P2GREeN Good Practice Summary

The problem and proposed solutions

Guimarães City Hall is aware of the importance of defining best guidelines and strategic Biodiversity plan in order to **P**rotect and **P**romote Urban areas. It is crucial to have an integrated Urban Biodiversity Plan adding Value to the City **Green** areas, so citizens can enjoy/respect it. Moreover, the plan should contribute towards increasing the autochthone species importance and the added value of it. Thus, sensitizing, educating and involving citizens and local stakeholders through a strong leadership is one of the main objectives to be achieved. As consequence, a holistic approach (**P2GREeN**) addressing the need to promote the biodiversity in the city context was developed.

P2GREeN good practice comprises two main steps

1. Diagnostic/Characterization

1.1. Invasive Alien Species Plan Control

An initiative laying in characterizing, combating and monitoring invasive plant species was implemented.

1.2. Environmental Education – (Re)forestation (autochthone species)

An Educational/Environmental Awareness Program was developed, according to each child is invited to plant a tree and protect during all its growth stages. Private companies wanted to be a part of the project buying trees to be planted.

1.3. Creation of Biodiversity Database

A mobile app - "Biodiversity GO" - was created aiming to increase capacity to create a biodiversity database and also promoting nature tourism.

2. Valorise

2.1. Natural Routes

Biodiversity routes were created for enjoying the biodiversity of the region, promoting natural heritage, involving school community.

2.2. Promote species observation

With the purpose of educating and raise awareness of the community to the importance of protecting Biodiversity, the Guimarães Ornithological Observation Center was created.

2.3. Improvement Nature Tourism

Potential areas become more attractive for locals/tourists by promoting touristic nature-related activities relating nature and cultural events.

Timeframe, dates, important milestones

Development and implementation of this good practice started in 2015 as a part of a new project for the sustainable development of the territory, inserted in Guimarães Green Capital Candidacy.

P2GREeN good practice is still operating, because we are still collecting data, testing natural routes and improving our green urban areas.

The link to the specific strategy

The strategy described here, result from the project "Guimarães Getting Greener" http://www.cm-guimaraes.pt/pages/1092 and also from the scientific research and environmental education program developed by the Landscape Laboratory http://www.labpaisagem.pt.

The main outputs for achieving objective, innovative elements

1. Development of an app mobile – Biodiversity GO! – that was made under the citizens' science concept were people were invited to create the Guimarães biodiversity database.
2. Development and implantation of the Environmental Awareness Program PEGADAS that gathers more than 30 partners, contributing to the P2GrEeN holistic approach.
3. All projects and actions are monitorized by Landscape Laboratory, an institution created to think the territory and to promote biodiversity and also responsible for scientific monitoring of all actions developed.

Results achieved, monitoring

1. Mobile application "Biodiversity GO!" is available for download and contributions: https://appsto.re/pt/Pcjtib.i.

Citizen's contributions are also available on the official site of Landscape Laboratory: www.labpaisagem.pt/biodiversitygo

2. Educacional Programa PEGADAS - http://www.labpaisagem.pt/plano-de-atividades/

PEGADAS comprises more than 100 activities reaching all schools in the county. Forestation program allowed to plant more than 15.000 trees in Guimarães. Other initiatives generated from PEGADAS – Youth EcoParliament – allows students to propose solutions for biodiversity improvement.

Educational Program – (Re)Forestation – www.labpaisagem.pt/guimaraes-mais-floresta

Invasive Alien Species - http://www.labpaisagem.pt/especies-invasoras/

3. Nature Routes - http://www.guimaraesturismo.com/pages/171

Natural routes were already identified and integrated the city routes system. The routes were tested with citizens' participation with several events developed (https://www.facebook.com/labpaisagem/videos/1082120485205978/)

4. Birdwatching stations were constructed in several green urban areas.

Potential for re-use and improvement

It is our firm belief that P2GREeN good practice is of great interest to other EU cities, in particular those wishing to develop an integrated Urban Biodiversity Plan to protect/promote the biodiversity of their urban green areas. Its implementation can help cities to shape the pattern and distribution of urban biodiversity, contributing to specific social goals, such as community-based management, sustainable development and poverty reduction in cities.