtwälder, Conservation and restoration of alluvial forests and bog woodland in Brandenburg. Restoration, stabilisation and creation of 25 ha of *91D0 bog woodlands and 130 ha of *91E0 alluvial forests.

LIFE16 NAT/BG/000856 | Acronym: LIFE IAS Free Habitats - Collaborative management for

conservation of forest and grassland habitats negatively affected by IAS in Bulgaria. The goal of the project was to improve and maintain the conservation status of two of which priority natural habitat types (one of them is 9180) by Remove Alien plant species and maintain the conservation status of priority forest habitat 9180*. The habitat area in the NATURA zone is increased with more than 24,04 ha. Removed competitive plant species and IAS on 14,46 ha. Removed 5,01 ha more IAS trees and shrubs than planned 7,9 ha. Reduced IA plant species threat and negative impacts on 1333,12 ha.

LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000731, Acronym: LIFE for Insects, Conservation of Selected Natura 2000 Insect Species in Transboundary area (CZ-SK) of Western Carpathian Mts., Increase of target species abundance and overall species diversity through restoration of specific natural habitats (e.g., *1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria, 1083 Lucanus cervus).

LIFE17 NAT/DE/000497, Acronym: Tuff LIFE, Erhalt und Biotopverbesserung der Kalktuffquellen und der Bach-Oberläufe im Regionalforstamt Hochstift: Priority habitats *91E0 and *9180 sustainably protected and their conservation status improved.

LIFE17 NAT/CZ/000463, Acronym: LIFE Osmoderma 2017, Osmoderma eremita species conservation in SCI Poodří. Improving the conservation status of hermit beetle (*1084 Osmoderma eremita).

LIFE18 NAT/IT/001020, Acronym: LIFE FORESTALL, Restoration of Alluvial Forests and Cladium mariscus habitats in Ramsar and Natura 2000 sites. Exchange of experience in reducing the negative impact of invasive non-native species on native nature, in restoration management in forest habitats, especially in *91E0.

LIFE19 NAT/DE/000087, Acronym: LIFE Riverscape Lower Inn, Riverscape Lower Inn - An ecological perspective for riverscape management in the floodplains of the Lower Inn. Improving habitat conditions and conservation status for the typical wetland fauna and flora including 91E0*, amphibians and insects.

LIFE20 NAT/DE/001504, Acronym: LIFE 4 Siegerlandscapes, Siegerland´s cultural and natural landscapes, Establishment of habitat connectivity in alluvial forests (*91E0) through the conversion of conifer plantations; Optimisation of 50 ha of old-growth forest and 100 habitat trees on 100 ha (promoting habitat types 9110, 9130 and *9180).

The project LIFE21-CCA-CZ-LIFE Adapt Brdy is focused on maintaining a diverse landscape through nature-friendly, traditional methods of care in Central Bohemia as part of the adaptation of the landscape to climate change. We are in contact with its coordinator, Vojenské lesy a statky (Military Forests and Estates), and we have arranged for mutual consultations, sharing of experiences and using the project results in networking.

1.6 Complementarity with other actions *(n/a for concept note)*

Complementarity with other actions *(n/a for concept note)*

Explain how the project is complementary to other regional, national or international initiatives/activities/projects. How will it integrate the results from these other actions?

The project fully respects the sets of recommended measures for individual SAC/SCI, or care plans for individual small specially protected areas (natural monuments and nature reserves). The project is implemented in cooperation with the administrators of individual SCI/SAC (Regional Authorities, Department of the Environment).

CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, locality V Lyngu. The V Lyngu locality was purchased by the Czech Union of Nature Conservationists as part of the nationwide campaign "A Place for Nature". The aim of this campaign is to buy up valuable natural sites that are threatened with acute danger or that are suitable for the return of nature through a nationwide collection. But only small-scale management measures were applied (e.g., removal of shrubs near the ponds inhabited by amphibians, elimination of IAS plants and trees), by local NGOs Land association Cieszynianka). However, most of these managements are realised only infrequently. Moreover, due to limited funds, only smaller parts of the target habitats on the sites could be managed. The Model Forest project will build on these activities, in co-operation with the local land association Cieszynianka.

Within the framework of the LIFE Model Forest project, habitats for small amphibian pools will be prepared at several SCI/SAC CZ0713827 Stará Červená voda - lesní komplex and CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry), especially for the needs of *Bombina variegata* and *Triturus cristatus*.

Preparatory work (felling, removal of invasive plants, monitoring), which cannot be financed from

national resources, will be carried out. The actual implementation of the pools will subsequently be financed from national sources (e.g., from the Operational Programme Environment), and will take place in parallel with the project or as a follow-up to it.

Petrklíč Help, z.s. (PEH), as a project associated beneficiary, brings the concept of community work. They involve young people in local communities and create connections. As they have international accreditation for the European Commission program, they link European elements with local solidarity. During volunteer work in protected areas, they support teambuilding and openness. International volunteers are connected with local ones and together are looking for values that help to continue careens about environmental issues.

PEH cooperates with local social institutions and Job offices to give new impulse for young people who are in hard social situations. Involving those people to volunteer programs where they meet active people (local from Youth Parliament, international from European Solidarity Corps) helps them to discover new possibilities and role in community. PEH also runs Youth Incubator – during environmental activities young people can think how they can support protected areas with new attitudes and ideas. They help them and give them support to be proactive.

Sites in other EU countries are not officially integrated into the project; nevertheless, there are certain SCI areas situated in such close proximity to the border that their neighbouring counterparts will inevitably be impacted. A prime example is CZ0310001 Fabián - Homolka, located near the Austrian border. In this particular case, we place significant emphasis on the active participation of our affiliated partner, Naturschutzbund Niederösterreich. They will contribute volunteers and subsequently leverage their expertise gained from managing the Austrian sites in this shared conservation effort.

The other two project SAC/SCIs, CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice and CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, exhibit a remarkable complementarity with the SAC/SCIs PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odra in Poland. These sites share identical objectives for habitat and species protection. Additionally, they face a common challenge posed by the invasive plant species, Echinocystis lobata, which spreads along both sides of the border, encompassing both riverbanks of the Odra and Olše rivers that constitute the border between the Czech Republic and Poland. To effectively address this issue, the methodology for eradicating Echinocystis lobata will be translated and shared with organizations responsible for the areas on the Polish side of the border. Moreover, in proximity to the Polish border, we have CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj and CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex. This cross-border synergy and the collaborative efforts with Polish conservationists will extend to these sites as well, further enhancing the project's impact.

On April 9, the document "Priority Action Framework (PAF) for the Natura 2000 network in Poland for the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027" was submitted to the European Commission. These assumptions are the basis and starting point for defining further priority actions needed to protect Natura 2000 areas within the available national and EU funds in the financial perspective until 2027. The document was prepared by all major Polish authorities whose activities are related to natural environment protection. The project contributes to the implementation of the Priority Action Framework (PAF) in the following areas:

E.1.3. monitoring and reporting - activities in the project include monitoring the conservation status of priority natural habitats and the status of populations of plant and animal species;

E.1.4. Supplementing the knowledge base and the need for further research - the monitoring carried out will make it possible to add to the knowledge base on the objects of protection in the Natura 2000 areas included in the project and on the threats occurring there, such as invasive alien species.

The project also provides for activities to maintain and restore the proper conservation status of natural habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network (E.2) under E.2.3. Marshes, bogs and other wetlands; E.2.6. forest habitats.

1.7 Synergies and co-benefits with other LIFE sub-programmes *(n/a for concept note)*

Synergies and co-benefits with other LIFE sub-programmes *(n/a for concept note)*

Describe synergies with other LIFE sub-programmes (Nature and Biodiversity, Circular Economy and Quality of Life, Climate Change or Clean Energy Transition). Describe spillover effects (co-benefits) in addition to those targeted by the project. If possible, quantify the contribution.

Identify the activities/tasks that address these policy objectives of other LIFE sub-programmes.

1) Synergies and co-benefits with sub-programme Nature and biodiversity

Strengthening NATURA 2000 network, EU biodiversity strategy. The project will significantly contribute to EU environmental policies – both on National and EU level. Its implementing will contribute to meeting targets of following EU strategies and directives: LIFE regulation, EU Habitats directive, EU Biodiversity strategy to 2020, (Targets 1 and 2)

The Model Forest project falls under this sub-programme. All its objectives and activities (WP2-5) fulfil this subprogramme.

The solutions proposed by the project are in line with EU Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species. (WP2, T2.3, WP3, T3.3, WP5 T5.2, T5.3).

2) Synergies and co-benefits with sub-programme Circular Economy and Quality of Life

The project fully supports the idea of a circular economy. Its principle is to close material flows so that their value is maintained in the economic cycle for as long as possible and the smallest possible amount of waste is produced. This is in line with the idea of the project and the mission of our NG organization.

Co-benefits of circular economy implemented in the project:

WP5, T.5.1, T5.2 Public awareness and dissemination of results – (public and stakeholders)

As part of the project's PR support, printed matter will be published on recycled paper, possibly in an online version, freely available for download.

We also want to reach out to students and volunteers and raise their awareness of the endangered species and habitats addressed in the project. As educational items, they will then be given a cover to mobile phone or tablet with a picture of the priority species. These educational and promotional items of the project will be produced in a social enterprise (Sheltered Workshop) that employs socially disadvantaged people or people with disabilities and creates upcycling products (80% of the material is upcycled material: discarded polyester from the textile industry). The aim is, among other things, to show that upcycled items can be not only functional but also beautiful.

WP3 Conservation actions: Individual protection of seedlings: railings (wood will be used), tubes (recyclable), cages (can be used repeatedly for many years), chemical protection, and biological protection by sheep wool (sheep wool is currently a completely underappreciated, ecological material.

One of the ways to protect young trees from the taste of game is to wrap the shoots with sheep wool, which repels the game. This old traditional method is not widely used at present. The project will be applied mainly to young fir trees. We will use a completely ecological and at the same time underappreciated material from local sheep breeders.

Quality of life is the result of the interaction of environmental, health, social and economic conditions relating to human and social development. The natural environment in which people live is an important determinant of quality of life. Threats to biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems due to growing economic and other human activities, causes a reduction in the ability of ecosystems to meet human needs and thus reduction in quality of life. Forest ecosystems, forest stands, their biodiversity support the quality of life of people in rural areas. They are an important natural resource with a wide range of uses. Forest management ecosystems employ part of the population, and are an economic activity that brings profit. The high species diversity of forest ecosystems enables the harvesting of forest fruits in forest stands. These are mainly raspberries and blackberries, blueberries. Mushroom picking is very popular in the Czech Republic and Poland also. The forested foothills of the local highlands provide suitable conditions for mushroom picking. Ecosystems with high biodiversity and the occurrence of rare and endangered species of organisms are subject to nature protection. They support and increase the quality of life of people in rural areas. They are of interest to tourists and therefore increase the mobility of the population and enable entrepreneurship in rural tourism.

3) Synergies and co-benefits with sub-programme Climate Change or Clean Energy Transition

Forest protection and sustainable forest management have gained worldwide importance since the "Rio Principles for the Protection of Forests" were adopted at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) recognizes the importance of forests for the global balance of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) addresses biodiversity as part

of an expanded work program. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) also recognizes the importance of forests in achieving the objectives set out in that Convention. It is therefore quite clear that a project aimed at protecting and improving the condition of forest habitats also has an undeniable positive effect in coping with climate change. Mitigation and adaptation to climate change, achieved by enhancing forest health and bolstering resilience against climate impacts, will be considered in the expert studies conducted under Work Package 2. It's important to note that the current information relies on input from site managers, which may not always encompass all pertinent details.

Reducing the project´s Carbon footprint „as much as is reasonably possible".

The project will be in line with EC communication: "Public procurement for a better environment" (COM (2008) 400, on 16 July 2008), as well as subsequent National action plans for Green public procurement (GPP). Green public procurement toolkit (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/toolkit_en.htm) will be used as an indicative guideline for procuring goods and services. The project implementation strategy, adopted by all project beneficiaries, will be as follows:

1) Traveling (WP1-WP5): attention will be paid to make all project travels reasonable and effective as much as possible; using personal cars will be reduced to a reasonable minimum. Whenever possible, communication by phone, emails, videoconferencing will be used instead. Public transport and shared rides will be used whenever possible. When purchasing means of transport within the project, hybrid cars (electric cars) will be preferred, where possible.

2) Implementing project actions (WP1-WP5): efficiency and sustainability will be considered when planning and implementing project actions – not only to reduce their carbon footprint but also for reasonable and responsible use of project funds. Local and environmentally responsible companies will be preferred whenever possible (whilst also respecting value for money).

3) Office and every-day work (WP1): consumption of office paper will be reduced as much as is reasonably possible (electronic communication and el. documents will be preferred). Re-using and responsible use of paper and other office materials/resources will be applied and promoted to reduce consumption. Presentation materials (brochures, leaflets etc.) will be made of recycled or responsibly produced materials (e.g., FSC-certified paper) and distributed only to those subjects that can reasonably make use of them (regarding project objectives). Local and ecological products will be used for refreshment for seminars and meetings. Bottled water and excessively packed goods will be avoided. Waste recycling will be used and promoted by all project beneficiaries. Energy consumption will be reduced by reducing the heating and switching off the electric devices (PCs, plugging out chargers, etc.) Electric devices (e.g., light bulbs, white goods) as well as car tyres with high energy efficiency will be preferred. EU energy consumption labelling (EC Directive 2010/30/EU) will be sought for orientation.

1.8 Synergies and co-benefits with other EU policy areas *(n/a for concept note)*

Synergies and co-benefits with other EU policy areas *(n/a for concept note)*

Describe the synergies and positive spillover effects (co-benefits) with other EU policy areas (for example agriculture, health, civil protection, jobs and growth, etc.). If possible, quantify the contribution.

Identify the activities/tasks that address these other EU policy objectives.

The project boasts a robust network of associated beneficiaries, with the regions of **South Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia** taking centre stage. Not only do these regions oversee the selected project sites, but they also play pivotal roles as regional policy influencers. The **Olomouc Region**, the third key player within the project, has shown its unwavering support, as evidenced in the attached Letters of Support. The involvement of these regional entities holds immense significance, as the tangible outcomes of restoration endeavours, innovative methodologies, and effective management practices can seamlessly find their way into regional strategies and policies related to environmental protection. Furthermore, these bodies are poised to actively participate in the development and evaluation of important legislation and regulations in the realm of environmental conservation.

Our project maintains a longstanding, fruitful partnership with the **Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic**. Serving as the central authority for state administration in matters of nature and landscape protection, their endorsement and financial commitment are clearly outlined in the provided co-financing declaration and letter of support. This agency has actively contributed to shaping the project, ensuring its alignment with Czech environmental laws and its dedication to

meeting the priorities outlined in the Ministry's agenda for nature and biodiversity preservation. Our project is poised to play a significant role in achieving several objectives outlined in the **National Biodiversity Strategy of the Czech Republic and the State Programme on Nature and Landscape Conservation**. It harmonizes with the goals of the Habitats Directive and is set to make substantial contributions to realizing the ambitions of the **EU 2030 Biodiversity Strategy**, specifically the EU Nature Restoration Plan. In addition, our project aligns with the policies of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, particularly with regards to "Improving the health and resilience of managed forests." Furthermore, it tangentially intersects with the priorities of the **Invasive Alien Species Regulation** by targeting two species of Union concern, Impatiens glandulifera and Ailanthus altissima.

Our project is also a continuation of the long-standing fruitful cooperation with the **State Forests National Forest Holding**. As decision-makers in the field of forest management and protection in Poland, they support our project (see letter of support), provide the territory for project implementation, and plan to apply the procedures developed in the project in the Natura 2000 sites they manage.

The forward-looking vision of the new **EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change**, in accordance with the **Paris Agreement** and the proposed **European Climate Law**, underscores the need to enhance adaptive capacity, bolster resilience, and reduce vulnerability. The **European Climate Pact** actively encourages measures such as tree planting and effective water retention practices within landscapes. Our meticulously planned project, detailed in the preceding section, is strategically designed to fulfil these requirements. Mitigation and adaptation to climate change, achieved by enhancing forest health and bolstering resilience against climate impacts, will be considered in the expert studies conducted under Work Package 2. It's important to note that the current information relies on input from site managers, which may not always encompass all pertinent details.

Lastly, the project enthusiastically supports the evolution of sustainable tourism. This endeavour is explicitly addressed in WP5, which concentrates on enhancing the skills and motivation of forest owners to engage in the development of sustainable tourism at the local level. This aligns seamlessly with the **EC Communication COM/2010/0352** and its overarching goals.

The project is in line with **EU policy in jobs, education, and culture** by involving volunteers in project activities (WP3, T3.1, T3.2, T3.3 and WP5, T5.1). We expect 50 events with volunteers (10 per year.

There will be various categories of volunteers involved in the project:

1. European Solidarity Corps Volunteers: These volunteers are part of the European Solidarity Corps, managed by the accredited organization Petrklíč Help (PEH) in collaboration with partner institutions in the Czech Republic and Poland. The European Solidarity Corps focuses on promoting solidarity across European society, engaging young individuals and organizations in accessible and high-quality activities.

2. Youth Volunteers from Socially Disadvantaged Backgrounds: This group comprises young people aged 13-30 from different countries, who face social disadvantages. Their participation in the project holds particular significance as it provides them with valuable lessons in social responsibility and solidarity, experiences that may have been lacking in their upbringing.

3. Community Volunteers: This diverse category encompasses individuals of various ages who are eager to contribute to their local communities and foster a sense of communal space. It extends not only to young people but also to adults who wish to impart these values to the younger generation.

4. Austrian Volunteers: Our associated partner, Naturschutzbund NÖ, collaborates on habitat maintenance. They aim to facilitate their volunteers' involvement in the neighbouring Czech Republic, promoting an exchange of experiences and expertise with the project's associated beneficiaries in this field.

Creation of new jobs: the project will create 8 new jobs over a period of 7 years, both for professional professions (project management, construction coordinators, project support, 4 new jobs) and for workers (field workers, 4 new jobs). In addition, work will be secured for a further 6 years for 4 workers from the Regional School Economy (RSE), who will be able to transfer from LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001, Acronym, from January 2024: CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE to this project.

The project seamlessly aligns with **European policies addressing Invasive Alien Species** (IAS), which are identified as one of the most significant threats to biodiversity, leading to pronounced

ecological and socio-economic repercussions. In recognition of the imperative need for coordinated efforts to pre-empt, manage, and mitigate IAS, the European Parliament and the Council enacted the EU Regulation 1143/2014, henceforth referred to as the IAS Regulation.

The project's activities, specifically within WP2, T2.3 - Expert studies of invasive alien species, WP3, T3.3 - Elimination of invasive alien species, and various endeavours under WP5, are intrinsically linked to and fully compliant with the provisions outlined in EU Regulation 1143/2014. These activities are explicitly designed to combat the proliferation and adverse effects of invasive alien species, contributing significantly to the broader European efforts aimed at IAS prevention, control, and mitigation.

The project is firmly rooted in and actively bolsters **EU social policies**, with a particular alignment to the Lisbon Strategy of 2000:

1) Empowering Socially Disadvantaged Individuals: This endeavour is squarely aimed at empowering children and young people hailing from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. These individuals originate from families characterized by lower social statuses, often lacking essential educational support, including environmental education. They face a higher susceptibility to social challenges and pathologies. The project's primary goal revolves around offering them meaningful avenues to invest their free time productively and imbuing them with a sense of purpose and agency. Petrklič Help (PEH), an associated beneficiary of the project, will spearhead these activities.

2) Engaging European Solidarity Corps Volunteers* The involvement of young individuals from the EU also serves as a conduit for their informal education within an environmental context. Through their active participation, these young volunteers cultivate an enhanced awareness of the environmental needs within their immediate surroundings.

3) WP5 Activities: A selection of educational materials and promotional items will be meticulously crafted by the Sheltered Workshop, a social enterprise specializing in employing individuals with disabilities. This workshop represents a sterling example of a social enterprise seamlessly integrating an environmentally conscious ethos with providing essential support to individuals contending with health challenges stemming from disabilities—individuals often marginalized within the labour market.

#§COM-PLE-CP§# #§REL-EVA-RE§# #@IMP-ACT-IA@#

2. IMPACT

*Fill in **only** sections 2.1-2.3 at stage 1 (concept note). Fill in **all sections** at stage 2 (full proposal).*

2.1 Ambition of the impacts

Ambition of the impacts

Identify and quantify the effects of the project (during the implementation and up to 5 years after its end).

Be specific and provide only information about impacts that are a result of your project. The impact of other projects should not be taken into account.

Wherever possible, use quantified indicators and targets.

Note: *In addition to the description above, for stage 2 (full proposals) include quantified indicators in Part C of the application forms (both horizontal KPIs for the LIFE programme as well as any specific KPIs relevant to the proposal). Ensure correspondence between Part B and Part C.*

Expected impacts of the project:

1 Improve the condition of forest habitats on an area of at least 1900 ha and non-forest habitats on an area of at least 26 ha.

Thanks realization of WP3 Conservation actions, T3.1 Restoration management for habitats and T3.3 Elimination of invasive alien species, the condition of forest habitats on an area at least 1900 ha on 20 SCIs in 2 countries in 11 habitats, of which 3 are priority (***91E0, *91D0 and *9180**) and 8 are non-priority (9110, 9130, 9170, 91F0, 91T0, 91U0, 7140) will be improved.

Nearly one-third (32%) of the total area of our target habitats comprises priority forest habitats. The project is distinctly focused on these priority habitats, aiming to provide them with direct and targeted benefits. This approach creates a clear and demonstrative example of model habitat management for these priority forest ecosystems. This aspect has been notably missing in the Czech Republic and partially in Poland, making our project a pioneering effort in this regard. Simultaneously, we address other non-priority and non-forest habitats, ensuring a comprehensive perspective on habitat management that extends to other forested areas. This holistic approach

enriches our understanding of habitat conservation across various ecosystems, thereby strengthening the project's overall impact.

The solution for eradicating Invasive Alien Species encompasses not only the project's designated areas but also extends to adjacent territories. This holistic approach recognizes that effective eradication necessitates the cleansing of neighbouring regions. By doing so, we prevent these species from further spreading and potentially recontamination the areas that have already been cleared. This proactive strategy ensures a comprehensive and lasting impact by addressing the issue at its source and preventing future infestations.

Increased age and species diversity in forest habitats:

- planting of native tree species and shrubs at least 180 000 pcs and their watering, if necessary, in 12 SCIs

- individual protection of seedlings (planted and from natural regeneration) at least 18 000 pc

- installation of fences (collective protection of seedlings from game) at least 7 000 m

- collection of suitable seed material, sowing at 116 ha (mainly *Pinus rotundata* and *Abies alba*) - cutting weed species (*Calamagrostis epigejos*, *Rubus spp. etc)* at least on 10 ha per year

- Eradication of invasive non-native plants and trees on the area of at least 700 ha

- Cutting and maintaining forest-free in habitat 7140 of at least 26 ha

For each of the priority habitats (*91E0, *91D0, and *9180), a specific performance indicator (KPI) will be established: *Area of habitats where loss of biodiversity is being halted and reversed*. The initial value will be 0, while the final value will be the total area of each priority habitat where the loss of biodiversity has been halted and reversed due to our project. This indicator will demonstrate the positive impact of the implemented measures on biodiversity at the end of the project.

So, for each priority habitat it will look like this:

***91E0** Initial Value: 0, final Value: 2,85 km²

***91D0** Initial Value: 0, final Value: 1,84 km²

***9180** Initial Value: 0, final Value: 1,49 km²

2 Increases of populations of target species at least 5%

The project is primarily aimed at improving the status of 12 target species (3 amphibians, 7 insects – of which 2 are priority, 2 plants – of which 1 is priority).

Similarly, the project's focus extends to priority animal and plant species, which are integral to its core objectives. The total area encompassing these priority species far exceeds the surface area of our target habitats, spanning nearly twice as much territory (3600 hectares). This strategic emphasis on priority species reflects our commitment to addressing the most critical aspects of biodiversity conservation. While the primary project goal centers on improving the management of target habitats, we recognize that the well-being of these habitats is intimately linked to the survival and prosperity of priority species. Therefore, our approach ensures the delivery of direct and targeted benefits to these key species, enhancing the project's overall effectiveness in preserving biodiversity. This comprehensive strategy enriches our conservation efforts by encompassing a broader ecological context, yielding a more robust and sustainable impact on the natural world.

2 amphibians: 1193 Bombina variegata, 1188 Bombina bombina, 1166 Triturus cristatus

5 saproxylic insect: ***1084 Osmoderma eremita,** 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus, 1083 Lucanus cervus, 1079 Limoniscus violaceus and 4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus

2 other insects: ***1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria**, 4014 Carabus variolosus

2 plants: ***4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica**, 1381 Dicranum viride.

Due to the improvement of the living conditions of the target species, thanks to activities WP3, T3.2 and T3.3, we expect the population of these species to increase by at least 5%. The target for populations of unknown numbers will be to estimate their numbers within sites and also increase their numbers.

This will be achieved by:

- Maintenance or restoration of small aquatic pools, covering a total area of at least 20 ha, with a combined water surface of approximately 2 ha.

- Increase amount of deadwood to at least 50 m3 in SCIs: CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry, PLH240005 Beskid Śląski.

- Planting of draws and alleys of species-suitable deciduous trees at least 200 pcs and their watering if necessary

- Preservation of old trees (n. their torsion) with cavities, their professional treatment at least 1 400 pcs

As priority insect species ***1084 Osmoderma eremita** is an 'umbrella species', meaning that its protection allows hundreds of other protected insects species to live, we expect that restoration management targeting O. eremita under WP3, T3.2, will lead to improved quality of life for other insect's species as well.

3 Improvement of ecosystem functions and socio-economic benefits at least 1900 ha of restored habitats

Ecosystem functions

This project is the first LIFE project focused on forest habitats in the Czech Republic and Poland. The project deals with 3 forest priority habitats **(*91D0, *91E0 and *9180**), 7 forest non-priority habitats (9110, 9130, 9170, 91T0, 91F0, 91U0) and 1 non-forest habitat (7410).

One of the project's key objectives is to guarantee the preservation of crucial ecosystem functions within the selected SCI sites. The findings from this evaluation will serve as the foundation for identifying best practices, in collaboration with key stakeholders such as Site Administrators and forest landowners. This collaborative effort aims to enhance the replication and integration of the project's introduced methods and concepts into local and regional strategies. To facilitate this, we have established a partnership with the University of Silesia for the evaluation process, as outlined in the attached Letter of Support.

Socio-economic benefits

This project carries significant socio-economic implications, primarily driven by volunteer engagement that fosters a deeper connection between people and their local environment. Furthermore, individuals from socially disadvantaged backgrounds will receive support through sheltered employment opportunities in these areas, promoting their inclusion within society. The project will also foster intergenerational collaboration, with local volunteers spanning different age groups at various sites. Moreover, it will involve educational initiatives centred on family protection, wherein parents will impart knowledge to children about safeguarding natural areas, creating a reciprocal learning dynamic.

The sites under the project's care will experience an increase in their economic value, attributable to two key factors. Firstly, by substituting paid labour with volunteer contributions, particularly in WP3 activities (T3.1, T3.2, and T3.3). Secondly, there will be a boost in economic value through public relations (PR) efforts that highlight the significance of these diverse sites, their valuable forest habitats, and priority species. These awareness-raising activities will attract tourism to the area, contribute to site preservation, and potentially benefit local hospitality businesses.

The project will organize workshops, excursions, and conferences targeting forest landowners, forest managers, and government bodies responsible for forest management. These events will serve to educate participants about emerging trends in forest ecosystem management within SCIs, with a particular focus on the impacts of climate change. The planned conferences will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences not only between different countries but also among various regions.

Through collaboration with stakeholders, the project aims to translate these insights into practical actions, potentially creating new employment opportunities within the country. Interested individuals can further engage with the project by participating in field excursions or workshops offered as part of WP5 activities.

To enhance tourism at project sites, information boards will be installed at selected locations within each SCI. The project's target audience encompasses primary, secondary, and higher education institutions, as well as nature conservation associations, members of local governments, state administrations, landowners, and companies interested in innovative environmental conservation approaches.

Additionally, educational institutions ranging from primary schools to universities are considered stakeholders. Students will actively contribute to implementing practical conservation measures in

the landscape, gaining firsthand experience in nature protection during professional practice and field trips. Given the project's duration, it is anticipated that many students will continue their engagement through scientific studies, including secondary school projects, bachelor's or master's theses, during and after the project's conclusion.

4 Creation of model care for diverse forest habitats with a positive impact on non-forest habitats, and promoting sustainable tourism especially in cooperation with forest owners and with the support of volunteers

- Development of the volunteering system: A functional system of regular annual volunteering of Czech, Polish and other foreign participants (European solidarity corps through PEH, Austrian volunteers from NSB) will be created, which will support the management of localities and ensure its sustainability while minimizing costs

- 50 volunteer campaigns are planned. It is also planned that volunteers will subsequently support the promotion of SCI/SACs cared for.

The recruitment of volunteers from both the general public and professionals will be conducted through various channels, including social networks, radio, newspapers, and television spots. Volunteer involvement is an integral component of public awareness and the practical implementation of innovative approaches. It is anticipated that engaging in volunteer activities will not only contribute to the personal growth of individuals or groups but also have a broader impact beyond the environmental realm.

Many of the volunteers, including students, may, as part of their personal development, eventually pursue careers in fields such as the Ministry of Environment, nature conservation authorities, flow management, private companies, and more. These roles inherently involve the responsibility of managing forest ecosystems and making informed decisions. Volunteers will benefit from improved conditions for making objective decisions, including access to a network of experts, professional support, and firsthand experience and knowledge gained through their involvement in the project.

5 Demonstration and replication of new solutions in the region (e.g. effective removal of invasive alien species)

For some IAS species, the current population size within the project area is not yet known but will be determined during the preparatory phase (WP2). Therefore, the locations where removal measures will be carried out and the removal methods are only briefly outlined at this stage. After obtaining this information, a plan will be prepared on how to achieve complete and sustainable eradication.

- Methodology of elimination of *Echinocystis lobata* will be developed within WP 2, T 2.3 and WP4, T4.1. This methodology will be based on the methodology of E. lobata control recently published by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection in Poland and it will be freely available on the project website not only in Czech, but also in English, German and Polish (the occurrence of *Echinocystis lobata* has been confirmed in the SAC Hraniční meandry Odra, so its occurrence in the SCI 'Graniczny Meander Odra' PLH240013, which is directly adjacent to the SAC Hraniční meandry Odra on the Polish side).

At the same time, this methodology will be sent to the landowners and also to the site administrators (in terms of nature conservation) on whose land the occurrence of *Echinocystis lobata* will be confirmed in the framework of invasive species mapping in T2.3. Their interest was confirmed at the preparatory meetings for the project and is expressed in the annex Letters of Support (in particular the majority owners of the affected site The Forest of CZ, the Czech Union for Nature Conservation, the Odra River Basin, Polish State Forests).

The site administrator is the Moravian-Silesian Region (MSR), which is an associated beneficiary of the project, so the applicability of the methodology is directly set here. In addition, it will continue to provide it to other regions where the occurrence of this potentially dangerous plant is currently confirmed, including confirmed results in practice. These are in particular the South Moravian, Central Bohemia and West Bohemia regions. Their representatives will also be invited to field trips where they can see the results in the field for a first-hand experience.

In the South Bohemian region, the occurrence of this invasive species has been detected only sporadically, but in case of a larger spread, the associated beneficiary of the SBR project will have

it at its disposal and can nip the danger in the bud. Similarly, in nearby locations on the Austrian side of the border, the NSB associated partner will have this methodology available.

E. lobata is widely distributed in Poland. The regions in the centre and south of the country are the areas where this species is the most abundant. The methodology will be transferred to the Polish organisations managing the affected land on the other side of the border by the associated beneficiary PEH, which has long-standing links in Poland and has confirmed its interest from preliminary personal meetings.

2.2 Credibility of the impacts

Credibility of the impacts

Show the steps of your calculations and base yourself on the activities mentioned in your work plan.

Justify and substantiate the baselines, benchmarks and assumptions you used, making reference to relevant publications, studies or statistics.

Try to use the same methodologies for calculating impacts (avoid using different methodologies for each partner, region or country).

The areas of interest have been degraded by man in the past, generally lacking suitable habitats for target species. The project will result in increased habitat heterogeneity and thus we expect to increase populations of target species and increase the area of target habitats.

Although each species has its own natural population fluctuation, based on the project measures implemented and analogy with similar types of projects, we have made an expert estimate that there will be an increase in the population of the target species of at least 5%.

Credibility of the impacts

Baseline: current extent of individual habitats

The official mapping of biotopes carried out by the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic (NCA) was used to determine the area of biotopes. Source: https://webgis.nature.cz/. These are freely available data, guaranteed by the NCA.

Data for Polish sites were collected from freely available Forest Data Bank (https://www.bdl.lasy.gov.pl/portal/en) and/or shared by Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection (regions: Katowice, Opole, Wrocław) on request.

Baseline data: population abundances of target species

For the determination of the number of populations of target species, current data from the site administrators (Regional Authorities of the Moravian-Silesian, South Bohemian – both are project associated beneficiaries, and Olomouc Regions) from their inventory surveys at individual SAC/SCI were used.

Data for Polish sites were collected from freely available website of General Inspectorate for Environmental Protection: https://siedliska.gios.gov.pl/

Background for WP3

For the calculation of the planned scope of the interventions, WP3, T3.1, T3.2, T3.3, the costing of the usual measures of NCA was used, adjusted by a provision for the outlook during the project implementation period. In Poland the calculations were prepared basing on costs of services by subcontractors cooperating with IBL and State Forests in recent years, adjusted by a provision for the outlook during the project implementation period.

Background for WP2, WP4

Expert studies for individual habitats and target species (WP2, T2.1, T2.2, T2.3) and monitoring of the impacts of project activities on target habitats and species (WP4, T4.1) will be prepared according to the official methodology of inventory of habitats and species of NCA and the official methodology of inventory of habitats and species developed by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection.

#@SUS-CON-SC@#

2.3 Sustainability of project results

Sustainability of project results

Describe your strategy to sustain the project's results after the EU funding ends. Consider the following aspects:

- *How will the project impact be ensured and sustained? Which tasks will you carry out during the project to ensure*

that?

- *Which parts of the project should be continued or maintained? How will this be achieved and which resources will be necessary?*

Our project's sustainability strategy is underpinned by the proactive engagement of all associated beneficiaries, who have a well-established history of addressing the issues central to our project both before and after its inception. This continuity ensures that the project's impact will endure beyond the conclusion of LIFE funding.

We recognize that the project will elevate the quality of our work to a new level, a standard that we may not have achieved without the support of the LIFE program. This heightened quality will persist long after the project's conclusion. To ensure this, we have meticulously devised a practical strategy for sustaining the project's results and outputs, backed by the identification of the necessary resources.

Our commitment extends to sharing the wealth of results and knowledge acquired and validated during the project on a national and international scale. The groundwork for this dissemination is already in motion, as evidenced by direct contacts established by our project team members within the EU and EEA. These connections, detailed in Chapter B.2.5 Catalytic Potential, have initiated discussions about the practical application of our project's outputs.

In terms of individual WP3 activities, we anticipate a shifting mindset among forest owners. They are increasingly recognizing that a forest is a complex community of organisms, including bacteria, fungi, plants, and animals, all interdependent within the forest ecosystem. It is not merely a "wood factory." The awareness-raising initiatives conducted throughout the project are expected to foster collaboration with forest landowners who will embrace this holistic perspective. This attitudinal shift will contribute significantly to the sustainability of our project's results in this context.

Post-project sustainability will be carried out by project beneficiaries specifically:

ONYX: own financial resources, EU resources (e.g. OPE) or national grants: WP3, WP4

IBL: own financial resources or national grants: WP3.

PEH: own financial, EU resources (e.g. OPE) or national grants, continue cooperation with volunteers from Czech Republic and Austria through an associated partner **NSB** (WP3)

MSR, SBR: own financial resources, EU resources (e.g. OPE): WP3. Both regions are also the administrators of the project sites, so they have a legal obligation to continue the maintenance of the area and to maintain the project results in the long term. The maintenance of the sites in the 3rd region - **Olomouc** - is ensured through a statement of support from this institution, see the annex Letters of Support.

RSE: own financial resources, EU resources (e.g. OPE) or national grants - field work, care of woody plants, continue cooperation with volunteers from PEH and NSB (WP3)

Stakeholders outside of project:

Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic: own financial resources, EU resources (e.g. OPE), national resources (e.g. PPK, POPFK), volunteers: WP3

The Forest of the Czech Republic: own financial resources, EU resources (e.g. OPE): WP3. As the dominant owner of the project sites, it has a legal obligation to look after the sites outside the project period, including long-term conservation of plantations. It is a state organisation, so sustainability is also legally guaranteed here. This commitment is also expressed in the Letter of Support, see relevant annex.

The amount of compensation for damage resulting from leaving the forest or its parts to develop spontaneously (including leaving dead wood) is determined by Annex 3 to Decree No.335/2006 Coll., which establishes the conditions and method of providing financial compensation for damage resulting from restrictions on forest management. The Decree was issued by the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic.

Specifically, for each project site (20 in total), sustainability is ensured by commitments of the site owners and administrative authorities as follows:

Czech Republic

South Bohemian (6 sites):

Site administrator for all 6 sites is associated beneficiary South Bohemian region (SBR).

CZ0314021 Borkovická blata – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

CZ0314044 Opolenec – Letter of support from main landowner Lesy ČR (95%)

CZ0310067 Ryšovy – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

Moravian-Silesian (5 sites):

Site administrator for all 5 sites is associated beneficiary Moravian-Silesian region (MSR).

CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj – Letter of support from landowner Lesy ČR (6%)

CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy – Letter of support from landowner Lesy ČR (37%)

CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice – Letter of support from landowners Lesy ČR (47%), Odra River Basin and Czech Union for Nature Conservation (43%)

CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry – Letter of support from main landowners Lesy ČR (70%), Odra River Basin and Czech Union for Nature Conservation (10%)

Olomouc (2 sites):

Site administrator for all 2 sites is Olomouc Regional Authority, which expressed its support in a Letter of Support.

CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex – Letter of support from main landowner Lesy ČR (90%)

CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas in Olomouc (100%)

Polish sites - Letter of support from the General Directorate of the State Forests, exclusive landowner of all of PL SCIs except one.

Negotiations with the remaining small landowners, mostly private individuals and smaller municipalities, will be initiated at the outset of the project. According to the experience in our previous LIFE projects, smallholders agree to restoration interventions on their land when they see that the majority owner is also involved, which we have already confirmed with commitments in the form of Letters of Support. The fact that the two associated beneficiaries are also the administrators of most of the project sites (MSR, SBR), the remaining sites are managed by the Olomouc Region, which has also provided us with a Letter of Support, also plays a very positive role here.

WP3, T3.1 Restoration management for habitats

Tree and shrub planting, along with collective and individual protective measures, will continue to function beyond the project's conclusion. The extended duration of the project ensures that individual protective measures, with a real lifespan of 10 years or more, have ample time for plantings to grow to a stage where they will not be susceptible to damage by wildlife. Furthermore, regular inspections and any necessary repairs will be conducted before the project's completion. Following the project's conclusion, repairs will be managed by volunteers or landowners. The project's associated beneficiaries, the South Bohemian Region and RSE, will ensure the planting of *Pinus rotundata* and *Abies alba* from seed collected during the project, or the planting of seedlings grown within the project. Importance will be focused on protecting suitable seed trees and fencing will be created around seedlings from natural regeneration.

WP3, T3.2 Restoration management for species

Species - saproxylic insects: (maintenance of greenery, planting of trees and individual protection, provision of dead wood in the forest) - the need for fundamental treatment of trees after the intervention arises after more than 10 years, measures will be the responsibility of site administrators (regional authorities), individual protection will ensure growth seedlings to a size safe from the taste of game (see previous).

Species – amphibians: (siltation and maintenance of original ponds) - grounding of ponds will be renewed only after more than 10 years, measures will be under the responsibility of site administrators.

In the last years of the project, there will be an inspection and possible addition of care (re - cutting of the air raid and branches to sunbathe the water level, etc.) This essentially preparatory phase will be followed by the actual implementation of the new pools (in places selected and prepared

during the project), which will be financed from national sources, specifically from the Operational Program for the Environment, which enables the implementation of new pools for amphibians.

WP3, T3.3 Elimination of IAS

Invasive Alien Species (IAS): (eradication of *Reynoutria spp*., *Impatiens glandulifera, Solidago* spp., *Robinia pseudoacacia*, etc. and biotechnical measures). Thanks to the length of the project, 6 years of disposal of non-native species will be available, which is a very important factor, as Invasive Alien Species usually need to be destroyed repeatedly. After the end of the project, we expect a significant reduction or complete elimination of these species. Ongoing control and possible further elimination will be the responsibility of site administrators, volunteers will also be used.

WP5, T5.1 Public awareness and dissemination of results

The LIFE communication plan will include an accurate strategy for maintaining the appropriate communication and dissemination channels that are necessary to continue the appropriate dissemination and replication after project completion.

Activities that will continue (or are preserved) are:

Project website - if necessary, maintained and updated for min. 5 years after the end of the project. It will be placed in the "Projects" section of the project's main project website, so there is no extra cost for the project after the project. The printed outputs of the project will also be available for download in electronic form on the project website. Social networks will also work after the end of the project. We will also have an information line in operation, and we expect that working groups will continue to work for selected sub-topics covered in the project. At the same time, the volunteering system will operate, as it is the subject of the co-recipient activity (PEH).

WP5, T5.2 Awareness raising - key stakeholders (in the project areas)

All the results and knowledge obtained and verified during the project will be passed on for further use to the owners of the forest land included in the project: the Forests of the Czech Republic, the Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas in Olomouc, the Czech Union of Nature Conservationists, Polish main administrators: State Forests and private owners. Furthermore, the administrators of individual SCIs from the point of view of nature protection: the Regional Office of the Olomouc Region, the Regional Office of the Moravian-Silesian Region, the Regional Office of the South Bohemian Region, the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic, regional directorates for environment protection in Poland.

WP5, T5.3 Replication toolkit (outside of project areas)

The project team is expecting to develop at least 3 areas of best practice/demonstration:

- Removal of invasive non-native plant species, including a comprehensive invasion prevention and mitigation strategy and methodology for *Echinocystis lobata* and others IAS removal, to be developed under WP2, T2.3 and WP4, T4.1.

- Optimal management of priority habitats: *91E0, *91D0, *9180 (see WP2, T2.1. and WP4, T4.1).

- Optimal management of saproxylic insects and amphibian species (see WP2, T2.2. and WP4, T4.1).

All these documents will remain available on the organisation's website for at least 5 years after the end of the project and will thus be freely available to anyone interested in replication.

Since two project SAC/SCIs (CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice and CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odra) are directly adjacent to SAC/SCIs (PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry and PLH240015 Beskid Śląski) in Poland, and the objects of protection in these SAC/SCIs are identical, the materials related to these sites will also be translated into Polish. Especially Methodology of elimination of *Echinocystis lobata (*WP 4, T 4.1), because the invasive species can be expected to spread on both sides of the border, on both sides of the rivers (the border between the Czech Republic and Poland is formed by the rivers Odra and Olše in both cases).

At the same time, this methodology will be sent to the landowners and also to the site administrators (in terms of nature conservation) on whose land the occurrence of *Echinocystis lobata* will be confirmed in the framework of invasive species mapping in T2.3. Their interest was confirmed at the preparatory meetings for the project and is expressed in the annex Letters of Support (in particular the majority owners of the affected site The Forest of CZ, the Czech Union for Nature Conservation, the Odra River Basin, Polish State Forests and landowners).

The site administrator is the Moravian-Silesian Region (MSR), which is an associated beneficiary

of the project, so the applicability of the methodology is directly set here. In addition, it will continue to provide it to other regions where the occurrence of this potentially dangerous plant is currently confirmed, including confirmed results in practice. These are in particular the South Moravian, Central Bohemia and West Bohemia regions. Their representatives will also be invited to field trips where they can see the results in the field for a first-hand experience.

In the South Bohemian region, the occurrence of this invasive species has been detected only sporadically, but in case of a larger spread, the associated beneficiary of the SBR project will have it at its disposal and can nip the danger in the bud.

The methodology will be transferred to the Polish organisations managing the affected land on the other side of the border by the associated beneficiary PEH, which has long-standing links in Poland and has confirmed its interest from preliminary personal meetings.

The output materials will be translated into English and electronically distributed to contacts obtained during the project implementation (owners, site administrators). It will also be freely available to the public on the project website.

#§SUS-CON-SC§#

2.4 Exploitation of project results *(n/a for concept note)*

Exploitation of project results *(n/a for concept note)*

Do you foresee other ways of exploiting the project's results (e.g. utilisation in further research, in developing / creating / marketing a product or process, in creating / providing a service, in standardisation activities etc.)? Who are the targeted users?

For close-to-market projects: Describe the reference market: actual and potential market size, features of prospective customers and of their demand, competitors, market and regulatory barriers, etc. Explain the economic feasibility of the proposed solution comparing cost, price or other economic investment variables (e.g. payback period, net present value, etc.).

***Note:** Don't forget to include the activities in the mandatory Work Package for Sustainability, replication, and exploitation of project results.*

The project outputs have a high potential to significantly influence forest policy makers and site administrators to improve forestry practices and regulations and also conservation plans development. Therefore, they will be shared with other regions in the Czech Republic (especially through the associated beneficiaries **South Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia regions**, as well as through entities that have expressed support for the project by letters, see annex - **Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, Olomouc Region** and others). They will also be made available to Polish and Austrian regions that are closely adjacent to the project sites and thus face the same problems (same natural conditions, types of protection and threats). They will help Polish **Regional directorates for environmental protection** (**RDEP**) prepare conservation plans for sites in Poland. The **SBR** and **MSR** have a major role to play in this through their twinning channels of cross-border cooperation. In addition, **PEH** (link and long-term cooperation with Polish organisations) and **NSB** (associated partner in Austria) will be helpful. The project does envisage transnational cooperation to guarantee the achievement of the project objectives.

Targeted users:

Our results will be used in particular by the **Czech Nature Conservation Agency**, which is obliged to report the number of species in SCIs/SACs. Regional authorities will use them for management plans, The Forest of CZ (significant landowner) for forest management plans, and universities for their basic research.

We also provide an overview of the institutions that will be actively involved in replication, as these entities are in long-term working contact with members of our project team and have already had discussions with them about the use of our project outputs:

The Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic (MoE) is the central state administrative authority in nature and landscape protection. Interest is confirmed by a Letter of Support, see Annex. The Department of Species Protection and Implementation of International Commitments is responsible inter alia for species protection and implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directive in the Czech Republic. The MoE endorses and expresses its support of the proposed project, which focuses on improving the status of the habitat types and species listed in Annex I and II of Habitats Directive in 9 SACs/SCIs in the Czech Republic. The project is fully in line with the Czech environmental legislation and meets priorities of the MoE in the field of nature and biodiversity conservation. The project is very beneficial from the national point of view. It will

contribute to fulfilment of several objectives from the National Biodiversity Strategy of the Czech Republic and State programme on Nature and Landscape Conservation. The project will also contribute to the fulfilment of the goals of the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic: active interest. As a state-established organization, it has the best prerequisites for effectively informing target groups about project results and for transferring obtained data into practice.

The Forest of the Czech Republic (landowner): active interest, confirmed by a Letter of Support, see Annex. Guarantee the possibility of using the land in question for the purposes of the project, post-project sustainability of proven measures, cooperation to secure the necessary permits for project implementation.

Czech Environmental Inspectorate – Interest in using expert studies as a basis for binding or expert opinions or the catalogue of semi-natural measures.

Regional authorities in the Czech Republic: active interest in project outputs, inspiration for the creation of conditions, including justification for administrative proceedings. The Olomouc region confirmed its interest with a Letter of Support, see annex. Next two regions are associated beneficiaries of this project – South Bohemian and Moravian-Silesian regions.

Municipalities with extended powers – many municipalities or officials have already shown interest in project outputs, in the use of expert studies as a basis for binding or expert opinions.

Private landowners, churches that own land with forests – inspiration for better management on forest land (water retention in the landscape, increasing biodiversity). The Czech Union for Nature Conservation, Oder River Basin Office and Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas in Olomouc confirmed their interest with a Letter of Support, see annex.

Conservation organisations in other EU countries: transfer of project results, proven methodologies, especially in **Poland** (some project SCIs are in close proximity to the border or directly connected to each other, PEH has long-standing contacts there), in **Austria** (through the project associate partner NSB) and in **Slovakia** (through BROZ, which has great experience with LIFE projects and has expressed its support to us in a letter, see annex).

In most cases, these institutions have also provided us with a Letter of Support, which are listed in the Annex. Please note that some of the Letters were created with the previous application in 2021, since the project has not changed substantially in its topic, and supporters are still with us (verified currently) we have used them again in this call.

List the Letters of Support as attached to the application in a separate attachment. For administrative simplicity, we have utilized the letters of support from last year. However, we have re-engaged with all the organizations that provided these letters, and their support remains confirmed.

The Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic (MoE) is the central state administrative authority in nature and landscape protection. The Department of Species Protection and Implementation of International Commitments is responsible inter alia for species protection and implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directive in the Czech Republic. The MoE endorses and expresses its support of the proposed project LIFE Model Forest, which focuses on improving the status of the habitat types and species listed in Annex I and II of Habitats Directive in 13 SCI/SAC in the Czech Republic. The project is fully in line with the Czech environmental legislation and meets priorities of the MoE in the field of nature and biodiversity conservation. The project is very beneficial from the national point of view. It will contribute to fulfilment of several objectives from the National Biodiversity Strategy of the Czech Republic and State programme on Nature and Landscape Conservation. The project will also contribute to the fulfilment of the goals of the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

Lesy ČR (Forestry of the Czech Republic) - landowner in the localities CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka, CZ0314044 Opolenec, CZ0310067 Ryšovy, CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj, CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy, CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice

Olomouc Regional Authority, Department of Environment and Agriculture - administrator of the sites CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice

Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas in Olomouc - owner of land in CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice

CSOP - owner of land in CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry

Odra River Basin - owner of land in CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry

State Forests of Poland - manager of the forest habitats within all the polish sites included in the project.

Bratislavské regionálne ochranárske združenie – BROZ has been implementing practical conservation measures in Natura 2000 sites for 25 years. Since its establishment in 1997, BROZ has established itself as a leading NGO in the field of protection and restoration of rare biotopes in the Slovak Republic.

Other ways of exploiting the project's results:

Improving the condition of valuable forest (and small non-forest) habitats benefits everyone without exaggeration. The function of forests in the landscape is irreplaceable - they slow down surface water runoff, prevent erosion, reduce soil drying or wind speed, influence the climate in their surroundings and, finally, absorb CO2 and produce oxygen. The better the condition of the forest, the better it performs these functions. Beyond this, there are other more tangible exploitation of the project results.

One of the important benefits of the project, which is not easy to quantify but can have a very significant impact, is the "meeting at the same table" of very different "types" of forest owners. In addition to the very traditional state forest managers such as the Forests of the Czech Republic (Lesy ČR) and the Military Forests and Estates (Vojenské lesy a statky), there will be owners from the ranks of "conservationists" - the Czech Union of Nature Conservationists, representatives of small owners such as municipal forests, and completely new owners who have only recently had their forest land returned to them - the Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas (returning land as part of church restitution).

The management of forest and associated ecosystems is currently divided among several institutions and organisations (forest managers, landowners, government, hunters) with different interests in all project sites; this often results in conflicting interventions that have a negative impact on the functioning of forest ecosystems. Together with the owners, the project will also involve the state nature management authorities: regional authorities (project associated beneficiaries MSR, SBR), Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic, with whom some landowners do not always have positive experiences. One of the tasks of the project is to find common ground and thus support the conservation of target habitats and species. This model can then be taken up by other forest administrations, church restitutions, municipalities and private landowners who are in a similar situation.

2.5 Catalytic potential: Replication and upscaling

Catalytic potential: Replication and upscaling *(n/a for concept note)*

Describe the potential for the results to be replicated in the same or other sectors or places. Which factors might favour or limit the replication?

Describe the potential for the results to be up-scaled by public/private actors or through mobilising larger investments or financial resources. What is the coverage and size of the market? Who are the potential users of the results?

Describe the strategy and tasks to multiply the impact of the project (during implementation or afterwards). How will its main actions and results be replicated elsewhere?

***Note:** Don't forget to include the activities in the mandatory Work Package for Sustainability, replication, and exploitation of project results.*

The project outputs have a high potential to significantly influence forest policy makers and site administrators to improve forestry practices and regulations. Therefore, they will be shared with other regions in the Czech Republic (especially through the associated beneficiaries **South Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia regions**, as well as through entities that have expressed support for the project by letters, see annex - **Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, Olomouc Region** and others). They will also be made available to Polish and Austrian regions that are closely adjacent to the project sites and thus face the same problems (same natural conditions, types of protection and threats). The **SBR** and **MSR** have a major role to play in this through their twinning channels of cross-border cooperation. In addition, **PEH** (link and long-term cooperation with Polish organisations) and **NSB** (associated partner in Austria) will be helpful. The project does envisage transnational cooperation to guarantee the achievement of the project objectives.

Targeted users:

Our results will be used in particular by the **Czech Nature Conservation Agency**, which is obliged to report the number of species in SCIs/SACs. Regional authorities will use them for management plans, The Forest of CZ (significant landowner) for forest management plans, and universities for their basic research. We also provide an overview of the institutions that will be actively involved in replication, as these entities are in long-term working contact with members of our project team and have already had discussions with them about the use of our project outputs:

The Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic (MoE) is the central state administrative authority in nature and landscape protection. Interest is confirmed by a Letter of Support, see Annex. The Department of Species Protection and Implementation of International Commitments is responsible inter alia for species protection and implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directive in the Czech Republic. The MoE endorses and expresses its support of the proposed project, which focuses on improving the status of the habitat types and species listed in Annex I and II of Habitats Directive in 9 SACs/SCIs in the Czech Republic. The project is fully in line with the Czech environmental legislation and meets priorities of the MoE in the field of nature and biodiversity conservation. The project is very beneficial from the national point of view. It will contribute to fulfilment of several objectives from the National Biodiversity Strategy of the Czech Republic and State programme on Nature and Landscape Conservation. The project will also contribute to the fulfilment of the goals of the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic: active interest. As a state-established organization, it has the best prerequisites for effectively informing target groups about project results and for transferring obtained data into practice.

The Forest of the Czech Republic (landowner): active interest, confirmed by a Letter of Support, see Annex. Guarantee the possibility of using the land in question for the purposes of the project, post-project sustainability of proven measures, cooperation to secure the necessary permits for project implementation.

Czech Environmental Inspectorate – Interest in using expert studies as a basis for binding or expert opinions or the catalogue of semi-natural measures.

Regional authorities in the Czech Republic: active interest in project outputs, inspiration for the creation of conditions, including justification for administrative proceedings. The Olomouc region confirmed its interest with a Letter of Support, see annex. Next two regions are associated beneficiaries of this project – South Bohemian and Moravian-Silesian regions.

Municipalities with extended powers – many municipalities or officials have already shown interest in project outputs, in the use of expert studies as a basis for binding or expert opinions.

Private landowners, churches that own land with forests – inspiration for better management on forest land (water retention in the landscape, increasing biodiversity). The Czech Union for Nature Conservation, Oder River Basin Office and Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas in Olomouc confirmed their interest with a Letter of Support, see annex.

Conservation organisations in other EU countries: transfer of project results, proven methodologies, especially in **Poland** (some project SCIs are in close proximity to the border or directly connected to each other, PEH has long-standing contacts there), in **Austria** (through the project associate partner NSB) and in **Slovakia** (through BROZ, which has great experience with LIFE projects and has expressed its support to us in a letter, see annex).

In most cases, these institutions have also provided us with a Letter of Support, which are listed in the Annex. For administrative simplicity, we have utilized the letters of support from last year. However, we have re-engaged with all the organizations that provided these letters, and their support remains confirmed.

List the Letters of Support as attached to the application in a separate attachment:

The Czech Republic:

The Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic (MoE) is the central state administrative authority in nature and landscape protection. The Department of Species Protection and Implementation of International Commitments is responsible inter alia for species protection and implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directive in the Czech Republic. The MoE endorses and expresses its support of the proposed project LIFE Model Forest, which focuses on improving the status of the habitat types and species listed in Annex I and II of Habitats Directive in 13 SCI/SAC in the Czech Republic. The project is fully in line with the Czech environmental legislation and

meets priorities of the MoE in the field of nature and biodiversity conservation. The project is very beneficial from the national point of view. It will contribute to fulfilment of several objectives from the National Biodiversity Strategy of the Czech Republic and State programme on Nature and Landscape Conservation. The project will also contribute to the fulfilment of the goals of the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

Lesy ČR (Forestry of the Czech Republic) - landowner in the localities CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka, CZ0314044 Opolenec, CZ0310067 Ryšovy, CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj, CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy, CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice.

They find the project very necessary as they are addressing similar issues in their habitats. They are also interested in restoring and protecting valuable habitats, and therefore, they welcome project activities. They express their willingness to visit the project sites during implementation to observe the progress and the effectiveness of the proposed procedures. As regional policy makers, they plan to incorporate the valuable project outputs into their documents and are eager to use the project results for their own purposes. They are also willing to share these results with other organizations. Furthermore, they are enthusiastic about supporting the initiation of international cooperation in nature conservation and intend to initiate such cooperation within their contacts. They believe that the project will facilitate the exchange of new knowledge among regions of other EU member states.

Olomouc Regional Authority, Department of Environment and Agriculture - administrator of the sites CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice. Their first priority is the restoration and protection of the valuable habitats on these sites. They enthusiastically support the planned project activities designed to enhance the overall condition of the land and the conservation objects. They commit to close collaboration with the project team, represented by ONYX, and pledge to maintain regular communication throughout the entire project duration.

Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas in Olomouc - owner of land in CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice. Their main interest lies in the restoration and protection of valuable habitats on the land they own. They express a strong appreciation for the planned project activities aimed at enhancing the overall condition of the site and safeguarding critical ecosystem elements.

Czech Union for Nature Conservation (CSOP) - owner of land in CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry. They are interested in restoring and protecting valuable habitats on their land and welcome project activities aimed at enhancing the status of the SCIs. They pledge to maintain regular communication with the project implementers throughout the project's duration and commit to cooperating in the implementation of project activities.

Povodí Odry, státní podnik / Odra River Basin, state enterprise - owner of land in CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry. Their primary focus is on restoring and safeguarding valuable habitats on their land. They express strong support for the planned project activities aimed at enhancing the overall condition of the sites and safeguarding essential ecosystem components. They commit to close collaboration with the project team, led by ONYX, and pledge to maintain regular communication with them throughout the project's duration.

Silesian University Opava, School of Business Administration in Karviná - students and teachers will participate in conservation work in selected sites. There will also be lectures on activities. In selected courses, the outputs may be implemented in courses related to sustainable business. Students will be taught to look for opportunities to link business and environmental protection.

Poland:

The State Forests National Forest Holding, Polish State Forests - the project is fully in line with the Polish environmental legislation and meets priorities of the State Forests - the greater manager of forests in Poland - in the field of nature and biodiversity conservation.

Fundacja LAJA - The LAJA Foundation - it sends, receives and coordinates European Voluntary Service and projects funded by the Visegrad Funds. As part of project activities, students and teachers from LAJA will participate in conservation work in selected sites.

Zespół Szkół im. Władysława Szybińskiego, Cieszyn - as part of project activities, students and teachers will participate in conservation work in selected sites.

Slovakia:

Bratislavské regionálne ochranárske združenie – BROZ has been implementing practical conservation measures in Natura 2000 sites for 25 years. Since its establishment in 1997, BROZ has established itself as a leading NGO in the field of protection and restoration of rare biotopes in the Slovak Republic. As regional policy makers in the field of environmental protection in the Slovak Republic, they will incorporate the valuable project outputs into their documents. They are eager to utilize the results for their own purposes and to disseminate them to other organizations for their benefit.

Other ways of exploiting the project's results:

Improving the condition of valuable forest (and small non-forest) habitats benefits everyone without exaggeration. The function of forests in the landscape is irreplaceable - they slow down surface water runoff, prevent erosion, reduce soil drying or wind speed, influence the climate in their surroundings and, finally, absorb CO2 and produce oxygen. The better the condition of the forest, the better it performs these functions. Beyond this, there are other more tangible exploitation of the project results.

One of the important benefits of the project, which is not easy to quantify but can have a very significant impact, is the "meeting at the same table" of very different "types" of forest owners. In addition to the very traditional state forest managers such as the Forests of the Czech Republic (Lesy ČR) and the Military Forests and Estates (Vojenské lesy a statky), there will be owners from the ranks of "conservationists" - the Czech Union of Nature Conservationists, representatives of small owners such as municipal forests, and completely new owners who have only recently had their forest land returned to them - the Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas (returning land as part of church restitution).

The management of forest and associated ecosystems is currently divided among several institutions and organisations (forest managers, landowners, government, hunters) with different interests in all project sites; this often results in conflicting interventions that have a negative impact on the functioning of forest ecosystems. Together with the owners, the project will also involve the state nature management authorities: regional authorities (project associated beneficiaries MSR, SBR), Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic, with whom some landowners do not always have positive experiences. One of the tasks of the project is to find common ground and thus support the conservation of target habitats and species. This model can then be taken up by other forest administrations, church restitutions, municipalities and private landowners who are in a similar situation.

#§IMP-ACT-IA§# #@QUA-LIT-QL@# #@WRK-PLA-WP@#

3. IMPLEMENTATION

*Fill in **only** section 3.1 and 3.3 at stage 1 (concept note). Fill in **all sections** at stage 2 (full proposal).*

3.1 Work plan

Work plan

Provide a brief description of the overall structure of the work plan (list of work packages or graphical presentation (Pert chart or similar)).

WP1 includes ongoing tasks related to the management and coordination of the project. Under WP2, expert studies will be carried out to determine the most appropriate measures for the target species and habitats to be subsequently implemented in WP3 activities. These activities will be monitored during WP4, in terms of impacts on nature conservation in general and effect of dissemination activities will also be monitored. These are included in WP5, including replication tools and networking experience exchange. A plan for the sustainability of the implemented measures is included in the form of an After-LIFE Conservation Plan.

WP1 Project management and coordination

T.1.1 Project management and reporting

T.1.2 Project bookkeeping, financial management

WP2 Expert studies on restoration management

T.2.1 Expert studies for habitats

T.2.2 Expert studies for target species

T.2.3 Expert studies of invasive alien species

WP3 Conservation actions

T.3.1 Restoration management for habitats

T.3.2 Restoration management for target species

T.3.3 Elimination of invasive alien species

WP4 Monitoring and evaluation

T.4.1 Monitoring of project impact on target species and habitats

T.4.2 LIFE Key Performance indicators monitoring

T.4.3 Monitoring of dissemination actions

WP5 Sustainability, replication and exploitation of project results

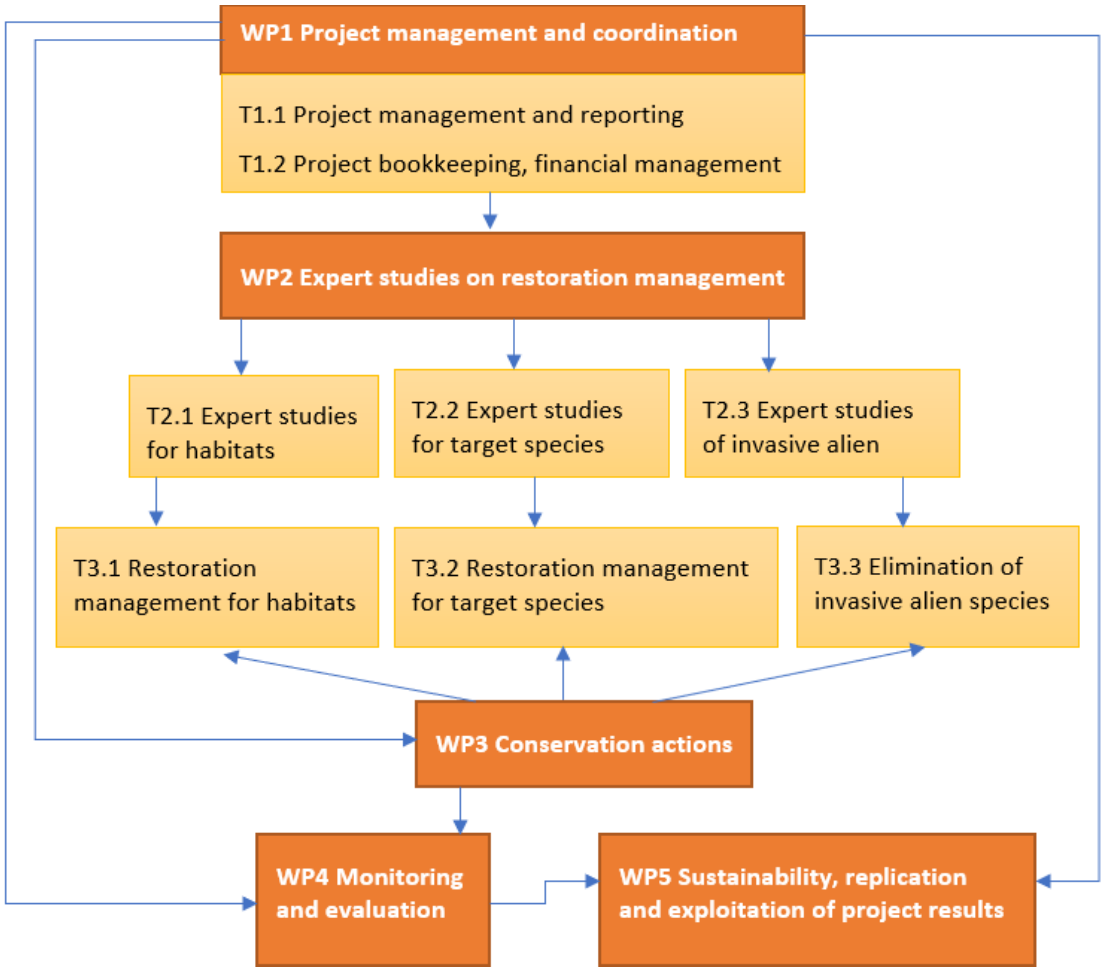
T.5.1 Awareness raising – public

T.5.2 Awareness raising - key stakeholders (in the project areas)

T.5.3 Replication toolkit (outside of project areas)

T.5.4 Networking with other LIFE and non-LIFE projects

T.5.5 After-LIFE Conservation plan



Timetable

Timetable (projects of more than 2 years) *(n/a for concept note)*

Fill in cells in beige to show the duration of activities. Repeat lines/columns as necessary.

Note: *Use the project months/years instead of calendar months/years. Month 1 always marks the start of the project. In the timeline you should indicate the timing of each activity per WP. You may add additional columns if your project is longer than 6 years.*

ACTIVITY	YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3				YEAR 4				YEAR 5				YEAR 6				YEAR 7			
	M 1-3	M 4-6	M 7-9	M 10-12	M 13-15	M 16-18	M 19-21	M 22-24	M 25-27	M 28-30	M 31-33	M 34-36	M 37-39	M 40-42	M 43-45	M 46-48	M 49-51	M 52-54	M 55-57	M 58-60	M 61-63	M 64-66	M 67-69	M 70-72	M 73-75	M 76-78	M 79-81	M 82-84
WP1 Project management and coordination																												
T.1.1 Project management and reporting																												
T.1.2 Project bookkeeping, financial management																												
WP2 Expert studies on restoration management																												
T.2.1 Expert studies for habitats																												
T.2.2 Expert studies for target species																												
T.2.3 Expert studies of invasive alien species																												
WP3 Conservation actions																												
T.3.1 Restoration management for habitats																												
T.3.2 Restoration management for target species																												
T.3.3 Elimination of invasive alien species																												
WP4 Monitoring and evaluation																												

T.4.1 Monitoring of project impact on target species and habitats																													
T.4.2 LIFE Key Performance indicators monitoring																													
T.4.3 Monitoring of dissemination actions																													
WP5 Sustainability, replication and exploitation of project results																													
T.5.1 Awareness raising – public																													
T.5.2 Awareness raising - key stakeholders (in the project areas)																													
T.5.3 Replication toolkit (outside of project areas)																													
T.5.4 Networking with other LIFE and non-LIFE projects																													
T.5.5 After-LIFE Conservation plan																													

3.2 Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholders' engagement

Identify any key stakeholders outside the consortium that are required to ensure the success of the project. How will you mobilise them to contribute to your project activities or participate in these?

Annex Letters of support to demonstrate the type and level of commitment already secured (if any).(n/a for concept note)

For Nature and Biodiversity: If your project (or a part of it) depends on support of the competent authority or stakeholders, provide letters of support to show their commitment to the project (needed for full proposal, n/a for concept note)

1. Land owners and administrators of the project sites

The Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic (MoE) as the central state administrative authority in nature and landscape protection, supports our project, which is fully in line with the Czech environmental legislation and meets priorities of the MoE in the field of nature and biodiversity conservation. The project is very beneficial from the national point of view. It will contribute to fulfilment of several objectives from the National Biodiversity Strategy of the Czech Republic and State programme on Nature and Landscape Conservation. The project will also contribute to the fulfilment of the goals of the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. (See its Letter of Support in Annex). In the narrower spectrum, these will be mainly owners of land and buildings located in the vicinity of the project area. A cooperation agreement will be concluded with them, which will ensure mainly the possibility of access and subsequent survey of the sites, long-term monitoring and implementation of WP3 activities. The agreement will also benefit the owners in the form of the valorisation of their land, most of which is in a poor condition, or the possibility to use the resulting waste material (wood, hay) on the commercial market. We also foresee the possibility that some owner will not want to conclude the agreement. We have treated these cases in such a way that a significant landowner is a key stakeholder **The Forest of the Czech Republic** (see its Letter of support in annex), and **the regional authorities in the Moravian-Silesian and South Bohemian regions (MSR, SBR**), who are administrators of the project sites as nature protection authorities, are project associated beneficiaries.

Polish State Forests (SF) as the main management authority of forests in Poland (nearly 77% of area) and exclusive landowner of almost all of the Polish sites in this project (except one). SF supports our project, because it meets the priorities of nature and biodiversity conservation, promoted by the Polish Ministry of Climate and Environment. The project will also contribute to the fulfilment of the concept of sustainable silviculture, which is promoted in Poland. It will be also beneficial to the local tourism sector, as there are many touristic spots within many of our project sites. Achieving our goals will increase the attractiveness of these locations and lead to an increased income for the local tourist sector (accommodation, shops, bike rent, camping sites, etc.). This, in turn, may motivate other private forest owners to adapt our measures to make benefit from their forests and make the local tourist sector develop even more.

With a significant part of the major forest landowners, the project has been arranged in advance. Some of them have also provided their intention of support in the Letter of support (see annex Letters of support from **The Forest of the Czech Republic, Regional Authority of the Olomouc region, Department of Environment and Agriculture, Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas in Olomouc, Odra River Basin, state enterprise, Czech Union for Nature Conservation, General Directorate of the State Polish Forests**).

- during preparation and implementation, they acquire information on the importance of individual species and habitats within the framework of the EU, on national and regional level

- in certain sites they will directly participate in project implementing, in some other ones they will be regularly familiarized with optimal management measures for the target habitats (or species)

- we will continue cooperating with the entities concerned on a professional basis, including regular evaluation and regulations of the site care, where applicable

- project is unique in that it brings together traditional large forest owners in the Czech Republic such as The Forest of the Czech Republic or Military forests and estates, small forest owners, non-traditional forest owners (Czech Union for Nature Conservation, Oder River Basin Office) and completely new owners (Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas in Olomouc, note - church restitutions have been taking place in the Czech Republic since 2013).

- In Poland the State Forest manages most of the forests, also within the project sites. With their support it is highly possible to run all the planned actions with full success and to maintain the effects for the following decades.

Owners will be provided with information on the status and importance of the species and habitats

at EU, national and regional level during the preparation and implementation of the project. In some sites they will be directly involved in the implementation of the project, in others they will be regularly briefed on optimal management measures for the target habitats (or species). Other land users in the region outside the project will be drawn in through public events and field trips to show them that it is possible to manage in accordance with conservation principles. We will use practical examples to show that species and habitat conservation is not just about specific protected areas, but that the activities undertaken have an impact on the wider environment and can be used to effectively enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions. Here the project will focus on exemplary methodologies and solutions that are feasible and accessible to other managers and landowners. Such an approach will be relevant as a basis for replication.

Specifically, for each project site (20 in total), engagement of the site owners and administrative authorities is ensured as follows:

The Czech Republic

South Bohemian (6 sites):

Site administrator for all 6 sites is associated beneficiary South Bohemian region (SBR).

CZ0314021 Borkovická blata – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

CZ0314044 Opolenec – Letter of support from main landowner Lesy ČR (95%)

CZ0310067 Ryšovy – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

Moravian-Silesian (5 sites):

Site administrator for all 5 sites is associated beneficiary Moravian-Silesian region (MSR).

CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Lesy ČR (100%)

CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj – Letter of support from landowner Lesy ČR (6%)

CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy – Letter of support from landowner Lesy ČR (35%)

CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice – Letter of support from landowners Lesy ČR (47%), Odra River Basin and Czech Union for Nature Conservation (43%)

CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry – Letter of support from main landowners Lesy ČR (70%), Odra River Basin and Czech Union for Nature Conservation (10%)

Olomouc (2 sites):

Site administrator for all 2 sites is Olomouc Regional Authority, which expressed its support in a Letter of Support.

CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex – Letter of support from main landowner Lesy ČR (90%)

CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice – Letter of support from exclusive landowner Metropolitan Chapter of St. Wenceslas in Olomouc (100%)

Polish sites - Letter of support from the Directorate General of the State Polish Forests, exclusive landowner of almost all project sites in Poland except one.

Negotiations with the remaining small landowners, mostly private individuals and smaller municipalities, will be initiated at the outset of the project. According to the experience in our previous LIFE projects, smallholders agree to restoration interventions on their land when they see that the majority owner is also involved, which we have already confirmed with commitments in the form of Letters of Support. The fact that the two associated beneficiaries are also the administrators of most of the project sites (MSR, SBR), the remaining sites are managed by the Olomouc Region, which has also provided us with a Letter of Support, also plays a very positive role here.

2. Other land users in the region (e.g., foresters)

- we will organize public events and professional excursions with group 1 to show the participants that it is possible to forestry in accordance with line with the nature conservation principles

– Using practical examples, we will show that species and habitat protection is not just about specific protected areas, but that the activities carried out by foresters have an impact on the wider

environment and can be used to effectively enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions.

Here the project will focus on example methodology and solutions that are feasible and accessible to other foresters and forest owners. Such an approach will be relevant as a basis for replication.

3. Representatives of local Municipalities and Regional offices

- on a local level, municipalities will be often involved in the implementation of the project in group 1 as landowners. Some of them have also provided their intention of support in the Letter of support.

- relevant the representatives of regional offices as well as mayors of local Municipalities will be invited to seminars and field excursions, where positive results and procedures will be presented

- feedback from representatives of municipalities will be frequently gathered, to help in identifying potential problems

- It will enable us to better adjust the project actions to increase their positive impact on local communities. This approach will also improve conditions for replication.

At the local level, municipalities will often be involved in project implementation as landowners. Some of them have also indicated their intention of support in the Letter of Support. Relevant representatives of the regional authorities of both **South-Bohemian SBR and Moravian-Silesian MSR** are project associated beneficiaries as well as mayors of local municipalities will be invited to seminars and field trips where positive results and practices of the project will be presented. Feedback from municipal representatives will be sought frequently to help identify potential problems and to better tailor project actions to increase their positive impact on local communities. This approach will also improve the conditions for replication. At the local level in Poland the project will be supported by regional directorates of State Forests and local forest districts. Feedback from representatives of State Forests will be gathered.

4. Professionals working in nature conservation sector, state administration authorities

- Persons highly qualified in the field of natural sciences and natural conservation will participate in the project. They will discuss project issues with experts and scholars in relevant fields.

- all WP3 activities will be carried out according to care plans and sets of recommended measures for individual SCI/SACs, whose administrators are the given regional authorities, environmental departments (Regional Office of the South Bohemian Region and Moravian-Silesian Region – both are project associated beneficiary, abb. **SBR** and **MSR**)

- positive as well as negative experience and its solution will be shared by presenting at professional seminars, conferences, publishing interim reports and having discussions within the framework of networking.

- the final conference of the project will be used for comprehensive presenting of the project´s results and discussing the impacts of the used solutions on a professional level. This can also help in replication of the most suitable methods.

- frequent networking and exchange of information will be realized with relevant NGOs, to share most suitable practices and solutions, contacts and to enable possible cooperation

The project will involve people with high qualifications in natural sciences and conservation (for example stakeholder and landowner **Czech Union for Nature Conservation**). They will discuss the project issues with experts and scientists from relevant fields. All activities in WP3 will be carried out according to the management plans and sets of recommended measures for individual SCIs/SACs, which are managed by the respective regional authorities, environmental departments (**Regional Authority of South Bohemia and Moravian-Silesian Region** - both are also project associated beneficiaries – abb. SBR and MSR).

IBL will ensure a variety of experts that will participate in discussions, meetings, information exchange etc. Positive and possible negative experiences and their solutions will be shared through presentations at professional seminars, conferences, publication of interim reports and networking discussions. The final conference of the project will serve for a comprehensive presentation of the project results and for a discussion on the impact of the applied solutions on a professional level. This may also help in replicating the most appropriate methods. Frequent networking and exchange of information with relevant organisations will be undertaken to share best practices and solutions, contacts and to facilitate possible collaboration. Some of these organisations have also expressed their intent in a Letter of Support.

5. Students and schoolchildren

- simultaneously with the project in the sites concerned, vocational training of students will be organized where they will have the opportunity to learn about new practical procedures

– students will be familiarized with the Natura 2000 system through schools participating in excursions to SCI/SAC near the residence of their school.

– students will be allowed to participate directly in the project (e.g., as volunteer, participating on monitoring, etc., see Participant info of **PEH**: Secondary schools, with which PEH cooperates)

In parallel with the project, training will be organised in the affected localities to provide students with the opportunity to learn about new practical practices. Students will be introduced to Natura 2000 through school field trips to SCIs/SACs close to their school. Students will also be given the opportunity to participate directly in the project (e.g. as volunteers, participating in monitoring, etc.). We have been working with schools for a long time in other projects, we have experience in how to get their attention. Silesian University Opava, School of Business Administration in Karviná (CZ) supports the project and as part of these activities, students and teachers will participate in conservation work in selected sites. There will also lectures on activities. In selected courses, the outputs may be implemented in courses related to sustainable business. Students will be taught to look for opportunities to link business and environmental protection. Zespół Szkół im. Władysława Szybińskiego, Cieszyn (PL) - as part of project activities, students and teachers will participate in conservation work in selected sites.

6. Non-expert public

- during the project, media campaigns will be implemented with a view to improving general awareness of nature conservation and the Natura 2000 system

– education panels, local information points and several professional and promotional materials will be implemented to support tourism

- Non – expert public will be allowed to participate directly in the project (e.g., as volunteers)

7. Volunteers

- Volunteers within the European Solidarity Corps, which is coordinated by the accredited organization **Petrklíč Help** (project associated beneficiary **PEH**) in cooperation with other partner institutions in the Czech Republic and Poland. The European Solidarity Corps aims to foster solidarity in European society, engaging young people and organisations in accessible and high-quality activities. Also, **Naturschutzbund Niederösterreich** (Austrian associated partner **NSB**) has a lot of experience with habitat maintenance by volunteers, it will allow them to work in the neighbouring Czech Republic within WP3 and thus exchange experience in this field with project partners.

- Volunteers to involve young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. These are young people aged 13-30 who are from the Czech Republic and are disadvantaged in some way (mostly social disadvantage). In this case, the involvement of these volunteers is very important for their teaching of social responsibility and solidarity, to which they were not led in childhood.

- Community volunteers. It is a wide range of people who want to help their surroundings and build a common community space. It is not only young people, but also adults who want to show this path to their children. (See students and schoolchildren and non-expert public).

The LAJA Foundation supports the project and as part of projects activities, students and teachers from LAJA will participate in conservation work in selected sites.

8. Similar organisations in other countries

– a very important target group are foreign entities active in nature conservation with whom cooperation will be built within the framework of WP5, T5.4 Networking and to whom the procedures and results of the project will be presented to stimulate the use of such results as the best practices in the context of similar conditions.

Our associated partner **Naturschutzbund Niederösterreich** (**NSB**) is from Austria. The League of nature conservation lower Austria (Naturschutzbund NÖ) was founded in 1960 as an independent nature conservation association. Its field of activity is Lower Austria, although it also works closely with organizations in neighbouring countries (e.g., the Czech Republic and Slovakia as part of

international projects). One of its focuses is the implementation of nature conservation goals on land. He is thus also the landowner of several protected areas in Lower Austria and implements the necessary maintenance measures here together with the local population. Other focal points include species protection and awareness-raising measures.

We have a long-standing cooperation with **Bratislavské regionálne ochranárske združenie – BROZ** (Slovak Republic) on LIFE and other projects, we have excellent working and personal relations, so we assume their active support, sharing and involvement, see their Letter of support in annexes.

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3.3 Impact monitoring and reporting *(n/a for concept note)*

Impact monitoring, evaluation and reporting strategy *(n/a for concept note)*

Describe your overall approach to monitor and evaluate the impact indicators during your project. Ensure that you include specific tasks to monitor, evaluate and report impacts in the work plan (section 2 of this template).

Monitoring of project impact on target species and habitats (WP4, T4.1)

Monitoring of project impact on target species and habitats will be carried out annually. Long-term will allow us to distinguish between annual fluctuations and actual habitat or target species change. The exact size of target species populations within some sites are lacking, previous studies only confirmed their presence. The first year of the monitoring (the initial inventory) will allow to estimate the yet unknown numbers of target species within sites. The specific parameters to be monitored will be based on expert studies.

The outputs will be an annual summary monitoring report. Findings over the life of the project will be summarized in a final report. The results of the monitoring will be regularly reported on the project website. The results will be used to update management plans at individual sites, prepare scientific papers and presentations at conferences (WP5)

Target habitats

Regular annual monitoring can also change the management intervention if it is not sufficient. The use of vegetation composition data will allow us to predict the future development of specific sites in relation to projected global changes and to design long-term appropriate management to maintain high habitat quality and high abundance of indicator species. Within WP2, T2.1, monitoring plots for individual habitats within specific SACs will be targeted using GPS. Monitoring will then be carried out as per the guidelines in Expert studies for habitats (T2.1), under WP4, T4.1, where detailed information is described.

The monitoring will focus on the different effectiveness of individual protection of seedlings and seedlings against biting by wild animals (chemical, mechanical - tubes, biological - sheep wool, no protection), and on the effectiveness of group protection (fences). For individual protection, the growth and possible deformation of seedlings and saplings will also be considered. Species, number, increment, mortality and, where relevant, herbage cover will be recorded.

The monitoring of habitat conditions will focus on assessing structure, species composition, and dynamics. The primary method will be field measurements on permanent and temporary monitoring plots of various sizes (10 × 10 m, 1.5 × 1.5 m, circular plots, etc.). A regular network of points will be established and stabilized in the field. We will monitor the representation of tree species, age and spatial structure of stands, deadwood volume, and the presence of typical indicator species. Monitoring will also include the presence of non-native species and disruptive factors (logging, eutrophication, erosion, drought). Data will be recorded using phytosociological surveys and GIS technologies. Aerial imagery and remote sensing (LiDAR) will be used to assess stand structure and diversity. Monitoring will be conducted annually, with results analyzed using statistical (multivariate analysis) and GIS programs. Outputs will include tables, graphs, and maps.

Target species

As part of WP2, T2.2, an expert study will be carried out on the optimal management of the target species. These studies will include a methodology for monitoring amphibian and saproxylic insect species at specific SACs.

The monitoring of project impact on amphibians will focus on the evaluation of optimal management (WP3, T2.2) of 1193 *Bombina variegata*, 1188 *Bombina bombina* and 1166 *Triturus cristatus*. Regular monitoring will be carried out in SCIs CZ0813457 Niva Olše - Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0713827 Stará Červená voda - forest complex and

PLH240005 Beskid Śląski, PLH160004 Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka, PLH160007 Góry Opawskie, PLH240001 Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe. The methodology is set and will be based on individual counting (observations, counting calling individuals during the mating season).

The monitoring will also include an overview of the current status of the target amphibian species and their abundance at individual project sites and an assessment of the impact of the project measures (WP3, T3.2) on the amphibian population. Other amphibian species will also be recorded as part of the monitoring. This monitoring will also be the basis for the preparation of new pools to be implemented as part of AFTER LIFE care, after the completion of this project.

Monitoring of project impact on insect species will focus on the evaluation of optimal management (WP3, T2.2) in:

CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry: the monitoring of project impact on saproxylic insects will focus on **1084 Osmoderma eremita* and *1086 Cucujus cinnaberi*nus.

CZ0314126 Hlubocké Obory: the monitoring of project impact on saproxylic insects will focus on **1084 Osmoderma eremita, 1083 Lucanus cervus, 1079 Limoniscus violaceus* and *4026 Rhyzodes sulcatus*.

CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice: the monitoring of project impact on insect will focus on **1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria* and *4014 Carabus variolosus*

CZ0714772 Údolí Bystřice: the monitoring of project impact on insect will focus on **1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria*

PLH240013 Graniczny Meander Odry: the monitoring of project impact on saproxylic insects will focus on **1084 Osmoderma eremita* and 1086 Cucujus cinnaberinus

PLH240005 Beskid Śląski: the monitoring of project impact on saproxylic insects will focus on **1084 Osmoderma eremita*

PLH240005 Beskid Śląski: the monitoring of project impact on insect will focus on *4014 Carabus variolosus*

PLH020016 Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika: the monitoring of project impact on insect will focus on *4014 Carabus variolosus.*

The methodology is set and will be based on individuals live trapping.

The monitoring will also include an overview of the current status of the saproxylic insects and other insects and their abundance at individual project sites and an assessment of the impact of the project measures (WP3, T3.2) on the insects' population.

The monitoring of invertebrates will require a combination of methods targeting different life stages and habitat types. Specific methods will include pheromone traps for selected species, emergence traps placed on deadwood to capture species developing within the substrate, and window traps to record actively moving flying insects. Additionally, active surveys of individuals in tree cavities, under bark, and on wood surfaces will be conducted. The monitoring will consider different tree species and decay stages. It will be performed annually at multiple time points to track different developmental stages. Control plots will be used to assess intervention impacts. The detailed methodology will be defined during project preparation.

Monitoring of project impact on plant species will focus on the evaluation of optimal management (WP3, T2.2) in: CZ0314044 Opolenec: **4094 Gentianella praecox subsp. bohemica* and CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory: *1381 Dicranum viride*.

PLH160007 Góry Opawskie: *1381 Dicranum viride*

PLH240005 Beskid Śląski: *1381 Dicranum viride*

The monitoring will include an overview of the current occurrence of the monitored plants and their abundance at individual project sites, including an assessment of the impact of the project measures (WP3, T3.2) on their populations.

Invasive alien species

As part of WP2, T2.3, a detailed mapping and determination of the IAS disposal methodology for individual IAS species and specific SCIs will be carried out. Outbreaks of IAS will be actively sought out, and if identified outside the project area, their eradication will be carried out in coordination with the affected landowners and land managers. The IAS eradication methodology will be in line with the recommended measures for individual SCIs and, where appropriate, management plans.

At the same time, permanent monitoring areas of 10x10m will be targeted using GPS. The number of plots depends on the amount of IAS occurrence, minimum 1 - maximum 5 for 1 SCI. Regular monitoring will be carried out on each monitoring plot before the intervention and at least 2 weeks after the intervention, i.e., at least twice a year, but more often if necessary. IAS cover, IAS species composition, IAS vigour and any deformation (after herbicide application) will be examined. Subsequently, the emergent herb and tree cover, its species composition, abundance, growth (in the case of seedlings), and any deformations will be recorded. Special attention will be paid to IAS *Echinocystis lobata*. The experience with this IAS will be recorded annually and included in the methodology at the end of the project.

Monitoring of key-performance indicators (WP4, T4.2)

The action will secure exact reporting on the project's impact in terms of key performance indicators corresponding to nature and biodiversity, ecosystem functions, socio-economic impacts, and other targets – as set in the Key performance indicators table (KPI).

The expected results set in the KPI table are based on assessment of the initial situation in the project areas and potential for possible improvements regarding the overall project objectives. Although almost all the indicators were filled in the provided template, 1 new indicator was added to reflect and monitor the expected positive impacts of the project:

Policies – involving nature conservation objectives into min. 2 regional/national policies. Finally, WP5, T5.1, T5.2 are designed to make use of these experiences and best practice by involving the relevant objectives into policies that are expected to be updated in the time and region of the project implementing.

KPI monitoring will be carried out on a regular basis from the beginning of 2026 until the end of the project.

Monitoring of impacts of dissemination actions (WP4, T4.3)

The effectiveness and impact of dissemination actions (WP5), with reference to project performance indicators will be evaluated. Quantitative and qualitative results and impacts of dissemination actions on target public will be monitored and reported:

• Quantitative results of projects dissemination actions will be monitored and compared to the overall expected results – e.g., number of participants of an event, number of website visits, number and list of media outputs, etc.

The results will be delivered with every project report. Specifically, the number of participants will be documented by participants' attendance list, website visits. The quantity and list of media outputs will be documented using a list of links to internet articles, copies of printed articles, archive videos for easier spreading (besides copies, which will be downloaded and saved for archiving).

• Qualitative impact on target audience will be evaluated and reported for relevant dissemination sub-actions by corresponding means – by evaluating the interest and feedback from participants of excursions, field trips, meetings, and workshops (WP5, T5.1, T5.2).

Project Audit and Monitoring Strategy

To ensure transparency and accountability, a thorough project audit process is in place. An impartial auditor, selected by the coordinating beneficiary, will meticulously review the financial statements submitted to the contracting authority during the final report submission. This audit report, detailing the project's financial statements and expenditures, will be attached to the project's final report.

Our comprehensive monitoring strategy encompasses the following elements:

1) Project Partner Reports: Regular updates from project partners will showcase tangible progress made towards expected outcomes and project performance indicators.

2) External Monitoring Visits: External monitoring teams will conduct on-site visits to evaluate project implementation and adherence to set goals.

3) Task Tracking: A detailed list of deadlines, milestones, and deliverables will be maintained to monitor the timely completion of tasks.

4) Steering Committee Engagement: The Steering Committee's involvement will serve as a robust monitoring mechanism, ensuring alignment with project objectives.

5) Constant Communication: Continuous exchange of information between the Project Manager, partners, and project staff will facilitate real-time progress assessment.

This combined approach of rigorous audit and vigilant monitoring guarantees the project's successful advancement and adherence to established standards.

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3.4 Communication, dissemination and visibility *(n/a for concept note)*

Communication, dissemination and visibility of funding *(n/a for concept note)*

Define your target audience(s). Describe the planned communication and dissemination activities to promote the action and its results and maximise the impact (to whom, which format, how many copies, etc.). Clarify how you intent to reach each target audience, and explain the choice of the dissemination channels. Describe the methods and indicators (quantitative and qualitative) to monitor and evaluate the outreach and coverage of the communication and dissemination activities and results.

Describe how the visibility of EU funding will be ensured.

Visibility of EU funding

All communication, promotional and information materials will bear the LIFE and NATURA 2000 logos and information about the project support from the LIFE programme in according with https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/life/communication-and-gdpr-rules_en

Target audience: Awareness raising - public (WP5, T5.1)

Target group T5.1: local primary and secondary schools, surrounding forest owners (outside the project sites), local authorities (municipalities and project area), local volunteers, professional and public.

Task T.5.1 will primarily target the public, with a particular emphasis on forest owners. Task T5.1 contains a set of information and awareness raising sub-measures to facilitate the implementation of the project and to ensure proper promotion of the project itself and its results and to raise general awareness of LIFE and Natura 2000.

The dissemination of information will take place at several levels using different communication channels. Basically, we would like to target forest owners, residents, students and pupils of local schools, volunteers, and the public. All promotional and information materials will bear the LIFE and Natura 2000 logos. Calendars, diaries, chocolates, and other printed materials will contain a sentence stating that the item was created within the LIFE Model Forest project, the project number and "with the co-financing of the European Commission from the LIFE programme and with the support of the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic".

Project website

The project website will be created and launched as part of the organisation's website https://www.csoponyx.cz/ and updated regularly. A minimum of **5,000 unique visitors** are expected by the end of the project. It will be maintained for a min. of 5 years and beyond the end of the project. The website will contain information on the project, project sites, target species and habitats, major environmental issues/threats and how they are being addressed through project measures. Information on LIFE and Natura 2000, including the logo, will be provided. Current events, contacts, information from WP4 monitoring and WP3 fieldwork will be promoted. These activities will also include publishing project activities on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter. Also, all partners will inform about the project on their websites.

Media promotion, film

The promotion of the project in the media, its objectives, methods, and achievements in the field of nature conservation to the public and the public will be done through the media - press, radio, and television at local, regional, national, and international level. Information will also be provided to journalists in the form of press releases, interviews, field reports, articles for professional journals, etc., resulting in media coverage and outputs in a wide range of media aimed at a very broad public. A minimum of 10 articles will be carried out at regional and 10 at national level (also distributed abroad).

The professional team will prepare a **film** regarding the target habitats and species and the implementation of project activities. The film will be available in CZ with EN and PL subtitles. The film will be produced on a **USB flash drive (1000 pcs, 32GB**), available online on the project website, shared on FB and broadcast 2 times on TV. The streams will be used to promote the project through media, FB, and web, at least 10 streams. Sub-events will be coordinated by the PR manager.

Noticeboards

Noticeboards will be installed at **all 20 project sites**. Each will provide basic information on the natural values of the project site, target habitats/species and the conservation measures implemented under the project and the reasons for their necessity.

Language: Czech or Polish (in sites near the CZ/PL border in both languages), with ENG summary.

Printed materials, promotional items

Printed materials will be prepared and disseminated during the project lifetime. They will be used not only in communication with the public, but also as means of first contact with important stakeholders.

Renewable and responsible source materials (e.g., FSC certified paper) will be used, in line with the EU and national Green public procurement toolkit. The materials will be distributed considerably and only to those, who can make use of them/the info contained. This is to avoid wasting and over-consumption. The printed and promotional materials will be prepared by the PR manager (ONYX). Graphical design, photographs, proof-reading, translations, drawn pictures and printing will be provided by external assistance.

Two wall-mounted calendars will be issued, each with **300 copies (600 calendars in total**). The calendar will be in colour, A3 format, the theme of the first calendar will be target habitats and species, including basic information about them. The topic of the second calendar will be IAS plant species addressed by the project, including instructions for their disposal. The calendars will be addressed to forest landowners, volunteers, and other stakeholders. They will be distributed in the framework of WP5.

Two diaries, each for two years, 300 copies each (600 diaries in total). The diaries will be in colour (photos, drawings), A5 format, the first diary will focus on the target habitats and species, including basic information about them. The theme of the second diary will be IAS plant species addressed in the project, including instructions for their disposal. The diaries will be targeted at forest landowners, volunteers, and other stakeholders. They will be distributed in the framework of WP5.

Chocolates with picture/photo of target species or IAS plants (Bombina variegata, Osmoderma eremita, Reynoutria spp, etc.), **1000 pcs**, (organic, fair trade), chocolates will be distributed by actions with young volunteers (children) and during action WP5, T5.1 excursion for schools (children)

Magnets, 6x6 cm, with picture/photo of target species or IAS plants, **300 pcs**, magnets will be distributed by actions with young volunteers (children) and during action WP5, T5.1 excursion for schools (children)

Pens 10 000 pcs., recycled material, include printing (Project information)

Bags, 40X33 cm with picture/photo of target species or IAS, **400 pcs**, bags will be produced in the social enterprise (sheltered workshop), which employs people with disabilities and creates upcycling products. Bags will be distributed by actions with volunteers and during action WP5, T5.1 excursion for schools and public

Mobile phone, and laptop covers will be produced in the social enterprise (sheltered workshop), which employs people with disabilities and creates upcycling products. Mobile phone, and laptop covers will be distributed by actions with young volunteers and during action WP5, T5.1 excursion for schools (students). Linking nature conservation and "conservation" to things that are indispensable for young people (mobile phone, laptop) today will have a more positive impact on young people than traditional printed promotional materials.

Mobile phone cover: 17x9 cm, upcycling material, picture of target species or IAS plants, **300 pcs**

Laptop cover: 26x18 cm, upcycling material, picture of target species or IAS plants, **200 pcs**.

T-shirts, men's (L, XL), women's (S, M, L), children's, in total **500 pcs**, T – shirts will be produced in the social enterprise (sheltered workshop), which employs people with disabilities and creates upcycling products. Upcycling material, picture of target species or IAS plants.

Excursions

Min. **10 excursions** for schools and public on project sites will be realised. It is expected that a minimum of **200 participants** will personally visit the project sites with the expert guiding and presentation of nature conservation actions. During these excursions promotional items will be

distributed.

Theatre performances

As part of PR, we choose an original form of promotion in the form of a cheerful, original theatrical performance. It will be inspired by the classic fairy tale of Sleeping Beauty, but we will include the realities of our project in the plot. The audience will thus learn about invasive plant species and be introduced to the basic ideas behind our project. The introduction will always be a short, erudite lecture about our project and a competition for promotional items. This adapted fairy tale incorporating elements of invasive alien species (IAS) and a castle overgrown by these species provides an excellent opportunity for raising awareness and educating the public about IAS in an entertaining and engaging manner. This approach will achieve several significant objectives:

1. Engaging Communication Format: Classic fairy tales have the ability to captivate and appeal to not only children but also adults. The inclusion of a castle overrun by invasive species will create an emotionally charged story that easily captures the attention of a wide range of people.

2. Entertaining Educational Method: The fairy tale will offer a means of educating the public about IAS in an enjoyable format. The complex issue of invasive species can be challenging for many to comprehend, but a fairy tale narrative can simplify this matter and make it accessible to all age groups.

3. Building Awareness of the Issue: The fairy tale about a castle engulfed by IAS can generate awareness about how rapidly and inconspicuously invasive species can impact the environment. The fairy tale's story will illustrate how these species spread and how they can endanger native biodiversity.

4. Increasing Motivation for Collaboration: When the prince in the fairy tale decides to rid the castle of IAS, it will symbolize the necessity of collective efforts in combating these species. This motivation will stimulate greater public interest in nature conservation and participation in IAS management measures.

5. Expanding Project Awareness: The fairy tale will be accompanied by information about a specific project or initiative focused on combating IAS. This will enhance awareness of specific actions and the significance of nature conservation.

Overall, it can be concluded that this adapted fairy tale offers a unique opportunity for promoting the significant issue of IAS and disseminating it to the wider public through an attractive and compelling form.

An innovative approach to promotion will involve **10 theatre performances at schools and another 10 during socio-cultural events.** These performances will creatively weave project-related content into an engaging storyline, inspired by the Sleeping Beauty fairy tale. Theatregoers will not only enjoy the performance but also learn about invasive plant species and the project's core concepts. The performances will be followed by brief, educational lectures on the project and interactive competitions. The goal is to reach around 1,000 children and teachers through school performances and a wider audience during cultural and social events.

Awareness raising – key stakeholders (in the project areas) WP5, T5.2

Target group T5.2: local foresters, representatives of municipalities, regional authorities and other policy makers, private forest owners, representatives of institutions responsible for landscape management (Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic).

Education and training of key actors on the above-mentioned topics will be implemented through excursions, seminars and personal meetings and discussions. During the field trips, participants will be introduced to the target habitats, their natural values and ecosystem services, as well as appropriate measures for their restoration. Field trips will be organised mainly to the project area, but also to other protected areas in the Czech Republic or Poland, where important positive examples and lessons learned can be presented. The field trips will focus on topics related to the project - e.g., cooperation of forest owners in nature protection in protected areas, effective removal of invasive plant species, etc.

Field workshops (Key stakeholders involved in the project)

A minimum of **3 two-day field workshops** will be conducted with a total of at least 50 participants from all over the country. The topics of the workshops will be:

• Management of target species, focusing on *Osmoderma eremita*

• Eradication of IAS plants

• Management of priority habitats (*91E0, *91D0, *9180).

Participants in the planned field trips and workshops will have the opportunity to gain first-hand experience of conservation management in similar natural and socio-economic settings. Participants will have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion and actively participate in determining the best possible management measures to achieve the project objectives. Stakeholder input is also expected on the post-project conservation plan and future cooperation between the beneficiary and project partners and local stakeholders, relevant institutions (forestry, agriculture, water management, etc.) and municipalities. Although the event is primarily aimed at local stakeholders, participation in excursions and meetings is open to all interested parties from different regions and countries. This will help replicate best management practices in similar locations in other European regions.

Personal meetings with stakeholders

At least **20 face-to-face meetings** with forest owners in the project area (key stakeholders, 2-4 participants/meeting) will take place during the project. Ongoing management (WP3) and ongoing monitoring of the project (WP2) and its partial and overall results will be consulted in detail.

Conference and seminars (final conference, 4 seminars)

The final conference will be held in person at the end of the project and will be a two-day conference with a minimum of 100 participants. The conference will officially close the project, evaluate its outputs and results, and set the stage for successful replication.

Seminars will probably be online (risk prevention) - Participants will be regional and supra-regional actors (nature protection authorities, forest landowners, at least **50 participants**).

Preparation of training materials, promotion, and event arrangements (transport, premises, technical support, accommodation, refreshments, etc.) will be provided by the PR manager.

Replication toolkit (outside of project areas) WP5, T5.3

Workshops for key stakeholders (outside of project areas)

Minimally **2 field 1-days workshops** will be implemented, with a minimum of 30 participants in total from the whole country. Workshops for target stakeholders (forest landowners, regional and superregional stakeholders) will be realised.

Information focal points

A particular member of project team or the local government that has pledged to support the project (see Annex 1 Letters of support) in the Olomouc Regions (NUTS II Central Moravia), in the Moravian-Silesian Region (NUTS II Moravia-Silesia) and in the South Bohemian Region (NUTS II South-West) will have a position of information focal point. In Poland such focal points will be organised, if necessary, especially for the local landowners near sites, where the majority of land is private (Graniczny Meander Odry). Expected results: min. **40 individual consultations**.

Networking with other LIFE and non-LIFE projects

The aim of the whole networking concept is to create a network ("net") of quality and active contacts around you. In total, a minimum of **20 networking trips/events** will be carried out with institutions or projects dealing with relevant topics.

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4. RESOURCES

*Fill in **only** section 4.1 at stage 1 (concept note). Fill in **all sections** at stage 2 (full proposal).*

4.1 Consortium set-up

Consortium cooperation and division of roles (if applicable)

Describe the consortium composition. How will all the partners together bring the necessary expertise?

In what way does each of the participants contribute to the project? Show that each has a valid role and adequate resources to fulfil that role.

For stage 2 (full proposal), fill out the Participant information (annex) with more details on the participants and their project teams (key staff).

The project boasts a robust consortium comprising conservation organizations, regional entities (project site administrators), and organizations actively engaging volunteers. For a comprehensive

understanding of the participants and their key personnel, kindly refer to the annex labelled "Participant Information."

Coordinating organisation:

1 ZO ČSOP ONYX (ONYX)

The Czech Union of Nature Conservationists (CSOP) ONYX, established in 2007, serves as the foundational organization with a mission to safeguard nature, landscapes, and promote ecological education. Its members hold extensive practical knowledge in executing projects related to nature conservation, landscape protection, sustainable development, and environmental education. ONYX's expertise also includes proficiency in managing LIFE programs.

More details can be found at https://www.csoponyx.cz/stranka/125/english .

ONYX is one of the local chapters of the network under the association Czech Union for Nature Conservation, which is a member of IUCN and is a founding member of the UNEP Czech National Committee. CSOP is a civil association of people who are united by an active interest in nature and environmental conservation. Its mission is to protect and restore nature, landscape and the environment, promote environmental education and encourage sustainable living. The range of activities is very wide. Among other things, managing valuable natural sites, conducting biological field research and surveys, striving to preserve the richness of plants and animals in the Czech Republic, working with children and youth and the general public, providing care for injured or otherwise handicapped wildlife, participating in administrative decision-making processes and cooperating in the protection of cultural heritage. The Union has existed since 1979 and its members come from the ranks of professional naturalists, experienced volunteers as well as pure enthusiasts who simply love nature. In around 350 local chapters all over the Czech Republic there are almost 7 thousand adult members and over 2 thousand children organized in groups of Young Environmentalists. CSOP also registers hundreds of individual members.

ONYX is Onyx is coordinating beneficiary of the project LIFE18 NAT/CZ/000832, Conservation of priority grassland habitats of the South Moravian Region, 2019-2025 Organization is an associated beneficiary in project LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001 Optimalization of Natura 2000 sites management delivery in the South Bohemia Region and the territory of South Slovakia – coordinating beneficiary South Bohemia Region. Organization is an associated beneficiary in project LIFE17 NAT/SK/000589, Restoration of sub-Pannonian grassland habitats and species, coordinating beneficiary BROZ (Slovak Republic). Members of ONYX bring a wealth of experience from various LIFE programme projects within the Czech Republic. Their involvement spans projects like LIFE06 NAT/CZ/000121 Morávka (awarded the Best LIFE Project 2011 and received the national ENERGY GLOBE AWARD 2010), LIFE08 INF/CZ/000443 INFOMS (awarded Best LIFE Project 2014), and LIFE14 CAP/CZ/000001 Czech LIFE.

In this project, ONYX takes on the role of lead beneficiary, assuming central responsibilities across all work packages (WP1, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP5). As a coordinating beneficiary, ONYX ensures the seamless and effective execution of the project, fostering a robust project management structure for its successful realization.

Project associated beneficiaries:

Czech Republic

2 Petrklíč Help z.s. (PEH)

Petrklíč Help, z.s. is an educational, community and innovative non-profit organization operating in youth work since 2005. It is in the town of 25 thousand citizens at the border with Poland and close to Slovakia. Management of the organization has 15 years' experience in the field of international projects.

See https://petrklichelp.cz/en/

Our team is highly experienced in working with entrepreneurial, community and ecological issues. We are particularly focused on helping young people to be more power-fuller. We also have a dedicated support team offering advice and guidance on self-development and ecological issues. PEH has international accreditation for sending and receiving volunteers: Quality label – European Commission accreditation number for volunteering is 2021-1-CZ01-ESC50-094581. Within our activities we focus also on local, nationwide activities like: Nationwide school magazine competition, Meetings with travellers, Healthy lifestyle events, Tea degustation, Mongolian yurt tours, Creative recycling workshops, Community gardening, Youth Councils

PEH has experience in international projects:

Incubator for Young People - 2020-2-CZ01-KA205-078643 - a project to involve young people in community projects

Protecting Youth's Mental Health - 2020-2-CZ01-KA205-078597 - a project to address the social inclusion of young people with mental health problems

The Power of Good Will - 2021-1-CZ01-ESC51-VTJ-000037574 - a project to enable foreigners to be volunteer in Czechia

Volunteer Programme - funded by the Residomo Foundation - a project to provide facilities for volunteers from abroad or Czechs young people with disadvantaged backgrounds

“Start4Change” international project which is designed to increase understanding and skills in the use of social environmental enterprise as an effective tool in youth work. The project aim is to increase knowledge and expertise on green social enterprise among youth workers who in turn can cascade their learning into practical initiatives.

PEH as a project associated beneficiary, will be fully responsible for all activities with volunteers in WP3. In addition, WP4 - T4.2 and T4.3 will be under his responsibility. It will also cooperate in WP1 and WP5 activities.

3 Jihočeský kraj - South Bohemia Region (SBR)

The South Bohemia Region (SBR), established in 2001 as one of the Czech Republic's higher territorial self-governing units alongside 13 other regions, plays a crucial role in nature and landscape conservation. With an annual budget of approximately €500 million, SBR administers state functions in this realm. Collaborating closely with the Regional Authority, SBR oversees the management and preservation of over 240 protected areas and 100+ Natura 2000 sites. More than 100 sites benefit from active management efforts, supported by an annual budget of around €400,000 allocated for protected area and species management. Central to SBR's responsibilities is nurturing protected areas and ensuring the upkeep and safeguarding of Natura 2000 sites, including the development of management care plans and expert documentation.

For further details, please visit: https://kraj-jihocesky.cz

As a significant project partner, the South Bohemia Region takes on the full responsibility of activities within WP2 (T2.1, T2.3) and WP3 within the South Bohemian Region, covering CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka, CZ0314044 Opolenec, CZ0310067 Ryšovy, CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory. Active collaboration also extends to WP1, WP3, WP4, and WP5 initiatives. The South Bohemia Region is legally mandated to serve as the conservation manager for all these designated SCI/SAC areas. Additionally, the South Bohemia Region brings extensive experience from international projects, including its role as the coordinating beneficiary in the project LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001 - Optimalization of Natura 2000 sites management delivery in the South Bohemia Region and the territory of South Slovakia. The region also has a strong track record of cooperation with Austria within various INTERREG projects, such as "Adaptation to Climate Change through Green Infrastructure," "Cross border Habitat Network and Management – Connecting Nature," and "Promoting the natural habitat and habitat of the pearl mussel in the Malše river basin."

Through its multifaceted engagement, the South Bohemia Region significantly contributes to the comprehensive success of the project across various work packages (WP1, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP5) and remains dedicated to advancing nature conservation efforts.

4 Krajské školní hospodářství - Regional School Economy (RSE)

Established by a resolution of the South Bohemian Region Council in 2014, the Regional School Economy (RSE) serves as a key contributory organization. It brings with it a wealth of experience garnered from participation in international projects, including its role as an associate beneficiary in the project LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001 - Optimalization of Natura 2000 sites management delivery in the South Bohemia Region and the territory of South Slovakia. The knowledge and resources acquired through this project will be effectively utilized in the subsequent WP3 activities, ensuring the continuity of field worker positions.

The primary mission of the Regional School Economy lies in providing practical training to students in the fields of fisheries and forestry, in line with school educational programs. Notably, it furnishes the Secondary School of Fishing and the Higher Vocational School of Water Management and Ecology in Vodňany with pond facilities and fishing production resources for educational purposes. Similarly, facilities dedicated to forestry instruction are extended to the Higher Vocational School of Forestry and the Bedřich Schwarzenberg Secondary School of

Forestry in Písek. The institution's commitment extends beyond education, encompassing additional activities such as forestry and fisheries management on entrusted properties, accommodation services, conservation efforts in specially protected areas, significant European sites, avian habitats, and other areas protected under the Nature and Landscape Protection Act (including Natura 2000 and LIFE-designated sites). RSE has already acquired essential equipment from project LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001, including a truck, wheeled tractor with a balancer and forestry attachments, and hand chainsaws, which will be utilized in the current project for operational purposes.

In the capacity of an associated beneficiary, the Regional School Economy takes on a pivotal role. It bears the responsibility for WP3 activities within the South Bohemian Region, spanning CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka, CZ0314044 Opolenec, CZ0310067 Ryšovy, CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory. Furthermore, active collaboration extends to WP1, WP4, and WP5 initiatives.

For more comprehensive insights, kindly visit: https://www.kshcb.cz/

Through its multifaceted engagement, the Regional School Economy significantly contributes to the overall project's success and advancement, particularly in the context of nature conservation and landscape management.

5 Moravskoslezský kraj - Moravian-Silesian Region (MSR)

Founded in 2001, the Moravian-Silesian Region (MSR) emerges as a pivotal higher territorial self-governing unit within the Czech Republic, standing shoulder to shoulder with 13 other Czech regions. Functioning within the MSR, the regional office shoulders the vital responsibility of state administration over territories beyond the domain of Protected Landscape Areas. Impressively, the region plays host to 40 sites of European significance, serving as sanctuaries for a total of 19 species of European importance, all under dedicated protection. With a robust commitment to nature conservation, the Moravian-Silesian Region has adeptly steered the implementation and ongoing stewardship of Natura 2000 sites. Notably, the region's undertakings extend towards safeguarding endangered animal species, with a particular focus on initiatives that holistically enhance air quality across the area.

For a comprehensive understanding, please explore: https://www.msk.cz/index-en.html

In its role as a distinguished project partner, the Moravian-Silesian Region takes up a significant mantle of responsibility. This encompasses both WP2 (T2.2) and WP3 activities within its jurisdiction, spanning the areas of CZ0813474 Údolí Moravice, CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj, CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy, CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, and CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry. The collaboration further extends to encompass WP1, WP3, WP4, and WP5 initiatives. Notably, the Moravian-Silesian Region, in accordance with legal mandates, undertakes the pivotal role of nature conservation manager for all the designated SCI/SAC sites. Through its active engagement, the Moravian-Silesian Region significantly bolsters the project's scope and success, reinforcing the overarching mission of nature protection and landscape enhancement.

Poland

6 The Forest Research Institute (pl. Instytut Badawczy Leśnictwa - IBL)

The Forest Research Institute was established in 1930. It carries out comprehensive research for forests and the entire forestry as well as wooded areas and trees.

IBL research, studies and expertise support forest science, forest management and government institutions. The Institute is a partner in the implementation of projects financed by the European Union. It is also the organizer and co-organizer of many international and national meetings, seminars, trainings, workshops and conferences. It conducts nature and forest education for children and young people in the Forest Education Chamber. The IBL library has been collecting forest literature for over 80 years, and its resources are the largest in this part of Europe.

See https://www.ibles.pl/en/home-page/

Associated partner:

Austria

7 Österreichischer Naturschutzbund Landesgruppe Niederösterreich (NSB)

Established in 1960 as an independent nature conservation association, the League of Nature Conservation Lower Austria (Naturschutzbund NÖ, NSB) holds a significant role within the project as an associated partner. NSB's operational domain encompasses Lower Austria, fostering close

collaborations with neighbouring countries such as the Czech Republic and Slovakia through international projects. Guided by a resolute commitment to realizing conservation objectives on land, NSB not only safeguards protected areas in Lower Austria but also actively engages local communities in necessary maintenance efforts. The organization's multifaceted expertise extends to encompass species protection and impactful awareness-raising initiatives, contributing to a holistic conservation approach. The core focus of the project centres on the conservation and restoration of species-rich and endangered forest and non-forest habitats, a mandate aligned with the imperative of the Habitats Directive. Particularly pertinent in the Waldviertel region of Lower Austria, which borders the Czech Republic, the region has grappled with significant bark beetle infestations in recent years. The discourse surrounding the region's future forests, coupled with climate resilience, underscores the crucial role of NSB in shaping the trajectory of nature conservation. With a dedicated commitment to knowledge dissemination, NSB has diligently explored the concept of the 'forest of tomorrow' through annual conferences, delving into topics like peatland forests (91D0*) within the framework of projects like "Connecting Nature" under Interreg.

A key motive driving NSB's engagement is the imperative to harmonize sustainable forest management with the conservation of species-rich woodlands. Leveraging their considerable experience, NSB is poised to play a pivotal role in advancing volunteer engagement within the project. This endeavour will extend beyond borders into the neighbouring Czech Republic under WP3, a strategic move that accentuates NSB's commitment to fostering knowledge exchange among project partners. In its capacity as an associated partner, NSB undertakes a multifaceted role encompassing PR activities, dissemination of results across EU countries, and the replication of project outcomes (WP5). Moreover, NSB's profound experience in habitat upkeep with volunteers serves as the bedrock for facilitating cross-border volunteer initiatives under WP3. This initiative not only enhances the project's outcomes but also underscores NSB's dedication to fostering collaborative learning and sharing among project collaborators. Through its varied contributions, NSB significantly amplifies the project's reach and efficacy, advancing the overarching goal of nature conservation and sustainable landscape management.

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4.2 Project management *(n/a for concept note)*

Project management, quality assurance and monitoring of progress *(n/a for concept note)*

Describe the management structures and decision-making mechanisms within the consortium. Explain how decisions will be taken and how regular and effective communication will be ensured.

Describe the measures and methods planned to ensure good quality, monitoring, planning and control of project implementation.

The project staff will remain employed throughout the entire duration of the project. External subcontractors, suppliers of goods, and services will be selected through public tenders in accordance with the project implementation schedule. Project staffing will encompass the following positions, with their associated responsibilities and job descriptions:

To ensure the successful implementation of the project, it is imperative to establish an effective project management framework. Once EU funding for the application has been approved, the following activities will be carried out:

• Appointment of a Project Manager by the Chairperson of the beneficiary organization.

• Execution of partnership agreements by all collaborating partners.

• Appointment of other key project staff (Coordinators, Site managers, PR manager, etc.).

For the successful execution of the project, an efficient project management framework will be established, ensuring that the appropriate personnel are assigned to each role. This will contribute to the streamlined implementation of the project's objectives and activities. Listed below are the positions, their responsibilities, and job descriptions, along with the abbreviation of the partner and the full-time equivalent (FTE) allocation for each role:

Project manager (ONYX – 1 FTE)

In this pivotal role, the Project Manager oversees a comprehensive range of responsibilities to ensure the successful execution of the project:

- Daily Project Management: Overseeing the day-to-day operations of the project, ensuring

adherence to project plans and tasks.

- Administrative and Financial Control: Maintaining meticulous control over administrative and financial aspects of the project, ensuring resources are allocated effectively.

- Coordination and Communication: Facilitating seamless project progress through efficient coordination of staff and beneficiaries, serving as a central point for reporting to the European Commission, external monitoring teams, and remote workgroups.

- Implementation Oversight: Rigorous oversight of project implementation, including change management, issue tracking, risk assessment, and mitigation.

- Reporting and Planning: Crafting detailed progress, midterm, and final reports for the European Commission, while also preparing project benefits control plans and future stage plans.

- Budget Management: Careful management of the project budget, including the preparation of payment requests.

- Quality Management: Utilizing contemporary knowledge in quality management to optimize project processes, activities, and competencies.

- Training and Event Coordination: Orchestrating training sessions, conferences, and workshops within the project.

- Steering Committee Liaison: Responsibly reporting to the Project Steering Committee and providing updates on project advancements.

- Team Management: Overseeing other project staff and ensuring their alignment with project goals and the Project Manager's directives.

The Project Manager's role is instrumental in driving the project towards success, fostering efficient collaboration among team members, and ensuring the project's smooth progression according to established plans and quality standards.

Financial Manager (ONYX – 0.3 FTE)

An adept financial manager with proven experience in accounting and bookkeeping practices at both the Member State and EU levels will be an integral part of the project team. Throughout the project's duration, this role will be responsible for the comprehensive financial oversight and management of the project.

Key Responsibilities:

- Financial Management: Exercising meticulous control over the project's financial aspects, ensuring adherence to financial regulations and practices.

- Cash Flow Planning: Strategically planning the cash flow to facilitate efficient financial operations within the project.

- Payment Distribution: Overseeing the proper distribution of payments to associated beneficiaries in alignment with project needs.

- Financial Reporting: Preparing accurate and timely financial reports for various stakeholders, including the Project Manager, Steering Committee, Contracting Authority, and the monitoring team.

- Tendering for External Contractors: Managing the process of tendering for external contractors essential to the project's execution.

- Economic Matters: Taking charge of all economic aspects of the project, coordinating with partners' accounting departments, and ensuring compliance with economic guidelines.

- Project Accounting: Ensuring meticulous record-keeping of project-related financial transactions and maintaining a clear overview of the project's financial health.

- Communication and Collaboration: Regularly communicating with relevant stakeholders and partners to ensure seamless financial management and reporting.

With a keen eye for financial details and a robust understanding of financial regulations, the Financial Manager plays a crucial role in maintaining the project's financial integrity, transparency, and adherence to fiscal guidelines throughout the project lifecycle.

Site Manager (RSE – 1 FTE), Site Manager (ONYX – 1 FTE)

As highly skilled Site Managers, these individuals are entrusted with ensuring the seamless

technical execution of specific conservation actions within the project. With a comprehensive understanding of all project sites, they play a pivotal role in overseeing on-site operations, meticulously managing fieldwork, and supervising the implementation of conservation initiatives.

Key Responsibilities:

- Field Operations Leadership: Expertly leading field operations and activities, ensuring that conservation actions are executed according to plan and in alignment with project objectives.

- Technical Expertise: Leveraging their in-depth knowledge of all project sites, they provide invaluable insights to guide decision-making and optimize conservation efforts.

- Supervision of Teams: Serving as supervisors for machine operators and field workers, they ensure a coordinated and efficient team effort in executing on-ground activities.

- Volunteer Work Oversight: Serving as the authoritative figure for volunteer efforts, they provide clear guidance on tasks and procedures, carry out thorough quality checks, and assume responsibility for the work undertaken.

- Project Management Support: Collaborating closely with the Project Manager and Coordinator, they contribute to the overall project management structure by providing technical expertise and insights.

- Reporting and Communication: Maintaining open communication channels with project leadership, they report progress, challenges, and outcomes, contributing to the overall success of the project.

With their comprehensive technical knowledge, leadership skills, and commitment to conservation objectives, the Site Managers play an integral role in ensuring the successful execution of conservation actions, contributing to the overall achievement of project goals.

Science Section Coordinators (ONYX - 1 FTE, IBL – 0.2 FTE, SBR - 0.7 FTE, MSR - 0.7 FTE)

The Science Section Coordinators, distributed across multiple partner organizations, play a pivotal role in overseeing the scientific aspects of the project, spanning various work packages. With their diverse expertise, they ensure the seamless planning, execution, and coordination of activities related to expert studies, restoration management, and monitoring of target species, habitats, and Invasive Alien Species (IAS).

Key Responsibilities:

- Expert Studies and Research: Orchestrating the planning and coordination of expert studies within WP2, these coordinators ensure efficient field research and the subsequent generation of scientifically rigorous reports.

- Restoration Management: Leading the planning and provision of recommendations for restoration management activities within WP3, they contribute to the enhancement of targeted habitats and species.

- Monitoring and Coordination: Overseeing the planning and coordination of monitoring activities related to target species, habitats, and IAS within WP4, they ensure accurate data collection and reporting.

- Collaboration with Experts: Establishing effective communication with external experts involved in WP2 and WP4, they foster collaboration and knowledge exchange to achieve project objectives.

- Reporting and Communication: Regularly reporting progress, findings, and challenges to the project coordinators and project manager, they contribute to informed decision-making and project success.

- Collaboration with Site Manager: Collaborating closely with the Site Manager, they ensure alignment between scientific research and on-ground implementation, maximizing the impact of conservation efforts.

- Project-wide Coordination: As part of the project-wide coordination, they play a crucial role in fostering integration between different sections and ensuring holistic project execution.

With their specialized knowledge, coordination skills, and dedication to scientific excellence, the Science Section Coordinators contribute significantly to the achievement of project goals, maintaining the highest standards of scientific rigor and impact.

Research Experts (IBL – 3.5 FTE)

The Research Experts within IBL form a proficient team dedicated to executing critical field research and contributing to the scientific foundation of the project. With their extensive expertise and collaborative approach, they play a vital role in various work packages, ensuring the generation of valuable insights and comprehensive reports.

Key Responsibilities:

- Field Research: Undertaking field research activities in both WP2 and WP4, these experts gather essential data and observations that serve as the basis for informed decision-making and project outcomes.
- Scientific Reporting: Leveraging their research findings, they meticulously prepare scientifically robust reports within WP2 and WP4, contributing to the dissemination of knowledge and evidence-based recommendations.
- Restoration Management Support: Collaborating with the Science Section Coordinators in WP3, they offer valuable input and data to help formulate effective restoration management recommendations.
- Collaboration with External Experts: Engaging with external experts within WP2 and WP4, they facilitate knowledge exchange, validation of research methodologies, and enrichment of project insights.
- Reporting to Science Section Coordinators: Regularly communicating their progress, findings, and challenges to the Science Section Coordinators, they ensure seamless coordination and alignment of efforts.

Through their dedication to meticulous research, reporting, and collaboration, the Research Experts significantly contribute to the scientific integrity and success of the project. Their collective efforts bolster the project's impact, underpinning the development of evidence-based strategies for conservation and restoration.

Project Coordinator (PEH – 1 FTE)

The role of a Project Coordinator for beneficiary PEH entails overseeing various aspects of the project's life cycle, from its initiation and planning stages through execution, monitoring, reporting, presentation of results, evaluation, and final closure. Project Coordinators play a central role in ensuring that projects are completed on time, within budget, and with all objectives met. They act as the primary link between the project team and higher management, facilitating communication and alignment of efforts to achieve project goals.

Key Responsibilities:

- Project Leadership: Leading the project beneficiary team through all phases of the project, including initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, reporting, presentation of outputs, evaluation, and closure.
- Timely and Financial Planning: Developing a comprehensive time and financial implementation plan for the project to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and project milestones are met.
- Team Management: Assembling, leading, and managing the project team, including defining roles and responsibilities, setting expectations, and promoting a collaborative work environment.
- Work Procedure Coordination: Coordinating work procedures and task dependencies across various project activities to ensure that all aspects of the project are executed in a logical sequence.
- Effective Communication: Managing project communication, both within the team and with external stakeholders, to ensure that everyone is informed, aligned, and motivated for efficient performance.
- Document Management: Maintaining meticulous control over all project documentation, including plans, reports, contracts, and other project-related materials.
- Risk and Opportunity Analysis: Identifying, analysing, and managing project risks and opportunities to mitigate potential issues and capitalize on advantages.
- Change Management: Overseeing any changes that may arise during the project, including scope changes, schedule adjustments, and resource reallocations.
- Schedule Adherence: Ensuring that the project adheres to established work schedules, project deliverables are completed on time, and acceptance criteria are met by relevant stakeholders.

- Reporting: Providing regular project progress reports to both the internal project team and the main project manager to keep all stakeholders informed of the project's status and performance.

Educator (PEH - 0.5 FTE)

The Educator plays a critical role in ensuring the protection of the area while also guaranteeing the successful execution of volunteer work tasks. They report to the Project Manager and Coordinator and collaborate closely with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Key Responsibilities:

- School Outreach: The Educator will visit partner organizations, primarily schools, to inform students, pupils, and educators about the environmental activities being carried out as part of the project.
- Curriculum Development: They will create outlines, curricula, and educational materials for participants.
- Teaching: Conduct environmental activity presentations, lead discussions and practical exercises, and provide feedback to program participants.
- Individual Guidance: Offer personal guidance or mentoring to individuals involved in the programs.
- Material Development: Continuously update and enhance educational materials and methodologies based on feedback and new insights.
- Skill Development: Support the development of relevant skills and competencies among participants, tailored to their areas of study or work.

Volunteer coordinator (PEH - 1 FTE) 2 individuals with half-time employment

The role of a Volunteer Coordinator is instrumental in managing all aspects related to volunteer engagement within a project. This position focuses on planning, organizing, and overseeing volunteer events, ensuring that volunteers are effectively coordinated and supported in their roles. Volunteer Coordinators play a crucial part in building a network of volunteers, organizing their activities, facilitating their transportation to project sites, and ensuring a smooth volunteer experience. They work in close collaboration with the Project Manager, Coordinator for PEH, and the contact person of the NSB beneficiary.

Key Responsibilities:

- Volunteer Engagement: Leading efforts to engage volunteers in project-related activities, including recruitment, onboarding, and retention strategies.
- Event Planning: Planning and organizing volunteer events, ensuring that they align with project goals and schedules.
- Volunteer Coordination: Coordinating the activities of volunteers, assigning tasks, and overseeing their performance to ensure the efficient execution of project-related work.
- Transport and Accompaniment: Arranging transportation for volunteers to project locations, as well as accompanying them to localities, ensuring their safety and well-being during project activities.
- Collaboration: Collaborating closely with the Project Manager, Coordinator, and the designated contact person of the Nature Conservation Organization (NSB) to ensure that volunteer efforts are in sync with project objectives.
- Logistics: Managing the logistics of volunteer events, including the provision of necessary equipment, materials, and resources.
- Training and Support: Providing training, guidance, and support to volunteers to ensure that they are well-prepared for their roles.
- Communication: Maintaining effective communication with volunteers, project staff, and relevant stakeholders to keep everyone informed and aligned.
- Safety and Compliance: Ensuring that all volunteer activities adhere to safety standards and legal compliance requirements.
- Reporting: Providing regular reports on volunteer activities and their impact to the Project Manager and Coordinator PEH.

PR Manager (ONYX - 0.3 FTE) and PR Assistant (PEH - 0.25 FTE)

The PR Manager and PR Assistant form a dynamic duo responsible for the strategic communication and administrative aspects of the project. With their combined expertise, they ensure the project's message reaches the right audience and that administrative tasks are effectively managed. Under the guidance of the Project Manager and Coordinator, the PR Manager and PR Assistant play a pivotal role in ensuring effective communication, administrative efficiency, and successful implementation of the project's communication and dissemination goals.

PR Manager Responsibilities:

- Communication Strategy: Developing and implementing the project's communication strategy, the PR Manager ensures a cohesive and impactful approach to public awareness, dissemination, and replication actions (WP5).
- Coordination: Overseeing all communication-related activities, the PR Manager ensures a coordinated effort to convey the project's goals, achievements, and impact to the relevant stakeholders.
- Public Awareness: Strategically engaging with the public, the PR Manager fosters awareness and understanding of the project's significance, contributing to its overall success.
- Dissemination and Replication: Taking charge of dissemination activities, the PR Manager ensures that project results and insights are effectively shared, facilitating replication and broader adoption of successful practices.
- Reporting: Keeping the Project Manager and Coordinator informed, the PR Manager ensures that communication efforts align with the project's objectives.

PR Assistant Responsibilities:

- Finance and Administration: Managing financial and administrative tasks related to both the project and PR activities, the PR Assistant ensures the efficient handling of financial and administrative obligations within WP1 and WP5.
- Supportive Role: Assisting the PR Manager, the PR Assistant contributes to the execution of the project's communication strategy, ensuring a smooth flow of communication and activities.
- Coordination: Collaborating closely with the PR Manager and other relevant team members, the PR Assistant ensures streamlined coordination of administrative tasks.
- Preparation of PR Materials: Creating various PR materials, including social media posts, website content, and articles for regional publications.
- Press Release Creation: Drafting press releases to communicate project updates and milestones.
- Publicity Monitoring: Keeping track of the project's publicity in both print and online media.
- Stakeholder and Public Communication: Engaging with stakeholders and the wider public to disseminate information about project activities.
- Designing Promotional Items: Designing and producing advertising and promotional items.

Field Workers (ONYX - 4 FTE, RSE - 3 FTE) for a duration of 6.5 years from 1/2026 to 6/2032

Our dedicated team of Field Workers forms the backbone of hands-on implementation for the project. Their technical skills and expertise are instrumental in carrying out restoration actions and tasks within the project's scope. Throughout the project's duration, our skilled and dedicated Field Workers will work tirelessly to bring the restoration actions to life, ensuring the project's success on the field.

Field Worker - Machine Operator (ONYX - 2 FTE, RSE - 1 FTE):

- Machinery Operation Specialist: Proficient in operating machinery procured as part of the project, these Field Workers possess advanced skills in handling equipment. Additionally, they are well-versed in operating machinery acquired through the South LIFE project, contributing to our new project's efficiency.
- Collaboration with Site Manager: Working closely with the Site Manager, they ensure that machine-operated tasks are effectively executed in coordination with other project activities.
- Responsibilities: Their responsibilities are aligned with the Site Manager and Coordinators' goals, particularly within WP3, where they play a key role in realizing restoration actions.

Field Worker (ONYX - 2 FTE, RSE - 2 FTE):

- Technical Skill Set: Equipped with technical prowess, these Field Workers bring invaluable experience in executing tasks relevant to the project's objectives.
- Manual Execution: With a focus on manual execution, they carry out concrete works and tasks integral to restoration actions, contributing to the project's success on the ground.
- Equipment and Machinery: Responsible for the operation and maintenance of equipment and machinery, they ensure the tools necessary for project implementation are well-managed.
- Collaboration with Site Manager: Collaborating with the Site Manager and Coordinators, they ensure tasks are aligned with project goals and are efficiently executed within WP3.

Project Steering Committee

The Project Steering Committee will play a pivotal role in overseeing the comprehensive project implementation. Comprising representatives from all project beneficiaries and the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, the Steering Committee will be established at the project's outset. An annual meeting schedule is planned, during which crucial decisions, matters related to scientific, managerial, and financial aspects of the project, and support in integrating nature conservation policies into relevant policies will be addressed.

The Steering Committee will hold its first and concluding meetings in person, with one meeting taking place in the Czech Republic and the other in Poland. To optimize cost efficiency and promote eco-friendly practices, the remaining meetings will be conducted online. This approach aligns with the project's commitment to minimizing expenses and contributing to environmental sustainability.

To ensure seamless project management, a contingency plan will encompass project implementation, the project management framework, action execution, and financial management. This plan, collaboratively developed by the Project Manager and Coordinators, will be shared with the project staff and updated annually. Additionally, each beneficiary will maintain a contingency plan specific to their roles, personnel structure, financial management, equipment utilization, and overall project actions. These individual plans, created by the Coordinators and Managers of respective beneficiaries, will undergo quarterly updates.

Maintaining control over project staff and facilitating partnership coordination is of utmost importance. The Project Manager will exercise direct oversight over staff employed or contracted by the associated beneficiaries. Coordinators, reporting to the Project Manager, will manage the staff of beneficiaries. Open channels of communication, including personal meetings, phone calls, emails, and mail, will be established to ensure consistent contact and supervision.

The monitoring strategy devised to evaluate project progress is multi-faceted:

- Comprehensive project reports from beneficiaries, detailing quantifiable advancements in expected outcomes and project performance indicators.
- External monitoring visits conducted by an expert team.
- A predefined schedule of deadlines, milestones, and deliverables for specific project activities.
- The Steering Committee, serving as an effective monitoring mechanism.
- Continuous communication between the Coordinating Beneficiary and other project staff.

For effective project management, all necessary equipment will be procured, and travel costs will be covered. Equipment acquisition and the selection of external providers will adhere to standard tendering procedures in accordance with national regulations. Green public procurement practices will be prioritized whenever feasible and rational.

4.3 Green management *(n/a for concept note)*

Green management *(n/a for concept note)*

Describe the measures proposed to reduce the environmental impact of your project, for example through the use of green procurement, environmental management systems, etc.

Green Management Approach:

The mission of ONYX is rooted in the protection of nature, landscapes, and environmental education. Our commitment to minimizing the project's negative impact on the environment is unwavering. We are dedicated to implementing green procurement practices (both national and

European as well) and employing environmental management systems to their fullest extent, all while striving to reduce our carbon footprint. This ethos resonates deeply with our project partners, who share a similar dedication. Adherence to green management principles will constitute an integral aspect of the project manager's responsibilities. The project manager will conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation in this regard and provide regular reports to the Steering Committee.

Environmental Management System:

Our strategy prioritizes intangible, electronic communication methods such as radio and local television, reducing the need for printed materials. When necessary, we use recycled paper or paper with recognized eco-labels, like FSC, indicating sustainably sourced forest materials. Our focus is on products that are easily recyclable or compostable, with a preference for those made from fewer materials. We opt for durable products, preferably with refillable options, minimizing waste (e.g., pens, markers). We favour products free from organic solvents and prioritize dry erase markers as a more eco-conscious alternative to traditional flipchart markers. Printer software functionalities, like spell checks and print previews, help curtail unnecessary paper consumption. In cases of minor errors, manual corrections are made, accompanied by a signature, indicating our commitment to reducing paper waste. Duplex printing and copying, as well as printing on one side of one-sided printed paper for note-taking and drafts, demonstrate our efficiency-oriented paper practices. Unnecessary decorative items like painted or plastic-coated paper clips are avoided.

We actively assess the necessity of in-person meetings, encouraging digital information exchange across all project management levels. Recycled paper is our choice for printing materials, and we emphasize digital document sharing. Our focus extends to sustainable transportation, favouring public transport and electric hybrid vehicles, especially for reaching remote SCI/SAC locations with limited public transportation options.

Water management and circular economy principles guide our actions, particularly in purchasing and material treatment. We prioritize local food for refreshments during educational and presentation activities, reinforcing our commitment to sustainability. Adherence to EMS principles will constitute an integral aspect of the project manager's responsibilities. The project manager will conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation in this regard and provide regular reports to the Steering Committee.

Green Public Procurement:

We adhere to green public procurement guidelines at the national level in both the Czech Republic and Poland. These principles are integral to our national legislation. Regional contractors with eco-friendly practices are our preference, and machinery and vehicle procurement take emission limits into account. Local products/providers and promotional items made from recycled or recyclable materials are prioritized. Additionally, we seek sheltered workshops as producers, aligning with our overarching goals.

Outsourced services align with our sustainability principles, with potential suppliers expected to operate sustainably and adhere to circular economy standards, including recycling and eco-friendly transportation methods.

Continuous Monitoring:

Our dedication to environmentally friendly practices is continuously monitored by the project manager, partner coordinators, financial manager, and economist. This ensures that our green management approach is upheld throughout the project's lifecycle.

#§PRJ-MGT-PM§# #@FIN-MGT-FM@#

4.4 Budget (n/a for concept note)

Estimated budget — Resources *(n/a for concept note)*
See detailed budget table/calculator (annex 1 to Part B).

#§FIN-MGT-FM§# #@RSK-MGT-RM@#

5. OTHER

5.1 Ethics

Ethics
Not applicable

#§ETH-ICS-EI§# #@SEC-URI-SU@#

5.2 Security

Security
Not applicable

#§SEC-URI-SU§# #@DEC-LAR-DL@#

6. DECLARATIONS

Higher funding rate *(for Nature and Biodiversity; n/a for concept note)*	**YES/NO**
Do you fulfil the conditions set out in the Call document for a higher funding rate (75% or 67%)? If YES, explain and provide details.	**NO**

We confirm our willingness to implement the project with a 60% level of support.

Double funding *(n/a for concept note)*	
Information concerning other EU grants for this project ⚠ *Please note that there is a strict prohibition of double funding from the EU budget (except under EU Synergies actions).*	**YES/NO**
We confirm that to our best knowledge neither the project as a whole nor any parts of it have benefitted from any other EU grant *(including EU funding managed by authorities in EU Member States or other funding bodies, e.g. EU Regional Funds, EU Agricultural Funds, etc.)*. If NO, explain and provide details.	YES
We confirm that to our best knowledge neither the project as a whole nor any parts of it are (nor will be) submitted for any other EU grant *(including EU funding managed by authorities in EU Member States or other funding bodies, e.g. EU Regional Funds, EU Agricultural Funds, etc.)*. If NO, explain and provide details.	YES

Financial support to third parties (if applicable) *(n/a for concept note)*
If in your project the maximum amount per third party will be more than the threshold amount set in the Call document, justify and explain why the higher amount is necessary in order to fulfil your project's objectives.
Not relevant for this project.

Seal of Excellence (if applicable) *(n/a for concept note)*	
If provided in the Call document, proposals that pass the evaluation but are below the budget threshold (i.e. pass the minimum thresholds but are not ranked high enough to receive funding) will be awarded a Seal of Excellence. *In this context we may be asked to share information about your proposal with other EU or national funding bodies.*	
Do you agree that your proposal (including proposal data and documentation) is shared with other EU and national funding bodies to find funding under other schemes?	*[*YES*]*

#§DEC-LAR-DL§#

ANNEXES

LIST OF ANNEXES

- Letter of support from The Forests of the Czech Republic s.p., dated 25.03.2025
- Letter of support from The State Forests National Forest Holding, Poland, dated 27.03.2025
- Letter of support from The Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, dated 27.03.2025
- Confirmation of SDF update from The Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, dated 29.04.2025
- Confirmation of SDF update from The General Directorate for Environmental Protection, Poland, dated 12.05.2025

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	19.09.2024	Initial version
2.0	31.03.2025	Final version *This document has been revised according to the guidelines in the document Guidance Note, LIFE 2024 Standard Action Project Grant Agreement Preparation, Task 1.1., and further according to the following points of the revision in the document Technical and Budgetary GAP Document:* • *Point 2: In the Technical Description (Part B) under sections 1.2 – Specific objectives and 2.1 - Impacts, the concrete expected results for each of the priority habitats have been added by introducing a new habitat-specific project KPI separately for each priority habitat type, concerning the changes in their area.* • *Point 10: In Part B, Section 3, the project timetable has been revised.* • *Point 12: In Section 3.4 of Part B (now Section 3.3 after renumbering), more details have been added regarding the monitoring methods to be implemented to monitor the project's impacts on the targeted invertebrates, particularly the saproxylic species.* • *Point 14: This document has been checked and revised to ensure that the acronyms of the beneficiaries are consistent throughout the document.* • *Point 17: The co-financing rate was reduced from 67% to 60%. In Section 6, we confirm our willingness to implement the project with a 60% level of support.* • *Point 22: The staffing for the IBL partner has been adjusted as follows: Science Section Coordinator (IBL - 0.2 FTE) and Research Experts (IBL - 3.5 FTE). This adjustment has been reflected in Section 4.2.* *Other changes as required by the revision will be made in the text of individual WPs, or in Part C.*

LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY

Acronym: LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest

Proposal title:

Model management of forest habitats and species bound to forest habitats and trees

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Name and legal status: **Lesy České republiky, s.p.**

Full address: Přemyslova 1106/19, 500 08 Hradec Králové

Tel: [redacted]

E-mail:

Contact person (name and function): Ing. Ivan Klik, entrusted with the management of the forest and water management section.

Please specify whether, why and how you will support this project:

As a manager of land owned by the Czech Republic in the areas listed below, he supports the LIFE project "Model management of forest habitats and species bound to forest habitats and trees".

Project areas in our ownership (contact person for LČR):

CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka, CZ0310067 Ryšovy, CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, - OŘ Jižní Čechy LČR s.p., Ing. Jana Souchová, email: [redacted]

CZ0314044 Opolenec- LZ Boubín LČR s.p., email:Ing. Lucie Mánková, [redacted]

CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy, CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj – OR severní Morava LČR s.p., Ing. Václav Langer, email: [redacted]

We find the project very useful; we are solving similar problems at our sites. We are interested in the restoration and protection of valuable habitats and welcome the project activities. It will be our pleasure to visit the project sites during implementation to see what progress has been made and how the proposed practices are working in practice.

As regional policy makers, we will incorporate useful project outputs into our documents and we will be happy to use the results for our own use and to disseminate them to other organisations for their benefit. We are happy to support the initiation of international cooperation between conservation organisations, which we will initiate within our possibilities. We believe that the project will bring new knowledge between regions of other EU Member States.

We are ready to support the project by informing the public through distribution of information materials, participation in project meetings and conferences, and possible further cooperation as needed.

We will be happy to be in contact with the project team during the whole implementation period.

Uveďte, zda, proč a jak tento projekt podpoříte:

Jako správce pozemků ve vlastnictví České republiky v níže uvedených územích podporuje projekt LIFE "Modelový management lesních stanovišť a druhů vázaných na lesní stanoviště a dřeviny".

Projektová území v našem vlastnictví (kontaktní osoby za LČR, s.p.):

CZ0314021 Borkovická blata, CZ0310001 Fabián – Homolka, CZ0310067 Ryšovy, CZ0310020 Velký a Malý Kamýk, CZ0314126 Hlubocké obory, - OŘ Jižní Čechy LČR s.p., Ing. Jana Souchová, email: [redacted] t: +420[redacted]

CZ0314044 Opolenec- LZ Boubín LČR s.p., email:I ng. Lucie Mánková, [redacted] +420[redacted]

CZ0813457 Niva Olše – Věřňovice, CZ0814093 Hraniční meandry Odry, CZ0713827 Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex, CZ0810035 Kojetínské vrchy, CZ0810423 Hněvošický háj – OR severní Morava LČR s.p., Ing. Václav Langer, email: v[redacted]

Projekt nám přijde velmi potřebný, podobné problémy řešíme i na našich stanovištích. Máme zájem na obnově a ochraně cenných biotopů a vítáme projektové aktivity. Bude pro nás potěšením v průběhu realizace navštívit projektové lokality, abychom zjistili, jakého pokroku bylo dosaženo a jak navržené postupy fungují v praxi.

Jako tvůrci regionální politiky budeme užitečné projektové výstupy zapracovávat do našich dokumentů a jeho výsledky rádi využijeme pro naši potřebu a předáme k využití dalším organizacím. Rádi podpoříme zahájení mezinárodní spolupráce mezi organizacemi na ochranu přírody, kterou budeme v rámci našich možností iniciovat. Věříme, že projekt přinese nové poznatky mezi regiony dalších členských států EU.

Jsme připraveni projekt podpořit informováním veřejnosti prostřednictvím distribuce informačních materiálů, účastí na projektových setkáních a konferencích, případnou další spolupráci podle potřeby.

S projektovým týmem budeme rádi v kontaktu po celou dobu realizace.

V Hradci Králové dne:25.3.2025

[redacted]

Lesy České republiky, s.p. [105]
Přemyslova 1106/19, Nový Hradec Králové
500 08 Hradec Králové
IČ: 42196451, DIČ: CZ42196451

Ing. Ivan Klik

pověřen řízením úseku

lesního a vodního hospodářství

LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY

Acronym: LIFE Model Forest
Title: Model management of forest habitats and species bound to forest habitats and trees LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest

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Name and legal status: The State Forests National Forest Holding
Full address: Grójecka 127, 02-124 Warsaw, Poland
Phone: [redacted]
E-mail: [redacted]
Contact person (name and function): Witold Koss, Director General of the State Forests

Please specify whether, why and how you will support this project:

The State Forest National Forest Holding supports the LIFE project Model management of forest habitats and species bound to forest habitats and trees „LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest".

We have been working with the applicant of the project for a long time within LIFE and other projects and have excellent working and personal relations.
We find the project very interesting and useful. We are solving similar problems in several locations in the forests managed by the State Forest Holding. We are very committed to the restoration and protection of valuable habitats and welcome the project activities. It will be a pleasure to support and follow the implementation of the project activities to see what progress has been made and how the proposed procedures work in practice. We believe that the project will bring new insights between the regions of the other EU Member States.

We are willing to support the project by providing access to the sites selected for the project and remaining in our gestion, as well as attending project meetings and conferences and collaborating further as required.

We will be happy to be in contact with the project team during the whole implementation period.

At (location): Warsaw, Poland
On (date): March 27, 2025
Name and status of signatory: Witold Koss, Director General of the State Forests

Witold Jan Koss
Elektronicznie podpisany przez Witold Jan Koss
Data: 2025.03.28 14:36:28 +01'00'

DECLARATION OF SUPPORT FROM THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY

(Letter of support)

Name and legal status: Ministerstvo životního prostředí České republiky / Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic

Full address: Praha 10, Vršovická 65, 100 10, Czech Republic

Tel: [redacted] **E-mail:** [redacted]

Contact person (name and function): Ing. Jan Šíma, director (Department of Species Protection and Implementation of International Commitments)

Please specify whether, why and how you will support project Model management of forest habitats and species bound to forest habitats and trees (LIFE ModelForest):

The Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic (MoE) is the central state administrative authority in nature and landscape protection. The Department of Species Protection and Implementation of International Commitments is responsible inter alia for species protection and implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directive in the Czech Republic. The MoE endorses and expresses its support of the proposed project " Model care for forest habitats and species associated with forest habitats and trees", which focuses on improving the status of the habitat types and species listed in Annex I and II of Habitats Directive in SCI/SACs in the Czech Republic.
The project is fully in line with the Czech environmental legislation and meets priorities of the MoE in the field of nature and biodiversity conservation. The project is very beneficial from the national point of the view. It will contribute to fulfilment of several objectives from the National Biodiversity Strategy of the Czech Republic and State programme on Nature and Landscape Conservation. The project will also contribute to the fulfilment of the goals of the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.
This project is currently in the revision phase of Grant Agreement preparation.

Signature and date: 27. 3. 2025 [redacted]

Name and status of signatory: Ing. Jan Šíma, director, Department of Species Protection and Implementation of International Commitments

Ministry of the Environment
of the Czech Republic

Department of Protected Areas
Vršovická 1442/65
100 10 Praha 10

Prague 29th April 2025
Ev. No.: MZP/2025/620/1853
Processed by: Pavla Klabanová
Tel.: [redacted]
E-ma[redacted]

Mr. Marek Fügner
ZO ČSOP ONYX
Panská 363/9,
Brno-město,
602 00 Brno

Affirmation regarding the potential update of the SDF in connection with the LIFE Model Forest - amendment

Dear Mr. Fügner,

the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic (MoE) endorses and expresses its support to the proposed project "LIFE Model Forest" (LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest), which focuses on improving site-specific conservation management and structural measures to restore natural habitat types and habitats of an endangered species.

The MoE is the central state administrative authority in nature and landscape protection. The Department of Protected Areas is responsible inter alia for implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directive in the Czech Republic and for updating Standard Data Forms (SDF) for Natura 2000 sites.

All data obtained from the monitoring activities of the Czech project sites must be transferred to the Species Occurrence Database of the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic (NCA). The NCA will thus obtain high-quality data on the occurrence and abundance of important species of plants and animals at the project sites. And in that case, it will be possible to use the data obtained from the project for a potential update of the SDFs. The Species Occurrence Database is also available to nature protection authorities as well as the public, so the data could be further used for the subsequent management of the area and the administration.

The MoE will assess the data obtained within the project and use it to update the SDFs, if compliant with the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2806 of 15 December 2023 concerning a site information format for Natura 2000 sites. Relevant SDFs will be updated before the end of the project's duration.

Best regards,

Petr Havel
Digitálně podepsal Petr Havel
Datum: 2025.04.29 14:03:21 +02'00'

Director of Department of Protected Areas
Petr Havel

GENERALNY DYREKTOR OCHRONY ŚRODOWISKA

Piotr Otawski

Warszawa, 12 maja 2025 r.

DZP-WP.080.1.2025.MC.3

Ms. prof. dr hab. Dorota Dobrowolska
Deputy Director for Research and Science
Forest Research Institute

The General Directorate for Environmental Protection supports the LIFE project "Model management of forest habitats and species bound to forest habitats and trees" (LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest).

We have experience in cooperation in the implementation of various projects with the applicant and we have very good working and personal relations.

We find the project very interesting and useful. We are very committed to the restoration and protection of valuable habitats and welcome the project activities. It will be a pleasure to support and follow the implementation of the project activities to see what progress has been made and how the proposed procedures work in practice. We believe that the project will bring new insights between the regions of the other EU Member States. As the entity responsible for updating the Standard Data Forms (SDF) for Natura 2000 areas, we confirm that the data obtained during the project will be verified and, if substantive validity is found, used to update the SDF for the sites covered by the project. Any possible and appropriate changes to the SDF will be included before the end of the project.

We are willing to support the project by providing the necessary permits for activities within the sites, as well as attending project meetings and conferences and collaborating further as required.

We look forward to staying in contact with the project team throughout the implementation period.

on behalf of the General Director for Environmental Protection

Anna Ronikier-Dolańska
Zastępca Generalnego Dyrektora Ochrony Środowiska
/ – dokument podpisany elektronicznie – /

Detailed Budget Table

[LIFE Model Forest]

Important:
You may add rows but no additional tabs. This may result in your proposal being considered inadmissible.
Please ensure that the file can be printed on a format of 1 page wide (number of pages depending on the number of participants).
Please make sure that the figures in this table are consistent with the total budget provided in part A section 3 of the application.
In case of inconsistencies, part A will prevail.

Staff effort allocation

Fill in the effort per work package and Beneficiary/Affiliated Entity.
Please indicate the number of person-months over the whole duration of the planned work.
Adapt the columns to the number of work packages in your proposal.
Identify the work-package leader for each work package by showing the relevant person-month figure in bold.

Participant Number/Short Name	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	WPx…	Total
1. ONYX	101	21	478	31	34			**665**
2. PEH	42	42	264	92	42			**482**
3. SBR	29	15	0	15	0			**59**
4. RSE	0	0	318	0	0			**318**
5. MSR	29	15	0	15	0			**59**
6. IBL	31	93	62	93	31			**311**
7. NSB	0	0	0	0	0			**0**
8.								**0**
9.								**0**
10.								**0**
Total person-months	**233**	**186**	**1123**	**246**	**107**	**0**	**0**	**1894**

Personnel costs

Present your estimated "Personnel costs" split into 3 categories as per the table below. If you do not have any personnel costs falling under "A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries" or "A.5 Volunteers", all personnel costs should be budgeted under "A1. Employees (or equivalent); A2. Natural persons under direct contract and A3. Seconded Persons".

For A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries: please note that as per Annex 2a of the LIFE General Model Grant Agreement (MGA), a unit cost is applied to this cost category. The units are the days spent working on the action (rounded up to the nearest half-day) and the amount per unit (daily rate) is calculated according to the following formula: {EUR 5 080 / 18 days = EUR 282,22 per day} multiplied by {country-specific correction coefficient of the country where the beneficiary is established}
Note that the country specific correction coefficient to use is the one applied for the Marie Sklodoska-Curie Actions (MSCA). Yearly rates are published in the Horizon Europe Work Programme – Marie Sklodowksa-Curie Actions under the funding and tender portal Reference Documents (work programme and call documents section), available at https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/reference-documents;programCode=HORIZON.

For A.5 Volunteer Costs: a unit cost is also applied to this cost category. The units are the days spent working on the action (rounded up to the nearest half-day) and the amount per unit (daily rate) is a country specific rate of the country where the beneficiary is established. Country specific rates to apply can be found in the LIFE MGA on pages 83 & 84.

Participant Number/Short Name	Country	Number of person months (staff effort per beneficiary)	Average monthly salary rate	A1. Employees (or equivalent); A2. Natural persons under direct contract and A3. Seconded Persons (costs)	A.4 SME owners and natural person (sole trader) beneficiaries (Unit costs in €)	Subtotal personnel costs without volunteers (A1+A2+A3+A4) - must be the same as in part A section 3	A.5 Volunteers (Unit costs) must be the same as in part A section 3	Total Personnel costs
1. ONYX	CZ	665	2 570 €	1 638 730 €		**1 638 730 €**	70 200 €	**1 708 930 €**
2. PEH	CZ	482	1 821 €	526 750 €		**526 750 €**	351 000 €	**877 750 €**
3. SBR	CZ	59	2 866 €	168 560 €		**168 560 €**		**168 560 €**
4. RSE	CZ	318	2 379 €	756 800 €		**756 800 €**		**756 800 €**
5. MSR	CZ	59	2 866 €	168 560 €		**168 560 €**		**168 560 €**
6. IBL	PL	311	4 712 €	1 465 583 €		**1 465 583 €**		**1 465 583 €**
7. NSB	A	0	#DĚLENÍ_NULOU!			**0 €**		**0 €**
8.		0	#DĚLENÍ_NULOU!			**0 €**		**0 €**
9.		0	#DĚLENÍ_NULOU!			**0 €**		**0 €**
10.		0	#DĚLENÍ_NULOU!			**0 €**		**0 €**
Total		**0**		**4 724 983 €**	**0 €**	**4 724 983 €**	**421 200 €**	**5 146 183 €**

Subcontracting

Give details on subcontracted action tasks (if any) and explain the reasons why (as opposed to direct implementation by the participants).
Subcontracting — Subcontracting means the implementation of action tasks, i.e. specific tasks which are part of the action and are described in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement.
Note: Subcontracting concerns the outsourcing of a part of the action to a party outside the Consortium. It is not simply about purchasing goods or services. We normally expect the participants to have sufficient operational capacity to implement the project activities themselves. Sub-contracting should therefore be exceptional.
Include only subcontracts that comply with the rules (i.e. best value for money and no conflict of interest; coordinator tasks can normally not be subcontracted).

Participant Number/Short Name	Subcontract Description	Cost (€)	WP	Justification (Why is subcontracting necessary?)
	Total estimated costs	**0 €**		
If subcontracting for the entire project goes beyond 30% of the total eligible costs, give specific reasons.	Insert text			

Other direct costs

Please complete the table below for each participant. If required add further tables at the end of this work sheet (one per participant).
Please ensure that sufficient details are provided in part B. For major cost items add lines below, in order to provide a detailed breakdown within one cost category.

1 ONYX	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence	42 000 €	WP1-5, Travel and subsistence expenses for project staff (500€ x 84 Months)
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)	320 892 €	WP3, 4X4 150PS Tractor with forestry attachment including accessories - this machine will be used for the management of WP3 throughout the project and beyond. A more detailed justification of the effectiveness of the acquisition of the machine can be found in the annex to the application 'Detailed budget justification'.
	355 500 €	WP3,Three-sided 6x6 35 t tipper truck with container carrier, hydraulic arm and 30 t trailer - this machine will be used for the whole duration of the project and after its completion for the implementation of the management within WP3. It will transport the tractor and its accessories and materials for the implementation of the management. A more detailed justification of the effectiveness of the acquisition of the machine can be found in the annex to the application 'Detailed Budget Justification'.
	59 800 €	WP3, Pick up, 4x4, vehicle for transporting site manager and field staff to all project sites
	14 500 €	WP3, Pick up trailer for the transport of small equipment and small materials
Other goods, works and services	251 433 €	WP3, Operating costs of machines and company vehicles(fuel, oil., etc.)
	80 287 €	WP3, Machine and company vehicle overheads (insurance, servicing, etc.)
	38 400 €	WP3, Rental of space for parking and servicing of machines
	60 962 €	WP3, Material for fencing
	141 654 €	WP3, Seedlings for planting native tree species
	92 484 €	WP3, Material for individual protection of seedlings
	19 010 €	WP3, Material for the eradication of invasive species
	30 000 €	Project audit
	380 000 €	WP3, Maintenance or restoration of small aquatic pools of at least 20 ha
	7 800 €	Website, social networks
	32 000 €	PR services - Promotion in media, film
	20 000 €	PR services - Noticeboards
	55 000 €	PR services - Printed materials, promotional items
	20 000 €	PR services - Theatre performances
	16 000 €	PR services - Field workshops
	4 000 €	PR services - Conferences and seminars
	5 000 €	PR services - Workshops for key stakeholders
	4 000 €	PR services - Final conference
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	**2 050 722 €**	

2 PEH	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence	16 800 €	WP1-5, Travel costs for team staff for partner meetings, fieldwork and educational activities in schools (200€ x 84 Months)
	29 520 €	Fuel for the rented van for 6 years (approx. 720 trips by van or 360 by minibus) = 41 eur per trip (average) x 720 = 29 520 EUR
	51 840 €	Accommodation and catering for volunteers = 18 volunteer x 60 days per year x 6 years x 8 eur per one = 51 840 eur
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)		
Other goods, works and services	43 200 €	Rental of a van for volunteers - rental of two vans, always 9 and 9 persons (two van or one minibus), average costs per day 60 EUR (120 minibus), 60 working day per volunteers x 6 years = 120 EUR x 360 days = 43 200 eur. Hiring a van is cheaper than buying and maintaining it.
	18 000 €	PR services - Excursions for local schools and public, training of teachers
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	**159 360 €**	

3 SBR	Cost (€)	Justification

Travel & subsistence	16 800 €	WP1-5, Travel and subsistence expenses for project staff (200€ x 84 Months)
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)	11 000 €	WP3, 19 m working platform for the implementation of tree management. The platform will extend the machinery equipment of SBR acquired within the LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001 CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE project. During the works within the above mentioned project it was found that this type of platform is a missing link for even better implementation of management.
Other goods, works and services	75 000 €	Expert studies and monitoring in SBR
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	**102 800 €**	

4 RSE	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence	16 800 €	WP1-5, Travel and subsistence expenses for project staff (200€ x 84 Month)
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)		
Other goods, works and services	115 000 €	WP3, Operating costs of machines and company vehicles (fuel, oil., etc.) Operation of the machines purchased from the LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001 project
	45 350 €	WP3, Machine and company vehicle overheads (insurance, servicing, etc.) Operation of the machines purchased from the LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001 project
	35 419 €	WP3, Seedlings for planting native tree species
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	**212 569 €**	

5 MSR	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence	16 800 €	WP1-5, Travel and subsistence expenses for project staff (200€ x 84 Months)
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)		
Other goods, works and services		
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	**16 800 €**	

6 IBL	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence	63 000 €	WP1-5, Travelling connected with fiels work (expert studies, monitoring) (750€ x 84 Months)
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)	20 889 €	WP2, WP4, equipment for field research - expert studies, monitoring (2 cameras with macro lenses, 5 tablets with numerical map software)
Other goods, works and services	89 062 €	Expert studies and monitoring in PL and MSR, OLR
	290 520 €	Forest and technical work
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	**463 471 €**	

Proposal ID	Call for Proposal	Topic	Type of Action
SEP-211094779	LIFE-2024-SAP-NAT	LIFE-2024-SAP-NAT-NATURE	LIFE-PJG

LIFE Programme – Application Forms (Part C – KPI)

Horizontal KPIs for all LIFE applicants (Mandatory to report on all the KPIs of this section).

Innovation

Is your project proposal developing, demonstrating and promoting innovative techniques and approaches?

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

Governance

Is your project proposal improving governance through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society?

- ( ) Yes
- (●) No

Plans & strategies

Is you project proposal implementing key plans or strategies?

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

Catalytic effect - Financial

Will your project trigger additional investments?

- ( ) Yes
- (●) No

Catalytic effect - Spatial

Will the results of your project be replicated beyond its intended geographical scope?

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

Catalytic effect - Thematic

Will the results of your project be replicated (transferred) beyond its intended thematic scope?

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

Catalytic effect - Societal

Will your project :

a) Contribute to the development of new or existing national legislation, policies, regulations, incentives and voluntary commitments?

b) Achieve a step-change in more effective compliance with and enforcement of Union environmental and climate legislation and/or in policy implementation?

c) Achieve a step-change in awareness and support of environmental and climate matters?

d) Establish a new macroregional or national model of cooperation (networking)?

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

Rio markers for climate, biodiversity and air quality

Please indicate if your proposal:

• Has climate change/ biodiversity/ air quality as their primary objective

• Has climate change/ biodiversity/ air quality as their secondary objective and provide substantial contributions to these objectives

• Does not contribute significantly to climate change/ biodiversity/ air quality

Climate change

Secondary Objective

Biodiversity

Primary Objective

Air quality

Secondary Objective

LIFE Programme - Context selection

Please select the EU Member State(s) or/and Associated Countries (if any) or/and potential Associated Countries (if any) that best describe the geographical context of your project proposal, i.e. the area(s) of work or/and area(s) of impact.

Please select the type of country you wish to add

◉ EU Member States
○ Associated Countries
○ To Be Associated Countries

Czechia(CZ)

Please select the EU Member State(s) or/and Associated Countries (if any) or/and potential Associated Countries (if any) that best describe the geographical context of your project proposal, i.e. the area(s) of work or/and area(s) of impact.

Please select the type of country you wish to add

◉ EU Member States
○ Associated Countries
○ To Be Associated Countries

Poland(PL)

Please select the EU Member State(s) or/and Associated Countries (if any) or/and potential Associated Countries (if any) that best describe the geographical context of your project proposal, i.e. the area(s) of work or/and area(s) of impact.

Please select the type of country you wish to add

◉ EU Member States
○ Associated Countries
○ To Be Associated Countries

Austria(AT)

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0314021: Borkovická blata

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0310001: Fabián - Homolka

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0314044: Opolenec

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0310067: Ryšovy

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0310020: Velký a Malý Kamýk

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0314126: Hlubocké obory

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0813457: Niva Olše - Věřňovice

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0814093: Hraniční meandry Odry

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0813474: Údolí Moravice

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0714772: Údolí Bystřice

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0810423: Hněvošický háj

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0810035: Kojetínské vrchy

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Czechia	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

CZ0713827: Stará Červená Voda - lesní komplex

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Poland	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

PLH020016: Góry Bialskie i Grupa Śnieżnika

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Poland	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

PLH240005: Beskid Śląski

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Poland	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

PLH160004: Ostoja Sławniowicko-Burgrabicka

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Poland	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

PLH160007: Góry Opawskie

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Poland	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

PLH240013: Graniczny Meander Odry

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Poland	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

PLH160018: Rozumicki Las

If relevant, please select the Natura 2000 sites that your project will be addressing.

EU Country	Typology
Poland	SCI: Sites of Community Importance

Natura 2000 sites

PLH240001: Cieszyńskie Źródła Tufowe

LIFE Programme - Annex II - Section 2 - Specific KPIs - (Please report on KPIs you consider relevant).

Please select the relevant indicators for your project. For each selected indicator please provide any required values and comments. Please note that if you deselect an indicator, all values entered will be lost.

☐ Air quality	☑ Biodiversity (Invasive Alien Species)	☑ Biodiversity (habitats)
☑ Biodiversity (number of Species)	☐ C2M projects	☐ Chemicals (environment)
☐ Chemicals (humans)	☐ Climate area vulnerability reduction	☐ Climate vulnerability (humans)
☐ Employment	☐ Energy savings	☐ GHG emissions
☐ GHG sequestration	☐ Investments and Financing	☐ Noise
☑ Other project specific KPIs	☐ Renewable energy	☐ Resource efficiency
☐ Soil quality	☐ Waste management	☐ Water efficiency
☐ Water quality		

Biodiversity (habitats)

Area of habitats where loss of biodiversity is being halted and reversed

The start-value is pre-set to 0. In the end-value please provide an estimate of the area of habitats where loss of biodiversity is being halted and reversed due to your project, at project-end. The end-value is expected to be higher than the start-value, demonstrating an increase in the area positively affected, due to the project actions. Please also provide the estimated number, 3/5 years after the project-end, to demonstrate if further area of habitats will be positively affected. Please also provide relevant comments (e.g. 3 most relevant habitats addressed , their areas, etc)..

Project-Start Value (Baseline)	Project-End Value	3/5 years beyond Project-End Value	Unit
0	19	22	km2

Please provide stand-alone information to further clarify your input and briefly explain any assumptions/calculations. Please also ensure alignment with the main proposal text.

One of the key objectives of this project is to enhance the condition of ten distinct forest habitats, spanning a minimum area of 19,07 km2, which includes three priority habitats covering 6,18 km2. Additionally, the project aims to improve one nonforest habitat covering at least 0,26 km2. To achieve this, we will leverage expert studies conducted in WP2 and specific activities outlined in WP3, focusing on habitat restoration management. These priority habitats include:
*9180, encompassing a total area of 1,49 km2 (1 CZ, 3 PL SCIs)
*91D0, spanning 1,84 km2 in total (1 CZ, 2 PL SCIs)
*91E0, covering a total area of 2,85 km2 (2 CZ, 7 PL SCIs).
The restoration management strategy will address various habitat challenges, such as the low species diversity and age distribution in forests, the absence of veteran, decaying, and dead trees in the forest, the proliferation of invasive non-native plant and tree species, as well as the preservation of small-scale valuable non-forest habitats.

Biodiversity (number of Species)

Number of species whose population loss is being halted and reversed

The start-value is pre-set to 0. In the end-value please provide an estimate of the number of species whose population loss is being halted and reversed due to your project, at project-end. The end-value is expected to be higher than the start-value, demonstrating an increase in the number of species positively affected, due to the project actions. Please also provide the estimated number, 3/5 years after the project-end, to demonstrate if further species will be positively affected. Please also provide relevant comments (e.g. 3 most relevant species addressed , their populations, ranges/areas, etc).

Project-Start Value (Baseline)	Project-End Value	3/5 years beyond Project-End Value	Unit
0	12	20	Number of species

Please provide stand-alone information to further clarify your input and briefly explain any assumptions/calculations. Please also ensure alignment with the main proposal text.

The project's primary objective is to enhance the conservation status of a diverse group of target species, encompassing 12 distinct species across various taxa. These species include 3 amphibians, 7 insects (including 2 priority species), and 2 plants (with 1 being a priority species): *1084 Osmoderma eremita occurs in 5 project SCIs (3 in CZ, 2 in PL), its population varies from isolated occurrences to about 100 individuals. *1078 Callimorpha quadripunctaria is protected in 2 CZ SCIs, its population ranges from confirmed occurrences of individuals to 100 imagoes. The *4094 Gentianella bohemica is located in 1 CZ SCI, with about 270 individuals according to the counting in year 2022.
Furthermore, we anticipate that the measures implemented in WP3, specifically within T3.2 and T3.3, will have positive ripple effects on other amphibian species. Notably, O.eremita serves as an umbrella species, meaning its protection directly benefits numerous other protected insect species.

Biodiversity (Invasive Alien Species)

Reduction in area occupied by invasive alien species .

In the start-value please provide the baseline at the start of the project (e.g. the area of the invasive alien species targetted by your project). In the end-value please provide the new estimated area of the invasive alien species due to the project, at project-end. The end-value is expected to be lower than the start-value, demonstrating an reduction in the area of the invasive alien species, due to the project actions. Please also provide the estimated area of the invasive alien species for the 3/5 years after the project end to demonstrate if further reduction would be achieved. Please also provide relevant comments (e.g. 3 most relevant IAS addressed , their populations, etc).

Project-Start Value (Baseline)	Project-End Value	3/5 years beyond Project-End Value	Unit
7	2	1	km2

Please provide stand-alone information to further clarify your input and briefly explain any assumptions/calculations. Please also ensure alignment with the main proposal text.

The total area subject to invasive species assessment within the project spans 1 km2 in CZ and PL SCIs as well. Detailed mapping of invasive species across this expanse will be conducted under WP2, T2.3. Subsequently, invasive species removal will take place in accordance with WP3, T3.3, and the entire process will undergo continuous monitoring as outlined in WP4, T4.1. Given the project's duration, the opportunity for recurrent eradication efforts against invasive species, particularly those as formidable as Reynoutria spp. and Impatiens glandulifera, is essential for achieving effective results. It's important to note that Echinocystis lobata, currently considered a neglected invasive species, is listed among the top 100

most dangerous invasive species in Europe, as per the Global Invasive Species Information Network. Among the invasive species most frequently encountered in the project area are also Solidago spp., Aster lanceolatus, Helianthus tuberosus, and Robinia pseudoacacia.

Other project specific KPIs

Please enter your project's specific KPI title and provide clarifications in the comment box.

Please specify any other KPIs you wish to present that you consider relevant and not included in the existing KPI list.

Project-Start Value (Baseline)	Project-End Value	3/5 years beyond Project-End Value	Unit
0	28500	28500	m2

Please provide stand-alone information to further clarify your input and briefly explain any assumptions/calculations. Please also ensure alignment with the main proposal text.

Area of habitat *91E0 where loss of biodiversity is being halted and reversed.

Other project specific KPIs

Please enter your project's specific KPI title and provide clarifications in the comment box.

Please specify any other KPIs you wish to present that you consider relevant and not included in the existing KPI list.

Project-Start Value (Baseline)	Project-End Value	3/5 years beyond Project-End Value	Unit
0	18400	18400	m2

Please provide stand-alone information to further clarify your input and briefly explain any assumptions/calculations. Please also ensure alignment with the main proposal text.

Area of habitat *91D0 where loss of biodiversity is being halted and reversed.

Other project specific KPIs

Please enter your project's specific KPI title and provide clarifications in the comment box.

Please specify any other KPIs you wish to present that you consider relevant and not included in the existing KPI list.

Project-Start Value (Baseline)	Project-End Value	3/5 years beyond Project-End Value	Unit
0	14900	14900	m2

Please provide stand-alone information to further clarify your input and briefly explain any assumptions/calculations. Please also ensure alignment with the main proposal text.

Area of habitat *9180 where loss of biodiversity is being halted and reversed.

Other project specific KPIs

Please enter your project's specific KPI title and provide clarifications in the comment box.

Please specify any other KPIs you wish to present that you consider relevant and not included in the existing KPI list.

Project-Start Value (Baseline)	Project-End Value	3/5 years beyond Project-End Value	Unit
0	12	15	number

Please provide stand-alone information to further clarify your input and briefly explain any assumptions/calculations. Please also ensure alignment with the main proposal text.

Number of replications of selected methodologies developed within the project, 3 methodologies replicated at a minimum of 2 different sites/entities each.

ANNEX 2

ESTIMATED BUDGET FOR THE ACTION

	Estimated eligible[1] costs (per budget category)										Estimated EU contribution[2]			
	Direct costs									Indirect costs	Total costs	EU contribution to eligible costs			Maximum grant amount[6]
	A. Personnel costs			B. Subcontracting costs	C. Purchase costs			D. Other cost categories		E. Indirect costs[3]		Funding rate %[4]	Maximum EU contribution[5]	Requested EU contribution	
	A.1 Employees (or equivalent) A.2 Natural persons under direct contract A.3 Seconded persons	A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries	A.5 Volunteers	B. Subcontracting	C.1 Travel and subsistence	C.2 Equipment	C.3 Other goods, works and services	D.1 Financial support to third parties	D.2 Land purchase	E. Indirect costs					
Forms of funding	Actual costs	Unit costs[7]	Unit costs[7]	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Flat-rate costs[8]					
	a1	a3	a4	b	c1	c2	c3	d1a	d2	e = flat-rate * (a1 + a3 + b + c1 + c2 + c3 + d1a)	f = a + b + c + d + e	U	g = f * U%	h	m
1 - ONYX	1 638 730.00	0.00	70 200.00	0.00	42 000.00	750 692.00	1 258 030.00	0.00	0.00	258 261.64	4 017 913.64	60	2 410 748.18	2 410 748.18	2 410 748.18
2 - PEH	526 750.00	0.00	351 000.00	0.00	98 160.00	0.00	61 200.00	0.00	0.00	48 027.70	1 085 137.70	60	651 082.62	651 082.62	651 082.62
3 - SBR	168 560.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	16 800.00	11 000.00	75 000.00	0.00	0.00	18 995.20	290 355.20	60	174 213.12	174 213.12	174 213.12
4 - RSE	756 800.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	16 800.00	0.00	195 769.00	0.00	0.00	67 855.83	1 037 224.83	60	622 334.90	622 334.89	622 334.89
5 - MSR	168 560.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	16 800.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12 975.20	198 335.20	60	119 001.12	119 001.12	119 001.12
6 - IBL	1 465 583.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	63 000.00	20 889.00	379 582.00	0.00	0.00	135 033.78	2 064 087.78	60	1 238 452.67	1 238 452.67	1 238 452.67
7 - ONLN															
Σ consortium	4 724 983.00	0.00	421 200.00	0.00	253 560.00	782 581.00	1 969 581.00	0.00	0.00	541 149.35	8 693 054.35		5 215 832.61	5 215 832.60	5 215 832.60

[1] See Article 6 for the eligibility conditions. All amounts must be expressed in EUR (see Article 21 for the conversion rules).
[2] The consortium remains free to decide on a different internal distribution of the EU funding (via the consortium agreement; see Article 7).
[3] Indirect costs already covered by an operating grant (received under any EU funding programme) are ineligible (see Article 6.3). Therefore, a beneficiary/affiliated entity that receives an operating grant during the action duration cannot declare indirect costs for the year(s)/reporting period(s) covered by the operating grant, unless they can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action. This requires specific accounting tools. Please immediately contact us via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal for details.
[4] See Data Sheet for the funding rate(s).
[5] This is the theoretical amount of the EU contribution to costs, if the reimbursement rate is applied to all the budgeted costs. This theoretical amount is then capped by the 'maximum grant amount'.
[6] The 'maximum grant amount' is the maximum grant amount decided by the EU. It normally corresponds to the requested grant, but may be lower.
[7] See Annex 2a 'Additional information on the estimated budget' for the details (units, cost per unit).
[8] See Data Sheet for the flat-rate.

ANNEX 2a

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON UNIT COSTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

SME owners/natural person beneficiaries without salary

See Additional information on unit costs and contributions (Annex 2a and 2b)

Volunteers

See Additional information on unit costs and contributions (Annex 2a and 2b)

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

PETRKLIC HELP ZS (PEH), PIC 947999140, established in CAPKOVA 13/12, CESKY TESIN 73701, Czechia,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101216157 — LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest ('the Agreement')

between ZO CSOP Onyx (ONYX) **and** the **European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

Agata SUCHANEK with ECAS id nkantpet signed in the Participant Portal on 28/05/2025 at 04:44:43 (transaction id SigId-18164-iwULtp4AXObPxEbrhB4IyNgno3CM3vjiPFmOvDKdzR2Z6C3gBXoA2hPPYIE86rf9JszOVWze5SPwxqYJRxI4zqm-rS0vSrmBGYC9fvh5JEPA3y-xerNB8hNrIYVN4FEcVOD3sZxluO7LWcaMd0pxY86EpJ7hv89aakNmOzmdzhuuoPGrQc8qtzfHkKojTmELdmDuNG). Timestamp by third party at 2025.05.28 04:44:49 CEST

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

JIHOCESKY KRAJ (SBR), PIC 923643701, established in U ZIMNIHO STADIONU 1952/2, CESKE BUDEJOVICE 370 76, Czechia,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101216157 — LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest ('the Agreement')

between ZO CSOP Onyx (ONYX) **and** the **European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

KRAJSKE SKOLNI HOSPODARSTVI, CESKE BUDEJOVICE, U ZIMNIHO STADIONU 1952/2 (RSE), PIC 888402243, established in U ZIMNIHO STADIONU 1952/2, CESKE BUDEJOVICE 370 76, Czechia,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101216157 — LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest ('the Agreement')

between ZO CSOP Onyx (ONYX) **and** the **European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

Moravskoslezsky kraj (MSR), PIC 885596712, established in 28. října 2771/117, Ostrava 702 00, Czechia,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101216157 — LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest ('the Agreement')

between ZO CSOP Onyx (ONYX) **and** the **European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

Hana Ondračka Kraussová with ECAS id n00aeekl signed in the Participant Portal on 29/05/2025 at 07:23:33 (transaction id SigId-27154-OzbvxnYLUdfJTTfs5lgW3JgIIRRj9hE4EbrnQSzZeGLJGVNkUTyZgQBXhbvkLp1ba7zQ5N3gwuI3tUmyFl0MuRm-rS0vSrmBGYC9fvh5JEPA3y-NuS8fB0u4ZASYzmdKmaUv6xQ0XFlmgjQ1Whe22mzuMJs4gfbe2quIUe83BbXrpNuw7u1lnMhjiXFiv9uTLVFm7). Timestamp by third party at 2025.05.29 07:23:43 CEST

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

INSTYTUT BADAWCZY LESNICTWA (IBL), PIC 998921715, established in UL BRACI LESNEJ 3 SEKOCIN STARY, RASZYN 05-090, Poland,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101216157 — LIFE24-NAT-CZ-LIFE Model Forest ('the Agreement')

between ZO CSOP Onyx (ONYX) **and** the **European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR [PARTICIPANT NAME] FOR REPORTING PERIOD [NUMBER]

	Eligible[1] costs (per budget category)											EU contribution[2]				Revenues
	Direct costs									Indirect costs	Total costs	EU contribution to eligible costs			Total requested EU contribution	Income generated by the action
	A. Personnel costs			B. Subcontracting costs	C. Purchase costs			D. Other cost categories		E. Indirect costs[2]		Funding rate %[3]	Maximum EU contribution[4]	Requested EU contribution		
	A.1 Employees (or equivalent) A.2 Natural persons under direct contract A.3 Seconded persons	A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries	A.5 Volunteers	B. Subcontracting	C.1 Travel and subsistence	C.2 Equipment	C.3 Other goods, works and services	D.X Financial support to third parties	D.2 Land purchase	E. Indirect costs						
Forms of funding	Actual costs	Unit costs[5]	Unit costs[5]	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Flat-rate costs[6]						
	a1	a3	a4	b	c1	c2	c3	d1a	d2	e = flat-rate * (a1 + a3 + b + c1 + c2 + c3 + d1a)	f = a+b+c+d+e	U	g = f*U%	h	m	n
XX – [short name beneficiary/affiliated entity]																

The beneficiary/affiliated entity hereby confirms that:

The information provided is complete, reliable and true.

The costs and contributions declared are eligible (see Article 6).

The costs and contributions can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Articles 19, 20 and 25).

For the last reporting period: that all the revenues have been declared (see Article 22).

ⓘ Please declare all eligible costs and contributions, even if they exceed the amounts indicated in the estimated budget (see Annex 2). Only amounts that were declared in your individual financial statements can be taken into account lateron, in order to replace costs/contributions that are found to be ineligible.

[1] See Article 6 for the eligibility conditions. All amounts must be expressed in EUR (see Article 21 for the conversion rules).

[2] If you have also received an EU operating grant during this reporting period, you cannot claim indirect costs - unless you can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action. This requires specific accounting tools. Please contact us immediately via the Funding & Tenders Portal for details.

[3] See Data Sheet for the reimbursement rate(s).

[4] This is the *theoretical* amount of EU contribution to costs that the system calculates automatically (by multiplying the reimbursement rates by the costs declared). The amount you request (in the column 'requested EU contribution') may be less.

[5] See Annex 2a 'Additional information on the estimated budget' for the details (units, cost per unit).

[6] See Data Sheet for the flat-rate.

ANNEX 5

SPECIFIC RULES

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR) — BACKGROUND AND RESULTS — ACCESS RIGHTS AND RIGHTS OF USE (— ARTICLE 16)

Rights of use of the granting authority on results for information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes

The granting authority also has the right to exploit non-sensitive results of the action for information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes, using any of the following modes:

- **use for its own purposes** (in particular, making them available to persons working for the granting authority or any other EU service (including institutions, bodies, offices, agencies, etc.) or EU Member State institution or body; copying or reproducing them in whole or in part, in unlimited numbers; and communication through press information services)
- **distribution to the public** in hard copies, in electronic or digital format, on the internet including social networks, as a downloadable or non-downloadable file
- **editing** or **redrafting** (including shortening, summarising, changing, correcting, cutting, inserting elements (e.g. meta-data, legends or other graphic, visual, audio or text elements extracting parts (e.g. audio or video files), dividing into parts or use in a compilation
- **translation** (including inserting subtitles/dubbing) in all official languages of EU
- **storage** in paper, electronic or other form
- **archiving** in line with applicable document-management rules
- the right to authorise **third parties** to act on its behalf or sub-license to third parties, including if there is licensed background, any of the rights or modes of exploitation set out in this provision
- **processing**, analysing, aggregating the results and **producing derivative works**
- **disseminating** the results in widely accessible databases or indexes (such as through ‘open access’ or ‘open data’ portals or similar repositories, whether free of charge or not.

The beneficiaries must ensure these rights of use for the whole duration they are protected by industrial or intellectual property rights.

If results are subject to moral rights or third party rights (including intellectual property rights or rights of natural persons on their image and voice), the beneficiaries must ensure that they

comply with their obligations under this Agreement (in particular, by obtaining the necessary licences and authorisations from the rights holders concerned).

COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY (— ARTICLE 17)

Communication and dissemination plan

The beneficiaries must provide a detailed communication and dissemination plan, setting out the objectives, key messaging, target audiences, communication channels, social media plan, planned budget and relevant indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

Additional communication and dissemination activities

The beneficiaries must engage in the following additional communication and dissemination activities:

- **present the project** (including project summary, coordinator contact details, list of participants, European flag and funding statement and special logo and project results) on the beneficiaries' **websites** or **social media accounts**
- for actions involving equipment, infrastructure or works, display as soon as the work on the action starts a **printed or electronic sign** of appropriate size, with European flag and funding statement and special logo
- upload the public **project results** to the LIFE Project Results platform, available through the Funding & Tenders Portal .

Special logos

Communication activities and infrastructure, equipment or major results funded by the grant must moreover display the following logo:

- the LIFE Programme logo

and

- for projects in Natura 2000 sites or contributing to the integrity of Natura 2020 network: the Natura 2000 logo

SPECIFIC RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION (— ARTICLE 18)

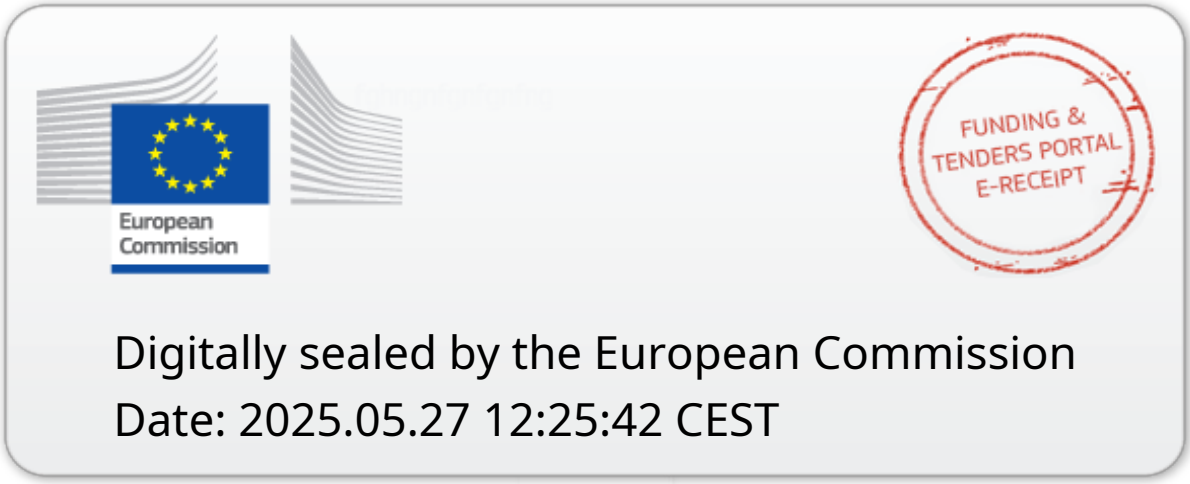
Durability

Unless exempted by the granting authority, beneficiaries of Standard Action Projects, Strategic Nature Projects and Strategic Integrated Projects must commit to continue to use and maintain after the end of the action equipment bought and eligible at full costs, for activities pursuing the action's objectives. Such equipment must be used for these purposes — for at least five years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) or until the end of its economic lifespan (i.e. until it has been fully depreciated) — whichever is earlier.

Specific rules for blending operations

When implementing blending operations, the beneficiaries acknowledge and accept that:

- the grant depends on the approved financing from the Implementing Partner and/or public or private investors for the project
- they must inform the granting authority both about the approval for financing and the financial close — within 15 days
- the payment deadline for the first prefinancing is automatically suspended until the granting authority is informed about the approval for financing
- both actions will be managed and monitored in parallel and in close coordination with the Implementing Partner, in particular:
    - all information, data and documents (including the due diligence by the Implementing Partner and the signed agreement) may be exchanged and may be relied on for the management of the other action (if needed)
    - issues in one action may impact the other (e.g. suspension or termination in one action may lead to suspension also of the other action; termination of the grant will normally suspend and exit from further financing and vice versa, etc.)
- the granting authority may disclose confidential information also to the Implementing Partner.



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Subjekt, který změnu formátu dokumentu provedl:

Jihočeský kraj, U Zimního stadionu 1952/2, 37001 České Budějovice, posta@kraj-jihocesky.cz

Datum vyhotovení ověřovací doložky:

10.10.2025

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Bošanská Dagmar

Elektronická pečeť: 10.10.2025

Certifikát autora podpisu:

Jméno: Jihočeský kraj - elektronická pečeť

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