



Life+ Nature Guardians - Minimize the incidence of environmental crimes

LIFE17 GIE/ES/000630



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#### Contact details:

Contact person: José María Sánchez

Tel: 34914340910

Fax: 34914340911

Email: [gestion@seo.org](mailto:gestion@seo.org)

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#### Project description:

##### Background

Environmental crime has become one of the world's most profitable organised criminal activities and has a significant impact not only on the environment, but on society and the economy in general (EU council conclusions on countering environmental crime, 8/12/2016). These crimes enjoy a high level of impunity, leading to very few convictions. This shows a lack of awareness among certain sectors of society towards their natural heritage and the importance of protecting it from illegal harm. This shortcoming can be solved by introducing measures to enforce environmental-legislation by improving legal, investigative and information-giving measures to raise awareness of these criminal actions and their impact.

##### Objectives

The Life+ Nature Guardians project's main aim is to improve environmental conservation by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of actions against environmental crimes in Spain, Portugal and other EU countries. In particular:

- Guarantee and strengthen the enforcement of criminal and environmental law as a means of environmental protection, increase the detection of criminal activities, bring more crimes to trial and improve determination of perpetrators' liability;
- Improve the conservation status of the environment and in particular of EU

species and habitats by reducing the criminally induced death rate, as well as adopting a suitable legislative framework;

- Boost the operational capability of agents and organisations in charge of preventing, investigating, prosecuting and dealing with environmental crime, by exchanging information and experiences and establishing best practices;
- Raise awareness of the importance of preventing environmental crime and promote a socio-cultural mind-set towards more environmentally-friendly behaviour;
- Reduce the level of environmental-crime impunity;
- Raise awareness of the dimension of environmental crime and the motives behind it.

Expected results:

- An increase in Spain (5%) and Portugal's (1%) number of environmental-crime court procedures, as well as an increase (15%) in the detection of criminal activity against fauna in Spain;
- Ensure exemplary court judgments are brought in in Spain and Portugal;
- A reduction in Spain (20%) and Portugal (5%) in fauna species mortality caused by criminal action, contributing to the EU Biodiversity Strategy;
- Set up an intelligence analysis unit within the Spanish Guardia Civil's Nature Protection Service (SEPRONA) and study the implementation of game-changing police investigation procedures;
- Design a universal methodology for collecting information and monitoring incidents of non-natural mortality among fauna and implement this methodology in Spain, Portugal and other EU countries;
- Improve arrangements for liaising and exchanging information and experience among the various EU police forces by drawing up one manual and four protocols mutually agreed by all EU police forces;
- Train up 100 SEPRONA officers, eight officers of Portugal's Guarda Nacional Republicana and over 130 environmental officers to improve environmental crime investigation and prosecution capability;
- Raise professional awareness by running specific courses for judges and public prosecutors of Spain and Portugal;
- Train 80 government technicians in the proper enforcement of legislation on crimes against fauna and their habitat;
- Draw up draft legislation for both Spain and Portugal to improve enforcement of the protection of the environment through criminal law;
- Conduct a study to improve knowledge of the motives behind this criminal activity in Spain and Portugal;
- Draw up a methodology and legislative proposal for making an economic appraisal of the EU fauna species that are the victims of criminal action; and
- Increase the level of stakeholder and general-public awareness of the impact of environmental crime by 10% in Spain and Portugal.

Results

Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Information - Governance - Improved legislative compliance and enforcement

Keywords

information network, environmental law, environmental awareness, environmental training

Target EU Legislation

- Nature protection and Biodiversity
- Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (01.06.1982)
- COM(2011) 244 final “Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 ...

Natura 2000 sites

Not applicable

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	SOCIEDAD ESPAÑOLA DE ORNITOLOGIA (SEO/BirdLife)
Type of organisation	NGO-Foundation
Description	SEO/BirdLife is a charitable organisation with headquarters in Madrid. The organisation is spread across the country through a network of local offices and technical bureaus. SEO/BirdLife is the representative and partner of BirdLife International in Spain, a partnership devoted to the conservation of birds all over the world. BirdLife International has representation in 121 countries and 13 million members and supporters worldwide.

Partners SERVICIO DE PROTECCION DE LA NATURALEZA  
- DIRECCION GENERAL DE LA GUARDIA CIVIL,  
Spain Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das  
Aves, Portugal Consejería de Medio Ambiente y  
Ordenación del Territorio - Junta de Andalucía,  
Spain

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE17 GIE/ES/000630
Duration	01-JUL-2018 to 30-JUN -2022
Total budget	1,974,932.00 €
EU contribution	1,158,538.00 €
Project location	Galicia(España) Asturias(España) Cantabria(España) País Vasco(España) Navarra(España) Rioja(España) Aragón(España) Madrid(España) Castilla-León(España) Castilla-La Mancha(España) Extremadura(España) Cataluña(España) Comunidad Valenciana(España) Balears(España) Andalucía(España) Murcia(España) Ceuta y Melilla(España) Canarias(España) Norte(Portugal) Centro(Portugal) Lisboa e vale do Tejo(Portugal) Alentejo(Portugal) Algarve(Portugal) Açores(Portugal) Madeira(Portugal)

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