

BID-REX
Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

BID-REX Euskadi

Information flows



Conclusions from the 3rd Local Stakeholders Meeting

15 November 2017

Ekoetxea Txingudi - Gipuzkoa

BID-REX EUSKADI: PROJECT INTRODUCTION

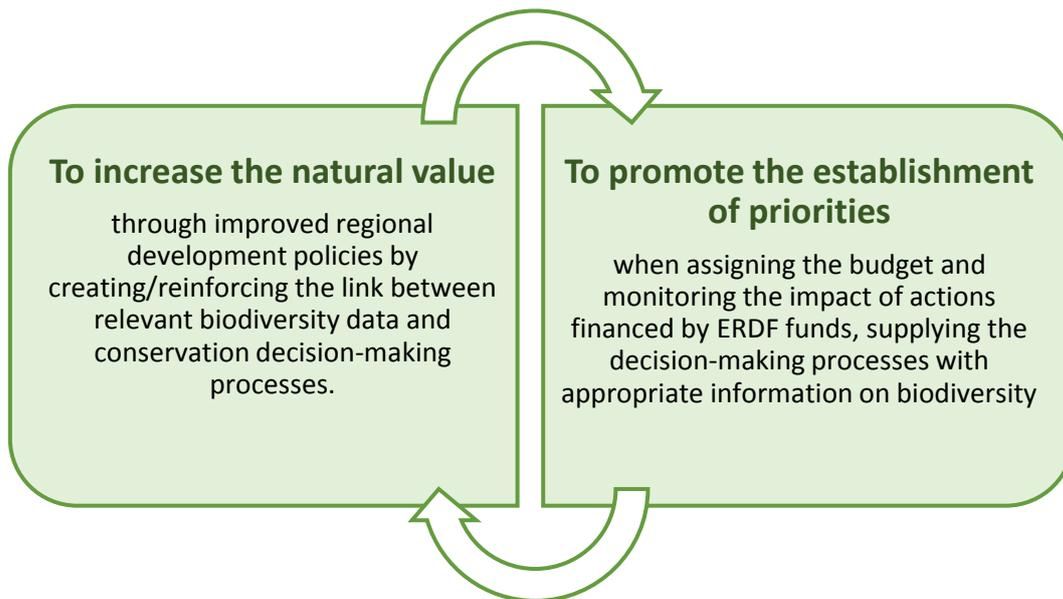
WHY WE LAUNCHED THIS PROJECT

Numerous organisations and initiatives contribute to generating information and scientific knowledge of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation services; all of this information is relevant for making decisions, producing regulations and defining future political strategies. However, there is still no recognised, validated mechanism that allows the compilation, synthesis, and analysis of all of this information and facilitate this decision making process.

To rectify the situation, the Basque Government Department of the Environment has joined forces with the European BIDE-REX project, **seeking to strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity and the ecosystem services with the aim of contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, human welfare and sustainable development.**

THE PROJECT

BID-REX is a 5-year long (April 2016-March 2021) European project funded by the Interreg Europe programme with a **two-pronged objective**:



6 other European regions (Catalonia, Norfolk county (the UK), the Marche Region (Italy), Ljubljana Marsh (Slovenia), the Region of the Northern Great Plain (Hungary) and Wallonia (Belgium) will also participating alongside the Basque Government's Department of the Environment.

This shared learning process is **focussed on achieving:**

- **Improved prioritising** of biodiversity conservation efforts, using methods based on available evidence on biodiversity and the environment
- **A guide** on how to obtain and use biodiversity data to increase impact of the funds assigned to conserving Europe's natural heritage
- As a result of this interregional exchange, the partners and players involved will improve their **biodiversity information management skills**

PARTICIPATORY MEETING: DESIGN AND CONTENT

This document contains a summary of the main contributions made at the **third regional participatory workshop** held on 15 November 2017 at Ekoetxea Txingudi (Irun-Gipuzkoa), which was attended by 21 people.

The workshop was organised by the Basque Government's Department of the Environment within the framework of the 2017 Social Forum on Biodiversity, in collaboration with Innobasque, to ensure the continuity of the process launched on a regional basis last February that accompanies the Europe-wide process taking place.

FOCUS OF THE MEETING

While the previous regional workshops focused on the need for decision-making information (strengths and weaknesses, the relevance of the information collected, etc.), this third workshop focused on how to improve the flow of information from a range of perspectives:

- How to facilitate the access and use of the information?
- How to improve the coordination and collaboration between producers, users and public administrations? Which role must be played by each one? How to recruit relevant organisations and people?
- How to increase the use of information on biodiversity to agents who think they don't need it?
- How to incorporate the feedback from users to ensure that the information available is increasingly adapted to needs?

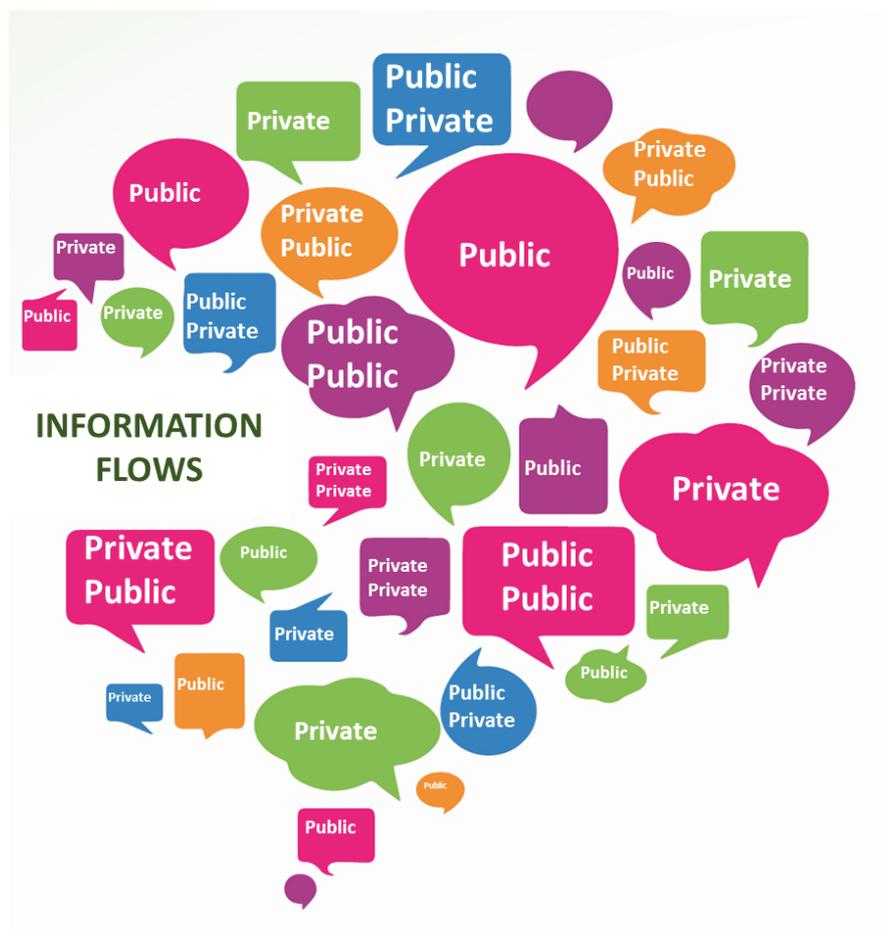
CONTENT DEALT WITH IN THE MEETING

It started off with a **presentation to define both the project and the results of the participatory workshops conducted to date (both regionally and internationally).** [LINK TO THE PRESENTATION](#)

Likewise, and given that in the previous workshops a recurrent demand had been detected as the need to address inter-institutional coordination in a more effective manner, a technical dialogue was generated through a round table to analyze possible actions to be developed to improve these flows. **Those participating were as follows:**

- Marta Rozas, from the Basque Government– Eusko Jaurlaritza
- Iñigo Moreno, from the Araba Regional Council – Arabako Foru Aldundia
- Xabier Iturrate, from the Bizkaia Regional Council – Bizkaiko Foru Aldundia
- Jon Zulaika, from the Gipuzkoa Regional Council – Gipuzkoako Foru Aldundia
- Mario Saez de Buruaga, from the Natural Resources Consultancy

They then worked in **plenary format to try to outline the possible actions** that may improve the flows of information from a multidirectional perspective:

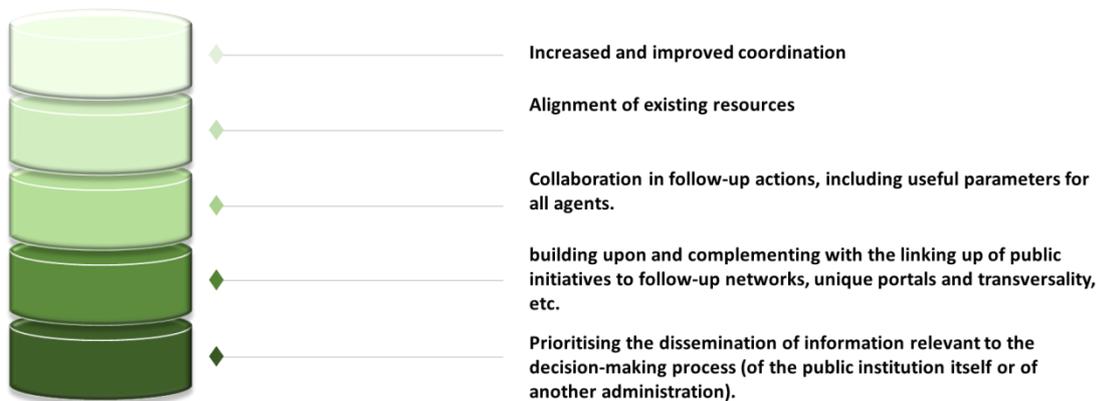


Bellow is shown a structured summary of the contributions made at this meeting.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS MADE

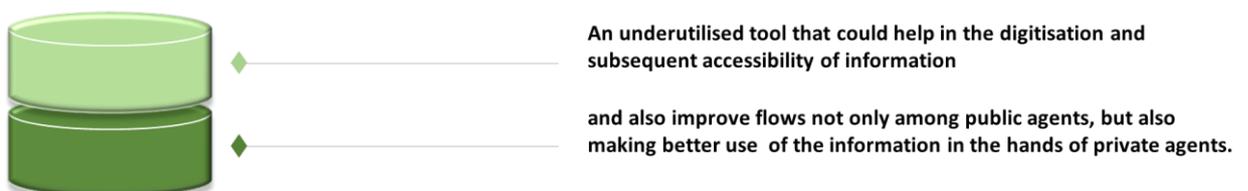
Prior to establishing any possible actions to improve the decision-making flow of information, one of the main aspects raised at the plenary meeting was the **need to improve inter-agency coordination**, with increased and improved coordination, alignment of existing resources, collaboration in follow-up actions including useful parameters for all agents, building upon and complementing with the linking up of public initiatives to follow-up networks, unique portals and transversality, etc. Another item raised was the importance of prioritising the dissemination of information relevant to the decision-making process (of the public institution itself or of another administration).

A need for improved inter-agency coordination



In this context, **the potential of the Basque Government’s Nature Information System** was highlighted as an underutilised tool that could help in the digitisation, and subsequent accessibility of information to improve flows not only among public agents, but also to make better use of the information in the hands of private agents.

The potential of the Basque Government’s Nature Information System



On the other hand, it was highlighted that, if the flow of information between administrations is not enough, the information that reaches citizens is also insufficient, **and has a clear impact on the development of a critical and active citizenship in the protection of biodiversity.** (for example, insufficient information to plead) **and in the construction of a citizen culture that**

values biodiversity (for example, when working with children information is needed "for interpretation").

The impact of inadequate information flows between Administrations



The information available to the public will be lacking if there is not a proper flow of information among administrations

It has a clear impact on the development of a critical and active citizenship in the protection of biodiversity (for example, insufficient information to plead)

as well as the construction of a civic culture that values biodiversity (for example, when working with children information is needed in "for interpretation").

ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE FLOW OF INFORMATION

The different ideas identified in the meeting to improve the flow of information for decision-making as a result of a "brainstorming" exercise was then presented:

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Cite or mention studies or information although it is not accessible in order to get over the hurdle around the discussion of "ownership" of the information , especially in the case of reports requested by public agents to consultants (which do not proactively post this information because they are not the owners). In short, to create an inventory of the information, even if it is not published (title, or title and summary) |
| 2 | Attendance at conferences to publicise the work promoted by the administration as a way of generating opportunities for the exchange of knowledge and learning among private agents |
| 3 | Request a summary version (executive report) or outline of key ideas in tendering / subcontracting that facilitates the interpretation of the information, improving its understanding . This action can be complemented with the development and/or use of common contracting annexes that include the duty of how to deliver the data and differentiating the owner from the author |
| 4 | Identify any "recoverable" information or easier to transform and unify in the formats available to different public agents . Start by posting the less "cumbersome" information |
| 5 | Evaluate the Nature Information System to identify barriers to use and areas of improvement in order to better respond to its purpose |
| 6 | The generation of ongoing group meetings and dynamic sessions with departments involved to discover the limitations (staff, financial resources, etc.) and find out where there have been convergences or divergences. |
| 7 | An assessment of the need to develop a regulatory support to promote greater cooperation between administrations , transcending political frameworks with a |

| | technical focus |
|----|---|
| 8 | Incorporate in a clearer/simpler way in the Nature Information System a directory of people/professionals/agents willing to share information (by subject-area and with contacts) to promote peer-to-peer collaboration. The creation of some type of "campaign" was proposed as a complementary action to complete more profiles on the System as a first step in the generation of a network of knowledge and collaboration. |
| 9 | Foster the connection with intermediaries that have informative materials to promote awareness so that this work does not fall on the technical staff of the administrations |
| 10 | Reinforce communication with "innovative" parameters (such as inviting "influencers" to biodiversity workshops) that incorporate the vision of younger digital natives (as well as brainstorming ideas with young people) and to allow this collective to provide information (generating visual elements) |
| 11 | Develop multi-year grants with budget reserves that incorporate criteria of publicity and accessibility of information. Allocation of budget items to process historical reports |
| 12 | Design and implement reward or return actions to the most active agents when sharing information |
| 13 | Be active agents in the transmission of the value of the platform, for example, requesting permission to the owner agent to incorporate the information in it or collecting the agents that are dedicated to the production of data in a specific area or topic |
| 14 | Analyze success stories to extract lessons learned (such as the CEA [environmental studies centre] in Vitoria) and facilitate greater use of private dissemination initiatives (such as touring exhibitions) |

FROM PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO COLLECTIVE ACTION

Following this exercise, attendees were asked to choose an action with a demonstrable impact that could be the starting point of the creation of a collaborative network to improve the flow of information for decision-makers in the field of biodiversity.

The following page details the actions selected by the participants that show the changes that **these pillars of this new system are undergoing in terms of form and action, i.e., the processes and values**, of each of the people and agents working on the protection of biodiversity in the Basque Country.

| ACTION- <i>If we did the following...</i> | IMPACT- <i>We would get...</i> |
|---|--|
| If we use more and better new technologies | We will be able to improve the communication with the public and have new participants each year at our workshops |
| If we recognize the work (personal recognition, financial rewards) | We will keep that person within the information system and will be an active agent |
| If we contract out a study, in whose specifications we will detail how we want to receive the information and that it should be accessible in the Government platform | We will improve the flow of information due to the increased number of people with access to this data |
| If we coordinate to the point of developing a unique information system | We would make significant progress, because it would not matter the status of our own portals |
| If we reference and identify the information that each one has | All the information will be accessible to everyone |
| If we identify better the agents | We will obtain more information in a shorter space of time |
| If we do less, prioritising and taking time to reflect and create a strategy | We will achieve even more, as we move from dealing with urgent matters to what is most important |
| If we emphasize on training and awareness at "citizen level" | We will get a greater return in terms of involvement and participation |
| If we go through the fourth part of what we have talked about today (change quality by quantity) | We will succeed |
| If we are not cautious in showing the information | We will get more from the system |
| If we share the work we are involved in | This will be useful not only to other people, but also for the purpose we are striving to obtain |
| If we learn to communicate what we do well | Two plus two will be more than four: we will generate good practices that reinforce the work we do from an evaluation and continuous improvement perspective |
| If we characterize information, data and knowledge well | We will place greater value on what has been generated |
| If we improve the communication between our "followers" (sharing, understanding us, speaking, etc.) | We will improve what we do in the future due to basing this on what is already in place: building on what we want from what we already are |
| If we communicate proactively | The public will get more involved |
| If we reflect on what is spoken today and we do not forget | We will launch an action in our organization |
| If we are close to the citizens who come to us | We will close a path of erosion and we will create bridges overcoming distrust |