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Regional Action Plan for Montaña Alavesa

January 2022



Arabako Foru Aldundia
Diputación Foral de Álava

Part I – General information

Project: Wildlife Economy: Nature as a viable Economic Alternative.

Partner organisation: Álava Provincial Council (Diputación Foral de Álava).

Country: Spain (Basque Country)

NUTS2 region: ES21.

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Version 3: January 2022

Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
	<input type="checkbox"/>	European Territorial Cooperation programme
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: OP 2021-2027 of the Basque Country

Explanation on the policy instrument addressed:

In the WLE project document (officially approved in May 2019), the Provincial Council of Alava stated its commitment to improving the OP 2014-2020 of the Basque Country region (País Vasco FEDER 2014-20 PO).

The Basque Country's ERDF OP aimed to boost smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth. Its Priority Axis 6 (PA 6) focused on "the conservation and protection of the environment and the promotion of resource efficiency". Under SO 6.4.1, IP 6.d, the OP looked for "Protection and restoration of the biodiversity and the soil and promotion of the services of the ecosystems, included in Natura 2000". PA 6 was also linked to the Strategy for the Biodiversity of the Basque Country 2030, which targets the "Impulse of Natura 2000 as an instrument of opportunity" through 4 key challenges involving the definition of the Natura 2000 economic model, evaluation of socio-economic effects, elaboration of good practices and development of a model that promotes the sustainable economic use of environmental assets.

The Provincial Council of Alava sought to improve some aspects of this Policy Instrument through the interregional learning process of the WLE project. These aspects were:

- trying to address the economic and environmental challenges addressed together, since they were considered separately
- considering that the policy instrument was still searching for a translation of the challenges regarding nature preservation and ecosystem services into practical strategies and projects, the Provincial Council of Alava was taking the opportunity of the learning process within the WLE project to provide examples of projects that could be adapted to the regional context and developed under the OP using its funding schemes.
- The process of participating in the WLE project and holding workshops with local stakeholders in Montaña Alavesa would show the Managing Authorities the positive side of developing projects in synergy with local communities, which was not considered nor stated as a requirement in the OP.

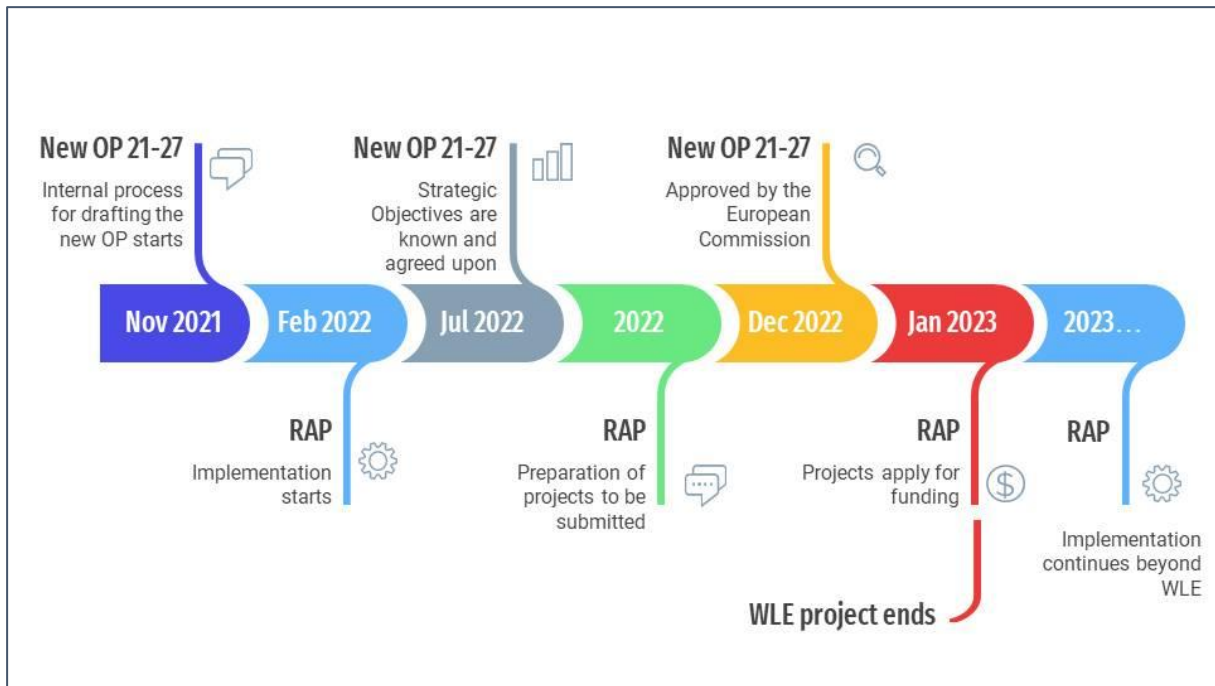
WLE project started in August 2019, with two years ahead to learn from the interregional exchange of good practices and study visits. At the end of the second semester, partners would have developed, together with the group of local stakeholders, a regional action plan (RAP) that would start its implementation by August 2021.

In March 2020 the COVID Pandemic changed the plans of the whole consortium. The partners' meetings that would be held physically had to be cancelled and some of the study visits only took place online. The Provincial Council of Alava, with strict confinement affecting the whole country, had to postpone the celebration of the meeting with stakeholders during the second semester in Montaña Alavesa to discuss the actions that would be part of the Regional Action Plan. The project consortium decided to ask for a 6 months extension of Phase I, which was officially approved by the Joint Secretariat by February 1st, 2021. This would bring the start of the implementation of the Regional Action Plan to February 2022.

In the meantime, the OP 2014-2020 of the Basque Country region was concluded. No more calls for projects were open by then. Therefore, it was not possible anymore for the Provincial Council of Alava to influence or improve such policy instrument with the learnings coming from the WLE project.

However, at the moment of delivering the present Regional Action Plan to the Joint Secretariat for validation (November 2021), the situation regarding the new Operational Programme for the Basque Country (2021-2027) is as described below:

- The ERDF Operational Programme for the Basque Country 2021-2027 should be drawn up by July-August 2022, with the aim of the European Commission approving it in December 2022.
- The internal programming process at the Provincial Council of Alava started on November 17, 2021, when a meeting with the European Commission was held, and some additional indications (to the ones already offered by the Ministry of Finance) came.
- The specific objectives (eligible lines of action) are already set out in the ERDF Regulation and are very similar to those of the previous programme. The specific objectives (SOs) that will finally be selected for the Operational Programme will be agreed upon between the four intermediate bodies (Basque Regional Government and the provinces of Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa y Araba/Álava). They must comply with the principle of concentration, which means that the financial allocation of each one must be relevant: it is necessary to concentrate resources on a few specific objectives.
- On November 19, the representatives of the Service of European Affairs (within the Department of Taxes, Finance and Budget) and the Department of Environment and Urbanism, both from the Provincial Council of Alava, held the first meeting to share and propose strategic lines that can be included in the next OP 2021-2027 of the Basque Country. At this meeting, the Service of European Affairs presented the Politic Objectives (PO), Specific Objectives (SO), and main intervention areas of the new ERDF. The Service of Environmental Sustainability, responsible for managing the WLE project within the Council, presented the two actions included in the present RAP. This is the first step towards the objective of influencing and improving the next Operational Program with the learning experience coming from the WLE project.
- A second meeting took place on November 30 (2021), with representatives of the European Affairs Service (within the Department of Treasury, Finance and Budget), representatives of the Department of the Deputy General, and representatives of the Department of Agriculture, with the presence of representatives of the Department of Environment and Urbanism. This meeting was devoted to sharing with the Department of Agriculture the first notions on the actions eligible for ERDF funding in the period 2021- 2027 as well as the coordination with the Next Generation funds (NGEU). At this meeting, the Head of the Environmental Sustainability Service gave a brief presentation of the WLE project and the Regional Action Plan. The representatives of the Departments of Agriculture and Environment and Urbanism commented on the opportunity to establish synergies between the actions of both departments in relation to the actions of the Regional Action Plan of the WLE project.
- From these meeting onwards, it will be at a higher political level that the decision will be taken. The representatives and staff of the Department of Environment and Urbanism will continue having a close look at the process and attend the meetings providing their knowledge and contribution to succeed in influencing this new Policy Instrument.



Timeline for the OP of the Basque Country 2021-2027 (*above*) and the Regional Action Plan implementation (*below*)

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

The two actions included in this Regional Action Plan are in line with the main objective of the "WLE" Project: to consider nature as a driver for development, especially in rural regions with a declining population, and to promote improved regional economic development policies that are rooted in their natural resources. It should be noted that both the Greenway of the Basque-Navarrese Railway and the Natural Asphalt Mining Landscapes of the Alaveses Mountains have been identified as two fundamental eco-tourism resources with two common objectives:

- to complement and widen the nature tourism offer in the region
- create synergies with the Izki Natural Park and other Natura 2000 Network sites in the region (the Vasco-Navarro Greenway runs parallel to the Río Berrón SAC and very close to the Izki and Sierras Meridionales de Álava SAC and SPA), as they are geographically very close resources (in fact, the Lucía Mine, for example, is located within the Natural Park).

ACTION 1: "Revitalisation of the Basque-Navarrese Greenway in Montaña Alaveses through the provision of infrastructures, equipment, and services. Recovery and rehabilitation of the old motor-vehicle pavilion".

1. The background

The objective of this action is to consolidate this Greenway ("Vía Verde") as the main ecotourism resource in the region, serving to guarantee sustainable mobility within the area and towards the main protected natural area of the region itself, the Izki Natural Park, boosting the tourism towards a typology of visitor interested in nature.

The inspiration for this action has come from several sources, all of them identified through the 2 years of interregional exchange of experiences:

- a. [Meeting with local stakeholders in Montaña Alaveses \(Vitoria-Gasteiz, Nov 2019\).](#)

The 2 days meeting with local stakeholders and the exchange of experiences with stakeholders coming from abroad, helped to validate the SWOT analysis that had been previously delivered by the main players in the region and to bring new ideas that are considered as drivers in the action, especially in the tourism sector:

- Need to connect the region to the city, as that is where potential customers/tourists are. Need to focus on tourism for bigger and qualified groups and based in specific sightseeing places, with facilities for them.

- b. [Sustainable Business Model presented within the framework of the study carried out by the University of Deusto \(Jan 2021\)](#)

A Sustainable Business Model was elaborated by the Deusto University in Phase I of WLE project and shared with the rest of the partners in the consortium. This Business Model includes Action 1 as an example to show the Model applied, with the following objectives to be achieved in the long term development of the action:

- Increase usage flows (number of visitors).
- Raise the quality of the recreational offer in natural areas, linked to the Basque-Navarrese Greenway and the Mining Landscapes project (Montaña Alaveses).
- Open the market to national and international demand (increase the stay)
- Identify and promote activities/initiatives linked to the Basque-Navarrese Greenway

c. Study visit to Vía Verde del valle de Turón (Oct 8, 2021).

This experience shows the success of an intervention that Montaña Alavesa wishes to draw inspiration from, above all because of its objective and the way it has been carried out.

- The rehabilitation of this old railway track, built along the valley to allow the material extracted from the mine to reach out, is nowadays a place for walking and connecting the different points of the valley, linking in the memory of the inhabitants the past industrial activity with an activity that is now in demand, such as the enjoyment of nature and outdoor activities.
- This road has also served as the backbone of tourist activity in the valley, providing access to different points of interest for visitors related to the valley's mining past. These points are: access to the old open mine, access to the first mineshaft, access to a multi-purpose room with associated services, all of which can be visited on foot or by bicycle.
- Finally, the project to upgrade this old rail has been carried out in permanent dialogue with the residents, who are the ones who, knowing the old path of the railway and its original use, get to enjoy its new use, and most importantly, are involved as local guides for tourism.

These three learning experiences are taken into account in the development of Action 1.

d. Landscape Business Plan of the Great Côa Valley, presented by Rewilding Europe at the Meeting in Oder Delta (Oct 1, 2021)

This experience, developed by Rewilding Europe in the Great Valley of the Côa, brings together similar aspects to those that shape the region of Montaña Alavesa. Some of the learnings in that process will be considered in Montaña Alavesa.

- This valley has several natural protected areas including a Natura 2000 area. Throughout the Côa Valley, a hiking linear route of 200 km route has been established and marked in both directions. The route can be completed on foot, cycling, or riding a horse and there are alternative trails exclusive for cyclists and horse riders. The experience of developing the landscape Business Plan in this area is showing that to ensure the use of the linear route to bring tourism to the area, support services such as transfer services and other infrastructures such as accommodation and places to eat are needed.

Action 1 is taking this aspect into account.

2. How will Action 1 improve the Operational Programme for the Basque Country 2021-2027?

Action 1 aims at improving the new Policy Instrument **through the introduction of a strategic approach (structural change, type 3¹)** that would include a new line to finance the provision of infrastructure, equipment, and services along the Greenways of Alava. It seems from the meeting held on November 19, 2021, that a strategic line promoting sustainable mobility could be included in the new OP. Action 1 aims at influencing the policy instrument in this direction, so that the infrastructures and equipment needed to support the development of

¹ Type 3: change in the strategic focus of the policy instrument (structural change). The third type is the most challenging since it requires a change in the operational programme. To integrate the lessons learnt from the cooperation, some managing authorities can modify existing measures or even create new measures in their programme ([see Interreg Programme Manual](#))

the Basque-Navarrese Green Way in Montaña Alavesa to become an eco-tourism resource would benefit from this funding.

As mentioned before, policy objectives, specific objectives, and intervention areas have been set up for the new OP. It is within these objectives and areas that the strategic focus towards WLE project objectives could be placed, by including the actions described in the RAP.

Policy Objectives	Specific Objectives	Areas of Intervention
OP 2: a greener, low-carbon Europe in transition towards a zero net carbon and resilient economy, promoting a clean and equitable energy transition, green and blue investment, circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation and risk prevention and management and sustainable urban mobility.	SO 27: Promoting the protection and conservation of nature, biodiversity and ecological infrastructures (green infrastructure) also in urban areas and reducing all forms of pollution	TI0073: Rehabilitation of industrial sites and contaminated land TI0078: Protection, restoration and sustainable use of Natura 2000 areas TI0079: Protection of nature and biodiversity, heritage and natural resources, green and blue infrastructures TI0083: Facilities for bicycles
OP 5: A Europe closer to its citizens, promoting the integrated and sustainable development of all types of territories and local initiatives.	SO 52: In non-urban areas, promoting integrated and inclusive local social, economic and environmental development, culture and natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security.	TI 00165 Protection, development and promotion of public tourism assets and tourism services. TI 00167 Protection, development and promotion of natural heritage and ecotourism, except for Natura 2000 areas.

3. Action

The Basque-Navarrese Greenway crosses the region of Montaña Alavesa from South to North, being a backbone of the whole region and a sustainable communication route that allows friendly access to all the Natural Spaces in this region (4 ZECs of the Natura 2000 Network, one ZEPA, and one Natural Park). From this historic Greenway, it is possible to see the protected landscapes, the plant communities, and biotopes declared of Community interest by the Habitats Directive and several species of wild fauna catalogued in Danger of Extinction (European mink, otter). The motor-vehicle building and its extension designed and built respecting its original design from the beginning of the 20th century (by Ing. Mendizabal) could become a nerve centre for the interpretation and dissemination of the natural **values of the region** together with the adjoining Basque-Navarrese Interpretation Centre and the nearby Izki Natural Park Interpretation Centre.

The objective is to consolidate this Greenway as the main ecotourism resource in the region, serving to guarantee sustainable mobility within the area and towards the main protected natural area of the region itself, the Izki Natural Park, boosting the tourism towards a typology of visitor interested in nature. Providing sustainable mobility infrastructures that respect the environment, to guarantee the approach of visitors to protected natural areas is one of the keys to promoting the socio-economic development of the region

The project includes the recovery, rehabilitation and interior refurbishment of the former motor-vehicle pavilion on the Basque-Navarrese Greenway. The restoration and recovery of the Antoñana building has recently been carried out, the aim of which was to refurbish the pavilion, extending its surface area in line with the original design. From now on, funding will be sought to complete the refurbishment of the interior of the building and give it a new use, housing a bicycle rental area, a small exhibition area and a rest area with a restaurant service.

In the course of implementing the action, the Environmental Sustainability Service will present the Regional Action Plan of the WLE Project in the different coordination meetings of the institution, with the aim of influencing the typology of projects that will be proposed for the Operational Programme. Information on the Regional Action Plan will also be sent to the Department of the Environment of the Basque Government, responsible for the new OP.

Activities:

Activity 0: Lobbying for the inclusion of a new strategic line in the OP to finance the provision of infrastructure, equipment, and services of the Greenways of Alava. From February to July 2022, representatives of the Environmental Sustainability Service within the Department of Environment and Urbanism will present the content of Action 1 (activities 1 and 2) to try to influence the inclusion of this new strategic approach as part of the new OP.

Date	Meeting	Main target	Expected Participants
February 2022	Meeting 1. Presenting the RAP.	DFA/ European projects	Representatives of the Environmental Sustainability Service and/or Head of the Department of Environment and Urbanism, representatives of the Service of European Affairs within the DFA
April 2022	Meeting 2. Presenting the RAP.	DFA/ other departments	Representatives of the Environmental Sustainability Service and/or Head of the Department of Environment and Urbanism, representatives of other departments (Department of Territorial Balance and Department for the Promotion of Employment, Trade and Tourism and Regional Administration).
July 2022	Meeting 3. Wrap up on the inclusion of new lines.	DFA/ Basque Government	Representatives of the Environmental Sustainability Service and/or head of the Department of Environment and Urbanism, representatives of the Basque Government (Department of Tourism, Trade and Consumer Affairs)

Activity 1: Design and search for funding for the preparation of a project to be presented for a line of subsidies, with the aim of completing the infrastructure and relevant services inside the Antoñana motor-vehicle building, with a view to its definitive commissioning for public use, making room for new uses that attract tourists interested in nature (possible uses: bicycle rental area, a small exhibition area, and a rest area with a restaurant service).

Activity 2: Forecast for the complete inauguration and opening to the public of the former Basque-Navarrese railway carriage shed (Antoñana). After the recovery and complete refurbishment of the former Basque-Navarrese Greenway carriage shed, both in terms of the works and provision of external services (almost all of which have already been completed) and the interiors (pending completion), and after installing the relevant furniture to provide the infrastructure with the optimum conditions to house the new uses that have been considered, an inauguration and opening to the public is expected to take place.

4. Players involved

Players involved	Role
Álava Provincial Council	Main promoter.
Cuadrilla de Montaña Alavesa	Main promoter. Contribution to project design.

5. Timeframe

Action 1 is expected to start in February 2022 and to be finished in one year. However, it will probably continue beyond Phase II of the WLE project.

- Activity 0 will last until the process of designing the new OP remains open (estimated July 2022)
- Activity 1 is expected to be completed by December 2022-January 23.
- Activity 2 is expected to be officially completed (as is the WLE project) by January 2023.

	Feb-Apr 2022	May-Jul 2022	Aug-Oct 2022	Nov 22-Jan 23
Activity 0				
Activity 1				
Activity 2				

6. Costs (estimated)

Activity	Staff cost (management)	Infrastructures and/or external tender	Total
0	Dedication of the DFA Technical Team and Cuadrilla de Montaña Alavesa	-	
1		80.000 €* [*]	80.000€
2		-	

*It will be financed through some line of subsidy.

7. Funding sources (estimated)

Activity	Staff cost (management)	Infrastructures and/or external tender
0	Provincial Council	None
1	Provincial Council and/or Cuadrilla de Montaña Alavesa	Different lines of subsidy will be considered
2	Provincial Council and/or Cuadrilla de Montaña Alavesa	None

The Alava Provincial Council warrants that the activities included in this action will be covered by funds included in its own budget (except for the infrastructure and/or external tendering costs quantified at €80,000 derived from activity 1, which will be financed through a subsidy line).

ACTION 2: “Recovery and value enhancement of the mining landscapes of natural asphalts in Montaña Alavesa”.

1. The background

The action aims to achieve an environmental restoration and value enhancement of the mining landscapes of the former natural asphalt mines of Montaña Alavesa and the development of ecotourism activities related to the Lucía Mine. The Recovery of Mining Areas allows the restoration of degraded spaces, with a remarkable geological and historical-cultural value, which are located in the heart of a Protected Natural Area of the Natura 2000 Network and ZEPA. The rehabilitation of the Lucía Mine, within the old Mining Areas, is carried out in a way that respects the natural environment and their original heritage values, and takes place in an area on the edge of the Natural Park. It is hoped that this rehabilitation will allow the geological, naturalistic and historical values to be disseminated, and at the same time will provide a boost to the socio-economic development of a region that is depressed in this respect. Nature, history and economy are thus linked.

The inspiration for drawing this action has come from several sources, all of them identified through the 2 years of interregional exchange of experience:

a. Meeting with local stakeholders in Montaña Alavesa (Vitoria-Gasteiz, Nov 2019).

The 2 days meeting with local stakeholders and the exchange of experiences with stakeholders coming from abroad, helped to validate the SWOT analysis that had been previously delivered by the main players in the region and to bring new ideas that are considered as drivers in the action, especially in the tourism sector:

- If villages are considered too small for larger projects ("due to lack of resources" according to the local population) greater cooperation between villages should be promoted. These initiatives should benefit the local population in the long term.
- Public investment in (tourism) infrastructure is needed; its management can be tendered to local private initiatives.
- Activities should try to focus on keeping tourists in the region for 2-3 days
- When thinking about "challenges/opportunities of the wildlife economy", one should not only focus on nature but try to combine with other sectors, such as culture and history, aspects that are characteristic of the region and that are the "essences" of the region. Therefore, focus on what is specific and unique to the region to create an identity. But this has to be done sustainably so that the characteristic nature and landscape are not negatively affected.

b. Sustainable Business Model presented within the framework of the study carried out by the University of Deusto (Jan 2021)

A Sustainable Business model was elaborated by Deusto University in Phase I and shared with the rest of the partners in the consortium. This business model includes Action 2 as an example, proposing some of the following activities:

- Recruit and train profiles with extensive knowledge of the destination
- Facilitate instruments for workers and customers to ensure the natural, historical, patrimonial, and ecological value of the destination.
- Train in ecotourism, nature, and sustainable tourism. Involve the local population in these work segments.
- Encourage the commitment to establish a link with the environment: heritage interpretation, environmental education, conservation, respect, etc.

c. Study visit to Somiedo Valley and Mining Landscapes of Turón (Oct 7-8, 2021).

This experience shows the success of an intervention that Montaña Alavesa wishes to draw inspiration from, above all because of its main objective and how it has been carried out.

- The restoration of the mineshafts and mining facilities in this valley has enabled the possibility of carrying out new activities, especially linked to environmental education and tourism, which bring new economic avenues to the valley.
- The restoration valorizes the natural assets of the valley, which were there already before the mining activity, and harmonizes them with the restored mining facilities. This is explained by tourist guides to visitors that come to the valley, enhancing the relevance of the natural values of the place.
- The intervention in this valley is explained and advertised in several thematic webpages managed at a regional level, linking it to similar activities carried out in the province. This way, the chance of tourists arriving, understanding, and enjoying the experience increases.
<https://www.turismoasturias.es/descubre/cultura/patrimonio-industrial/recursos-y-equipamientos/paisaje-minero-del-valle-de-turon>
<https://guiadeasturias.com/lugar/paisaje-minero-del-valle-del-turon-mieres/>
<http://mineriaypaisaje.com/valle-del-caudal-it/>
- Finally, the project to upgrade this old mining landscape has been carried out in permanent dialogue with the residents, who are the ones who enjoy its new use, and most importantly, are involved as local guides for tourism.

These learnings are taken into account in the development of Action 2.

2. How will the Action 2 improve the Operational Programme for the Basque Country 2021-2027?

Action 2 aims at improving the new Operational Programme for the Basque Country 2021-2027 now under elaboration through the introduction of a new strategic approach (structural change, type 3). The objective of the Provincial Council of Alava with presenting Action 2 in the RAP is to influence the inclusion of a new line for the promotion of restoration of degraded areas. It seems from the meeting held on November 19, 2021, that a strategic line for allowing the promotion of an Environmental Restoration of the mining landscapes in Montaña Alavesa could be defined.

Policy objectives, specific objectives, and intervention area have been set up for the new OP. It is within these objectives and areas that the strategic focus towards WLE project objectives could be placed, by including the actions described in the RAP.

Policy Objectives	Specific Objectives	Areas of Intervention	
OP 2: a greener, low-carbon Europe in transition towards a zero net carbon and resilient economy, promoting a clean and equitable energy transition, green and blue investment, circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation and risk prevention and management and sustainable urban mobility.	SO 27: Promoting the protection and conservation of nature, biodiversity and ecological infrastructures (green infrastructure) also in urban areas and reducing all forms of pollution	TI0073: Rehabilitation of industrial sites and contaminated land TI0078: Protection, restoration and sustainable use of Natura 2000 areas TI0079: Protection of nature and biodiversity, heritage and natural resources, green and blue infrastructures	← Action 2
		TI0083: Facilities for bicycles	
OP 5: A Europe closer to its citizens, promoting the integrated and sustainable development of all types of	SO 52: In non-urban areas, promoting integrated and inclusive local social, economic	TI 00165 Protection, development and promotion of public tourism assets and tourism services.	← Action 2
		TI 00167 Protection, development	

territories and local initiatives.	and environmental development, culture and natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security.	and promotion of natural heritage and ecotourism, except for Natura 2000 areas.
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Through the year, representative of the Provincial Council of Alava will continue supporting the definition of the OP attending meetings in which this subject will be discussed.

3. Action

Most of the mining landscapes in the mountains of Alava constitute a place of geological interest of exceptional heritage value that should be valued as an ecotourism resource, especially as they are currently degraded and altered areas located in Natura 2000 Network areas, and require environmental restoration.

One of the main considerations before designing this action is that the municipalities of the region are the owners of many of the lands where the mining landscapes are: their involvement is therefore essential for the correct implementation of the action. Likewise, residents have many connections with the old mining operations, either because their relatives worked in the mines, or because they are familiar with stories related to asphalt mining. This valuable intangible heritage will be fundamental to design and carry out an adequate historical rescue and museography project and to identify the ecotourism assets to be shown to the public.

A first contract has already been awarded for the drafting of the "Construction project for the safety, consolidation and conditioning for public and ecotourism use of the Lucía Mine in the municipality of Arraia-Maeztu". In addition to the awarding of the construction project, in the summer of 2021 the projected works began, which will last 27 months. In the coming months, and within the deadlines of the WLE project, the execution reports will be received from the technical assistance responsible for the safety of the Project.

Activities:

- **Activity 0:** Lobbying for the inclusion of a new strategic line in the OP for the "Recovery and value enhancement of the mining landscapes of natural asphalts in Montaña Alavesa". From February to July 2022, representatives of the Environmental Sustainability Service within the Department of Environment and Urbanism will present the content of Action 2 (activities 1 to 4) to try to influence the inclusion of this new strategic approach as part of the OP.

Date	Meeting	Main target	Expected Participants
February 2022	Meeting 1. Presenting the final RAP	DFA/ European projects	Representatives of Environmental Sustainability Service and/or Head of the Department of Environment and Urbanism, representatives of the Service of European Affairs.
April 2022	Meeting 2. Presenting the final RAP.	DFA/ other departments	Representatives of the Environmental Sustainability Service and/or Head of the Department of Environment and Urbanism, representatives of other departments (Department of Territorial Balance and Department for the Promotion of Employment, Trade and Tourism and Regional

			Administration).
July 2022	Meeting 3. Wrap up on the inclusion of new lines.	DFA/ Basque Government/	Representatives of Environmental Sustainability Service and/or Head of the Department of Environment and Urbanism, representatives of the Basque Government (Environment, Tourism)

- **Activity 1: Preparation of an information and photographic dossier to disseminate and publicize the heritage value of the natural asphalt mining landscapes on the Basque Government's Industrial Tourism website.** A professional company will be hired to propose the content and display in a high quality graphic dossier all the information on the natural asphalt landscapes of Montaña Alavesa. This dossier will be delivered to the Basque Government, with whom the activity will be agreed, so that it can study the inclusion of the Mining Landscapes, in particular the Lucía Mine, within the Basque Industrial Tourism Network. Likewise, the Basque Association of Industrial Heritage and Public Works and Basquetour will be informed first-hand of the works at the Lucía Mine by means of a visit and the Dossier produced, of the values linked to Industrial Tourism that the old asphalt mining site in the Mountains treasures and its strategic value for the development of Industrial Tourism, a sector that is now emerging in the Basque Autonomous Community.
https://turismo.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/turismo_industrial_landing/es_def/index.html
- **Activity 2: Follow-up visit of the first phase of the safety, consolidation and conditioning works of the Mina Lucía for public and ecotourism use, presentation of this first part of the work.** This official visit will be used to publicise the works in support of the meetings held in activity 0 and 1, involving policy makers and key stakeholders to raise awareness of the potential of this natural asset. The second part of the work will be devoted to developing the mine museum project.
- **Activity 3: Drafting and presentation of a project for the development of an interpretative itinerary of the mining landscapes and natural asphalts of the Montaña Alavesa,** with Mina Lucía as a starting point. As the works to guarantee the safety of Mina Lucia are completed, as well as the works to house the mining museum and to open it up to the visitors, the drafting of a second, more extensive project will be contracted, which, taking Mina Lucia as a starting point, will make it possible to visit the entire landscape of natural asphalts of Montaña Alavesa, including different locations, towns, facilities and routes.
- **Activity 4: Environmental restoration of a degraded mining area of natural asphalts in Montaña Alavesa.** In Montaña Alavesa there are some localised areas heavily degraded as a result of mining human activity: dumps, landfill areas, quarries, gravel pits, areas heavily compacted by the passage of machinery, etc. The Environmental Sustainability Service has a detailed register of these sites. As part of the whole action 2, dedicated to the recovery and value enhancement of the mining landscapes of natural asphalts, one of these degraded areas will be restored to stop and avoid the continuity of the processes that have caused the degradation. The work includes:
 - Recovery of the physical and chemical characteristics of the substrate, avoiding problems of erosion, landslides or instability and restitution of the autochthonous vegetation cover, and guaranteeing long-term conservation.
 - Transforming the area into a green infrastructure, key for the improvement of ecological connectivity and the maintenance of ecological processes in their environment.

This activity will be advertised and presented as well to the local stakeholders, wide public, policy makers and visitors as part of the WLE approach and strategy of investing in nature and natural assets for the sustainable development of the region.

4. Players involved

Players involved	Role
Department of Environment and Urban Planning of the Álava Provincial Council	Main promoter.
Basque Government: Department of Economic Development, Sustainability, and Environment	Main promoter.
Cuadrilla de Montaña Alavesa	Main promoter. Disseminating information on the action. Engaging residents.
Administrative Boards of the villages in the region	Disseminating information on the action. Engaging residents.

5. Timeframe

All five activities will be implemented during Phase II of the WLE project: however, new activities linked to the action will be implemented beyond the project.

	Feb-Apr 2022	May-Jul 2022	Aug-Oct 2022	Nov 22-Jan 23
Activity 0				
Activity 1				
Activity 2				
Activity 3				
Activity 4				

6. Costs (estimated)

Activity	Staff cost (management)	Infrastructures and/or external tender
0		None
1	Dedication of the DFA technical team (mainly) and/or Cuadrilla de Montaña Alavesa.	15.000 -20.000 €
2		None
3		15.000 €
4		20.000 €

7. Funding sources (estimated)

Activity	Staff cost (management)	Infrastructures and/or External services
0		Provincial Council
1	Provincial Council and/or Cuadrilla de Montaña Alavesa	Provincial Council
2		Provincial Council + Basque Government ²
3		Provincial Council

² An agreement between the Provincial Council of Alava and the Basque Government has already been signed to work together in the design and implementation of some activities in this area.

4	Provincial Council
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The Alava Provincial Council warrants that the activities included in this action will be covered by funds included in its own budget.