



Luxembourg, 31 May 2025

Environmental and Social Completion Sheet (ESCS)

Overview

Project Name:	REWILDING EUROPE (NCFF)
Project Number:	2015-0607
Country:	Regional EU
Project Description:	Cornerstone investment in a fund targeting sustainable land use projects, promoted by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment at Completion

EIB notes the following Environmental and Social performance and key outcomes at Project Completion.

Environmental assessment: The Rewilding Europe project aimed to strengthen natural processes and revive socio-economic dynamics in rural areas across Europe. The project supported ecosystem restoration and sustainable forestry in Finland and Portugal, aligning with the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. Contributions to maintaining and creating habitats, supporting wildlife comeback, and managing Natura 2000 sites were partially successful. Efforts to connect protected areas and secure land rights over natural corridors contributed to resilient green infrastructure. Despite achieving these contributions on a smaller scale than initially envisioned, the project made notable strides towards EU policy objectives.

Social Assessment: The project aimed to counter land abandonment in Europe's remote rural areas by identifying alternative ways of generating cash revenues and reviving social and economic dynamics. This was achieved by developing new nature and wildlife-centric economies. The project created 11 permanent full-time equivalent jobs, falling short of the initial target of 35 jobs due to reduced investment scale, with only three projects financed instead of the planned 20+. Despite these challenges, the project contributed positively to the EU's cohesion policy objectives by investing in two less developed regions in Portugal and Finland.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement: The project promoter engaged in constant dialogue with local stakeholders and worked directly with local communities impacted by project activities. Targeted consultations and workshops were held to explain the benefits and opportunities of protecting and learning about large predators.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects: Monitoring indicators to track progress on maintaining and increasing biodiversity were established together with the promoter, both at the portfolio and individual project levels. All investees committed to contributing to the objectives of the EU's Biodiversity Strategy and the LIFE objectives.

Key outcomes: the broader Rewilding Europe (RE) initiative and the European Rewilding Network (ERN)¹ under which the EIB financed operation was designed, has achieved relevant progress across its performance indicators. Achievements include the increase of operational rewilding areas from eight in 2016 to ten in 2022, and the expansion of land under rewilding agreements from 36,000 to 80,000 hectares. Out of 36 indicators, 11 met their 2022 targets, and 7 reached over 75% of their targets. The project also saw the reintroduction of 14 wild species and the creation of 68 jobs through rewilding enterprises. The number of national and international media visits to rewilding areas rose to 130. The overall progress demonstrated the project's positive impact on biodiversity and socio-economic development.

¹ [Rewilding Europe's Strategic Plan for 2021–2030: A Summary](#)



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Summary opinion of Environmental and Social aspects at completion:

EIB is of the opinion that, based on reports from the promoter and site visits conducted by the EIB team during construction, the project has been implemented in line with EIB Environmental and Social Standards, applicable at the time of appraisal. The project is expected to deliver net positive environmental and social impacts.