




Manual for Area of Support:  
**Improved Environmental  
Status in Ecosystems**

A photograph of a pond filled with water lilies and pink flowers. In the background, there is a dense forest of tall trees. A small wooden structure is visible on the far shore. The water is calm, reflecting the surrounding greenery.

An ecosystem is a functional  
**system of living and non-living**  
components of the environment,  
which are interconnected...

## ***Protecting ecosystems and biodiversity is essential for our future***

*The law defines an ecosystem as a functional system of living and non-living components of the environment, which are interconnected by substance exchange, energy flow and information transfer, and which interact and develop in a certain space and time. Every ecosystem around us, natural or man-made, is therefore made up of organisms and inanimate components, between which there is a constant interaction. By strengthening the health of ecosystems, we can respond to the challenges of the modern world and create sustainable values that will enable us to further develop our society. The health of ecosystems is not only important from the point of view of plant and animal protection, but also has implications for all areas of our society and our lives. For example, the European Commission has recently published an economic risk analysis, which shows that inadequate treatment of environmental and biodiversity damage can mean an annual economic loss of 50 billion EUR for the European Union. The health of our ecosystems is therefore important not only from the point of view of preserving biodiversity and protecting the environment, but it also affects all areas of our society and has an undeniable impact on its future.*



***The health of ecosystems is not only important from the point of view of plant and animal protection, but also has implications for all areas of our society and our lives.***

## Biodiversity and ecosystems in the Norway Grants Programme

Projects aimed at protecting ecosystems and promoting biodiversity have already been funded by the **EEA and Norway Grants** in recent grant periods. The current focus of the first area of support thus partly follows on some of the previously supported projects, within which, for example, new rescue programs were prepared for selected endangered species of plants and animals in our territory, mapping of migration barriers on watercourses was implemented and a Strategy for reducing the impacts of river network fragmentation in the Czech Republic was created, etc. Within the programme „Environment, Ecosystems and Climate Change“, supported by the **Norway Grants 2014–2021** (hereinafter the Programme), a total of **EUR 9,079,023** is allocated to ecosystems and biodiversity.

Our Programme is based, among other things, on the measures set out in the [State Environmental Policy](#), the [State Program for Nature and Landscape Protection](#) and the [Strategy for Biological Diversity of the Czech Republic](#).

A specific feature of the current programming period is the support of new innovative approaches and tools in environmental protection, as well as the opportunity to obtain funds for the application of the results of scientific research projects in practical use in the Czech Republic. Applicants may also receive funding for small-scale projects aimed at implementing selected measures outside specially protected areas aimed at increasing the biodiversity of ecosystems or for projects aimed at protecting endangered species on the red lists. The Programme is complementary to public funding for the care of specially protected areas. However, as most endangered habitats and species cannot be maintained by territorial protection alone, the Norway Grants programme focuses on supporting measures applied outside specially protected areas where funding is lacking. Likewise, the Programme is complementary to other European financial resources, which focus on general care for the landscape.

The whole area of support is complemented by the support of information and educational campaigns for professionals and the general public in the field of protection of ecosystems and biodiversity.

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**Our goal is to strengthen the health of ecosystems in regions outside specially protected areas, to support the protection of endangered species of plants and animals and to help apply new, innovative solutions for environmental protection in the Czech Republic.**

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## Basic information about the area of support

The first of the areas of support of the Programme focuses on the **protection of ecosystems** in the Czech Republic and **the increase and protection of biodiversity** in these ecosystems. **Large innovative projects** will be supported, the aim of which is to implement the results of scientific research projects focused on environmental protection in practical use in the regions in the Czech Republic. Furthermore, projects aimed at the **implementation of measures aimed at the protection and conservation of endangered natural habitats outside specially protected areas** will be supported, as well as projects **applying measures to protect endangered species of plants and animals with emphasis on species listed on the red lists**. The area of support also includes a small grant scheme focused on educational projects in the field of ecosystem protection and biodiversity.

### What is the project grant rate?

- The grant assistance is provided up to 90 %/100 %\* of the total eligible expenditure of the project. The maximum amount of project grant within the call can be found on the following pages of this manual.
- Total allocation for this area of support: **9 079 023 EUR**

### Who can apply for a grant?

- In general, all entities, private or public, commercial or non-commercial, and non-governmental non-profit organizations established in the Czech Republic as a **legal entity** are considered eligible applicants.

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\* support of 90% of total eligible expenditure concerns SGS and cases where the final beneficiary is a non-governmental non-profit organization or a social partner

#### Are you interested in applying for support?

Detailed information for applicants can be found at the text of each call on the website [www.sfzp.cz](http://www.sfzp.cz)

## What do we expect from your projects?

The area of support focuses on three main types of projects. The first is the **application of research projects, innovative approaches and the transfer of examples of good practice** in environmental protection. This is, for example, the application of the results of completed research projects, which are listed in the Information System of Research, Experimental Development and Innovation managed by the Council for Research, Development and Innovation, or similar types of projects that have been successfully implemented in other localities, or abroad, and their adaptation to the local environment and conditions. Due to the complexity of the assessment of these innovative projects, it is always necessary to first submit a **project intention within the two-round call**, on the basis of which the expert committee will assess whether the project is suitable for funding from Norway Grants.

The second type of projects is a project called “small grant scheme” („SGS”). As part of the support of small-scale measures aimed at protecting and preserving endangered natural habitats outside specially protected areas, we expect the implementation of activities that will be in accordance with the [National Strategy for Biodiversity of the Czech Republic 2016–2025](#) and the newly updated [State Nature and Landscape Protection Program of the Czech Republic 2020–2025](#). Measures should be aimed at increasing the resilience of ecosystems, their sustainable state and the promotion of biodiversity in the landscape.

As part of a small grant scheme, we also support measures to protect the most endangered species of plants and animals **on the red lists**. These projects should be in line with relevant national or regional environmental planning documents and action plans (such as summaries of recommended measures for Natura 2000 sites, rescue programs, care programs or regional action plans for specially protected plant and animal species). Some of these plans were prepared under previous periods of the financial mechanism. You can find the relevant documents on the [AOPK CR website](#).

Raising public awareness is also a key part of the entire Norway Grants Programme. In the case of projects implemented in this area, these are educational and information activities focused on the protection of the ecosystem and biodiversity. These include, for example, educational projects at schools.

The Programme generally prefers measures that **bring new innovative solutions to environmental problems** and have the potential to serve as examples of good practice in the Czech Republic, Norway and elsewhere abroad.



**We are introducing  
innovative approaches**  
to environmental protection

# Call 1a: Implementation of pilot projects for the application of the results of scientific research and innovative projects in the field of improving the state of the environment in ecosystems in practice

Open Call

<b>Total allocation:</b>	<b>5 779 023 EUR</b>
<b>Expected date of announcement:</b>	
→ project intentions:	<b>at the end of 2020</b>
→ applications for approved project intentions:	<b>autumn 2020</b>
<b>Minimum and maximum project grant:</b>	<b>200 000–1 000 000 EUR</b>

**What is the project intention?** A project intention is a document that summarizes the basic idea of a project; contains a brief formulation of the intended goal, expected benefits of the project, a brief description of the implementation and a description of the economic side of the project - budget, implementation costs, staffing, etc.

## What key will we use to evaluate the submitted applications?

In particular, the following groups of criteria will be considered when evaluating and selecting projects:

- territorial scope and impact of the proposed project
- links to completed research and innovative projects, transfer of examples of good practice
- multidisciplinary focus and strategies of proposed projects
- evaluation of the project in terms of environmental, social, economic, technological or other benefits
- innovative approach applied in the implementation of individual measures
- longevity and sustainability of the proposed procedure
- financial complexity and efficiency
- bilateral or other cooperation

## What mandatory indicators do you have to follow in your project?

- number of innovative projects to improve environmental status in ecosystems implemented with a multi-sectoral approach
- number of accepted proven methods coming from accomplished R&D projects to improve Environmental Status in Ecosystems
- number of people benefiting from the ecosystem improvement measures
- number of selected species whose conditions have been improved
- number of targeted habitats with improved ecological status

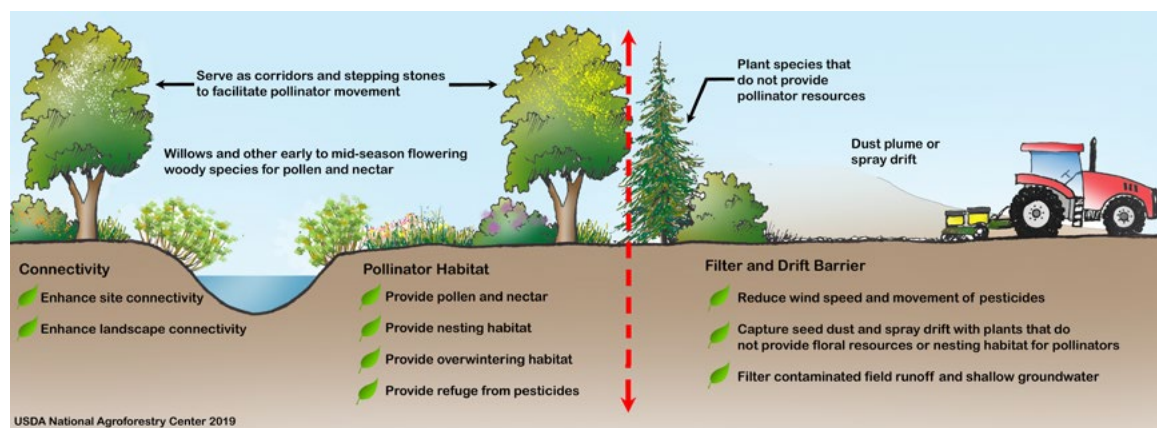
### Supported measures:

Projects that can be implemented under the call include measures aimed at improving the state of ecosystems and protecting biodiversity, in particular:

- pilot and demonstration projects with completed research or ending multi-year projects, which are registered in the [Information System of Research, Experimental Development and Innovation](#), supported from public funds of the Czech Republic;
- pilot and demonstration projects that are not normally implemented and financed from public funds of the Czech Republic or commonly used for commercial purposes, or projects in the implementation of which „highly innovative“ technologies are used;
- pilot and demonstration projects that are implemented in the same ecosystem conditions abroad and serve as examples of good practice for the Czech Republic;
- pilot and demonstration projects, which are originally implemented in different natural conditions and serve as initial examples of good practice for the implementation of similar measures in the conditions of local ecosystems

## Where to get inspired before preparing innovative projects?

Being innovative does not have to mean just creating purely new technical equipment, processes or products. Innovative approaches are also related to a number of measures in non-technical areas, such as changing the organizational structure, culture of the working environment and especially in the development of active cooperation in environmental protection between cities, states and all sectors of our economy. Paradoxically, we can also look for inspiration for innovative approaches in our history.



**When it comes to the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity, the challenge for our future is, for example, the effective interconnection of individual sectors of our economy with the protection of nature and landscape. Using appropriate measures and innovative tools, it is possible to find a balance that will allow us to use our resources while minimizing negative impacts on the environment.**

Source: [www.mdpi.com/1999-4907/10/11/981/htm](http://www.mdpi.com/1999-4907/10/11/981/htm)

**We can also look for inspiration for the balanced use of natural resources and suitable practices in accordance with the environment in our history and also in successful examples of good practice from home and abroad.**

Source: [www.agrotechnomarket.com/2019/01/alley-cropping-and-its-benefits.html](http://www.agrotechnomarket.com/2019/01/alley-cropping-and-its-benefits.html)



Planning the Design of Alley Cropping

A photograph of a serene forest stream. The water is shallow and clear, reflecting the surrounding greenery. The banks are covered in dense, vibrant green grass and moss. Numerous small, white, daisy-like flowers are scattered throughout the stream bed and along the edges. The background is filled with tall, leafy trees, creating a dense canopy. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

**The protection** of ecosystems  
and biodiversity **is essential**  
**for the future of our society**

# **SGS 1: Implementation of measures aimed at the protection and conservation of endangered natural habitats and the protection of endangered species (listed on the red lists of plants and animals) outside specially protected areas**

Small grant scheme

**Total allocation:** 3 000 000 EUR  
**Expected date of announcement:** autumn 2020  
**Minimum and maximum project grant rate:** 5 000–200 000 EUR

## **What key will we use to evaluate the submitted applications?**

In particular, the following groups of criteria will be considered when evaluating and selecting projects:

- linking measures to action plans or other documents aimed at protecting a given species/ecosystem
- location and impact of the proposed measures
- innovative approach and transfer of examples of good practice
- financial complexity and efficiency of the project
- longevity and sustainability of the proposed measures
- bilateral or other cooperation

## **What mandatory indicators do you have to follow in your project?**

- number of measures aimed at the protection and conservation of endangered natural habitats outside specially protected areas
- number of measures for selected species implemented
- number of people benefiting from the ecosystem improvement measures
- number of selected species whose conditions have been improved
- number of habitats with improved ecological status

## Supported measures

- **implementation of measures aimed at protection and conservation of endangered natural habitats outside specially protected areas** (for example: measures to protect against invasive plant species, measures to restore and protect wetlands and increase water retention in the landscape, planting native tree species)
- **implementation of measures for the protection of red-listed species** through the protection of their natural habitats outside specially protected areas (for example: care of old orchards, important trees, stone drift, light forest creation, tree habitat treatment, wetland creation, clearing migration barriers for animals, restoration open sands and other disturbances and the creation of early successional stages, the creation of nests for endangered species)

**How can we protect the biodiversity of our ecosystems? Let's look at some examples of good practice.**



**Planting of hedgerow and other natural shelters for animals**

Source: [info.ricany.cz/mesto/izolacni-zelen-a-aleje-v-ricanech-s-vyuzitim-dotaci](http://info.ricany.cz/mesto/izolacni-zelen-a-aleje-v-ricanech-s-vyuzitim-dotaci)



**Habitat restoration and protection – The Kozmice Bird Meadows**

Source: [www.eprogram.cz/mista/902-kozmicke-ptaci-louky](http://www.eprogram.cz/mista/902-kozmicke-ptaci-louky)




**Watercourse revitalization – measures creating habitats for endangered species and restoration of wetland habitats**

Source: [www.dotace.nature.cz/galerie-oparteni/?arrangementId=39&pictureId=205](http://www.dotace.nature.cz/galerie-oparteni/?arrangementId=39&pictureId=205)



**Grazing and mowing of meadows for the purpose of restoration and protection of habitats – Padrtě extensive grazing cattle**

A photograph of a person in a forest, wearing a cap and a backpack, holding a camera up to take a picture of a large tree trunk with a hollow. The scene is lush with green foliage and sunlight filtering through the trees.

**Environmental awareness  
and education** motivate  
society to behave in a way that  
is favorable to the environment.

# SGS 1d: Raising public awareness and capacity building in the field of ecosystem and biodiversity protection

Small Grant Scheme

**Total allocation:** 300 000 EUR  
**Expected date of announcement:** autumn 2020  
**Minimum and maximum project grant rate:** 5 000–50 000 EUR

## What key will we use to evaluate the submitted applications?

In particular, the following groups of criteria will be considered when evaluating and selecting projects:

- number of directly and indirectly addressed participants
- range and quality of media outputs
- professional contribution
- innovative approach and transfer of good practice examples
- cost and efficiency
- short/long term benefits of promotional activities

## What mandatory indicators do you have to follow in your project?

- number of awareness raising campaigns carried out
- number of people reached by awareness raising campaigns

## Supported measures:

- carrying out information and education campaigns for the general public on water protection issues related to the occurrence of ecosystems and biodiversity
- organizing seminars and workshops on ecosystems and biodiversity protection
- preparation and publication of professional and information media outputs on the issue of ecosystems and biodiversity protection
- school projects on ecosystems and biodiversity protection

## **Bilateral aspect within the area of support**

The space for establishing bilateral cooperation with a partner organization from Norway and the international sharing of examples of good practice is offered within all supported activities on ecosystems and biodiversity. Norway has long been one of the leading countries in the field of nature protection and is successfully implementing many measures at national and regional level. In addition, Norwegian universities and research institutes have shown a strong interest in cooperating in previous periods of the financial mechanism of Norway Grants. Cooperation with Norwegian partners in project preparation can be a great benefit, especially in the implementation of innovative pilot measures in the field of ecosystem protection and biodiversity.

The potential for bilateral cooperation can also be found in the case of small grant scheme projects focusing on the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems. Many animal and plant species that are critically endangered in our conditions are common species in Norway, thanks to successfully implemented local rescue programs or careful approach not only of responsible institutions, but especially the approach of the whole society to the protection of natural resources. The sharing of some examples of good practice in the care of endangered species of plants and animals or in the application of appropriate measures for the protection of selected ecosystems has already been successfully implemented in the past period of Norway Grants. These are, for example, projects for the protection of wetlands which were implemented in the last financial mechanism period.

There is also place for cooperation in the case of a small grant scheme to raise awareness of ecosystem protection and biodiversity. Examples of good practice are joint projects for Czech and Norwegian educational institutions.

# Manual for Area of Support: **Improved Environmental Status** **in Ecosystems**

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If you have any questions or concerns regarding this area of support, please send your question to [norwaygrants@sfzp.cz](mailto:norwaygrants@sfzp.cz).



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