



BEST
VOLUNTARY SCHEME
FOR BIODIVERSITY AND
ECOSYSTEM SERVICES
IN TERRITORIES OF
EUROPEAN OVERSEAS

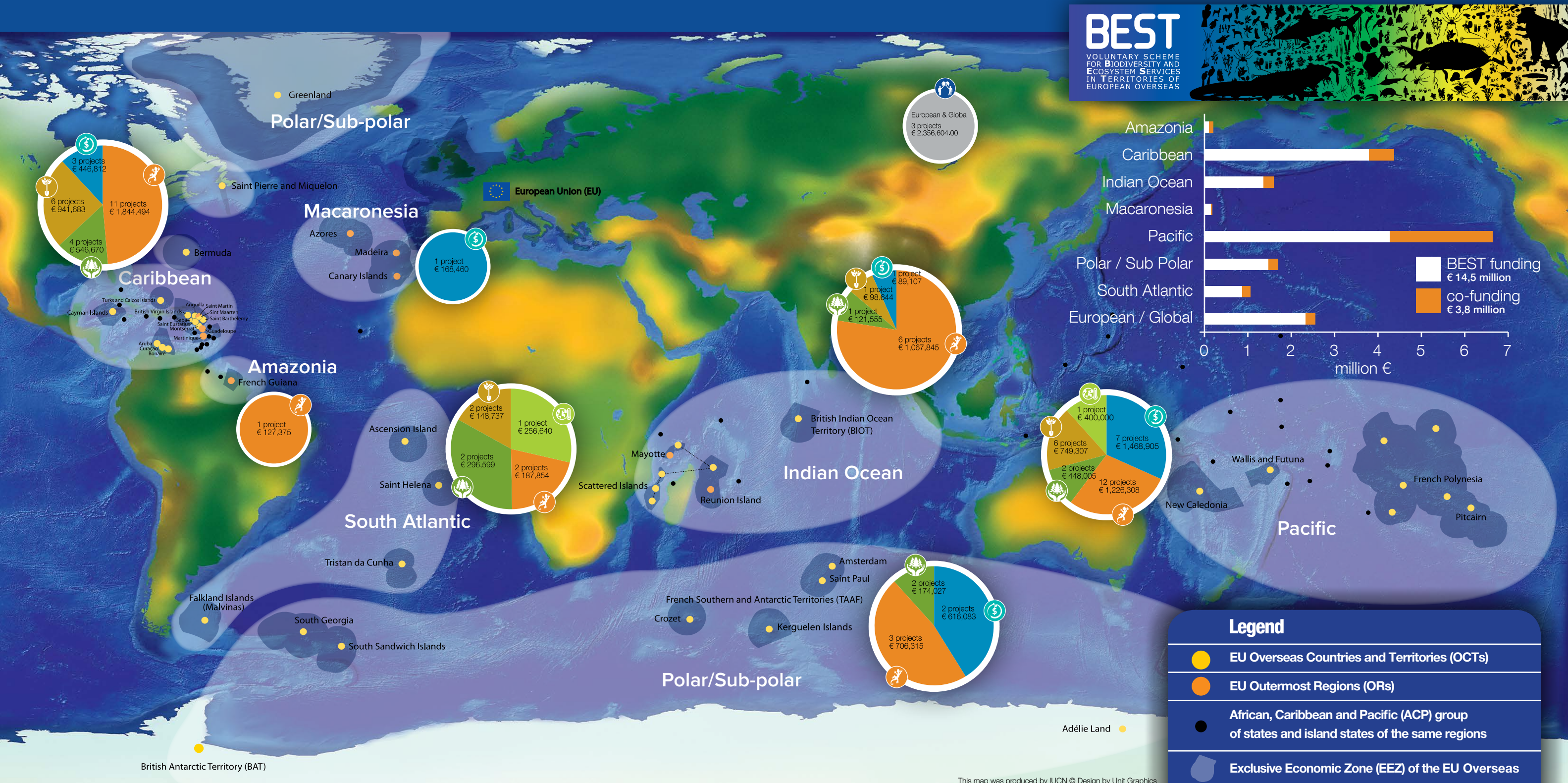


BEST Initiative

Projects 2011 - 2017

A European initiative to foster action in 7 regions of global importance

Since 2011 the BEST Initiative has supported the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of ecosystem services including ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation in the 9 EU Outermost Regions (ORs) and 25 Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) through 80 projects.



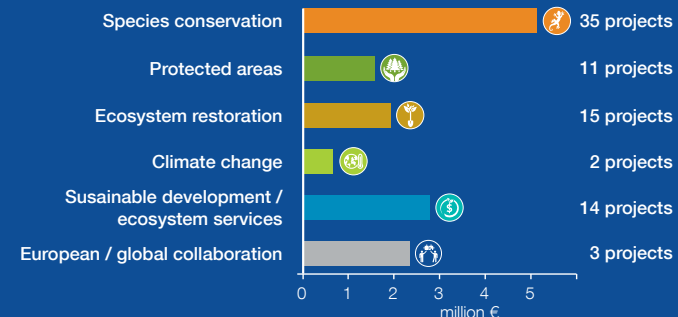
The **BEST initiative** started as a follow up to the 'Message from Reunion Island'¹, which called for a dedicated funding mechanism to support the conservation of EU Overseas' biodiversity.

The **BEST Preparatory Action (BEST PA)** provided seed money for the BEST Initiative and **allowed funding of 16 projects** via 2 calls for project proposals (**BEST I-2011** and **BEST II-2012**), a first partnership with the French Development Agency (AFD) supporting 2 additional projects and the BEST consortium work on 'Measures

towards sustaining the BEST PA' (**BEST III**), led by IUCN, which developed 7 regional ecosystem profiles and investment strategies in collaboration with partners and local actors.

The work enabled through the BEST PA stimulated further, and much needed, investment in the EU Overseas through the **BEST 2.0** grant-making facility for OCTs and **BEST RUP** pilot project offering more funding of on-the-ground activities in the French ORs.

¹ Outcome of the Conference "European Union and its Overseas Entities: Strategies to counter Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss" held under the French Presidency in 2008.



List of 80 BEST projects (2011-2017)



European & Global (3 projects – € 2.37 million)

European/Global collaboration (3 projects)

- Piloting the development and implementation of national-level joint activities between the Rio Conventions in support of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation (CBD facilitation project)
- Building partnerships and awareness of biodiversity and climate change in Europe overseas for the future of BEST (IUCN facilitation project)
- Measures towards sustaining the BEST Preparatory Action to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories (BEST III)



Amazonia (1 project – € 127,375)

Species Conservation (1 project)

- SOPPAG - White-lipped peccaries monitoring from the national park of French Guiana



Macaronesia (1 project – € 168,460)

Sustainable development / ecosystem services (1 project)

- Changes in submersed vegetation: assessing loss in ecosystems services from fondose to depauperate systems dominated by opportunistic vegetation



Indian Ocean (9 projects – € 1.38 million)

Species Conservation (6 projects)

- MIROMEN - Migration Routes of Humpback Whales (*Megaptera Novaeangliae*)
- CoCa Loca – Connectivity of Loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*) in Western Indian Ocean: Implementation of local and regional management
- REPT'ILE - Terrestrial reptiles of the Scattered Islands
- DyCIT - The Dynamic and Conservation of the Island of Tromelin
- COPRA - Conservation and integrated management of phanerogam seagrass meadows in the Glorieuses Marine Nature Park and their functional role for marine turtle populations
- CORCOPA - Optimising Conservation of Europa's Coral Reefs by Eco-Acoustics



Protected areas (1 project)

- Creation of new protected areas in the public forests of La Réunion and Mayotte



Ecosystem restoration (1 project)

- PRODVEGEUR - Development of an autonomous plant production unit for the restoration of habitats and the biological reinforcement of populations of plant species on the island of Europa



Sustainable development / ecosystem services (1 project)

- BIOT Environmental Interpretation and Education Project



Caribbean (24 projects – € 3.78 million)

Species Conservation (10 projects)

- Conserving Species and Sites of International Importance by the Eradication of Invasive Species in the Caribbean UK Overseas Territories
- Securing pockets of paradise in the Caribbean; embedding capacity for invasive alien species management in UKOT based organisations
- Saving the sea turtles of Anguilla: combining community action with scientific evidence to drive legislative change
- Combining local ecological knowledge and ciguatera analysis to rule lionfish toxicity and edibility and catalyse infestation control
- Enacting a new regional recovery plan for the Lesser Antillean iguana: an endangered ecological keystone species
- Management of invasive lionfish hotspots: conservation of biodiversity on mesophotic coral ecosystems in Bermuda
- Improving the management of the invasive lionfish (*Pterois volitans*) by determining movement patterns and depth preference
- Best of Bats!
- A Nursery for Endemics and Key Native Species
- Assessing the utility of lionfish traps for preserving biodiversity by managing invasive populations
- Best of sharks and rays in Saint-Barths



Protected areas (4 projects)

- Marine Park Aruba
- Understanding the East Caicos KBA's corals and coast: A key to safeguarding TCI's future
- North Saba National Park Phase 1
- Promoting and enhancing the ecological and economic value of Anguilla's marine parks: piloting the Little Bay Marine Park restoration project



Ecosystem restoration (6 projects)

- MANG - Giving impetus to a collective movement in favour of the preservation of coastal wetlands in EU overseas territories
- RESCQ - Restoration of Ecosystem Services and Coral Reef Quality
- Restoration of Key Biodiversity Areas of St. Maarten (plant)
- Scaling-up Efforts to Rehabilitate Threatened Coral Communities Using Recruits Reared from Wild-caught Gametes
- Watershed & biodiversity conservation on Bonaire
- Pop-Up Nursery and Coral Restoration



Sustainable development / ecosystem services (3 projects)

- EcoServPlantain - Quantification of ecosystem services in agro-ecosystems, case of plantain banana in Martinique
- CARIPES - Quantification of ecosystem services provided by marine protected areas (MPAs) in the Caribbean with a view to their payment
- Capacity building and increased financing for long term monitoring programmes for coral reefs in the Turks and Caicos Islands

South Atlantic (7 projects - € 889,829)



Species Conservation (2 projects)

- Developing a site-based conservation approach for Sei whales (*Balaenoptera borealis*) at Berkeley Sound, Falkland Islands
- Nurseries for nature: increasing capability at St Helena's endemic nurseries



Protected areas (2 projects)

- Trails and interpretation improvements in the Peaks National Park, St Helena
- An ecological assessment of Ascension Island's shallow-water seamounts as candidate MPAs



Ecosystem restoration (2 projects)

- Restoration of Peak Dale's St Helena gumwood forest
- Forest Restoration and Improved Biosecurity on Nightingale Island



Climate change (1 project)

- TEFRA - Terrestrial Ecosystems of the Falklands - a climate change Risk Assessment

Polar and Sub-polar (7 projects - € 1.5 million)



Species Conservation (3 projects)

- Identifying important marine areas for macaroni penguins (*Eudyptes chrysolophus*) in the UK and FR OCTs
- Determining the feeding areas used by the community of seabirds breeding on the island of Grand Cumbier
- Where are they right now? Right whales in the South Georgia marine ecosystem



Protected areas (2 projects)

- ITAGED - Conservation of threatened top marine predators of the French Southern Territories: Identifying Threats And Getting Essential Data
- SEECTOR: Significant Ecological areas for pelagic species and Conservation challenge in the southern Indian ocean



Sustainable development / ecosystem services (2 projects)

- PISUNA - Protecting biodiversity and creating multiple benefits for local communities in Greenland
- Sustainable fishing in the Arctic: Can the harvest of Greenland's biggest export be compatible with the conservation of benthic ecosystems?

Pacific (28 projects - € 4.29 million)



Species Conservation (12 projects)

- Protection and sustainable management of French Polynesia land-birds threatened by extinction
- Saving the two most threatened bird species in French Polynesia from extinction
- FLORE NC: Preserving together the floristic heritage of New Caledonia
- Strengthening conservation measures and tools for threatened conifers and palms of the rainforests and scrubland of New Caledonia
- Strengthening the local capacity to protect the terrestrial natural heritage of Rimatara
- Hei Moana, Ocean Sentinels
- Conservation of the critically endangered Niau Kingfisher through the local community
- Saving the endangered flora of the raised Anaa atoll and the definition of priority areas for conservation based on the flora and fauna
- Necessity of safeguarding the terrestrial environment of Rapa
- Safeguarding the Rare and Threatened Birds of Ua Huka
- RECOFOR: Regulation of deer for the conservation of forests
- NEREIS: Conservation of the Fairy Tern (*Sterna nereis exsul*)



Protected areas (2 projects)

- Pacific Biodiversity Blue Belt
- Strengthening the participative and integrated management of the UNESCO property on Touho



Ecosystem restoration (6 projects)

- Protect and Restore the Dry Forest of the Coast of New Caledonia
- Biodiversity and sustainable management of the marine and coastal environment and related resources in the context of climate change in Wallis and Futuna
- Conservation of the Natural Forest Remnants of Maraeti'a Plateau, Punaruu Valley, Tahiti
- Strengthening the drinking water supply system of the Houaliou commune by maintaining the ecosystem services of the upstream water catchment
- Tukemaragai - Ecological restoration of 3 islands of Gambier
- Restoration of small basins on the plateau of Te Mehani rahi



Sustainable development / ecosystem services (7 projects)

- CORAIL - Coral reefs in a changing world - ecosystem services from coral reefs: public tools for decision making in New Caledonia and French Polynesia
- GREEN NC - Comprehensive management strategies for environment and natural areas: biodiversity and ecosystem services in New Caledonia
- PACIOCEA - South Pacific Ocean Ecosystemic Analysis
- Innovative and sustainable water management: optimizing agricultural irrigation
- Sustainable management of Wallis and Futuna's forests
- Development of the network of Educational Managed Marine Areas in 5 schools of French Polynesia
- AGRISUB - Organic farming substrates for the sustainable use of natural resources, carbon sequestration and the control of invasive species



Climate change (1 project)

- BIOPELAGOS - Biodiversity of oceanic pelagic ecosystems for a better conservation and management of outstanding natural areas



Foreword



Cristiana Paşca Palmer, PhD
Executive Secretary,
Convention on Biological Diversity

The European Union's (EU) Outermost Regions (ORs) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) are home to immense biodiversity, including significant fishing stocks as well as extensive coral reefs of global importance.

The achievements of the BEST Preparatory Action (PA) have been impressive. With 13 million Euros invested by all partners, BEST PA has unlocked the potential of the EU's ORs and OCTs to contribute to the implementation of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. It has also supported ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation. It has helped to increase the awareness and recognition of the global importance of biodiversity in these countries and territories. And its work to conserve and sustainably use the biological resources in these areas provides examples of nature-based solutions to development and global challenges that can be replicated.

I would like to congratulate all partners on this success. These include the International Union for Conservation of Nature, whose Europe Overseas programme has played a catalytic role, advocating for establishing a dedicated mechanism at the EU level and piloting BEST, European institutions, EU Member States, the EU ORs and OCTs, and the Global Islands Partnership (GLISPA), which has facilitated cooperation of the EU's ORs and OCTs at the international level.

I was pleased to witness the launch of the BEST Challenge by the European Commission during the UN Biodiversity Conference in December 2016 in Cancun, the first interregional Oceans challenge to be promoted through GLISPA. As the BEST PA comes to a close, this initiative will help showcase the many lessons learned, continue to support work on the links between biodiversity and climate change in the EU's OR's and OCTs and facilitate cooperation with their neighbours on these issues.

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity stands ready to collaborate with its BEST partners, and to support efforts to put the lessons from the BEST Preparatory Action into a more permanent and multilateral mechanism.

Foreword



Humberto Delgado Rosa
Director for Natural Capital,
DG Environment,
European Commission

My background as an evolutionary biologist has given me a natural attraction for islands. Islands provide exceptional examples of evolution and biodiversity - indeed islands were key to allow Darwin to shape his evolutionary theory. Furthermore, islands are microcosmoses, which make them prone to serve as true 'laboratories' in the quest for sustainable development.

Most of the EU Outermost Regions (ORs) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) are islands. I feel a genuine interest in these places, which host an exceptionally rich biodiversity and which are at the same time most vulnerable to climate change and other environmental challenges. Looking at the world-map, the wide geographical spread of the EU ORs and OCTs has frequently struck me as an opportunity to showcase the huge European opportunity in terms of regional cooperation in seven globally important regions of the world and thus to contribute to the advancement of sustainable development and resilience.

The BEST initiative has helped to raise awareness on the ecological importance of ORs and OCTs for conserving global biodiversity, but such awareness still needs to be increased further in the EU. The Mid-term Review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy showed that although progress has been made, efforts need to be considerably stepped up in order to achieve its targets. Such efforts should focus on maintaining and restoring healthy ecosystems, including where biodiversity is richest, such as in the ORs and OCTs. BEST has helped to show that investing in biodiversity is one of the most cost-effective ways to mitigate climate change and to adapt to its impacts, while also contributing to achieve wider sustainability goals and objectives.

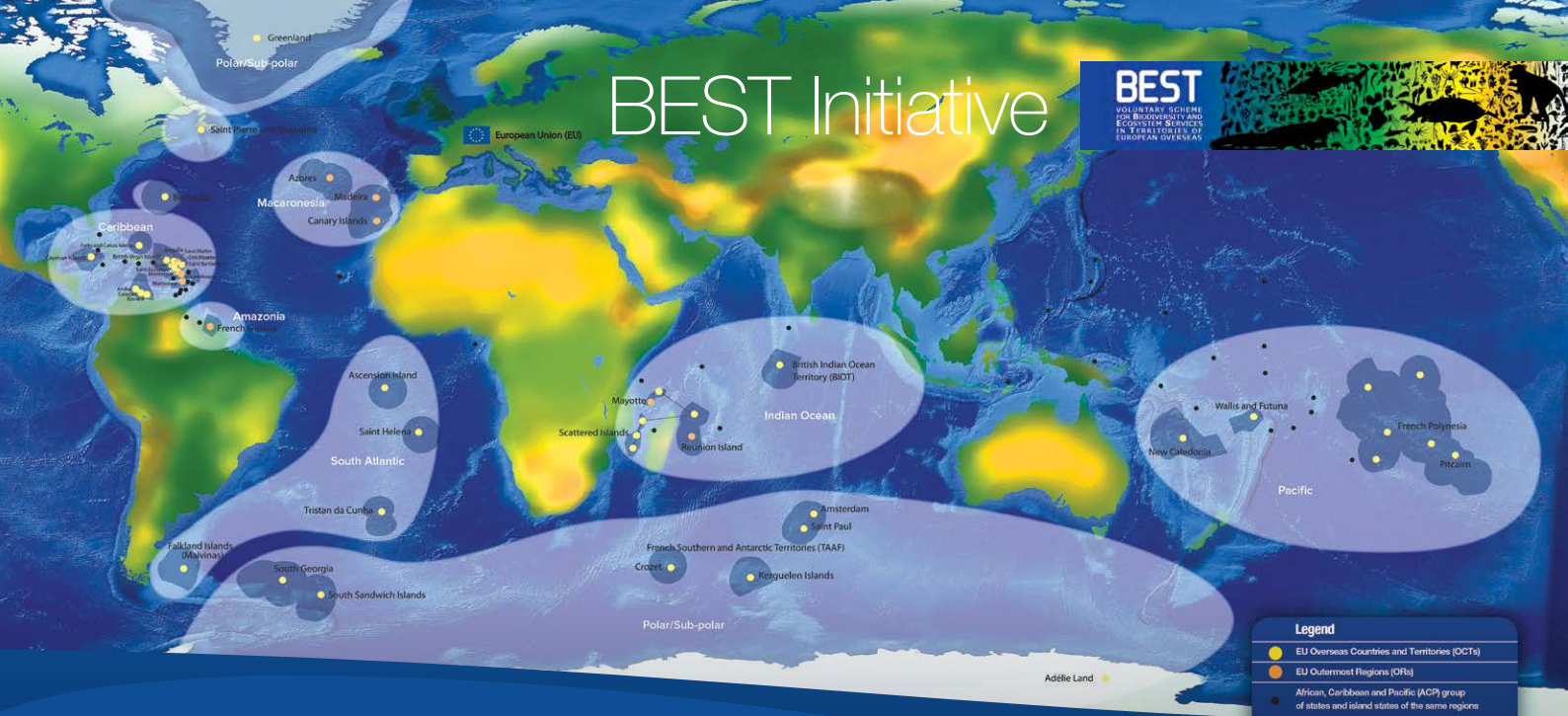
At the same time, fighting climate change and addressing its effects is fundamental to ensuring proper ecosystem functioning and services, human health and socio-economic security. Ecosystem-based approaches have consistently emerged as a key instrument to confront these concerns across sectors of business and society, offering multiple benefits in a potentially cost-effective manner. Hence it is timely and useful that one of the objectives of BEST is to promote ecosystem based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

With this vision in mind, I wish the BEST initiative - which in the past years has proven to be a strong initiative inspired by a true vision - a continued success, with perseverance, creativity and inspiration. We are committed to promote and facilitate the transition towards a sustainable partnership dedicated to mobilise resources to protect the unique ecosystems and societies in the EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories.

Foreword was originally a contribution to BEST Newsletter 3.

All BEST newsletters are available as pdf and e-book on the BEST website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/best/>



European & Global

3 projects – € 2,356,604

BEST map © IUCN, design by UnitGraphics

BEST PA I 2011

Piloting the development and implementation of national-level joint activities between the Rio Conventions in support of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation (CBD facilitation project)



Targeted territories: All EU Overseas

BEST PA grant awarded: 58,936 € | **Total budget:** 170,772 € (65% co-financing)

Duration: December 2011 - December 2012 (12 months)

Lead: Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat

Objective:

To build capacity in pilot countries to identify and capitalize on opportunities to enhance links between three interconnected environmental issues (biodiversity, climate change and land degradation) and related processes

Project outcome summary:

The project contributed to build a bridge between climate change adaptation/mitigation and biodiversity agendas. Through knowledge exchange with other countries and direct consultations with experts, OCT representatives received guidance on issues such as impacts and vulnerability on biodiversity and ecosystems, ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as invasive alien species and shared their experience. Side events held at the Rio+20 and the CBD COP XI in 2012 generated significant interest. This outreach project raised the awareness for and the visibility of ORs and OCTs at the international level and contributed to a greater understanding of the unique opportunities and issues in the EU Overseas.

CONTACT

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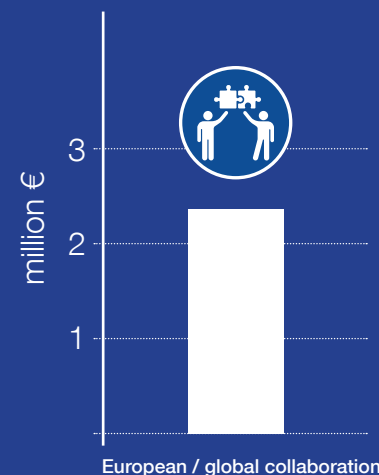


Photo: © IISD Earth Negotiations Bulletin

Building partnerships and awareness of biodiversity and climate change in Europe overseas for the future of BEST

(IUCN facilitation project)



Targeted territories: All EU Overseas

BEST PA grant awarded: 325,000 € | **Total budget:**

413,153 € (21% co-financing)

Duration: April 2012 - April 2014 (24 months)

Lead: IUCN Brussels Regional Office

Partners: EBCD; non-funded supporters: CEPF, CI, CBD Secretariat

Objective:

To create new and strengthen existing partnerships to improve governance and financial mechanism supporting European overseas biodiversity and sustainable development, especially in the face of climate change

Project outcome summary:

The project contributed to better knowledge and awareness of biodiversity and climate change issues and challenges in the EU Overseas by highlighting the importance of their biodiversity for the achievement of global and EU biodiversity targets. Embedding the project's final event into the International Conference on Biodiversity and Climate Change held in Guadeloupe in October 2014 allowed a wide distribution of the project results, including the [BEST business case](#), an elaboration of options for the future of BEST. This project significantly contributed to considering the engagement of the EU Overseas as a priority in the overall strategy of the Global Island Partnership ([GLIPSA](#)) to build resilient and sustainable island communities through innovative partnerships. The project demonstrated a significant leverage effect, leading to funding of two additional projects by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

CONTACT

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BEST presentation at Bright Spot event in Marseille © GLIPSA

BEST PA III 2013

Measures towards sustaining the BEST Preparatory Action to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories



Targeted territories: All EU Overseas

BEST PA grant awarded: 1,972,668 € | **Total budget:**

1,972,668 €

Duration: December 2013 – December 2017 (48 months)

Lead: IUCN

Partners: WWF France, SPAW-RAC (Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Regional Activity Center), South Atlantic Environment Research Institute, (SAERI), TAAF, UICN Comité Français, Committee, Fundo Regional para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FRCT), Conservation International (CI), Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)

Objective(s):

To support the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of ecosystem services in the EU Outermost Regions (ORs) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) by facilitating the establishment of partnerships and a long-term sustainable finance mechanism

Project outcome summary:

As the last round of the BEST preparatory action, BEST III has established a platform for guiding long-term conservation efforts and investments in the 7 regions where the ORs and OCTs are located through the development of regional ecosystem profiles and investment strategies in consultation with regional and local actors following a participatory and science-based approach. The BEST website, other communication and outreach materials and the organisation of regular meetings with partners, potential donors and other stakeholders has enabled exchanges and facilitated progress towards the establishment of a sustainable funding mechanism for the EU Overseas.

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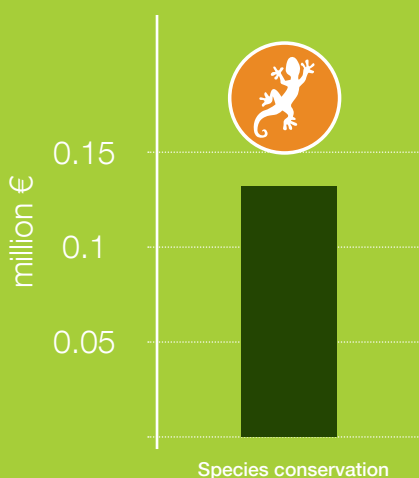
Presentation of first BEST ecosystem profile results, 2015, Brussels © Sylvie Rockel



Mount Itoupé, French Guiana © PAG, photo by Guillaume Feuillet
Baby turtles on French Guiana coast © WWF, photo by Roger Leguen

Amazonia

BEST funded projects (2011-2017)
1 project - € 127,375



Territories

French Guiana



SOPPAG - White-lipped peccaries monitoring from the national park of French Guiana

SOPPAG - Suivie Opérationnelle des Pécaris à lèvres blanches du Parc Amazonien de Guyane



Targeted territory: French Guiana

BEST PA grant awarded: 127,375 € | **Total budget:** 218,536 € (42% co-financing)

Duration: July 2012 - July 2014 (24 months)

Lead: Parc Amazonien de Guyane (PAG)

Objective:

To improve the knowledge, biological importance and conservation measures of the white-lipped peccaries as indicators of ecological networks of the South American forest

Project outcome summary:

Using tracking collars and genetic samples the project monitored the distribution and movements of white-lipped peccary, a wild pig species (also known as javelina or skunk pig) native to the Americas with significant impact on forest structure and function. Information about the peccary's ecology (diet, behaviour and demography) was synthesized from exchanges with indigenous populations and complemented by research findings. The results informed conservation measures to ensure the preservation of this ecologically and socially important species. In addition to raising awareness in the population recommendations for better management practices were provided. The Parc Amazonien continues the work started under SOPPAG.

SOPPAG activities website: <http://www.parc-amazonien-guyane.fr/les-actions/connaissance-au-service-du-territoire/suivi-operationnel-des-pecaris-a-levres-blanches/>

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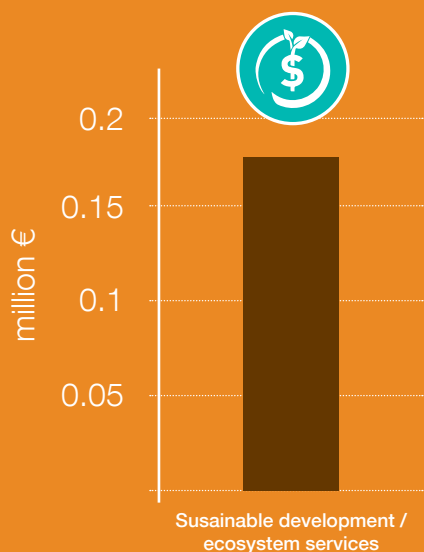
Photo: © PAG, ONCFS



Lagoa Comprida, Flores, Azores © Luisa Madruga
Bottlenose dolphins, Canary Islands © Ricardo Haroun

Macaronesia

BEST funded projects (2011-2017)
1 project - € 168,460



Territories

Azores
Madeira
Canary Islands



Changes in submersed vegetation: assessing loss in ecosystems services from fondose to depauperate systems dominated by opportunistic vegetation



Targeted territories: Azores, Canary Islands, Guadeloupe

BEST PA grant awarded: 168,460 € | **Total budget:** 177,327 € (5% co-financing)

Duration: December 2012 – December 2014 (24 months)

Lead: Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Partners: Université des Antilles et de la Guyane (Guadeloupe); Universidade dos Açores

Objective:

To provide information on changes in the magnitude of ecosystem services to help guide conservation and restoration of these ecosystems and inform environmental decision-makers

Project outcome summary:

The project explored how functioning and provision of ecosystem services differ between different seagrass meadows across the Canary Islands, Azores and Guadeloupe. The economic value of *Cymodocea nodosa* seagrass for local fisheries in Gran Canaria was determined by calculating the total monetary value of fish biomass per hectare. Promoting the economic and ecological importance of seagrass meadows for coastal fisheries as both 'fishing' and 'nursery' grounds will help to incorporate seagrasses into conservation legislative frameworks.

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Seagrass assessment, Azores © Fernando Espino



Angel shark © Canary Islands © Carlos Suarez



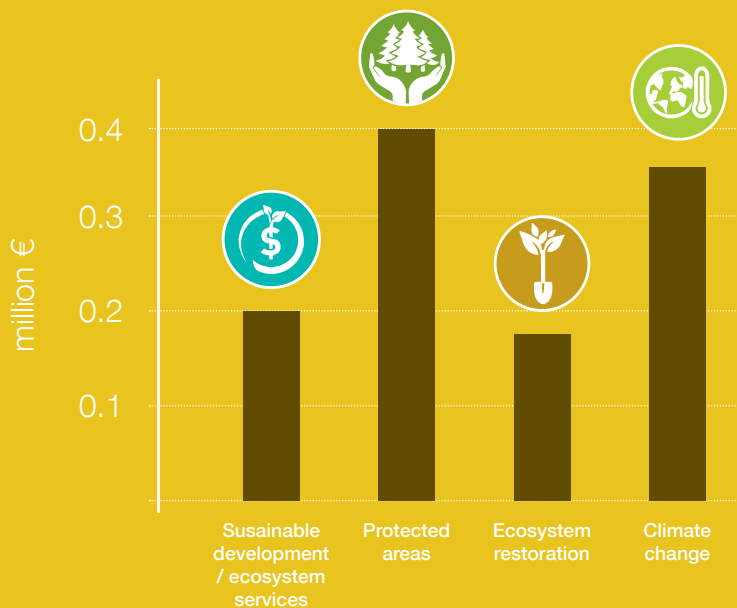
Photo: Kayaking Azores © Luisa Madruga



Elephant seals, Falkland Islands © Maria Taylor
Cloud forest, Saint Helena © Mike Jervois

South Atlantic

BEST funded projects (2011-2017)
7 projects – € 889,829



Territories

Ascension Island
Saint Helena
Tristan da Cunha
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)



TEFRA - Terrestrial Ecosystems of the Falklands - a climate change Risk Assessment



Royal Botanic Gardens
Kew

Targeted territory: Falkland Islands

BEST PA grant awarded: 256,640 € | **Total budget:** 297,280 € (14% co-financing)

Duration: January 2013 - September 2015 (33 months)

Lead: Botanic Royal Gardens, Kew

Partners: Falklands Conservation; United Kingdom Falkland Islands Trust (UKFIT)

Objective:

To provide the Falkland Islands Government with the tools and knowledge to effectively conserve native plants, their habitats and the services they provide in the face of climate change

Project outcome summary:

This first climate change risk assessment for a UK OCT identified the impacts of climate change, as well as priority risks for terrestrial biodiversity and ecosystem service delivery of the Falkland Islands and developed a set of recommended actions in four categories: policy level, legislation level, research level and practical action. The risk assessment was approved by the Falkland Islands Government (FIG) and provided input to an updated Biodiversity Framework (BioFrame), which includes climate change as a cross-cutting theme. The project enabled close collaboration between local stakeholders, including the government, the farming community and businesses.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Marcella Corcoran, RBG Kew

Restoration of Peak Dale's St Helena gumwood forest



Targeted territory: St Helena

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,987 € | **Total budget:** 49,987 €

Duration: May 2016 – March 2018 (22 months)

Lead: Saint Helena Nature Conservation Group (SNCG)

Objective:

To halt the decline of Saint Helena's gumwood forest by undertaking and informing best practice techniques for restoration work at Peak Dale

Project outcome summary:

Baseline surveys and distribution mapping was used to establish native and endemic planting areas within the restoration area, coupled to measures to restore the forest, such as clearance and control of invasive species as well as planting and surveys of gumwood trees, which engaged local stakeholders and increased restoration capacity. A management plan for Peak Dale was developed in collaboration with stakeholders. Fostering community involvement, public information on the activities and an awareness campaign have contributed to the long-term sustainable management of the forest.

Facebook page on restoration activities:

<https://www.facebook.com/SNCGPeakDale/>

CONTACT

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Photo: © Phil Lambdon

Developing a site-based conservation approach for Sei whales (*Balaenoptera borealis*) at Berkeley Sound, Falkland Islands



Targeted territory: Falkland Islands

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 97,065 € | **Total budget:** 97,065 €

Duration: August 2016 – September 2017 (14 months)

Lead: Falklands Conservation

Objective:

To increase knowledge and awareness of Sei whales (*Balaenoptera borealis*) in order to improve their protection and conservation status

Project outcome summary:

The project recorded the distribution and abundance of Sei whales in Berkeley Sound using visual and aerial surveys. Communication materials were developed to address the current lack of awareness of the whales' socioeconomic role at the Falklands and the lack of accessible information and best practice guidance for maritime users, including those offering whale-watching tourism. Human impacts on Sei whales and the associated management implications were detailed in a scientific project report, and a draft Code of Conduct for marine users to reduce impacts on Sei whales and other cetaceans was produced and shared with the Environmental Planning Department of the Falkland Islands Government. The project worked closely with local stakeholders including representatives of the government and the fishing and hydrocarbon industries.

Project website: <http://www.falklandsconservation.com/projects/sei-whale-project>

CONTACT

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Photo: © Alan Henry

Trails and interpretation improvements in the Peaks National Park, St Helena



St Helena
Government



Targeted territory: St Helena

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 99,531 € | **Total budget:** 99,531 €

Duration: April 2016 – July 2017 (15 months)

Lead: Government of Saint Helena, Environmental Management Division

Partner: Saint Helena Tourism

Objective:

To ensure safe access to St Helena's Peaks National Park while minimizing disturbance to the fragile cloud forest ecosystem

Project outcome summary:

During one of the largest ecotourism development projects on St Helena, trail facilities in the Peaks National Park were improved by installing boardwalk, stairs, handrails and a hiking shelter and clearing vegetation from overgrown trails. Online and local



Photo: © Mike Jervois

newspaper articles and a display during a local Nature Day event raised awareness of the trail upgrades, biodiversity and conservation efforts in the park. Construction with high-quality materials and regular maintenance will ensure the facilities will be long-lasting.

CONTACT

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Forest Restoration and Improved Biosecurity on Nightingale Island



Targeted territory: Tristan da Cunha

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 98,750 € | **Total budget:** 125,293 € (21% co-financing)

Duration: July 2016 – June 2018 (24 months)

Lead: Government of Tristan da Cunha, Conservation Department

Objective:

To secure the future of the endemic bird Wilkin's bunting (finch) through the restoration of its *Phylica* woodland habitat on Nightingale Island and establishing a biosecurity protocol

Project description:

The project will strengthen inter-island biosecurity measures to prevent the arrival of non-native species to Nightingale coming with human visitors moving between the islands, including developing a biosecurity protocol for visitors and a monitoring protocol. The

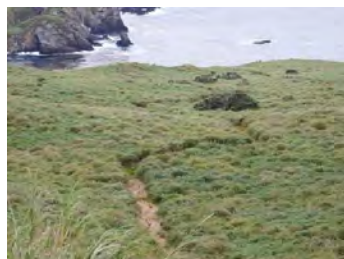


Photo: © Trevor Glass

Wilkin's bunting's (*Nesospiza wilkinsi*) population will be assessed, its territory mapped, and restoration undertaken through the planting of *Phylica* trees. Annual monitoring of *Phylica* will check for signs of sooty mould fungus and introduced scale insects that impact the plants.

CONTACT

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BEST 2.0 MG 2016

An ecological assessment of Ascension Island's shallow-water seamounts as candidate MPAs



Targeted territory: Ascension Island

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 197,067 € | **Total budget:** 303,012 € (35% co-financing)

Duration: January 2017 – September 2018 (21 months)

Lead: Ascension Island Government Conservation & Fisheries Department (AIGCFD)

Objective:

To provide information on Ascension Island's shallow-water seamounts in order to inform decision-makers about the need for their inclusion in a large-scale pelagic marine protected area (MPA) that is planned for the Territory

Project description:

The project will undertake the first detailed ecological studies of Ascension Island's three offshore shallow-water seamounts to feed into a major marine spatial planning exercise for designating the Atlantic Ocean's largest no-take MPA (or MPA network) within the next few years. Using an innovative combination of aquatic

telemetry and underwater video census techniques, the project will assess the importance of Ascension's seamounts as aggregation areas for pelagic megafauna and the size of marine reserves needed to effectively protect such assemblages from the impacts of commercial fisheries.

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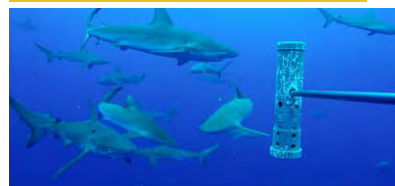


Photo: © Ascension Island Government (AIG) Conservation Department

BEST 2.0 SG 2017

Nurseries for nature: increasing capability at St Helena's endemic nurseries



St Helena
Government



Targeted territory: St Helena

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 90,789 € | **Total budget:** 90,789 €

Duration: January 2018 - January 2019 (12 months)

Lead: St Helena National Trust

Partner: St Helena Government, Environmental and Natural Resources Directorate (ENRD)

Objective:

To improve the facilities and increase the capacity of Saint Helena's three conservation nurseries to produce healthy genetically diverse plants focusing on six Critically Endangered species

Project description:

The project will expand the work of the island's three leading conservation focussed nurseries growing cloud forest, dry-land, moist upland and desert species. Building knowledge, partnerships and collaboration between committed nursery teams will increase the facilities capability to produce some of the world's most threatened plants. The production of native plants is currently

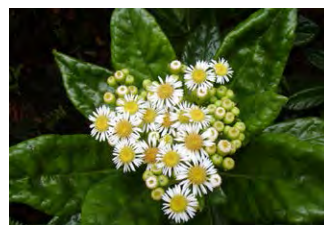


Photo: © Mike Jervois

the limiting factor for habitat restoration efforts on the island. The project will share experiences with other OCTs and raise awareness in St Helena's population about the island's endemic species, their threats and conservation efforts.

CONTACT

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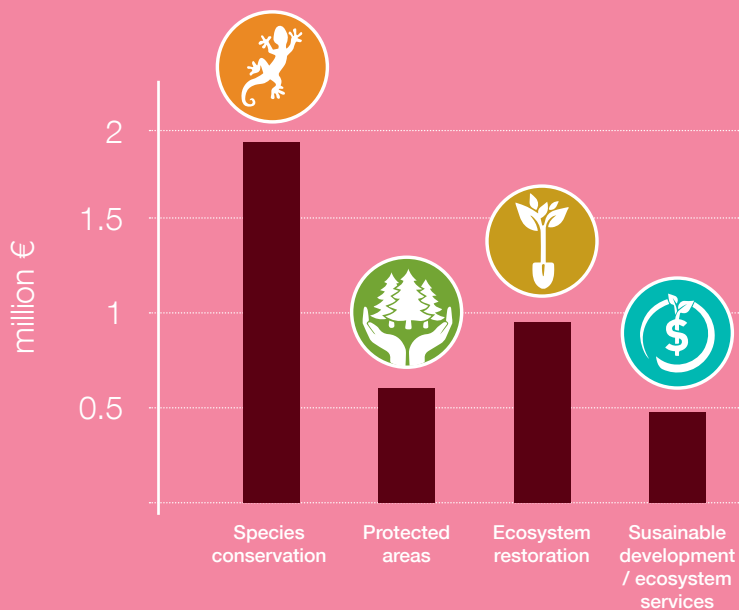


St Martin coastal wetland restoration © Romain Renoux
Bonaire reef © Erik Meesters

Caribbean

BEST funded projects (2011-2017)

24 projects – € 3.78 million



Territories

- Bermuda
- Cayman Islands
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- British Virgin Islands
- Anguilla
- Saint Martin
- Sint Maarten
- Saint Barthélemy
- Saba
- Sint Eustatius
- Montserrat
- Martinique
- Aruba
- Curaçao
- Bonaire
- Guadeloupe



EcoServPlantain - Quantification of ecosystem services in agro-ecosystems, case of plantain banana in Martinique

Quantification des services écosystémiques associées aux agroécosystèmes - Cas des systèmes à base de bananes plantains en Martinique



Targeted territory: Martinique

BEST PA grant awarded: 65,589 € | **Total budget:** 69,041 € (5% co-funding)

Duration: March 2012 - March 2014 (24 months)

Lead: Centre de Coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD)

Partner: Conseil Régional de Martinique (*observer, no funding*)

Objective:

To assess the ecosystem services of plantain fields taking conservation measures into account in order to guide the development of sustainable agricultural practices in tropical climates

Project outcome summary:

The project contributed to a better understanding of the correlation between biodiversity, pest regulation and production yields and its regulation processes in agroecosystems. The methods developed in this project - to measure ecosystem services in the context of tropical agroecosystems - will be useful for future projects. In addressing the role of biodiversity in cropping systems this project complemented an ERDF project, which was more applied and focused specifically on the design of innovative systems.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Martin Godefroid, CIRAD

CARIPES - Quantification of ecosystem services provided by marine protected areas (MPAs) in the Caribbean with a view to their payment

CARIPES - Quantification des services écosystémiques des aires marines protégées de la Caraïbe en vue de leur paiement



Targeted territories: regional (selected Caribbean MPAs)

BEST PA grant awarded: 331,265 € | **Total budget:** 348,700 € (5% co-funding)

Duration: July 2012 – July 2016 (48 months)

Lead: Université des Antilles et de la Guyane - Centre de Recherche sur les Pouvoirs Locaux de la Caraïbe (UAG CRPLC)

Partner: Conseil Régional de Martinique (*observer, no funding*)

Objective:

To value ecosystem services provided by selected MPAs and develop a payment system for these services that is supported by and benefits coastal fishermen

Project outcome summary:

Although the project did not achieve its full potential, it delivered valuable ecosystem health indicators as well as ecological and economic assessments of ecosystem services, involving fishermen and other ecosystem users. The results inform follow-up projects on 'payments for marine protected area ecosystem services in the Caribbean oceans and other oceans'.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Jean-Philippe Maréchal

Conserving Species and Sites of International Importance by the Eradication of Invasive Species in the Caribbean UK Overseas Territories



Targeted territories: Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands (UKOTs)

BEST PA grant awarded: 266,432 € | **Total budget:** 284,511 € (6% co-funding)

Duration: January 2013 - December 2015 (36 months)

Lead: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

Partners: Anguilla National Trust, National Trust of the Cayman Islands

Objective:

To protect sites and species of conservation importance by eradicating invasive mammals in the 5 UKOTs

Project outcome summary:

The project delivered high quality technical planning for invasive alien species (IAS) removal, successful IAS eradication, an evaluation of biodiversity benefits and ecological impacts of IAS management in Caribbean OT, control and monitoring, biosecurity protocols and contributed to building capacity through networking, cross-territory workshops and fund raising. The project also capitalised on synergies with DEFRA funded actions and there are strong indicators that some of the territories mobilised support for continued action on IAS.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Lyndon John

MANG - Giving impetus to a collective movement in favour of the preservation of coastal wetlands in EU overseas territories



Targeted territories: Transregional (French entities in the Caribbean, French Guiana and Indian Ocean)

BEST PA grant awarded: 331,265 € | **Total budget:** 348,700 € (5% co-funding)

Duration: November 2013 - November 2016 (36 months)

Lead: Atelier Technique des Espaces Naturels (Aten)

Partner: Conservatoire du littoral

Objective:

To promote the value of coastal wetlands and appropriate management measures that are supported by public and private stakeholders

Project outcome summary:

The project developed a site assessment method for coastal wetlands in selected pilot sites to fill gaps in terms of knowledge, networks, and capacity building. Allowing a real interregional platform it provided useful and pertinent information to the different stakeholders involved in management and conservation in order to raise awareness and appreciation of the critical values and ecosystem services of these habitats. It promoted the adoption of a participatory management approach that was supported by the public and private organisations by involving all concerned stakeholders for each site in defining appropriate conservation strategies.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Romain Renoux

Securing pockets of paradise in the Caribbean; embedding capacity for invasive alien species management in UKOT based organisations



Targeted territories: British Virgin Islands; Cayman Islands; Montserrat; Turks and Caicos Islands
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 398,541 € | **Total budget:** 442,243 € (10% co-funding)
Duration: May 2016 – April 2019 (36 months)
Lead: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Partners: National Park Trust of the Virgin Islands; National Trust of the Cayman Islands; Department of Environment of Montserrat; Montserrat National Trust; National Trust of the Turks and Caicos Islands

Objective:

To increase the capacity to manage invasive alien species (IAS) in the four territories

Project description:

The project aims to build capacity, run targeted public awareness campaigns and promote regional cooperation in the 4 territories. This involves training on IAS management approaches and implementation activities within 4 key biodiversity areas (KBAs) (1 per territory). It will also develop national protocols for the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat.

CONTACT

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Photo: © James Millett

Marine Park Aruba



Targeted territory: Aruba
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 297,985 € | **Total budget:** 355,354 € (16% co-funding)
Duration: May 2016 – April 2019 (36 months)
Lead: The Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research (TNO)
Partner: Aruba Government, Directorate on Nature and Environment

Objective:

To establish a multi-use marine park for Aruba with legislation and long-term management

Project description:

The project will develop the appropriate legislation and establish a management structure for a multi-use marine park. Four ecosystem restoration and climate resilience projects targeting the four KBAs within the marine park will be developed, including budget estimates, proposed funding plan and project partners. For each of these KBAs a management plan will be developed to guide ecosystem maintenance and restoration, biological diversity and ecological processes along with climate adaptation project plans. A communications plan to build awareness and ownership of the KBAs will form a crucial part of the management and project plans.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Carole Martinez

Saving the sea turtles of Anguilla: combining community action with scientific evidence to drive legislative change



Targeted territory: Anguilla

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 394,976 € | **Total budget:** 438,238 € (10% co-funding)

Duration: May 2016 – April 2019 (36 months)

Lead: Government of Anguilla, Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources

Partners: Anguilla National Trust; University of Roehampton

Objective:

To improve the available scientific knowledge on sea turtles in order to better inform their management and conservation

Project description:

The project will assess foraging and breeding areas, population status and threats of sea turtles as well as formulate a mitigation plan. It aims to support the implementation of conservation actions by developing a recovery action plan and an eco-tour guide certification programme. National and international awareness and support for sea turtle and coastal conservation will be increased by educating local staff and the general public on the biology and conservation of sea turtles, sea turtle tracking and monitoring and marine spatial planning and data analysis. Throughout the project relevant stakeholders will be engaged and decision-makers in policy development informed.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Stuart Wynne

RESCQ - Restoration of Ecosystem Services and Coral Reef Quality



Targeted territories: Sint Maarten, Saint Eustatius, Saba, Turks and Caicos

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 333,468 € | **Total budget:** 393,468 € (15% co-funding)

Duration: May 2016 – April 2019 (36 months)

Lead: Wageningen Marine Research

Partners: Nature Foundation St. Maarten; Saba Conservation Foundation; St. Eustatius National Parks; Turks & Caicos Reef Fund

Objective:

To restore degraded coral reef zones by establishing coral nurseries on each of the 4 islands

Project description:

The project is establishing self-sufficient coral nurseries on each of the four islands and transplanting coral fragments at selected restoration sites, aiming to restore at least 100 Elkhorn (*Acropora palmata*) and Staghorn (*Acropora cervicornis*) colonies per site. Genotyping and monitoring of the resilience of coral fragments will be used to maintain genetic diversity within the restored colonies and ensure that the most resilient fragments are transplanted to the restoration sites. A practical manual for coral restoration will be produced.

Project website: <http://www.rescq.eu/>

CONTACT

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Photo: © Erik Meesters

Combining local ecological knowledge and ciguatera analysis to rule lionfish toxicity and edibility and catalyse infestation control



Targeted territory: Saint-Barthélemy
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 100,000 € | **Total budget:** 115,989 € (14 % co-funding)
Duration: April 2017 – September 2018 (18 months)
Lead: Agence Territoriale de l'Environnement de Saint-Barthélemy (ATE)

Objective:

To assess the toxicity and edibility lionfish as means to explore alternative invasive alien species control measures

Project description:

Using local ecological knowledge to select a sample of individual lionfish, the project will undertake chemical toxicity analysis to determine their edibility. The results will inform the regulation of lion fish sale and consumption as well as a long-term lionfish control strategy for Saint-Barthélemy.

Project website: <https://agencedelenvironnement.fr/portfolio/chasse-au-poisson-lion/>

CONTACT

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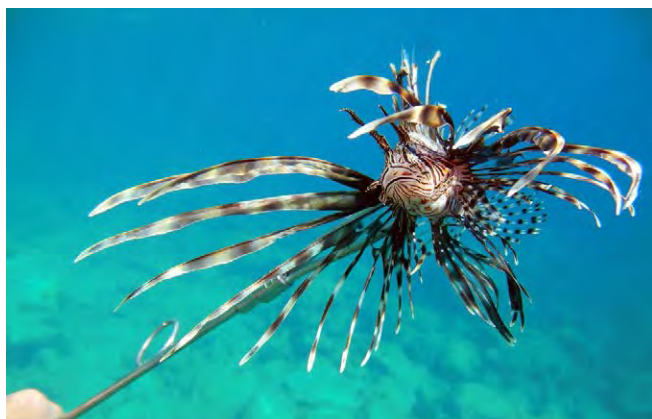


Photo: © Karl Questel

Enacting a new regional recovery plan for the Lesser Antillean iguana: an endangered ecological keystone species



Targeted territories: Anguilla; Saint-Barthélemy; Saint Eustatius

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 99,454 € | **Total budget:** 113,458 € (12% co-funding)

Duration: February 2017 – July 2018 (18 months)

Lead: Anguilla National Trust (ANT)

Partner: Agence Territoriale de l'Environnement de St. Barthélemy; Saint Eustatius National Parks

Objective:

To support the conservation of the Lesser Antillean iguana (common green iguana) by creating a sub-regional framework for species recovery and conservation

Project description:

The project aims to improve regional population data for the common green iguana, reintroduce the species to a site in Anguilla, implement standardised bio-security measures, and increase national and sub-regional awareness and support systems. Building on national-species and habit-specific policies, management plans, biodiversity strategies, and scientific data to guide action it encourages sustainable management of this endangered species within key biodiversity areas (KBAs) of three different island territories. It will also provide opportunities for cross-territory learning, knowledge exchange, and capacity building as well as networking amongst front-line conservation agencies in the wider Caribbean region and internationally.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Olivier Raynaud

Management of invasive lionfish hotspots: conservation of biodiversity on mesophotic coral ecosystems in Bermuda



Targeted territory: Bermuda

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 96,440 € | **Total budget:** 96,440 €

Duration: July 2017 – December 2018 (18 months)

Lead: Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences (BIOS)

Objective:

To preserve local reef fish diversity by targeted removal of invasive lionfish

Project description:

The project aims to establish a baseline for the local native reef fish community and reduce lionfish feeding pressure on it. In addition, it will promote the creation of a sustainable lionfish fishery through provision of lionfish to local restaurants followed by surveys to determine market demand. Results will indicate the lionfish control efficacy through targeted removal, the impact of removal efforts to biodiversity, and the viability of a creating a lionfish fishery. Findings will be shared with local stakeholders and other Overseas Countries and Territories through a variety of outreach activities.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Gretchen Goodbody-Gringley

Understanding the East Caicos KBA's corals and coast: A key to safeguarding TCI's future



Targeted territory: Turks and Caicos Islands

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,959 € | **Total budget:** 49,959 €

Duration: January 2017 – December 2017 (12 months)

Lead: Turks and Caicos Reef Fund (TCRF)

Partner: SWA Environmental

Objective:

To build resilience to climate change in East Caicos' coral reef ecosystems by improving their long-term conservation and the sustainable use of their biodiversity and ecosystem services

Project description:

Conservation zone classifications based on multi-criteria evaluation, management and monitoring protocols will be agreed in workshops with the Turks and Caicos Islands' management authority - the Department of Environment and Coastal Resources (DECR) and local stakeholders. After project completion, TCRF, in conjunction with DECR, will establish regular monitoring protocols at two-year intervals. The project methods and results will be shared via multi-media and open-access online media.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Kathleen McNary Wood

North Saba National Park Phase 1



Targeted territory: Saba

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 98,871 € | **Total budget:** 98,871 €

Duration: February 2017 – July 2018 (18 months)

Lead: Public Entity of Saba (Openbaar Lichaam Saba)

Partners: Saba Conservation Foundation (SCF); Saba Archaeological Center (SABARC)

Objective:

To safeguard the biodiversity and the archaeology in the northern part of Saba through the establishment of a national park

Project description:

The project aims to prepare the legislation necessary for species protection and to establish a National Park, including a draft management plan. In addition, the old trail, preserving the ruins of a small historical settlement will be restored to demonstrate the sustainable use of the park area.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Public Entity of Saba

Restoration of Key Biodiversity Areas of St. Maarten



Targeted territory: Sint Maarten

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,945 € | **Total budget:** 49,945 €

Duration: July 2017 – March 2018 (9 months)

Lead: Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC)

Objective:

To restore coastal and terrestrial biodiversity with native tree species at degraded sites to increase carbon sequestration

Project description:

A citizen-science initiative will integrate student volunteers, who will learn valuable skills and knowledge regarding botany, restoration ecology and conservation issues. The project also aims to establish a short interpretive nature trail, long-term management of the sites and increased support for the establishment of protected areas.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Rueben Thompson

Capacity building and increased financing for long term monitoring programmes for coral reefs in the Turks and Caicos Islands



WOLFS COMPANY
NATURE BY NUMBERS
WWW.WOLFSCOMPANY.COM

Targeted territory: Turks and Caicos Islands
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,958 € | **Total budget:** 49,958 €
Duration: March 2017 – January 2018 (11 months)
Lead: Wolfs Company

Objective:

To strengthen the government's capacity to manage the territory's coral reefs based on sound scientific findings and to guide decision-making and investments in natural resources management

Project description:

A coral reef monitoring course will involve scientific survey techniques and provide sufficient knowledge to develop effective monitoring programmes and strengthen coral reef management. The project also aims to identify feasible long-term revenue streams for coral monitoring and suitable indicators for environmental 'return on investment'.

Project website: <http://www.wolfscountry.com/best-2-0-capacity-building-and-increased-financing-for-monitoring-programmes-for-coral-reefs-in-the-turks-and-caicos-islands/>

CONTACT

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Photo: © Don Stark

Scaling-up Efforts to Rehabilitate Threatened Coral Communities Using Recruits Reared from Wild-caught Gametes



Targeted territory: Curaçao
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 91,657 € | **Total budget:** 91,657 €
Duration: January 2017 – June 2018 (18 months)
Lead: Caribbean Research and Management of Biodiversity Foundation (CARMABI)

Objective:

To increase persistence and recovery of Caribbean coral reef ecosystems by restoring degraded coral reefs

Project description:

The project will further develop its coral propagation method to increase recruitment success and reduce the growth of harmful algae, make outplanting more efficient and financially sustainable thus enabling larger scale coral reef restoration. It will demonstrate the performance of the refined tile design for *ex situ* coral offspring growth in the field.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Mark Vermeij

Watershed & biodiversity conservation on Bonaire



Targeted territory: Bonaire

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 99,862 € | **Total budget:** 99,862 €

Duration: June 2017 – November 2018 (18 months)

Lead: Echo Foundation

Objective:

To protect and restore a threatened dry forest habitat by establishing an extensive protected area around a site with high biodiversity

Project description:

Restoration of the unique *Rooi Sangu* canyon landscape will include reintroducing native plants and fencing off damaging introduced herbivores within the protected area. A series of trails will be established to make the area accessible to the public and panels will raise awareness of the area's value.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Lauren Schmaltz

Improving the management of the invasive lionfish (*Pterois volitans*) by determining movement patterns and depth preference



Targeted territory: Cayman Islands

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 99,880 € | **Total budget:** 99,880 €

Duration: January 2017 – July 2018 (18 months)

Lead: Central Caribbean Marine Institute

Objective:

To preserve coral reefs by enhancing the management strategy for invasive red lionfish

Project description:

The project will increase the understanding of lionfish movement patterns to inform a national management strategy and strengthen regional and international efforts to reduce the impact of lionfish and conserve biodiversity and ecosystem function. The creation of a publicly accessible database and map of Little Cayman lionfish population will allow appropriate selection time and sites for more effective targeted removal efforts.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Allison Candemo

Best of Bats!



Targeted territories: Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 100,000 € | **Total budget:** 100,000 €
Duration: April 2017 – September 2018 (18 months)
Lead: Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance Foundation (DCNA)

Objective:

To improve the conservation status of bats on Aruba, Curacao and Sint Maarten by increasing their habitat on the islands

Project description:

A desk study undertaken at the start of the project will establish the current status of bat populations and their nesting sites in the Dutch Caribbean and will be supplemented by field studies in Aruba, Curacao and Sint Maarten. The results will determine the type and distribution of bat houses to be built from local materials. An integral part of the project is the implementation of an education and outreach programme aimed at schools and the general population of the islands on the ecological function of bats.

CONTACT

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A Nursery for Endemics and Key Native Species



Targeted territory: Montserrat
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 88,810 € | **Total budget:** 88,810 €
Duration: January 2017 – May 2018 (17 months)
Lead: Montserrat National Trust (MNT)

Objective:

To establish a plant nursery for native species and support efforts to restore Montserrat's dry forest

Project description:

Plant species of special ecological value in Montserrat, including a number of endangered species, will be propagated and replanted – involving local communities in planting the seedlings during a native tree planting day - in an effort to restore 10 ha of this threatened ecosystem.

Project website: <http://montserratnationaltrust.ms/montserrat-native-nursery/>

CONTACT

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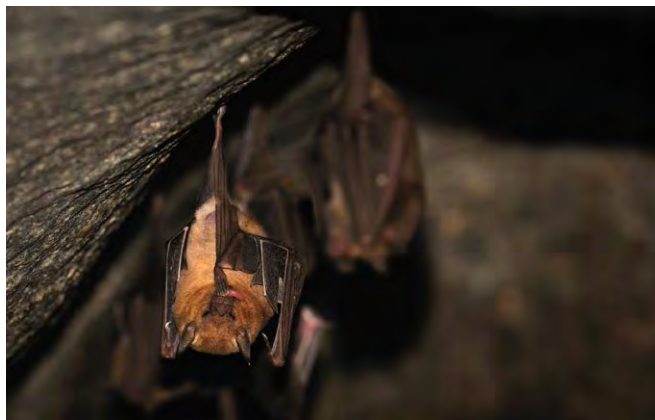


Photo: © Roland and Renate Kraft

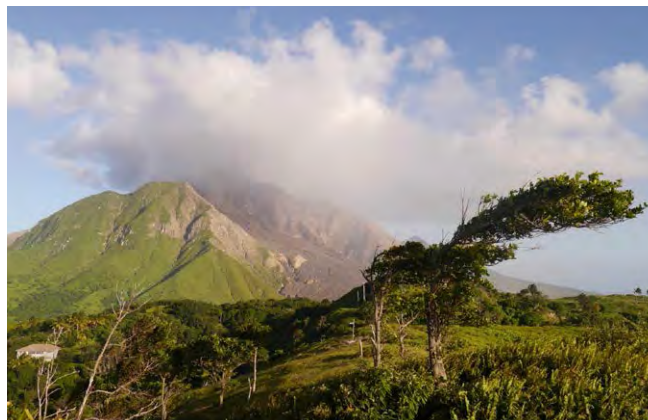


Photo: © Nicolas Tirard

Promoting and enhancing the ecological and economic value of Anguilla's marine parks: piloting the Little Bay Marine Park restoration project



Targeted territory: Anguilla

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 99,855 € | **Total budget:** 106,845 € (7% co-funding)

Duration: February 2018 – January 2019 (12 months)

Lead: Anguilla National Trust (ANT)

Objective:

To restore biodiversity and improve coral reef ecosystem resiliency by creating an artificial habitat for critical reef species

Project description:

The project will construct and deploy lobster casitas (artificial shelters) within the Little Bay Marine Park (LBMP), creating a "sanctuary" that will also provide critical habitat to other reef fish, sea turtle, and coral reef species. The project will diversify LBMP's value through awareness raising on the importance of Anguilla's nearshore ecosystems and providing alternative livelihood opportunities (eco-tourism) to fishers.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Amandine Vaslet

Pop-Up Nursery and Coral Restoration



Targeted territory: Bonaire

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,672 € | **Total budget:** 49,672 €

Duration: January 2018 - January 2019 (12 months)

Lead: Coral Restoration Foundation Bonaire (CRF Bonaire)

Objective(s):

To restore Elkhorn coral populations in a low biodiversity reef area within the Bonaire National Marine Park (BNMP) boundaries and increase species abundance and genotypic diversity

Project description:

A "pop-up" coral nursery will be set on site and removed at the end of the project allowing, in 8 months, for the propagation of 700 corals of 14 different genotypes, ready for transplantation. The restoration area of approximately 500m² will be monitored using recently developed 3D modelling technology to quantify several measures of coral growth, abundance and health through an easy-to-use and non-intrusive tool. The monitoring protocol and collected data will be shared with the BNMP and coral restoration projects in the Caribbean to spark the future development of a feasible and standardized monitoring protocol.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Erik Meesters

Best of sharks and rays in Saint-Barths



Targeted territory: Saint-Barthélemy

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 100,000 € | **Total budget:** 100,000 €

Duration: January 2018 - January 2019 (12 months)

Lead: Agence Territoriale de l'Environnement de Saint-Barthélemy (ATE)

Objective(s):

To improve the knowledge on sharks and rays and their conservation status in Saint Barthélemy and inform the adjustment of existing, and development of new conservation measures

Project description:

Fieldwork using Baited Remote Underwater Video (BRUV), including a new technique to observe pelagic species, will be complemented with fishermen and dive centre surveys on the species' socio-economic role. Through stakeholder consultations an adapted action plan for sharks and rays will be developed on the basis of the new knowledge and identify the required adjustments and additions to the existing regulations to protect these species. Communication activities - including a short documentary - will raise awareness about the project, demonstrate the importance for actions to protect sharks and rays and foster community involvement and support.

CONTACT

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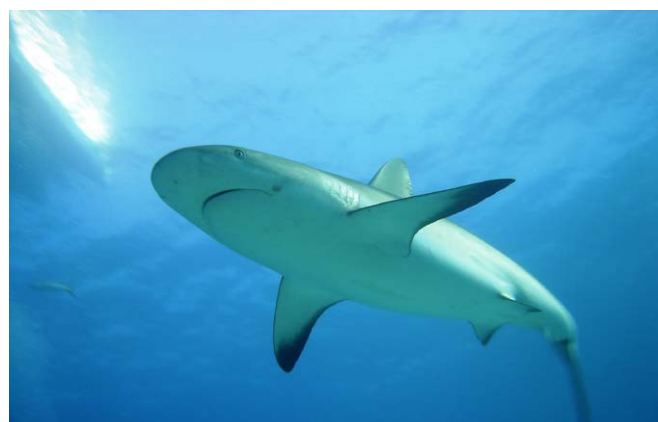


Photo: © Stuart Wynne

Assessing the utility of lionfish traps for preserving biodiversity by managing invasive populations



Targeted territory: Bermuda

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 99,961 € | **Total budget:** 99,961 €

Duration: February 2018 - January 2019 (12 months)

Lead: Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences

Objective:

To assess the efficiency of a new lionfish trap design as a cost effective (ecologically and financially) mechanism to continuously supply lionfish to the market

Project description:

Carrying out surveys of the fish community composition and lionfish density the project will determine the utility of a lionfish specific trap, developed by the U.S. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA), at known lionfish hotspots in Bermuda. The findings will be directly comparable to removal efforts led by technical divers (BEST 2.0 project in 2016) and provide resource managers with tangible results for determining the most efficient method for preserving biodiversity and ecosystem services and a cost effective (ecologically and financially) mechanism to continuously supply lionfish to the market. By sharing all results with territorial stakeholders and other OCTs through a variety of outreach activities the project aims to provide information for an adaptable management strategy at both the local and regional scales.

CONTACT

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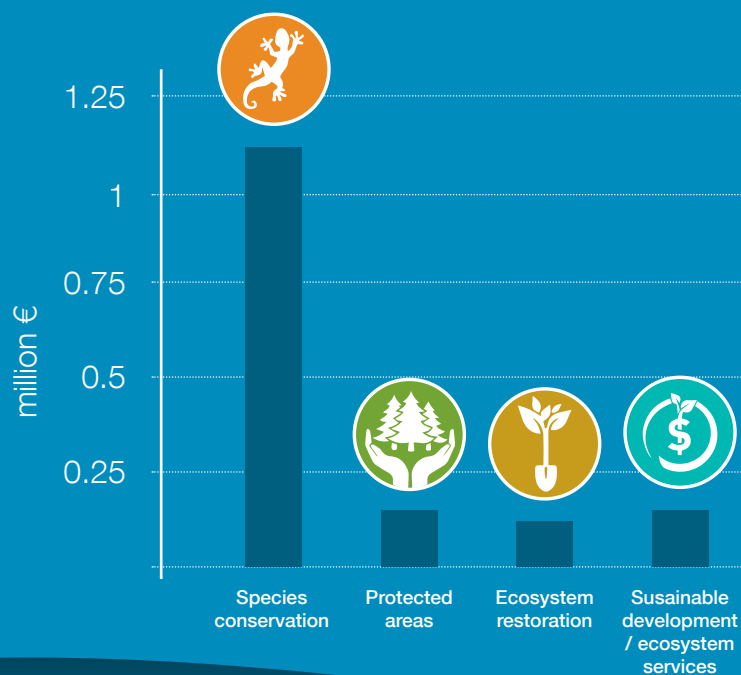


Photo: © Dr. Steve Gittings/NOAA



Indian Ocean

BEST funded projects (2011-2017)
9 projects – € 1.38 million



Territories

British Indian Ocean
Territory (BIOT)

Scattered Islands

Mayotte

Reunion Island



CoCa Loca – Connectivity of Loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*) in Western Indian Ocean: Implementation of local and regional management



Targeted territories: Reunion, Mayotte

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 240,444 € | **Total budget:** 253,099 € (5% co-funding)

Duration: September 2013 - March 2016 (30 months)

Lead: Kélonia

Partners: Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer (IFREMER); Collecte Localisation Satellites (CLS)

Objective:

To tackle anthropogenic threats (fishing, plastic ingestion, boat strikes) impacting Loggerhead turtles in the territorial waters of la Réunion and Mayotte through regional cooperation and the implementation of best practices in management of species and fisheries

Project outcome summary:

The project produced valuable information on the regional scale of the turtle's oceanic migration patterns, including new tracking data, and fostered regional cooperation between the countries hosting the nesting sites of this species (South Africa, Madagascar, Mozambique and Oman). In close collaboration with the fisheries sector and local fishermen best practices in the management of the species and fisheries were established that avoid by-catch as much as possible, such as equipping fishing vessels with "rescue kits" that allow the safe release of turtles caught by hooks. Thanks to interregional exchanges the project capitalized on good practices in Macaronesia's waters and shared experiences and scientific knowledge by gathering leading scientist from the Indian and Atlantic Oceans to identify future research and conservation actions on marine turtles in Overseas European Territories.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Eric Lancelot

REPT'ILE - Terrestrial reptiles of the Scattered Islands

REPT'ILE - REptiles Terrestres des Iles Eparses



Targeted territory: Scattered Islands (Îles Eparses), Glorioso Islands

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 48,585 € | **Total budget:** 48,585 €

Duration: July 2016 - December 2017 (18 months)

Lead: Nature Océan Indien

Objective:

To improve the conservation of terrestrial reptiles on the Glorioso Islands by providing a baseline on the status of local reptiles and amphibians to inform management measures

Project description:

The project will (re-)assess the conservation status of all terrestrial reptiles through desk-based research, collation of existing data and field trips to Grande Glorieuse, Île du Lys and Roches Vertes. Data for each species will be summarized and mapped using GIS. The results of the project will be published in the form of a scientific paper and will inform proposals for updated management measures.

CONTACT

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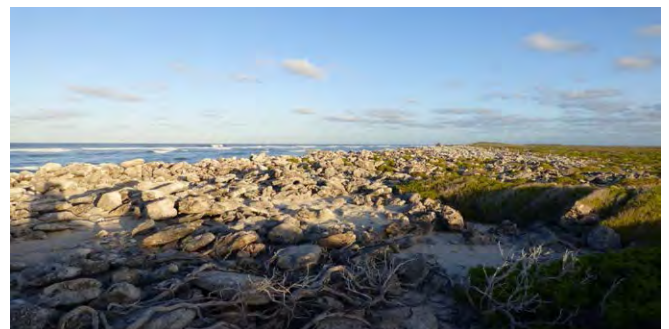


Photo: © Mickaël Sanchez

Creation of new protected areas in the public forests of La Réunion and Mayotte

Création de nouvelles aires protégées dans les forêts publiques à la Réunion et à Mayotte



Targeted territories: Reunion, Mayotte

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 121,555 € | **Total budget:** 127,952 € (5% co-funding)

Duration: February 2012 - August 2013 (18 months)

Lead: Office National des Forêts (ONF)

Objective:

To develop a strategy for the creation of protected areas in La Réunion and establish a regional collaboration to create protected areas in Mayotte's public forests

Project outcome summary:

The project created three new reserves with management plans in previously prioritized areas of La Réunion. The results were included in the annual programming for further funding dedicated to the ecological restoration in the public forest of La Reunion. The plans developed through this BEST project replied to a direct demand expressed by the forestry agents in charge of the areas. A regional collaboration with Mayotte was initiated with a focus on the creation of protected areas in the public forests. This BEST project marked the start of planned conservation actions in the concerned territories defined in the developed strategies.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Julien Triolo, ONF

MIROMEN - Migration Routes of Megaptera Novaeangliae (Humpback Whales)



Targeted territory: Reunion

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 183,550 € | **Total budget:** 194,850 € (5% co-funding)

Duration: February 2013 - January 2015 (24 months)

Lead: Association Globice Réunion

Partner: Wildlife Conservation Society, Madagascar

Objective:

To improve understanding of the migration routes of Humpback Whales with the purpose of reinforcing conservation measures and triggering the implementation of new management plans for this species at a local and regional level

Project outcome summary:

MIROMEN identified the migration routes of Humpback Whales (*Megaptera Noviangliae*) and assessed their movements between breeding areas around la Réunion by tracking 15 tagged individuals and studying their behaviour. The project results contributed to the creation of a new transnational marine protected area (MPA) and international scientific collaboration allowing technology improvements. Through strong communication general public awareness was raised, notably through activities in schools.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Globice

BIOT Environmental Interpretation and Education Project



Targeted territory: British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT)
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 89,107 € | **Total budget:** 159,028 € (44% co-funding)
Duration: May 2016 – March 2017 (11 months)
Lead: British Indian Ocean Territory Administration (BIOTA)

Objective:

To address the risk from personnel and visitors to BIOT by ensuring effective communication of the global importance of BIOT's biodiversity and the management measures in place to protect it

Project outcome summary:

A 250 m snorkel trail and 0.6 km forest trail in an area of active forest restoration were created on Diego Garcia with significant inputs from personnel working in the territory. Signboards providing information on the territory's biodiversity were installed at the trail sites and leaflets identifying guidelines for the prevention of introduction of invasive non-native species and informing of the fishing restrictions in place within BIOT's waters were produced and disseminated. A short film was produced to showcase the biological importance of BIOT and encourage the future involvement of personnel and visitors to get involved in conservation efforts. The project outputs can be accessed through the BIOTA website: <http://www.biot.io/news/eu-info-projects17/>.

CONTACT

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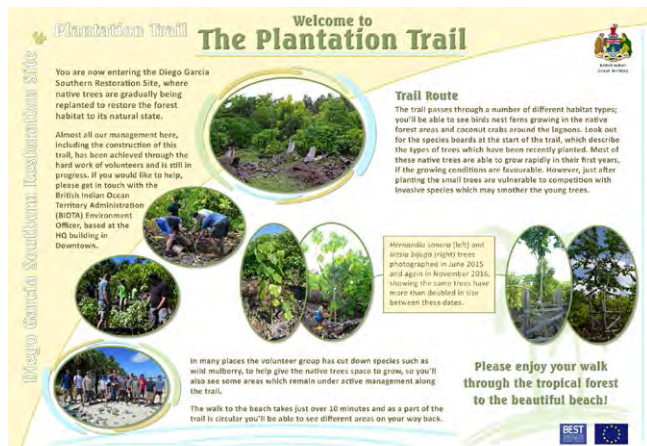


Photo: © BIOTA

DyCIT - The Dynamic and Conservation of the Island of Tromelin

DyCIT - Dynamique et Conservation de l'Île Tromelin



Targeted territory: Scattered Islands (Îles Eparses), Tromelin
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 96,000 € | **Total budget:** 173,940 € (45% co-funding)
Duration: July 2016 - June 2018 (24 months)
Lead: Université de La Réunion
Partner: Conservatoire Botanique National de Mascarin (CBNM)

Objective:

To assess the dynamics of the small tropical island of Tromelin following the eradication of rats and to inform future management actions for the island

Project outcome summary:

The project focuses on Tromelin's seabirds and vegetation to assess how they have evolved since the rat eradication that took place in 2005. It is also assessing the introduced mouse population to understand its impact on the island's biodiversity and evaluate possibilities for eradication. An increased understanding of the interactions, both positive and negative, between marine birds, vegetation and the mouse population through monitoring of biological indicators will help improve the future management of the island.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Matthieu Le Corre

COPRA - Conservation and integrated management of phanerogam seagrass meadows in the Glorieuses Marine Nature Park and their functional role for marine turtle populations

COPRA - Conservation et gestion intégrée des herbiers de phanérogames marines du parc naturel marin des Glorieuses et rôle fonctionnel pour les populations de tortues marines



AGENCE FRANÇAISE
POUR LA BIODIVERSITÉ
ÉTABLISSEMENT PUBLIC DE L'ÉTAT



Targeted territory: Scattered Islands (Îles Eparses), Glorieuses archipelago and Geyser Bank

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 399,646 € | **Total budget:** 420,680 € (5% co-funding)

Duration: January 2017 – April 2019 (28 months)

Lead: French Agency for Biodiversity (AFB)

Objective:

To conserve seagrass beds of marine phanerogams (seed plants) as a support for biodiversity and maintenance of the Glorieuses Marine Nature Park's (PNMG) marine turtle populations

Project description:

As a follow-up to preliminary studies on mapping seagrass distribution and their role as a habitat for juvenile green turtles this project aims to:

1. Increase knowledge of seagrass habitats and functional role for marine turtles, to inform management measures
2. Initiate a regional seagrass monitoring network
3. Improve the conservation and management of these ecosystems through specific measures to strengthen the PNMG management plan.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Parc naturel marin des Glorieuses / AFB

CORCOPA - Optimising Conservation of Europa's Coral Reefs by Eco-Acoustics

CORCOPA - Conservation Optimisée des Récifs Coralliens d'euROPa par l'éco-Acoustique



Targeted territory: Scattered Islands (Îles Eparses), Europa

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 99,620 € | **Total budget:** 112,610 € (12% co-funding)

Duration: January 2018 - December 2018 (12 months)

Lead: Université de La Réunion

Objective:

To strengthen and sustain TAAF's technical capacity to manage the coral ecosystems of the Scattered Islands

Project description:

The project will set up an innovative, operational and inexpensive monitoring tool using eco-acoustics - adapted to both the isolation of Europa and the pace of change experienced by its ecosystems – for passively recording the "sound landscape" of coral reefs to determine their status, coupled with visual reef assessments. The installation of an autonomous underwater station to perform and interpret continuous monitoring of the sound environment will allow changes to be monitored and will inform the management of Europa Island.

CONTACT

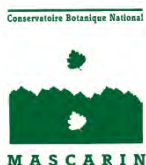
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Photo: © Bruno Marie

PRODVEGEUR - Development of an autonomous plant production unit for the restoration of habitats and the biological reinforcement of populations of plant species on the island of Europa

PRODVEGEUR - Développement d'une unité de production végétale autonome en faveur de la restauration des habitats et du renforcement biologique de populations d'espèces végétales patrimoniales de l'île Europa



Targeted territory: Scattered Islands (Îles Eparses), Europa

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 98,644 € | **Total budget:** 98,644 €

Duration: February 2018 – January 2019 (12 months)

Lead: Conservatoire Botanique National de Mascarin

Objective:

To support ecological restoration operations on the island by building TAAF's capacity in the propagation and breeding methods of native species

Project description:

Following the *in situ* installation of a functional plant production unit and harvesting of native plants species seeds TAAF staff will be trained in their propagation and seeding. Invasive plants will be eradicated to provide space for the native plant seedlings and an educational centre will be established for visitors. Supporting communication will include a website and social media activity documenting the activities.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Bruno Marie

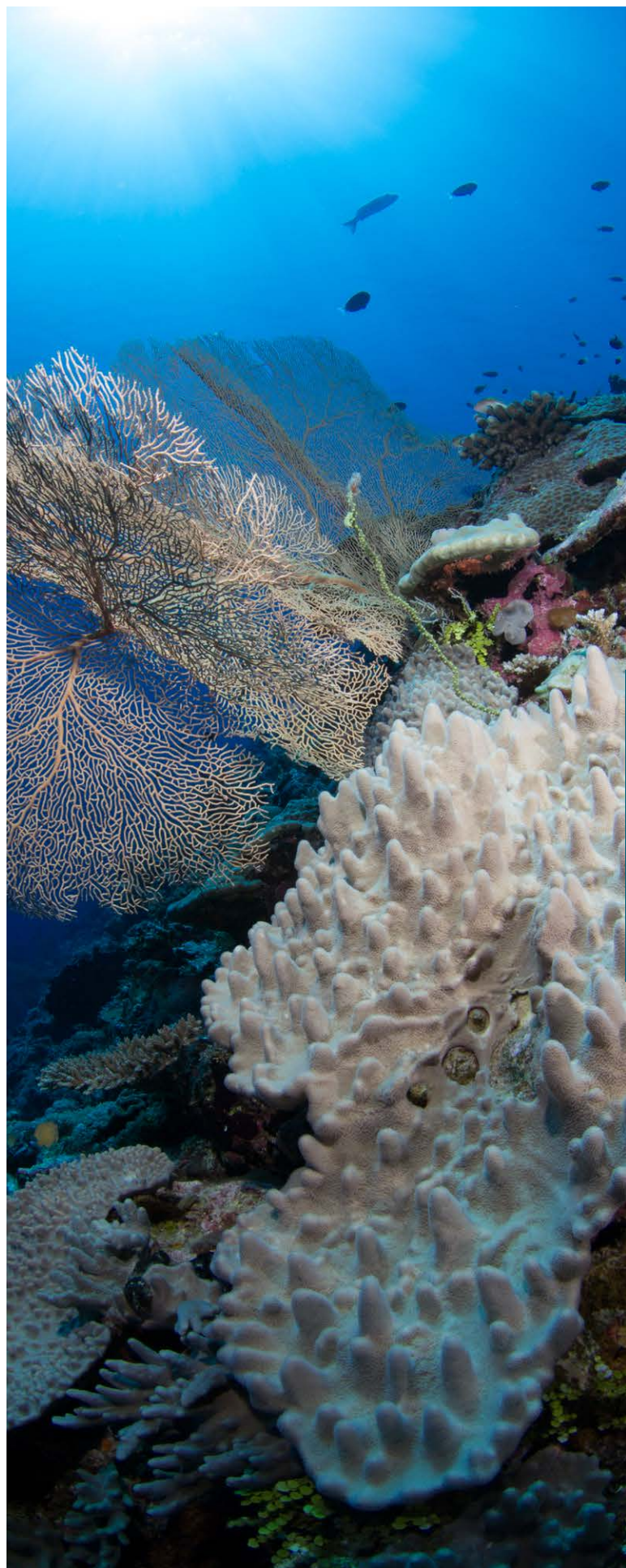


Photo: © Rohan Holt, Redfern

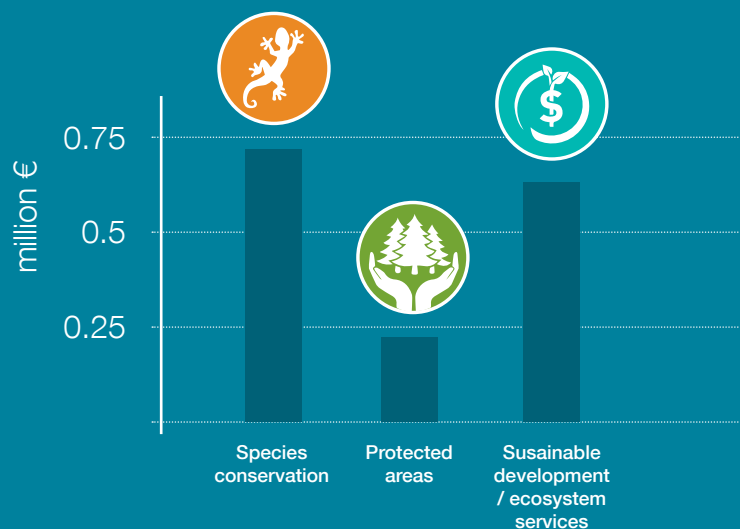


Greenland © Michael Köté Poulsen

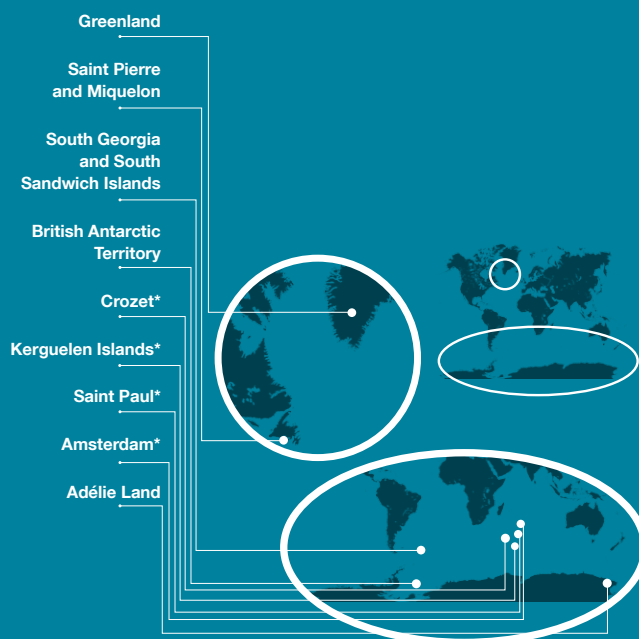
King penguin on South Georgia © Judith Brown

Polar & Sub-Polar

BEST funded projects (2011-2017)
7 projects – € 1.5 million



Territories



*Part of the Territory of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (French: Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises - TAAF)

Identifying important marine areas for macaroni penguins (*Eudyptes chrysolophus*) in the UK and FR OCTs



Targeted territories: South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (SGSSI), TAAF

BEST PA grant awarded: 287,308 € | **Total budget:** 302,429 € (5% co-funding)

Duration: June 2013 - August 2015 (27 months)

Lead: Natural Environment Research Council - British Antarctic Survey

Partners: Centre d'Etude Biologiques de Chizé (CNRS), BirdLife International

Objective:

To identify the most important at-sea areas for macaroni penguins and contribute to the design and designation of marine protected areas (MPAs) and management plans

Project outcome summary:

The project led to a comprehensive overview and improved understanding of macaroni penguin at-sea distribution and habitat preference around their major breeding sites on South Georgia, Kerguelen and Crozet, allowing the identification of marine Important Bird Areas (mIBAs), informing future marine spatial planning across OTs and catalysing further collaborative work. The methods generated scientific interest and are promoted as a model for similar work on other European OCTs and globally. The identified areas are now listed as candidate mIBAs and dialogue with policy makers and stakeholders was initiated to establish appropriate management measures.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Annette Scheffer

PISUNA - Protecting biodiversity and creating multiple benefits for local communities in Greenland



The Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Exploring and Conserving Nature

Targeted territory: Greenland

BEST PA grant awarded: 319,700 € | **Total budget:** 356,346 € (10% co-funding)

Duration: January 2013 - December 2016 (48 months)

Lead: Nordisk Fond for Miljø og Udvikling

Partners: Department of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture, Government of Greenland; Greenland Fisher and Hunter Organisation; Greenland Association of Municipalities; Cornell University, Laboratory of Ornithology; Inuit Circumpolar Council

Objective:

To help the government monitor natural resources in the face of a changing environment and to increase capacity and involvement of local communities in the governance and sustainable use of these resources

Project outcome summary:

This pioneering project contributed to improving international policy development on climate change and community-based monitoring in the Arctic. The involvement of indigenous and local people in environmental monitoring for resource management is now an explicit part of most major sustainable development efforts in the Arctic region outside of Russia. Greenland now has a community-based observation system that provides an opportunity for indigenous and local community members' insight and knowledge on the environment to be used and their voices heard. The project enabled the Greenland government to scale up the community monitoring scheme, technically and organisationally, beyond the critical point at which the scheme can continue across the country with minimal further external assistance. PISUNA was referred to in a presentation by Greenland in the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII).

Local Observations PISUNA-net:

<https://eloka-arctic.org/pisuna-net/en>

CONTACT

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Photo: © Elmer Topp-Jørgensen

Determining the feeding areas used by the community of seabirds breeding on the island of Grand Colombier

Détermination des zones d'alimentation utilisées par la communauté d'oiseaux marins se reproduisant sur l'île du Grand Colombier, Archipel de Saint Pierre & Miquelon



Targeted territory: Saint Pierre & Miquelon
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 20,276 € | **Total budget:** 34,041 € (40% co-funding)
Duration: May 2016 – June 2017 (13 months)
Lead: Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage

Objective:

To contribute to a better understanding of the marine areas utilised by seabirds breeding on Grand Colombier and inform conservation efforts

Project description:



Photo: © Joël Detcheverry

The project identified the most important marine areas around Grand Colombier used by adult Atlantic Puffins during breeding season by tracking a number of individuals using miniaturized GPS devices. The collected GPS data was

used to map the marine feeding areas and inform possible management measures for these areas to help maintain a sufficient food supply for seabirds breeding on Grand Colombier. This project contributed to long-term monitoring and conservation efforts in St Pierre & Miquelon, supported by the government.

CONTACT

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Sustainable fishing in the Arctic: Can the harvest of Greenland's biggest export be compatible with the conservation of benthic ecosystems?



Targeted territory: Greenland

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 296,383 € | **Total budget:** 324,759 € (9% co-funding)

Duration: April 2017 – March 2019 (24 months)

Lead: Zoological Society of London (ZSL)

Partner: Sustainable Fisheries Greenland

Objective:

To assess the impacts of climate change and trawling on West Greenland's seabed and develop appropriate management plans for the sustainable use of marine resources

Project description:



Photo: © Stewart McPherson

The project will perform photographic surveys of the West Greenland seabed (benthic zone) to document existing benthos communities, their structure, function and diversity. It will establish changes to

benthic habitats of West Greenland's continental shelf due to the impacts of over 30 years of trawling and climate change and project potential future changes and the recovery potential of affected benthic communities under the existing impact regime. Observations and information collected, along with analytical interpretations, will be made publically available and used to develop and evaluate management plans for the sustainable use of marine resources in West Greenland. Fishermen, industry and the public will be engaged with the issue of the conservation value of Greenland's benthic habitats and the need for their sustainable management.

CONTACT

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Where are they right now? Right whales in the South Georgia marine ecosystem



British Antarctic Survey
 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL



University of St Andrews

Targeted territory: South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (SGSSI)

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 398,731 € | **Total budget:** 451,347 € (12% co-funding)

Duration: May 2017 – April 2019 (24 months)

Lead: Natural Environment Research Council – British Antarctic Survey (BAS)

Partner: University Court of the University of St Andrews (USTAN)

Objective:

To increase the knowledge base of right whales in South Georgia waters and inform management of the South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands (SGSSI) marine protected area (MPA) and the Antarctic krill fishery

Project description:



Photo: © Emma Carroll

The project will develop baseline surveys of right whales in South Georgia waters during summer to investigate their prey sources, habitat use in relation to the krill fishing within the sustainable-use SGSSI MPA, genetic diversity, population connectivity with calving areas and health status. Satellite tracks, acoustic and oceanographic data will be used to identify key areas of whale habitat use and foraging patterns. Results will inform the SGSSI MPA review and CCAMLR for consideration of right whales in spatial krill fishery management plans and ecosystem models. The project will also investigate migratory connections between South Georgia waters and calving grounds off Argentina and Brazil.

CONTACT

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BEST 2.0 SG 2017

ITAGED - Conservation of threatened top marine predators of the French Southern Territories: Identifying Threats And Getting Essential Data



Targeted territory: French Southern and Antarctic Lands, Amsterdam & St Paul islands

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 99,657 € | **Total budget:** 163,366 € (39% co-funding)

Duration: February 2018 - January 2019 (12 months)

Lead: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) - Délégation régionale Centre Limousin Poitou-Charentes

Partner: BirdLife International



Photo: © Lise Chambrin, TAAF

Objective:

To determine key marine habitats of 4 seabird species to inform marine conservation and management in the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF)

Project description:

This project aims to complete at-sea studies of 4 endangered seabirds at Amsterdam and Saint Paul islands, which include:

1. Characterization of their key foraging habitats and potential overlap with fisheries
2. Creation of habitat models to predict changes in foraging habitat location under climate change scenarios
Analysis of tracking data during key biological stages
3. Identification of marine Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (mIBAs) as a tool to help protecting key foraging areas

CONTACT

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SEECTOR: Significant Ecological areas for pElagic species and ConservaTion challenge in the sOuthErN Indian ocean



Targeted territory: French Southern and Antarctic Lands

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 74,370 € | **Total budget:** 74,370 €

Duration: January 2018 – December 2018 (12 months)

Lead: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS)

Partner: Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle (MNHN)

Objective:

To improve the knowledge and conservation status of pelagic ecosystems in the Southern Ocean by evaluating the impact of the projected climate changes for marine biodiversity and identifying priority areas for protection

Project description:



Photo: © Antoine Dervaux, TAAF

The project will gather information on the current spatial patterns linked to critical habitats of mid-trophic organisms and hotspots of interactions with top predators in the South Indian Ocean using analyses of acoustic measurements and samples of zooplankton

combined with tagging of seals and seabirds. The approach adopted in the SEECTOR project will improve the zoning of functional hotspots and provide useful information to prevent conflict of interests with other activities. The results will help to define marine protected areas (MPAs) in the EEZs of Crozet and Kerguelen and in international waters and identify measures to mitigate anthropogenic and climate-related pressures.

CONTACT

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Hlenghene lagoon, New Caledonia © Conservation International, photo by François Tron
Va'a training, French Polynesia © Carole Martinez

Pacific

BEST funded projects (2011-2017)
28 projects - € 4.29 million



Territories

Wallis and Futuna
French Polynesia
Pitcairn
New Caledonia



Protection and sustainable management of French Polynesia land-birds threatened by extinction

Protection et gestion durable des oiseaux terrestres de Polynésie française menacés d'extinction et de leurs habitats



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST PA grant awarded: 250,000 € | **Total budget:** 421,124 € (40% co-financing)
Duration: March 2012 - February 2014 (24 months)
Lead: Association Manu Société d'Ornithologie de Polynésie

Objective:

To establish sustainable management in 32 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and promote eco-tourism

Project outcome summary:

The project developed "soft" ecotourism on two islands based on endemic bird species it safeguarded, contributed to the effective and efficient tackling of invasive species (rats) and established very good collaboration with the local communities by forming species support groups and participatory management groups, engaging locals in protection measures such as invasive species control and promoting eco-tourism. The project earned several prizes for its work and released several press articles and a video.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Julie Larguier, SOP

CORAIL - Coral reefs in a changing world - ecosystem services from coral reefs: public tools for decision making in New Caledonia and French Polynesia



Targeted territories: French Polynesia & New Caledonia
BEST PA grant awarded: 221,433 € | **Total budget:** 270,423 € (18% co-financing)
Duration: September 2012 - April 2016 (44 months)
Lead: Institute for the Pacific Coral Reef
Partner: Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute

Objective:

To provide tools for the evaluation of coral reef services for decision-making in the context of demographic and climate change

Project outcome summary:

In addition to assessing the reefs' economic values, governance of MPA networks and ecosystem services related to cultural and traditional aspects were addressed. The project enabled bridges between on-going research programmes and other EU funded programmes in the region (RESCCUE & INTEGRE), which used the results from CORAIL and allowed perpetuation of the activity.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Thomas Vignaud

GREEN NC - Comprehensive management strategies for environment and natural areas: biodiversity and ecosystem services in New Caledonia

GREEN NC - Gestion raisonnée de l'environnement et des espaces naturels : biodiversité et services écosystémiques de Nouvelle Calédonie



Targeted territory: New Caledonia

BEST PA grant awarded: 497,604 € | **Total budget:** 1,596,076 € (69% co-financing)

Duration: March 2012 - March 2014 (24 months)

Lead: ADECAL (Administration de l'Agence de développement économique de la Calédonie)

Partners: Province Nord; Province Sud; Province des Iles Loyauté

Objective:

To improve sustainable management of natural resources through a strong local network connecting sites of major environmental importance, identified and managed by local competent communities

Project outcome summary:

Facilitating exchange of experience between the three provinces and cross-cutting actions enabled the establishment of a local network and a foundation for sustainable use of ecosystem services in New Caledonia. Nesting this project in a bigger framework (INTEGRE) led to the promotion of the BEST objectives, increased attention of all stakeholders to the conservation of biodiversity and management of natural resources and the continuation of the initiatives using public or project funds after the BEST project ended.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Conservation International, photo by N. Texier

BEST PA II - 2012

PACIOCEA - South Pacific Ocean Ecosystem Analysis



Targeted territories: Regional (all 4 Pacific Overseas entities)

BEST PA grant awarded: 500,000 € | **Total budget:** 904,453 € (45% co-financing)

Duration: January 2013 - September 2015 (33 months)

Lead: Agence des aires marines protégées (AAMP)

Partners: Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD)

Objective:

To strengthen marine ecosystem conservation and sustainable management, foster ecosystem-based approaches and climate change adaptation by developing marine spatial planning (MSP) in Pacific EU Overseas territories and neighbouring countries

Project outcome summary:

The project contributed to the implementation of sustainable marine strategies for the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). It highlighted the need to foster regional cooperation around large-scale MSP processes in the Pacific and set the basis for future MSP projects in the regions. Outcomes and actions of PACIOCEA are sustained through on-going initiatives including Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Management in Pacific Island Countries (MACBIO); Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme (BIOPAMA), Enhancing Pacific Ocean Governance (EPOG) and the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI).

CONTACT

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Photo: © Carole Martinez

Pacific Biodiversity Blue Belt



AGENCE FRANÇAISE
POUR LA BIODIVERSITÉ
ÉTABLISSEMENT PUBLIC DE L'ÉTAT



Targeted territories: French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Wallis & Futuna

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 399,897 € | **Total budget:** 440,997 € (9% co-funding)

Duration: May 2016 – November 2018 (31 months)

Lead: Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

Partner: Agence Française pour la Biodiversité (AFB)

Objective:

To promote the protection of marine and coastal ecosystems and biodiversity of the 4 Pacific OCEANIC TERRITORIES (OCTs)

Project description:

The project is implementing practical national and territorial actions supporting local initiatives to help achieve tangible outcomes towards the marine Aichi targets 6 (sustainable fisheries), 10 (healthy coral reefs) and 11 (10% marine areas conserved) of the European territories, including:

1. Assisting territorial governments and stakeholders to develop strategic approaches for establishing and managing large and small MPAs. The project will also establish a Pacific MPA Managers Network to facilitate the sharing of experience and approaches.
2. Elaborating guidelines on surveillance technologies appropriate for small and large MPA managers.

Developing best practices in ecotourism and underwater/coastal educational trails to promote wider public engagement in biodiversity conservation and support sustainable ecotourism industries.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Carole Martinez

Protect and Restore the Dry Forest of the Coast of New Caledonia

Protéger et restaurer la forêt sèche du littoral de Nouvelle-Calédonie



Targeted territory: New Caledonia

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 377,435 € | **Total budget:** 416,301 € (9% co-funding)

Duration: May 2016 – April 2019 (36 months)

Lead: Conservatoire d'espaces naturels de Nouvelle-Calédonie (CEN)

Objective:

To restore part of New Caledonia's coastal dry forest

Project description:

By developing and testing of best practices for forest restoration techniques that prevent grazing damage and local awareness-raising this project aims to protect 400 hectare area from introduced herbivores and suitable areas for restoration activities identified. Plantations will be established in areas previously deferred to grazing to trial new forest restoration techniques and assess their success.

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Photo: © Julien Barrault

Saving the two most threatened bird species in French Polynesia from extinction

Sauver de l'extinction les deux oiseaux les plus menacés de Polynésie française



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 390,000 € | **Total budget:** 524,131 € (26% co-funding)
Duration: May 2016 – August 2018 (28 months)
Lead: Association Manu Société d'Ornithologie de Polynésie

Objective:

To safeguard two endemic bird species from extinction and promote the birds' conservation

Project description:

As a result of conservation actions - including a previous BEST project – the Fatu Hiva Monarch and Tahiti Monarch have experienced recent population increases. Despite this, overall numbers remain low. This project will contribute to further recover by controlling the current predation threats whilst monitoring the population sizes and breeding success. The current conservation strategies for the two species will be assessed and Species Action Plans covering the period 2018-2023 will be developed. Communication activities will ensure that the local population and policymakers are better informed about and more involved in efforts to protect these species.

Activities website: <http://manu.pf/protection-du-monarque-de-fatu-hiva/>

CONTACT

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Photo: © Thomas Ghestemme, SOP

BIOPELAGOS - Biodiversity of oceanic pelagic ecosystems for a better conservation and management of outstanding natural areas

Etude de la biodiversité des écosystèmes océaniques pélagiques pour une meilleure préservation et gestion de ces espaces naturels remarquables



Pacific Community
Communauté du Pacifique

Targeted territories: New Caledonia; Wallis and Futuna
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 400,000 € | **Total budget:** 810,112 € (51% co-funding)
Duration: July 2016 – June 2019 (36 months)
Lead: Pacific Community (SPC)
Partner: Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD)

Objective:

To increase the capacity of New Caledonia and Wallis and Futuna to make informed decisions on the conservation and management and use of their oceanic biodiversity and ecosystems

Project description:

Newly gathered information about oceanic ecosystems and seabird surveys support the territories to identify geographic target areas for biodiversity conservation, strengthen the spatial planning/zoning of their oceanic waters and inform management and conservation measures at the regional level particularly for tuna stock management. Measures of the status and health of the ocean ecosystem are being used to assess climate change impacts and ecosystem modelling explores likely future modifications to the pelagic ecosystem in response to climate change and inform strategies to increase resilience.

Project website: <http://www.spc.int/oceanfish/en/ofpsection/ema/biopelagos>

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Photo: © Jean-Christophe Lefeuvre

Biodiversity and sustainable management of the marine and coastal environment and related resources in the context of climate change in Wallis and Futuna

Biodiversité et gestion durable de l'environnement marin et côtier et des ressources associées dans le contexte du changement climatique à Wallis et Futuna



Targeted territory: Wallis and Futuna

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 94,465 € | **Total budget:** 94,465 €

Duration: February 2017 – July 2018 (18 months)

Lead: Service Territorial de l'Environnement

Partner: Fédération des associations pour la protection de l'environnement Haofaki te Ulufenua

Objective:

To reduce forest fragmentation and increase climate change resilience of coastal and marine ecosystems through sustainable participatory management and protection of mangroves

Project description:

Following an inventory and health status assessment, mangrove areas will be cleaned from litter and restored with trees from pilot nurseries, which are established alongside the project for restoration. Local awareness activities on the preservation of natural ecosystem and endangered species will be supported by the implementation of a legal framework for the protection of mangroves and integrated coastal zone management.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Chloé Desmots

FLORE NC: Preserving together the floristic heritage of New Caledonia

Préserveons Ensemble le Patrimoine Floristique de Nouvelle-Calédonie



Targeted territory: New Caledonia

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,609 € | **Total budget:** 49,609 €

Duration: April 2017 – March 2018 (12 months)

Lead: Endemia

Objective:

To strengthen the protection of the most endangered terrestrial flora species in New Caledonia and support provincial and local conservation strategies

Project description:

A conservation list of priority species based on a 2014 IUCN Red List assessment will be established to identify priority species and facilitate their integration into provincial environmental codes and CITES annex-listed species, supported by workshops, mapping of these most threatened species, local initiatives and needs, as well as a communication campaign to sensitize the general public and decision-makers to the threats to this flora and conservation actions.

CONTACT

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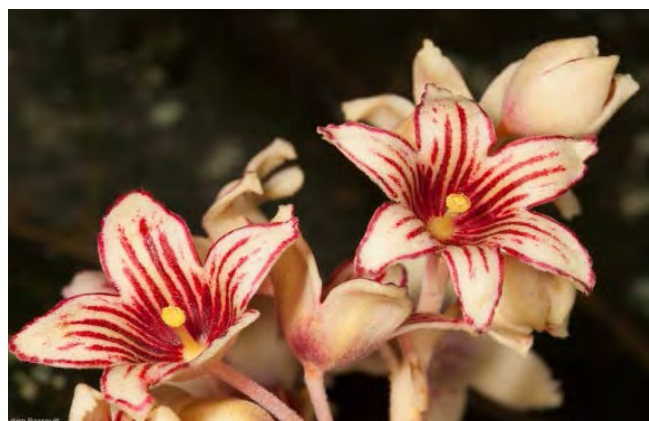


Photo: © Julien Barrault

Strengthening conservation measures and tools for threatened conifers and palms of the rainforests and scrubland of New Caledonia

Renforcement des mesures et outils de conservation des palmiers et conifères menacés des forêts humides et des maquis de Nouvelle-Calédonie



Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 90,279 € | **Total budget:** 90,279 €
Duration: February 2017 – May 2018 (16 months)
Lead: Noé Conservation

Objective:

To contribute to the preservation of 5 palm and conifer species and the protection of their habitats

Project description:

The project adopts an integrated approach based on 3 axes:

1. Implementation of measures and tools for *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation of target species, including capacity building of 4 conservation nurseries and guidelines for the conservation of the five target species
2. Creation and dissemination of recognition tools to combat illegal trafficking of the target species
3. Public awareness-raising to promote the practices and guarantee the project's long-term sustainability

Project website: <http://noe.org/sauvegarder/programme/palmiers-coniferes-de-nouvelle-caledonie/>

CONTACT

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Photo: © Rozenn Lhermitte

Innovative and sustainable water management: optimizing agricultural irrigation

Gestion innovante et durable de l'eau : optimisation du fonctionnement des périmètres irrigués agricoles (Aqualone)



aqualone
Climate sensitive irrigation

Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,900 € | **Total budget:** 49,900 €
Duration: March 2017 - February 2018 (12 months)
Lead: Aqualone
Partner: Chambre d'Agriculture de Nouvelle-Calédonie

Objective:

To demonstrate an innovative irrigation technology to increase sustainable organic agricultural production whilst saving water resources

Project description:

The technology is being trialled at three pilot sites by identifying needs, getting the farmer's commitment, measuring performance and demonstrating a return-on-investment from the first harvest. The project will develop a replicable business model for its adoption to improve food self-sufficiency of New Caledonia and other Pacific islands.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Aqualone

Strengthening the local capacity to protect the terrestrial natural heritage of Rimatara

Renforcement des capacités locales pour la protection du patrimoine naturel terrestre de Rimatara



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,659 € | **Total budget:** 49,659 €
Duration: January 2017 – January 2018 (12 months)
Lead: Association Rima'ura

Objective:

To strengthen the island's capacity to protect terrestrial areas from black rat invasion and to preserve endemic birds and trees and crop production

Project description:

The project will train teams inspecting incoming goods, including those arriving by plane, and carry out conservation actions for the island's endemic birds (regular bird census, protection of the bird's nesting trees from deforestation, delineation of new bird habitat, drafting a bird protection action plan). Awareness raising activities include educational projects with school children, meetings with island decision-makers and promotion of ecotourism.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Ioane Boniface

Hei Moana, Ocean Sentinels

Hei Moana, Les Sentinelles de L'Océan



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,972 € | **Total budget:** 49,972 €
Duration: February 2017 - January 2018 (12 months)
Lead: Te Mana O Te Moana

Objective:

To increase awareness of the local population on endangered marine species and ecosystems by providing them with skills and tools to become actively involved in observing and collecting data on the marine environment

Project description:

The project will adapt educational material ("Hei Moana" kit) on marine turtles, marine mammals and coral reefs to different target groups and provide training sessions and animations for the public. It includes marine turtle recognition and data gathering, collection of observational data on marine mammals combined with ecotourism, raise awareness on coral reef threats and protection as well as create a participatory coral reef and sea level rise monitoring network.

Project website: <http://www.temanaotemoana.org/auto-draft/>

CONTACT

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Photo: © Vie Stabile

Conservation of the Natural Forest Remnants of Maraeti'a Plateau, Punaruu Valley, Tahiti

*Conservation des vestiges de forêts naturelles du
plateau de Maraeti'a, vallée de la Punaruu, Tahiti*



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,958 € | **Total budget:** 49,958 €
Duration: April 2017 - July 2018 (16 months)
Lead: Te rau atiati a tau a hiti noa tu (Union pour la sauvegarde de la nature)

Objective:

To restore and preserve endemic plant species threatened with extinction by controlling invasive mammal populations and invasive plant species

Project description:

This project is part of a forest restoration program on the Maraeti'a plateau. Rat populations impacting native endemic plants will be controlled by chemical (raticide) and physical (traps) methods. Forested areas will be fenced off to exclude goats and pigs and invasive plant species within the fenced area will be managed.

CONTACT

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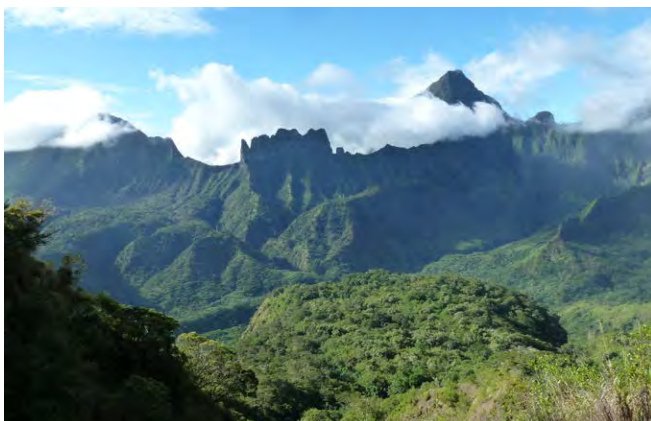


Photo: © Jean-Yves Meyer

Strengthening the drinking water supply system of the Houailou commune by maintaining the ecosystem services of the upstream water catchment

*Renforcement du réseau d'adduction d'eau
potable (AEP) de la commune de Houailou par le
maintien des services éco-systémiques en amont
des captages d'eau*



Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 100,000 € | **Total budget:** 100,000 €
Duration: March 2017 - May 2018 (15 months)
Lead: Mairie de Houailou

Objective:

To protect and manage the environment of the upstream catchment supplying water to the Houailou commune to ensure the supply of safe, drinkable water and forest ecosystem services

Project description:

Fences and barriers will be erected to protect the concerned areas and ensure the safety of infrastructures. Management of "wild animals" and humans as well as protection and replanting of the forest within the perimeter of the surface water catchment will allow improving water quality and quantities. After evaluation and assessment, the municipality will also maintain and replicate the project approach for other catchments, involving the local population to ensure realization and perpetuation.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Pascal Sawa

Sustainable management of Wallis and Futuna's forests

Gestion durable des forêts de Wallis et Futuna



Targeted territory: Wallis & Futuna

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 100,000 € | **Total budget:** 100,000 €

Duration: March 2017 - August 2018 (18 months)

Lead: Direction des Services de l'Agriculture, de la Forêt et de la Pêche

Objective:

To promote forest biodiversity conservation and management and sustainable use of Wallis' forest ecosystems

Project description:

This project will be implemented in 4 areas:

1. Establishment of a forest inventory, setting up a monitoring system and mapping land use;
2. Local consultations to define conservation measures and a strategy for forest planning
3. Forest rehabilitation pilot project: planting of seedlings in degraded secondary forests.
4. Development of a management plan and a territorial forest policy for sustainable forest management

Three pilot sites (one for each district) in key biodiversity areas (KBAs) will be designated in meetings with customary chiefs and authorities to effectively involve villages in forest rehabilitation.

CONTACT

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Photo: © DSA Wallis et Futuna

Conservation of the critically endangered Niau Kingfisher through the local community

Conservation du Martin-chasseur de Niau, en danger critique d'extinction, par la communauté locale



Targeted territory: French Polynesia

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 50,000 € | **Total budget:** 50,000 €

Duration: February 2017 – July 2018 (18 months)

Lead: Association Vaitamae

Partner: Societe D'Ornithologie de Polynesie – Manu

Objective:

To improve the conservation status of the critically endangered locally endemic Niau Kingfisher

Project description:

This project activities aim to increase the number of the Niau Kingfisher – only existing on the Niau atoll (Tuamotu archipelago) – by controlling cat populations, monitoring the species to evaluate the effect of the measures, and involving the local community in the implementation of respectful agricultural practices. The Niau Kingfisher Action Plan (2014-2018) will be evaluated and revised for the following 5 years. Experts will support the predator control actions and the revision of the Action Plan.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Caroline Blanvillain

Saving the endangered flora of the raised Anaa atoll and the definition of priority areas for conservation based on the flora and fauna

Sauvegarde de la flore menacée de l'atoll de Anaa et définition de zones prioritaires de conservation basées sur la flore et la malacofaune sur les atolls soulevés de Anaa et Niau aux Tuamotu



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,916 € | **Total budget:** 49,916 €
Duration: April 2017 – March 2018 (12 months)
Lead: Association Pu Tahi Haga no Ganaa

Objective:

To save the threatened flora of the Anaa atoll by managing natural populations and preserving priority conservation areas

Project description:

Endangered plant species populations will be assessed and nursery-raised plants reintroduced, followed by preparing an operational plan to reintroduce a green pigeon that disseminates the fruits of certain endangered species. Management proposals for the least degraded natural formations in previously defined conservation sites will be discussed with land owners and authorities. Preservation of the natural heritage of the atoll will improve resilience and enable sustainable ecotourism to develop.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Fonds Association Pu tahithaga no Ganaa

Tukemaragai – Ecological restoration of 3 islands of Gambier

Tukemaragai – Restauration écologique des petites îles du Sud-Est des Gambier



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 77,789 € | **Total budget:** 77,789 €
Duration: April 2017 – September 2018 (18 months)
Lead: Commune des Gambier

Objective:

To restore the habitats and birdlife and contribute to the conservation of endangered plants and soil restoration on 3 islands of Gambier impacted by erosion due to overgrazing and invasive plants

Project description:

The project will establish a nursery for native and endemic forest species that are particularly suited to harsh environmental conditions of the target sites, and then plant and care for the seedlings on eroded areas and areas colonised by invasive plants. Reforestation will improve soil fertility and lagoon waters quality. It will also install sound devices and create artificial burrows for breeding seabirds in order to encourage the return of some especially rare and endangered species, which in turn will eventually support bird ecotourism.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Norma Hokuin

Necessity of safeguarding the terrestrial environment of Rapa

Urgence pour la sauvegarde du milieu terrestre de Rapa



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,968 € | **Total budget:** 49,968 €
Duration: January 2018 - December 2018 (12 months)
Lead: Raumatariki Rapa

Objective:

To conserve the terrestrial ecosystem of Rapa by invasive alien species control

Project description:

The deterioration of the natural forest will be addressed by developing biosecurity measures against the black rat, defining key forest areas on the island that will be protected by expanding the area fenced off to grazing herds and eliminating invasive plant species (guava, pine), and building the capacity of the inhabitants of Rapa to protect their terrestrial environment.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Raumatariki

Safeguarding the Rare and Threatened Birds of Ua Huka

Assurer la Sauvegarde des Oiseaux Rares et Menaces de Ua Huka



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,962 € | **Total budget:** 49,962 €
Duration: January 2018 - December 2018 (12 months)
Lead: Vaiku'a i te manu o Ua Huka

Objective:

To preserve Ua Huka Island's natural biodiversity by strengthening the capacity of local organisations and measures to protect two locally endemic and threatened bird species

Project description:

This biosecurity project will continue the protection activities against invasive rat arrival, initiated by the Society of Ornithology of Polynesia (SOP MANU) by maintaining rat poison stations at all points of arrival of goods on the island (port and airport); control of sea freight by a rat detector dog and; raising awareness of schoolchildren and the population. The project will be complemented by assessing the status of threatened birds, transferring know-how to local teams, training biosecurity agents and implementing a range of awareness raising activities.

Activities website: <http://manu.pf/biosecurisation-de-ua-huka/>

CONTACT

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Photo: © Caroline Blanvillain

Development of the network of Educational Managed Marine Areas in 5 schools of French Polynesia

Développement du réseau d'aires marines éducatives dans 5 nouvelles écoles de Polynésie française



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,968 € | **Total budget:** 49,968 €
Duration: January 2018 - December 2018 (12 months)
Lead: TE ORA NAHO - Fédération des Associations de Protection de l'Environnement de Polynésie française (FAPE)

Objective:

To expand the network of educational managed marine areas (EMMAs) through the creation of EMMAs in 5 new schools on the Tuamotu Archipelago

Project description:

The project will undertake a characterisation of the initial ecological states of the 5 areas, supplying schools with teaching materials and involving the students in the acquisition of scientific knowledge and undertake a range of communication activities.

CONTACT

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Photo: © CREOCEAN

Restoration of small basins on the plateau of Te Mehani rahi

Restauration de petits bassins versants du plateau Te Mehani rahi



Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 49,662 € | **Total budget:** 49,662 €
Duration: January 2018 - December 2018 (12 months)
Lead: Association Tuihana

Objective:

To restore the exceptional vegetation of the small watershed slopes (<10 ha) of the Te Mehani plateau on the island of Raiatea

Project description:

The slopes, found at an altitude of >600m are home to 33 endemic plants, but are threatened by invasive plant species. The project will conduct a survey of the sites, undertake actions to tackle the invasive plant species and establish a nursery to provide native plants to be replanted. It will also sensitize the public to the need to protect the biodiversity of the Te Mehani plateaux by presenting the project to administrations, the public and the media.

CONTACT

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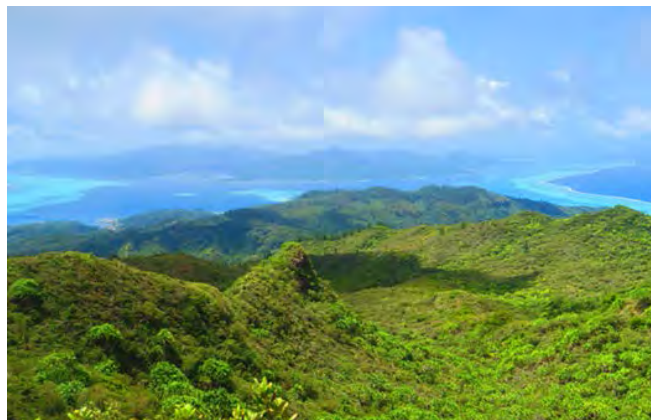


Photo: © Frédéric JACQ

RECOFOR: Regulation of deer for the conservation of forests

RECOFOR : REGulation des cerfs pour la COnservation des FORêts



Targeted territory: New Caledonia

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 50,000 € | **Total budget:** 50,000 €

Duration: February 2018 - January 2019 (12 months)

Lead: Association pour la Conservation en Cogestion du Mont Panié DAYU BIIK (ACCMP DAYU BIIK)

Objective:

To reduce and control the deer population within the Mount Panié Reserve in the long-term

Project description:

Following consultations with locals on the area to be regulated, helicopter interventions – an approach previously demonstrated to be efficient and effective – will allow a significant reduction of the invasive deer populations in a regulated zone of around 4000 ha. The project will also reinforce the capacity within New Caledonia to apply this control method.

CONTACT

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Photo: © François Tron

NEREIS: Conservation of the Fairy Tern (*Sternula nereis exsul*)

NEREIS : Conservation de la Sterne néréis (Sternula nereis exsul)



Targeted territory: New Caledonia

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 96,801 € | **Total budget:** 96,801 €

Duration: January 2018 - January 2019 (12 months)

Lead: Province Nord de la Nouvelle-Calédonie

Objective:

To improve the conservation status of Fairy Terns in the North Province impacted by invasive rodents and human disturbance

Project description:

This project proposes to improve the conservation status of the terns nesting in the northwestern lagoon by improving protocols, tools and monitoring capacity; proposing ways of dealing with the known causes of reproduction failures; increasing the sense of ownership and level of sensitivity in local communities; creating a sanctuary with local partners in a site known to be regularly used by breeding terns.

CONTACT

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Photo: © François Tron

Strengthening the participative and integrated management of the UNESCO property on Touho

Renforcement de la gestion participative et intégrée du bien UNESCO sur Touho



Targeted territory: New Caledonia

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 48,108 € | **Total budget:** 48,108 €

Duration: December 2017 - November 2018 (12 months)

Lead: Association Hô-üt

Objective:

To conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services of the municipality of Touho in order to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change

Project description:

Upstream of the participatory actions, field studies will be conducted by consulting firms to update and deepen the knowledge on this ecosystem since its UNESCO World Heritage Site inscription in 2008. This will allow inventorying the different species of mangroves, identifying the degraded areas to be rehabilitated and ensuring the coherence of the actions on the ecological level. Specific training from specialists for its members and sharing and dissemination of this knowledge to the public through participatory days will involve the local population in the monitoring, management and conservation of this remarkable ecosystem.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Lily Clarke

AGRISUB – Organic farming substrates for the sustainable use of natural resources, carbon sequestration and the control of invasive species

AGRISUB – Substrats de culture agricole biologiques pour l'utilisation durable des ressources naturelles, la séquestration du carbone et la lutte contre les espèces envahissantes



Targeted territory: French Polynesia

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 50,000 € | **Total budget:** 50,000 €

Duration: December 2017 - November 2018 (12 months)

Lead: VAIHUTI FRESH

Objective:

To limit the impact of agriculture on coral reefs due to erosion and sedimentation by creating alternative cultivation substrates

Project description:

Recent studies have shown that the use of compost and charcoal (biochar) in soils could improve crop yields while increasing carbon sequestration in soils. The project will use natural resources, particularly the biomass of invasive plant species, for the compost and biochar production of these crop substrates. It will also demonstrate the technical and economic viability of their use to encourage uptake by farmers.

CONTACT

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Photo: © Vaihuti Fresh

An open partnership recognized at the international level

The BEST initiative contributes to the achievement of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Strategic Plan and its Aichi Targets as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement.

Created as an open partnership, a first collaboration was established with the French Development Aid Agency (AFD) in 2012, allowing additional project funding and support for the establishment of a dedicated scheme to promote conservation of biodiversity and

sustainable use of ecosystem services in Europe's ORs and OCTs – key allies in achieving European and international biodiversity conservation targets.

The BEST Initiative was acknowledged in the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP) Decision XI-15, the 2016 World Conservation Congress (motion 70) and as an interregional challenge by the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA)»

Towards a partnership for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Europe's Overseas – BEST

The BEST initiative started as a follow up to the Message from Reunion Island*, which called for a dedicated funding mechanism to support the conservation of EU Overseas' biodiversity. The BEST Preparatory Action (BEST PA) provided seed money for the BEST Initiative and allowed funding of 16 projects via 2 calls for project proposals (BEST I-2011 and BEST II-2012), a first partnership with the French Development Agency (AFD) supporting 2 additional projects and the BEST consortium work on 'Measures towards sustaining the BEST PA' (BEST III), led by IUCN, which developed 7 regional ecosystem profiles and investment strategies in collaboration with 7 regional partners.

The work enabled through the BEST PA stimulated further, and much needed, investment in the EU Overseas through the BEST 2.0 grant-making facility or OCTs and BEST RUP pilot project offering more funding of on-the-ground activities in the French ORs.

From **2011 to 2017** European investment efforts of over **€ 14.7 million** have allowed

- Funding of **more than 80 projects** through tailored small and medium-sized grants,
- Unleashing energies and capacity building on the ground and **fostering collaboration** with stakeholders and authorities
- **Elaboration of 7 regional ecosystem profiles and investment strategies** in a participatory process, involving relevant local and regional actors.

In addition, BEST seeks to establish long-term funding to support conservation and thus to address the need for a dedicated financing mechanism that sustains action in the European ORs and OCTs and their neighbouring countries.

*Outcome of the Conference "European Union and its Overseas Entities: Strategies to counter Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss" held under the French Presidency in 2008.

Join us for fostering more actions in these 7 regions of global importance!



For more information and for contacts visit:

<http://ec.europa.eu/best/>

<https://portals.iucn.org/best/>

www.bestrup.org

