

# THREE BILLION ADDITIONAL TREES BY 2030

Support for implementing  
the EU 3 Billion Trees Pledge:  
The Financing Guide

#3BillionTrees



WE GROW  
TOGETHER



# Content of the presentation



Creation process of the guide



Structure



Objectives and targeted audience



Types of measures that can be supported



Typology of funding sources



Examples of funding instruments and projects funded

# Creation process

Country research  
template and training,  
Nov 2022

Country work and parallel EU  
level research Jan-May 2023

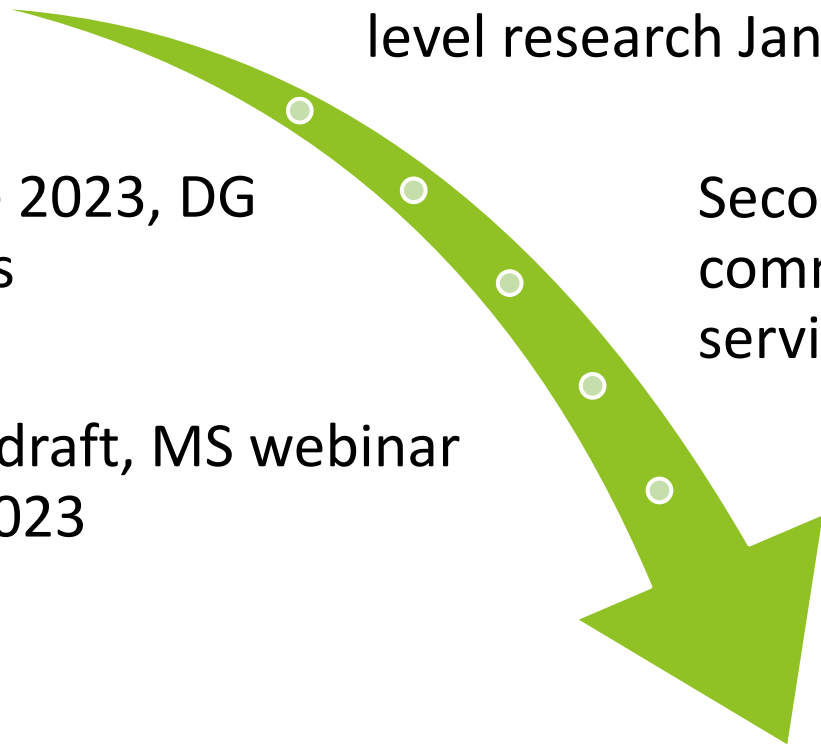
First draft June 2023, DG  
ENV comments

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comments from other COM  
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Third draft, MS webinar  
Dec 2023

Comments from MS  
authorities, Feb 2024

Final version



# Structure of the Guide

**Chapter 1:** Introduction (objectives, audience, types of measures covered)

**Chapter 2:** Typology of the funding sources relevant for tree planting (EU, national, innovative, international)

**Chapter 3:** Information on the selected funding programmes

**Chapter 4:** Selected general advisory programmes, on-line platforms and other financing guides

**Chapter 5:** Country-specific information

# Structure of country-specific sections

**Introduction** - a summary

**EU sources under shared management:** Cohesion Policy, CAP: managing authorities, principal programmes

**EU sources under direct management:** LIFE and Horizon, RRF

**National funding:** national funds, programmes of regional authorities, examples of municipal programmes

**Innovative sources:** green bonds, payment for ecosystem services, carbon offsets, crowdfunding

**Summary** of funding sources - annex table



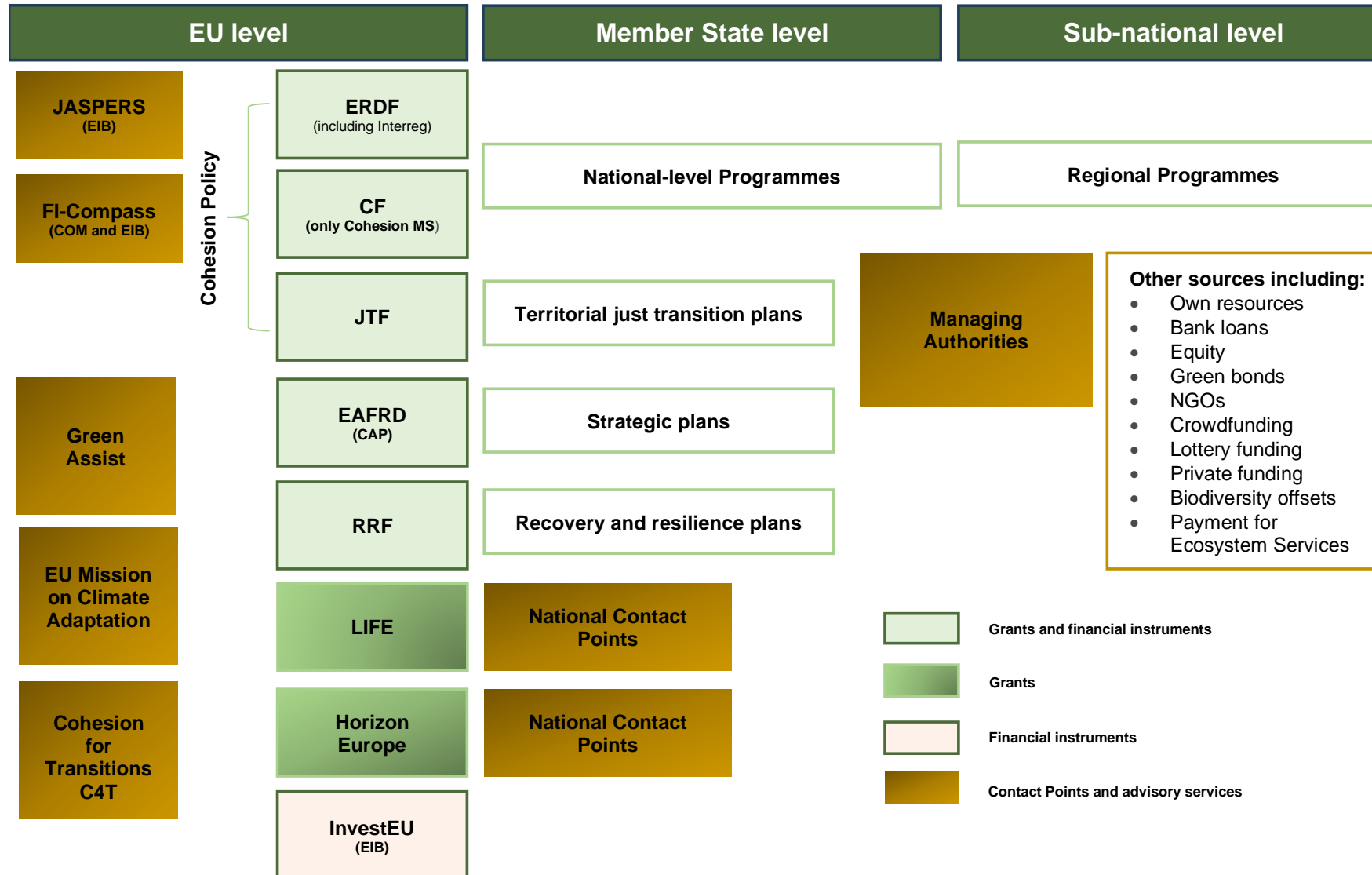
# Objectives and targeted audience

- ▶ There is no specific financing instrument to support the 3 Billion Trees pledge
- ▶ To provide information to stakeholders interested in finding (additional) funding sources for their tree planting and nurturing initiatives
- ▶ Can be relevant for projects/initiatives with broader biodiversity and nature protection objectives
- ▶ To raise awareness on funding sources available for/from institutional stakeholders

# Types of measures that can be supported

- ▶ The EU pledge covers planting trees in forest areas, agricultural areas and urban areas, or along transport or energy infrastructures.
- ▶ Planting of native species, exclusion of planting of invasive alien species.
- ▶ Environmental benefits and the preservation of genetic diversity trees not for commercial purposes.
- ▶ Other measures that share 3 Billion Trees objectives:
  - ▶ Tree nurturing and management, with the aim of long-term planning and securing the survival of the planted trees over decades.
  - ▶ Re-planting in case of loss, and support for tree nurseries.

# Typologies of funding sources





# ERDF – General information

- ▶ EU fund under shared management, Cohesion Policy
- ▶ Co-financing rate varies from 40% for more developed regions to 85% for less developed
- ▶ Member State-specific and Interreg
- ▶ Member States prepare Programmes for disbursement of funding, approved by the EC; calls for proposals organised by each managing authority
- ▶ Key information on objectives, volume of funding, types of beneficiaries, advisory services, project examples, and links: Chapter 3

## ERDF: MEMBER STATE-SPECIFIC FUNDING

**Key characteristics:** Part of Cohesion Policy, with the main objective of strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion across the EU. Available in all EU regions.

**Key objectives relevant to tree planting:** Two of the Policy Objectives set out for Cohesion Policy 2021-2027: PO2 (Greener Europe) and PO 5 (Europe closer to citizens) are most likely to support biodiversity-related goals. The range of sectors covered by the ERDF is very broad, including preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, as well as climate change adaptation and resilience, taking into account ecosystem approaches<sup>19</sup>.

**Volume of funding:** Total volume of the ERDF in the financial period 2021-2027 amounts to over EUR 300 billion. In June 2023, PO2 (Greener Europe<sup>20</sup>) had a planned allocation of EUR 104.4 billion from the ERDF, while PO5 (Europe closer to citizens) had a planned allocation of EUR 26.9 billion<sup>21</sup>.

**Management and disbursement:** Shared management, with Programmes on national and regional levels in Member States. The programmes are drafted according to common

**Types of eligible beneficiaries:** Depending on the programme; a broad range of beneficiaries are eligible, including local authorities, enterprises, civil society organisations, and individuals.

**Advisory services:** Advisory services are provided by Managing Authorities of programmes relevant to the country and/or region of the planned intervention. However, not all Member States include advisory services promoting afforestation or other types of tree planting initiatives. More information about the ERDF (including information about all Programmes per Member State) can be found under the following links:

[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/funding/erdf\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/erdf_en)

[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/in-your-country/programmes\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/in-your-country/programmes_en)

Information about the use of financial instruments in the ERDF can be found using the following link:

<https://www.fi-compass.eu/funds/erdf>



### Project example:

Improving the conservation status of forest habitats in the Natura 2000 network in Southwestern Bulgaria

# ERDF – Country specific information

- ▶ Chapter 5
- ▶ Section on EU funding under shared management provides a description of the largest programmes in the country using the ERDF with objectives relevant to tree planting
- ▶ Summary table provides practical information about managing authorities of these programmes, with links.



Funding instrument	Managing institution	Contact Information (website)	Scope of support	Financing vehicles	Additional information (scale, time horizon advisory services if available)	Examples of relevant projects funded
EU funding under shared management						
<b>ERDF and CF: FENiKS</b>	Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy; Ministry of Climate and Environment	<a href="#">Website</a>	Nature protection, afforestation, natural risk prevention, tourism, education	Mostly grants, other financial instruments such as loans or loan guarantees are also possible	Additional information, including advisory services and timetable of calls for proposals, available on the programme's website	n/a
<b>ERDF and CF: Dolny Śląsk</b>	Office for the Śląskie Voivodeship in Wrocław	<a href="#">Website</a>	Nature protection, afforestation, natural risk prevention, tourism,	Mostly grants, other financial instruments such as loans or loan guarantees	Additional information, including advisory services and timetable of	n/a

# ERDF – Funded project example

## **Cohesion Policy: Improving the conservation status of forest habitats in the Natura 2000 network in Southwestern Bulgaria**

The project contributes to improving the conservation status, coverage and connectivity of forest habitats in South-Western Bulgaria. Planned activities include afforestation and care for the young forests and planting of over 2 million trees falling within seven protected areas of the Natura 2000 network. Total budget of the project: EUR 6.4 million, with EUR 5.4 million of support from the ERDF.

# LIFE – General information

- ▶ EU fund under direct management, the largest EU funding source for nature and climate, up to 95% co-financing
- ▶ Calls for proposals are organised centrally by the EU implementing agency CINEA
- ▶ Each Member State has a National Contact Point which provides information and assistance in the application process
- ▶ Key information on objectives, volume of funding, types of beneficiaries, advisory services, project examples, and links: Chapter 3



# LIFE

**Key characteristics:** LIFE is the only EU financial instrument dedicated exclusively to biodiversity and climate. The general objective includes contribution to the reversal of biodiversity loss and tackling the degradation of ecosystems as well as supporting the climate neutrality goal.

**Key objectives relevant to tree planting:** Two of the four LIFE sub-programmes are the most relevant for tree planting initiatives: “Nature and Biodiversity” and “Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation”; however, the remaining sub-programmes: “Circular Economy and Quality of Life” and “Clean Energy transition” may also support projects with tree planting elements<sup>38</sup>.

**Volume of funding:** Total volume of LIFE in the financing period 2021-2027 amounts to ca. EUR 5.4 billion<sup>39</sup>.

**Management and disbursement:** Direct management. The programme is managed by the European Commission and its executive agency CINEA, which publishes calls for proposals.

**Financing mechanisms:** Mostly grants (85 % of the budget) but other support is also possible.

[https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life/life-support-applicants\\_en](https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life/life-support-applicants_en)

Advisory services are also provided by Member States, through a network of National Contact Points. Information about the National Contact Points can be found under the following link:

[https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life/life-european-countries\\_en](https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life/life-european-countries_en)



## Project example:

### **LIFE UNCINATA: Restoration, conservation, and resilience of mountain pine forests on limestone in the Pyrenees**

The project aims to improve the ecological integrity and resilience of *Pinus uncinata* forests in the Pyrenees. Challenges such as climate change and land use threaten the pine forests' habitat in the Pyrenees. The activities of the project will contribute to making this habitat less vulnerable to negative impacts and to make human activities more compatible with its conservation. Catalonia and Navarra regions are partners in this project while other regions will

# LIFE – Country specific information

- ▶ Chapter 5
- ▶ Sections on EU funding under direct management provides information about National Contact Points and (if available), examples of LIFE-funded projects
- ▶ Summary table provides practical contact information with links.



Funding instrument	Managing institution	Contact Information (website)	Scope of support	Financing vehicles	Additional information (scale, time horizon advisory services if available)	Examples of relevant projects funded
LIFE	Walloon government	<a href="#">website</a>	Environment  Climate  Energy	Grants	2021-2027  NCP as advisory service	'Ecological restoration of rivers and forests in the steep valleys of the Ourthe, Amblève, Vesdre and Our basins'

# LIFE – Funded project example

## **LIFE UNCINATA: Restoration, conservation, and resilience of mountain pine forests on limestone in the Pyrenees**

The project aims to improve the ecological integrity and resilience of pine forests in the Pyrenees. Challenges such as climate change and land use threaten the pine forests' habitat in the Pyrenees. The activities of the project will contribute to making this habitat less vulnerable to negative impacts and to making human activities more compatible with its conservation. Catalonia and Navarra regions are partners in this project while other regions will participate in Coordination and Expert Advisory Committees. Total budget: EUR 3.7 million, EU contribution EUR 2.8 million.

# RRF – General information

- ▶ The Recovery and Resilience Facility is a building block of the NextGenerationEU – the EU's plan to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ▶ 37 % of the financial allocations of the recovery plans guiding the spending in each MS should support the green transition
- ▶ The ways the funds are distributed are country-specific
- ▶ Key information on objectives, project examples, and links: Chapter 3

# RRF – Funded project example

## **RRF: The Madrid Metropolitan Forest**

This forest project, with 75 km of woodland to encircle Madrid. The Metropolitan Forest, when ready, will feature a million new holm oak, poplar, ash, elm and strawberry trees and will link existing parkland areas, reclaim landfill sites and create space for new sports facilities, including an educational adventure park for children. It includes a tree nursery site to ensure the provision of necessary new trees.

Besides providing recreational amenities, the project should also provide environmental benefits for residents, such as mitigating the urban heat island effect, improving air quality and flood resilience, and absorbing up to 170,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> when the trees reach maturity within about 12 years.



# National Sources

- ▶ Dedicated environmental programmes or funds
- ▶ Support to afforestation, land management programmes, and sustainable development programmes
- ▶ Regional-level initiatives
- ▶ City programmes, municipal and local initiatives
- ▶ Foundations, business initiatives
- ▶ Country-specific – see Chapter 5 for examples

# National Funding Programme example

## **Irish Forestry Programme**

Following receipt of State Aid approval from the European Commission in August of 2023, the Government of Ireland approved the new EUR 1.3 billion funded Forestry Programme. This afforestation scheme offers a broad range of planting options, with rates up to 46%-66% higher than those contained within the previous Forestry Programme (2014-2020, extended to 2022). The premium period has been extended from 15 to 20 years for farmers. Within this scheme, the State covers 100% of the costs to establish the forest. Consistent with the new Forest Strategy, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine of Ireland is actively seeking, through this programme, to incentivise the planting of native tree species. Forests predominantly comprising broadleaf species receive significantly higher grants and premiums compared to forests predominantly comprising conifer species.

# Innovative funding sources

- ▶ Green bonds
- ▶ Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), understood broadly according to the *COM guidance on the development of Public and Private Payment Schemes for Forest Ecosystem Services*
- ▶ Compensation measures, e.g. biodiversity offsets, carbon offsets
- ▶ Carbon farming – land management practices to enhance the uptake and storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in soil and biomass
- ▶ Crowdfunding
- ▶ Country-specific: Chapter 5

# Innovative funding sources: examples of measures

## **PES: Foresta Italia**

Foresta Italia is a national campaign, managed by Rete Clima. It uses PES schemes targetting companies that want to plant trees (often near company headquarters or even at their own premises) for environmental and climate purposes and to improve the quality of urban areas. Companies can contact Rete Clima to initiate the shared design of projects.

## **Carbon offsets: REPSOL**

REPSOL in Spain has set up a programme to promote the planting of trees which can be used to offset CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (from a company or any installation buying carbon credits). The trees are registered in the Spanish Footprint Registry.

# Thank you!



Comments? Questions? Suggestions?

[fg-treespledge@milieu.be](mailto:fg-treespledge@milieu.be)

[agnieszka.markowska@milieu.be](mailto:agnieszka.markowska@milieu.be)

[Download the Financing Guide](#)