



## Project Concept Note

### **Working title: Tourism4Nature**

### **Interreg Europe 2021-2027, 2<sup>nd</sup> call for projects**

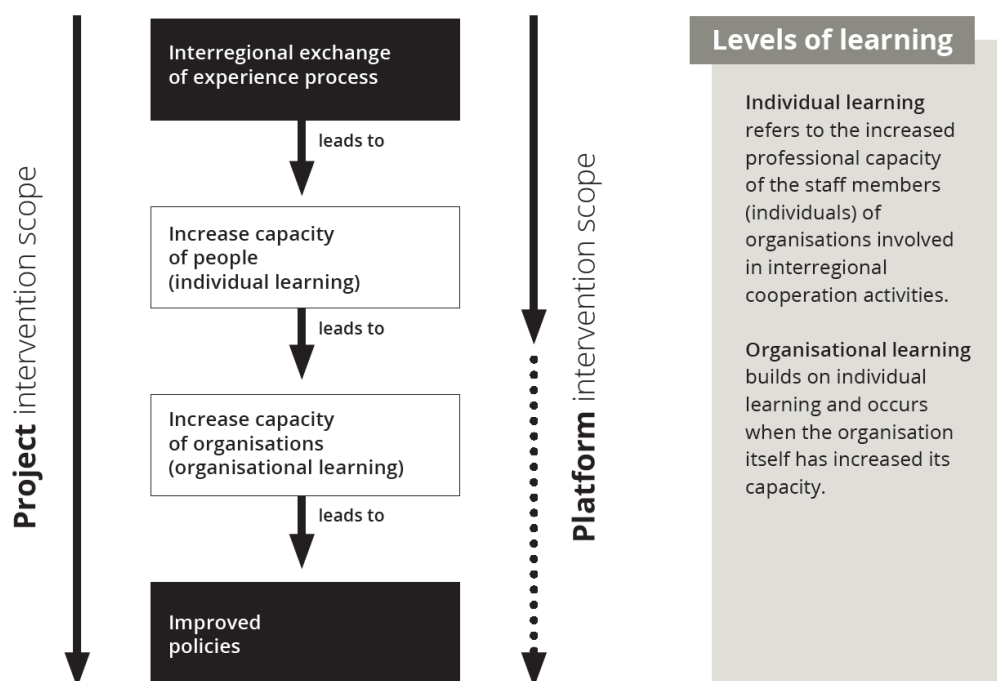
**Policy objective 2. A greener Europe, Specific objective: (vii) Protection and preservation of nature and biodiversity, green infrastructures, pollution reduction**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> call is **open from 15 March 2023 and closes on 9 June 2023 at 12:00 p.m.** (midday) CEST (Paris time).

### **Programme Objective**

To improve the implementation of regional development policies, including Investment for jobs and growth goal programmes, by promoting the exchange of experiences, innovative approaches, and capacity building in relation to the identification, dissemination, and transfer of good practices among regional policy actors.

## Programme Intervention Logic



The objective of an interregional cooperation project (of its core phase) is to improve - through the exchange of experience - the performance of the regional development **policy instruments**<sup>1</sup> of the participating regions, including Investment for jobs and growth goal programmes, in line with the programme mission set out in Article (3) (3) (a) of the ETC Regulation (EU) 2021/1059.

This particular focus on cohesion policy means that, at the application stage, **at least one of the policy instruments addressed in a project must be an Investment for jobs and growth goal programme.**

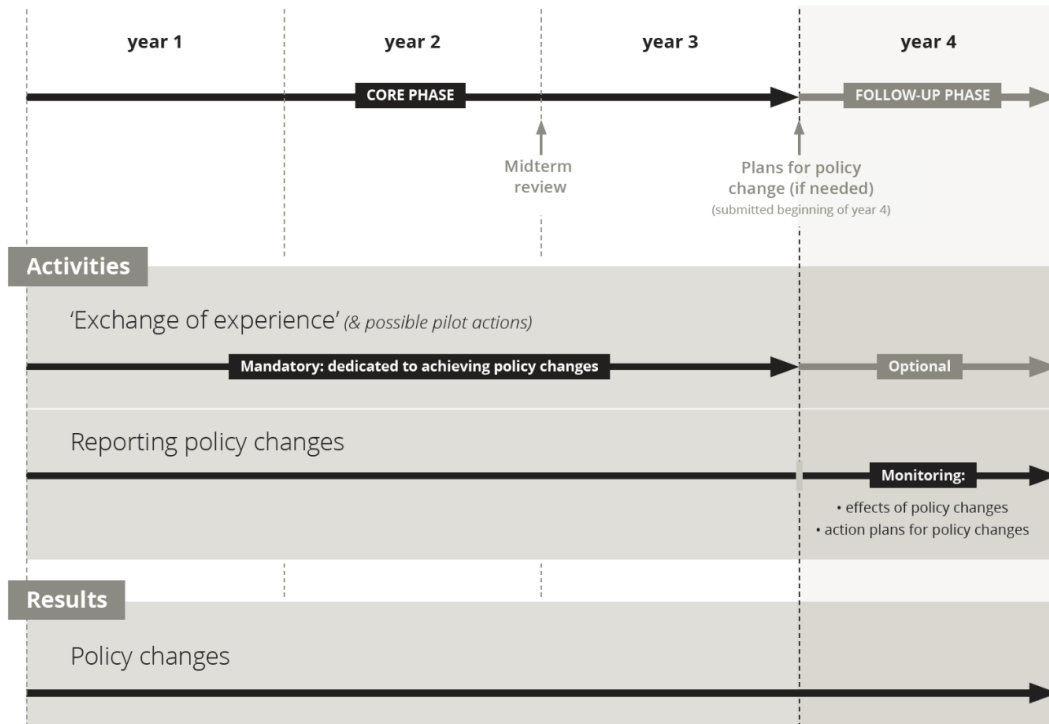
The policy instruments addressed by a project must be carefully selected and clearly defined at the application stage. In particular, the following elements should be ensured:

- ❖ Only one main policy instrument is addressed per participating 'region'.
- ❖ The scope of the different instruments is in line with the issue addressed by the project.
- ❖ The project addresses existing policy instruments whose time span covers at least the duration of the Interreg Europe projects. Policy instruments under preparation may be addressed only if sufficient details are available on its scope and nature (each policy

<sup>1</sup> A policy instrument is a means of public intervention. It refers to any strategy, programme, or law developed by public authorities and implemented to improve a specific territorial situation. (More about policy instrument definition check on Programme Manual page 29.: [https://www.interregeurope.eu/sites/default/files/2023-02/IR-E\\_programme\\_manual\\_annexes.pdf](https://www.interregeurope.eu/sites/default/files/2023-02/IR-E_programme_manual_annexes.pdf))

instrument needs to be described in the application form) and if its policy responsible authority is already confirmed.

### Project Phases<sup>2</sup>



More about 2<sup>nd</sup> call: [2<sup>nd</sup> call](#)

<sup>2</sup> More about project phases page 29. and 30. of Programme Manual:  
[https://www.interregeurope.eu/sites/default/files/2023-02/IR-E\\_programme\\_manual\\_annexes.pdf](https://www.interregeurope.eu/sites/default/files/2023-02/IR-E_programme_manual_annexes.pdf)



## **Background**

Nature is essential to Travel & Tourism. It is integral for sector growth and prosperity, from its vital ecosystem services to the uniqueness it provides global destinations. More than that, nature supplies clean air, fresh water and food, it supports human development and our resilience to viral pandemics, and offers solutions to climate change. Life simply cannot do without it.

Travel & Tourism can contribute to biodiversity loss, but it can also advance nature conservation. Taking direct action to reduce impacts and restore nature, while encouraging supply chains and destination partners to do the same, can protect our planet and also boost tourism appeal. Managed well, Travel & Tourism can reconnect people with nature, invest in species protection through effective community-led partnerships and play a leading role in a Nature Positive future.

Travel & Tourism is one of only six economic sectors with more than 80% of the value of its goods and services highly dependent on nature – from the demand for raw materials to the popularity of nature-based tourism. Furthermore, over 50% of the Travel & Tourism market share is driven by nature tourism and the desire to explore new environments, which is expected to grow year on year. Considering this mutual dependency, the potential consequences of biodiversity loss and nature degradation are critical for the sector.

The private sector must take a proactive role in nature protection and restoration. Nature Positive actions can be valuable commercial investments and can enable collaboration with local organizations and the empowerment of local communities. Effective activities include;

- ❖ Delivering powerful and informative communication for customers
- ❖ Raising awareness among other businesses and public bodies
- ❖ Supporting other Nature Positive initiatives

While many activities exist, they can be grouped into four themes:

- ❖ Reconnecting people and nature
- ❖ Supporting sustainable value chains
- ❖ Protecting animals and their welfare
- ❖ Investing in nature



## Aim of the project

Tourism4Nature's goal is to improve the effective and efficient implementation of **6 policy instruments** to enhance nature conservation by building the capacities of tourism business stakeholders for the integration of sustainability into their daily operations and to become ambassadors for their local natural assets.

In consequence the project aims at increasing the Nature Positive image of the targeted destinations and thus triggers increased interest of visitors to the region. The Partners involved in this project are facing similar challenges in the policy performance regarding tourism activities in connection with nature conservation and the mainstreaming of sustainability in the tourism business sector.

In order to address these challenges, the experiences gained by partners will be shared and jointly analyzed. At least **12 documented good practices**<sup>3</sup> will be identified, tailored to the specific needs of each partner and integrated into the Programme Policy Learning Platform. The experience learning will result in **6 Action Plans**.<sup>4</sup>

The foremost benefits for regions participating in the project are:

- ❖ Increased enhancement of the conservation and sustainable use of natural assets
- ❖ Improved sustainability performance of the tourism sector
- ❖ Applied new innovative Nature Positive approaches
  
- ❖ Better promotion and communication of the sustainable destination
- ❖ Delivered Action Plan to monitor and evaluate the influence of its actions on regional policies
- ❖ Upscaled experiences and competences of partner's staff and key stakeholders.

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<sup>3</sup> In the context of Interreg Europe, a **good practice** is defined as an initiative related to regional development policy which has proved to be successful in a region and which is of potential interest to other regions. 'Proved successful' is when the good practice has already provided tangible and measurable results in achieving a specific objective. Examples of good practices can be found in the good practice database on the programme website on [www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices](http://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices).

<sup>4</sup> The **Action Pan for policy improvement** is a document specifying how the lessons learnt from the cooperation work in the core phase will be implemented in a region in order to improve the policy instrument addressed by this region. It provides information on the nature, costs, and timeframe of the action(s) to be implemented, the stakeholders involved, and the way the action(s) derive from the project. Only regions that do not achieve a policy improvement by the end of the core phase need to produce an action plan.

The partners will implement the bottom-up approach for the drafting of Action Plans together with key stakeholders involved in all project activities. The **Stakeholder Groups** established during the start of the project will provide a continuous forum to ensure a durable impact related to the project issue and consequent actions planned/implemented.

**Programme manual 2021-2027.**

**Duration:** between 3 to 4 years  
**Budget:** between 1 to 2 million EURO  
**Co-financing:** Public bodies 20%  
 Private sector and NGOs 30%  
**Pre-financing:** Mandatory



<b>Cost category</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Staff</b>	Usually, the largest share of the total budget Applies to the staff employed by the project partners
<b>Office and administrative</b>	Calculated as a flat rate of 15% of the staff costs Is calculated automatically in the application form
<b>Travel and accommodation</b>	Flat rate of 15% of staff costs (real costs only if justified)
<b>External expertise and services</b>	Less than 50% of the total budget (recommended). Applies to services and expertise provided by an organisation other than the project partners (including travel costs for staff of the associated policy authorities and stakeholders).
<b>Equipment</b>	Office equipment (usually not exceeding EUR 7,000 per project - recommended) and other equipment (where pilot actions are planned, if justified)
<b>Infrastructure and works</b>	Only in the case of pilot actions, and if justified by the nature of this action



## Potential Partnership Structure

### Criterion 5: Geographical coverage

The application includes partners from either three *or* four (see footnote) geographical areas defined by the programme (North, East, South, and West).<sup>1</sup>

<i>Geographical areas</i>	<i>Countries covered</i>
<b>North</b>	Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden
<b>East</b>	Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia
<b>South</b>	Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain
<b>West</b>	Belgium, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Switzerland

In compliance with Article 23 (1) of the ETC regulation (EC) 2021/1059, the application also includes partners from three countries, of which at least two partners are from EU Member States, with the latter applying for Interreg Europe funding.

This eligibility criterion is checked only once at the application stage.

**Lead partner:** Zadar County Rural Development Agency – Croatia

**Optimal number of partners for project proposal is between 6 to 8,** and will include North, East, South and West of Europe.

