

# Newsletter, July 2014

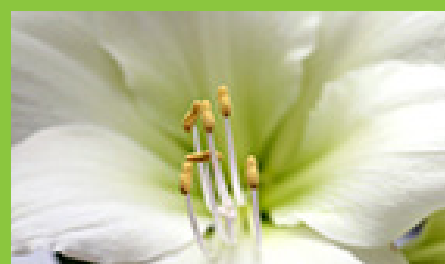
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## The Partners

Fondation pour la Recherche sur la Biodiversité, FRANCE, Coordinator

Fonds zur Forderung der Wissenschaftlichen Forschung, AUSTRIA

Belgian Science Policy Office, BELGIUM

Bulgarian National Science Fund, BULGARIA

Estonian Research Council, ESTONIA

Agence National de la Recherche, FRANCE

Ministère de l'Écologie, du Développement Durable et de l'Énergie, FRANCE

Projekträger im Deutschen Zentrum für Luft-und Raumfahrt e.V., GERMANY

Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, GERMANY

Ministry of Rural Development, HUNGARY

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Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning, SWEDEN

Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, SWEDEN

Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, TURKEY

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, UNITED KINGDOM

Joint Nature Conservation Committee, UNITED KINGDOM

Natural Environment Research Council, UNITED KINGDOM

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BiodivERsA is pleased to announce the results of its 5th joint call that was launched in November 2013 jointly with the FACCE-JPI (Joint Programming Initiative on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change). On behalf of all BiodivERsA partners, I would like to congratulate the research teams of the selected projects, and thank the evaluation committee members and the agencies for contributing to the high quality of the call and associated procedures.

## **“interactions with European and international initiatives will be at the heart of future BiodivERsA’s activities”**

This joint activity with FACCE-JPI has proven to be a real success: pending funding decision, 8 to 10 projects, involving teams from ten different European countries will be funded for a total amount of 9.2 to 10.3 million euro. Joining forces with FACCE-JPI was a very positive experience. It allowed addressing a cross-sectorial issue, promoting more integrative science and attracting more funders. It also underlined the complementarities between the two initiatives – BiodivERsA and FACCE-JPI – and their ability to collaborate in a constructive way. Further opportunities for collaboration with FACCE-JPI, going beyond the implementation of a joint call, will be explored in the future with the objective to implement other strategic joint activities and to build a fruitful long-term relationship.

In the coming years, developing interactions with European and international initiatives addressing biodiversity and ecosystem services issues will be at the heart of BiodivERsA’s activities. At the European level, a particular attention will be paid to engaging with other JPIs addressing themes linked to biodiversity. Thanks to a collaboration plan between partners of BiodivERsA2 and of the former NetBiome ERAnet, the relationships with overseas regions will also be reinforced to better integrate overseas scientific communities and tackle the challenge of biodiversity loss and degradation of ecosystem services in these regions. At a global scale, BiodivERsA is willing to build links with international initiatives funding research and addressing biodiversity issues. For example, discussions have been initiated, with the Belmont Forum in view of its forthcoming call on “Scenarios of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services” to be launched early 2017.

BiodivERsA’s commitment to the development of partnerships and collaborations offers multiple benefits. It will contribute to reinforcing the coherence of the European Research Area on biodiversity and ecosystem services, create synergies among European initiatives and avoid redundancies and gaps in the field. These collaborations also offer an opportunity for BiodivERsA to foster the impact of the European research community at the global scale.

With all these collaborative actions, BiodivERsA demonstrates its ability to increase its international and cross-sectorial dimension, which is a major challenge for the European Research Area on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

**Xavier Le Roux**  
Coordinator and CEO of BiodivERsA  
xavierleroux@hotmail.fr

# Results of the joint BiodivERsA/FACCE-JPI call 2013-2014: 8 to 10 pan-European projects proposed for funding for 9 to 10 M€

The results of the BiodivERsA/FACCE-JPI joint call, launched on November 2013 on « Promoting synergies and reducing trade-offs between food supply, biodiversity and ecosystem services » are now available.

The call addressed the following themes:

> **To what extent can biodiversity better support agro-ecosystems / agricultural production systems in terms of multi-functionality and outcomes in a global change context?**

> **Which policies and governance systems can promote the emergence and support of agro-ecosystems / agricultural production systems benefiting from and beneficial to biodiversity and ecosystem services?**

52 full proposals were reviewed by an independent evaluation panel. Using external reviews, the panel members evaluated the scientific excellence and societal impact of the proposals and decided on a ranked list of projects.

Strictly respecting this list, the Call Steering Committee – composed of BiodivERsA and FACCE\* partners participating to the call – has shortlisted the top-ranked research projects (8 plus 2 that are presently on a waiting list pending final funding decisions) for a total funding amount of 9.2 to 10.3 Million €. The 10 shortlisted projects encompass a range of pressing scientific and societal issues. The final list of funded projects will be available in October 2014 at the latest.

\*FACCE-JPI: Joint Programming Initiative on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change.

Website: <https://www.faccejpi.com/>

## LIST OF THE 8 SHORTLISTED PROJECTS

**BASIL:** Landscape-scale biodiversity and the balancing of provisioning, regulating and supporting ecosystem services

**Eco-serve:** Sustainable provisioning of multiple ecosystem services in agricultural landscapes

**ECODEAL:** Enhancing biodiversity-based ecosystem services to crops through optimized densities of green infrastructure in agricultural landscapes

**Ecofruit:** Managing ecosystem services for fruit production in different European climates

**PromESSinG:** Management concept for Central European vineyard ecosystems: Promoting ecosystem services in grapes

**STACCATO:** SusTaining AgriCultural ChAnge Through ecological engineering and Optimal use of natural resources

**TALE:** Towards multifunctional agricultural landscapes in Europe: Assessing and governing synergies between biodiversity and ecosystem services

**VineDivers:** Biodiversity-based ecosystem services in vineyards: analysing interlinkages between plants, pollinators, soil biota and soil erosion across Europe

## COMPLEMENTARY WAITING LIST:

**CP<sup>3</sup>:** Civil-Public-Private-Partnerships and collaborative governance approaches for policy innovation to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services delivery in agricultural landscapes

**BEEHOPE:** Honeybee Conservation centres in Western Europe: an innovative strategy using sustainable beekeeping to reduce honeybee decline.



# Two new policy briefs published!

BiodivERsA has published two additional policy briefs based on the projects BeFoFu and Ecocycles (funded via the 2008 Call on “linking scientific advancement to policy and practice”). Two additional BiodivERsA policy briefs are expected to be published in the course of this year (on the projects Peatbog and LinkTree).

By producing policy briefs, BiodivERsA aims at disseminating the funded projects’ outputs to relevant stakeholders and policy makers in the EU institutions and European national governments and providing them with specific recommendations.

To achieve this goal, the consortium partnered up with IUCN Europe and thus benefits from an expertise in knowledge brokerage and identification of relevant policies.

- The “Natura 2000 and Europe’s forests” policy brief is based on the BeFoFu project lead by Dr. Georg Winkel. It outlines the ecological challenges related to the management of protected forests and governance challenges related to the implementation of Natura 2000. This policy brief describes these socio-ecological challenges, presents key research results, and outlines policy solution pathways towards improving the effectiveness of Natura 2000 with regards to the conservation and sustainable management of Europe’s forest.



- The “Conservation of small mammals and associated ecosystems” policy brief derives recommendations from the results of the Ecocycles project lead by Dr. Xavier Lambin. It underlines the importance of European policies (for example, the Common Agricultural Policy and the EU Strategy on Climate Adaptation) and actions in the context of the conservation of small mammals and other species which predate them. Recommended measures could contribute to improving the situation and reach the targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020.

Although BiodivERsA2 is coming to an end, the network intends to continue dissemination of key knowledge to policy makers and stakeholders, and will work on a series of new policy briefs derived from ongoing and newly funded projects under its joint calls (the 2010-2011 call on “biodiversity and ecosystem services and their valuation”; the 2011-2012 call on “Biodiversity dynamics: developing scenarios, identifying tipping points and improving resilience”; and the 2012-2013 call on “Invasive species and biological invasion”).

The series of policy briefs are made available on <http://www.biodiversa.org/policybriefs>



# BiodivERsA workshop on Nature-Based Solutions

On 11th and 12th June 2014, the BiodivERsA consortium organized a “horizon scanning workshop” in Brussels to investigate key future challenges and policy needs for research on biodiversity and ecosystem services at European level. In this context and along with the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, the “nature-based solutions” (NBS) concept has been emerging, calling for renewed needs of knowledge and actions. The NBS concept refers to the use of nature in tackling challenges such as climate change, food security, water resources, disaster risk management, etc. Going beyond the traditional biodiversity conservation principles, this concept intends to integrate societal factors such as poverty alleviation, socio-economic development and efficient governance principles.

As the concept of NBS is rising on the research policy agenda, it is important that the scientific community and national research funders start examining it more closely to further explore how societies can avoid degrading their natural capital and the wealth of valuable benefits it provides. The BiodivERsA horizon-scanning workshop provided an opportunity for BiodivERsA project scientists and BiodivERsA members to:

- Learn more about NBS through discussions with policy makers (different DGs from the European Commission were represented) and a range of stakeholders (NGOs, businesses, practitioners, etc.)
- Assess to what extent NBS have already been addressed in BiodivERsA-funded research projects
- Discuss how these NBS could be further investigated in the field of interest of participants. Produce lists of potential research priorities that could be considered by BiodivERsA’s strategic agenda
- Further strengthen collaboration with other BiodivERsA-funded research projects.



One output of the workshop was to identify different categories of NBS approaches (Fig.1-top) and to evaluate how BiodivERsA is actually addressing the NBS topic through a range of funded projects and calls (Fig.1-bottom).

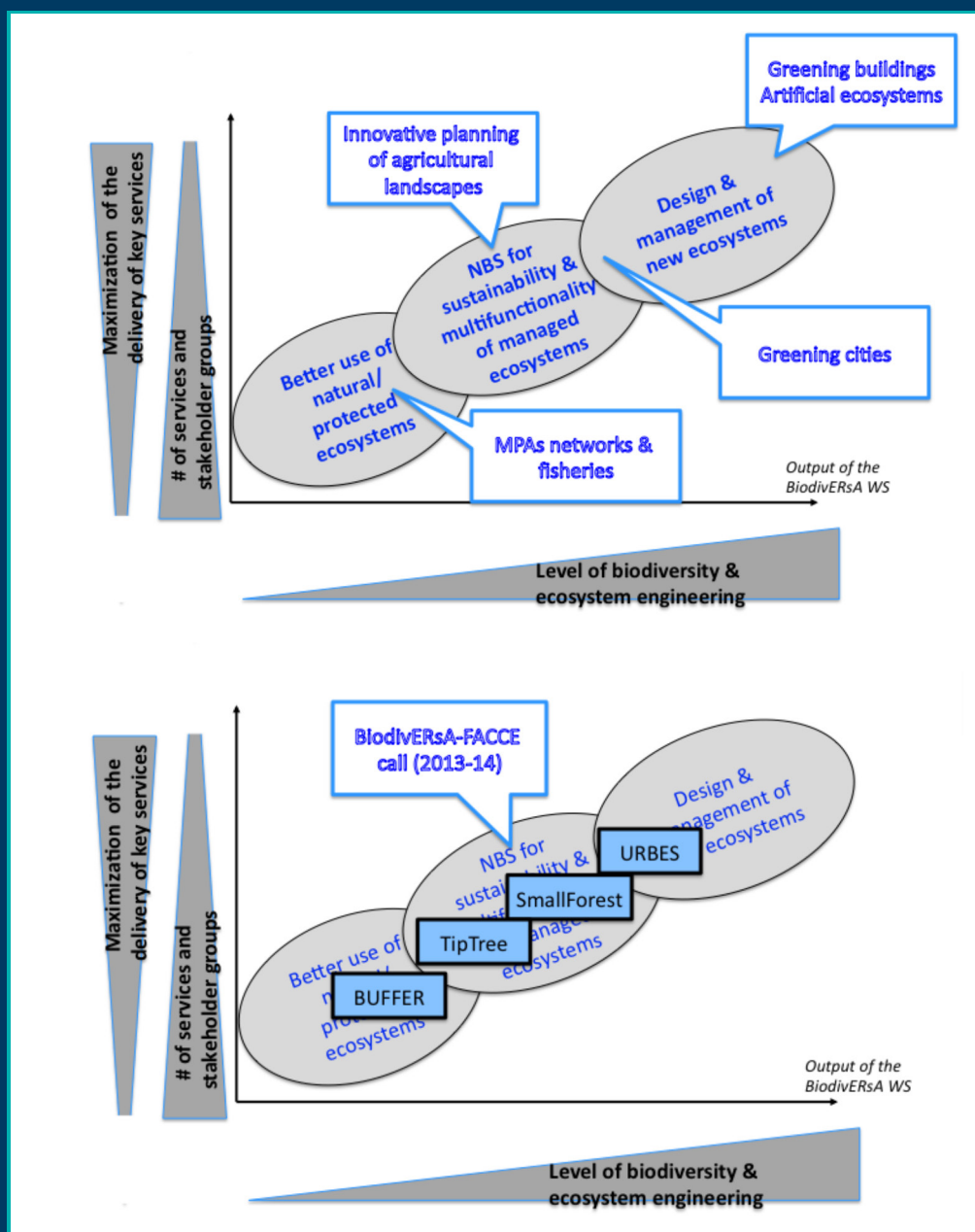


Figure 1 (top): Schematic representation of the range of NBS approaches to be considered, as identified during the BiodivERsA workshop. Three main types of NBS are defined, differing in the level of engineering applied to biodiversity / ecosystems (X axis), and in the number of services to be delivered, the number of stakeholder groups targeted, and the likely level of maximization of the delivery of targeted services (Y axis). Some examples of NBS located in this schematic representation.

Figure 2 (bottom): Some examples of NBS are located in this schematic representation. The type of NBS addressed by the BiodivERsA-FACCE call launched in late 2013 is also indicated.

This workshop was a great opportunity to involve scientists and stakeholders in the research development process from the start (identifying gaps of knowledge), and initiated a regular consultation with them to ensure they can contribute to the upstream discussions on emerging research issues. It further raised awareness on the importance of nature-based solutions for BiodivERsA's future work.



# BiodivERsA2 final conference and kick-off meeting for the 2012-2013 funded projects

On 2nd and 3rd October 2014, the consortium will hold its final conference as the second phase of BiodivERsA will come to an end in late 2014.

The final conference will be an opportunity to demonstrate the impact and added value of the network's achievements so far, and give insights on the future of the European Research Area on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The final conference will be organised in Paris, back-to-back with the kick-off meeting for the nine projects funded - for a total amount of 8,9 million euro - through the 2012-2013 call on "Invasive species and biological invasions".





# Partner profile

In the context of the joint call with FACCE-JPI, BiodivERsA has collaborated with new funding agencies, not presently members of the BiodivERsA consortium. You can read below a presentation of two of them: UEFISCDI in Romania and SNSF in Switzerland. Both could join BiodivERsA consortium in the near future.

## UEFISCDI

**The Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI)** is a public entity of the Central Administration under the authority of Ministry of National Education (MEN).

UEFISCDI supports the activity of MEN's consultative councils, coordinates 5 out of 6 national research programmes of the National Plan for Research, Development and Innovation (NPRDI) and manages in a decentralized system and/or implements projects concerning higher education, development and innovation with public and international financing.

The previous National Strategy for Research, Development and Innovation (2007-2013) focused on 9 major domains. Environment and Agriculture, food security and safety (AFSS) were very well represented, as they were allocated 26% of the total budget of NPRDI for applied research.

UEFISCDI is a national reference point, which occupied the first place in 2012 and the second position in 2013 in the list of entities accessing FP7 projects (European Research Ranking). The institution hosted the BFUG Secretariat and the online official website of Bologna Process between 2010-2012. Also, UEFISCDI was awarded by the World Futures Studies Federation with the «WFSF Award for Futures Institutions» in 2014. The prize confirmed the UEFISCDI role as part of the regional leadership of prospective studies.

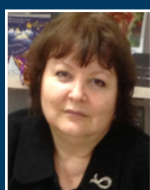


UEFISCDI is a member of different European associations (EARMA, EARTO); offers support to SME's through EUREKA, EUROSTARS, and administers the Romanian participation to the Joint Technology initiatives – JTI/JU (ENIAC, Artemis, Clean Sky, Fuel Cells, IMI). UEFISCDI also has strategic partnerships & cooperation agreements with several European research organisations (European Science Foundation – ESF, Swiss National Science Foundation – SNSF, and several national funding agencies from European countries).

Through the implemented projects, UEFISCDI made important contributions to the development of public policies for higher education, research, development and innovation (system functional analysis, policy proposals, strategic vision documents) in Romania and more broadly, in the international sphere. UEFISCDI is also involved in more than 20 international projects, most of them under ERA-NET Scheme and FP7.

In the context of the collaboration between BiodivERsA and FACCE-JPI, Romania participated in the call “Promoting synergies and reducing trade-offs between food supply, biodiversity and ecosystem services”. Since then, UEFISCDI has been involved in the call encouraging participation of Romanian scientific community to transnational projects.

For more information please see  
<http://en.uefiscdi.gov.ro/>



**NASTASIA BELC,**  
Senior Consulting



**ADRIAN ASANICA,**  
BiodivERsA 2 NCP



**LUCIANA BRATU,**  
Head of International  
Relations Department  
(UEFISCDI)

## SNSF

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) is mandated by the federal government to support basic science in all academic disciplines, from history to medicine and the engineering sciences. It was founded on 1 August 1952 by the scientific umbrella organisations of Switzerland. Its main tasks were and still are providing financial support for basic research projects in all academic disciplines and promoting young scientists. To date, SNSF is Switzerland's foremost research funding organisation and finances over 3,400 projects involving 14,000 researchers each year. To ensure its independence, the SNSF was established as a private foundation in 1952. Its core task is the evaluation of research proposals. Every year, the SNSF awards approximately CHF 800 million to outstanding researchers. By awarding public research money based on a competitive system, the SNSF contributes to the high quality of Swiss research.

In close collaboration with higher education institutions and other partners, the SNSF strives to create optimal conditions for the development and international integration of Swiss research. It pays particular attention to the promotion of young researchers. In addition, it accepts evaluation mandates to ensure that large Swiss research initiatives funded by third parties deliver the highest scientific quality.



The international activities of the SNSF are targeted towards Europe and beyond. The prime focus of the SNSF's international activities is to remove obstacles to international co-operation and facilitate cross-border collaboration between research groups. The SNSF is therefore pursuing two main goals, namely raising scientific capacities in developing and transition countries to an international level and giving Swiss researchers access to research groups in those countries as well as supporting existing co-operation with emerging, industrialised and European countries, facilitating new initiatives and securing access to European Framework Programmes and other international research programmes for Swiss researchers.

While SNSF's main focus remain the funding of excellent curiosity-driven projects, it engages 19% of its fund in ten National Research Programmes (NRP). The NRP on 'sustainable use of soil as a resource' covered thematic areas linked to the activities of the Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) on Agriculture, Food security and Climate Change (FACCE) and that of the BiodivERsA ERA-Net. Overall, the SNSF is active in 12 ERA-Nets and 4 JPIs.

For more information please see  
<http://www.snf.ch/en/>



**PASCAL WALTHER**

is scientific officer at SNSF in charge of the NRP  
on sustainable soil, among others.



## Upcoming activities

### Upcoming workshops and events:

- Final conference of BiodivERsA2 (2nd of October 2014)
- Kick-off meeting for the 2012-2013 funded projects (3rd of October 2014)

## Upcoming publications

- **Brochure on BiodivERsA 2012-2013 funded projects through the call on invasive species and biological invasion** – To be published in September.

*It presents the selection process used in the call, and the results of the call in terms of funding amounts, success rate, main call themes addressed, main environments covered, and type of disciplines mobilized. Each project selected for funding is presented.*

- **Brochure on the type of biodiversity research funded in Europe** – To be published in September.

*The brochure analyses the kind of biodiversity research projects that is funded in Europe, and the temporal evolution of the main themes of biodiversity research funded. The complementarities and differences of biodiversity research funded between national agencies are also presented.*

- **Stakeholder engagement handbook** – To be published in September.

*This handbook provides research project teams with best practice guidelines on how to better plan and engage with non-academic stakeholders, including policy makers.*

- **Brochure on the major outputs of the 2008 funded projects** – To be published in late September 2014.

*It will present the major outputs and publications of the 2008 funded projects, aiming to highlight their scientific results but also key products of particular interest for stakeholders including policy makers.*

- **Two additional policy briefs** – To be published this year.

*Two policy briefs presenting policy recommendation based on the outputs of the Peatbog and LinkTree projects.*

## BiodivERsA partners

FRB, France (Coordinator) - FWF, Austria - BelSPO, Belgium - BNSF, Bulgaria - ETAG, Estonia - ANR, France - MEDDE, France ONEMA (observer), France - DFG, Germany PT-DLR, Germany - VM, Hungary - RCL, Lithuania - NWO, The Netherlands - RCN, Norway - NCN (observer), Poland - FCT, Portugal - MINECO, Spain - FORMAS, Sweden - SEPA, Sweden - MFAL, Turkey - DEFRA, UK - JNCC, UK - NERC, UK.

**Contributors:** Claire Bléry, Hilde Eggermont, Frédéric Lemaître, Xavier Le Roux

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### For more information:

#### Coordinator

Xavier Le Roux

Fondation pour la Recherche sur la Biodiversité

xavierleroux@hotmail.fr

Ph.: +33 (0) 6 31 80 38 20

#### Secretariat

Frédéric Lemaître (Executive Manager)

Frederic.lemaître@fondationbiodiversite.fr

Ph.: +33 (0) 1 80 05 89 37

Claire Bléry (Coordination and Management Assistant)

Claire.bléry@fondationbiodiversite.fr

Ph.: +33 (0) 1 80 05 89 36

Fondation pour la Recherche sur la Biodiversité

195, rue Saint Jacques 75005 Paris, France

