

Interreg



ADRION

ADRIATIC-IONIAN

European Regional Development Fund - Instrument for Pre-Accession II Fund

IMPRECO



*Common strategies and best practices to IMprove
the transnational PProtection of ECOsystem integrity and services*

STUDY VISITS TERMS OF REFERENCE

IMPRECO PROJECT:

IMPRECO main objective is to enhance the safeguarding of ecosystem services and tackle their environmental vulnerability strengthening the potential of protected areas in biodiversity and ecosystems conservation through their transnational networking. The Project Partners are daily facing the challenge of Eco-system (ES) conservation and experiencing the relationship between the ES and the Socioeconomic-system (SoES) which produces flows of benefits from the ES to the SoES but also drivers of change from the SoES to the ES. Human and natural pressures are undermining the health of ES and their capacity to provide services fundamental for living conditions of people in the area. A common challenge for the project area, is on one side, to maintain, enhance and restore ES and their functionality and, on the other, to integrate the ES in local development plans. The project addresses such common challenges applying the so called ESS approach but in an innovative way: unleashing Protected Areas (PA) potential as laboratories to test innovative measures for ES conservation and transferring them in the surrounding territories through the application of a quadruple helix approach. Safeguarding ES requires a comprehensive approach to be effective: by converging efforts at the local level, which requires the involvement of PA managers, public bodies, civil society, academia, economic operators and by sharing efforts on transnational ground since ES are ecologically interconnected and threatened by pressures generated at such level. Therefore, the project will establish a transnational network composed by PAs and local stakeholders and support it with a common strategy for the ES management and conservation together with a set of innovative governing tools. Thanks to such project outputs and their active involvement in the project implementation through a community based management system, the commitment and capacities of quadruple helix actors to tackle threats on ES and apply measures for ES management and safeguarding will be increased.

PROJECT PARTNERS:

- LP - Municipality of Staranzano (IT)
- PP2 - Veneto Agricoltura – Veneto Region’s Agency for the innovation in the primary sector (IT)
- PP3 - University of Salento – Department of Biological and Environmental Science and Technologies (DiSTeBA) (IT)
- PP4 - DOPPS-BirdLife Slovenia (SLO)
- PP5 - Public Institution for the Management of Protected Areas in the County of Split and Dalmatia “Sea and Karst” (HR)
- PP6 - Albanian Development Fund (AL)
- PP7 - Region of Crete (GR)

WP T2 – ECOSYSTEM SERVICES MANAGEMENT:

Starting from the assumption that safeguarding ecosystem services (ESS) means safeguarding human well-being, the first part of the project aims at defining the two main systems: the ES and the SoES. Once the two systems are defined, the Project Partners (PPs) develop a map that identifies their relationships and the most sensitive areas for pilot interventions. The pilots focus on how to manage Protected Areas (PAs) and Natura 2000 sites in an integrated way, involving stakeholders (SH) being both beneficiaries of ESS and affecting ES and biodiversity. The aim is to minimize impacts and maximize benefits to enhance ES and ESS management strengthening the commitment and increasing the capacities of the local actors. PPs identify win-win solutions on the base of the best practice experienced by other actors and PAs through literature review and the organisation of specific study visits. PPs and SH summarize such knowledge into a repository on ES management which highlights the pro and cons of success. The repository is used by PPs for selecting the ESS management measures to be tested within the pilot. Since the project aims at developing an integrated management system, local SH are actively involved both in the planning of the pilot and its implementation and assessment to maximize the effectiveness and to build their capacities. Best practices reviewed from literature, experienced by other PAs and through study visits, and carried out by PPs through pilots are collected into the so called “Methodology for Ecosystems management - M4ES”. The methodology with enclosed action plan & strategy (S4ES) are agreed among PPs and the PAs involved, setting the base for the IMPRECO transnational network. Finally win-win solutions are formalized signing protocols between SH and PAs and local authorities managing Natura 2000 sites to activate a dynamic protection system of ES and tackle environmental vulnerability in the long period.

ACTIVITY T2.2 - SHARING BEST PRACTICE:

PPs produce a **Repository on ES management**, composed by different measures kept from international literature and PAs’ experiences, that is used for the selection of the ESS management measures to be tested within the pilot and later fed with the new best practices coming from the project pilots themselves. The best practices on ES management in the ADRION area are collected thanks to literature review, dedicated interviews to PA’s managers and **study visits of PAs**. Once completed, it represents a physical - soft tool supporting the transnational network set up by the project and it is hosted on the project platform, shared online applying an open-access policy for the data and fed by project activities. Thanks to this structure, the repository is shaped as a tool to be consulted also by other organizations with different needs for ES management.

THE STUDY VISITS PROGRAMME:

The IMPRECO repository is implemented by PPs to build up virtual knowledge on ES management collecting the related best practices on the base of a common template focusing on premises, measures applied, results achieved, stakeholders involved and overall costs. At this end, PPs organize 7 Study visits (SVs) to make field experience of best practice carried out by PAs where also local stakeholders are invited to participate. Stakeholders are provided with an interview template in order to collect standardized data during the visits Then, they are analysed highlighting the pro and cons of success and summarised in a Study Visit report which includes also the PAs management system, the biodiversity and ES conservation measures, the application of ESS approach and related activities, the management of threat/weak-points. PPs integrate them with some video interviews for the project video and the IMPRECO e-learning platform.

GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION TO STUDY VISITS

As for the participation of the Stakeholders to the Study Visits Programme described here above, it is foreseen a procedure for the selection of about n. 03 participants for each of the 7 Study Visits (3 in Italy, 1 in Slovenia, 1 in Croatia, 1 in Albania and 1 in Greece). The minimum requirements for the participants are:

- The candidates must demonstrate a clear relationship with the Pilot Protected Area and/or the ecosystem services provided by the PA's ecosystems in order to be identified as Stakeholders. Employees of pilot Protected Areas or collaborators can be candidates but they must have, at the time of application, work / collaboration contracts covering the entire duration of the Study Visits Programme (until November 2019);
- Good knowledge of English;
- The candidates must have reached the age of majority before the date application;
- The candidates must be European citizens or non-EU citizens residing in one of the partner countries of the project.

In the evaluation of the candidacies, priority will be given to those presented by subjects who have not already participated in study visits programs/actions on the same subjects in the last two years.

In the selection phase particular attention has to be paid to gender equality in access to the Study Visits Programme.

SUBMISSION OF CV AND MOTIVATION LETTER

Candidates are asked to submit a Curriculum Vitae and a Motivational Letter. As for the Motivational Letter, it has to state:

1. Relationship with the Pilot Protected Area (Škocjanski zatok NR) or with the related natural heritage/ecosystems;
2. The main motivations for the participation to the Study Visits;
3. The main expectations for the participation to the Study Visits;
4. The commitment to the participation to all the preliminary activities to the participation to the Study Visits and to the following evaluations/surveys included the related interviews

COSTS COVERED

For each participant, the PP covers the following costs:

- round trip costs
- room and board at the chosen facilities
- local transports

There is no compensation, reimbursement or recognition of the hourly costs for the participants to the companies or organizations of origin.

DUTIES OF PARTICIPANTS

Selected candidates are obliged to attend pre-departure preparation meetings, if asked by the PP. There are no reimbursements for any expenses incurred by the candidate for participation in such meetings or the selection interviews.

Each participant also assumes the obligation to draft out an interview and a report on the activities carried out, the skills acquired, the possibility of transferring them in their reference contexts, on the basis of a format that will be delivered by the PP.