



e-newsletter

Innovative Models for Protected Areas: exChange and Transfer

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Exploring new models to balance exploitation and conservation of protected areas

Welcome!

This bi-annual e-newsletter is dedicated to sharing news, events and updates from IMPACT project. Enjoy reading!

Issue #2 - March 2017



New IMPACT Interreg Europe project video!

Watch this video to get an overview of the project, know the different partners and their expectations and find out some testimonials of businesses that carry their activity inside a protected area.

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Partners overview



Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning - Regional Government of Andalusia, Spain.

The Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of the Regional Government of Andalusia is the regional administration in charge of promoting socio-economic development and preserving natural values in protected areas in Andalusia, Spain.

To do so, they devise the so-called **Sustainable Development Plans**, which are considered as the **main socio-economic planning tool** for protected areas in Andalusia; these Sustainable Development Plans are the object of the current IMPACT project. Andalusia has implemented 23 Sustainable Development Plans at an earlier stage.

However, these are no longer operational because of the current socio-economic situation

and since challenges are very different from the past. The exchange of experience with the rest of partners will help introduce new ideas, approaches and methodologies into the new Sustainable Development Plans.

The Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of the Regional Government of Andalusia is the Lead Partner of the project. The Pilot areas where the new Sustainable Development Plans will be tested are **Grazalema Natural Park** and **Andujar Natural Park**.



Grazalema Natural Park.

Size: 53.411 hectares.

IUCN Category: V.

Protection categories: Natural Park, NATURA 2000, part of REBIM (Intercontinental Mediterranean Biosphere Reserve).

Located halfway between Cadiz and Malaga, the Grazalema Natural Park (*Sierra de Grazalema*) contains rugged mountains with contrasting formations. Water erosion has created stunning canyons such as Garganta Verde. It is 400 metres deep and an ideal place for canyoning. It is also home to a subterranean labyrinth of caves and grottos.

The Hundidero-Gato system stands out especially. This is Andalusia's longest cave, and is the hibernation site for around 100,000 bats, the largest colony in Spain.

The park is also home to the the Spanish fir, *Abies pinsapo*. This species is a descendent of the central-European fir tree, which formed major forests here during the glacial periods. Some areas of the park receive more rainfall than anywhere else on the Iberian Peninsula.

[Discover the park.](#)



Andujar Natural Park.

Size: 74.774 hectares.

IUCN Category: V.

Protection categories: Natural Park, NATURA 2000.

The Andujar Natural Park (*Sierra de Andújar*) is an example of the typical undulating ridge landscape of the Sierra Morena Mountains. There is a large number of emblematic endangered species that take refuge here, between the Mediterranean mountains and the pasture land in the centre of the park, the rugged mountains of the north and the dense pine woods of the south.

The most characteristic species are the holm oak *Quercus ilex*, and the cork *Quercus suber* set on pasture-land, while the Portuguese oak *Quercus faginea* can be found higher up where there is higher rainfall.

The long, exceptional list of animals that live in the nature park is one of its great attractions. It includes endangered carnivores such as the Iberian lynx - this is home to the world's largest community - and the wolf - Andalusia's main community is also to be found here. From the Jabalí-Encinarejo Trail, it is also relatively easy to see Iberian imperial eagles and other large birds of prey such as the golden eagle and the black vulture.

[Discover the park.](#)

Interviews



Javier Soto Vázquez.

*Head of Socio-Economic Dynamic Service,
General Secretariat for Environment and Climate Change-
Regional Government of Andalusia, Spain.*

Q: Why has the Junta de Andalucía (Regional Government of Andalusia) decided to promote this project?

JSV: The Andalusian Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning plans development in the most important natural areas through Sustainable Development Plans. A Sustainable Development Plan is the strategic and planning tool for socio-economic and sustainable development in Andalusian natural areas; the purpose is...

[Read the whole interview](#)



Aisté Jurkienė.

*EUCC Project coordinator,
EUCC Baltic Office.*

Q: What is the objective of IMPACT project in your region?

AJ: The objective of IMPACT project in Lithuania is to reduce key pressures on coastal nature and ecosystem services by stepping up efforts to implement EU nature legislation and anchor biodiversity objectives into sectorial policies in regional development...

[Read the whole interview](#)



Egidijus Jurkus.

*Senior Specialist,
Pajūrio Regional Park (Seaside Regional Park).*

Q: What are the main natural values of the protected area?

EJ: The area of the Seaside Regional Park covers 5.700 ha (2.700 ha onshore and 3.000 ha offshore). Protected natural heritage in the Seaside Regional Park: a strip of seaside dunes, Grand (24 m, so called Dutchman's cap) and Minor scarps, boulders, original seaside fauna and flora, important bird hatching habitats and areas of their...

[Read the whole interview](#)

IMPACT work in progress

Good practices identified by IMPACT partners.



Flow of tourists from the Western area to the Eastern area of Sierras de Tejeda, Almijara and Alhama Natural Park.

Regional Government of Andalusia, Spain.



Facilitating sustainability of nearshore fisheries in marine protected areas by integrated approach and communication.

EUCC Baltic Office, Lithuania.



Involvement of an NGO to manage a N200 site.

Molise Region - WWF Oasis Guardiaregia, Italy.



Evaluating the carrying capacity for visitor management in the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve.

INCDDT - Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, Romania.



Health & Nature trip.

Espaces Naturels Régionaux (ENRx) - Gîtes de France, France.



IMPACT Kick-off meeting takes place.

The kick-off meeting of IMPACT INTERREG Europe project took place at the end of January between Sevilla and El Bosque, locality from Grazalema Natural Park.

During two days, partners could exchange on the aims of the project and know from first hand interesting experiences from local business established in the protected area, which perfectly illustrate how natural protected areas can be a **potential source of green jobs and economic development**.

The visits started with the Ethnological Museum Molino de Abajo, an ancestral mill propelled by water of the river Majaceite. This museum is located at El Bosque village and in it is possible to see an ancient mill recovered from the family tradition by Francisco Javier González, and through which he produces wheat flour and a local rounded bread, or Mollete, for the whole region.

Afterwards, a visit to El Bosqueño took place. This company produces cheese from autochthonous sheep and goat breeds, and has been granted with an international award for the quality of their cheese. Last, it is worth to mention the visit to the Enrique Calvillo Rural Hotel, an accommodation recognized with the **European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in protected areas (ECST)** promoted by EUROPARC.

On the other hand, at the other side of the Natural Park belonging to Malaga province, the participants were able to taste the ecological comfitures of Al Jaque jam factory. This factory uses local and natural products to produce its marmalades and is fully committed with the conquest of the vegan market. The visit ended at the olive oil production factory *Oleum Viride*, which is located at the foot of Zahara de la Sierra municipality, and where the attendees were able to learn about the process through which olive oil is produced.

Regione Molise Stakeholders meeting, Italy.

Regione Molise held its first Stakeholders meeting on the 23rd of February at the Camera di Commercio del Molise, in Isernia, Italy.

The meeting was open by Vittorino Facciolla - Councillor for Agriculture and the Environment; Regione Molise. Both good practices in management of protected areas and exploration of business models that can be used for the economic management of environmental protection and enhancement of protected areas were presented.

IMPACT dissemination event in Villeneuve d'Ascq, France.

In the framework of the IMPACT project, Espaces Naturels Régionaux (ENRx) is promoting actions in order to give support to local economic actors from protected areas.

In this occasion, a campaign has been launched to involve Guest Houses owners in the promotion and dissemination of local vegetables. Owners were given a kit with seeds of local vegetable and fruit tree species. Owners undertake to create vegetable squares and/ or plantations of trees and fruit trees and thus become ambassadors of the regional vegetable and fruit tree species within the Guest Houses network and their tourist clients.

2nd Stakeholders meeting in Romania.

In 29 of March 2017, PP5 - INCDT organised in Bucharest, Romania, a dissemination workshop to raise awareness and discuss different topics on IMPACT project with the Stakeholders. The main areas of discussion were the project objectives, expected results and best practices identification.

Furthermore, a debate with representatives of Natural and National Park administrations took place in order to identify what good practices could be transferable from international experience. A total of 6 Natural and National Parks were represented in the meeting, and their main areas of interest were management of tourist flows, certification schemes for nature and health, and sustainable fishing.

About IMPACT Interreg Europe project

Innovative Models for Protected Areas: exChange and Transfer, or simply IMPACT, is an interregional cooperation project developed with the support of the EU European Regional Development Fund. Its objective is to introduce **new management models in protected areas to promote socioeconomic activities that are respectful with nature**.

During a four years process, the following **six partners** will be sharing best practices, designing **Sustainable Development Plans** for their respective protected areas and implementing them:

- Regional Government of Andalusia (Spain), as the Lead Partner.
- EUROPARC Federation (Germany), as the Advisory partner.
- EUCC Baltic office (Lithuania).
- Molise region (Italy).
- National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism (Romania).
- Espaces Naturels Régionaux (France).

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