

AUSTRIA

Biodiversity's restoration, preservation & enhancement

Location
Nationwide

Programming period
2014 – 2020

Priority
P4 – Ecosystems
management

Measure
M16 - Cooperation

Funding
Total budget 373 310.56
(EUR)
EAFRD 187 161.64 (EUR)
National/Regional 186
148.92 (EUR)

Project duration
2018 to 2021

Project promoter
Personengemeinschaft
Insekten-Leben!

Email
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Website
www.insekten-leben.at/

Raising awareness about insect conservation in Austria.

Summary

The “Insekten-Leben!” project brought 25 partners together across five regions in Austria to develop practical actions that encouraged local government, farmers, schools, and the general public to participate in insect conservation.



Project Results

The target audiences were shown that anyone, in their own small way, can make an important contribution to insect conservation.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Policy interventions for nature conservation should aim to stimulate non-institutionalised, long-term, and differentiated action.

Context

Recent years have seen a substantial decline in insect populations and species. The causes of the decline are not conclusively researched and many different impact factors can be involved. Society can help reverse this decline on agricultural land, in private gardens or in public green spaces, and through behaviour in leisure time, or as consumers.

Objectives

The aim of this project was to help reverse the decline of insect populations by raising awareness among different stakeholder groups and engage them in conservation actions.

Activities

- The project was supported and implemented by 25 different individuals and organisations across Austria. The partners came from agriculture, local government, nature conservation NGOs and the private sector. They met regularly in the regions to discuss and manage collective endeavours and also undertook local actions within their own sphere of influence to pass on messages from the project to their audiences and communities. These included:
- Information and awareness-raising materials including posters, a booklet (entitled "Tu was!" / "Do something!"), beer coasters, an insect sticker album, and information signs.
- Public seminars and workshops in meadows and building yards to increase awareness of the presence or absence of insects and the different factors that contribute to increase or decline of insect populations.
- A series of school workshops explained the world of insects and their habitats. Children learnt about how they can support insect conservation at home and at school.
- A live show called "Insect - Life", which conveyed the sensitive topic of insect extinction with humour and encouragement for personal action.
- A traveling pop-up exhibition which toured Austria in 2021 and 2022 to highlight insect extinction risks for

audiences who might not otherwise intentionally engage with a formal exhibition on the topic.

- An interactive information stand called "Schlampertatsch" was developed which described the topic in an engaging way at festivals and markets.
- The first Austrian Insect Fair in the summer of 2021 brought together stakeholders around the topic of insect protection and created an opportunity for the general public to get broad information on the topic of insects.

Main results

- The project actions showed various audiences how they can make important contributions to insect conservation.
- Exchanges between regions and stakeholders led to greater mutual understanding and a broad appreciation of different needs and possibilities, which resulted in the project's wide variety of communication and public engagement actions.
- 13 000 copies of the 100-page booklet "Tu was!" were distributed throughout Austria and around 200 workshop/seminar participants became multipliers who were trained to transfer knowledge to their regions.

Key lessons

Nature conservation should rely on multiple small- and large-scale actions implemented by different actors independently and out of their own motivation. Policy interventions should aim to stimulate non-institutionalised, long-term, and differentiated action. Face-to-face communication, strong storytelling skills and broad networking are key components of success in this endeavour.

"In order for insects to find adequate habitat, there needs to be areas that are barely mowed on as many corners as possible. Even though these may look sloppy, to nature they are neat!"

Wolfgang Suske, Project Manager

Additional sources of information

https://www.instagram.com/insekten_leben/?hl=de

www.ordentlich-schlampert.at