

REPORT

“Living Lakes Partnership of Businesses and NGOs for Climate Change mitigation and adaptation”

World Congress on Wetland and Lake Restoration.

7th -9th May 2019, Valencia

Global Nature Fund

www.globalnature.org

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Brief summary of the event

Lakes and wetlands are particularly vulnerable against impacts of climate change. Only healthy lake ecosystems will be able to maintain their ecosystem services, which are essential for human beings as well as for their extraordinary biodiversity.

The 15th Living Lakes Conference: *“Living Lakes Partnership of Businesses and NGOs for Climate Change mitigation and adaptation. World Congress on Wetland and Lake Restoration”* in 2019 offered intense exchange on the impacts of climate change on fresh water ecosystems, their ecosystem services and their biodiversity. Experienced NGOs, scientific institutions and local authorities from Europe and international level contributed to appropriate and efficient mitigation and adaptation strategies that will help to protect the ecological functions of lake and wetland ecosystems and preserve their natural legacy for future generations.

The focus of the conference was on climate change mitigation and adaptation in lake and wetland regions. Conference delegates from governments, corporates and NGOs discussed and evaluated what – from municipal to federal level – can be done to contribute to climate protection and increase the resilience of lakes and wetlands as ecosystems as well as the resilience of local communities living around lakes against negative impacts of climate change. The conference also looked at the role of business and their responsibility in contributing to strategies for the protection of water ecosystems and their crucial services.

The event took place in Valencia, Spain, during three days, and in around 200 people from all around the world attended the event.

Below is a small summary for each day:

The focus of Day I was the partnership of businesses and NGOs for lake and wetland restoration and management, with parallel sessions on *“Organization, businesses and climate”*, *“Watershed management, water footprint and other tools”* and *“Payment for ecosystem services, project support, sponsoring: compensation or contribution or both?”* presented by different experts on the subjects.

On the Day II, a field trip was organized to showcase the ecological & cultural values and ecosystem services and conservation initiatives of lakes and wetlands in the Nature Park Albufera de Valencia.

Day III focused on how to increase resilience of water ecosystems and their ecosystem services against impacts of climate change, highlighting the restoration best practices and defining the role of businesses, society and NGOs in developing environmentally and socially responsible strategies to mitigate climate change and increase resilience against negative impacts of climate change and loss of biodiversity. Emphasis was put on an interactive exchange and to build a connection at the science-policy-society interface.

Structure of the EKLIPSE module, Day III: Speed Networking

Description

The restoration of lakes and their environmental protection and defence occurs worldwide. Living Lakes, under Global Nature Fund's umbrella, is the only network that brings together all people working in this field, facilitating the exchange of information and joining forces to make the relevance of lakes known worldwide. Therefore, one of the key goals of the Congress was the exchange of information among the stakeholders and create links between science, policy and society in order to share knowledge and best practices on lakes restoration. The speed networking methodology was presented, allowing the participating organizations to exchange information on best practices and create alliances among the participants with the same interests

Methodology

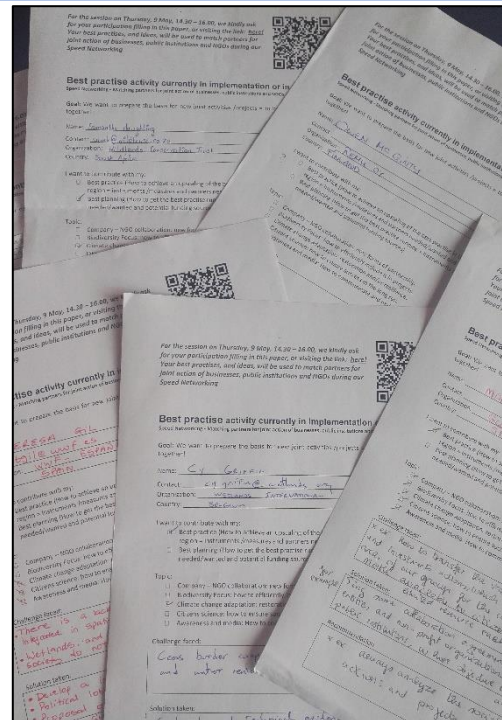
During the registration, a brief questionnaire was distributed among the participating companies, administrations, NGOs and other participants with questions regarding their plans and priorities on lake protection, watershed management and their best-cases (see Annex I).

In the afternoon of the third day, a Speed Networking was organized matching partners from the business sector, public institutions and NGOs for joint action highlighting their best examples.

For that, using the results of the questionnaires, the GNF team together with the table moderators allocated the different results to the different working groups according to the given answers. At the same time, moderators will also have that information from the stakeholders in order to facilitate the exchange of information during the dynamic.

The topics of the five "Networking tables" were:

- Biodiversity Focus: How to efficiently include that in projects.
- Climate change adaptation: restoration and/or resilience.
- Participatory monitoring: How to ensure success in the long run.
- Citizens science: How to empower citizens in bottom up actions.
- Awareness and media. How to communicate and make actions visible.



Picture 1: Filled questionnaires

Eight environmental organizations from European countries were moderating this workshop, bringing also their expertise on the addressed topics. This moderation tool helped to facilitate an extensive exchange between the participants from the different sectors and – possibly – provide a starting point for joint activities. An extra person from the Eklipse team (Judith Fisher) facilitated the dynamic.

The table moderators for each table were:

1. **Company – NGO collaboration: new forms of partnership:** Patrick Trötschler (Bodensee-Stiftung, Germany) + Jordi Domingo (Fundación Global Nature, Spain)
2. **Biodiversity Focus: how to efficiently include it in projects:** Margit Säre (Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation, Estonia) and Roman Guziak (Stowarzyszenie Ekologiczne "Etna", Poland)
3. **Climate change adaptation: restoration and/or resilience:** Zita Egerszegi (Hungary)+ Zsoka Sitzu (Association of Civil organisation of Lake Balaton, Hungary)
4. **Citizens science and participatory monitoring: how to ensure success in the long run:** Sarah Swindley (The Lake District Foundation, UK)
5. **Awareness and media: how to communicate and make actions visible:** Sebastian Winkler (Board Member GNF, Switzerland)



Picture 2: Preparation of the workshop during the Congress. Table Moderators, main moderator and GNF team

Results:

On the third Day of the Congress, Thursday 9 May, Judith Fisher, Chair of the EKLIPSE Restoration EWG, Member of the IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, Research Fellow at UWA African Research and Engagement Centre gave a keynote on Science-Policy-Society interface on Ecosystem Restoration



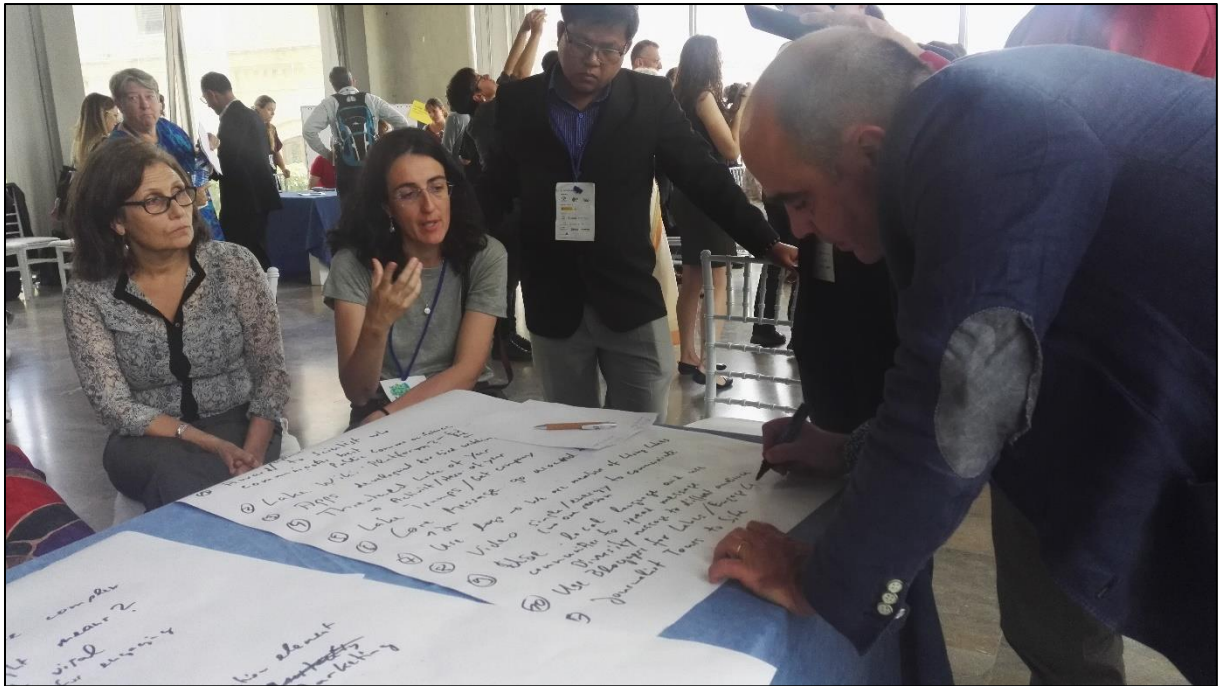
Picture 3: Judith Fisher, Keynote speech

Regarding the second part: Speed Networking: “matching partners for joint action of businesses, public institutions and NGOs on Lake Restoration”, took also place that day, from 14.30 until 16.00.

There was 90 minutes in total and five thematic tables. The participants could decide to stay in one single table – if they were interested in planning an activity or if they could contribute with experiences and best practices - or go to another topic every 20 minutes (see picture 4, 5, 6).

The most promising information was collected by the table moderators and shortly presented in a Wrap Up at the end of the session (see picture 7).

The Flip Charts or wall papers remained until the end of the conference and organisations interested could write down their contact information and make pictures of the contact lists and results.



Picture 4: During the Speed Networking I



Picture 5: During the Speed Networking II



Picture 6: During the Speed Networking III

Lessons learned and conclusion:

All the objectives that had been proposed with this dynamic were satisfactory fulfilled:

- There was exchange of information on best practices among participants.
- People presented their methodologies and lessons learned to the other participants.
- Participants with the same interests exchanged contacts.

The sum-up done by the table moderators helped as a summary of the most important points, although the real success of the workshops was achieved on the conversations and discussions held in the different tables. The role of the moderators of each table was crucial to give dynamism and expertise with their own experiences on each topic. We received good feedback from the participants, and although unfortunately it is difficult to estimate the number of alliances that may have emerged from this dynamic, we hope that people remain in contact and exchanging information.



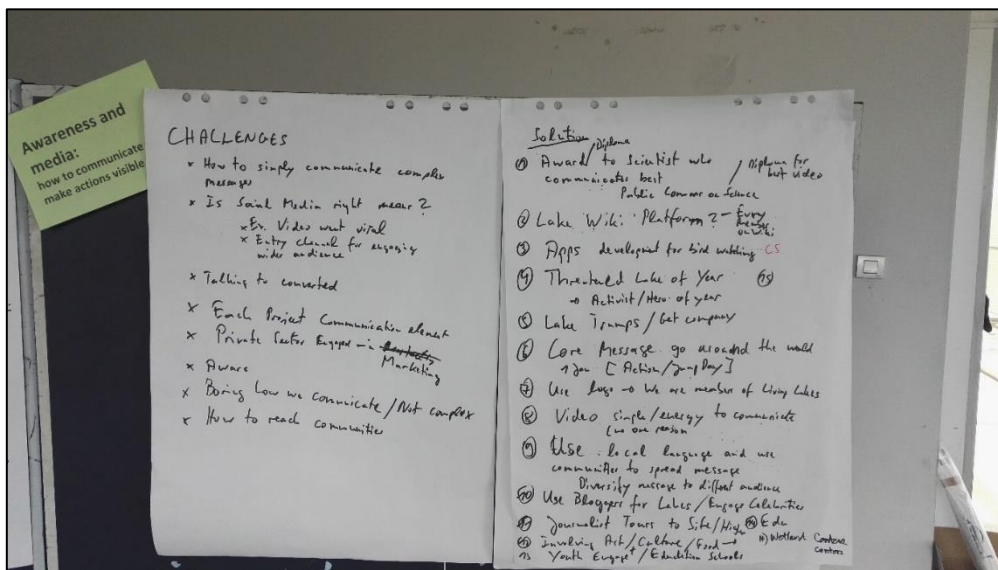
Picture 7: Short feedback of each thematic table

Pictures of the main results from the different topics:

The flip charts with the main results were left in the room until the end of the congress. People interested on them, could walk by and take pictures of them.

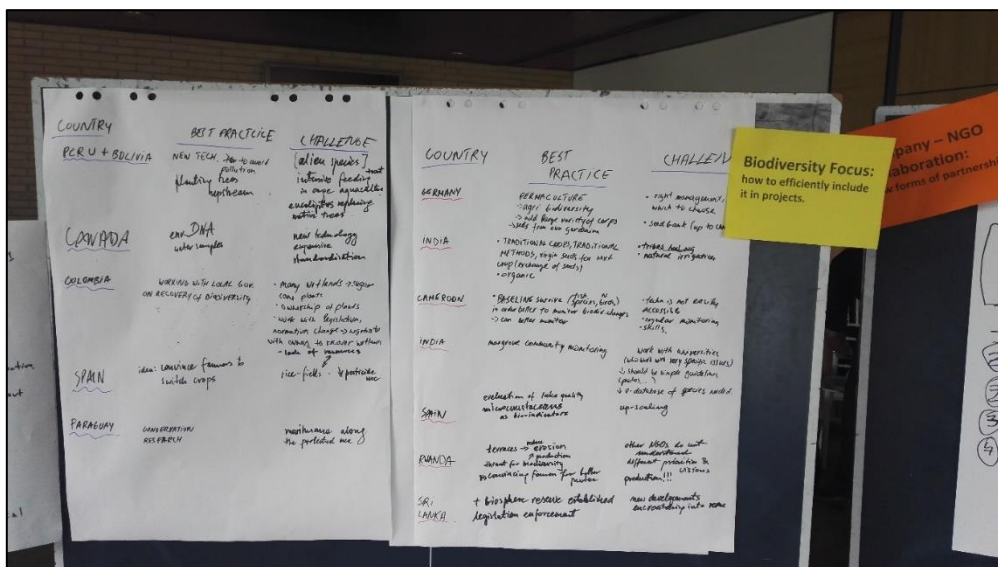
- **Awareness and media. How to communicate and make actions visible.**

Remarks: it is important to simply communicate complex information. Before launching a big campaign, the target group must be clear. It is important to use the local language, logos and a clear core message.



- **Biodiversity Focus: How to efficiently include it in projects.**

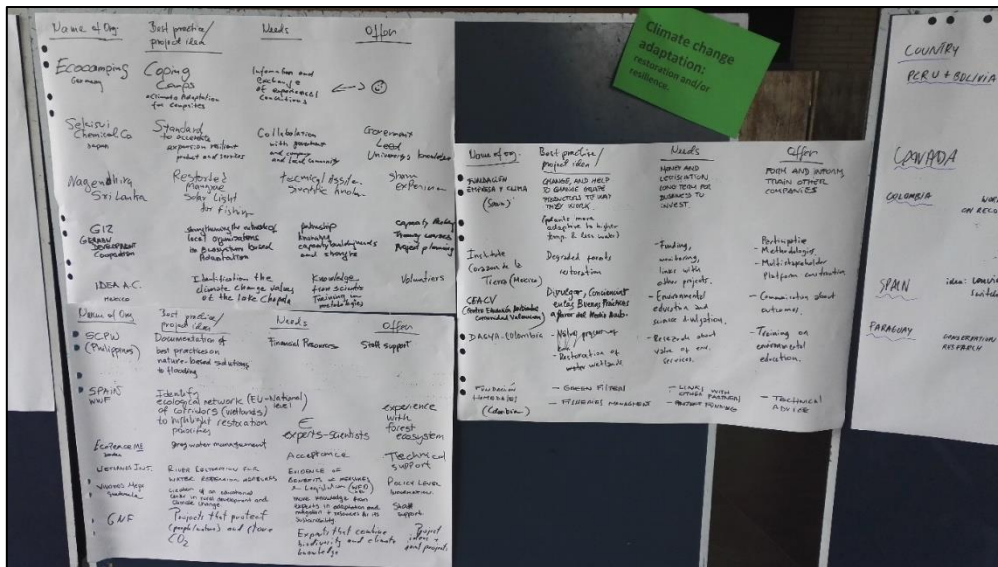
Remarks: this thematic-table categorized the best practices by country and challenges. Among the best practices of how to include biodiversity in projects, it was mentioned as clue factors:



involving the local communities and authorities, and bet for permaculture system and traditional crops.

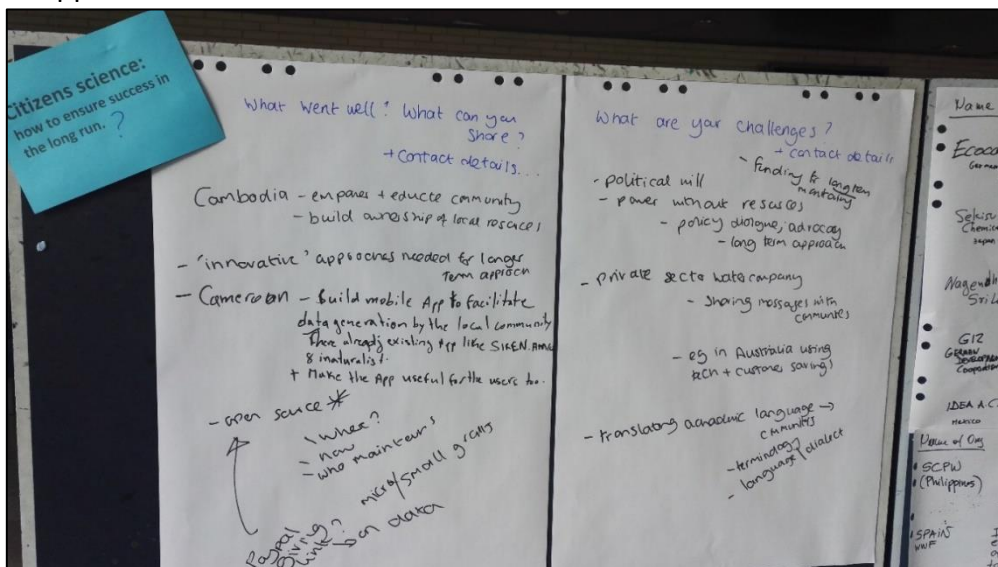
• **Climate change adaptation: restoration and/or resilience.**

Remarks: With the same format as in the table before, table moderators compiled different examples from partners, their best practise, their needs and what they offer. Best practices were about green filter, mangrove conservation, restoration, how collect and compile information for monitoring or successful awareness activities, among others.



• **Citizens Science: How to ensure success in the long run.**

Remarks: as in other tables, it is highlighted how crucial is to involve the local communities from the beginning of the project, give them trainings if they are not aware of the problem, and use the local language. Other best practice highlighted was the success of different telephone apps available for the local communities.



- **Company-NGO: new forms of collaborations**

Remarks: while the participants were sharing their experiences of collaborating with companies, table moderators collected the pro/cons of working with companies, being a NGO, and the opposite around. In general, the experience is positive and becomes like a partnership in the long run.

