

# How to fund the Trans-European Nature Network (TEN-N)

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)  
and Cohesion Fund (CF)



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# ERDF and CF

The **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)** and the **Cohesion Fund (CF)** are part of the **EU's Cohesion policy**. The ERDF and CF are relevant opportunities for funding protected area management and extending protected area networks as they support investments in the field of the environment. The Interreg programme funded by part of the ERDF budget is described in a separate factsheet. The **ERDF** aims to help address the main regional imbalances in the EU and contribute to reducing disparities between the levels of development of the regions. The **Cohesion Fund's** objectives are to strengthen the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the EU in the interests of promoting sustainable development. The two funds are programmed together with the European Social Fund+ (ESF+) aimed at achieving high employment levels, fair social protection and a skilled and resilient workforce, and the Just Transition Fund providing tailored support to the territories most affected by the transition towards climate neutrality.

ERDF funds are allocated to Member States based on a set of socio-economic criteria, so that the least developed regions and countries have the largest available fund amounts. The CF provides funding for Member States whose gross national income per capita is less than 90% of the EU average.

The ERDF and CF are shared management funds, meaning that the Member States' authorities in charge of administering the funds select the projects which will be supported through grants and/or via financial instruments such as a loan. ERDF and CF projects must be co-funded (the maximum co-funding rate depends on the level of development of the region).

For the 2021-2027 programming period, the EU allocated a budget of €378 billion to the jobs and growth goal of the cohesion policy funds [1]. The actual budgets available to each national and regional programme are agreed in the national partnership agreements and are made up of different combinations of four funds (ERDF, CF, JTF, ESF+).

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[1] A small part of the ERDF budget goes to Interreg, a fund for transnational and transboundary co-operations (see separate factsheet). Part of the Cohesion Fund budget goes into the Connecting Europe Facility which is managed directly by the European Commission (CINEA agency) to fund high priority large scale transport, energy and digital projects.

## Assessment of ERDF and CF

### Who can apply for ERDF and CF funding?

- ✓ Public bodies, some private sector organisations (especially small businesses), universities, associations, NGOs and voluntary organisations. Note that beneficiaries may be defined differently in each programme and measure – applicants should check if they qualify for funding.
- ✓ Foreign firms with a base in the region covered by the relevant operational programme can also apply, provided they meet European public procurement rules.
- ✓ For CF, you can only apply if you are from one of the following Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia.

### What types of support do the ERDF and CF provide?

#### ERDF and CF can support

The ERDF and CF can support one-off investments with large budgets:

- **One-off restoration investments**
- **Research** if linked to one-off investments (inventories, maps, etc.).
- **Nature-based solutions** that bring benefits for biodiversity as well as to climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, water management, urban environment, and other infrastructure (energy, transport etc.) are particularly relevant.
- The funds offer opportunities to fund small and medium enterprises (**SMEs**) and **job creation, research and innovation, technology and infrastructure investments** that could be associated with Natura 2000 site management and restoration, and/or **green infrastructure investments**.
- ERDF funding is relevant for your TEN-N project if it aims for and results in both socio-economic and nature protection co-benefits.
- CF funding is relevant for your TEN-N project if it aims to implement green transport and energy infrastructure projects by reducing fragmentation effects through the creation of ecological corridors.

#### ERDF and CF cannot support

- Running costs or regular administrative costs.
- Management measures related to agricultural or forestry production - the CAP funds are more appropriate.
- Pilot projects and primary research - usually more suitable for LIFE and Horizon Europe, respectively.
- Marine measures - in principle more appropriately funded through EMFAF fund or LIFE fund (see the factsheets on these funds).
- Transnational or transboundary cooperation - Interreg is more appropriate.



## Opportunities for funding measures for the Trans-European Nature Network (TEN-N) through ERDF and CF

This section assesses the opportunities for funding the types of measures needed to build the Trans-European Nature Network through ERDF and CF. The table matches the different types of costs with the available sources of funding. The full list of types of costs is in the Annex to this factsheet.

**The ERDF and CF funds provide opportunities to cover all costs associated with ecological networks but cannot provide long-term support for site management and governance.**

Types of measures eligible for ERDF/CF funding		ERDF Article 5	CF Article 6
Network planning costs	Administrative	✗	✗
	Spatial planning	✓	✓
	Biogeographical network planning		
	Monitoring and reporting of the protected area network		
Protected area establishment costs	Site or corridor designation and management planning	✓	✓
	Administrative	✗	✗
	Remaining knowledge gaps and research needs	✓	✓
	One-off establishment actions		
	Compensation		
Management costs	Land purchase		
	Site (cluster) administration	✓ *	✓ *
	Compliance checking and enforcement		
	Monitoring and reporting		
	Maintenance and ongoing restoration measures for species and habitats		
	Additional green infrastructure measures (outside protected areas)		
Communication and awareness raising costs	Protected area infrastructure maintenance		
	Communication and awareness raising measures, education and visitor access	✓	✓
	Best practice exchange		

\* If management measures are related to agricultural and forestry production, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) funds are more appropriate.



## What activities can the ERDF and CF fund?

The ERDF and CF can contribute to the creation and management of an ecological network of protected areas through the following actions:

### 1. Network planning and site and corridor designation and protection



#### **Research and planning to designate relevant areas as protected:**

- Mapping of biodiversity hotspots
- Spatial planning (of new protected areas, corridors, green infrastructure)
- Communication and engagement with landowners and other stakeholders

### 2. Restoration and maintenance of habitats and species in protected area(s)

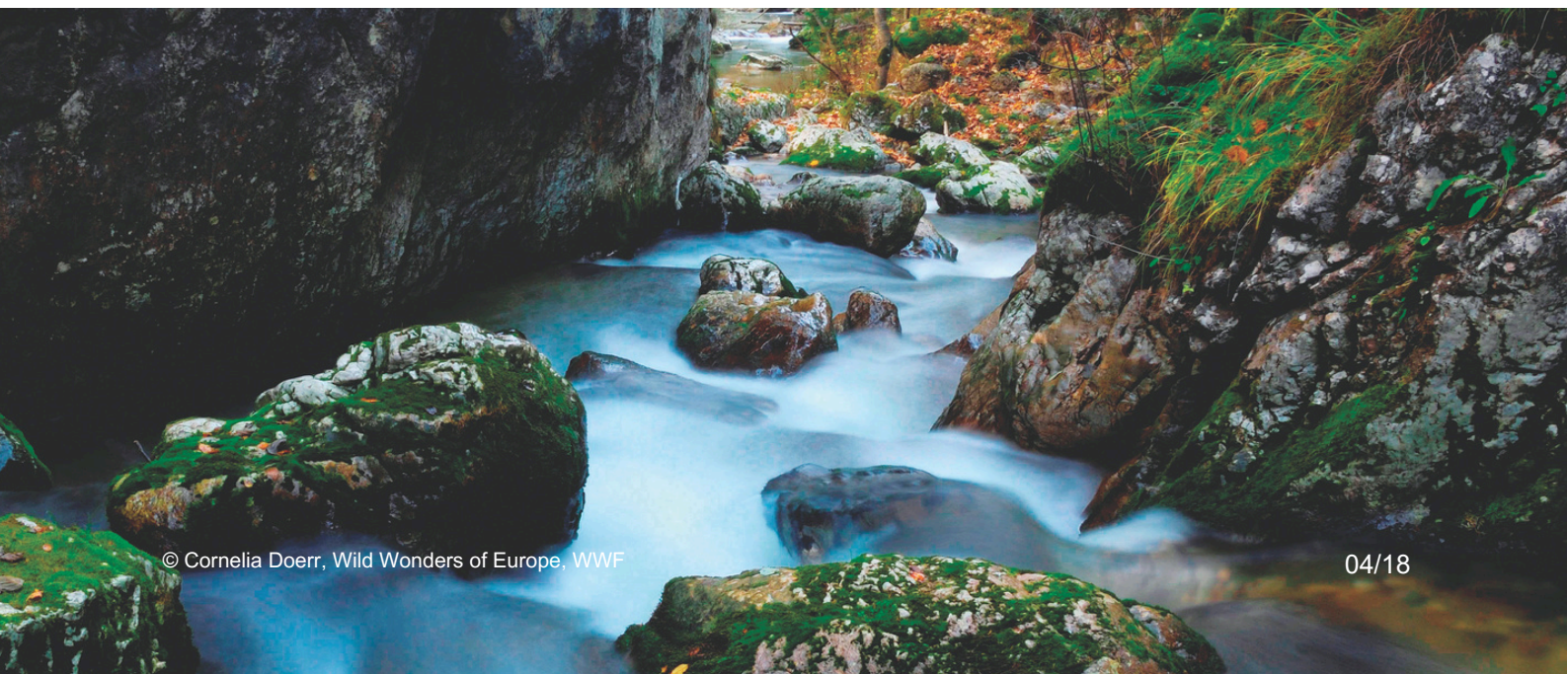


- Restoration and maintenance of natural habitats and habitats of species
- Maintaining and improving the conservation status of species and habitats in Natura 2000 and other protected areas
- Restoration of natural hydro-morphological water regime, restoration of wetlands and rivers
- Adaptation to climate change that contributes to the coherence of the nature conservation network (e.g. dune ecosystems, riparian forests), actions to avoid landslide risk and coastal erosion
- Eradication of invasive species

### 3. Creation of new connecting landscape elements and corridors



**Green infrastructure development, including creation and restoration of terrestrial and aquatic ecological corridors** (including defragmentation measures through fish passes, eco-tunnels, fauna passages under roads, etc.).



## 4. Maintenance and management of the area in a sustainable way by defining and implementing targeted conservation measures



### **Improvement of knowledge and information on biodiversity:**

- Conservation status assessment
- Information systems for the management of the Natura 2000 sites
- Mapping of natural habitats, mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services
- Monitoring systems for biodiversity and Natura 2000
- Monitoring and assessment of climate change effects on the Natura 2000 sites

### **Improvement of capacities for management of Natura 2000:**

- Elaboration of Natura 2000 management plans and species action plans
- Information and Communication Technologies applications for management of Natura 2000 sites
- Management structures for Natura 2000 (equipment, justified staff costs for duration of the project)
- Invasive species management and eradication

## 5. Financial and technical support to the development of the network



### **Awareness and communication on Natura 2000:**

- National information and communication campaigns and actions on Natura 2000 and biodiversity

### **Public use and sustainable use of the Natura 2000 sites:**

- Equipment and infrastructure for public use in natural areas: visitor centres, information offices, signposting, access and trails, etc.
- Support for starting green businesses in protected areas (tourist services and facilities, accommodation and information centres)

## Important considerations for TEN-N

Sources: EPRS (2023), European Commission (2022), Ciffolilli et al (2024) - for full references see Useful resources section of this factsheet

- ERDF and CF funding have different objectives, but they have a similar scope in the type of measures that can be funded for biodiversity conservation and for expanding protected area networks. Member States that are eligible for both funds usually programme them together in the same national or regional funding programme(s).
- ERDF is aimed at investments in the environment through a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, improved water and waste management, protection of the environment, preserving biodiversity and reducing pollution. There is an obligatory thematic allocation under ERDF which obliges Member States to allocate at least 30% of their total ERDF funding to the policy objective for a greener, low-carbon Europe. Given the importance of mainstreaming climate change action with nature co-benefits this could offer significant opportunities for Natura 2000 funding under ERDF.
- The CF has the objective to support investments in the field of environment and the trans-European networks of transport infrastructure (TEN-T) and energy infrastructure (TEN-E). Projects must clearly benefit the environment in terms of energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy, developing rail transport, supporting intermodality, strengthening public transport, etc.
- The main avenue for obtaining funding for protected area and corridor measures is to align the project with the objectives of the funds. Identify and describe the important **co-benefits to both socio-economic wellbeing and Natura 2000 management**, for example:
  - **Combining climate change adaptation, risk prevention and disaster resilience with Natura 2000 site restoration and nature-based solutions building green infrastructure** (ERDF)
  - **Promoting sustainable water management** in relation to improving Natura 2000 environmental conditions (ERDF)
  - **Fostering the integrated social, economic, and environmental local development, cultural heritage and security, for both urban and rural/coastal areas** also through community-led local development – which strongly resonates with the territorial sustainable development vision of the Habitats Directive (ERDF)
  - Projects related to the **greening of TEN-T and TEN-E infrastructure [2]**, such as the **creation of ecological corridors and improvements to reduce fragmentation effects** (CF)

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[2] Trans-European Transport Network and Trans-European Energy Network = EU policy instruments that plan and identify priority corridors or projects for EU wide infrastructure networks and set out requirements for coherent quality throughout the EU.



- Cohesion policy funding is important for less developed Member States and regions, as the funds' objectives are to help redress the main regional imbalances in the EU.
- ERDF and CF project budgets must be co-funded by national and regional public and private funds: both funds provide only a percentage of the total eligible costs of a project. The level of funding varies based on factors such as the level of development of the region and state aid (3 categories: less developed; transition; more developed, with different funding rates).
- Application procedures (such as the calls for proposal and project selection) and the types of funding allocated are decided by the managing authority of the programme.
- Member States must establish monitoring committees in which partners are represented, informed, and empowered to contribute to the design of the programmes. Monitoring committees therefore play a watchdog role in scrutinising the direction of the cohesion policy.
- The Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) principle must be applied to the cohesion policy funds under the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) since 2021. The DNSH assessment must be applied at the programme or measure level (i.e. at the level of funding objectives and targets), and then should systematically be integrated during the evaluation and selection of projects following a call for projects (EIPA 2022). According to the Commission guidance, the DNSH assessment is intended to complement the SEA or EIA by covering all aspects of significant harm, so the two assessments can be integrated (European Commission 2021).





## Strengths for TEN-N

- These programmes can be used to fund a wide array of protected area establishment and management activities. In many cases, they focus on effective management of Natura 2000 sites, following the Prioritised Action Frameworks (PAFs), and fund the preparation of management plans and projects for habitat and species protection.
- They can be used to cover preparatory actions including the elaboration of management plans for sites and species, mapping and other work to establish baselines, and public awareness activities [3].
- They also promote investments for natural heritage, local development and sustainable tourism. For example, support can be given to walking tours, information displays, visitor centres and other infrastructure.
- The ERDF focuses specifically on sustainable urban development, with at least 8% of the ERDF resources set aside for specific relevant actions. These funds can be used for urban green infrastructure projects, which often provide a high return on investment and have important socio-economic benefits.
- SMEs can access funding (the funds allow a wide range of beneficiary categories).
- Funds can support actions to raise awareness of the need to improve biodiversity and nature for regional development opportunities.
- The support documentation is not too complex, and a lot of information is available to understand the implementation and financial management of the project.
- The EU co-funding rate is high as it can reach up to 80% or increased to 85% for outermost regions.
  - ERDF: in highly developed regions ERDF can only fund up to 40% of project costs.

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[3] preparatory actions including the elaboration of management plans for sites and species, mapping and other work to establish baselines, and public awareness activities

## Limitations for TEN-N

- High administrative burden: the administrative capacity needed to develop projects and obtain funds can be significant, particularly where no prefinancing arrangements exist.
- In some regions there is no operational programme with environmental objectives that can be directed to TEN-N actions. Although Member States have the choice to include biodiversity in all operational programmes, there is no obligation to allocate funds for nature protection and biodiversity in cohesion policy funds.
- Member States are not allocating sufficient cohesion policy funding to biodiversity to meet the EU budget target of 10% for biodiversity in 2026 and 2027 – the allocation was at 6% in April 2023 (European Commission DG REGIO 2022). During the 2014-2020 programming period, only 4% of the total ERDF and Cohesion Fund expenditure contributed to biodiversity objectives (European Commission DG REGIO 2022). The amount spent on biodiversity under both ERDF and CF was significantly lower than the amounts that had been planned and decided.
- National administrators and stakeholders sometimes lack the capacity to absorb EU funding related to nature conservation: often, these types of projects are implemented by local governments and NGOs who lack capacity for project and financial management.
- Nature and biodiversity projects are often small-scale compared to those for water and waste infrastructure and take a longer time to prepare and deliver, sometimes with more uncertainty about the results. Administrations under pressure to allocate and spend the funds (and justify their spending) may find it easier to allocate funds to large infrastructure projects rather than many small biodiversity projects with less certain outcomes.
- ERDF and CF can fund infrastructure projects (energy, transport, water) that lead to biodiversity loss and increase fragmentation, if not properly designed and accompanied by mitigation measures. A rigorous strategic environmental assessment, requirements for environmental impact assessments of risky projects, and a transparent programming process with the involvement of NGOs and environmental groups can reduce these risks.

## Cohesion Policy Partnership Agreements (2021-2027)

Each Member State has agreed a Partnership Agreement (PA) with the Commission, where it lays out its strategy to use the cohesion policy funds (ERDF, CF, ESF+, JF, EMFAF) during the 2021 to 2027 funding period. The partnership agreement specifies the objectives the Member State intends to reach and their expected impact, as well as complementarities and synergies between the funds. It lists the national and regional programmes which will operate in the Member State.

- For example, the French partnership agreement sets out that under objective PO2 'a Greener and low-carbon Europe', ERDF will contribute to challenge n°3: Improving water quality and preserving biodiversity. ERDF programming will mobilise €442 million for actions in favour of biodiversity, representing 5% of the funds in France.

To understand where these funds for biodiversity are allocated and where to get them, we need to look at the national and regional (or multi-regional) programmes. The PA lists all the contributions for each programme.

For example, in France, the programme for the Ile de France and Seine basin region will:

- Support 'actions to restore a functional ecological network on a territorial scale' to support biodiversity and associated ecosystem services with €10 million worth of grants (from a total budget of €413 million). The following projects are eligible:
  - Preliminary studies necessary to identify the ecological continuities to be restored and to define the works to be carried out.
  - Work to restore terrestrial ecological continuities: creation of wildlife crossings or improvement of existing crossings, desilting and renaturation of artificial areas, planting, ecological restoration of degraded natural environments, creation of dark areas for nocturnal fauna, etc.
  - Communication actions and monitoring of the ecological effectiveness of the work carried out.

The targeted groups are local authorities ('collectivités territoriales') and their groupings, as well as public organisations ('établissements publics').



- Support actions to restore, re-establish, or create ecological connectivity on waterways and lateral connectivity benefiting biodiversity with €3.5 million in grants.

The following projects are eligible:

- Studies and works for the construction of fish passes or the improvement of existing passes.
- Development of tributary waterways of the navigable river and their connectivity to improve ecological functionality (wetlands, operations benefiting aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity), excluding studies and works related to navigability.
- Monitoring and communication actions related to the creation or improvement of river biodiversity and connectivity, such as fish passes.

Targeted groups are wider than for the previous objective, as local authorities, the State, syndicates, NGOs and public research operators are eligible.

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Sources:

Partnership Agreement with France – 2021-2027 (Accord de Partenariat France - 2021-2027)

[https://commission.europa.eu/publications/partnership-agreement-france-2021-2027\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/publications/partnership-agreement-france-2021-2027_en)

Programme régional Île-de-France et bassin de la Seine ERDF-ESF+ 2021-2027. 2021FR05FFPR001. <https://www.europeidf.fr/les-financements-europeens/FEDER>



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## Annex I: Examples of ERDF and CF projects that have benefited protected areas and ecological connectivity

Examples of how ERDF and CF have been used to fund **ecological connectivity measures** and **restoration of habitats** in and around protected areas.

### Conservation actions outside the Galician Protected Areas Network, Spain

#### Who and when

Dirección General de Patrimonio Natural in Galicia from 2016 to 2023.

#### Aim and results

Actions outside the Natura 2000 Network and the Galician Network of Protected Areas, to **ensure the ecological coherence of the network**, enhance ecological connectivity between sites, facilitate the genetic exchange and displacement of species of fauna and flora, as well as curb fragmentation, deterioration and pollution of habitats.

#### Funding

ERDF contributed €400 000 (amounting to 80% of the overall budget).

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Source: European Commission Kohesio database <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3232681>

### Restoration of habitats in the natural area of Doñana, Spain

#### Who and when

The government of Andalucía from 2016 to 2023.

#### Aim and results

A series of measures aiming to restore degraded areas and improve certain sections of the habitats present in **Doñana** and within the Biosphere Reserve. The measures contribute to the maintenance of biological diversity, the appropriate use of the environment and existing facilities and the prevention of external risks such as fires, waste accumulation and others. The actions included pruning of trees, selective scrub clearance to prevent the risk of fire, and preparation and disposal of the biomass from cutting and pruning.

#### Funding

ERDF contributed more than €13 million (amounting to 80% of the overall budget).

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Source: European Commission Kohesio database <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3267470>

## Contract Biodiversity Restoration of the Regional Natural Park of the Grand Causses, France

### Who and when

Parc naturel régional des Grands Causses from 2017 to 2021.

### Aim and results

The project ran and implemented **works to restore ecological connectivity** for the preservation of the waterways and wetlands and to ensure the preservation of the park's open environments. The actions were part of the implementation of the Regional Ecological Coherence Scheme (SRCE).

### Funding

ERDF contributed €96 000 (amounting to 50% of the overall budget).

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Source: European Commission Kohesio database <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3682649>

## River Restoration of the Transboundary Section of the Guadiana River and Albufeira de Alqueva, Portugal

### Who and when

EDIA company (Empresa de Desenvolvimento e Infra-Estruturas do Alqueva S.A.) from 2016 to 2023

### Aim and results

A set of actions for the prevention, early detection and control of invasive aquatic species, such as the water hyacinth, in the transboundary section of the Guadiana and Albufeira de Alqueva between Portugal and Spain, simultaneously developing actions to enhance the ecological value of this section, **contributing to the connectivity of the river**, the improvement of water quality and the conservation of species of high ecological value.

### Funding

Cohesion Fund contributed more than €300 000 (amounting to 85% of the overall budget).

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Source: European Commission Kohesio database <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q2983050>





Examples of how ERDF and CF have been used for **improving management effectiveness of protected areas** and other conservation areas, and how they have helped **establishing new sites**.

## Technical assistance for Natura 2000 network management in Andalucía, Spain (ERDF)

### Who and when

Directorate-General for the Management of the Natural Environment and Protected Areas (RENPA) in Andalucía during 2016 to 2018.

### Aim and results

Technical support to carry out work aimed at protecting and, where appropriate, restoring natural values, as well as promoting ecosystem services, through planning, management, monitoring, coordination, participation and evaluation strategies in the Andalusian Network of Protected Natural Areas, with particular attention to the Natura 2000 Network. This included: technical assistance to the RENPA Coordination and Management Service for the preparation of reports and documents related to the environmental assessment procedures and on the administration's intervention regime in protected areas, in support of the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation of planning instruments, as well as for other tasks linked to the Network of Protected Natural Areas; and preparation of reports and documents, and collection and processing of information.

### Funding

ERDF contribution: €24 182 532 (80%), co-funding from the Andalusian government.

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Source: European Commission Kohesio database <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3267471>



## Development of conservation mission plans for Natura 2000 sites, Poland (CF)

### Who and when

Polish General Directorate of Environmental Protection (Ministerstwo obsługujące ministra właściwego ds. rozwoju regionalnego) during 2017 to 2023.

### Aim and results

The project funded the development of high-quality conservation plans for the Polish Natura 2000 sites (except those sites managed under the state forest agency). These planning instruments are set up for Natura 2000 sites based on the Nature Conservation Act of 16 April 2004.

### Funding

100% funded through EU Cohesion Fund with €8 149 273 [4].

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**Source:** European Commission Kohesio database <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q85648>

Examples of how ERDF has been used for **land acquisition** for protected areas:

## Land acquisition of LACHAUSSEE ponds, France (ERDF)

Acquisition by EPFL of the ponds of Lachaussée, Picard and Comé located in the heart of the Regional Natural Reserve of Lachaussée, with a view to a rational management by the Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Lorraine.

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Source: European Commission DG REGIO database: <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3697894>

## Acquisition of the Red Pond in Insviller, France (ERDF)

Acquisition of the Red Pond in Insviller by the Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Lorraine, in order to ensure its restoration and management.

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**Source:** European Commission Kohesio database <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3696712>

[4] 100% project funding was an exceptional case for this project – normally the maximum co-funding rate is 85%.

## Annex II: What are the financial costs associated with the TEN-N?

The creation and management of a coherent TEN-N in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030 requires the following actions from the national and regional authorities:

- **Designate the relevant areas as protected**, in order to contribute to the 30% protected areas and the 10% strict protection targets.
- **Restore the relevant areas to contribute to the 20% restoration target of EU's land and sea by 2030**, in order to improve the habitat condition and delivery of ecosystem services.
- **Create new connecting landscape elements** to physically or functionally connect existing elements.
- **Maintain and manage the protected areas in a sustainable way by defining and implementing targeted conservation measures**, which may allow various types of low-impact land uses.
- **Financial and technical support** to the development of the network.

Meeting these objectives involves the following costs:

### Network Planning Costs

One time or recurring costs associated with planning for or updating a comprehensive and well-connected network of protected areas.

- **Spatial mapping and planning**: mapping and modelling to identify priority areas (GIS mapping of habitat and species occurrences, land use, mapping of barriers and corridors), site identification information, IT infrastructure, training and capacity building.
- **Habitat and species surveys**: surveys to map habitat condition and species distribution, identify restoration priority areas and potential habitat recreation areas.
- **Biogeographical network planning**: exchange and joint planning (e.g. meetings, travel to neighbouring countries, information sharing).
- **Administrative**: staff, overheads, training, as part of the network planning exercise.
- **Stakeholder engagement**: costs associated with organising meetings with landowners and other potentially affected stakeholders.
- **Monitoring and reporting of the protected area network**

### Protected Area Establishment Costs

One-time or recurring costs associated with planning for placement, levels of protection and designation of additional protected areas and corridors.

- **Site/corridor designation and management planning**: definition of sites (habitat surveys, precise boundary definition, land parcel data, species and habitat data), designation, legal protection, management planning, impact assessment and permit issuing.
- **Administrative**: staff and salaries, trainings, overheads or office acquisitions, planning and coordination with other management teams in cross-border protected areas.
- **Remaining knowledge gaps and research needs**: additional surveys and research, engaging external expertise, modelling of ecological changes under climate scenarios, social impacts, capacity building.



- **One-off establishment actions: time and tools (incl. machinery) for:**
- **Defragmentation measures:** removing roads, river barriers, building green bridges.
- **Infrastructure:** Water management infrastructure, fire management infrastructure, construction of infrastructure necessary for management and visitors.
- **Landscape restoration:** e.g., fencing, removing or moving dykes, engineering works, earth moving, removing non-native trees, replanting, recreating floodplains.
- **Creation of corridors and connectivity/defragmentation features:** infrastructure or restoration actions e.g., green bridges, creation of green infrastructure features along water courses or transport networks for biodiversity.
- **Compensation:** establishment of alternative income-generating activities, short-term compensation, stewardship contracts with landowners.
- **Land purchase:** e.g. buy outs, land swaps.

## Management Costs

Fixed and variable, recurring annual or one-off costs of site management and day-to-day activities.

- **Site (-cluster) administration:** staff and salaries, trainings, overheads, coordination with other management teams in cross-border protected areas, renewal of stewardship contracts with landowners.
- **Compliance checking and enforcement:** equipment, data, staff.
- **Impact assessment and permits:** assessments of development projects, control and issue of permits or licenses for activities or developments.
- **Surveillance, monitoring and reporting:** at scale of site and surroundings e.g. corridors. Species and habitat monitoring. Surveillance of invasive species, animal and plant diseases or pests, etc. Wildfire surveillance.
- **Maintenance and ongoing restoration measures for species and habitats,** incl. tools and machinery.
- **Additional green infrastructure measures outside the protected area:** maintenance and ongoing restoration measures for species and habitats in corridors, buffer zones, stepping-stone habitat patches etc.
- **Protected area infrastructure maintenance:** access (roads, paths), visitor facilities – observation hides, visitor centres, parking and other facilities, wildfire prevention and management.

## Communication and Awareness Raising Costs

- **Protected area-related communication and awareness raising measures, education and visitor access:** general communication and awareness-raising measures, education, access to visitors, etc.
- **Best practice exchange** between protected area managers and between land managers of ecological corridors.

## Annex III: Useful resources

### Resources

- European Commission webpage on Cohesion Fund  
[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/funding/cohesion-fund\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/cohesion-fund_en)
- European Commission webpage on European Regional Development Fund  
[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/home\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/home_en)
- European Commission webpage guide to accessing regional funds  
[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/funding/accessing-funds\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/accessing-funds_en)
- European Commission Cohesion Open Data Platform <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu>  
Visualises and provides open data on the national, regional and interregional programmes funded by the EU Budget
- EU regional and urban development projects database: has examples of funded projects  
[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/projects/projects-database\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/projects-database_en)

#### How to get technical advice on getting funding

Managing authorities or intermediary bodies should provide support for project applicants on how to fill out an application form, how to ensure that the project idea is in line with the ERDF programme, how to set up a financial plan, and how to select indicators to monitor the implementation of the project.

- Find your managing authority: [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/in-your-country/managing-authorities\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/in-your-country/managing-authorities_en)
- Find your national portal on EU funding opportunities:  
[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/2021-2027\\_en#inline-nav-12](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/2021-2027_en#inline-nav-12)

#### TAIEX-REGIO Peer2Peer

[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/policy/how/improving-investment/regio-peer-2-peer\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/how/improving-investment/regio-peer-2-peer_en)

It facilitates exchanges between the national and regional bodies that manage and administer funds from the ERDF, the Cohesion Fund and the Just Transition Fund. Funds and organises short-term exchanges between civil servants to share knowledge, good practice and practical approaches with their peers in other EU countries, as one to one meetings or events. Facilitates longer-term dialogues and exchanges through REGIO Peer2Peer Communities.

**Find out about ERDF financial instruments on [www.fi-compass.eu](http://www.fi-compass.eu)**

### References

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# How to fund the Trans-European Nature Network (TEN-N)

European Regional Development Fund  
(ERDF) and Cohesion Fund (CF)

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