



Εδώ ζούμε
Natura 2000



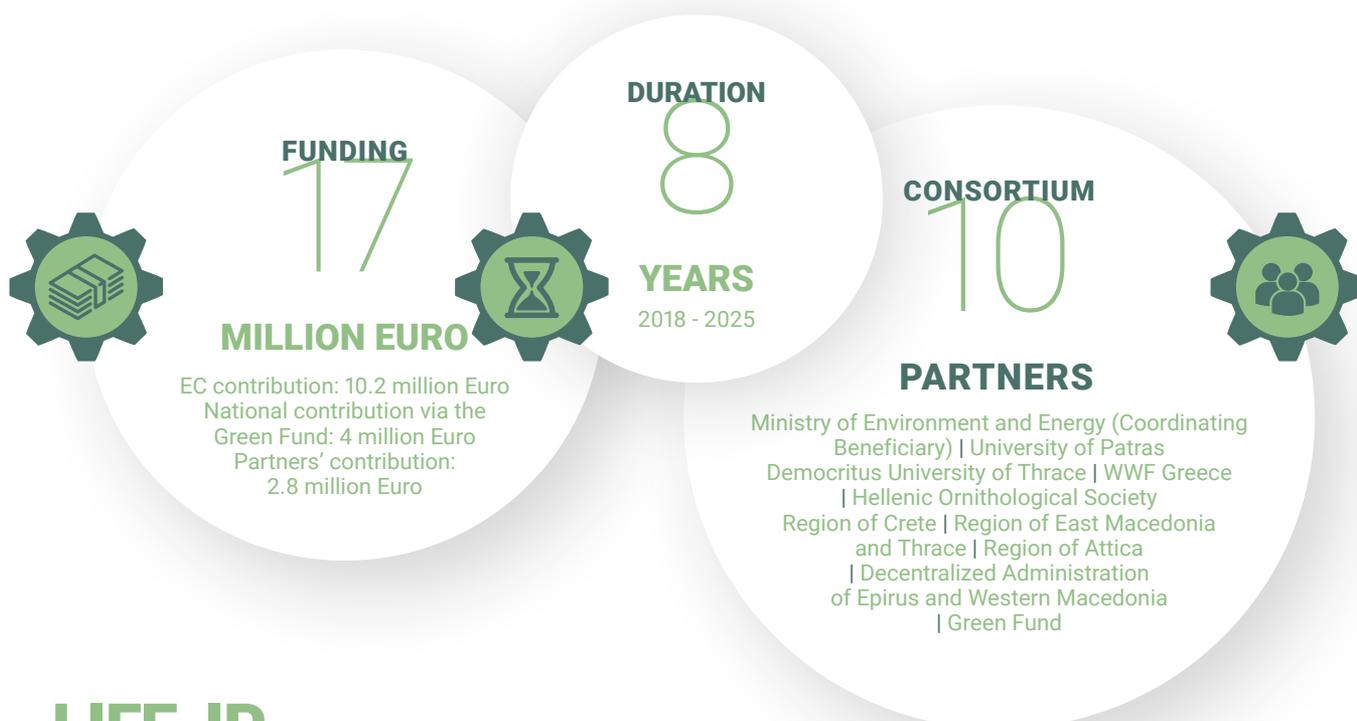
LIFE-IP 4 NATURA

**THE LARGEST PROJECT, IN TERMS
OF DURATION AND FUNDING,
FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATURE
IN GREECE.**

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LIFE-IP 4 NATURA in a nutshell

LIFE-IP 4 NATURA is the first LIFE Integrated Project (IP) that has ever been approved for Greece and the largest nature conservation project -both in terms of duration and funding- that the country has ever undertaken. It is the first time that actions covering a wide range of aspects related to the protection of nature (i.e. policy, economy, society, scientific knowledge) have been integrated into a single project, coordinated by the Ministry of Environment and Energy. The approval of the LIFE-IP 4 NATURA reflects the recognition of Greece's strong commitment to meet its national obligations regarding the implementation of the Natura 2000 network.



LIFE-IP...

The unique characteristic of LIFE Integrated Projects lies in the fact that they help Member States implement a long-term strategy for the environment, conducting several projects with the same strategic vision. Also, they help countries mobilise funds from different EU funding sources, as foreseen in Member States' Environmental Strategies (e.g. Prioritised Action Framework), along with national funds and private sector investments.

During the period 2014-2016, 25 LIFE Integrated Projects have been funded in 14 EU Member States. These projects have a total budget of more than 460 million Euro and have mobilised and coordinated the use of complementary funds -either from EU and national sources or the private sector- which account for more than 5 billion Euro. To date the number of approved LIFE Integrated Projects has increased to 37 with a total budget of more than 680 million Euro.

LIFE-IP 4 NATURA will formulate and implement action plans for specific protected species and habitats of Community Interest.

The Karpathos frog (*Pelophylax cerigensis*).



...4 NATURA

Natura 2000 is the largest network of protected areas in the world and one of the main pillars of EU nature policy regarding the conservation of biodiversity.

According to the Nature Directives, EU Member States are required to designate sites for the protection of species and habitats of special importance: Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC). Together, these two types of protected areas form the European ecological network Natura 2000.

Nature Directives establish a framework for the conservation of the natural environment that aims at the effective protection of rare or threatened species, while allowing for the sustainable development of designated areas.

Member States must adopt conservation and management measures in order to maintain and restore natural habitats and species of EU importance at a favourable conservation status.

LIFE-IP 4 NATURA will map the ecosystems of the Natura 2000 sites, will assess their services and will implement management plans in selected areas in Greece.



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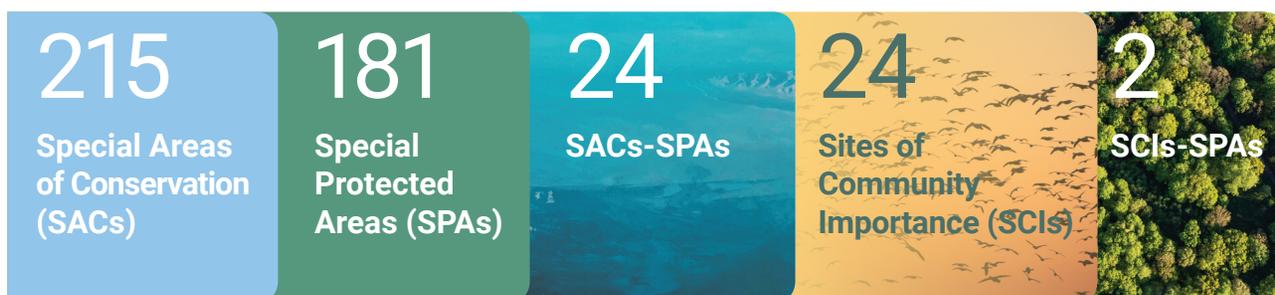
LIFE-IP 4 NATURA - The aim of the project

LIFE-IP 4 NATURA aims at enhancing the protection of natural environment in Greece and strengthening the compliance of the country with the European nature legislation. It is the first integrated and coordinated initiative that supports the implementation of Greece's Prioritised Action Framework for the Natura 2000 network at national, regional and local level.

More specifically LIFE-IP 4 NATURA aims at:

- improving the conservation status of species and habitats of Community Interest;
- implementing an integrated approach for the management of the Natura 2000 network;
- building capacities of the competent authorities in support of the implementation of EU nature legislation;
- actively involving stakeholders in the conservation and management of Natura 2000 sites;
- raising awareness among Greek citizens of the Natura 2000 network and its significance;
- promoting citizen participation and adoption of positive attitudes towards the Natura 2000 sites; and
- supporting the mobilization of complementary funds to meet the objectives of the Nature Directives in Greece.

Natura 2000 network in Greece consists of 446 sites:



More specifically, the following actions will be implemented in the context of the project:

1. formulation, legal adoption and implementation of action plans for species/habitats of Community Interest;
2. mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services (MAES) of the Greek Natura 2000 network;
3. development of web-based interactive/cutting edge GIS tools to support the effective management of the Natura 2000 network by competent authorities;
4. identification and mapping of all stakeholders involved in the management of the Natura 2000 sites; and
5. launch of a nation-wide communication and dissemination campaign.

It should be noted that the results and achievements of all actions will be maintained and further advanced through dedicated transfer and replication activities carried out on national and EU level.

On a multiregional level the project will

- a) implement Natura 2000 management plans in four Administrative Regions;
- b) improve and build on the capacity of involved and key stakeholders; and
- c) carry out pilot implementation of MAES in four Administrative Regions.

The status quo in Greece

Greece is a country rich in biodiversity, both in terms of the number of species, as well as the status and the diversity of the ecosystems that it hosts. For this reason, the preservation of the natural capital is one of the key responsibilities of the country.

Following the recent designation of new sites and the expansion of the boundaries of the already existing ones, the Natura 2000 network covers about 28% of the country's terrestrial surface and 20% of its marine area. Moreover, the basis for the national system of protected areas has been set, with the management bodies of protected areas playing a central role in it.

LIFE-IP 4 NATURA will support this framework for the protection of nature in Greece, but will also act complementarily to it. It will address various and long-lasting gaps that, to date, have not allowed for the full implementation of the Natura 2000 network. The successful implementation of the LIFE-IP 4 NATURA project will be a catalyst for halting biodiversity loss and safeguarding Natura 2000 sites in Greece, while also laying the foundations for their sustainable development.

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