

Making people part of ecosystem restoration

KEY POINTS FOR POLICY-MAKERS

Why is participation so important for nature restoration?

Gain knowledge



Nobody knows the local context better than the people there

Win acceptance



Success of measures largely depends on stakeholder support

Build alliances



Local advocates are key to convince others, promote success and scale out restoration

Boost benefits



Consider all land use interests to maximize social and economic benefits of restoration

How to develop restoration policy inclusively?

Co-design measures

Involve all relevant actors and knowledge holders in choosing suitable restoration aims and measures as well as developing effective incentive systems

Re-think consultation

Establish meaningful two-way communication through dialogue formats, workshops, iterative processes etc.



Stakeholder dialogues during the Aterno Valley Model Forest Project, Italy (Photo: Alessio di Giulio)

How to ensure participation throughout implementation?

Scale up funding & improve access

Make sufficient money easily available to local authorities, communities and bottom-up initiatives to implement their local restoration priorities

Engage people

Dedicate funds, time and staff to local co-design: reach out, build trust, understand the context, discuss concerns and develop locally adapted multi-benefit solutions

Ensure flexibility & adaptability

Provide a funding framework that lets actors incorporate local ideas, react to changing circumstances and keep learning and improving

Think long-term

Offer long-term funding to monitor restoration success, ensure continued maintenance, build lasting local partnerships and scale out solutions

Which legal obligations exist for making people part of nature restoration?

EU Nature Restoration Law

Art. 14 (20): Member States **shall ensure** that the preparation of the restoration plan is open, transparent, inclusive and effective and that **the public, including all relevant stakeholders, is given early and effective opportunities to participate** in its preparation. Consultations shall comply with the requirements set out in Directive 2001/42/EC.

Art. 15 (3): Each Member State **shall include** the following elements in the national restoration plan [...]: a summary of the process for preparing and establishing the national restoration plan, including **information on public participation** and of **how the needs of local communities and stakeholders have been considered**;

Preamble (83): They should put in place the **necessary measures to engage** local and regional authorities, landowners and land users and their associations, civil society organisations, business community, research and education communities, farmers, fishers, foresters, investors and other relevant stakeholders and the general public, **in all phases of the preparation, review and implementation** of the national restoration plans, and to foster dialogue and the diffusion of science-based information about biodiversity and the benefits of restoration.



Children helping to restore a drained wetland (Photo: S. Wulf)

Imprint

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It presents outcomes of the European expert workshop **“Making people part of ecosystem restoration in Europe”** held by BfN on 17th-19th October 2023 in Bonn.

For more information, also consider our guidance for practitioners and watch our short film about people-centered restoration.

