

BEST

VOLUNTARY SCHEME
FOR BIODIVERSITY AND
ECOSYSTEM SERVICES
IN TERRITORIES OF
EUROPEAN OVERSEAS



90 minutes for discovering the EU Overseas: BEST innovative & key partners of the EU Biodiversity strategy



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Legend

- EU Overseas Countries and Territories
- EU Overseas Regions (ORs)
- African, Caribbean and Pacific States and Territories of the EU
- Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)
- BEST projects funded in 7 EU Overseas Territories
- Project icon



For more information
<http://ec.europa.eu/best/>
<https://portals.iucn.org/best/>

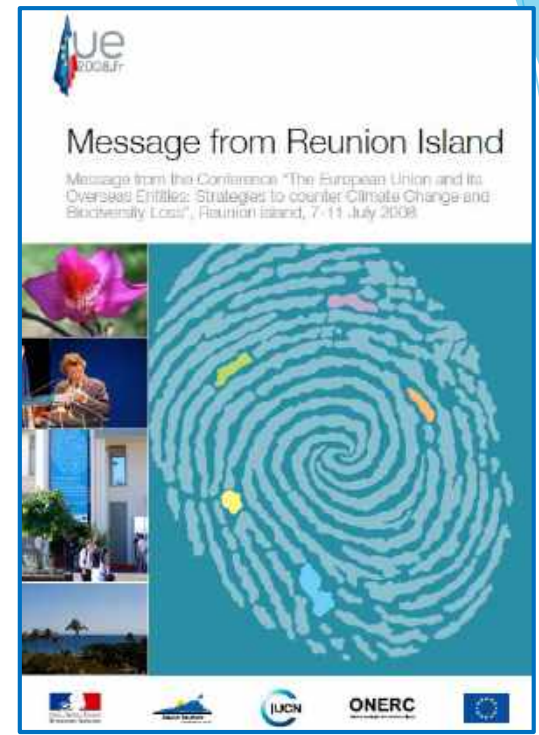
British Antarctic Territory (BAT)

Adèle Land



1st EU Conference
on EU Overseas Biodiversity
Message from La Réunion

European Parliament
Preparatory Action



13. There is an urgent need for EU Member States and the European Commission, together with the ORs and OCTs, to establish a voluntary scheme for the protection of species and habitats, inspired by the Natura 2000 approach. This scheme should be easily accessible, flexible, adapted to the local situation, balance conservation and development needs, as well as take into account existing mechanisms and tools. The implementation of the scheme should be based on local commitment and shared financing.



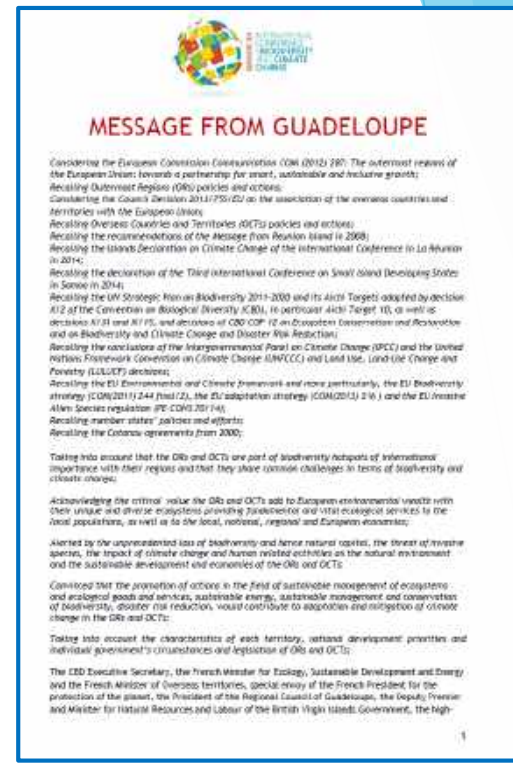
1st EU Conference on EU Overseas Biodiversity Message from La Réunion



European Parliament Preparatory Action



2nd EU Conference on EU Overseas Biodiversity Message from Guadeloupe



Strategic orientation:

- Build on the BEST preparatory action by setting up a sustainable partnership dedicated to biodiversity, ecosystem services and climate change in the ORs and OCTs. This partnership shall be committed to the establishment of an inclusive and representative management structure and shall:

Operational actions:

- Secure support from various donors, financial instruments and programmes, exploring in particular the development and use of trust funds;



A European initiative to foster action in 7 regions of global importance

BEST



BEST (Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of European Overseas) aims to strengthen biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, sustainable development and management of ecosystems and ecosystem services, as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation in the 7 European Overseas regions by:

1. Promoting biodiversity (CBD) & priority areas for action
2. Defining methods, tools & good practices on the ground through pilot actions
3. Raising awareness & building capacity

Regional profiles – a scientific & participatory process

- Perform assessment tool to identify gaps, conservation status and investments
- A series of high priority conservation actions and reporting
- A participatory process through consultations and workshops with regional and local stakeholders and experts
- Regional assessment based on most relevant scientific data, reports and stakeholders (via EU awareness)
- A tailored approach to define measures to be a priority for reaching EU Overseas stakeholders' needs for future project funding

Caribbean region

- Coral reefs protection
- Marine protected areas
- Wetlands conservation
- Coastal ecosystems preservation
- Accessibility – ecosystem services quantification
- Forests and trees conservation
- Priority for assessment process

Polar/Sub-Polar

- Sustainable development
- Climate & biodiversity monitoring

Global

- Global partnerships
- Multilateral agreements

Indian Ocean

- Island dynamics and conservation
- Terrestrial marine conservation
- Invertebrates conservation
- Whale conservation
- Pinnacled Geck
- Log-rafting turtle conservation & fisheries bycatch mitigation

Pacific

- Regional marine conservation
- Dry forest restoration
- MPA assessment capacity building
- Nature-based solutions conservation (2 projects)
- Ecosystem management strategies
- Coastal and ecosystem services
- Spatial planning



Legend

- EU Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)
- EU Overseas Regions (ORs)
- WTOs, Caribbean and Pacific (CARIPAC) group of states and other states of the commonwealth
- Overseas Domestic Zone (ODZ) (France)
- BEST projects funded in 7 EU Overseas regions & global focus

South Atlantic

- World heritage sites & biodiversity
- Sustainable development
- Climate & biodiversity monitoring
- Marine spatial planning
- Climate change adaptation

Polar/Sub-Polar

- Marine conservation
- Participatory climate change impact monitoring

For more information:
<http://ec.europa.eu/best/>
<https://portals.iucn.org/best/>



A flexible scheme

A wide scope

Promoting conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services in European Outermost Regions and European Overseas Countries and Territories.



A tailored scheme

*Letting local stakeholders to define their projects according to their needs

*Offering a diversity of grants to address the diversity of needs & capacities:

Swift Grants ≤ € 50,000

Small Grants ≤ € 100,000

Medium Grants ≤ € 400,000

*More accessible : No co-funding for swift and small grants only 5% for Medium Grants



Objectives

- 1. **To facilitate access to EU funds** for actors in the **EU Outermost Regions (ORs)** and **EU Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)** so as **to unlock initiatives** and potential in the fields of biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of ecosystem services, including ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation, as a basis for sustainable development.
- 2. **To increase the capacity** of ORs and OCTs actors to access and effectively manage EU funds.
- 3. **To increase the visibility** of EU ORs and OCTs as key contributors to the achievement of EU and global biodiversity targets and strategies.

Results



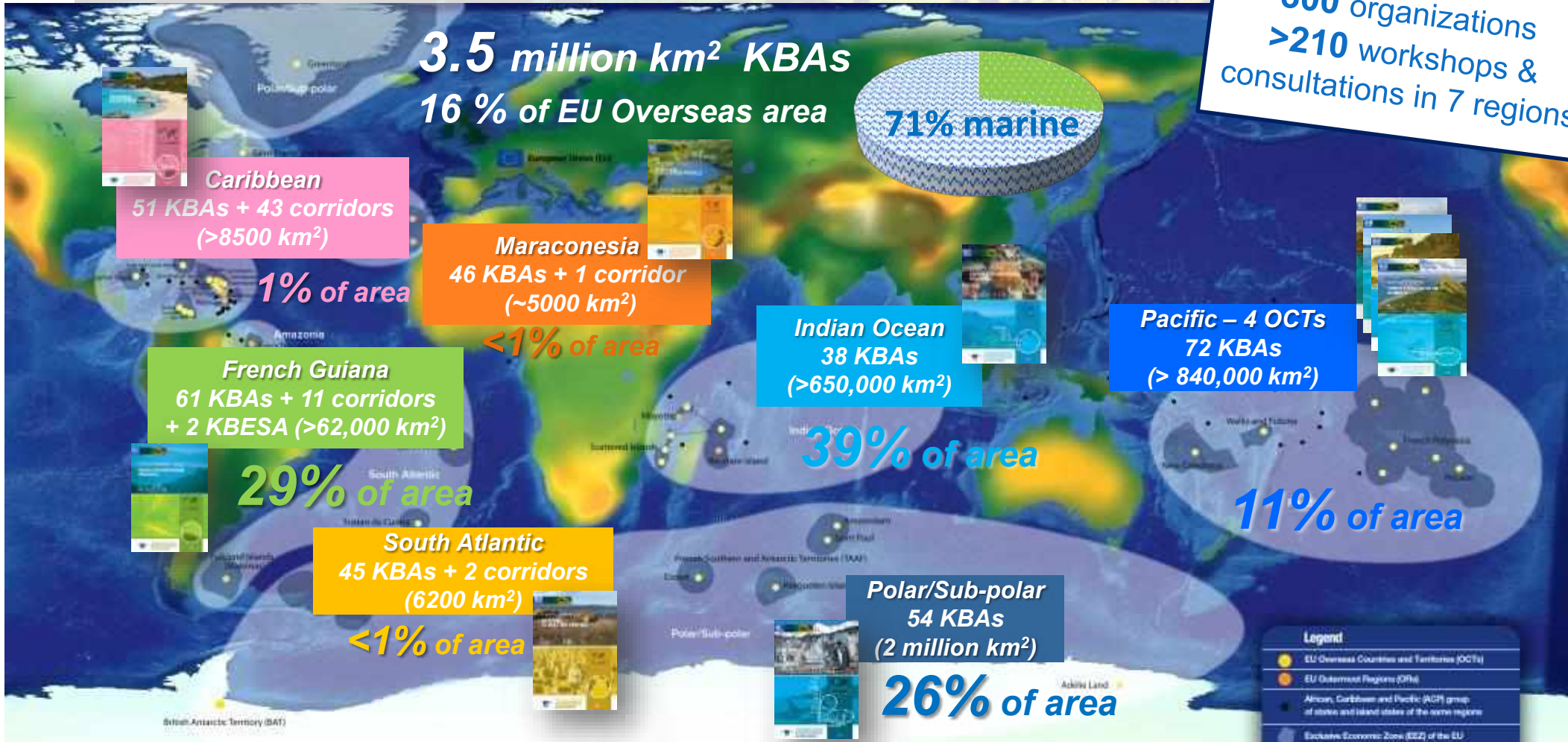
- ✓ **7 regional ecosystem profiles**
- **400 new key biodiversity areas (KBAs)**
- &
- ecological corridors identified (3.5 million km²)

367 new Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)

57 Ecological Corridors

+ 2 Key Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Area

Participatory process mobilized
900 stakeholders from > 300 organizations
>210 workshops & consultations in 7 regions



Results



✓ 7 regional ecosystem profiles

➤ 400 key biodiversity areas (KBAs) & ecological corridors identified (3.5 million km²)

✓ 7 regional investment strategies

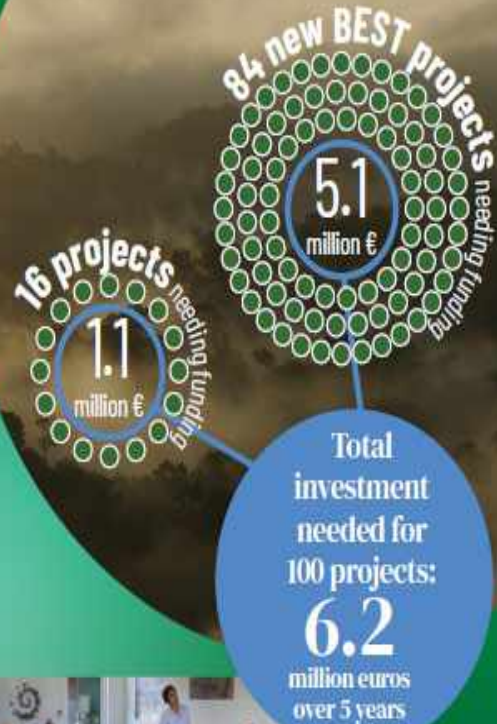
4 x more funding needed than invested in the past by BEST

○ 450 projects ready-to-be funded projects identified as investment niches

○ > € 90 million funding needs next 5 years



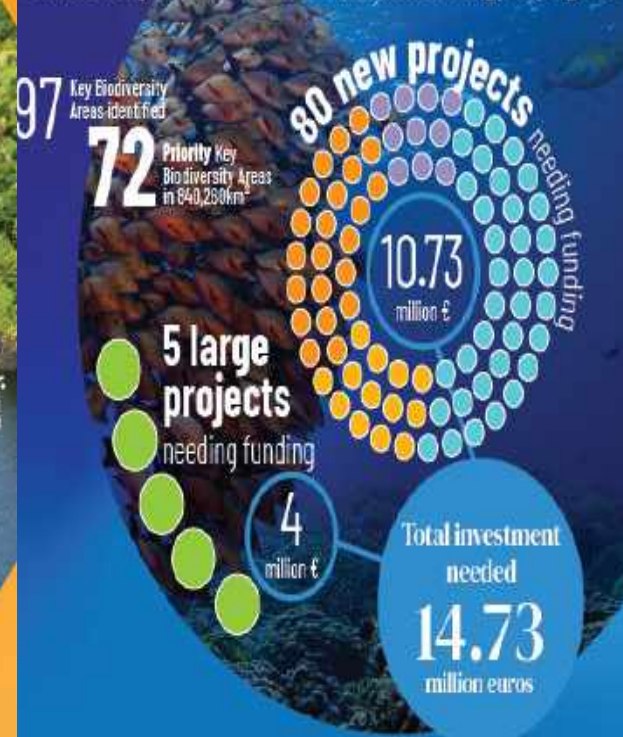
Amazon Ecosystem Profile and Investment strategy key figures



Macaronesia Ecosystem Profile and Investment strategy key figures



Pacific Ecosystem Profile and Investment strategy key figures



Polar and Subpolar ecosystem Profile and investment strategy key figures



2014-2017 Consultation efforts for the Ecosystem Profile and the Regional Investment Strategy

Led by the WWF France, the consultation for the Ecosystem Profile and the Regional Investment Strategy mobilized more than 50 stakeholders from 20 organizations (government institutions, civil society and research organizations). Over 20 formal consultations and workshops were organized and, between 2016 and 2017, 7 regional meetings were held.

2014-2017 Consultation efforts for the Ecosystem Profile and the Regional Investment Strategy

Over 123 regional stakeholders were mobilized for the BEST III Ecosystem Profile and Regional Investment Strategy, from government organizations, the scientific community, NGOs and the private sector. 21 workshops were organized across the three archipelagos between 2014 and 2016, in addition to specific interviews and expert consultancies.



NATURA 2000

Coordinated network of EU protected areas. Macaronesia, the only EU Overseas region included in the network, has 290 sites over 32,500 km² on land and sea. The BEST Ecosystem Profile for Macaronesia highlighted important gaps in conservation: - Territorial mismatches between Natura 2000 sites and identified KBAs - Many endangered species are not covered by European directives



2014-2017 Consultation efforts for the Ecosystem Profile and the Regional Investment Strategy

As illustrating the efforts: Over 280 stakeholders from 70 organizations (government institutions, civil society and research organizations) Over 20 formal consultations and workshops 7 regional meetings

Funding needs are 3,5 times more than the previous funding for BEST 2011-2017 calls:



2015-2017 Consultation process for the Ecosystem Profile and the Regional Investment Strategy

The consultation for the Ecosystem Profile and the Regional Investment Strategy within the framework of BEST III mobilized more than 150 stakeholders from civil society, government institutions and research organizations of Polar and Subpolar OCEs. Five workshops were organized: one in Nuuk, Greenland, and four in Paris, France, in addition to numerous bilateral exchanges and consultations.





Results



- ✓ **7 regional ecosystem profiles**
 - > **400 key biodiversity areas (KBAs) & ecological corridors identified (3.5 million km²)**
- ✓ **7 regional investment strategies**
 - > **450 projects ready-to-be funded projects identified as investment niches**
 - > **€ 90 million funding needs next 5 years**
- ✓ **1 Overview of existing biodiversity lists species, habitats + recommendations**





Results

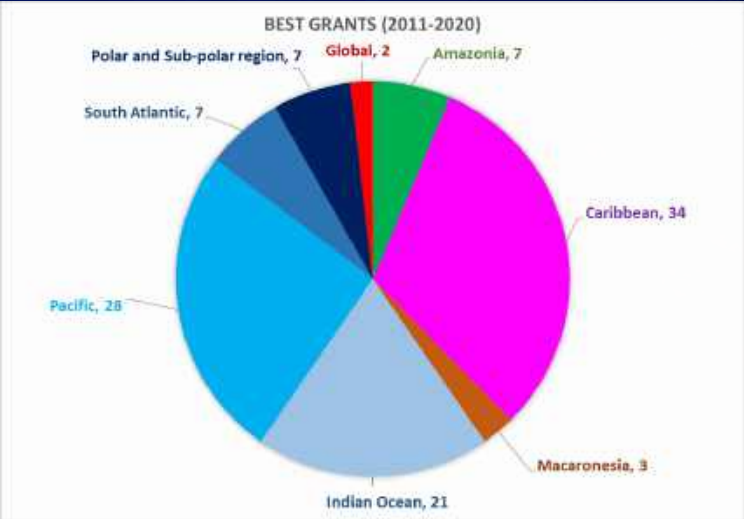
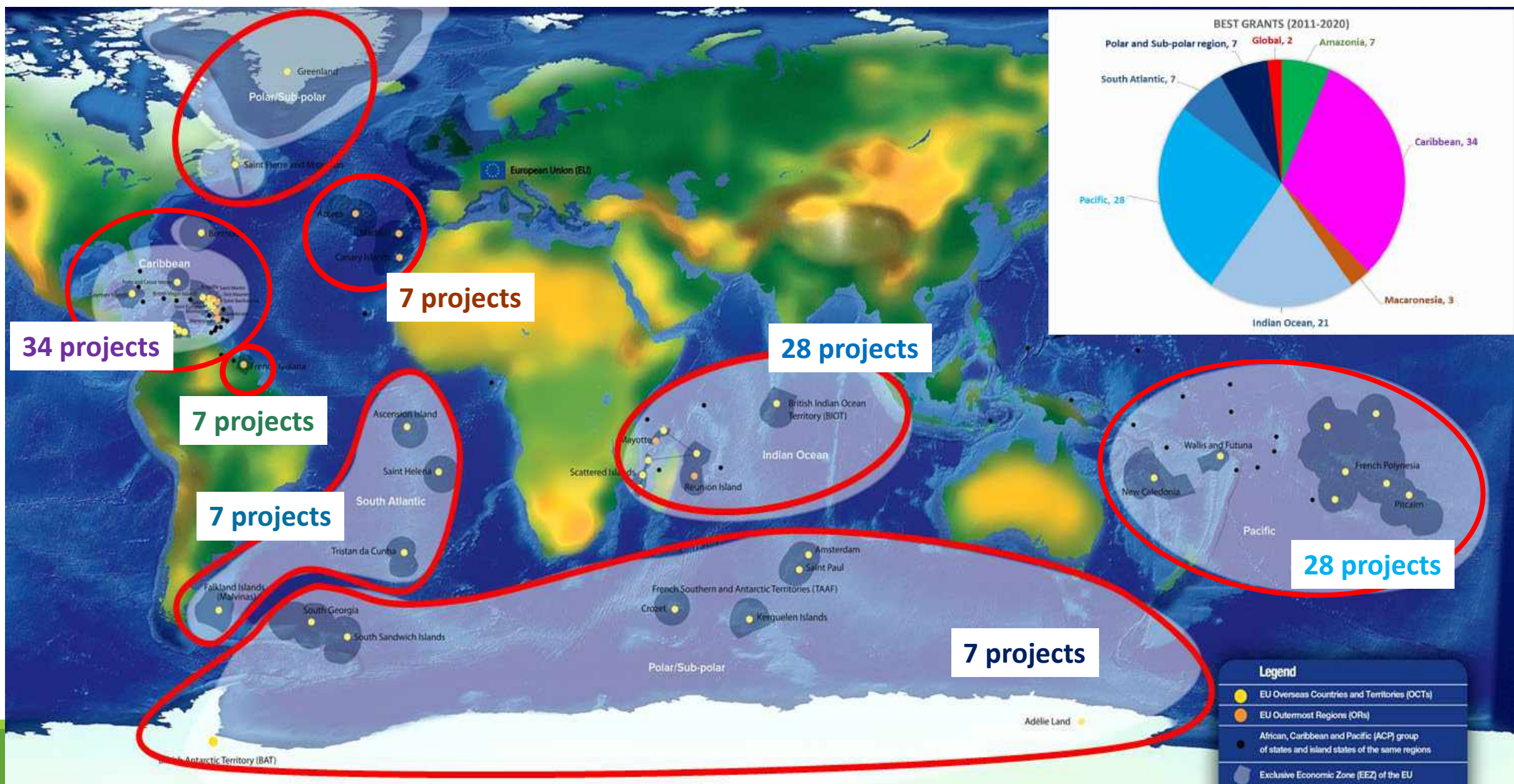
- ✓ **109 projects funded – 20 M :**
- **+ new to come in 2021 !**



on-going-call for proposals



on-going call for proposals



Legend

- EU Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)
- EU Outermost Regions (ORs)
- African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states and island states of the same regions
- Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the EU



Awakening vocations :
more than **120 jobs** created



Involving communities and citizens :
more than **650 volunteers** mobilised



Capacity building :
More than **100 workshops** organised



Raising awareness :
More than **500 awareness-raising events**
reaching circa **50,000 people**





Enhanced conservation measures :

More than **475,000 km²** of marine and coastal areas
More than **1400 species** benefited from new inventories
12 new species discovered
3 new protected areas created



Sustainability & leverage effect :

more than **40 projects** continued
beyond BEST grants
More than **400 collaborations** initiated



BEST Impact Factsheets



PROJECT RESULTS

CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY, SUSTAINABLE USE OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES



- 395 km² covered by **invasive alien species prevention and control measures**.
- 3,492 km² benefited from **new assessments or analysis**, as below:



All the projects were dedicated to the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services, with a focus on terrestrial areas (60%). Project amounts ranged from €6,000 to €400,000.



- An **updated assessment** (inventory) was carried out for **236 species**.
- **11 new species discovered for the first time**: Colubrina, Cynorkia, Diapryas, Erythroxylum, Gagnebina, Gymnastrophon, Kadrostis, Valkomeria, Brientalius, Echinalampas, Metalia sp.
- **28 endangered species benefited** from protection measures.



PROJECT RESULTS

CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY, SUSTAINABLE USE OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES, CLIMATE CHANGE



- Immense marine areas were covered by the projects, including the **67 million hectares** of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands.
- **1 new Marine Protected Area (MPA)** of **1,900 km²** was created in Melville Bay, Greenland.



- **40 species** were studied, from birds to zooplankton and whales.



- **40% of the projects** contributed to climate change mitigation or adaptation.

<https://www.best2plus.org/>
<https://www.life4best.org/en/home>



A European Initiative of international importance

Decision of the CBD COP XI/15 on the Review of the Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity mentions the BEST initiative among the “the progress on sustainable financing mechanisms developed in island regions for climate change and Biodiversity”.

BEST Challenge

BEST initiative as the first interregional GLISPA challenge



“BEST has helped to raise awareness for the ecological importance of the Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories for conserving global biodiversity and we are working together with the partners to transform BEST into a sustainable partnership.” - Humberto Delgado Rosa, Director Natural Capital, European Commission Directorate General for Environment

“BEST not only offers an opportunity to cope with problems, but also to engage with sovereign states, islands and I want to see this strengthened.” - Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Director, Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity



The BEST Challenge is a commitment to promote conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services, including ecosystem-based approaches to climate adaptation and mitigation in the EU overseas. This will be achieved through strengthening collaborations between sovereign island nations, countries with islands and EU overseas entities by sharing island-led solutions to global challenges. The Challenge also aims to inspire others in the international community to join the movement to build resilient and sustainable island communities around the world.

Launched by the European Commission with the Deputy Premier of the British Virgin Islands during a high level event at the 13th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-13) in December 2016, the BEST Challenge is the first interregional challenge to be promoted through GLISPA.



- ✓ [EU Council Conclusions](#) end of 2015
- ✓ [European Parliament Resolutions](#) on the Mid-term review of the EU's Biodiversity Strategy (Feb 2016)
- ✓ Political Declaration of the OCT Ministerial Conference (March 2017)
- ✓ Voluntary SDG 14 Commitment by the European Commission
- ✓ In LIFE Programme Regulation 2021-2027



Lessons learned

- **Small grants can have an important impact not only locally but as well at the EU and international levels**
- **Diversity of needs and capacities requires a diversity of tools and mechanisms that can play in synergy and complementarity**
- **When enabled, local stakeholders and citizens can make a difference : they are key for the EU Biodiversity strategy implementation**
- **Funding needs remain : the Preparatory Action should get a political answer and the BEST initiative should be pursued**

Thank you!



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