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

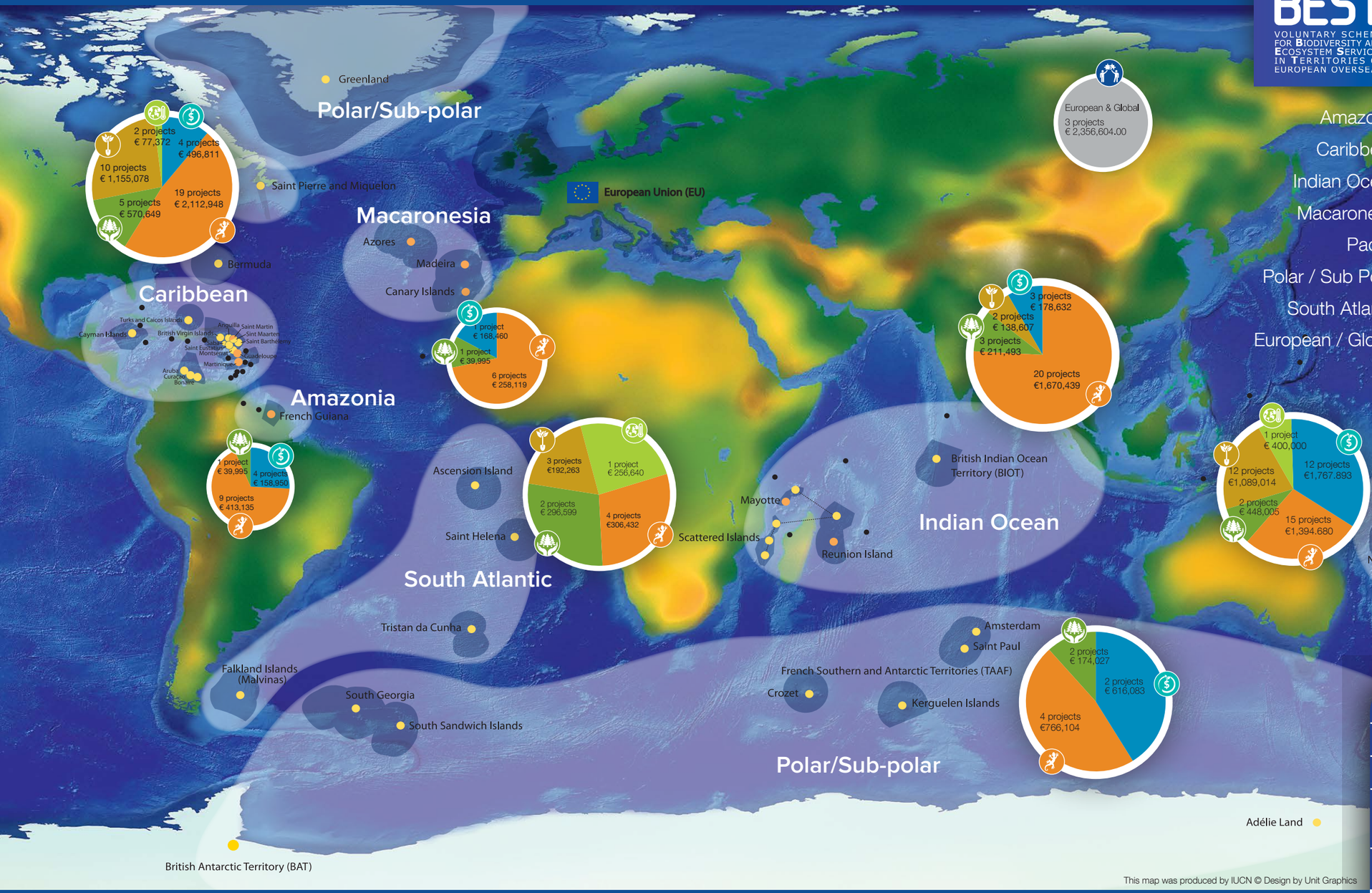
BEST Initiative

Projects 2011 - 2023

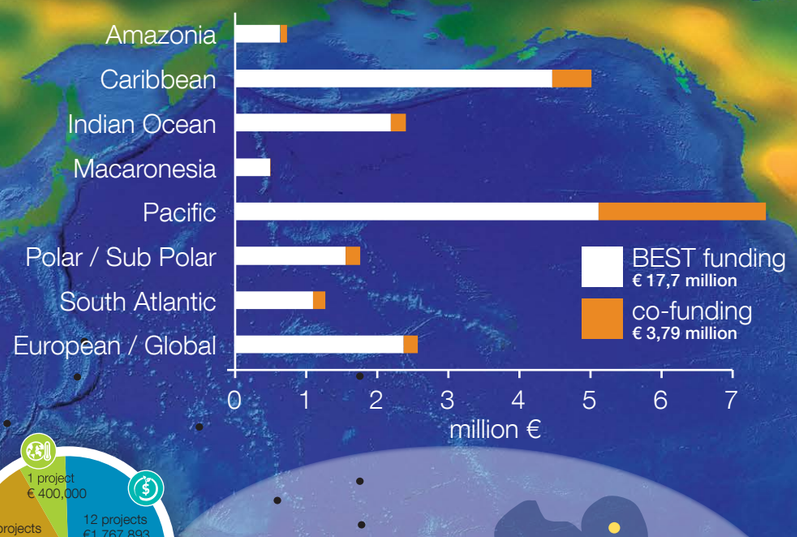
A European initiative to foster action in

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 153 projects.







This map was produced by IUCN © Design by Unit Graphics

Legend

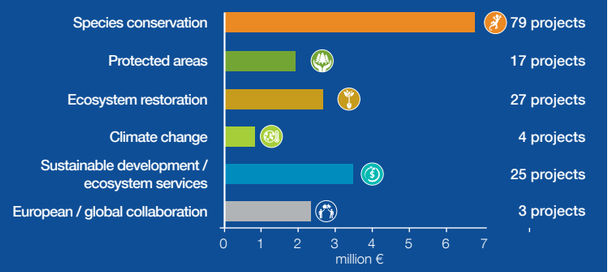
- EU Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)
- EU Outermost Regions (ORs)
- African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states and island states of the same regions
- Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the EU Overseas

The **BEST initiative** started as a follow up to the 'Message from Réunion 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.

In 2019-2020, LIFE4BEST and BEST 2.0+ programmes took over following the end of BEST RUP and BEST 2.0, respectively covering the ORs (40 projects) and the OCTs (23 projects). Both programmes support field actions that aim to enable, empower and strengthen local authorities and civil society organisations committed to local development, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of ecosystem services



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 153 BEST projects (2011-2023)

European & Global (3 projects – € 2.36 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 (14 projects € 612,083)

Species Conservation (9 projects)

- SOPPAG White-lipped peccaries monitoring from the national park of French Guiana
- EIEFAG: Evaluating the impacts of logging on the birds of French Guiana: establishing a monitoring protocol
- Identifying the feeding ecology and causes of death of marine mammals and sea turtles stranded in French Guiana
- Stingrays and sharks in Guyana: awareness, involvement and training of seafarers
- Deploying a mobile application to encourage geo-referenced reporting of environmental problems
- Presenting the ecology of the Approuague river to young schoolchildren
- Facilitating the discovery of the natural environment, and deliver educational materials to locals
- Raising awareness and immersing schoolchildren in the protection of the marine environment through educational actions in the classroom and outings at sea
- Implementing protection and management tools for the conservation of savannas in Montsinéry-Tonnégrande

Sustainable development / ecosystem services (4 projects)

- Fauna of the lower Approuague river, from discovery to popularization
- Supporting 3 Amerindian communities of Terre-Rouge, Mana and Bellevue in the development of traditional agricultural and / or agroforestry activities on pilot plots
- Sustaining the value of the Amazon forest biodiversity and the natural resources and ecosystem services it provides
- Developing local biodiversity initiatives in Guyana Pro-sité

Protected areas (1 project)

- Animating a network of actors in order to set up a sustainable educational project around Pripris de Yiyi conservation site

Macaronesia (8 projects € 466,575)

Sustainable development / ecosystem services (1 project)

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

Species Conservation (6 projects)

- Developing new acoustic methods able to map and characterize Black Coral forests
- Filling knowledge gaps and updating seabird baseline information through passive acoustic monitoring
- Identifying key butterfly habitat areas and devising conservation action plans
- Assessing the capacity of rhodolith bottoms to store Carbon (Blue Carbon sequestration)
- Enhancing baseline data collection & species threat assessment for the Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*, LC).
- Creating a baseline for the conservation of maerl habitats

Protected areas (1 project)

- Assessing the importance of SAC PTMAD0001 Laurissílva da Madeira as a suitable habitat for the endangered Madeira pipistrelle

Indian Ocean (28 projects €2,19 million)

Species Conservation (20 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
- Feeding ecology of the Mauritius Fruit Bat, interactions with fruit crops and the implications for the conservation of the species on Reunion
- Knowledge and conservation of Mayotte's little known and threatened flora
- Creation of an atlas of the distribution of reptiles and amphibians of Mayotte and guidelines for their conservation
- Inventory and status report of echinoderm populations in Mayotte

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- Collecting data and better understanding the mesophotic area of La Réunion
- Developing tools for monitoring major anthropogenic pressures and quantification of ecosystem services in the Maori lagoon
- Controlling invasive species, while promoting awareness and social integration
- Raising awareness on the protection of sea turtles
- Raising public and school awareness of invasive alien species in natural and urban environments
- Searching for microbats hitherto not described in Réunion Island and analysis of acoustic differentiation
- Identifying priority conservation areas within the reef plateaus of the island of La Réunion
- Collective Monitoring of Nautical and Maritime Activities, for the assessment of the risks of exposure of cetacean populations of Réunion Island to maritime traffic
- Contributing to expertise and awareness initiatives in favour of the conservation of marine biodiversity
- Research and management recommendations of the chiropterans in the Scattered Islands

Protected areas (3 projects)

- Creation of new protected areas in the public forests of La Réunion and Mayotte
- Census and awareness of landowners, users and uses on the protection perimeters of 2 water catchments: Combani and Ourovéni, in a key biodiversity area of Mayotte
- Raising awareness on IAS and planting native species in the vicinity of Réunion National Park

Ecosystem restoration (2 projects)

- 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
- Protecting local ponds that are of great interest in terms of biodiversity and ecosystems

Sustainable development / ecosystem services (3 projects)

- BIOT Environmental Interpretation and Education Project
- Providing new quantitative descriptors of coral reefs in Mayotte
- Co-construction of sustainable mangrove management through participatory approach

Caribbean (40 projects €4,41 million)

Species Conservation (19 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
- 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
- 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
- Towards the first conservation measures for elasmobranchs in the French West Indies
- Structuring of floristic information and conserving endangered elements of Martinique's flora
- EPI REV: Pilot action to reinforce populations of the threatened Orchid Epidendrum revertianum in Guadeloupe and Martinique
- Managing the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by integrating biodiversity across government and society
- Protecting and showcasing the ponds of Les Anses d'Arlet
- Improving data on flora and habitats, and raising awareness on the conservation of endangered species
- Improving the conservation status of the Lesser Antilles iguana
- Mitigating the effect of erosion that affects coastal sites
- Conceiving specific management tools for sharks and rays in Saint-Martin
- Restoring and conserving Anguilla's pollinators and degraded habitats to make them more resilient

List of 153 BEST projects (2011-2023)

Protected areas (5 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
- Environmental interpretation and education

Ecosystem restoration (10 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
- Contributing to the restoration of a degraded coastal ecosystem
- Large scale *Diadema antillarum* restoration in Saba and St Eustatius
- Larval propagation: an innovative technique to scale up the Bonaire's reef restoration programme
- Mangrove restoration in Bonaire

Sustainable development / ecosystem services (4 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
- Medicinal plant nursery and school in Martinique

Climate change (2 projects)

- Planting 1500 trees on the limestone of Grande Terre, in order to reinforce the impact of the climate change on the biodiversity of Guadeloupe
- Restoring the degraded mangrove of Morne Cabri

South Atlantic (10 projects €1,06 million)

Species Conservation (4 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
- Eradicating New Zealand flax from Inaccessible island World Heritage Site
- Establishing a St Helena Biological Records System

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 (3 projects)

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

Climate change (1project)

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

Polar and Sub-polar (8 projects €1,55 million)

Species Conservation (4 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 Columbier
- Where are they right now? Right whales in the South Georgia marine ecosystem
- BROOKTROUTSPM improving the knowledge of the threatened brook trout and its habitat

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

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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 (42 projects €5,08 million)

Species Conservation (15 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 (*Sternula nereis exsul*)
- Conservation of forest species of traditional interest and restoration of degraded forests in Wallis and Futuna
- Vairao Rori Titi
- Biodiversity conservation in the islets of North Wallis

Protected areas (2 projects)

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

Ecosystem restoration (12 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
- Protection of the coastline
- Strengthening the capacity of local populations for the restoration of degraded sites
- Biodiversity restoration under highly advanced secondary forestation conditions
- Preserving, restoring and enhancing native coastal vegetation in French Polynesia
- Using seed bombs for the ecological restoration of degraded mine sites
- Restoration of the Kamaka islet, a biodiversity refuge in the Gambier Islands

Sustainable development / ecosystem services (12 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
- Reefs on the move
- Valleys of the Montagne des Sources: enabling citizen mobilisation to protect biodiversity
- Sowing in the Tuo Cèmuhi forest
- Promoting culture for nature conservation (PCNat)
- Characterisation of environmental pressure: light pollution in New Caledonia

Climate change (1project)

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

Foreword



Elizabeth Maruma Mrema
Executive Secretary of the Convention
on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment
Programme

A cornerstone of achieving the goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is the need for truly global responses—from the peaks of the highest mountains to the smallest islands—to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

In 2006, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD adopted the programme of work on island biodiversity, which outlined key actions needed to preserve and sustainably use island biodiversity around the world. Importantly, the programme of work was focused on the unique ecological characteristics of islands around the world and the elevated threats they face, regardless of their political status. Sadly, many islands face enormous cross-cutting challenges to impeding effective on-the-ground action.

In this vein, the Voluntary Scheme for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of European Overseas (BEST Initiative) has truly demonstrated itself as a key factor of ensuring that EU Outermost Regions (ORs) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) are not forgotten in the patchwork of responses, and that they have the resources needed for implementation and the enabling conditions for success into the future. Thanks to the enormous support of its donors and partners, BEST has unlocked the potential of the EU ORs and OCTs and has demonstrated how these small areas can have an enormous positive impact and demonstrate leadership among the global community.

The work of the BEST Initiative will only become more important with the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework under the CBD. This framework, with its new set of global goals and targets, must be underpinned by support needed to catalyze tangible action.

The 5th Global Biodiversity Outlook clearly outlined the need for heightened ambition and increased action among all sectors of society if we hope achieve a sustainable our collective goals.

Thus, I urge BEST partners to build on the impressive achievements made thus far and scale up success stories and solutions so that EU ORs and OCTs can pave the way towards a future where humanity lives in harmony with nature.

Foreword



Kate Brown
Executive Director
GLISPA

Island advocacy, the building up of resilient and sustainable island communities around the world, and facilitating collaboration and genuine friendship among all islands to achieve this has been my life's work.

Scattered as we are, and in spite of our cultural differences, our physical geographical limitations have forged a unique resilience in our people that is common to us all as island folk. I firmly believe that our potential is limitless, and that islands are best placed to be the vanguard of human progress and inspiring new ways of living and being for the rest of the world to follow.

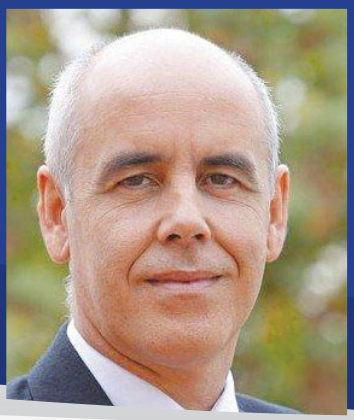
Thankfully, initiatives like the BEST Initiative and Challenge prove that my beliefs are not far-fetched! I am extremely grateful to be associated with this project, and bear witness to its growth and evolution. Through the partnership between BEST, and my organisation, the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA), we have been able expand the programme's influence beyond the EU's Outermost Regions (ORs) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) to one that is truly international through a platform which engages island nations and other island jurisdictions. The common denominator is and will always remain 'island'.

The lessons learnt and shared from the ground-breaking projects featured in this brochure has gone on to inspire many others throughout the GLISPA membership and beyond, in turn sparking new innovations and new learning. The success of this approach has directly set the stage for a new way for islands to engage each other and to continue to identify and share their own bright spots. We invite BEST participants to continue to work with us and to engage in our new initiative the Local2030 Islands Network to significantly advance island climate and sustainability goals by 2030.

Inspiration in action, the BEST Challenge truly exemplifies the BEST in island achievement.

Kate Brown

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.

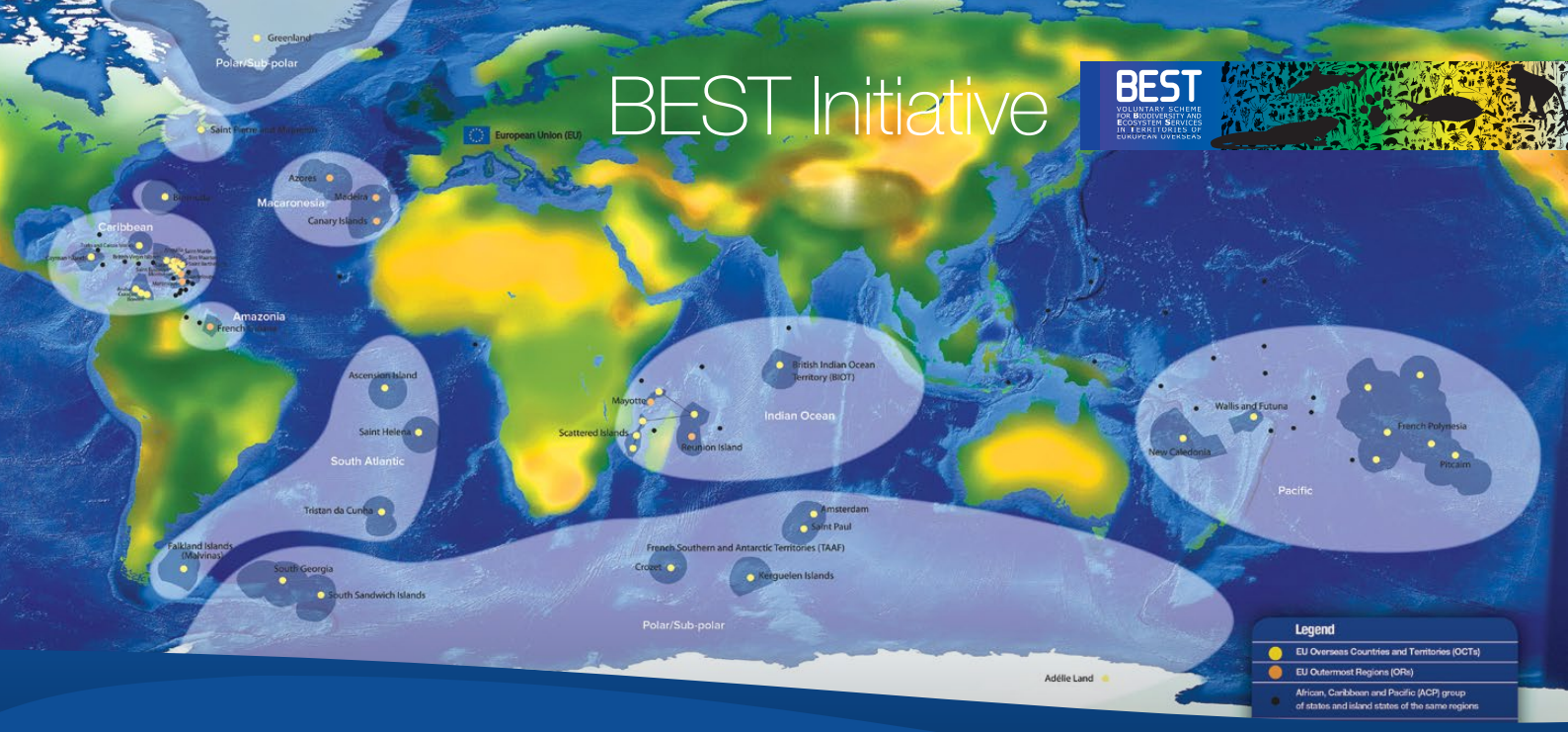
Most of the EU Outermost Regions (ORs) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) are islands. I feel a genuine interest in these places, which host an exceptionally rich biodiversity and which are at the same time most vulnerable to climate change and other environmental challenges. Looking at the 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 in the dedicated section of the EC website.



BEST map © IUCN, design by UnitGraphics

European & Global

3 projects – € 2,356,604

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.



Photo: © IISD Earth Negotiations Bulletin

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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).



BEST presentation at Bright Spot event in Marseille © GLISPA

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.



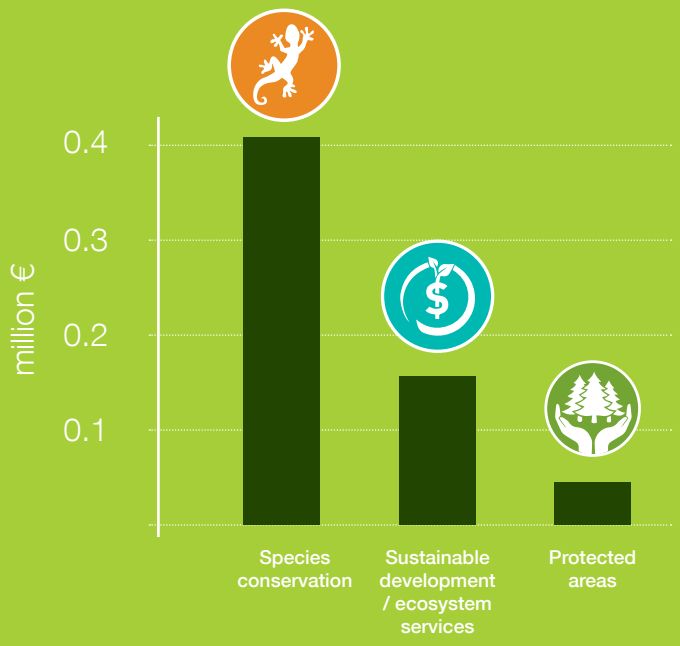
Presentation of first BEST ecosystem profile results, 2015, Brussels © Sylvie Rockel



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

Amazonia

BEST funded projects (2011-2022)
14 projects - € 612,083



Territories



BEST PA I - 2011

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

SOPPAG *- **S**uivie **O**pérationnelle des **P**écaris à lèvres blanche du **P**arc **A**mazonien de **G**uyane*

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

BEST RUP 2017

Fauna of the lower Approuague river, from discovery to popularization

Faune du bas Approuague, de la découverte à la vulgarisation

Targeted territory: French Guiana
BEST RUP grant awarded: 17,982 €
Duration: June 2018 – May 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Maison Familiale Rurale des Fleuves de l'Est (MFR de Régina)

Objective:

To increase awareness of the fauna of the lower Approuague river among the young people of the Régina commune and encourage them to protect it.

Project description:

The project is organising four annual outings for four classes of 24 students to increase their awareness and appreciation of the fauna of the lower Approuague river and the services it provides. During the outings students are engaged in the identification of the species encountered and the implementation of species censuses, the results of which will be shared with the Kaw and Nouragues reserves. Awareness raising activities will also be undertaken in schools in eastern Guyana. The project is carried out in partnership with the Kaw Nature Reserve, the Nouragues Reserve, the GEPOG and KWATA associations.

CONTACT
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Photo: © Polo973

EIEFAG: Evaluating the impacts of logging on the birds of French Guiana: establishing a monitoring protocol

« EIEFAG » : Evaluer les Impacts de l'Exploitation Forestière sur l'Avifaune de Guyane : mise en place d'un protocole de suivi

Targeted territory: French Guiana
BEST RUP grant awarded: 45,769 €
Duration: June 2018 – May 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Groupe d'Etude et de Protection des Oiseaux en Guyane (GEPOG)

Objective:
To establish a bird monitoring protocol appropriate for measuring variations in bird abundance at the site scale using point-source bird surveys.

Project description:
The protocol based on the point-based bird survey method ("listening points") that is currently implemented in French Guiana enables analysis at the regional level but it is not suitable for measuring variation in bird abundance at the local level. The project is defining a protocol appropriate for measuring variations in bird abundance at the local level based on monitoring at two forest sites - one exploited site and one control site - within the Regina-Saint-Georges managed forest. The protocol will be widely applicable to other sites to assess the impact of logging or other site-level disturbances.

CONTACT
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Photo: © Guillaume Feuillet / PAG

The feeding ecology and causes of death of marine mammals and sea turtles stranded in French Guiana

Alimentation et causes de mortalité chez les mammifères marins et tortues marines échoués en Guyane

Targeted territory: French Guiana
BEST RUP grant awarded: 22,730 €
Duration: June 2018 – May 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Association Kwata

Objective:
To improve the knowledge base on the feeding ecology of marine mammals and sea turtles in French Guiana.

Project description:
Despite increasing in recent years, knowledge of French Guiana's marine environment is relatively limited compared to other regions. Elements of the ecology of marine mammals and sea turtles are still little studied and certain threats have not yet been well characterised. The project is analysing the stomach contents of marine mammals and turtles stranded in 2016, 2017 and the beginning of 2018 to characterise their diets and to quantify and characterise any ingested waste. This will allow potentially important feeding areas to be identified and the impact of marine litter on these species to be assessed.

CONTACT
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Photo: © Frédéric Blanchard

LIFE4BEST 2019

Promotion of agroforestry and traditional Amerindian agriculture

Valorisation de l'agroforesterie et de l'agriculture traditionnelle amérindienne

Targeted territory: French Guiana
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 44,121.24 €
Duration: August 2020 – August 2021 (13 months)
Lead: Nature Rights Guyane

Objective:
Support three Amerindian communities of Terre-Rouge, Mana and Bellevue in the development of traditional agricultural and / or agroforestry activities on pilot plots.

Project description:
The project is divided into two axes. On the one hand, supporting project leaders on three small plots in the Native American communities of Terre-Rouge, Mana and Bellevue to develop their traditional agricultural and / or agroforestry activities, developing the plots and training young people to raise awareness on the sustainable use of resources and the preservation of ecosystems. On the other hand, facilitating three sessions of inter-community agricultural meetings, in partnership with the Territorial Authority of Guyana and several local institutions and associations.

CONTACT
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Guyana Forest Discovery Center

Centre de Découverte la Forêt Guyanaise

Targeted territory: French Guiana
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 49,972.21 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: CeDeFoG

Objective:
Sustain the value of the Amazon forest biodiversity and the natural resources and ecosystem services it provides.

Project description:
Located in the commune of Kourou, on a private plot of 7ha, the site consists of a welcome carbet and an educational garden. The association enjoys privileged access to 3 ha of Guyanese forest allowing the discovery of different forest biotopes (mainland forest, pine forest, riparian forest, etc.) via a discovery trail the maintenance of which is ensured by CEDEFOG. The carbet is made available to nature education structures such as Koté Forêt, local associations, and others.

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Photo: © NatureRights



Photo: © Lucile Dudoignon

Developing local biodiversity initiatives in Guyana - Pro-sité

Développer les initiatives en faveur de la biodiversité de proximité en Guyane – Pro-sité

Targeted territory: French Guiana
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 46,875.20 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: Groupe d'Etude et de Protection des Oiseaux en Guyane (GEPOG)

Objective:
Conservation of local biodiversity in Guyana.

Project description:
By adapting national or continental approaches to the Guyanese context, the project is making species identification guides available to the general public and institutions, as well as developing actions to promote wildlife. In terms of discovering local biodiversity, the project focuses on various groups of species: birds, day butterflies, amphibians. It also touches on traditional practices of valuing local nature, while adapting them to the urban context.

CONTACT
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Photo: © GEPOG

LIFE4BEST 2020

Stingrays and sharks in Guyana: awareness, involvement and training of seafarers

Raies et requins en Guyane : sensibilisation, implication et formation des acteurs de la mer

Targeted territory: French Guiana
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 38,637.49 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Groupe d'Etude et de Protection des Oiseaux en Guyane (GEPOG)

Objective:
Inform, raise awareness and train marine stakeholders in Guyana on stingrays and sharks.

Project description:
The project aims to inform, raise awareness and train marine stakeholders in Guyana on stingrays and sharks, so that they can take these species into account in their activities and future conservation programs. The project also aims to create a network of actors that work together and conduct collective reflections to move towards a sustainable management of this threatened marine resource while ensuring the reconciliation of existing socio-economic activities.

CONTACT
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Nature Sentinels: Citizen, Digital and Ecological Observatory in Guyana

Sentinelles de la Nature : Observatoire citoyen, numérique et écologique en Guyane

Targeted territory: French Guiana
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,999.87 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Guyane Nature Environnement

Objective:
Deploy a mobile application to encourage geo-referenced reporting of environmental issues.

Project description:
The project will aim to adapt and deploy a mobile application to encourage geo-referenced reporting of environmental problems, with the dual objective of mobilizing both citizens and the actors in charge of regulating and solving such issues. The tool shall thus constitute the backbone of an environmental damage observatory. In addition, positive actions for nature will also be reported in order to support and stimulate similar initiatives.

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Photo: © Guyane Nature Environnement

Approuague fauna: from discovery to popularization

Faune du bas Approuague : de la découverte à la vulgarisation

Targeted territory: French Guiana
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 18,757.10 €
Duration: August 2021 – July 2022 (12 months)
Lead: Maison Familiale Rurale des Fleuves de l'Est

Objective:
Make information on Approuague river ecology accessible to young people and raise awareness of the local population.

Project description:
The project aims to present the ecology of the Approuague river to young schoolchildren of the MFR by immersion via canoe, accompanied by naturalists, and then to transmit findings in the form of original content in local schools and to the local population. The main objective is to enable students and residents of Régina to have access to high-quality scientific information that allows for a better appropriation of the territory's environmental issues.

CONTACT
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Photo: © Maison Familiale Rurale des Fleuves de l'Est

Eco-Route

Parcours Eco-Pagayeur

Targeted territory: French Guiana
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,887.65 €
Duration: July 2021 – July 2022 (13 months)
Lead: COSMA Canoë Kayak du Maroni

Objective:
Facilitate the discovery of the natural environment, and deliver educational materials to locals.

Project description:
This will be an itinerary and a site of practice, allowing both the discovery of the natural environment, and the delivery of educational materials to locals that touch on environmental issues. Informative panels presenting such topics will be installed along the banks. With the help of a topo-guide, eco-paddler users will be able to follow the proposed route by canoe-kayak. By setting up many partnerships with local structures (especially schools), this course can be a valuable support point to raise awareness and educate on environmental issues, but also cultural and social matters.

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Photo: © COSMA Canoë Kayak du Maroni

Sea Class

Classe de Mer

Targeted territory: French Guiana
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,999.01 €
Duration: September 2021 – July 2022 (10 months)
Lead: Ocean Sciences & Logistic

Objective:
Raise awareness and immerse schoolchildren in the protection of the marine environment.

Project description:
This project aims to raise awareness and to immerse schoolchildren in the protection of the marine environment through educational actions in the classroom and outings at sea. The project will enable the discovery of the marine life of the Amazon, the reconnection of young Guyanese to their shores, and will also be a driving force for the realization of eco-citizen projects by schoolchildren. The mobilization of these actors and citizens of tomorrow is a major pillar of collective action against the loss of Guyana's natural heritage.

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Photo: © Ocean Sciences & Logistic

Promote the implementation of protection and management tools adapted for the conservation of savannas in the commune of Montsinéry-Tonnégrande

Favoriser la mise en place d'outils de protection et de gestion adaptés pour la conservation des savanes de la commune de Montsinéry-Tonnégrande

Targeted territory: French Guiana
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,980.85 €
Duration: August 2021 – August 2022 (13 months)
Lead: Association Trésor

Objective:
Implement protection and management tools for the conservation of savannas in Montsinéry-Tonnégrande.

Project description:
The commune of Montsinéry-Tonnégrande benefits from a rich natural heritage, among which there are remarkable savannas. This environment is considered rare, rich and threatened across the region. Faced with issues of limited information and protection, but also with issues related to the municipality's development, the association Trésor proposes to establish a hierarchy of issues around savannas using a characterization based on scientific studies, in order to contribute to their protection through the establishment of a local concerted effort.

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Photo: © Trésor

Pripris de Yiyi, support for nature-centred education

Les pripris de Yiyi, support d'éducation à la Nature

Targeted territory: French Guiana
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,995.36 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Société d'Etude, de Protection et d'Aménagement de la Nature en Guyane – SEPANGUY

Objective:
Animate a network of actors in order to set up a sustainable educational project around Pripris de Yiyi.

Project description:
This project is centred around Pripris de Yiyi, a conservation site and RAMSAR area. Part of the site is a recreational fishing place frequented by locals. However, much of its ecosystem is little known to the general public and its biodiversity is underappreciated. The aim of this project is to animate a network of actors in order to set up a sustainable educational project around this protected natural space.

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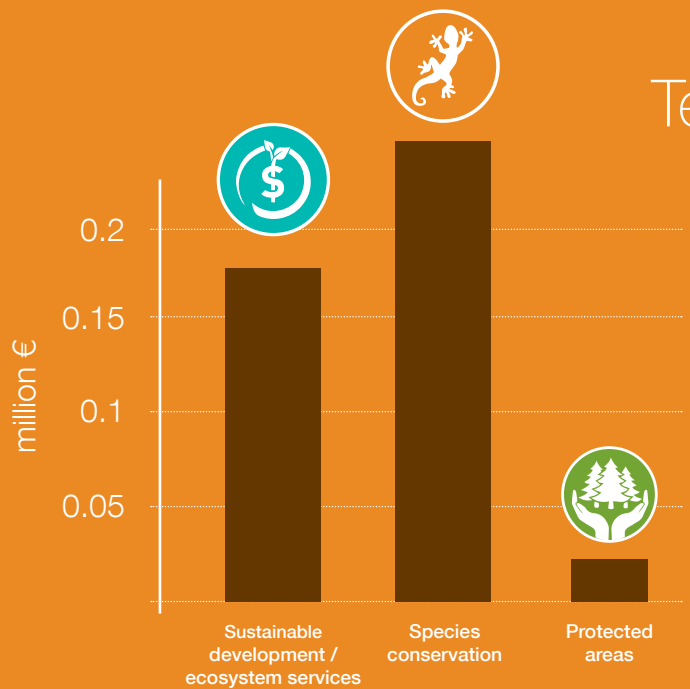

Photo: © SEPANGUY



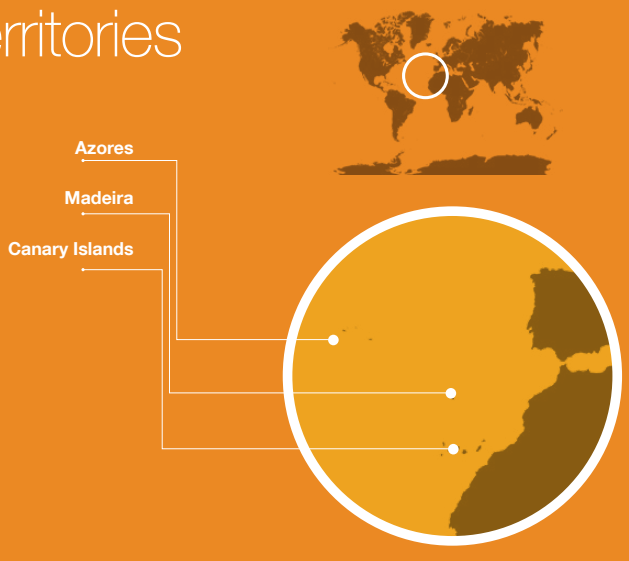
Lagoa Comprida, Flores, Azores © Luísa Madruga
Bottlenose dolphins, Canary Islands © Ricardo Haroun

Macaronesia

BEST funded projects (2011-2022)
8 projects - € 466,574



Territories



BEST PA II - 2012

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

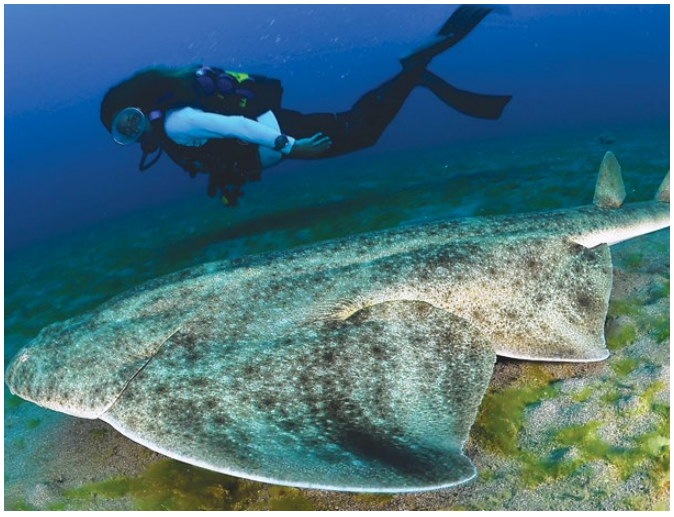
Targeted territories: Azores, Canary Islands, Guadeloupe
BEST PA grant awarded: 168,460 € | **Total budget:** 177,327 € (5% co-financing)
Duration: December 2012 – December 2014 (24 months)
Lead: Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
Partners: Université des Antilles et de la Guyane (Guadeloupe); Universidade dos Açores

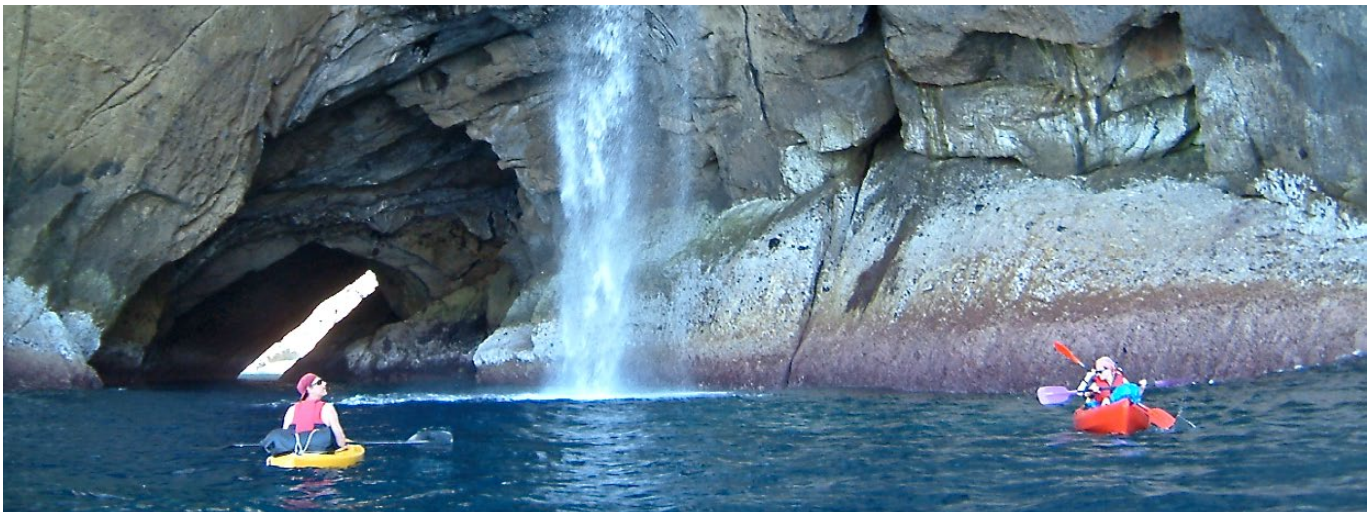
Objective:
To provide information on changes in the magnitude of ecosystem services to help guide conservation and restoration of these ecosystems and inform environmental decision-makers

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 © CarlosSuarez


Photo: Kayaking Azores © Luisa Madruga

LIFE4BEST 2019

The Black Coral forests as unexplored biodiversity Hotspots in the MAcaronesian Region: ecosysteM functions and sErvices analyseD (B-CHARMED)

Targeted territory: Canary Islands
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 48,691.13 €
Duration: August 2020 – August 2021 (13 months)
Lead: Asociación Biodiversidad Atlántica y Sostenibilidad

Objective:
Develop new acoustic methods able to map and characterize Black Coral forest of *Antipatella wollastoni*.

Project description:
B-CHARMED is working on developing new acoustic methods able to map and characterize Black Coral forest (BCF) of *Antipatella Wollaston*, and defining the minimal conservation Unit able to preserve their ecosystem functions and services by using acoustic methods, in-situ surveys (ROVs and technical deep diving), automatic data loggers able to register environmental variables, underwater visual census and bait-cameras to estimate ichthyofaunal biodiversity associated with BCF.

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Photo: © B-CHARMED

Seabird Macaronesian Sound (SMS)

Targeted territory: Azores & Madeira
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 49,990.70 €
Duration: June 2020 – July 2021 (13 months)
Lead: Portuguese Society for the Study of Birds (SPEA)

Objective:
Assess, fill knowledge gaps and update seabird baseline information through passive acoustic monitoring.

Project description:
The project is working on updating the information regarding seabird distribution and population size in Macaronesia islands of Madeira and Azores archipelagos (26 potential colonies and 5 seabird species) through low-cost and standardized passive acoustic methodologies. Preliminary results (*Hydrobates castro*) surpassed the proposed actions by increasing the number of islands and consequently sampling sites in the Azores, in synergy with projects being implemented in the region, such as the LIFE IP Project AZORES NATURA and the Interreg MAC EElabs project. Bandrumped Storm-petrel distribution was also assessed through passive acoustic methodologies.

CONTACT
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Photo: © Tania PIPA

LIFE4BEST 2020

Using the endangered Madeira pipistrelle as one of the flagship species for the Conservation of Natura 2000 SAC Laurissilva da Madeira (PTMAD0001)

Targeted territory: Madeira
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,994.99 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Instituto das Florestas e Conservação da Natureza, IP-RAM

Objective:
Assess the importance of SAC PTMAD0001 Laurissílva da Madeira as a suitable habitat for the endangered Madeira pipistrelle.

Project description:
The Madeira pipistrelle *Pipistrellus maderensis* (VU) is an endemic bat of Macaronesia with an estimated number of mature individuals is under 1000. The known populations are fragmented and under pressure of urban development and climate change and their ecological requirements are poorly known thus hindering direct conservation measures. The project will complement the existing ecological data in all main pristine primary laurel forest areas, meeting the Baseline Data collection & species assessment, a priority area of action in the BEST Ecosystem Profile for Macaronesia.

CONTACT
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Photo: © IFCN

Conservation of Madeira's Threatened Endemic Butterflies

Targeted territory: Madeira
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,744.90 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Stichting Butterfly Conservation Europe

Objective:
Identify key butterfly habitat areas and devise conservation action plans.

Project description:
Madeira constitutes a hotspot for threatened endemic butterflies in Europe. The planned project targets three of the most endangered European butterfly species, the Madeiran Speckled Wood (*Pararge xiphia*, EN), the Madeiran Brimstone (*Gonepteryx maderensis*) and the possibly already extinct Madeiran Large White (*Pieris wollastoni*). Surveys are planned to identify the key areas of habitat and devise conservation action plans. Transects will be established in collaboration with local stakeholders in order to start a long-term monitoring programme for the butterflies of Madeira which will provide population trend data for endemic and invasive species, raise public awareness and increase the capacity for insect conservation by involving local stakeholders as well as the eco-tourism industry.

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Photo: © Dr. Martin WIEMERS

M-29 Macaronesian rhodolith beds: from factories of carbon sequestration to sensibility to environmental stressors

Targeted territory: Canary Islands
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,958.72 €
Duration: September 2021 – August 2022 (12 months)
Lead: Asociación Biodiversidad Atlántica y Sostenibilidad

Objective:
Assess the capacity of rhodolith bottoms to store Carbon (Blue Carbon sequestration).

Project description:
The project will assess the capacity of rhodolith bottoms, a paramount habitat across Macaronesia, to store Carbon (Blue Carbon sequestration), a key ecosystem service. Despite a large body of research has addressed this topic for seagrasses, mangroves and salt marshes, knowledge on Blue Carbon potential of rhodolith bottoms remains largely unknown. In addition, MACRODO will assess the sensibility of Macaronesian rhodolith beds to two human-mediated disturbances: light depravation and nutrient enrichment. Such knowledge is basic to strength on-site regional marine conservation strategies and policies about an important, but largely unknown marine habitat. Policy-makers and stakeholders involved with the management of Macaronesian ecosystems, as well as society in general, can understand the necessity to properly manage this habitat. Moreover, MACRODO will perform environmental raise awareness activities across stakeholders and society about the natural capital value of Macaronesian rhodolith bottoms and the necessity to promote their conservation.

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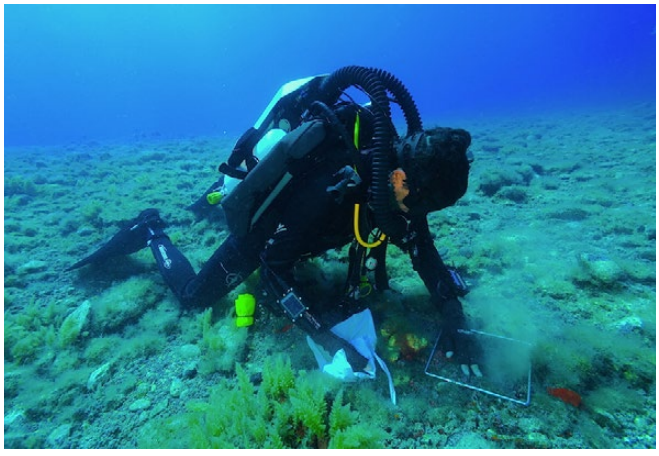


Photo: © Francisco OTERO-FERRER

M-22 Puffinus Life4Best Project

Targeted territory: Madeira
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,860.66 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (13 months)
Lead: Câmara Municipal do Funchal

Objective:
Increase baseline data collection & species threat assessment for the Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*, LC).

Project description:
The Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus,* LC) is one of the seabirds with more information world – wide, but this information is mainly focused on the northern populations, where the species is abundant, and the breeding sites are easy to access. The breeding colonies of the Macaronesia region represents the southern limit of its breeding distribution, Azores, Madeira and the Canaries, where the information is very scarce, because of small population sizes and inaccessibility of the breeding grounds, mainly located on cliff edges and remote areas. The project aims to increase baseline data collection & species threat assessment, improve biodiversity databanks, to develop appropriate conservation measures and tools that can be replicated in other breeding colonies of the Macaronesia in the islands of Azores, Canary and Madeira to update the specie distribution and abundance and contribute to environmental awareness campaigns to this unknow species.

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M-44 M3C: Madeira Maerl Mapping & Conservation

M3C Madeira Maërl Mapping & Conservation

AMACO - Associação Madeirense para a Conservação Marinha

Targeted territory: Madeira and Porto Santo
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,873.63 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Associação Madeirense para a Conservação Marinha

Objective:
Create a baseline for the conservation of maerl habitats.

Project description:
Maerl beds are complex habitats that serve as refuge, settlement ground and nursery for a wide variety of marine species. These habitats are biodiversity "hotspots", supporting complex trophic chains and acting as ecosystem bioengineers. Maerl species enjoy special protection status under the EU Habitats Directive. Preliminary surveys indicate these habitats may be considerably extensive in Madeira's subtidal, mostly inside MPA's. The aim of this proposal is to create a baseline for the conservation of maerl habitats, by assessing its extent and biological structure. This is has been identified as critical in the Regional Ecosystem Profile for Macaronesia, but remain largely unaddressed for the marine realm. The project addresses the priorities identified in the Regional Ecosystem Profile, focusing in the severely underrepresented marine realm. A partnership was established with IFCN, so that the project's data can be effectively used towards the conservation and management of Madeira MPAs and Natura 2000 sites.

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Photo: © Pedro Neves

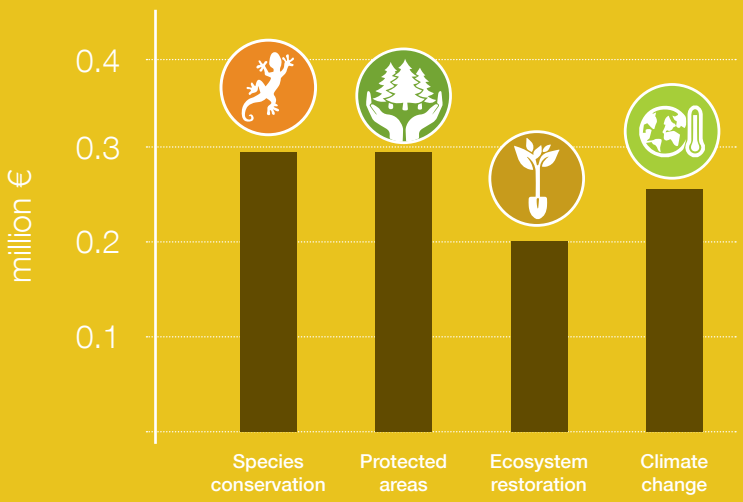
BEST Initiative



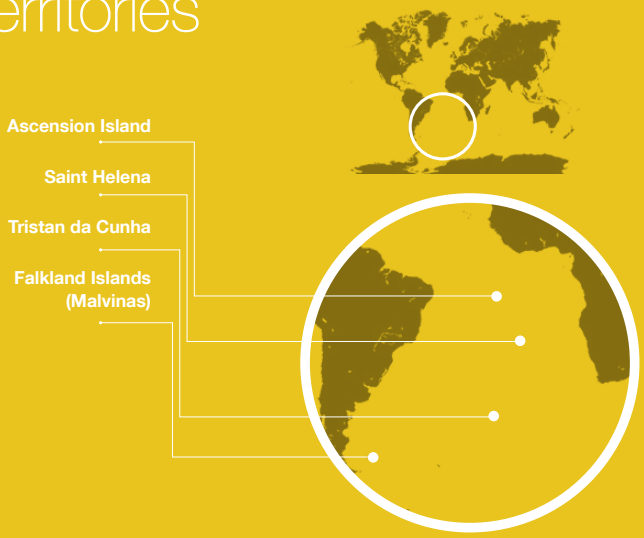
Elephant seals, Falkland Islands © Maria Taylor
Cloud forest, Saint Helena © Mike Jervois

South Atlantic

BEST funded projects (2011-2023)
10 projects - €1,051,933



Territories



BEST PA II - 2012

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

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.

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Photo: © Marcella Corcoran, RBG Kew

BEST 2.0 SG 2015

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 Berkley 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

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Photo: © Alan Henry

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

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 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.

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Photo: © Mike Jervois

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 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.

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Photo: © Trevor Glass

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

Saint Helena National Trust

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 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.

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Photo: © Mike Jervois

BEST2.0+ 2020

Eradicating New Zealand Flax from Inaccessible Island World Heritage Site

Targeted territory: Tristan da Cunha
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 59,981 €
Duration: September 2021 - March 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Conservation Department, Government of Tristan da Cunha

Objective:

To eradicate the invasive New Zealand flax on Inaccessible Island to secure two native species' sustainable recovery.

Project description:

The project will directly conserve and improve the biodiversity of Inaccessible Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) via locally-led, on-the-ground conservation actions to remove an invasive alien species (IAS), New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax*). This species threatens Tristan da Cunha's only native tree species, the Island Cape Myrtle (*Phylica arborea*), and its associated biodiversity, including the survival of endemic bunting subspecies. The proposed activities will result in all flax being removed and monitored for eradication success within the life of the project, and increased capacity to undertake removal activities in the future.

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Restoration and conservation of Motley Island native peatland habitats

Targeted territory: Falkland Islands
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 43,526 €
Duration: July 2021 - January 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Falklands Conservation

Objective:
To initiate re-vegetation of bare or eroding areas of peat soils on Motley Island.

Project description:
Motley Island is a Falklands Conservation-owned nature reserve that has experienced previous grazing and fire impacts, which has removed vegetation from coastal areas. There are roughly 10 hectares of exposed peat, which are eroding and expanding threatening habitats and biodiversity, releasing carbon and reducing carbon sequestering potential. This project will restore this area with native plants to halt erosion, restore biodiversity and provide a natural solution to help fight the climate crisis in terms of carbon sequestration and emission reduction. This whole process will involve pulling native plant tillers and replanting them in bare peat areas.

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Photo: © Falklands Conservation

Establishing a St Helena Biological Records System

Targeted territory: St Helena
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 58,597 €
Duration: July 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: St Helena Research Institute - Education & Employment Directorate, St Helena Government

Objective:
To establish a St Helena Biological Records System (SHBRS), accessible via a web-portal and App in order to increase the knowledge base, understanding and awareness of the island's wildlife and ecology.

Project description:
With the creation of this tool, this project will generate data with the analytical application needed to inform environmental management and conservation action at the ecosystem level. As a start-up, the project will focus on invertebrates and plants to build local capacity in biological recording, data management and analysis. The new system will be 'tested' by establishing a citizen science project with stakeholder identified species across different taxa to support data generation for identified conservation and biodiversity need.

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Photo: © Rebecca Cairns-Wicks

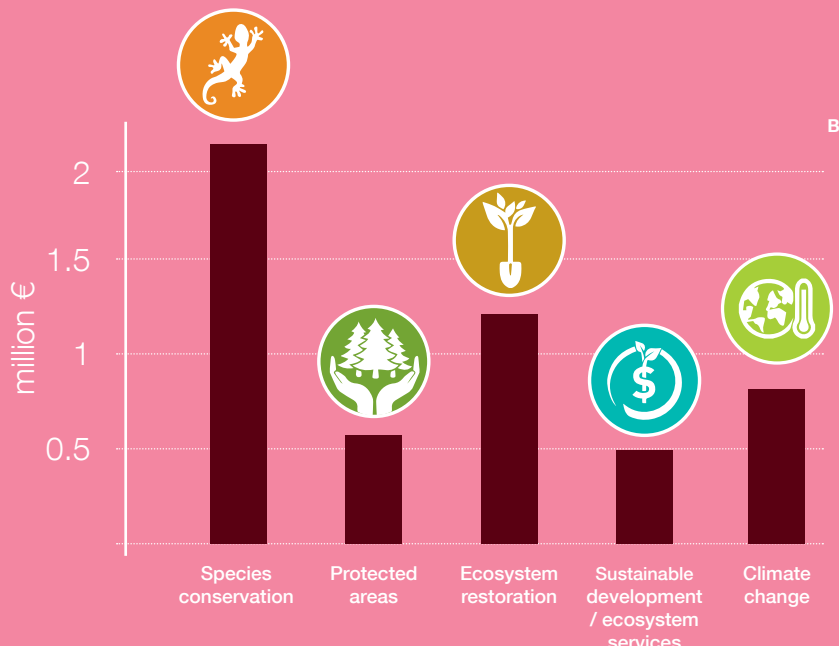
BEST Initiative



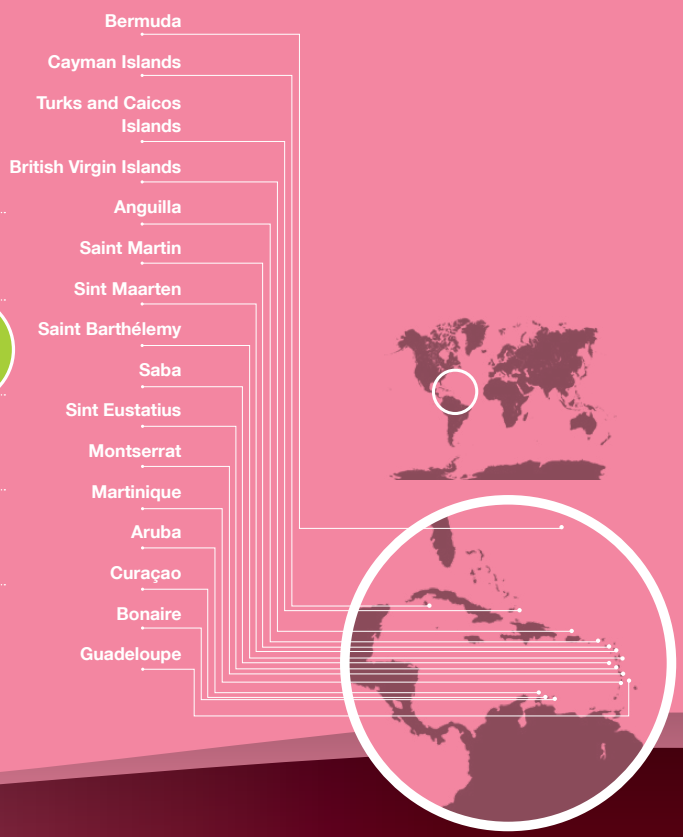
St Martin coastal wetland restoration © Romain Renoux
Bonaire reef © Erik Meesters

Caribbean

BEST funded projects (2011-2023)
40 projects - €4,41 million



Territories



BEST PA I - 2011

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

Quantification des services écosystémiques associées aux agroécosystems - 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.

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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'.

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Photo: © Jean-Philippe Maréchal

BEST PA II 2012

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.

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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.

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Photo: © Romain Renoux

BEST 2.0 MG 2015

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.

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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.

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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.

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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/

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Photo: © Erik Meesters

BEST 2.0 SG - 2016

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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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

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.wolfscompany.com/best-2-0-capacity-building-and-increased-financing-for-monitoring-programmes-for-coral-reefs-in-the-turks-and-caicos-islands/

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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.

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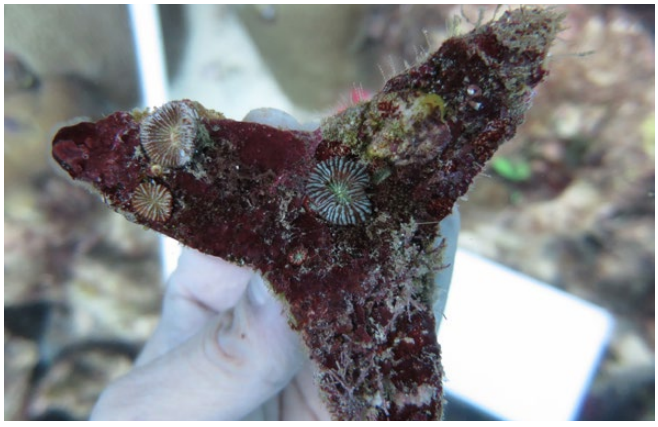


Photo: © Mark Vermeij

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.

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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.

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Photo: © Allison Candelmo

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/

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Photo: © Nicolas Tirard

BEST 2.0 SG - 2017

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.

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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 500m^2 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.

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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.

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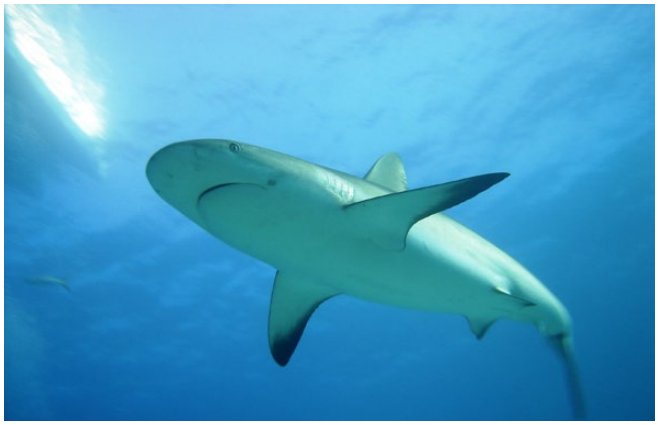


Photo: © Stuart Wynne

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.

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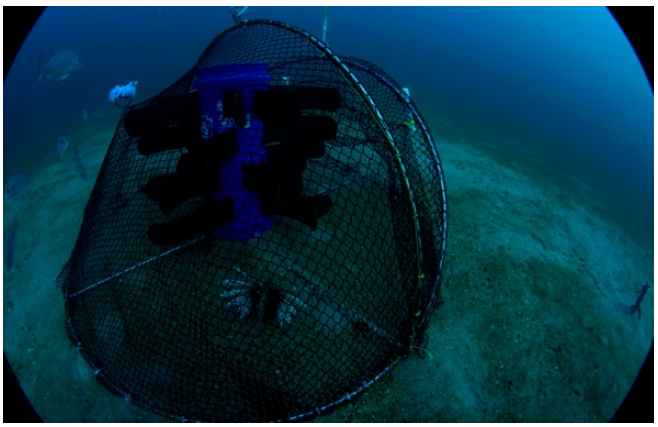


Photo: © Dr. Steve Gittings/NOAA

BEST RUP - 2017

Towards the first conservation measures for elasmobranchs in the French West Indies

Vers les 1ères mesures de conservation des élasmobranches dans les RUP des Antilles françaises

Targeted territories: Guadeloupe, Saint Martin and Martinique
BEST RUP grant awarded: 49,199 €
Duration: June 2018 – May 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Karaib associasion pou pwoteksion a la nati (Kap Natirel)

Objective:
To develop and promote the application of conservation measures for elasmobranch populations in the French West Indies.

Project description:
Currently the French West Indies have no local measures for the conservation of elasmobranchs despite the presence of more than 50 species. Human activities on sites regularly used by coastal elasmobranchs increases the interactions between humans and elasmobranchs, and consequently the risk of conflicts.

The project is promoting the establishment and implementation of appropriate management and conservation measures to protect coastal elasmobranchs and their associated habitats. Knowledge on the populations will be gathered and conservation measures that are feasible and adapted to the specific context of each site will be developed through a participatory process involving site managers, other local actors and international experts. Sensitization of the public and other actors will promote the proper implementation of the resulting action plan.

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Photo: © Oceane Beaufort

Environmental interpretation and education

Interprétation de l'environnement et éducation

Targeted territory: Martinique
BEST RUP grant awarded: 23,979 €
Duration: April 2018 – March 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Association Martiniquaise des Amis des Volcans Verts de la Caraïbe (AMAWECA)

Objective:
To establish favourable conditions for the creation of a biosphere reserve and volcano park on the peninsula of Southwest Martinique.

Project description:
The volcanic peninsula of Southwest Martinique is not currently protected; the stakes in terms of economic development in the area have inhibited the biotope protection order that has been under study for years.

The project is undertaking a broad education and awareness raising campaign targeting elected officials and the population of the region to promote the development of favourable conditions and support for the creation of a Volcano Park and a Nature Reserve for Biodiversity (Biosphere Reserve).

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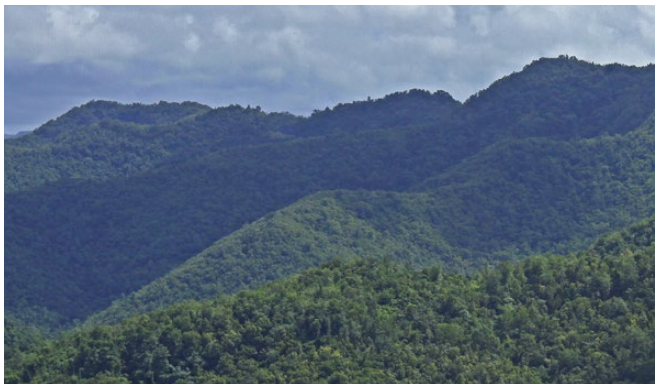


Photo: © J-P Fiard

Structuring of floristic information and conserving endangered elements of Martinique's flora

Structuration de l'information floristique et conservation d'éléments menacés de la flore de Martinique

Targeted territory: Martinique
BEST RUP grant awarded: 49,891 €
Duration: May 2018 – April 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Conservatoire Botanique de Martinique (CBMq)
Partner: Conservatoire Botanique National Centre Permanent d'Initiatives pour l'Environnement de Mascarin (CBN-CPIE Mascarin)

Objective:
To contribute to a better consideration of Martinique's flora in public policies and an improvement in its conservation status through enhancing the knowledge base on tracheophytes.

Project description:
Martinique's flora not only faces a lack of common taxonomical, nomenclatural and informational reference points, but also a virtual absence of ex situ conservation programs focusing specifically on endangered species.

The project is developing a taxonomic and nomenclatural reference system specific to the Martinique named "Tracheophytes Index of Martinique". It is also creating ex situ conservatory collections of 11 Martinican species listed in the "Red Book of threatened plants in the French West Indies" and developing and enhancing knowledge about the culture and production of these species through germination tests and technical production routes and promoting the use of these native species.

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Photo: © Christèle Allaud

EPI REV: Pilot action to reinforce populations of the threatened Orchid *Epidendrum revertianum* in Guadeloupe and Martinique

EPI REV : Action pilote de renforcement des populations de l'orchidée menacée Epidendrum revertianum en Guadeloupe et Martinique

Targeted territory: Guadeloupe, Martinique
BEST RUP grant awarded: 43,778 €
Duration: May 2018 – April 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Association Guadeloupéenne d'Orchidophilie (AGO)
Partner: Conservatoire Botanique de la Martinique (CBMq)

Objective:
To halt the decline of the population of the threatened Orchid *Epidendrum revertianum* in Guadeloupe and Martinique.

Project description:
Epidendrum revertianum is a terrestrial orchid endemic to the Lesser Antilles (Guadeloupe, Martinique, St Vincent) and classified as critical on the IUCN Red List. The project is carrying out controlled crosses between the rare plants of Guadeloupe on the one hand (less than 20 known) and Martinique on the other hand (70). The seeds are sowed in vitro, and the seedlings raised in a greenhouse until they are suitable to be planted in the wild. Work is also being done to try and establish the biological or ecological cause of the apparent lack of regenerative dynamics of the species.

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Photo: © Nicolas Barré

Medicinal plant nursery and school in Martinique

Plantothèque-école médicinale de proximité en Martinique

Targeted territory: Martinique
BEST RUP grant awarded: 50,000 €
Duration: May 2018 – April 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Centre de Culture Populaire Ypiranga de Pastinha Martinique (CCPYPM)

Objective:
To contribute to the preservation of medicinal plants utilized by local populations and associated knowledge related to their use.

Project description:
In Martinique the population has lost a lot of knowledge about medicinal plants, previously used to heal or prevent diseases, has been lost. Creating "reserves" of these plants will contribute to their preservation and enrich biodiversity by creating new habitats.

The project is building a medicinal plant bank for the development and safeguarding of about 150 medicinal plants and some food plants with high nutritional values. Environmentally friendly agricultural techniques will be promoted by the school and 25 reference persons will be trained in the planting, maintenance and use of the plants.

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Photo: © CCPYPM & Da Silva Oliviera

LIFE4BEST 2019

Véti'VERT, Restoration of a degraded coastal site

Véti'VERT, Restauration d'un site littoral dégradé

Targeted territory: Martinique
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 46,971.64 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: L'ASSO MER

Objective:
Contribute to the restoration of a degraded coastal ecosystem.

Project description:
A restoration operation of the coastal forest of Vétiver beach located in the commune of Case-Pilote in Martinique to improve the spawning habitat of sea turtles. This is indeed one of the most important spawning sites in Martinique for the nesting turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata*, a species classified as critically endangered (CR). It is also one of the last sparsely urbanized beaches in the northern Caribbean sector and therefore a very large retreat habitat.

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Photo: © L'ASSO-MER

Educational eco-location in favour of plant and animal biodiversity

Ecolieu pédagogique en faveur de la biodiversité végétale et animale

CENTRE DE CULTURE POPULAIRE
YPIRANGA DE PASTINHA MARTINIQUE
DANSER LA LUTTE POUR LA CITOYENNETE ET LA VIE

Targeted territory: Martinique
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 50,000.00 €
Duration: July 2020 – June 2021 (12 months)
Lead: Centre de Culture Populaire Ypiranga de Pastinha Martinique

Objective:
Managing the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by integrating biodiversity across government and society (increased biodiversity awareness).

Project description:
To reach its objective, the project team is conducting fauna and flora inventories (with the assistance of experts from various institutions), producing and installing pedagogical panels, improving the state of riverbanks and conducting a series of public awareness raising activities.

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Photo: © Christèle Allaud

Protecting and showcasing the ponds of Les Anses d'Arlet

Protection et valorisation des mares de Les Anses d'Arlet

LES ANSES D'ARLET

Targeted territory: Martinique
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 36,401.40 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: Ville de Les Anses d'Arlet

Objective:
Improving the knowledge of the target area in order to establish appropriate management and protection measures.

Project description:
The project intends to rehabilitate three ponds that are property of the City of Anses d'Arlet, with the first scientific assessments made by a public authority in Martinique in the interest of protecting endemic pond species. The main activities include an inventory of species and habitats conducted by experts, water analysis, and local partnership on cultural and social use of the local ponds with the local population.

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Photo: © Ville de Les Anses d'Arlet

SICOLIBA

Targeted territory: Martinique
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 49,690.20 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: Conservatoire Botanique de Martinique

Objective:
Improving data on flora and habitats, and raising awareness on the conservation of endangered species.

Project description:
The project includes in situ actions to improve the conservation status of an highly threatened species, the barrel vine (through the creation of neo-populations - reintroduction), while involving and raising awareness of the actors local (municipalities, associations) to the need for such actions and more broadly to the protection of indigenous and threatened flora and natural environments.

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Photo: © Guillaume VISCARDI

Viability of the Lesser Antilles iguana population on Chancel Island

Viabilité de la Population d'Iguanes des Petites Antilles de l'îlet Chancel

Targeted territory: Martinique
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 43,715.49 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: ONF

Objective:
Improving the conservation status of the Lesser Antilles iguana.

Project description:
Chancel Island in Martinique, located in the commune of Robert, is one of the islets of the Atlantic coast of Martinique and, because of its isolation from the main part of the Martinique island, is until now home to the largest and last viable iguana population in the Lesser Antilles of Martinique. As latest estimates place the population between 484 and 713 individuals, the project directly contributes to improving the management of iguana spawning sites and thus to improving the conservation status of its breeding habitat (including invasive species management - rats).

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Photo: © Alicia Bonanno

LIFE4BEST 2020

PLANT'AKSYON - Restoration of coastal flora

PLANT'AKSYON - Restauration de la flore bord de mer

Targeted territory: Guadeloupe
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 35,775.54 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Ville de Saint-François

Objective:
Mitigate the effect of erosion that affects the coastal sites of the region.

Project description:
Activities will be carried out on 3 beach sites: Anse à la Gourde, Anse Loquet and Pointe Gros-Boeuf. Invasive species will be removed (*Cocos nucifera, Scaevolia taccada* and *Sansevieria sp.*) and **plantation sessions for endemic** (6 endangered species) and local species will be held with children and local population. About 1350 plants will be planted on a total of 4200 m² terrestrial area to be restored, and approximately 250 meetings and conferences and events will be organised with experts, civil society, public authorities and schools.

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Photo: © Ville de Saint-François

1,500 Trees for Grande-Terre as part of 100,000 trees for Guadeloupe

1 500 Arbres pour la Grande-Terre dans le cadre de 100 Mille Arbres pour la Guadeloupe

Targeted territory: Guadeloupe
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 37,491.09 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Association Conseil Environnement Développement Durable ACED

Objective:
Plantation of 1500 trees on the limestone of Grande Terre, is order to reinforce the impact of the climate change on the biodiversity of Guadeloupe.

Project description:
ACED Project is the phase III of the bigger regional project that ACED has been working on in Guadeloupe since 2019, when working on the impact of Maria Hurricane and the effect of the pollution with pesticides of the Basse-Terre territory. 1500 endemic or local trees will be planted (worskshops will be held with experts in order to select the plants and produce tools for managing the process. 3 Workshops on participatory sciences and a vast campaign of 7 meetings for awareness to schools will also be held. About 1000 people are planned to be involved. The activities will be implemented with 5 volunteers.

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Photo: © Félix LUREL

Let's save the mangrove in 2 steps

Sauvons la mangrove à 2 pas

Targeted territory: Martinique
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,881.04 €
Duration: September 2021 – August 2022 (12 months)
Lead: Commune du Lamentin

Objective:
Restore the degraded mangrove of Morne Cabri.

Project description:
The KBA site of the central part of Martinique was notably devastated by Dean Hurricane in 2007 and, since then, was not properly restored by any public or private entity. A team of 25 SME's employees from La Lézarde will be trained and involved in the main activities that the municipality will implement. The project will entail cleaning and restoring parts of an area of 100 m² of the entire mangrove; replanting an area of 10 000 m² and removing 4 000 m² of invasive species and plantation of valorisation of 100 mangrove species; training courses for 25 employees and 100 people associated to the implementation.

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Photo: © Commune du Lamentin

BEST2.0+ 2020

Restoring and conserving Anguilla's pollinators and degraded habitats to make them more resilient

Targeted territory: Anguilla
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 58,868 €
Duration: July 2021 - December 2022 (18 months)
Lead: Anguilla National Trust

Objective:
To establish the platform needed to restore and conserve Anguilla's pollinators and degraded habitats, making them more resilient by reducing controllable stressors.

Project description:
Using the results of baseline data collected on Anguilla's bees, butterflies, birds, and bats, this project will involve undertaking a rapid assessment of Anguilla's key pollinators and collaboratively developing a National Pollinator Strategy. It will engage stakeholders to create additional pollinator habitat through the construction and installation of pollinator houses (bee and bat boxes), as well as the development of an Anguilla Pesticide Policy. The Policy will enable a transition from common application of non-specific toxic pesticides to bio-pesticides, horticultural oils, and other low impact pesticides.

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Photo: © Farah Muhkida / ANT

Large scale Diadema Antillarum Restoration in Saba and St Eustatius

Targeted territories: Saba, St Eustatius and Saba Bank
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 57,782 €
Duration: August 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Saba Conservation Foundation
Partner: St Eustatius National Bank

Objective:
To restock sea-urchins (*Diadema Antillarum)* population on reefs within the Saba Marine Park, Saba National Park and St Eustatius Marine Park.

Project description:
On Saba and St Eustatius, sea-urchins are abundant on a few locations, often on sheltered and shallow reefs, and their positive effects are very clear. This project will promote the re-establishment of sea-urchins population on patch reefs to decrease the algae cover within the three marine parks, and allow the coral reefs around Saba and St Eustatius to continue to fulfil their important ecological and economic role. Staff of the marine parks will collect settlers, raise them in a land-based nursery and restock them on the reefs. In total, 300m^2 of coral reefs will be restocked with *Diadema Antillarum*.

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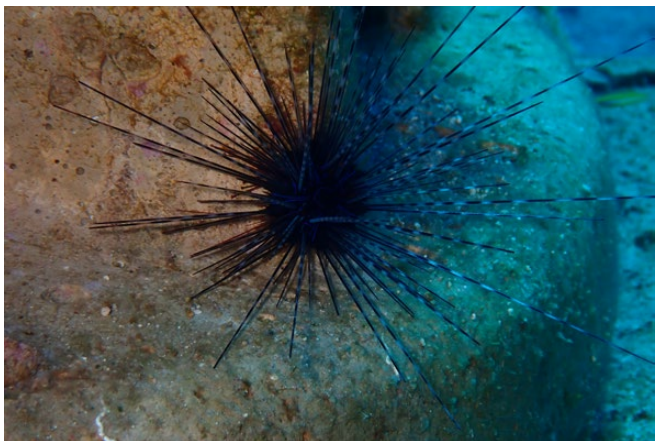


Photo: © Alwin Hylkema

Larval propagation: an innovative technique to scale up the Bonaire's reef restoration programme

Targeted territory: Bonaire
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 59,146 €
Duration: July 2021 – December 2022 (18 months)
Lead: Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire

Objective:
To assist the recovery of deteriorated coral reef areas by way of active coral restoration activities.

Project description:
The project will restore genetically diverse coral populations via larval propagation. Larval propagation tools and processes will help Bonaire experts to intensify the recovery of deteriorated coral reefs areas and to establish self-sustaining sexually reproducing coral populations that have sufficient genetic and phenotypic variation to adapt to changing climate and environments. Implemented in the Bonaire National Marine Park, the project will also seek to strengthen the technical cooperation among experts by way of sharing information and building capacity. It will ultimately complement the existent coral restoration activities based on coral fragmentation, thus building the capacity to improve the health, function, and genetic diversity of coral reefs in Bonaire.

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Photo: © Lorenzo Mittiga

Mangrove Restoration in Bonaire

Targeted territory: Bonaire
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 58,496 €
Duration: July 2021 – February 2022 (19 months)
Lead: Stichting Internos

Objective:
To conserve and increase the biodiversity of mangroves in Bonaire National Marine Park.

Project description:
Bonaire hosts the largest mangrove forest within the Dutch Caribbean, but there are numerous threats to these areas. This project will restore the vitality of the mangrove forest through hydrological restoration, erosion control in the watershed and reforestation in the degraded area. Improving the water circulation will be completed through a variety of projects intended to restore historical water circulation pathways within the mangroves. In addition, new channels will be opened to connect water bodies with the intent to increase overall circulation, particularly in areas that are degraded. Furthermore, nurseries will be established to grow mangroves to be planted in degraded areas and along the coast.

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Photo: © Mangrove Maniacs

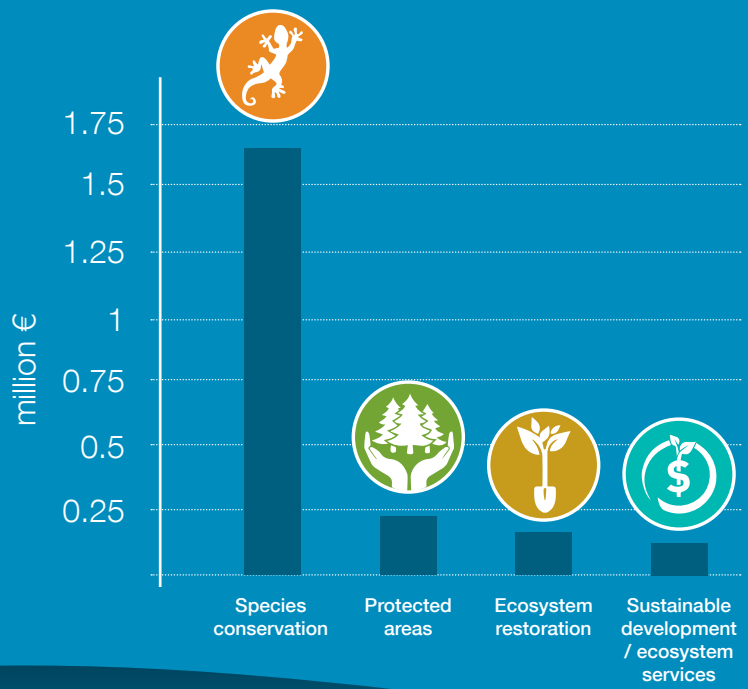
BEST Initiative



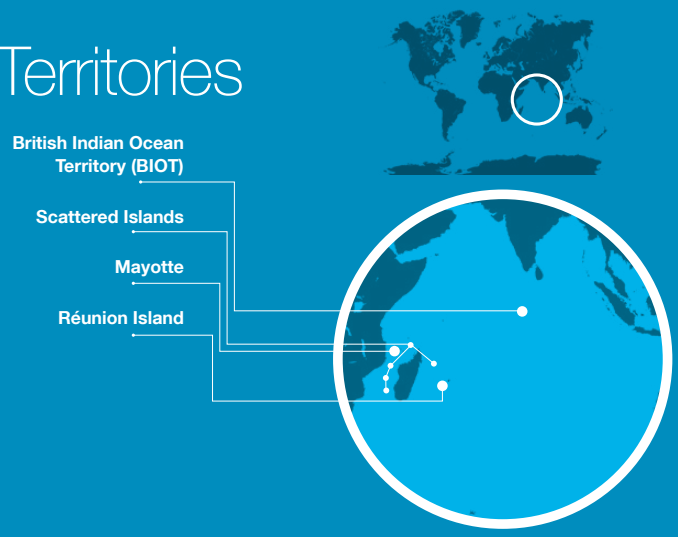
Local fisherwomen, Mayotte marine park © Agnes Poiret
Reunion © Aurélie Bocquet

Indian Ocean

BEST funded projects (2011-2023)
28 projects - €2,19 million



Territories



BEST PA I - 2011

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.

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Photo: © Julien Triolo, ONF

BEST PA II - 2012

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.

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Photo: © Eric Lancelot

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.

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Photo: © Globice

BEST 2.0 SG 2015

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.

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Photo: © Mickaël Sanchez

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/.

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Photo: © BIOTA

DyCIT - The Dynamic and Conservation of the Island of Tromelin

DyCIT - Dynamique et Conservation de l'Ile 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.

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Photo: © Matthieu Le Corre

BEST 2.0 MG 2016

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

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.

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Photo: © Parc naturel marin des Glorieuses / AFB

BEST 2.0 SG 2017

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.

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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.

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Photo: © Bruno Marie

BEST RUP - 2017

Feeding ecology of the Mauritius Fruit Bat, interactions with fruit crops and the implications for the conservation of the species on Reunion

Ecologie alimentaire de la Roussette noire, interactions avec les cultures fruitières et implications pour la conservation de l'espèce sur l'île de La Réunion

Targeted territory: Reunion
BEST RUP grant awarded: 49,789 €
Duration: June 2018 – May 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Groupe Chiroptères Océan Indien (GCOI)

Objective:
To develop appropriate and locally acceptable conservation measures for the Mauritius Fruit Bat in Réunion

Project description:
Fruit producers in Mauritius accuse the Mauritius Fruit Bat of destroying crops, thus the species is rather feared by fruit producers in Reunion. The current population in Reunion, of around 100 individuals, is gathered in a single site and thus extremely vulnerable to any disturbance. The project is using GPS bio-loggers to track the movements of previously tagged individuals and combining this with in situ observations to determine the bats' feeding behaviours. This information will be shared with stakeholders in the local fruit sector and used to determine conservation measures adapted to the conservation of the species on the island. Various communication actions will be implemented to disseminate the results of this project to a wide audience.

CONTACT
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Photo: © Tanguy Nicolas

Knowledge and conservation of Mayotte's little known and threatened flora

Connaissance et conservation de la flore méconnue et menacée de Mayotte

Targeted territory: Mayotte
BEST RUP grant awarded: 50,000 €
Duration: June 2018 – May 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Conservatoire Botanique National de Mascarin (CBNM - Antenne de Mayotte)

Objective:
To increase the knowledge base on a number of little known and threatened taxa in Mayotte to inform conservation actions.

Project description:
Following the development of the Mayotte Red List of Threatened Species in 2014 it became apparent that many taxa had long been recognized as new to science, but had never been described or published. Most of these taxa are considered rare and/or threatened at the island level. Through field work and ex situ conservation the project will address the knowledge gaps on several taxonomic groups of flora of Mayotte enabling a proper assessment of the heritage value of these taxa and facilitating their integrated into the various conservation programs for threatened species, and if necessary allow their inclusion on the list of protected species of Mayotte.

CONTACT
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Photo: © Johannes Chambon

Creation of an atlas of the distribution of reptiles and amphibians of Mayotte and guidelines for their conservation

Réalisation d'un atlas de distribution des reptiles et amphibiens de Mayotte et lignes de conduite pour la conservation

Targeted territory: Mayotte
BEST RUP grant awarded: 49,947 €
Duration: June 2018 – May 2019 (12 months)
Lead: Naturalistes Environnement & Patrimoine de Mayotte
Partner: ECO-MED Océan Indien

Objective:
To strengthen the consideration of issues related to native reptiles and amphibians in the context of development and climate change in Mayotte.

Project description:
Already composed of fragmented ecosystems, Mayotte's environment faces pressures from the development of agriculture and infrastructure. Conservation of its biodiversity relies as much on the management of this matrix of hybrid environments as in the pure and simple protection of relict natural spaces.

Of the 18 species of terrestrial reptiles and 2 species of amphibians in Mayotte, 8 are endemic and 5 are threatened. This project is producing an atlas of these reptiles and amphibians detailing the predicted the effects of climate change on the distribution of species and the predicted evolution of habitat degradation. The atlas is intended to inform public policies and development decisions (e.g. through environmental assessments, impact studies etc.), notably by proposing appropriate avoidance, reduction and compensation measures for these species.

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Photo: © Johannes Chambon

Inventory and status report of echinoderm populations in Mayotte

Inventaire et état des lieux des populations d'échinodermes à Mayotte

Targeted territory: Mayotte
BEST RUP grant awarded: 6,000 €
Duration: April 2018 – July 2018 (4 months)
Lead: Mayotte Nature Environnement (MNE)

Objective:

To enable local managers to implement relevant management measures by developing a complete, up-to-date and useful inventory of echinoderm populations in Mayotte

Project description:

Existing inventory lists of Mayotte's echinoderms are based largely on a synthesis of scattered bibliographic data that are often faulty or obsolete. Several species of echinoderms are the subject of a commercial fishery (mainly informal) and some species play an important role in maintaining the health of reefs. The project is developing the first complete inventory of echinoderm populations in Mayotte, quantifying the relative abundance of the different species, the local conservation status for species at risk, and potential exploitation thresholds for commercial species, with zoning of this information.
This can be used by local actors to inform establishment of conservation measures or the adaptation of existing measures.

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Photo: © Agnes Poiret

LIFE4BEST 2019

MESORUN

Targeted territory: La Réunion
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 50,000.00 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: Vie Océane

Objective:

Collect data and better understand the mesophotic area of La Réunion.

Project description:

MesoRun proposes to carry out inventories in Mesophotic Coral Ecosystems, which represent unique communities with habitats and assemblages of species distinct from near-surface reefs. The deep reef biodiversity located between 50 m and 150 m remains largely unknown in the southwest of the Indian Ocean, and in particular in La Réunion. This project will also make it possible to describe the habitats of the explored sites and to collaborate with several public organizations including the University of La Réunion and the Research Institute for Development in order to integrate the data collected with the description of the mesophotic habitats located below reef slopes around the island.

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Photo: © Vie océane

MAYSPONGE

Targeted territory: Mayotte
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 47,320.00 €
Duration: September 2020 – August 2021 (12 months)
Lead: Mayotte Nature Environnement

Objective:
Development of tools for monitoring major anthropogenic pressures and quantification of ecosystem services in the Maori lagoon.

Project description:
Surface water management is a major issue in Mayotte for the sustainable development of the island. The deficiencies in the sewerage network are reflected in the spread of contaminated surface water, increasing the risk of anthropogenic pollution in the lagoon. As such, the MAYSPONGE project proposes to initiate the development of innovative methodologies based on the use of sponges as auxiliary organisms for the evaluation of the impact of wastewater on the lagoon and the characterization of services that they render.

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Photo: © Mayotte Nature Environnement

Control of invasive species in the Bénara-Tchaourembo forest

Lutte contre les espèces envahissantes en forêt de Bénara-Tchaourembo

Targeted territory: Mayotte
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 41,932.00 €
Duration: June 2020 – June 2021 (12 months)
Lead: Mlezi Maore

Objective:
Controlling invasive species, while promoting awareness and social integration.

Project description:
The forests of Monts Bénara and Mont Tchaourembo (1000 ha) are among the last relics of preserved forests in Mayotte. The inaccessibility of these areas has preserved the remarkable species present in these forests from degradation caused by anthropogenic activities. Unfortunately, part of the forest is in a degraded state, highly affected particularly by lianas. They cover the undergrowth and destabilize forest dynamics. The projects actions include delianing and liana stumping, and planting seedlings of native species.

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Photo: © Mlezi Maore

Census and awareness of landowners, users and uses on the protection perimeters of 2 water catchments: Combani and Ourovéni

Recensement et sensibilisation des propriétaires fonciers, des usagers et des usages sur les périmètres de protection (PP) de 2 captages d'eau : retenue de Combani et prise d'eau d'Ourovéni

Targeted territory: Mayotte
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 50,000.00 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: Fédération Mahoraise des Associations Environnementales

Objective:
Restore water resources (quantity and quality) of 2 catchments.

Project description:
The project is centred around water protection, which is a major stake in the ORs, as most have very limited water resources. It concerns a key biodiversity area of Mayotte (MYT-08). The project proposes to raise awareness and empower users to restore good environmental conditions in areas where water is collected for human consumption (participation of landowners and other users of the plots).

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Photo: © FMAE

Reef 3D Structure, Pilot Study for Improving Management of the Mayotte Reef BIOdiversity (REBIOMA-3D)

Structure 3D des RÉcifs, étude pilote pour l'amélioration de gestion de la BIOdiversité récifalede MAyotte(REBIOMA-3D)

Targeted territory: Mayotte
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 49,970.00 €
Duration: August 2020 – August 2021 (12 months)
Lead: Creocean-OI

Objective:
Provide new quantitative descriptors of coral reefs. Determine possible degradations related to anthropogenic impacts and propose management measures for study sites.

Project description:
Coral reefs have a major role for biodiversity. Despite their importance, few monitoring programs take this into account to determine the health status of reefs. The project REBIOMA proposes to use a new 3D underwater mapping method to better characterize coral reefs and follow their evolution (resilience/deterioration) in a key biodiversity area of Mayotte (lagoon and external slope) which is strongly anthropized. Underwater photogrammetry allows to create 3D models of reefs at different spatial scales, ranging from the coral colony to reef landscapes. The 3D reconstruction by underwater photogrammetry also allows precise temporal monitoring of the reef communities.

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Photo: © Creocean-OI

Conservation of sea turtles from Saziley Point (Mayotte) through a participatory approach

Conservation des tortues marines de la pointe de Saziley (Mayotte) par une approche participative

Targeted territory: Mayotte
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 41,573.00 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: Les Naturalistes de Mayotte

Objective:
Raise awareness on the protection of sea turtles.

Project description:
Mayotte is a major spawning site in the Mozambique Channel and therefore plays an important role in the conservation of several endangered sea turtle species: green turtle (EN); hawksbill turtle (CR); loggerhead turtle (VU). This project proposes to inform the public (citizens, elected officials, associations) about the challenges of protecting sea turtles and their habitats, to increase their vigilance and their involvement (citizen and community initiatives) in anti-poaching deterrence actions, and to improve knowledge and practices for respectful observation of sea turtles.

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Photo: © Stéphane Lormant

Raising public and school awareness of invasive alien species in natural and urban environments

Sensibilisation du public et des scolaires aux espèces exotiques envahissantes en milieux naturels et urbains

Targeted territory: La Réunion
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 36,706.00 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: SREPEN-RNE

Objective:
Transmit basic knowledge on invasive alien species (IAS).

Project description:
Biodiversity in Réunion is subject to severe degradation, in particular due to the development of invasive alien species in natural environments. The project will raise awareness about the conservation of biodiversity, through better knowledge of invasive alien species, which must be controlled on the one hand, and not reintroduced into the wild on the other. It targets the public and school children. The project will feature exhibitions of informative panels on the main IAS present on the territory.

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Photo: © SREPEN

Search for microbats hitherto not described in Réunion Island and analysis of acoustic differentiation

Recherche de micro-chiroptères jusqu'alors non décrits à La Réunion et analyse de la différenciation acoustique

Targeted territory: La Réunion
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 49,465.00 €
Duration: July 2020 – August 2021 (14 months)
Lead: GCOI - Groupe Chiroptères Océan Indien

Objective:
Description of new bat species.

Project description:
The project is part of the reduction of biodiversity goal at the global level (UE strategies actions 17b, 17c, 18b and 19) if a new species is determined. It also concerns several key biodiversity areas (ZNIEFF, PNR REU-13). There is a lack of knowledge on Reunion bats, where some species are known only by their noise emissions. The objective of this project is to describe these species. To this end, acoustic prospecting is being carried out for the first time in La Réunion in order to improve knowledge on the distribution of the taxa.

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Photo: © Laurent DEBORDES

LIFE4BEST 2020

Co-construction of sustainable mangrove management through participatory approach

Co-construction d'une gestion durable des mangroves par une démarche participative

Targeted territory: Mayotte
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,555.37 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Naturalistes Environnement et Patrimoine de Mayotte

Objective:
Training and indicator monitoring actions involving citizens and users to raise awareness of the pressures exerted on mangroves and provide information on ecosystem services.

Project description:
Natural and anthropogenic pressures are exacerbated on the mangroves of Mayotte where villages develop in the immediate vicinity of the mangroves. Despite the importance of this ecosystem for the integrity of the coast, few projects are emerging for the sustainable management of these spaces and few actions are initiated to involve populations to their protection, in particular by improving their surveillance through participatory science initiatives. The project wishes to carry out training and indicator monitoring actions using a participatory approach with citizens and users, to raise awareness of the pressures exerted on mangroves and provide information on ecosystem services. In order to perpetuate this process, it will be a matter of co-building synergies mobilizing associations, municipalities, students and institutions by providing knowledge to integrate local action plans to be developed for the co-management of mangroves in Mayotte.

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Photo: © François Beudard

UTOPIAN (identification of priority conservation areas within the reef plateaus of the island of La Réunion)

UTOPIAN (identification des zones d'enjeUx prioritaire de conservaTiOn au sein des Platiers récifaux de l'île de LA RéuNion)

Targeted territory: La Réunion
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,979.84 €
Duration: August 2021 – July 2022 (12 months)
Lead: BEST RUN

Objective:
Map the ecological state of the internal reefs of La Réunion Island.

Project description:
UTOPIAN intends to mobilize BEST-ALI students from the University of Reunion to assess the ecological state of habitats inside La Reunion's reefs. The students will be trained in the MERCI-Cor method. The objective of this project is to establish a mapping of the ecological state of the internal reefs of La Réunion Island. A close collaboration will be established with the Marine Nature Reserve of La Réunion (RNMR). Indeed, from this mapping may emerge reflections as management policies and territorial development plans. By involving the BEST-ALI students, the project can be perpetuated, and data can be updated every two years (M1 for training, M2 for data acquisition). Once the initial results obtained, awareness-raising and sharing of knowledge will be proposed. Being publicly diffused, this information will make users aware of the ecological state of the lagoon.

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Photo: © BEST RUN

Raising awareness on IAS and planting native species

Sensibilisation sur les EEE et plantation d'espèces indigènes

Targeted territory: La Réunion
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,938.82 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: SREPEN-RNE

Objective:
Raising awareness on IAS and planting native species in the vicinity of Réunion National Park.

Project description:
The purpose of this project is to raise awareness among residents of neighbourhoods located close to Réunion National Park "doors", about risks of invasion of certain Invasive Alien Species which are present in gardens, and to promote their replacement by species indigenous and endemic. These neighbourhoods on the edge of protected areas require special monitoring in the propagation of IAS. The objective of this project is to strengthen awareness-raising actions in these territories in order to create a buffer zone of prevention through a biosecurity approach preventing IAS from entering primary forests, thereby preserving the biodiversity.

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SCAN'R - Collective Monitoring of Nautical and Maritime Activities, for the assessment of the risks of exposure of cetacean populations of Réunion Island to maritime traffic

SCAN'R - Suivi Collectif des Activités Nautiques et maritimes, pour l'évaluation des risques d'exposition des populations de cétacés de La Réunion au trafic maritime

Targeted territory: La Réunion
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,998.91 €
Duration: July 2021 – June 2022 (12 months)
Lead: Groupe Local d'OBservation et d'Identification des CEtacés

Objective:
Assess maritime traffic impact on cetaceans and improve its management.

Project description:
Faced with current and future growth of maritime traffic associated with human activities in La Reunion waters, the cetacean populations are subject to growing noxious pressures. So far, knowledge is lacking to describe maritime traffic, assess its impact on cetaceans and improve its management. In order to face this issue, the project proposes to 1) Characterize the traffic associated with the different human activities at sea and highlight the hotspots for the exposure of cetaceans to maritime traffic; 2) Contribute to improve the management of maritime traffic and uses at sea; and 3) Raise awareness among professionals and users to the issue of threats to cetaceans by maritime traffic in La Réunion Island. The results of the project will allow to improve the conservation of cetaceans and their habitat, and will contribute to the management of traffic and the sustainable development of maritime activities.

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PEROU: Protection of the Bois Rouge Pond

PEROU : Protection de l'Etang de Bois ROUge

Targeted territory: La Réunion
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,963.72 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Société d'Etude Ornithologiques de La Réunion

Objective:
Ensure the protection of a local pond.

Project description:
The ponds of Bois Rouge and Colosse are of great interest in terms of biodiversity and ecosystems. However, they do not benefit from sufficient management resources to mitigate threats and promote their biodiversity. This project therefore proposes the implement actions to fight Invasive Alien Species and also to restore an area favourable to migrating shorebirds. Hyacinth water will be manually removed from open water surfaces and physical barriers will be installed in order to prevent their reinvasion. Regarding introduced predators, rats will be eliminated using lethal traps. Finally, areas will be restored by mowing in order to promote presence of shorebirds on the site. In parallel with these management measures, follow-ups will be carried out in order to check their efficiency. The population will be sensitized (schoolchildren, residents, users) to the existing issues on these ponds.

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Photo: © SEOR

EDUCOCEAN

Targeted territory: La Réunion
LIFE4BEST grant awarded: 39,934.97 €
Duration: July 2021 – August 2022 (14 months)
Lead: Association Abyss

Objective:
Contribute to expertise and awareness initiatives in favour of the conservation of marine biodiversity.

Project description:
ABYSS association contributes to the improvement of ecological knowledge of the marine environment and its biocenosis through investigation methods and innovative processes: etho-acoustics data collection, assessment of dolphin welfare, characterization of spatial distribution of humpback whales by remote sensing using satellite images, description of environmental conditions in particular by analysis floating wrecks. In connection with these transversal actions, the EDUCOCEAN project aims to contribute to expertise and awareness initiatives in favour of the conservation of marine biodiversity, through actions of communication and environmental education. EDUCOCEAN is organized in 2 major axes: a) innovation for the sharing and monitoring of knowledge, b) the implementation of a school support program for strengthening of ecological awareness.

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Photo: © Gabriel BARATHIEU

BEST2.0+ 2020

Research and management recommendations of the chiropterans in the Scattered Islands

Targeted territory: Scattered Islands
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 59,949 €
Duration: August 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Groupe Chiroptères Océan Indien (GCOI)

Objective:
To carry out an acoustic inventory of bats on the Scattered Islands.

Project description:
The project will identify the species of bats present on three of the Scattered islands: Grande Glorieuse, Tromelin and Europa, to better understand their use of land and to recommend appropriate management measures. GCOI will rotationally deploy passive recorders on these islands and will take genetic samples from Grande Glorieuse bats, aiming to provide elements of understanding on the phylogeny of the species present. Finally, awareness-raising will be carried out among the general public to promote the knowledge of bats and disseminate the results of the study.

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Photo: © Laurent Debordes

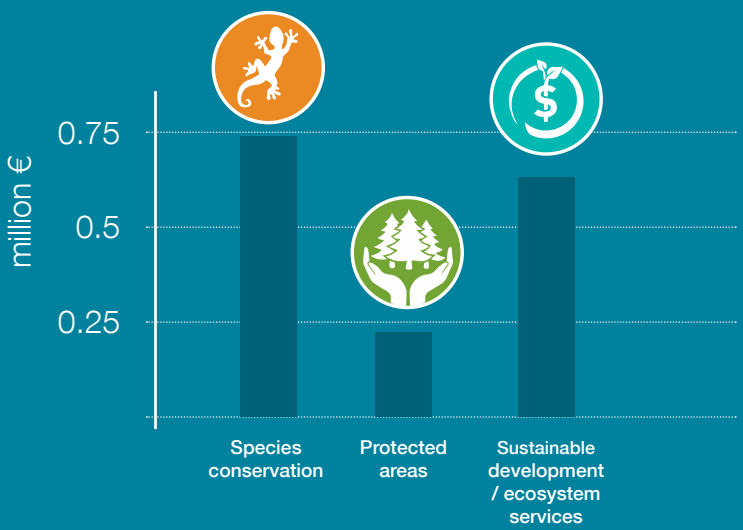
BEST Initiative



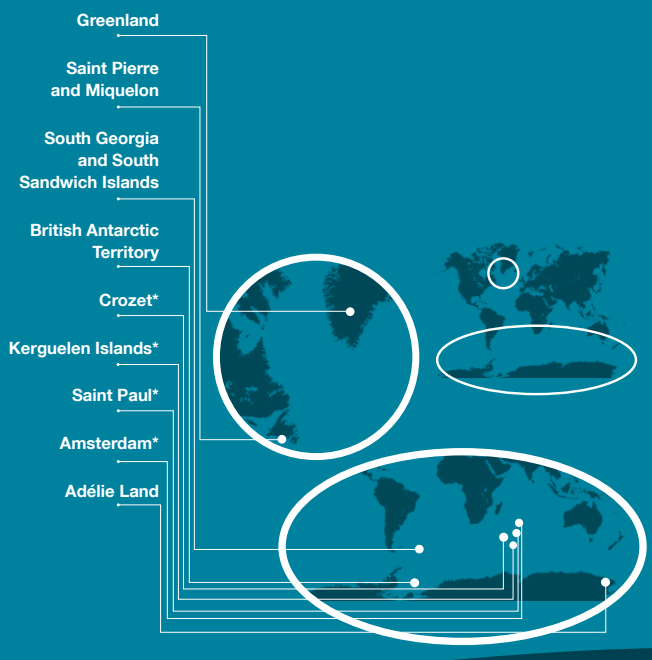
Greenland © Michael Køie Poulsen
King penguin on South Georgia © Judith Brown

Polar & Sub-Polar

BEST funded projects (2011-2023)
8 projects - €1,55 million



Territories



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

BEST PA II - 2012

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.

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Photo: © Annette Scheffer

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

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

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Photo: © Elmer Topp-Jørgensen

BEST 2.0 SG 2015

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

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

Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage

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 Columbier 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.

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BEST 2.0 MG 2016

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

ZSL LET'S WORK FOR WILDLIFE

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 cha0nge 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.

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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

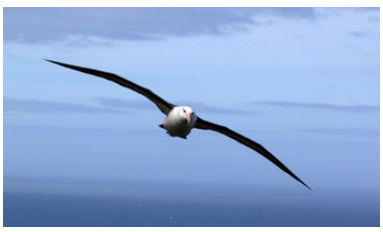
The project will develop baseline surveys of right whales in South Georgia waters during summer to investigate their prey sources, habitat use in relation to the krill fishing within the sustainable-use SGSSI MPA, genetic diversity, population connectivity with calving areas and health status. Satellite 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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BEST2.0+ 2020

BROOKTROUTSPM: Improving the knowledge of the threatened brook trout and its habitat

Targeted territory: Saint-Pierre and Miquelon
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 59,789 €
Duration: July 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Federation Territoriale des Associations Agrees pour la Peche et la Protection des Milieux Aquatiques (FTPSPM)

Objective:
To improve the knowledge of the threatened brook trout and its habitat.

Project description:
Saint-Pierre and Miquelon (SPM) hosts one of the most remarkable native and pristine populations of brook trout in the world. Despite being one of the most popular angling fish, knowledge of its biology and ecology in SPM is scarce and prevents sustainable and efficient management. This project will conduct an extensive biological survey and monitor water quality to support two main goals: (i) improve ecological connectivity and restore key habitats for the species, such as spawning grounds, and (ii) to develop sustainable ecotourism activities. This grassroots initiative will involve relevant local stakeholders including anglers, students and the general public.

CONTACT
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Photo: © Edgard Gustave

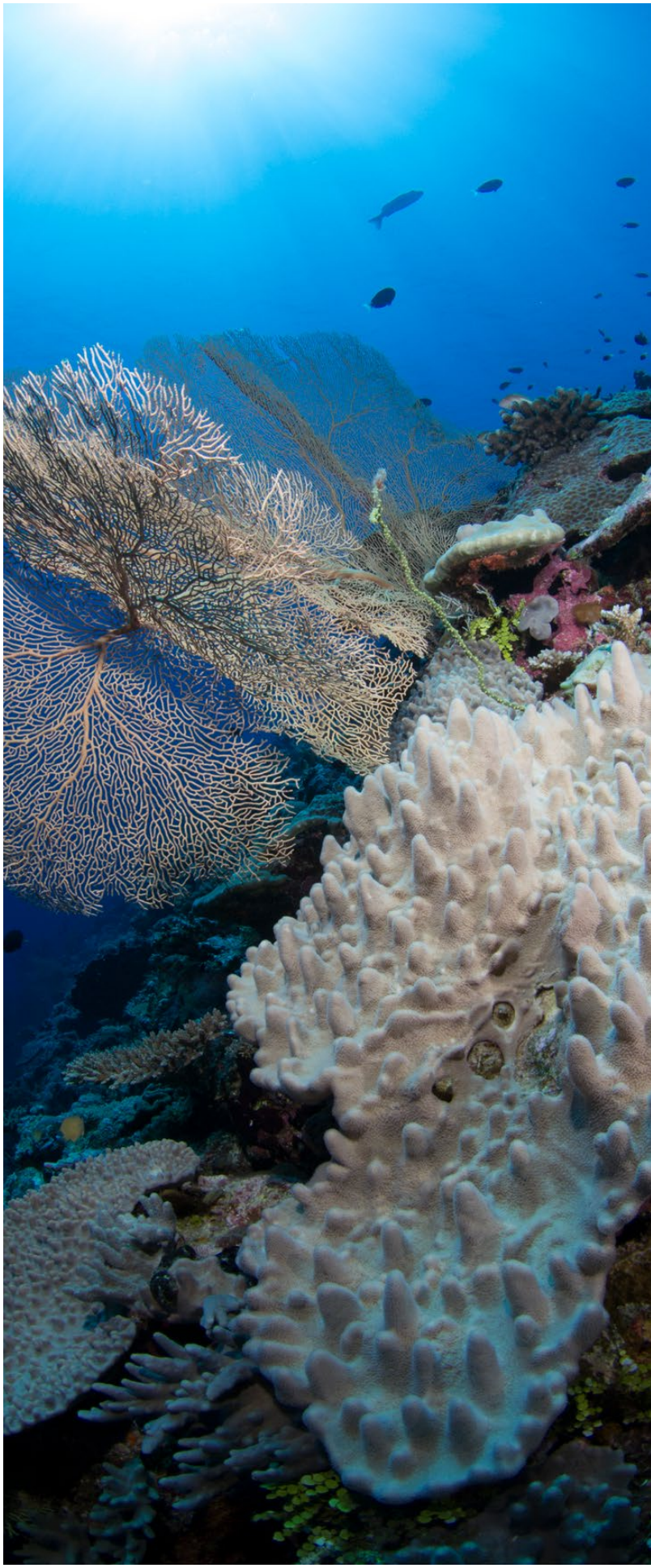


Photo: © Rohan Holt, Redfern

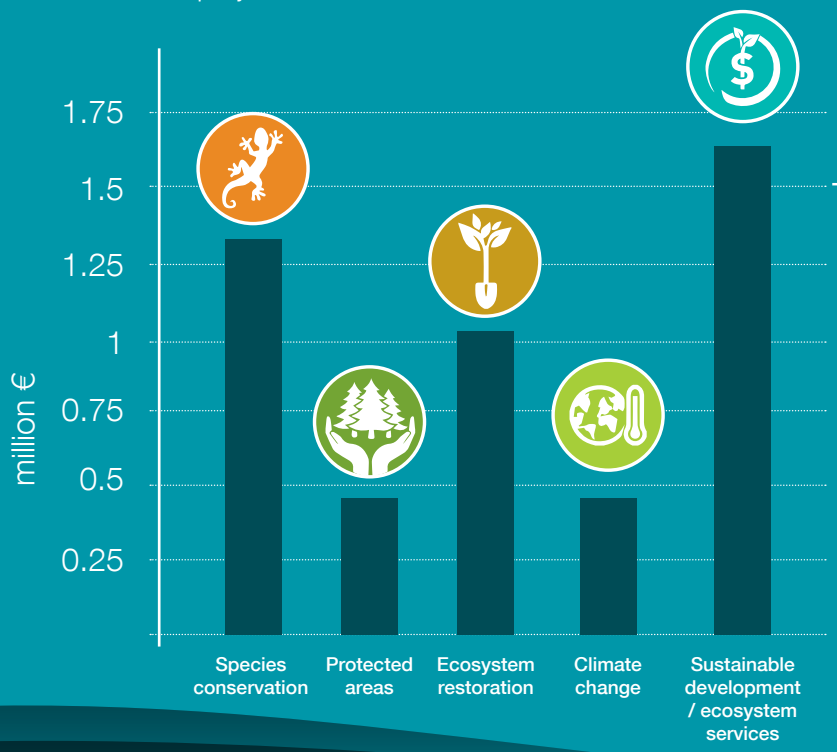
BEST Initiative



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

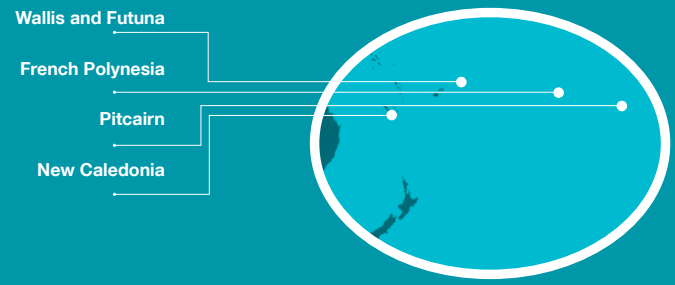
Pacific

BEST funded projects (2011-2023)
42 projects - €5,08 million



Territories





BEST PA I - 2011

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 prices 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 raisonée 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.

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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

BEST 2.0 MG - 2015

Pacific Biodiversity Blue Belt

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 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.

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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/

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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

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

CONTACT
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Photo: © Jean-Christophe Lefeuvre

BEST 2.0 SG - 2016

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.

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Photo: © Chloé Desmots

FLORE NC: Preserving together the floristic heritage of New Caledonia

Préservons 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.

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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)

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'Ocean

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/

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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

TE RAU ATI ATI A
TAU A HITI NOA TU

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 Houaliou 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

Commune de
WAA WI LUU

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.

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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.

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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.

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Photo: © Norma Hokuin

BEST 2.0 SG - 2017

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.

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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/

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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Photo: © Vaihuti Fresh

BEST2.0+ 2020

Conservation of forest species of traditional interest and restoration of degraded forests in Wallis and Futuna

Conservation d'essences forestières à intérêt traditionnel et restauration de forêts dégradées à Wallis

DSA WALLIS ET FUTUNA
Direction des services de l'agriculture, de la forêt et de la pêche

Targeted territory: Wallis and Futuna
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 49,320 €
Duration: July 2021 - January 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Direction des Services de l'Agriculture, de la Forêt, et de la Pêche de Wallis et Futuna

Objective:
To transform a degraded area of Caribbean pines (*Pinus caribaea*) into a conservation plot for this species.

Project description:
Wallis has a diversified forest, but some of the hardwood species used by the local population for traditional and medicinal purposes are becoming increasingly rare. This project will safeguard the Wallisian forest and these species, but also improve the means of subsistence of the Wallisian population. After the extraction of the softwood, part of the plot will be replanted and the other part will be used for "passive" restoration, where only the natural regeneration of native species will allow the reconstitution of a natural secondary forest. Once mature, the hardwood forest stand will constitute a seed reservoir that will be supervised by the authorities and promoted among the population in order to initiate similar projects elsewhere in the territory.

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Photo: © Yohan Lojou

Reefs on the move

Les récifs en itinérance

PALA DALIK
L'écho du récif

Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 59,952 €
Duration: July 2021 - January 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Pala Dalik, l'écho du recif

Objective:
To organise a travelling exhibition on coral reefs to increase the knowledge and preservation of coral reefs in New Caledonia.

Project description:
On the occasion of its 10th anniversary, Pala Dalik proposes to organise a travelling exhibition on coral reefs to inform as many people as possible about these ecosystems.

The project will develop innovative tools that will be used in combination with its own educational and informative methods. This exhibition is aimed at the general public and will be offered throughout the territory through cultural, environmental, scientific and school events. The information provided will invite New Caledonians to make the link between the evolution of these ecosystems and their own way of life in order to encourage an environmentally friendly behaviour.

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Photo: © Sandrine Jobs

Protection of the coastline

Protection du trait de côte

Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 58,786€
Duration: July 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Popwadene

Objective:
To use nature-based solutions to combat the erosion of the coastline of the commune of Pwêêdi Wiimîâ.

Project description:
Due to climate change and rising sea levels, the coastline of the commune of Pwêêdi Wiimîâ (Poindimié) is suffering from significant erosion, thus threatening homes and recreational areas for the local population. This project proposes an integrated and elaborate development plan to protect this coastline using nature-based solutions, and so targeting ecosystems such as mangrove planting, multiplication of seagrass and the vegetation of the coastline. These activities will lead to a restoration of the biotope and will allow the stabilisation of the coastline by limiting the progression of erosion. Furthermore, the project aims at having the locals fully involved and raising awareness of environmental protection.

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Photo: © Monique MAPERI

Valleys of the Montagne des Sources: enabling citizen mobilisation to protect biodiversity

Vallées de la Montagne des Sources: permettre la mobilisation citoyenne pour protéger la biodiversité

Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 59,266€
Duration: July 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Fonds Mondial pour la Nature, WWF-France

Objective:
To contribute to the reduction of environmental threats on the high-stake site “Montagne des Sources”.

Project description:
“Montagne des Sources” is the leading water resource in New Caledonia and home to exceptional biodiversity. This project proposes activities aimed to strengthen the intervention capacities of the environmental associations that are present in the area in order to reduce environmental threats such as fires and invasive species. The proposed activities will include defining methods of mobilisation recognised by the institutions to enable these associations to participate in these actions; training the involved associations; acquiring the equipment and material necessary to carry out effective actions, and communicating and capitalising on the actions being implemented.

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Photo: © Géraux Hubert

Sowing in the Tuo Cèmuhi forest

Semer pour la forêt de Tuo Cèmuhi

X-Graines

Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 59,931€
Duration: August 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: X-Graines

Objective:
To implement assisted natural regeneration strategies in New Caledonia.

Project description:
The project will carry out a pilot action of assisted regeneration of natural environments. It will train local communities in a "low tech" and resilient approach based on the process of sowing coated seeds or "seed bombs". With the support of experts, X-Graines will teach the local communities the technique of the process throughout the whole cycle, i.e.: the collection of the seeds, its production and its implementation on site. This action will take place in a watershed with degraded natural environments in the commune of Tuo Cèmuh, Ultimately, this project aims at the reconstitution of a forest cover, providing benefits on the quality and quantity of water resources, on soil preservation and erosion control, and on the diversity of species diversity within its ecosystem.

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Photo: © Nicolas Rinck

Strengthening the capacity of local populations for the restoration of degraded sites

Renforcer la capacité des populations locales pour la production de plants à destination de la restauration des sites dégradés

Noé

Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 58,248 €
Duration: August 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Noé Conservation

Objective:
To strengthen the capacity of the local population to produce diversified endemic plants for the ecological restoration of degraded sites.

Project description:
This project will enable tribal populations to take part in the production chain of endemic plants for the ecological restoration of mining sites in New Caledonia that are affected by ultramafic soils (29% of the territory). Culturally, tribal communities may be involved in the production of ornamental plants or fruit trees, but very little in the production of native species for restoration purposes. The proposed approach will allow a strong involvement of tribal members, encompassing from their initial feedback gathering, through to the final validation of the tools, which they will be able to master thanks to the training courses. Currently excluded from restoration projects due to a lack of technical knowledge, these local actors will be the main beneficiaries of this project.

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Photo: © Emilie Ducouret

Biodiversity restoration under highly advanced secondary forestation conditions

Restauration de la biodiversité d'une forêt fortement secondarisée avec installation d'un sentier botanique de sensibilisation dédié à sa protection

Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 47,463€
Duration: July 2021 - December 2022 (18 months)
Lead: Moorea Biodiversité

Objective:
To restore the biodiversity and the cultural links of the population of Moorea in order to achieve a coherent management of a natural space.

Project description:
The project will create a botanical trail on a forest plot, which is a traditional lookout point in the 'Opunohu' valley. Through the combination of social, environmental and economic activities, the project will be implemented with a view to restoring and protecting the biodiversity of a forest that has been colonised by invasive species, raising awareness and educating the public about the fragility and richness of the local ecosystem, and opening up prospects for endogenous and sustainable economic development. This project will also be in line with the territory's tourism strategy, the basis of which is an eco-tourism and heritage approach.

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Photo: © Cécile Berthe

Promoting culture for nature conservation (PCNat)

Promouvoir la Culture au bénéfice de la préservation de la Nature «PCNat»

Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 50,937€
Duration: July 2021 - December 2022 (18 months)
Lead: Dayu Biik

Objective:
To promote the conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of Mount Panié.

Project description:
Several indigenous communities living in the vicinity of the Mount Panié reserve are affected by environmental issues. Similarly, there are threats to the integrity of the forest ecosystem and the ecosystem services that the forest provides, such as drinking water and food supply. These threats also include the loss of the traditional knowledge of the Kanak indigenous people in terms of biodiversity protection. As such, the proposed activities will be geared towards raising awareness of when culture is at the service of nature. The actions of this project will include, among others, the elaboration of a booklet on cultural work, reforestation activities, development of awareness-raising panels, and skills and capacity building on video shooting and video editing.

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Photo: © Razafindrakoto

Characterisation of environmental pressure: light pollution in New Caledonia

Caractérisation de pression environnementale : la pollution lumineuse en Nouvelle-Calédonie

Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 52,902€
Duration: July 2021 – October 2022 (16 months)
Lead: Observatoire de l'Environnement en Nouvelle-Calédonie - OEIL

Objective:
To provide environmental managers with scientific, factual and reliable information on the pressure of light emissions in the natural environment of this territory.

Project description:
Light pollution is a source of multiple disturbances to ecosystems worldwide. In New Caledonia, although the effects of light pollution have not been particularly studied, flocks of seabirds are observed every year in areas that are heavily lit at night, such as urban and industrial zones or mining sites. Young birds are mainly affected during the fledging period and are found close to light sources, disoriented and vulnerable to predators and road traffic. This project will help New Caledonian environmental managers to make informed decisions on light pollution, drawing up an initial assessment of this pressure, which is a prerequisite for appropriate regulations and monitoring plans.

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Photo: © Anne Lataste

Preserving, restoring and enhancing native coastal vegetation in French Polynesia

Préserver, restaurer et valoriser la végétation indigène littorale en Polynésie française

Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 59,997€
Duration: August 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Fédération des Associations de Protection de l'environnement – Te Ora Naho

Objective:
To establish a protocol for the ecological restoration of the coastline of Society Islands.

Project description:
In French Polynesia the coastline of the Society Islands has been subjected for several years to intensified urbanisation and the artificialisation by embankments. The project proposes to establish and disseminate a protocol for the ecological restoration of the native vegetation of the coastline in collaboration with botanical experts in order to define a restoration protocol based on scientific results. Furthermore, it will integrate nature-based solutions into coastal management to be able to respond to climate challenges while preserving the local biodiversity, which is particularly rich and vulnerable on these islands.

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Photo: © Jean-Yves Meyer

Using seed bombs for the ecological restoration of degraded mining sites

Utilisation de bombes de graines intégrant des biofertilisants microbiens pour la restauration écologique des sites miniers dégradés

Targeted territory: New Caledonia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 56,493€
Duration: August 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Aura Pacifica

Objective:
To develop restoration techniques for degraded ultramafic environments.

Project description:
Ultramafic environments contain an exceptional plant biodiversity with an endemism rate of 82%, but these ecosystems are heavily threatened by mining activities. This project will develop an innovative approach based on the seed bomb technique (coating seeds with microbial biofertilisers) to regenerate degraded ultramafic ecosystems. The first stage of the project will consist of selecting seeds of native plant species, which are tolerant to the coating process and have an affinity with the microbial biofertilisers. The second stage will be the validity of the seed bomb method to be tested in the field. As such, the project will contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity and ecosystem services of these environments, threatened by mining activities.

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Photo: © Thomas Crossay

Vairao Rori Titi

Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 59,100€
Duration: August 2021 - April 2022 (9 months)
Lead: Tahiti Marine Products

Objective:
To contribute to the preservation and management of sustainable exploitation of the white sea cucumber species (*Holothuria fuscogilva*) in French Polynesia.

Project description:
As part of the research and development of aquaculture know-how on sea cucumbers, it is essential to gain knowledge of their habitats and stocks. This project will undertake stock surveys and search for juvenile habitats in Vairao lagoon. The sampling protocol for adult stocks has been defined by the Marine Resources Directorate and experts from the Pacific Community. The local population will be closely involved in the survey and the definition of suitable sites for the species, especially for juveniles. The results of these studies will make it possible to define the technical feasibility of aquaculture, sea ranching and the conditions for sustainable exploitation of the species. It will also be possible to define favourable areas for the reseeding of juvenile sea cucumbers in Polynesian lagoons.

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Photo: © Tahiti Marine Products

Biodiversity conservation in the islets of North Wallis

Préservation de la biodiversité dans les îlots du Nord de Wallis

Targeted territory: Wallis and Futuna
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 59,952€
Duration: July 2021 - February 2023 (19 months)
Lead: Hauhaulele

Objective:
To prevent the re-invasion of rats and the introduction of animal species threatening biodiversity in the North Wallis Islands.

Project description:
The islets of North Wallis concentrate today a very high density of seabirds, thus representing the main living and breeding grounds of many remarkable species that are now threatened by rats. This project will contribute to the monitoring of rat eradication operations planned by the Wallis and Futuna territorial environment service. It will also carry out regular inventories of birds, coconut crabs and marine turtles after the eradication operations. Furthermore, it will raise awareness among stakeholders (e.g. traditional chiefs, owners' families, fishermen, yachtsmen, etc) of the biodiversity of these islets and of the measures to prevent the reintroduction of the rat on the islets.

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Photo: © François Fao

Restoration of the Kamaka islet, a biodiversity refuge in the Gambier Islands

Restauration de l'îlot Kamaka, un refuge de biodiversité dans les îles Gambier

Targeted territory: French Polynesia
BEST 2.0+ grant awarded: 58,750€
Duration: July 2021 - December 2022 (18 months)
Lead: Société d'Ornithologie de Polynésie - Manu

Objective:
To restore the Kamala islet's biodiversity.

Project description:
The proposed approach will use the innovative technique of "rodenticide" pesticide sprayed by drones, which will be used for the first time in French Polynesia. With the eradication of invasive rats, this project will improve community food security, reduce the risk of disease, promote the restoration of native biodiversity, provide a new home for globally endangered species, build capacity for species at risk of global extinction and build local capacity to manage invasive species. The project is the condition for the return of seabirds of heritage interest and for having 4 southern islands free of introduced predators.

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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 Réunion 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.

In 2019-2020, LIFE4BEST and BEST 2.0+ programmes took over following the end of BEST RUP and BEST 2.0, respectively covering the ORs (40 projects) and the OCTs (23 projects). Both programmes support field actions that aim to enable, empower and strengthen local authorities and civil society organisations committed to local development, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of ecosystem services.

From **2011** to **2023** European investment efforts of over **€ 17,7 million** have allowed

- Funding of 153 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.

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