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**Forest Futures:
Letting Nature Innovate**



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Dear Readers

Since the moment the first signatures were put on the Paris climate agreement it was apparent that governments across the world, and on all sides of the political spectrum, were aware that we needed a change of course. While some have faltered in their devotion to the global ambitions on climate, many have indeed bolstered their efforts to meet their climate commitments. For this issue, we have asked our grant professionals to provide details on Europe's commitments and how some European nations are realising their objectives through funding schemes.

The cover article of this issue looks at how the United Kingdom is dealing with its challenges to restore the biodiversity of the UK woodlands. William Bond discusses the tension between the UK government's intention to reforest the UK landscape, through programmes such as the Landscape Recovery Scheme, and the fact that these measures will significantly alter the landscape. A dilemma not solely faced by the former EU member state, as Adele Lebano's article discovers. She discusses how the Italian government attempts to invest in "the beauty of its country" with the help of funds from the Recovery and Resiliency Fund. The article discusses how Italian grants try to forego nostalgia for the Italian landscape in its natural form in favour of planning wisely, reclaiming, repurposing, and most importantly, improving. "To call something 'beautiful in itself' is an invitation to leave things as they are, which may mean as they were once made to look like, whether exploited, contaminated, unwisely built, or blessed by beauty."

While Europe is shaping itself for the future and adopting itself to new realities, so are we at Grants Office Europe. I am pleased to announce a feature article by the hands of Vasilis Bouronikos from [EUcalls](#) who discusses the EU Green Deal and the details of its implementation. EUcalls is a platform dedicated to European funding and reliable partnerships for European projects. As of recently, EUcalls and Grants Office Europe have decided to partner to bring you even more relevant European grant information, through magazine publications, blog posts, webinars, and other social media campaigns.

Next to updating you on the rollouts of the RRF across the EU, we have also included interviews with Monica Cerutti and Loredana Grimaldi to chime in on the gendered perspective of the Italian RRF. All in all, we are very pleased to provide you with a few more tools for your fundraising toolbox and wish you a pleasant read.

Very best wishes,

Gregory Clare
Editor

GRANTS OFFICE EUROPE IS NOW ON TWITTER AND LINKEDIN!

Grants Office has built a leading reputation in grants intelligence in the United States. Over the past year, we have taken that expertise internationally. With the help of our team of locals and native speakers, we recognise that the European cultural, legal, and economic context shapes policies related to funding and creates a particularly European grant landscape. To that end, we offer our clients and partners tailor-made grant education and intelligence, such as you find here, in our quarterly magazine *Funded*, and ongoingly on our social media platforms.

Give us a follow on [Twitter](#) & [LinkedIn](#) to find the latest in European funding as well as information on webinars, and more.

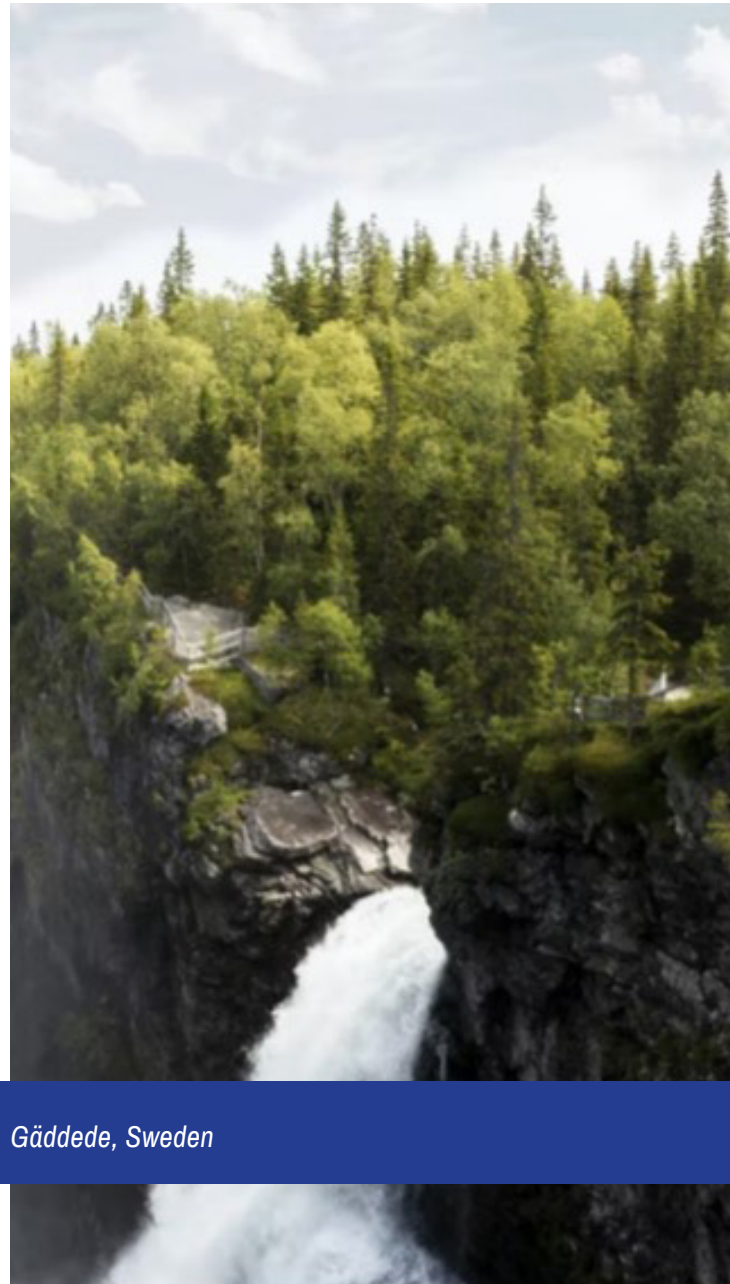
Forest Futures: Letting Nature Innovate

William Bond

Since 2019, and especially in the wake of the UK presidency of COP26, the Johnson government has tried hard to sharpen its image as a serious actor in the fight against climate breakdown. In practice, this has meant focusing on innovation and transformation in the energy sector and across the low-carbon technology space. Early this March, for example the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy formally launched its [Green Heat Network Fund \(GHNF\)](#), the latest in a series of schemes aimed at stimulating the expansion of the green energy market. (Heat networks are essentially pipe systems that distribute heat to multiple buildings from a central source. They do away with the need for properties to have their own individual boilers, and they make use of heat that would otherwise be wasted.)

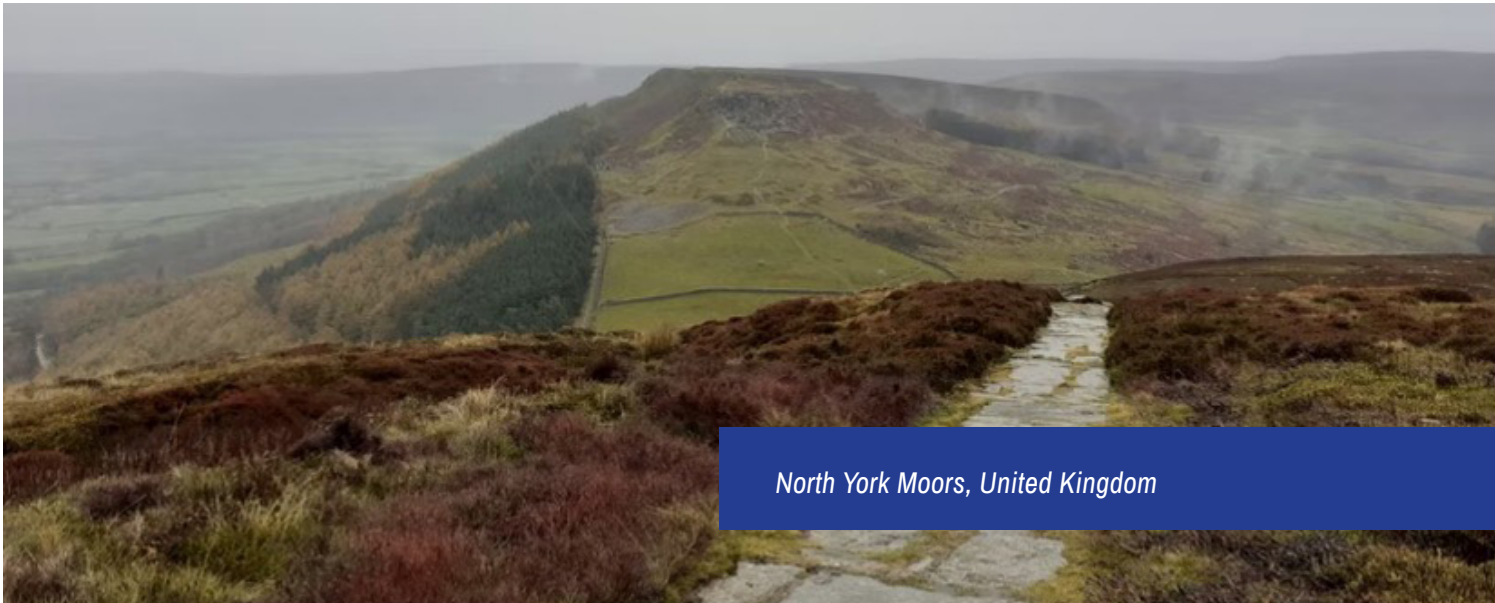
Alongside the [Net Zero Innovation Portfolio \(NZIP\)](#), the GHNF is a welcome plank in the government's long-term decarbonization efforts. Both may well be crucial in the coming years if COP26's Glasgow Climate Pact—with its continued promise to limit global heating to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels—is to be fulfilled. These programmes are typical of the Johnson government's Net Zero funding strategy in that they prioritise innovation in the design, manufacture and roll-out of new technologies in both public and private sectors. As made clear in the 2019 [Ten Point Plan](#), the government is keen to stake its claim not straightforwardly as a leader in environmental policy broadly conceived but more specifically as an incubator of a green technological revolution. Initiatives like the GNHF are part of this innovation-oriented industrial strategy, and much of the government's green agenda is best understood within this frame.

Technological innovation in the generation and distribution of energy will be central to the climate strategies of successive British governments; however, it has become increasingly clear in recent years that this is only part of the solution. As well as limiting new emissions, we need to remove carbon from the atmosphere. As [demonstrated](#) by the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C from the Inter-Government Panel on Climate



Gäddede, Sweden

Change (IPCC), “all analysed pathways limiting warming to 1.5°C with no or limited overshoot include Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR)” alongside the better known initiatives that reduce emissions. While CDR technology is still a relatively new area of innovation, the UK government's NZIP has so far included several different CDR-focused grant schemes such as the recent [Hydrogen BECCS](#) (Bioenergy with carbon capture and storage) Innovation programme.



North York Moors, United Kingdom

As the IPCC has [argued](#), however, “CDR deployed at scale is unproven,” and overreliance on CDR technology presents a “major risk in the ability to limit warming to 1.5°C.” In this context, it is crucial to note that technological innovation is not the only—or even the best—means of removing CO₂ from the atmosphere. Climate scientists, ecologists and environmentalists have been arguing for years that the climate catastrophe is intimately tied up with the worldwide breakdown of ecosystems and that the most reliable means of slowing down global warming is to restore biodiverse ecosystems at scale. A 2019 report published in *Nature*, for example, [argued](#) that the restoration of biodiverse natural forests is the “most effective approach for storing carbon” and is even more reliable and sustainable as a means of carbon capture than monoculture plantations—plantations consisting of one species of tree, generally grown for commercial purposes.

Reforestation is a key issue for the UK, only [13%](#) of which is covered by woodland according to the Woodland Trust. This is compared to [around 39%](#) for the EU. While the comparison may seem unfair since the EU figure includes countries like Sweden and Finland (with 63% and 66% forest coverage, respectively), the Woodland Trust also points out that only half of Britain’s trees are native species. The other half are “non-native, commercial conifer plantations.” The [knock-on effect](#) for carbon capture potential is serious. Ancient woodlands, which are relatively biodiverse, hold 36% of carbon captured in British trees despite making up just 25% of all woodland.

To be fair, the government nods to the importance of ecosystem restoration in its Ten Point Plan: under the heading, “Protecting our Natural Environment,” they promise to “safeguard our cherished landscapes” and “restore habitats for wildlife in order to combat biodiversity loss and adapt to climate change.” New National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are promised, along with new “long-term landscape recovery projects.” To what extent then will the UK’s green recovery involve reforestation (and the consequent benefits of natural carbon capture)?

It used to be the case that the debate around the plight of British trees focused on the impact of the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which at one time, subsidized the removal of closed-canopy woodland on the grounds that such clearances would render land usable for agricultural purposes. In 2011, the Woodland Trust [submitted evidence](#) to a parliamentary inquiry that the CAP actually worked against their goal of nurturing closed canopy woodland in Britain. In 2016, during the lead up to the UK’s referendum on EU membership, environmental writer George Monbiot [argued](#) that we should refer to these funds as “land subsidies” since “you don’t have to produce any food to receive them. Your land just has to look agricultural, which means bare.” In the intervening period, of course, the environmental policy landscape has evolved dramatically in Europe and across the world. The new [CAP for 2023-2027](#) has been redesigned under the rubric of the European Green Deal, so that 40% of the CAP budget for that period will go towards biodiversity- and climate-related initiatives.



Following the UK's departure from the EU, the CAP was replaced with a range of funding frameworks, including the Sustainable Farming Incentive, the Local Nature Recovery Programme, and the [Landscape Recovery Scheme](#). The last of these was launched this year, and the government hopes it will facilitate the kind of large-scale ecosystem and habitat restoration we saw promised in the Ten Point Plan. The first round is open (until 24 May 2022) to individuals or groups responsible for 500-5000 hectares of land of any type. A [policy paper](#) on the scheme published earlier in the year reiterated the government's commitment to restore "our most precious and beautiful landscapes," and the first round alone is expected to create at least "10,000 hectares of restored habitat" and improve the conservation status of "45-57% of Species of Principal Importance."

The Landscape Recovery Scheme offers a crucial glimpse of the kind of biodiversity-oriented restoration programmes that will be essential in the near future in the battle against climate crisis and ecosystem collapse: the scheme could, theoretically, contribute to a large-scale transition away from commercial plantations in the UK and towards biodiverse native forests. However, there is tension here in the government's own presentation of environmental restoration. If the purpose of the scheme is to protect "cherished" and "precious" landscapes, what do we do with the fact that these landscapes will be radically altered by extensive reforestation? As Monbiot has argued in a different context, British nature-lovers frequently claim to love and cherish those landscapes brought into being, in part, by deforestation—the open hills of the Cambrian mountains in Wales and the Lake District in the North-West of England or the heath and moorland of parts of Yorkshire and the Scottish Highlands.⁶

In fact, in a weird affective irony, the restoration of lost biodiversity may very well feel in its novelty less like a return to a cherished landscape, and more like the contemplation of those radical technological innovations that the government is so keen to champion through the NZIP. The fact is that reforestation and restoring natural habitats, if done properly, will completely transform our rural landscapes, uplands, and coasts, filling them with myriad (in some cases unfamiliar) species of plant-life, as well as endangered and even formerly extinct animals. Our very understanding of natural beauty will no doubt change too: the patchwork of fields and open land unobscured by thick forest—which, since at least the late eighteenth century, has dominated British expectations for natural beauty⁷—may very well have to give way to an aesthetic of biodiversity and to a view of the land as dynamic and mutable. The placid English idyll (in which, as the American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson [famously put it](#), the fields "appear to have been finished with a pencil instead of a plough") may not—and perhaps should not—survive the restoration of biodiverse ecosystems.

⁶ George Monbiot, *Feral: Rewilding the Land, Sea and Human Life* (London: Penguin, 2013), 62-89.

⁷ See: William Gilpin's influential theory of the picturesque as an example.

This green recovery will result, I would suggest, in new thrilling experiences of nature, as well as crucial benefits for the climate and environment, but it will be a shock too. The government's long-awaited [Levelling Up White Paper](#), published this February promised £15 million for the Northern Forest Initiative, framing the commitment as part of the government's efforts at "restoring local pride." The Northern Forest combines multiple woodland planting projects across the North of England from Liverpool to Hull, encompassing an area of over 10,000 square miles; the [goal](#) is to plant over 50 million trees (capable of absorbing 7.5 million tonnes of CO2 by 2050). How local communities, as well as hikers and ramblers, will actually experience the transition from the stark openness of the North York Moors, for example, to the vibrant wilderness of a restored forest is unclear.

In my view, the government would do well to explicitly celebrate this kind of project not as a means of protecting well-loved rural vistas but as a means of transforming the land in order to combat the existential threat of climate breakdown. In this way, the Landscape Recovery Scheme or the Northern Forest initiative will, counter-intuitively, come to resemble the radical technological innovations supported by the likes of NZIP and the Hydrogen BECCS programme. Highlighting such a resemblance and admitting how radical some of these changes to the landscape could be might actually help to marshal local support.

Finally, the consequences of this for green grant-seekers, looking to leverage government funds for environmental projects, are varied. One practical reality is that the language of conservation might soon become not merely unfashionable but laughable. It now behooves environmental project managers and grant writers to cast their proposals in terms of radical, innovative—and even unpredictable—environmental transformation. Framing an ecological restoration project straightforwardly in terms of "[innovation](#)" might have once seemed bizarre. Yet, the current climate crisis and the belated emergence of a political will to fund a major green agenda together demand this new vision.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Bond is a grants consultant for Grants Office Europe, where he supports grant-seekers in the UK and Ireland in identifying government funding for various projects including and low-carbon and green transition initiatives. He received his PhD in English, which focussed on early American environmental aesthetics and thought, in 2021 from Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts.

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Recovery Plans around the EU: Spotlight on Italy

21 July
2020

RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN

Italy was the main recipient of the Next Generation Europe funds for recovery after the Covid-19 Pandemic: 190 billion euro



2021

OBJECTIVES

51 objectives have been achieved in 2021 and approved from Brussels.

NEW PAYMENT

European Commission has authorized the transfer of 21 billion euro, 10 billion of grants and 11 billion of loans

28 Feb
2022





Main Calls

Mission 1 Digitalization

Investments in companies' technological and digital transformation and for the purchase of immaterial goods, e.g. software, systems and systems integration, platforms and applications, can benefit from financial relief till 31 December 2025, and under specific conditions, up to 30 June 2026.

Mission 2 - Green Revolution and Ecological transition.

Call for research projects in the field of hydrogen, the total budget is 20 million euro, 40% of which dedicated to projects in the South of Italy (Regions of Abruzzo, Basilicata, Campania, Molise, Puglia, Sardegna and Sicilia). Eligible participants are research centres and universities, all in partnership with each other and with providers of good and services essential to the research project implementation on the topic of clean and green hydrogen innovative technologies for storage and transportation and transformation in fuels of hydrogen.

Deadline: 09/05/2022.



The Recovery and Resilience Plan and Gender Equality in Italy

An interview with Monica Cerutti and Loredana Grimaldi, Associazione Donne 4.0



Monica Cerutti is a researcher at the Department of Computer Science, University of Turin and President of the Turin Chapter of the Business and Professional Women Federation Italy (FIDAPA). From 2014 to 2019 she was Regional Minister of Piemonte for Youth Policy and Primary and Secondary Education; International Cooperation and Equal Opportunity;

and Civil Rights, Immigration, and Consumer Protection. A spokesperson for the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) between 2016 and 2019, she was also a councilor (2001-2011) and the President of the Commission for Equal Opportunity in the City of Turin (2001-2006). As a member of Association Donne 4.0 she launched the activity of the Observatory on NRRP and Gender Equality.



Loredana Grimaldi worked for over 30 years in Telecom Italia/TIM Group, in both Corporate Communication and Corporate Social Responsibility. A pioneer of Digital & Social Communication, which she has been working on since the late 1980s, she has designed and implemented a variety of innovative projects for the Telecom Italia/TIM Group, including the

launch of the first website in 1995 and the first Group Intranet in 1998. She is currently a member of the Steering Committee of the Association for the Development of Corporate Communication in Italy (ASCAI), a member of the Italian Federation of Public Relations (FERPI) and Ambassador of Donne 4.0 Association.

The National Recovery and Resilience Plan, NRRP, a program for spending the 190 billion euros made available by the Next Generation Europe Fund, is the main tool of the Italian recovery after the Covid-19 pandemic. It is also a way to address long-standing problems that predate the pandemic. Obsolescence of infrastructure and bureaucracy, as well as the many divides that cut across the country (North versus South, old versus young, men versus women) are still defining traits of Italy.

The NRRP considers these three divides in its three horizontal goals: greater gender equality; better life chances for young people, and promotion of the South. These intersect with six 'missions': digitalization; green revolution; mobility; education and research; inclusion and cohesion; and health.

We asked Monica and Loredana about the gender equality goal and, more specifically, about what they have learned observing and analyzing NRRP through their work in Osservatorio NRRP, a part of Associazione Donne 4.0. This recently created body has managed in one year to mobilize civil society and politics around its mission "to bridge the gender gap by means of digital technologies." Emphasis on measurability and quantification is one of their foci. Their motto, "what cannot be measured does not exist," is a reminder that what we cannot count we can hardly account for, evaluate, and therefore correct.

*In her recent article in the online journal *inGenere*, the Italian political-economist Francesca Bettio asked whether the NRRP-led Italian recovery is, I quote freely, going to be good for women, underlining strengths and naiveté of the Plan. What is your view on this?*

Monica Cerutti. NRRP is an opportunity to reduce the gender gap. An opportunity that should be used, but the results of which are not a given. Among the priorities of the Plan features ‘gender equality,’ besides a focus on young people and on the South of Italy. These means that all the six Missions of the Plan should have an impact on gender equality. Now, in some of these Missions, the equality goal is more supported than in others. More than this, the NRRP by itself is not enough. There is a need for a kind of civil society active engagement, one that does not limit itself to flagging the faults but is able to correct the aim. This is what our Association is trying to do. It is trying to build partnerships with politics and civil society, to aim higher. But the first step is to try to measure what is there in the Plan and in the calls and grants that the Plan is making available. Calls and grants are a key indicator of the direction that has been taken, at least an ex-ante indicator.

When we talk about NRRP and women, we are often talking about funds for women’s entrepreneurship; or of ‘gender certification’ as a requirement to be considered by the call. We talk less about the impact on gender equality of measures and fields that are seen as less linked to traditional equal opportunities policies. Our aim as an association is to focus on the digital revolution and on those professions and education and career paths that will shape our future. I am thinking about the field of Artificial Intelligence, for example. Women should be there to give their contribution, to decide and shape together with men.

Loredana Grimaldi. I will add some details about ‘measuring’ and measuring the impact of policies and actions for women. The horizontal, crosscutting goal of gender equality has only one dedicated indicator: the 4% increase in female employment by 2026. Yet not much is said of the quality of this employment—which are the roles, sectors, contracts, for example, that such employment concerns.

I think that the Recovery Plan did not adopt tools that are refined enough to measure and evaluate concrete actions against the general goals. The ‘gender certification’ requirement that will be introduced in April as a recommendation to follow, is good news, but in fact, only partially new and useful. Since 2006, Italian firms have had to provide a picture of the gender composition of their workforce. Firms with 11 to 50 employees, for example, will have a six-month window from the approval of the project to meet the requirement and it is unclear who is going to check at that point. As Monica was saying, these are all measures traditionally linked to women, but what has been most interesting to find out, is what happens with goals and funding that are not labelled as “pro women”.

The plan includes “conditional clauses”, extra-points that the government assigns as ways to guarantee that some quotas, with respect to women and young people, are met by the organizations that receive NRRP funding. We still do not know how this will work in practice, but the aim of the Association is to flag the distance between what is in the guidelines and what is being realized.



If I understood, you want to address two orders of problem. On the one hand, you want to keep in check the actual development of the plan, the consistency between intentions and actions. On the other hand, you are flagging that there are some shadows already in the guidelines, that the intentions could have been more sincere.

Monica Cerutti. Yes, one of the problems is that of the 'exceptions' to the rule. The Plan states that the goal of 30% of female workforce can be overlooked in certain circumstances and depending on the characteristic of the sector the firms applying for funding belongs to. For example, where women are fewer, like in the constructions sector, it is possible to lower the 30% female employment requirement to reflect the reality of the sector. So, if women are already too few in certain professions or fields, little effort is spent to tackle this horizontal segregation. In the Mission 1 (digitalization, innovation, competitiveness, culture) is stated that one of the ways to gender quality is tourism. SO by supporting tourism one supports women. Yes, it is true that women are well represented there, but it also true that this leaves the picture unchanged. I wonder if this milder

approach is the result of the goal of 'gender equality' being an adaptation to Europe, rather than a key to unlock economic development.

Loredana Grimaldi. The NRRP does not emphasize enough how including women is good for the GDP, in addition to being a matter of justice. Our Association fights against vertical and horizontal segregation and believes that technologies can help closing the gender gap and support a cultural transformation that will be good for women, men, and society. Mission 1, Digitalization, innovation, competitiveness and culture, in the next three years could change the face of Italy. Paradoxically, the part of the Plan that deals with infrastructures, hard material matters, are the more gender-equality-oriented, while in the parts that address sectors such as culture, tourism and commerce, very little has been done in terms of gender equality requirements. For example, to narrow the gap in connectivity in Italian islands, schools, hospitals, applicants that are well equipped to secure the presence of women in top positions, that have life-long-learning policy targeted to gender equality in place, in addition to meeting the requirement of an above 30% female workforce, will get extra points.

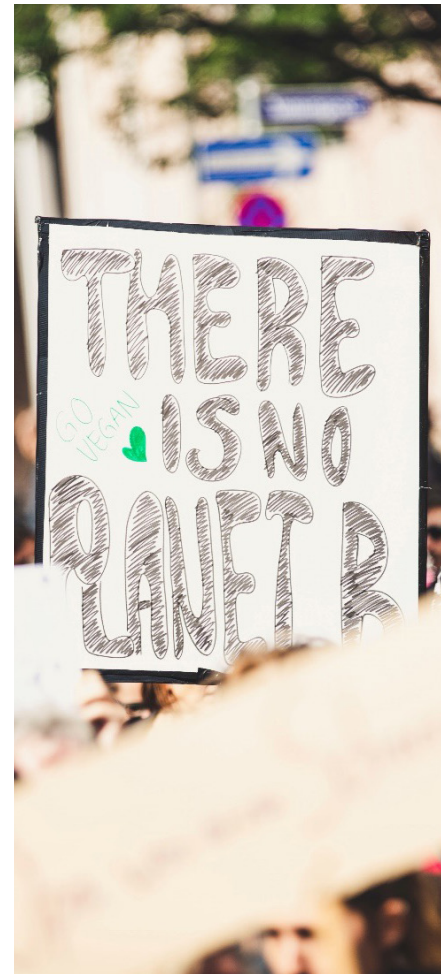


Can grants be the place where ecology, economics, technology and active citizenship meet?

Marie-Christine Noujaim

Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic crisis management, the United Nations Secretary General [António Guterres](#) stated that with crisis comes opportunity: “it is clear that we cannot simply rebuild the world as it was. Instead, we must build a fairer, greener and more resilient global economy that leaves no one behind,” he said. Transforming an unprecedented crisis into a historical opportunity may seem a complex mission, but it is definitely not an impossible one. In what follows, I analyze how the “world after Covid-19” is being reconsidered and rebuilt from a grant perspective. It is now crystal clear that [the roadmap for a responsible digital economy](#) is at the core of the EU economic recovery plan following the pandemic. The numerous funding measures currently being deployed in the EU, along with the strategic roadmap the EU is following, are not only means to counteract the consequences of the pandemic in the short-term, but also key instruments to prepare EU countries to respond to the various challenges of the years to come. I will focus particularly on how the European Commission is now making the challenges of the digital and green transitions its top priorities.

Climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution and irreversible natural resource depletion are emerging as critical concerns specifically for policymakers, national governments, citizens and businesses in the EU. As a result, we are now seeing varied funding opportunities being created to support the development and upscaling of innovative solutions to support the success of the double green and digital transition. More broadly, the EU’s funding orientation is aligned with the [2030 Agenda on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) set by the United Nations. The deployment of [NextGenerationEU](#), a new recovery funding portfolio aimed at repairing the immediate economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, with a total budget of a more than €800 billion, will help rebuild a post-Covid-19 Europe. The hope is that it will be a greener, more digital and more resilient Europe. NextGenerationEU is one of the vehicles through which the objectives of the [European Green Deal](#) are pursued. This Green Deal programme will pave the way for and support the double digital and green transformation of Europe’s society and economy for the benefit of citizens and businesses. Its other major aim is to accelerate economic recovery. Nevertheless, opening grant schemes and making them available to businesses and other organisations is only the first step of the journey towards transforming a crisis into an opportunity. Without the mobilization of willing, motivated grant-seekers including local authorities, companies, associations, administrations and R&D actors across the whole EU, the transition from theory to action would be impossible. Thankfully, as can be seen in the diversity of recent [EU grant winners](#), various organisations are showing more and more interest in applying for funding to bridge the gap between their exponential growth and digitalization agenda and their climate neutrality goals. Hence, making digital technology more environmentally responsible is not merely an ambition of the EU, but a goal that can be practically attained and achieved.



“It is clear that we cannot simply rebuild the world as it was. Instead, we must build a fairer, greener and more resilient global economy that leaves no one behind,” said the United Nations Secretary General António Guterres.



The numerous funding measures currently being deployed in the EU, along with the strategic roadmap the EU is following, are not only means to counteract the consequences of the pandemic in the short-term, but also key instruments to prepare EU countries to respond to the various challenges of the years to come.

The landscape of funding opportunities currently being deployed as part of the EU's green strategy is quite broad. One knock-on effect of the strategy is that the European Commission is also committed to supporting a significant economic boost, as well as an active citizenship reinforcement, across European societies. Economic growth has often meant unsustainable practice, resource extraction and carbon emissions, but the EU is now trying to make green growth possible. Below, I shed light on some of the calls from the [Horizon Europe](#), the EU's framework funding programme for research and innovation in which ecology, economics, technology and active citizenship intersect, proving that opposites really do attract.

Call #1: Urban planning and design for just, sustainable, resilient and climate-neutral cities by 2030

This call is designed to support a diverse range of urban areas across Europe. The goal is help urban authorities, as well as other stakeholders and citizens, to identify, plan, design, fund, roll out and replicate solutions and measures in order to achieve climate neutrality, sustainability and resilience and to significantly reduce carbon emissions across the most relevant sectors by 2030.

Call #2: Designing inclusive, safe, affordable and sustainable urban mobility

The aim of this call is to contribute to the agenda of the [Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission](#) by accelerating the transition of European cities towards climate neutrality through the promotion of zero-emission, shared, active and human-centered mobility. Another key objective is to ensure that common lessons are drawn and learned at the European level from the expansion and acceleration, and upscaling of those innovative and sustainable urban mobility solutions. Ultimately, the hope is that the lessons learned from this process will also contribute to the priorities of the [Zero Pollution Action Plan](#), the [Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy](#) and the [EU road safety policy framework 2021-2030](#), the last of which includes a 50% reduction target for deaths and serious injuries on the road by 2030.

Call #3: Positive clean energy districts

This call addresses the objectives of the Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission to support, promote and showcase 100 climate-neutral and smart European cities by 2030. The goal is for these first 100 cities to become experimentation and innovation hubs, capable of modelling of climate-neutral initiatives for other European cities. The European Commission's long-term objective here is to ensure all European cities are in a position to become climate-neutral by 2050. The call will thus contribute to the double green and digital transition promoted by the European Green Deal. It will allow a subset of innovating cities to lead by example in speeding up the necessary transformation towards urban climate neutrality.



All organisations - including businesses, local governments, schools, charities - can play a key role in the “new world after Covid-19.”

We should note that these grants are part of a strategy in which responsible innovative solutions are encouraged. The projects to be funded by these grants proposals will, of necessity, showcase different possibilities for achieving climate neutrality and zero pollution goals through various business activities across the EU and beyond. Furthermore, if we keep in mind the cross-sector ambitions of the EU's green funding - the desire to accelerate risky business innovations as much as to support necessary public infrastructure - it becomes clearer why the EU has paved the way for more and more stimulus schemes articulated around the convergence of the digital and the green transitions: the goal is not merely to ensure recovery but to promote green growth. Hence, the process by which grant programmes are designed can facilitate the dissemination of the best and most replicable practices which in turn, it is hoped, will lead to the upscaling of the digital and green transition. In this sense, good grant development activity is the result of cooperation and exchange between grant makers and grant seekers that transcends national and regional boundaries, mobilizing organisations in

the private and public sectors in the service of new sustainable models for cross-sector collaboration and community-building and work. Accordingly, can grant-funded projects be the place where ecology, economics, technology and active citizenship meet? Definitely!

The EU's actual green roadmap and funding measures, in effect, advocate for the convergence of digital and environmental transitions as a prerequisite for a responsible digital economy. To this end, its political and economic decision-makers are trying to ensure that organisations become more aware of the importance of sustainability in order to pass it on to future generations. We should always remember that any small action taken together can have a big impact on our planet. All organisations - including businesses, local governments, schools, charities - can play a key role in the “new world after Covid-19.” All in all, the EU's grant funding is demonstrating its effectiveness through the influence it exerts on the green and digital course of growth across the union.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marie-Christine Noujaim is the Lead Grants Development Consultant for France at Grants Office Europe. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Management in 2013. In 2016, she received her Master of Research in Management. From 2017 to 2021, she was enrolled in a PhD program at Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté; her thesis was entitled “The practice of diversity in companies: a quest for efficiency or legitimacy?”. She has participated in several EU-funded projects and has spoken at various international webinars, including the TandEM webinar “Empowering Youth as agents of integration and social cohesion” and the Grants Office Europe webinar on France's recovery plan support measures for SMEs.

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What is the European Green Deal?

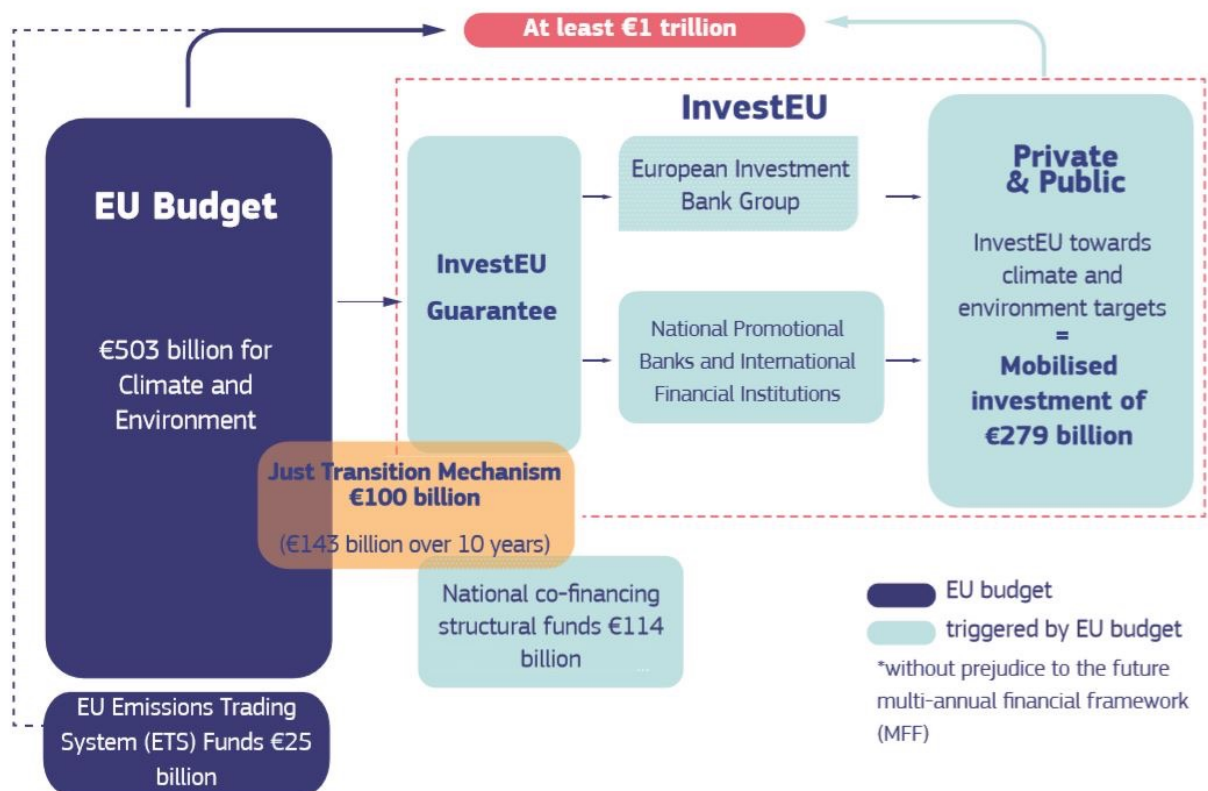
Vasilis Bouronikos

The European Green Deal is the EU's brand-new growth strategy to transition the European economy towards a more sustainable model for economic growth. The Green Deal was first introduced in December 2019, along with its overarching objectives. The European Green Deal embodies the European aspiration of becoming the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 by having a cleaner environment, affordable energy, smart transport, new

jobs, and an overall healthier life.

To achieve the ambitious European Green Deal plan, over €1 trillion EU funds are to be invested through various existing EU funding mechanisms. This green deal finance will support projects and the need for policy changes to reach the EU climate targets, eventually achieving a climate-neutral continent.

WHERE WILL THE MONEY COME FROM?



*The numbers shown here are net of any overlaps between climate, environmental and Just Transition Mechanism objectives.

WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF THE GREEN DEAL FUNDING?

The Green Deal finance is laid out in the [EU Green Deal Investment Plan](#) (EGDIP), which will mobilise at least €1 trillion in investments over the next decade. About half of the budget, €528 billion, will come directly from the EU budget. The EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) will trigger a further €114 billion in National co-financing for [green projects](#). At the same time,

€279 billion will come from the InvestEU programme, in the form of guarantees, so that European Investment Bank Group and implementing partners to invest in higher-risk projects. Finally, €279 billion will come from the Just Transition Mechanism to focus on the regions and sectors most affected by the transition to a more sustainable future. A central idea of the European Green Deal is that Europe can achieve true sustainability only if it's done equitably and inclusively.

THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL STRATEGIES

Climate Action

Taking actions to limit the consequences of climate change was integral in developing the Green new Deal. Specifically, reducing greenhouse gas emissions has been a long-standing European commitment since the '90s. With the EU Green Deal, Europe has renewed this commitment by aiming to make the continent carbon neutral by 2050.

However, this transition cannot be drastic as it will have devastating consequences. For this reason, the EU Commission has set milestones like the [2030 climate targets](#) that demand a 55% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions compared to the 1990 levels. To make it happen, this comes together with the "Fit for 55" package, which is a suite of legislative initiatives across sectors to revise the current European Climate Law to reflect the climate neutrality objective of the EU Green Deal.

Clean Energy

With [80%](#) of the total greenhouse gas emissions in the EU-27 coming from energy production and consumption, there is a high need to shift towards cleaner energy. The Green Deal scheme wants to reduce energy-related greenhouse gas emissions by utilising green finance to develop more renewable energy sources and create an interconnected digital EU energy market.

There are many ideas and strategies on the table to decouple energy production from burning fossil fuel to make it cleaner. For example, some initiatives encourage investments to increase offshore renewable energy production or promote the use of clean hydrogen to help decarbonise the EU economy.

Buildings and renovations

Buildings consume about 40% of the energy in Europe, and they are responsible for 36% of greenhouse gas emissions. For this reason, European Green Deal seeks to innovate the construction sector to make it cleaner and double renovations rates to create more energy-efficient buildings.

This strategy wants to decarbonise heating and cooling systems, discontinue the usage of the non-efficient building stock, and renovate public buildings like schools and hospitals. Additionally, the EU is reviewing its regulation on the requirements of certain construction materials in the EU Market to make them more environmentally friendly and safer to use.

Sustainable industry

The European industry accounts for about 20% of the European greenhouse gas emissions. As a result, a plan to decarbonise the sector and make it more sustainable could not be missing from the European green deal.

To achieve industry decarbonisation, the EU needed to develop a plan that would focus on all manufacturing stages, starting from the supply of raw materials to marketing sustainable products. For this reason, EU initiatives such as the [Circular Economy Action Plan](#) or the [European Industrial Strategy](#) are considered to be integral to achieving sustainability in the sector.

The Circular Economy, which is one of the main building blocks of the European Green Deal, wants to change the entire life cycle of products to make them last longer to preserve natural resources. On top of that, circular economy principles demand the further use of recyclables and insist on improving product reusability and reparability. On the other hand, the EU industrial strategy seeks to enhance the digital transformation, use alternative and cleaner energy sources, set recycling targets, or reduce the carbon footprint of the industry.

Sustainable mobility

Transport emissions account for about 25% of greenhouse gas emissions in the EU. The European Green Deal strategy for sustainable mobility seeks to radically reduce those emissions by 90% by 2050 through smart, accessible and affordable vehicles. More sustainable transport means will reduce traffic jams and less overall pollution in urban areas.

Green Deal grants for sustainable mobility will be busy in the following years as the EU has set ambitious targets for 2030 such as:

- Increasing the circulation of zero-emission cars on European roads,
- Creating a network of 100 climate-neutral and smart cities,
- Doubling the high-speed rail traffic crossing Europe,
- Making scheduled collective travels under 500km carbon-neutral,
- Deploying automated mobility at a larger scale,
- Introducing zero-emission marine vessels.

To achieve these targets, the EU must revise existing regulations like recharging and refuelling stations, the emission standards of new vehicles, and intelligent transport systems. However, a more environmentally friendly mobility system means investments in electric vehicle deployment. In such a case, batteries will become crucial in supporting the new automotive industry. Therefore, sustainable battery supply chains are needed for their entire life-cycle while also covering their recycling and re-use.

Eliminating pollution

Pollution is harmful to our health and our environment. It is also responsible for multiple mental and physical diseases and premature deaths, especially in young and older people. However, it is not only bad for people's health, but it also contributes to biodiversity loss, thus limiting the ability of ecosystems to provide their critical services.

With the adoption of the [Zero Pollution Action Plan](#), a key deliverable of the European Green Deal, the EU is more prepared than ever to fight against pollution. This action is further divided into three headline actions to eliminate pollution. First is the [Chemical strategy for sustainability](#) to better protect citizens and the environment against hazardous chemicals. Second, the [Zero pollution action plan for water, air and soil](#) to prevent, remedy, monitor and report on pollution. Finally, a [Revision of measures to address pollution from large industrial installations](#) to ensure they are consistent with climate, energy and circular economy policies to achieve the EU Green Deal vision.

Farm to Fork

Our food is responsible for about [21-37%](#) of greenhouse gas emissions and requires many resources to be produced. The [Farm to Fork strategy](#) is core to the European Green Deal as it aims at making food systems fair, healthier and more sustainable. To achieve this, Farm to Fork will focus on changing our attitudes and ways of doing things related to food production or consumption. The core objectives of this strategy are to eliminate food loss and waste, to produce, process, distribute, and consume food more sustainably. Sustainable food systems will bring new opportunities for all actors across the food value chain will benefit all stakeholders.

The Green Deal funding of €10 billion proposed for this strategy will open many opportunities for research and innovation in the sector. Namely, on food, the bio-economy, natural resources, agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture and the environment, digital technologies and nature-based solutions for agri-food.

Protection of biodiversity

The way we use our natural resources for economic growth is not sustainable, and it harms the world's biodiversity. It is estimated that in the last 40 years, the world lost approximately [60%](#) of its total biodiversity due to human activity. Biodiversity loss is intrinsically linked with climate change as extreme weather phenomena accelerate the natural world's destruction. It is urgent to [protect biodiversity](#) and nature as they can be vital allies in our fight against climate change. For example, nature acts as a regulator of climate and help remove emissions from the atmosphere.

As a first step, the [Biodiversity strategy for 2030](#) will help realise the EU Green Deal through biodiversity recovery by 2030. It will seek to make our societies more resilient to threats such as climate change, forest fires, food insecurity and disease outbreaks. The actions planned for biodiversity recovery are establishing a network of protected areas on land and at sea, launching an EU nature restoration plan to restore degraded ecosystems, introducing funding for biodiversity and a better governance framework, and launching measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Each component of the EU Green Deal is based on research and development. Many of the European Green Deal's projects necessitate the use of new technology and the transformation of financial and supply chains. [Horizon Europe](#), which has committed nearly 35% of its €95.5 billion budget to attaining EU climate goals, will fund many research and development programs. Horizon Europe will focus on critical areas such as batteries, clean hydrogen, low-carbon steel, the built environment, and biodiversity through forming green collaborations with various industries and member states.

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What Are The Prerequisite For a Green Social Contract?

Vanessa Del Pozo Sánchez

The pandemic was an example of a crisis for which we needed to act jointly and quickly and which, in turn, exposed the fragility of the economic, ecological, and collective resilience of our societies. In terms of green and digital transition, the pandemic worked as an accelerator. But the climate crisis was already giving us warning moments, but the national governments decided not to prioritise it as the green transition is not an investment from which direct, short-term results could be seen. Therefore, the intangible public goods of collective resilience systems are fundamental, and the more we integrate that knowledge early on, the better prepared we will be to deal with any crisis.

At first impact, we might expect that environmental grants are the solution to a digital and green transition; however, this is not enough, we also need a social contract between the state, its citizens, private and public institutions in order to articulate a greener and more inclusive agenda.

For example, the Horizon Europe programme has two clusters to support projects for the green agenda, with a budget of ca. € 3 billion. Nevertheless, private and public entities will have to work together to make sure that these investments are reflected in future benefits for society, such as a reduction in the prices of green energy and food, or ensuring that resources are available for the next generations, to give some examples.

Therefore, one of the main keys to achieving such a difficult contract is to change the way we perceive our natural resources and ecosystems, from a public good to a common good.

To understand why this is so fundamental, it is important to keep the two ideas distinct: the common good “refers to those



The Horizon Europe programme has two clusters to support projects for the green agenda, with a budget of ca. € 3 billion

facilities—whether material, cultural or institutional—that the members of a community provide to all members to fulfil a relational obligation they all have to care for certain interests that they have in common”, while a public good is “a particular type of good that members of a community would not possess if they were each motivated only by their own self-interest”¹.

Following those definitions, we can see that our ecosystems and natural resources have been treated since the industrial revolution as a public good, and later, considered as an element of both human rights and economic development to advancing decolonization in the 1960s.

Unfortunately, our current ecological catastrophe, shows us that the public good vision has failed. We always arrive too late: instead of preventing catastrophes, we have had to find new ways to solve them as emergencies, meaning a greater investment of money, time, and, in some cases, irreversible damage.

Parallely, this ecological catastrophe has its roots in colonialism, where unequal power relations between and within developed and developing countries continue to define the causes and consequences of climate change. Specifically, colonialism destroyed communal ways of life and knowing-being. It gave rise to the idea that all territories found across the globe were resource for the colonizers. It was a genocide and ecocide, which was entangled with the privatization of the global climate commons.

¹Hussain, Waheed, “The Common Good”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/common-good/>>.

THE COMMON GOOD



We need to change the way we perceive our natural resources and ecosystems, from a public good to a common good.

On the contrary, if we treat the natural world as a common good, then it becomes everyone's responsibility to maintain it and to preserve our planet. Up to now only a few bodies or actors have been in charge of preserving it, including scientists and civil organisations; however, it is necessary to devise a regulatory/decision-making system in which responsibility is shared more broadly, without seeking political or any other kind of gain and with more equitable interactions between private companies and local communities, and countries.

Under the common good scope, we need to reconfigure how we consume and use our resources, create green policy-making as having planet-level consequences, and reorganize our social relations into a place without borders and hierarchies of regions with power. It is true that local actions need to be taken to generate global change, but these actions need to go hand in hand with a coherent strategy regarding resource and ecosystem usage across the rest of the planet.

FIRST CASE OF NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AS A COMMON GOOD AND ITS CONSTRAINTS

Norway, in 2016, became the [first country to ban deforestation](#) and removed from its market any product that came from the indiscriminate felling of trees, demonstrating that it would only support markets of companies and industries that had environmental and sustainable initiatives for the country, and with that being able to design a green circle in the global economy. But the initiative didn't stop there, because the highest rate of deforestation on the planet does not occur in this geographical region, but rather in Africa and Latin America, where Brazil tops the list.

Therefore, Norway took other initiatives alongside its policies, such as the "[Joint Declaration of Intent](#)" to cooperate with the governments of Germany and Peru in 2014. Through this initiative, Norway has contributed to Peruvian efforts in the design and implementation of public policies at the national and regional levels to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. This was implemented through a payment by results mechanism, whereby Norway would disburse money to Peru for each target met.

Unfortunately, even with these initiatives, in a year marked by national immobilisation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, [Peru's forest loss in 2020 was the highest so far this century](#), exceeding the amount of forest lost the previous year by 54,846 hectares. Importantly, the data suggests that the largest proportion of deforestation is due to illegal activity, and this does not mean that managing natural resources as a common good has failed, but that the same problem must be tackled from different angles, since, in this case, the strong roots of colonialism have created a socio-economic urgency in overexploited countries.

In other terms, the colonisation of resources brought rapid socio-economic and technological change for the colonisers, but the colonised suffered the consequences of the overexploitation of their land beyond the natural consequences. Colonisation also caused the overexploitation of native workers and control of the economy and administration of the states, to ensure that the colonised country was made a consumer nation for colonisers manufactured goods, and thus create systematic overexploitation and forcing the colonised country to live under a debt-ridden economy all the time.

In addition, there are three important determinants of the relationship between colonialism and deforestation: corruption that is facilitated by the often remote areas, the inability to invent resources and the low pay of officials; property rights regimes, and the quality of the rule of law and political stability.

DEVELOPING A PROJECT UNDER THE COMMON GOOD SCOPE

While environmental grants such as the ones created by Save Our Species, Horizon Europe, and Interreg, among others, are in charge of accelerating the twin green and digital transitions, it is our responsibility as project developers and innovators to develop a project doing prior research on what ecological needs/crises are out there, as well as on how we can design the project to attain the most benefit, how we can ensure the project is going to enrich the future, how we can make it feasible for everyone, etc.

An example of this type of project under the common good scope was the development of the Astra Zeneca vaccine, which, even if it didn't produce by the highest immunity, took into account other global access factors as priorities.

In this particular case, the Oxford University researchers, which were mainly financed by the U.K. Government and the European Commission, negotiated that the prices had to remain accessible and that the storage temperature couldn't be so low that it wouldn't be accessible in the Global South. Also, to make sure that their intellectual property rights couldn't be abused, they signed up to the patent pool, which is a very important mechanism in terms of collective intelligence. This is an example of what it means to invest in a benefit for all and this leads to a new design of an economic model, that proposes as a primary goal a healthy planet to be able to offer a good life for everyone.

CONCLUSION

This article has covered the benefits of treating our planet and its resources as a common good to make better use of the environmental grants and achieve a real change. However, there is still a long way to go, and important problems to solve regarding the relationship between the common good and social justice, the creation of mutual concern about the current ecological catastrophe, the incorporation of the basic requirements of morality in decision making, and the very socio-economic system that has brought us to this moment.



Norway, in 2016, became the first country to ban deforestation and removed from its market any product that came from the indiscriminate felling of trees

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vanessa Del Pozo Sánchez is a grants consultant for Grants Office Europe. Driven by reason, analysis, and the disposition to help others, she takes pride in coming up with plausible solutions for a broad range of problems, all as part of a system of human cooperation. As part of the team of Grants Office, her goals include support to public and private entities in their search for grants for high-tech projects in Spain”

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EU Programme Snapshot

New technologies in the field of energy



SUMMARY

The programme was prepared to support the achievement of Poland's climate neutrality by implementing solutions increasing the country's energy security and increasing the competitiveness of the Polish economy, which should increase by 20-50% (compared to the 2020 level) in the share of energy from RES in the overall energy mix of the country. The objectives of the Programme are:

- C1: increasing the potential of the renewable energy industry (including prosumer);
- C2: development of intelligent network infrastructure (energy);
- C3: lowering the emission intensity of the energy sector by increasing the use of biodegradable raw materials and waste products.

Co-financing can be used for the performance of a feasibility study, basic research, industrial research, development works, and pre-implementation works.

ELIGIBILITY

consortia - consisting of a maximum of 3 entities: enterprises and research units which include at least one enterprise and at least one research unit. The consortium leader must be an enterprise.

DEADLINE

You can apply for this subsidy until June 30, 2022.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Nowe technologie w zakresie energii \(II konkurs\) - Narodowe Centrum Badań i Rozwoju - Portal Gov.pl \(www.gov.pl\)](#)

Justifying Funding for Environmental Awareness-Raising

Gregory Clare

Are you aware that smoking kills? Most smokers under the age of 35 would have been made aware of the detrimental effect on their health long before they had their first cigarette. They are just as aware as I am that the planet we so claim to love is heading towards catastrophe. This awareness fills me with guilt every plastic bag I stuff my plastic-wrapped veggies in but darn the inconvenience of always having a tote bag. Was the awareness-raising in vain? Ineffective perhaps? Whatever it might be, it was surely a costly affair, and a lot of government funding was utilised in the process. Money that could have been spent on jails for ecoterrorists such as myself. But my attempt at a joke aside, we should explore how useful funding awareness-raising still is.

In the world of non-profits, the beloved awareness-raising is the go-to when spreading consciousness about a problem or issue. It's only natural that those who care about an issue want others to be equally concerned. It lies at the core of what activists, influencers and awareness-raisers have been doing. If people only knew that a seatbelt could save their lives, they would wear one every time. Or is it the hefty fine that precipitated people into buckling up for a safer driving experience? To know is not enough, we can discount knowledge and employ our internal justification based on costs, values, convenience, tradition, and a myriad of other reasons.

Let's dwell on the seatbelt example for a little as it might help me get my point across. The seatbelt was introduced in the early 1950s by Dr C. Hunter Sheldon and incorporated by Volvo in 1958. Yet, only from the 1980s, various governments adopted laws that required drivers to wear a seatbelt. The UK enforced



"It's only natural that those who care about an issue want others to be equally concerned"

seatbelts in 1983 which resulted in a [29% reduction in fatalities](#) involving front-seat passengers. Comparable numbers were reported in other countries that adopted similar laws. The preceding 20 years, which saw a wide availability of seatbelts and awareness raising about its safety, showed no considerable behavioural changes. In the UK only 40% of its population wore a seatbelt when they became available in the years prior to the enactment of the law.

Government policies and law-making showed to be the most effective in this case, rendering awareness-raising campaigns useless. Or not? Can awareness-raising campaigns be resources well spent and work in tandem with government policies? If we take a sharp turn to political philosophy and consider policies, laws and regulations to be a part of a social contract that is only borne from the consciousness of the collective, then awareness-raising has a pivotal role to play. It would, therefore, make sense that government spending is partially allocated to awareness-raising.

But who is ultimately the best at awareness-raising? Everyone except for the government. Yet, it's not just the government that gets awareness-raising wrong. Throughout the article, we'll explore methods that can increase the effectiveness of awareness-raising and justify spending government funds on it. We will look at getting the public interested and moving beyond mere interest to participation. But more importantly, we need to look at how to approach people like myself, fully aware of issues like the environment but not doing anything about it.



If your awareness-raising project doesn't transition from raising awareness about the problems to raising awareness about solutions to environmental problems, you will have lost public interest quicker than you've gained it.

KEEPING THE PUBLIC'S INTEREST

Described by Anthony Downs (1991) as the “Ups and Downs with Ecology” it seems that our environmental awareness is short-lived and changeable. Downs identified a five-stage cycle: pre-problem state; alarmed discovery and euphoric enthusiasm stage; realisation of the cost of significant progress stage; gradual decline in the intense public interest; and the post problem state. And, dear reader, I understand that you are thinking “I’m seeing Greta Thunberg in the news forever, I think we are still alarmed.” Perhaps we are, but how do we stay there? In my opinion, we do this by tapping into our anthropocentric tendencies to keep the public’s interest.

Anthropocentrism is the perspective of humans to consider themselves exceptionally placed over other species on earth. The worth of everything is measured by its relation to us. It is evident from the Pew Research Survey that we are [greatly concerned that climate change will harm us personally](#). Typically, our short-term concerns are the health risks of chemicals in products and the agricultural use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Our

long-term concerns are whether the earth will be a safe place for our children to grow up in. There might be no shame in that, every species is concerned with its preservation, humankind is just betting on its ability to not suffer the same fate as the Dodo, the Tasmanian Tiger, and the Sabre-toothed cat.

Let’s get to the point! To help environmental issues to remain high on the collective agenda, we need constant reminders of how the deterioration of the environment affects us. But as we will uncover at the tail end of this article, trying to keep people continuously alarmed is a fool’s errand. If your awareness-raising project doesn’t transition from raising awareness about the problems to raising awareness about solutions to environmental problems, you will have lost public interest quicker than you’ve gained it.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The transition from raising awareness about problems to raising awareness about solutions is key in inducing any form of public participation. We need the public to participate because we’ve shifted to a world where the public is the main culprit. That might sound like a bold accusatory statement, but we have gone from decades of production as a source of environmental problems to unbalanced consumption patterns as a great source of pollution. Our electricity consumption (25%) is very high on the list of culprits of [greenhouse gas emissions](#).

Adopting pro-environmental behaviour (let us minimize the use of the word sustainable) will go a long way in protecting the environment. When referring to the seatbelt law, I mentioned that awareness-raising and policy should work in tandem. Awareness-raising leading to public participation increases the likelihood of citizens to respect legal frameworks and be more acceptant towards economic mechanisms.

Discimus ut serviamus, but how? In the earlier mentioned Pew Research Survey, 80% of people polled were willing to make changes to help reduce the impacts of climate change. Your project needs to focus on how to message. You should develop awareness-raising projects on how citizens can make a change and work towards solutions. This can be done by raising awareness about the scale of harm that everyday practices have in conjunction with evoking readiness among citizens to form environmental collectives in their neighbourhoods.

OVERCOME APOCALYPSE FATIGUE

The modern world has developed into a place where people, particularly in advanced economies, live a day-by-day life without too much doom and gloom. Yes, we are confronted with dire prognoses in the news and on our cigarette boxes. But we can get desensitized by nearly anything you throw at us too often or ill-timed. Most people are aware of the mental discomfort cognitive dissonance, but maybe less so with adaptive preference formation. The latter term explains how humans downgrade the value of desired outcomes as their realization becomes less likely. We're not only prone to outright ignore truths that question our belief system (cognitive dissonance), but we are also likely to downplay its significance if we find it too much work.

As an experienced environmentalist, you're fighting against these human traits because you know what is at stake. Destructive storms and forest fires, extinction of species that we hold dear and whole islands and ice shelves on the arctic calving into the sea. But what to do when these frightening scenarios only awake passive emotions, fear and guilt, or lead to avoidance of the topic all together?

Your awareness-raising projects need to reframe the discourse. One way is to speak about opportunities rather than threats. If you were attentive to the European Union's messaging, you would notice a subtle shift. Instead of overemphasising everything people and companies should not be doing, it took an empowering approach. It is seeking to better the food sources, create smarter energy and transportation systems that move us through smarter cities to our smarter buildings. We connect smarter to automation, to computers, intelligent groups of people working towards progress.

Everyone wants to be part of progress and development. This becomes an even more powerful emotion when used in social networks. Not Zuckerberg's, but real peer to peer social activity. In a study on [social norms and how to utilise them when managing climate change](#), four thousand households were divided into four groups. The first group was asked to conserve power/energy because it's the right thing to do for the planet. The second was asked to think about future generations. With the third one, they employed an economic strategy and made them aware of how much they could save on their utility bill. The fourth group was told how their energy use compares to that of their neighbours. Attempting to coerce the first group with apocalyptic scenarios did very little, while the fourth group came out on top consistently.



Humans downgrade the value of desired outcomes as their realization becomes less likely

CONCLUSION

You could paint a sobering picture that there is no shortage of environmental awareness and thus there is a lack of willingness. But if that's the conclusion you have come to, I've done a bad job in arguing my case. Your environmental awareness project does not have to be in vain, it must understand the multiplicity of relational structures and how to navigate them. What can environmental awareness-raisers do in relation to the public and what can they do in relation to government policy?

Environmental awareness-raisers need to strike a balance between alarming the public, and thus gaining their attention, and evoking action, thus keeping their attention. It is quite apparent that my pet peeve is seatbelt usage, but we can learn from past mistakes in awareness-raising to ensure that your project holds the attention. [Highway safety needs](#) efforts were receiving significant stimulus but only led to a 3% increase in seatbelt usage over 3 years. Berating the public rather than shaping a campaign on collective progress led to the need for legislation, high-visibility enforcement, and fines.

Sometimes we can't get around alarming people, but the objective should be life and your project should be about how to improve our lives. Shape your awareness-raising around feasible goals and do not dismiss, or overlook, those goals that have already been achieved. With underlining the problem comes the need for hope, for a turn-around or improvement, and a reminder of what has been accomplished to date.

Examples of goal orientated, rather than disaster orientated, are small initiatives such as [Utrecht4GlobalGoals](#), where projects are encouraged to spread awareness about what the Global Goals are and what is being done. The stimulus ties into the case for complementary work by awareness-raising projects following government initiatives. Don't try to reinvent the wheel but seek out government initiatives and design your project as such that it enhances the likelihood of public engagement and awareness of government objectives. With the government being the largest funders in most countries, tying your project objectives

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Gregory is one of the senior Grants Development Consultants at Grants Office. His area of expertise is the funding landscape in the Netherlands and the EU, with a particular focus on digitalisation processes in education and the developing labour market. As a former grant writer and fundraiser in the Lebanese, Syrian and Turkish context, he is also adept to developing compelling projects for non-profit organisations seeking European funding. His spare time is filled with as much sports as possible and he claims to be an expert on European film.

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to government goals increases the likelihood of funding.

Another example is partnering with local government in a consortium. This is being done by [CleanTech Regio](#), an initiative that brings together several entities in the provinces of Gelderland and Overijssel to focus on pro-environment and economic shared objectives. With the funds acquired they target a variety of organisations, communities and individuals. They provide small grants for businesses to propose zero emission city logistics, or training for jobseekers in IT, health, and other vital sectors. Their strategy is to focus on visibility on the local level with an eye on the future.

There is a plethora of project ideas that people more creative than I have, and can, come up with. It's on you and your project team to change your message from "we are doomed" to "yes, we can."

European Funds for Green Technologies in Poland

What are green technologies and do entrepreneurs see the importance of eco-development? How can subsidies help them?

Magdalena Manneveld

Below you will find information about what green technologies are and from which major programs you can apply for a grant in the coming years. I will also provide examples of current competitions and examples of successes of Polish projects in the field of green technologies. You will also learn what you can get a subsidy for. But before I go into that, I will first describe where it started.

Environmental pollution and climate change, caused by careless human activity, have reached a tipping point. Due to the growing environmental awareness not only of societies and their decision makers, but also of economic entities, the need for a global intensification of actions to improve the current state was noticed by national governments and intergovernmental organizations, including the EU, which created an action plan called “European Green Deal” “.

“The European Green Deal (EGD) is a strategy development, which is to transform the European Union into a neutral area climatically. It is a response to the climate crisis and strong environmental degradation processes. According to the general assumptions of the Green Deal the European Union is to become a climate neutral, fair and economical society, modern, resource efficient and environmentally friendly.”

Protecting the natural environment and reducing threats to human health, climate and biodiversity is one of the main goals of the long-term policy of the European Union. In the new financial perspective of the European Commission, emphasis is placed on promoting broadly understood pro-ecological solutions and supporting the SME sector in this regard.

One of the main programs under which entrepreneurs will be able to obtain support for their green projects is the European Funds for the Modern Economy Program (FENG).

FENG 2021-2027 has a budget of EUR 7.9 billion. Within this budget, one priority will be entirely allocated to the green transformation of the economy - EUR 800 million and to the Horizon Europe Framework Program - almost EUR 95 billion, including the European Green Deal.

Innovations in this area can be developed in different ways, but for a common goal - the protection of the environment and natural resources.

FENG will support, among others research, implementation of innovations, the use of advanced technologies, increased competitiveness of Polish SMEs as well as industrial transformation and entrepreneurship. FENG will be available to entrepreneurs and companies, institutions from the science sector, corporate consortia and business environment institutions, i.e. entrepreneurship, innovation centers and financial institutions. FENG will offer subsidies, equity and guarantee financial instruments, instruments combining repayable and subsidy financing. We can expect the first competitions from the FENG program (2021-2027) to be announced in the second half of 2022.



Below you will find examples of current calls for proposals.

New technologies in the field of energy is a grant awarded by the National Center for Research and Development (NCBR). The budget of the program is PLN 377.7 million. The co-financing is directed to SME enterprises and large companies that want to develop new technologies or develop new products in such areas as:

- Solar energy,
- Onshore wind energy,
- Offshore wind energy,
- Technologies for the production and use of hydrogen,
- Energy storage and energy and heat microgrids,
- Energy use of waste and heat from post-process gases,
- Energetic use of geothermal heat (geothermal).

The competition is open to consortia consisting of at least one enterprise and at least one research unit. The consortium leader must be an enterprise. The co-financing can be used for costs related to the development and testing of new technological or product solutions (including salary costs, costs of R&D services outsourced to other entities, costs of prototyping, etc.) Find more here: [Nowe technologie w zakresie energii \(II konkurs\) - Narodowe Centrum Badań i Rozwoju - Portal Gov.pl \(www.gov.pl\)](#)

The EIC Accelerator competition from the Horizon Europe program co-finances ground-breaking research and innovation.

The budget is as high as EUR 1,087.6 million. The subsidy was directed to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises as well as “small mid-cap” employing up to five hundred people. As part of the EIC Accelerator, you have the opportunity to finance technological, social or service innovations that are related to breakthrough innovation and have the potential to be implemented on the European or global market. [EIC Accelerator - Krajowy Punkt Kontaktowy \(kpk.gov.pl\)](#)

What are green technologies and do entrepreneurs see the importance of eco-development?

Green technologies are the logical consequence of resource depletion, urbanization and climate change. Their goal is to provide clean air, water and energy. Green technology is a component of six main elements: environmentally friendly energy and energy storage, energy modernization, more efficient use of raw materials, recycling, sustainable water management and sustainable transport.

An example of a subsidy for green technologies is “Development and implementation of innovative technologies, environmentally friendly, improving material management and using renewable energy sources in the Polimarky company.”

Project value: TU 6 572 013.00 PLN

Co-financing value: EUR 668,048.83

If you want to know more about this project or find more examples of the success of Polish companies implementing innovative pro-ecological technologies, find more at: [PARP](#)



Green technologies are not only wind turbines and solar panels. Among the interesting projects implemented in Poland that fit into the idea of the European Green Deal and concern green technologies are, for example, air quality monitoring and forecasting systems, molecular tests to minimize chemical spraying, mobile waste processing lines to avoid human contact with hazardous substances, and modern electrical city vehicles.

The value of renewable energy is estimated at EUR 90 billion. Green technologies lead to a new type of economy. There are proven business models for the production of energy products and technology that are used in environmental protection technology. Most companies recognize the importance of eco-development. The fashion for ecological business in our country is gaining momentum. The greatest emphasis is on trade. Introducing ecological solutions pays off. In addition to the obvious reasons for caring for our planet, it is also a great way to conduct marketing communication. A brand that cares about modern solutions, with respect for the environment, evokes only positive associations. Below you will find a company that took advantage of European funds, introduced an innovative product and reduced its ecological footprint.

An example may be a project by Comptest Sp. "Development and implementation of an innovative service for the repair of telecommunications equipment - intelligent recycling" Project value 306 967.48 EUR. The project consisted in developing a service unavailable on the Polish market, enabling the repair of telecommunications equipment and its re-use, after obtaining components from used equipment. As a result, it will be possible to maximize recycling activities, reduce emissions of pollutants into the atmosphere by extending the life cycle of products, and to manage materials more efficiently.

Another interesting project is: Implementation of the R&D project by launching the production of a go-kart with an electric drive and a replaceable power system. As part of the project, an innovative electric go-kart design with a replaceable power supply system was implemented.

The product innovation uses solutions unavailable on the European market, such as:

- the ability to quickly replace the battery without having to put the go-kart away for charging;
- regenerative braking, allowing the recovery of energy lost during braking;

- wireless remote integration in the controller setting, enabling switching to safe driving mode;
- a new switch handle that allows the angle of inclination to be changed without the need to use control devices on the diagnostic stand;
- leveling of body corrections after frame deformation.
- The use of an electric motor reduces the emission of exhaust gases and noise, and thus does not have a negative impact on the environment. The introduction of a new product influenced the perception of the company as an innovative company, offering the best and most modern solutions with the use of modern technologies.

Name of the Operational Program: Eastern

Project value: PLN 3,955,000.00

The global market for green technologies and sustainable development has been valued at \$ 10.32 billion in 2020 and is expected to reach \$ 74.64 billion by 2030 (Allied Market Research). This means that companies leading in the development of green technology have a great opportunity for development.

The EU perspective 2021-2027 offers many opportunities for companies planning pro-ecological projects. Do you want to find out what you can spend the subsidy for?

You can spend the funds, for example, on the thermal modernization of the company's buildings, the introduction of energy-saving technologies or the reconstruction of the production line. If you plan to obtain energy from renewable sources (e.g. by installing solar panels), the expenses for this purpose may also be part of the project

Perhaps you also need a modernization of heating, air conditioning or ventilation. You can also apply for funding for the production of energy from renewable sources. These are projects involving, for example, the creation of wind, solar, geothermal or biomass-based power plants. When you receive funding for this purpose, you can use the generated energy for your own purposes, but the surplus can also be transferred to the power grid.

If you want to know the most interesting projects so far implemented with European Funds in Poland, check this page. Who knows, maybe the successes of others will inspire you.

[Przykłady najciekawszych projektów - Ministerstwo Funduszy i Polityki Regionalnej \(funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl\)](#)

EU Programme Snapshot

Making Business Parks More Sustainable



SUMMARY

The province of South-Holland has launched a two-fold subsidy to encourage business parks to develop into future ready sustainable locations. Eligible businesses parks can get up to € 200.000 in funding for activities that contribute to:

Energy in business parks:

- Measures to produce energy from renewable sources;
- Building-related measures to save energy;
- Measures for connecting to a local heat network.

Making business parks more sustainable:

- Measures that are climate adaptive;
- Measures to increase biodiversity.

ELIGIBILITY

The scheme is available to entrepreneurial associations that are active on a business park in the province of South Holland, a BIZ foundation, or a municipality.

DEADLINE

You can apply for this subsidy until December 31 in 2025.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Verduurzaming bedrijventerreinen, subsidie - Provincie Zuid-Holland](#)

Recovery Plans around the EU: Spotlight on Spain

Map of investments managed by the autonomous communities

On 31 December 2021, **11,151 million euros** were allocated to the autonomous communities, earmarked for public policies linked to green transition, digitalisation, science, culture, social protection, sustainable tourism, employment, education and vocational training.



Calendar of upcoming Recovery Plan calls (January–June 2022)



The calls planned for the first half of 2022, which will mobilise more than **24.6 billion euros**, include calls from the General State Administration and the Autonomous Communities.

Most relevant Programmes:

- Digital Kit Programme: digitalisation of small businesses, micro-enterprises and self-employed persons
- Renewable hydrogen value chain: pioneering projects in this field.
- Construction of social rental housing to increase the public stock of energy-efficient housing for social rental or at affordable prices
- Energy-efficient renovation of buildings
- Tourism Sustainability Plans in Destinations



171.000 "Programa Actores del Cambio"

"Apoyo a clústers empresariales innovadores"

"Programa DIH"

"Aceleradores pymes 2.0"

"Programa de DIH"

"Programa Kit Digital" **1 Million**

2.500 "Planes de Acción de Internacionalización"

"Estrategia de Emprendimiento y Agenda Digital España 2025" **6.500**

PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

Number of SMEs to be benefited



Source: <https://planderecuperacion.gob.es/>

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- 2 writing samples (preferably narratives from successfully funded projects)



The almost intact stone wall of Magliano in Toscana, a medieval village in Tuscany, has been restored into a tourist attraction.

Between Nature and Culture. Notes on the Italian landscape of ‘green’ grants and the art of grant seeking.

Adele Lebano

There is not such a thing as a natural landscape. Whether we look out of a window at a city park, contemplate the opposite side of a riverbank, or drive through rolling pastoral hills, the ‘natural’ bears the mark of human work.

The landscape of Italian grants is no exception. Past funding rounds and newly opened calls show how the political and financial agenda for a greener future is double-sided. Funding bodies at the local, national, and European level, whether public or private, focus on the human and natural at the same time and try to pursue social and environmental goals at once. An example is Fondazione Cariplo, a private foundation in the Region of Lombardy, with a range of funding schemes that bridge the two. “La bellezza ritrovata,” [Beauty Rediscovered] to name one, funds initiatives of landscape restoration and art & culture with a civic engagement component. The aim is to mitigate environmental disruption caused by human misconduct and natural disasters, to restore the beauty of places while empowering citizens. In the declaration of its scope the call notes that landscape is always a product of nature and nurture. It references Article 1 of the [European Landscape Convention of 2000](#), which states: “‘Landscape’ means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.”

At the national level, the attempt to balance environmental goals and human interest is expressed in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza or NRRP), a program for major investment in Italy today. The plan lists the pursuit of a “Green Country,” di un Paese Verde, as one of the three main objectives of reforms and expenditure. The goal is to make Italy greener; more modern and competitive; more attentive to its citizens’ wellbeing. The Plan describes a ‘green Country’ as one where systems of production and transportation of energy strive to reduce greenhouse effect and climate change, and that is “more resilient to extreme climate events.”

The past few weeks have been a dramatic reminder of how much energy security, climate change, and world security are connected. The effects of political and environmental neglect are now in the backyards of all Europeans and impending over the present and future of humanity. Politicians and citizens alike are facing how careless they have been towards both the shared house of international institutions, as the historian Yuval Harari calls it, and the environment. Short term gains, everyday chores, not to mention ideological fantasies, have led us to downplay how dependence on traditional energy as fossil fuel can derail joint efforts for a peaceful and greener world. Now that the illusion has crumbled down, there is a chance for Green Deals and agendas for the environment to get momentum. In what follows I offer an overview of the ways the cultural side and the natural one are accounted for in the Italian context, focusing on the Recovery Plan.

The Green Country objective of the Italian Recovery Plan is informed by the European Green Deal and Agenda 30. It states the need to move towards the production of renewable energy, to reduce energy waste by making private and public buildings, urban mobility, or the production, moving, and storage of goods more energy efficient. The latter goal is pursued through granting financial support and access to advanced research and technology facilities, for example by means of dedicated start-ups incubators, or research centres, like in the case of the MISE, the Italian Ministry for Economic Development, calls.

The Recovery Plan provides funds to improve air quality in urban centers; repair hydrogeological damage, and clean lake, river and seawater. It explicitly refers to these interventions as investments in “the beauty of our country”, similarly to the Fondazione Cariplo grant in the opening.

Through a mix of grants, tax credit and loans, PNRR supports private owners or owner associations that want to renew their homes, making them energy savvy. It helps big and small municipalities make their schools reach students, and students access educational resources when classes in person are out, like in the case of pandemic lockdowns. It also encourages completion and refinement of the digital transition of cultural heritage, for example supporting museums offering fruition from remote and yet hands-on. This is for example the case of the nationwide grant “Cultura Crea,” [Culture Makes].

Consistent with the Italian and European Green Deals, PNRR takes into account the impact of industry and agriculture on natural ecosystems; it makes cultural heritage preservation and natural site restoration go hand in hand with support to greener energy production, climate preparedness feature besides historical sites restoration. The longstanding cliché that sees the Italian landscape simply ‘beautiful as it is’ seems to be gone for good. It was about time.

To think of a natural landscape as a given beauty that demands respect may be tempting, although inaccurate, but it risks foreclosing the chance of planning wisely, reclaiming, repurposing, improving. The intention of the policy makers is to put the dangerous temptation aside and clear the path for projects where cultural heritage preservation and natural site restoration go hand in hand. Projects, and grants to finance them, that in fact interpret the two as sides of one coin. To call something ‘beautiful in itself’, is an invitation to leave things as they are, which may mean as they were once made to look like, whether exploited, contaminated, unwisely built, or blessed by beauty. Such a motive may become an excuse not to ask the difficult questions, that are often the ones worth asking. The right balance between interventionism and laissez-faire in environmental and green policies may be elusive, but still worth seeking. Does pouring concrete over archaeological paths to make them less treacherous qualify as preservation or as disruption? Are the skeletons of never-started industrialization projects in the south of Italy monuments to corruption to tear down, or relics of history from which to learn? In front of a landscape of wind turbines or solar farms, how should one weigh the aesthetic and economic arguments either for or against?



Piazza Navona, a beautiful Roman square and a landmark of the city, occupies the site of the Stadium of Domitian built in 86AD.



Il Circo Massimo, Circus Maximus, a 600-metre-long and 140-meter-wide ancient Roman stadium for horse racing and public, religious entertainment (ludus). It remains a place for social gathering in the heart of Rome today.

A good thing about using grants to pursue change is that no answer is ever good once and for all. Applying for grants means finding solutions that serve the current needs of the applicants while also responding to the specific challenges the funder identifies. Each project must be planned and evaluated in its specificity and against a background of changing contexts and priorities. Grants require us to update our beliefs in the light of new information, and to take into consideration both big goals and the practical steps to achieve them. Grants need idealism and pragmatism at the same time, plus a mastery of storytelling. Writing a grant application can teach one how to tell a story so that it becomes meaningful for others—first and foremost the funders who would have to pay for the project. Finally, grants enable people who live in and love a place to act based on their knowledge and attachments while being responsive to a larger community.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As one of the Grants Development Consultants for Italy at Grants Office Europe, Adele Lebano has gained a rich experience through her former positions in academia, business, and the public sector across a variety of European countries and United States. Evident throughout her writing and her consulting are her passion for rigorous research, effective communication, freedom, equality and inclusion.

EU Programme Snapshot

Funding Mid to long term energy storage and energy storage systems integration



SUMMARY

The European Innovation Council (EIC) runs a Pathfinder grant programme to fund advanced research and to support the development of breakthrough technologies at the earliest stages of scientific, technological or deep-tech research and development. Pathfinder projects aim to build on new, cutting-edge directions in science and technology to disrupt a field and a market or create new opportunities. As well as the 'open' Pathfinder programme, the EIC also runs several specific challenges, including the "EIC Pathfinder Challenge: Mid to long term and systems integrated energy storage." This challenge grant aims to fund projects developing the following types of technology:

- mid/long term energy storage for power systems, with technologies such as metal air or redox flow batteries, power to heat to power, chemical bonds, electrochemical/ chemical/ thermal hybrid solutions, integration of energy carriers and 'storage to X' strategies; concepts for centralised or decentralised applications at grid, industrial or district scale level are included, excluding micro and small scale or single-building solutions;
- mid/long term thermal energy storage (heating or cooling) at different temperatures, such as building integrated and process systems integrated solutions, chemical looping or thermochemical storage, solar thermal energy harvesting and storage, combined storage of thermal and electrical energy as well as other energy vectors, storage systems integrated in cold chains and in industrial processes.

The total indicative budget for the EIC Pathfinder Challenges is EUR 167 million, which is expected to be allocated in approximately equal shares across the six 2022 challenges. Successful applicants will receive a grant for what Horizon Europe calls a "Research and Innovation Action" to cover the eligible costs. For this call, the EIC considers proposals with an EU contribution of up to EUR 4 million as appropriate. Nonetheless, applicants can still request larger amounts, if properly justified. The funding rate of this grant will be 100% of the eligible costs.

ELIGIBILITY

Proposals must be submitted by the coordinator, on behalf of a consortium that includes at least three independent legal entities, each one established in a different EU Member State or Associated Country and with at least one of them established in a Member State. 'Associated Country,' in this case, refers to those non-EU countries that are associated with the EU's Horizon Europe funding framework, e.g., the United Kingdom and Switzerland.

The legal entities may for example be universities, research organisations, SMEs, start-ups, industrial partners or natural persons.

DEADLINE

While the fund has been announced, it will not officially open for applications until 15 June 2022. The deadline for submission of applications will be 19 October 2022, 17:00 (CEST).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[EIC Pathfinder Challenge: Mid to long term and systems integrated energy storage](#)

Strukturstärkungsgesetz Kohleregionen - Strukturfördermaßnahmen adressieren den Klimawandel in Deutschlands Kohleregionen



<https://www.land.nrw/pressemitteilung/brandenburg-nordrhein-westfalen-sachsen-und-sachsen-anhalt-begruessen-beschluss-der>

Charlotte Von der Brelie

Über 40 Milliarden Euro werden von der Bundesregierung zur Verfügung gestellt, um Investitionen und Innovationen in Kohleregionen zu unterstützen. Diese Gelder sollen die Wirtschaftsstruktur in den betroffenen Bundesländern stärken und den Kohleausstieg ermöglichen und abfedern.

STRUKTURSTÄRKUNG UND KLIMAWANDEL

In der Debatte um den Klimawandel fokussieren wir uns oft auf die Förderungen von grünen Technologien und Infrastruktur, nichtsdestotrotz sind positive Anreize in Form von Strukturförderungen für Regionen betroffen von dem Wandel nicht zu ignorieren, um nicht nur den Energiepolitischen Wandel voranzutreiben, sondern auch die ökonomischen und gesellschaftlichen Folgen abzufedern.

Das Strukturstärkungsgesetz Kohleregionen ist ein Artikelgesetz, das die strukturpolitischen Empfehlungen der Kommission 'Wachstum, Strukturwandel und Beschäftigung' umsetzt. Das Ziel ist die Folgen des Ausstieges aus der Kohleverstromung abzumildern und Wachstum und Beschäftigung in den betroffenen Regionen unterstützen. Von den zur Verfügung gestellten Mitteln sind bisher nur ein geringer Anteil für die bestehenden Maßnahmen verplant worden. Die jeweiligen Regionen sollen nachhaltig gestärkt werden, indem die Fördermittel anteilig auf die betroffenen Bundesländer und Kommunen verteilt werden.

Gemäß Investitionsgesetz erhalten die Bundesländer Brandenburg, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt und NRW bis zum Jahr 2038 Finanzhilfen von bis zu 14 Milliarden Euro für besonders bedeutsame Investitionen von Ländern und Gemeinden. Darüber hinaus werden vom Bund weitere 26 Milliarden Euro bis 2038 zur Verfügung gestellt, durch die Erweiterung von Forschung und Förderprogrammen, den Ausbau von Verkehrsinfrastrukturprojekten oder die Ansiedelung von Bundeseinrichtungen.

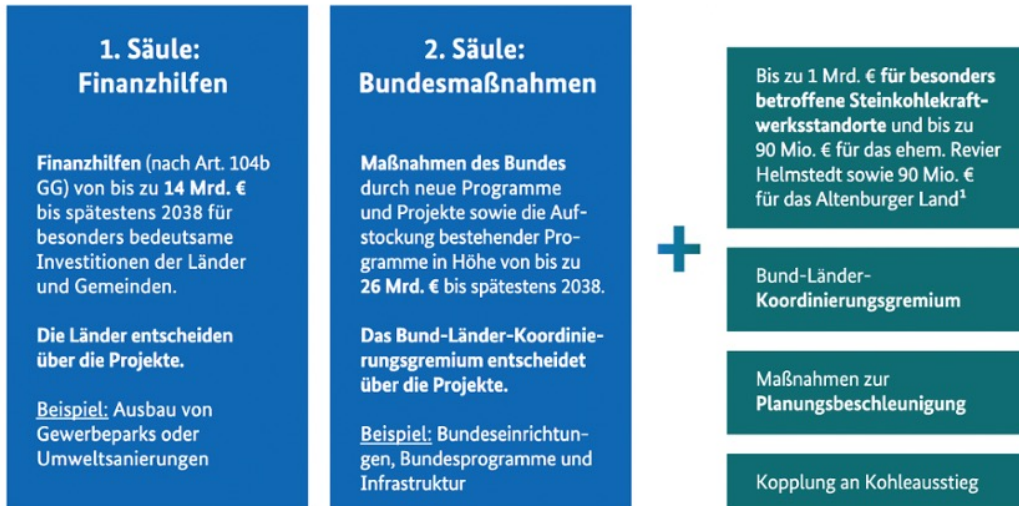
BESCHÄFTIGUNGSPOTENZIAL UND INVESTITIONSANREIZE

Das Strukturstärkungsgesetz baut auf zwei Säulen auf, den Finanzhilfen und den Bundesmaßnahmen, die vom Bund bereitgestellten Mittel werden durch das BMWi und BMBF bewirtschaftet. Bereits laufende Projekte sind die drei neuen Standorte des Deutschen Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt, sowie das Kompetenzzentrum Wärmewende in Halle (Saale). Eine weitere Maßnahme der zweiten Säule ist das STARK Programm. Zwei Milliarden Euro werden gezielt in nichtinvestive Projekte, die die Umgestaltung der Wirtschaftsstruktur beschleunigen.

Da bisher nur ein Teil dieses Geldes fest verplant ist kommt es nun darauf an das neue Ideen und Projekte entworfen werden, die die Regionen wirklich voranbringen und im Einklang mit dem Gesetz und den regionalen Entwicklungskonzepten der Länder sind. Wichtig ist auch die Zusammenarbeit zwischen Bund und Ländern sowie die Einbindung von Menschen in den Regionen. Die Rahmenbedingungen des Gesetzes geben, vor das die Investitions- und Fördermaßnahmen das Kriterium der Zusätzlichkeit erfüllen, also über die Maßnahmen von bereits bestehenden Investitionstätigkeiten hinausgehen. Darüber hinaus wird das Beschäftigungspotenzial von Projekten und die Gestaltung weiterer Investitionsanreize auch von primärer Bedeutung sein.

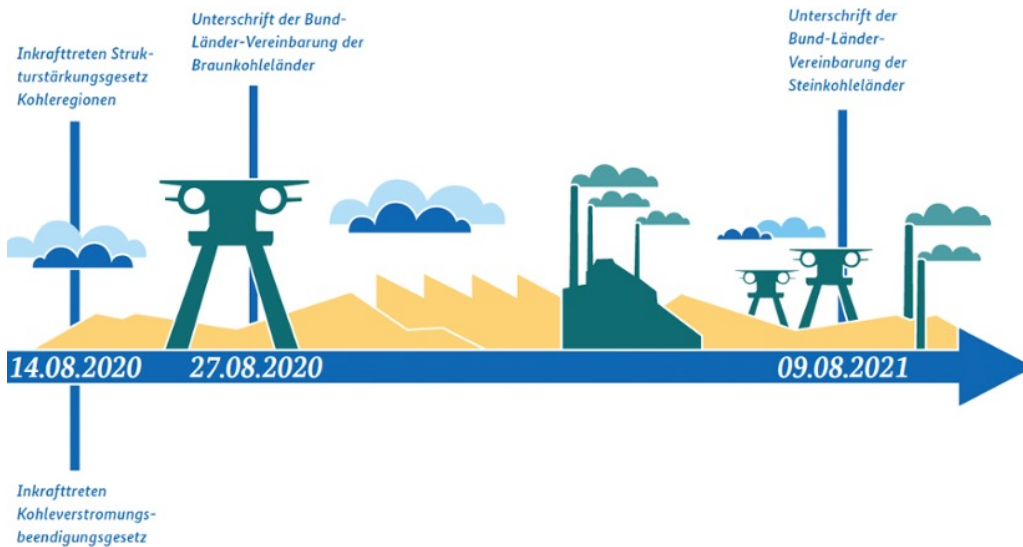
Unternehmen, die bereits in den betroffenen Regionen vertreten sind oder Investitionen planen die standortunabhängig getroffen werden können, sollten diese Entwicklungen in der Strukturförderung genau verfolgen. Auch für Kommunen und öffentliche Bereiche können diese Anreize von Relevanz sein. Die Regionen können durch Fördermaßnahmen und andere Investitionsanreize als Wirtschaftsstandort wesentlich reizvoller werden. Weitere Strukturprogramme auf Landes-, Bundes- und EU-Ebene können sich ebenfalls bezahlt machen, die Analyse von förderstrategischen Aspekten kann hierbei unterstützen.

ABBILDUNG 1: DAS INVESTITIONSGESETZ KOHLEREGIONEN



1) aus Mitteln für das Mitteldeutsche Revier gemäß § 3 Abs. 1 Nr. 3 InvKG
Quelle: BMWi

ZEITSTRAHL STRUKTURSTÄRKUNGSGESETZ KOHLEREGIONEN



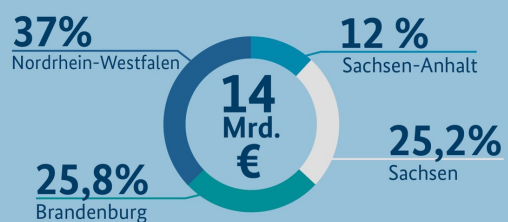
<https://www.bmwi.de/Redaktion/DE/Schlaglichter-der-Wirtschaftspolitik/2021/10/17-strukturwandel-aktiv-begleiten.html>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Charlotte Von der Brellie is specialised in German funding opportunities, as well as European Structural funding and IPCEI Projects

Strukturstärkungsgesetz Kohleregionen

- u. a. **40 Mrd. Euro** bis 2038
- Investitionen in die Verkehrsinfrastruktur & Breitbandausbau
- Förderung von Wissenschaft, Forschung, Lehre & Bildung

Finanzhilfe für Kohleregionen



<https://www.bmwi.de/Redaktion/DE/Infografiken/Energie/kachel-kohleregionen.html>

<https://twitter.com/BMWK/status/1164554440982061057?lang=hib>

¿Qué necesitamos para crear un contrato social verde?

Vanessa Del Pozo Sánchez

La pandemia fue un ejemplo de crisis para la que era necesario actuar de forma conjunta y rápida y que, a su vez, puso de manifiesto la fragilidad de la resiliencia económica, ecológica y colectiva de nuestras sociedades. En cuanto a la transición ecológica y digital, la pandemia funcionó como un acelerador. Pero la crisis climática ya nos había dando momentos de alerta. Sin embargo, los gobiernos nacionales decidieron no darle prioridad ya que la transición verde no es una inversión de la que se puedan ver resultados directos y a corto plazo. Por tanto, los bienes públicos intangibles de los sistemas de resiliencia colectiva son fundamentales, y cuanto más integremos ese conocimiento desde el principio, mejor preparados estaremos para afrontar cualquier crisis.

En una primera instancia, podríamos esperar que las subvenciones medioambientales sean la solución para una transición digital y verde; sin embargo, esto no es suficiente, también necesitamos un contrato social entre el Estado, sus ciudadanos y las instituciones privadas y públicas para articular una agenda más verde e inclusiva.

Por ejemplo, el programa Horizon Europe cuenta con un presupuesto de alrededor de 3.000 millones de euros con la finalidad de apoyar proyectos que se encuentren dentro de la agenda verde. Sin embargo, esto significa que las entidades privadas y públicas tendrán que trabajar juntas para que estas inversiones se reflejen en beneficios futuros para la sociedad, por ejemplo: la reducción de los precios de la energía y los alimentos bioseguros, o la garantía de que los recursos estén disponibles para las próximas generaciones.

Por lo tanto, una de las principales claves para lograr este difícil contrato es cambiar la forma en que percibimos nuestros recursos naturales y ecosistemas, pasando de ser considerado como un bien público a un bien común.

Para entender por qué esto es tan fundamental, es importante mantener las dos ideas diferenciadas: el bien común “se refiere a aquellas facilidades -ya sean materiales, culturales



El programa Horizon Europe cuenta con un presupuesto de alrededor de 3.000 millones de euros con la finalidad de apoyar proyectos que se encuentren dentro de la agenda verde

o institucionales- que los miembros de una comunidad proporcionan a todos los miembros para cumplir con una obligación relacional que todos tienen de cuidar ciertos intereses que tienen en común” , mientras que un bien público es “un tipo particular de bien que los miembros de una comunidad no poseerían si cada uno estuviera motivado solo por su propio interés”¹

Bajo estas definiciones, podemos notar que nuestros ecosistemas y recursos naturales, han sido tratados desde la revolución industrial como un bien público, y más tarde, considerados como un elemento tanto de los derechos humanos como del desarrollo económico para avanzar en la descolonización en la década de los sesentas.

Esta visión de los recursos como un bien público ha fracasado, siendo la actual catástrofe ecológica, el más claro ejemplo de esto. Siempre llegamos demasiado tarde, donde, en lugar de prevenir las catástrofes, hemos tenido que encontrar nuevas formas de resolverlas de manera emergente, lo que supone una mayor inversión de dinero, tiempo y, en algunos casos, ha causado daños irreversibles.

Es importante acentuar que esta catástrofe ecológica tiene sus raíces en el colonialismo, ya que las relaciones de poder desiguales entre y dentro de los países desarrollados y en desarrollo siguen definiendo las causas y consecuencias del cambio climático. En concreto, el colonialismo destruyó las formas de vida y de conocimiento comunales, y dio lugar a la idea de que todos los territorios que se encontraban en el mundo eran recursos para los colonizadores. Fue una un genocidio y un ecocidio, que se enredó con la privatización de los bienes comunes del clima mundial.

¹Hussain, Waheed, “The Common Good”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/common-good/>>.

THE COMMON GOOD



Tenemos que cambiar la forma en que percibimos nuestros recursos naturales y ecosistemas, de un bien público a un bien común.

Ahora bien, si cambiáramos y reguláramos el mundo natural como un bien común, entonces se convierte en responsabilidad de todos mantenerlo y preservar nuestro planeta. Hasta ahora sólo unos pocos organismos o actores se han encargado de preservarlo, entre ellos los científicos y las organizaciones civiles; sin embargo, es necesario idear un sistema de regulación/decisión en el que la responsabilidad se comparta de forma más amplia, sin buscar beneficios políticos o de cualquier otra índole y con interacciones más equitativas entre las empresas privadas, las comunidades locales y los países.

Para lograr este cambio en la percepción del mundo natural como un bien común, necesitamos reconfigurar la forma en que consumimos y utilizamos nuestros recursos, crear una política verde que tenga consecuencias a nivel del planeta y reorganizar nuestras relaciones sociales en un lugar sin fronteras ni jerarquías de regiones con poder. Es cierto que hay que emprender acciones locales para generar un cambio global, pero estas acciones deben ir acompañadas de una estrategia coherente en cuanto al uso de los recursos y los ecosistemas en el resto del planeta.

PRIMER CASO DEL MANEJO DE LOS RECURSOS NATURALES COMO UN BIEN COMÚN Y SUS LIMITACIONES

Noruega, en 2016, se convirtió en [el primer país en prohibir la deforestación](#) y retiró de su mercado cualquier producto que procediera de la tala indiscriminada de árboles, demostrando que sólo apoyaría los mercados de las empresas e industrias que tuvieran iniciativas medioambientales y sostenibles para el país, y con ello poder diseñar un círculo verde en la economía global.

Pero la iniciativa no se quedó ahí, porque la mayor tasa de deforestación del planeta no se produce en esta región geográfica, sino en África y América Latina, donde Brasil encabeza la lista.

Por ello, Noruega, a la par de sus políticas, adoptó otras iniciativas como la [“Joint Declaration of Intent”](#) para cooperar con los gobiernos de Alemania y Perú en 2014. A través de esta iniciativa, Noruega ha contribuido a los esfuerzos peruanos en el diseño e implementación de políticas públicas a nivel nacional y regional para reducir las emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero por deforestación y degradación de los bosques. Esto se implementó a través de un mecanismo de pago por resultados, mediante el cual Noruega desembolsaría dinero a Perú por cada objetivo cumplido.

Lamentablemente, incluso con estas iniciativas, en un año marcado por la inmovilización nacional debido a la pandemia del COVID-19, [la pérdida de bosques en Perú en 2020](#) fue la más alta en lo que va de siglo, superando la cantidad de bosques perdidos el año anterior en 54.846 hectáreas. En este caso, los datos sugieren que la mayor proporción de la deforestación se debe a la actividad ilegal, y esto no significa que manejar los recursos naturales como un bien común haya fallado, sino que el mismo problema debe ser abordado desde diferentes ángulos, ya que, en este caso las fuertes raíces del colonialismo han creado una urgencia socioeconómica en los países sobreexplotados.

En otros términos, la colonización de los recursos trajo consigo un rápido cambio socioeconómico y tecnológico para los colonizadores, pero los colonizados sufrieron las consecuencias de la sobreexplotación de sus tierras más allá de las consecuencias naturales. La colonización también provocó la sobreexplotación de los trabajadores nativos, el control de la economía y la administración de los estados para asegurar que el país colonizado se convirtiera en una nación consumidora de los productos manufacturados por los colonizadores, y así crear una sobreexplotación sistemática y obligar al país colonizado a vivir bajo una economía endeudada todo el tiempo.

Además, hay tres determinantes importantes en la relación entre el colonialismo y la deforestación: la corrupción, facilitada por las zonas a menudo remotas, la imposibilidad de inventar los recursos y la baja remuneración de los funcionarios; por los regímenes de derechos de propiedad; y la calidad del estado de derecho y la estabilidad política.

DESARROLLAR UN PROYECTO EN EL ÁMBITO DEL BIEN COMÚN

Mientras que las subvenciones medioambientales como las creadas por Save Our Species, Horizon Europe e Interreg, entre otras, se encargan de acelerar la doble transición verde y digital, es nuestra responsabilidad como desarrolladores de proyectos e innovadores, desarrollar un proyecto haciendo una investigación previa sobre qué necesidades/crisis ecológicas que hay, así como sobre cómo podemos diseñar el proyecto para obtener el mayor beneficio, cómo podemos asegurar que el proyecto va a enriquecer el futuro, cómo podemos hacerlo factible para todos, etc.

Un ejemplo de este tipo de proyectos bajo el ámbito del bien común fue el desarrollo de la vacuna de Astra Zeneca, que aunque no produjo por la mayor inmunidad, tuvo en cuenta factores de acceso global como prioritarios.

En este caso concreto, los investigadores de la Universidad de Oxford, que fueron financiados principalmente por el Gobierno del Reino Unido y la Comisión Europea, negociaron que los precios debían seguir siendo accesibles y que la temperatura de almacenamiento no podía ser tan baja que no fuera accesible en el Sur Global; pero también se adhirieron al pool de patentes, que es un mecanismo muy importante en términos de inteligencia colectiva, y que significa que no se puede abusar de los derechos de propiedad intelectual. Este es un ejemplo de lo que significa invertir en un beneficio para todos y esto lleva a un nuevo diseño de un modelo económico, que propone como objetivo primordial un planeta sano para poder ofrecer una buena vida para todos.

CONCLUSIÓN

En este artículo se han presentado los beneficios de tratar nuestro planeta y sus recursos como un bien común para hacer un mejor uso de las subvenciones ambientales y lograr un cambio real. Sin embargo, aún queda un largo camino por recorrer e importantes problemas por resolver en cuanto a la relación entre el bien común y la justicia social, la creación de una preocupación mutua por la actual catástrofe ecológica, la incorporación de los requisitos básicos de la moral en la toma de decisiones y el propio sistema socioeconómico que nos ha traído hasta este momento.



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EU Programme Snapshot

Funding for Digital Transformation and the Green Economy



SUMMARY

The European Space Agency (ESA) is running two rounds of funding in 2022 for projects addressing digital transformation and the green economy. As with all ESA grant schemes, projects are expected to develop a new, innovative product or service using at least one space-based technology. This could include: Satellite Earth Observation; Satellite Navigation; Satellite Communication; Space Weather; Spaceflight Technologies.

For this scheme, the ESA is looking for feasibility studies and demonstration projects that contribute to the development of digital technologies, products and applications targeted by the European Green Deal. The goal is to fund projects which support digitization (of any area of business) to green ends. Specifically, they are hoping to support sustainable and smart transportation and the transition towards a fully integrated, inter-connected and digitised European energy market, and they have broken the call into four thematic categories: 1) Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI/ML) and Cloud and Virtualisation, 2) Digital Twins, 3) Sustainable Mobility, and 4) Green Value.

Demonstration Projects are funded up to 50% for large companies and up to 80% for SMEs. A greater proportion of costs (up to 100% in some cases) can be covered for feasibility studies. Projects generally receive around €50-60 thousand, but the ESA is open to providing higher quantities (up to €2 million) for larger projects.

ELIGIBILITY

The call is hoping to attract specifically SMEs, but it is open to businesses of all sizes located in the 22 ESA Member States participating in the ARTES programme: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

DEADLINE

The first round closed at the end of March. The second round close in October 2022.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[European Space Agency: Digital Transformation and Green Economy](#)



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