

# **After-LIFE Communication Plan**

## **Including Replicability Guide for Project Products**

### **Trees for Europe's Green Infrastructure**

#### **TreesGreenInfra LIFE15 GIE/PL/000959**

## **1. Introduction**

### **Main objective**

**Improving the performance of trees as green infrastructure in rural and urban landscapes through better management practices, to maximise climate change mitigation and adaptation, and other benefits to the societies.**

### **Results highlights**

- Introducing trees along infrastructures as green infrastructure into regulations on EU level.
- Influencing over 21 national, regional, and local regulations concerning trees.
- Designing and promoting tree management standards for Poland, introducing nature conservation considerations into tree management guidelines in Germany.
- Strengthening grassroots activism in defence of trees in Poland and Germany.
- Fostering public acceptance of trees through media and promotional events (the Avenue Cultural Route Cycle Tour).
- Supporting international exchange of experience and activism in support of trees in other countries, particularly Czechia and Kaliningrad region of Russia.

### **Project Partners**

**Foundation for Sustainable Development** (Fundacja EkoRozwoju, FER), based in Wrocław, was the leader of the project. FER also was responsible for activities on national level in Poland, as well as regional level in Lower Silesia and locally in Wrocław.

**BUND Mecklenburg-Vorpommern** (BUND MV), based in Schwerin, was in charge of activities at national (federal) level in Germany and regional (land) level in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

**Eco-Initiative Association** (Stowarzyszenie Eko-Inicjatywa, SEI) of Kwidzyn conducted regional activities in Pomerania and Warmia-Masuria, as well selected nationwide activities.

## **2. After-LIFE communication approach**

The project Partners have been involved in conservation of tree avenues for over fifteen years. Based on that experience, they designed the LIFE project to make the regulatory environment in the EU, as well as in particular countries and regions, more supportive to trees in man-made landscapes. This was supplemented and enhanced with developing tree management standards and fostering grassroots tree activism. Thus, the project "Trees for Europe's Green Infrastructure" was not a one-time campaign: it built on past work, particularly a LIFE-supported "Roads for Nature" project and laid foundations for future efforts.

## Foundation for Sustainable Development

The Foundation for Sustainable Development will continue to focus on the following areas:

### 1. Influencing **legal environment**

Proposals for new regulations will be designed through expert work, in consultation with tree officers, conservation organisations, arborists, and community activists. Media will be approached to promote the concepts and diverse contacts with public officials and politicians will be used to reach the goal.

### 2. Support to **Tree Friends** movement

The movement will be supported, as in the past, with training, publications, advice, and interventions. The network will support the efforts to improve the law and to promote the tree management standards in localities.

### 3. **Tree Friends Forum**

The traditional country-wide meetings of tree activists, professionals, and public officials, will continue annually to bi-annually, in a format where most costs will be borne by participants.

### 4. Promotion of the **standards and guidelines**

This will be done through webinars, seminars, and advice, the website [www.drzewa.org](http://www.drzewa.org) and FB Przyjaciele Drzew as well as activities of Tree Institute (see below).

Activities/ projects under way in 2022 that continue and replicate the work of the LIFE project through FER, funded from diverse sources:

“Citizens for trees – trees for climate”, supported by the EEA funding facility from the “Active Citizens Programme” Regional Fund. It is aimed at strengthening local activism and helping to develop long-term strategies to protect trees:

<http://fer.org.pl/projekty/obywatele-dla-drzew-dla-klimatu/>

“Friends of Trees” – development of grassroots initiatives, supported from the Fund of Civic Initiatives NOWEFIO. The project is directed at networking for protection of local heritage – trees, avenues.

<http://fer.org.pl/projekty/przyjaciele-drzew-rozwoj-inicjatyw-obywatelskich-w-kraju/>

“Tree Wardens Network”, supported by Wujec Citizens’ Fund, fosters networking of local tree activists. <http://fer.org.pl/projekty/siec-straznikow-drzew/>

“We protect trees, with people and for people”, supported by the EEA facility. Focuses on drafting new legal acts to protect trees effectively, with public participation:

<http://fer.org.pl/projekty/chronimy-drzewa-z-ludźmi-i-dla-ludzi/>

### **Tree Institute**

The brand of Tree Institute was used since 2015 to conduct Certified Tree Inspector (CID) course, based on methodology created through the “Roads for Nature” LIFE project (LIFE11 INF/PL/467). The Institute was formally incorporated by FER and participating experts in January 2020 with the goal to assure that outcomes of the LIFE projects are disseminated and replicated via commercialisation. Since 2015, as of filing this report, 638 persons graduated from over 20 editions of the CID course conducted in several major cities. Main target groups are municipal tree officers, land managers, arborists. The experience gathered while teaching the course and conducting tree assessment contracts was a crucial contribution of TI experts to drafting the tree assessment standard.

The Tree Institute is now playing a pivotal role in promoting and replicating the project results:

- The tree management standards are used as teaching materials for participants of CID courses, many of whom represent local authorities and other potential standard users
- TI offers to local authorities webinars and training seminars on standard implementation. Recently, such events were conducted in Szczecin and Cieszyn. An offer was requested by the cities of Kalisz and Jastrzębie Zdrój. Cieszyn and Kalisz are interested in standard implementation and Szczecin is the city where newly adopted standards were partly based by our work. Jastrzębie implemented the standards as they are.
- TI offers consulting services on standard design and implementation, talks are under way with several municipalities.
- TI is involved in an international Erasmus project “Tree Assessor”, in which training materials on tree assessment are based on the tree assessment standard.
- TI is involved in an international Erasmus project “TeST” aimed at improving training of European Tree Technician, with the LIFE-generated standards as a basis for work.
- TI cooperates with European Arboricultural Council on creating more European standards for tree management, in addition to the pruning standard. So the work continues.
- TI began inviting to its courses Ukrainian tree officers at no cost. This led to the initiative to translate and adopt the standards for Ukraine.

The training courses and seminars of the Tree Institute are funded by clients and expected budget of the relevant activities is estimated as follows:

Certified Tree Inspector courses: € 700 x 25 people = € 17500, 6 courses per year: € 105000

Contracted training seminars in standard implementation: € 3000, 4 events per year: € 12000

Total per year: € 117 000

Total per 3 years: € 351 000

### **Cooperation with key partners**

In order to enhance replicability, additional partners were and are involved in the process of preparation and dissemination of project results.

#### **Association of Landscape Architecture**

Being a major partner of FER in elaboration of standard on trees on construction site, the Association promotes implementation of the standards at workshops and webinars, attended by landscape architects and public officials. Individual contacts of the professionals are also an important influence channel.

#### **Federation of Polish Arborists**

A partner in elaboration of the pruning standard, the Federation actively promotes it through its' internal communication. ID and FER held joint stands and events with the Federation at a national trade fair of the green industry in Poznań. This cooperation will continue.

#### **Polish Dendrological Association (PTD)**

This national association became an important dissemination forum for the project. The general meeting of PTD, scheduled for May 2022, will be an opportunity to disseminate standards among members and to establish a Tree Assessment Section of the Association.

#### **Polish Nurserymen Association**

By the time of writing this report, the Association conducted two webinars on tree management standards, implemented leading experts involved in the LIFE project.

### **Gaja Green Federation of Szczecin**

A former partner of FER in Roads for Nature programme, undertook further work on the roadside tree guidelines and dissemination. Gaja implements an Interreg project on avenue conservation with a neighbouring German county - an offshoot of the Roads for Nature programme.

### **Eco-Initiative Association**

The organisation will keep its commitment to protect and restore avenues in the region of Pomorze and Warmia-Mazury. Work with local and road authorities, as well as with regional government continues. Tree Friends, particularly those active in small rural communities will be supported.

Importantly, SEI will promote and provide support to **Check Trees** users and prospective users. “Check trees” (“Drzewa pod kontrolą”) is a flexible, pay-per-use solution, particularly practical for smaller and medium land managers such as communes and counties. Check Trees will be promoted via internet media and during seminars for local authorities and road managers. Tree Institute will disseminate the application while conducting trainings and courses in tree assessment.

SEI will continue working and disseminating guidelines for roadside trees management, in co-operation with road authorities.

Specific activities that build on the LIFE project and support its’ continuation and replication:

- “Caring for Trees” – trainings for tree officers, arborists and activists, in 2022, funded from the regional environmental fund, by a grant of € 6 000.
- A project to foster biodiversity in ancient avenues and to restore avenues, to be funded from regional EU funds, estimated grant € 370 000.
- Projects to protect and restore avenues in Natura 2000 “Avenues of Iława Lakeland, in partnership with county road authority.

### **BUND Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**

**BUND MV** will continue its work in support of avenue conservation in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and on federal level, such as:

- Taking part in further work of the parliamentary committee on avenues.
- Influencing the FLL (Forschungsgesellschaft Landschaftsentwicklung Landschaftsbau e. V.) committee on further updates of tree assessment and tree care guidelines.
- Working with the FSGV (Road and Transportation Research Association) committee on roadside trees guidelines.
- Implementing further young tree care seminars in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.
- Taking active part in periodic reviews of avenue conservation regulations in MV.
- Consulting and influencing plans to maintain, renovate and expand MV roads, where they have impact on trees.
- Promoting trees as green infrastructure at events on all levels, including presentations at nationwide arboricultural conference *Deutsche Baumpflegetage*. The edition in May 2022 included a full-day session on avenue trees, with lecturers from Germany and France – members of the European Avenue Working Group.
- Further cooperation with the *Alleenschutzgesellschaft* (Association for Avenue Conservation), where Katharina Dujesiefken serves as vice-president.

The activities are expected to be supported mainly by grants from the **Norddeutsche Stiftung für Umwelt und Entwicklung** (NUE), the fund that has supported BUND MV for many years and contributed to both LIFE projects. Future funding is expected to be commensurate with the past grants.

### **Communicating internationally**

Project Partners will use arising opportunities to present the project products at international meetings, such as:

- Deutsche Baumpflegetage in Augsburg
- European Forum on Urban Forestry
- Conference of the International Society for Arboriculture (in 2022 in Malmo)
- IENE – a bi-annual meeting on infrastructure and ecology

The Tree Institute implements **Erasmus+** projects with partners in numerous European countries: “TeST” and “Tree Assessor”. They are the mechanism to disseminate and further develop the LIFE project products.

**European Avenue Working Group**, created in the framework of “Roads for Nature” programme in 2012, will continue to meet and exchange experience. Opportunities for new international activities based on past experience will be explored.

**Ukraine.** As mentioned above, four employees of Lviv environmental department took part in a Tree Institute training on tree management standards in Cieszyn. After the event, they expressed strong interest in translating the standards into Ukrainian. A discussion in social media indicates that several cities are interested in introducing them, in addition to Lviv – Dnipro and Rivne. The Institute Chair (formerly the LIFE Project Leader) speaks Ukrainian and assists the new partners in the process.

**Expected funding for continuation of the activities** – approximate estimates for 3 years:

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| FER            | 141 200 EUR |
| Tree Institute | 351 000 EUR |
| BUND           | 220 000 EUR |
| EKOINICJATYWA  | 434 800 EUR |

**Total: 1 146 thousand Euro**

# REPLICABILITY PLAN /GUIDE

## for project products

The aim of this document is to provide a guidance on replicating project results beyond direct project activities. A more detailed guidance on implementation of the standards is included in “Standards for working in trees and their surroundings”.(see drzewa.org.pl).

The replication and transfer to new locations of the developed standards, guidelines, and good practices as well as the developed tools for tree management, can be done on several levels. At regional and national level by directly involving key project stakeholders - green infrastructure managers and regulators in Poland and Germany, at national level and in the model regions (Pomerania, Lower Silesia, Warmia and Mazury, Mecklenburg-Pomerania) and subsequent dissemination.

Networks of social partners in Poland and Germany are also a mechanism to foster replication and transfer. Through direct contacts and meetings with key institutions and organisations, cooperation will be established to integrate the effects of the project into strategic documents and subsequent practice in the European Union and its countries.

Also, the development of the European tree network serves to replicate and strengthen the transfer of project results to other countries. In the activities so far, we have seen that standards and good practices for trees and tree planting can be successfully adapted and transferred not only between regions, but also between countries.

Project results to be replicated

- Documents and regulations
  - o Standards
  - o Brochures
  - o Books
- Tree Friends network
- IT Tool

### Replication guidelines for standards

The standards and guidelines created by the project were long-awaited by local authorities, land managers, and the green industry. The way the standards have been formulated makes them highly replicable/transferable. Any local authority or land manager is able to simply approve them and implement as they are. The optimum result will be implementation of standards by local authorities. Implementation by businesses, such as arboricultural contractors, will contribute to further dissemination. At a very basic level, events to disseminate the standards served education of participants of all sectors and promotion of trees as green infrastructure. There are several main channels or vehicles of further dissemination and replication.

### Before implementation

- Identify which Standards may be subject to implementation
- Analysis of current status, including other standards, guidelines or procedures
- Analysis of the impact of implementation on the activities of the implementing entity

### Impacts of standards' implementation:

**Impact on strategy and image** - the implementation of the Standards will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the image of the institution, as it will increase the clarity of the institution's conduct in a particular area of activity.

**Impact on resources** - implementation usually involves necessary changes, including investments, in order to use the procedure more fully. These may be personnel changes (human resources with adequate competences), the way of managing the area where the procedure was implemented (appropriate division of tasks in the field and in the office) or required purchase of equipment to improve the implemented procedure. At the same time, it depends on the level of implementation and often does not involve costs greater than own or employee's time related to familiarisation with the implemented content. In the case of the implementation of Standards, the effort is likely to be largely one-off - to develop new content for documentation or orders - and is within the range of typical activities carried out in most target groups.

**Impact on relations with other entities** - the implemented Standard may streamline / accelerate legal and administrative proceedings. Justifies decisions made in a transparent and unambiguous manner.

**Impact on communication** - implementation should facilitate communication on many levels including with contractors, local and government authorities, the public or decision makers (relationship: employee / boss).

**Budgetary impact** - in the short term it may generate some expenses to implement and maintain the procedure (especially in the option where related tasks are outsourced to external companies), while in the long term it may generate savings, especially if the management and use of human resources with appropriate skills are changed.

**The impact on the efficiency of operations** - it will speed up administrative procedures, simplify property management or reduce the number of communication errors.

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| LEVELS OF USE OF THE STANDARDS | Improving own competences  |
|                                | Improving the competences of other process participants                                  |
|                                | Formulating expectations and guidelines towards contractors and the content of contracts |
|                                | Creating/changing the content of other documents (e.g. guides, templates)                |
|                                | Creating/supplementing normative acts (regulations, resolutions, orders)                 |

| <b>Standard for Tree Pruning and Care</b>  | <b>Standard for Tree Inspection and Diagnostics</b>  | <b>Standard for the Protection of Trees and Other Forms of Greenery in the Investment Process</b>  |
|--|--|--|
| The standard concerns the pruning of trees growing in green areas at different growth stages (from young to mature), including destroyed/damaged trees. It also includes recommendations for other work supporting the management of trees and safety in the vicinity of trees, such as mechanical reinforcement and maintenance work. | The standard refers to the rules for tree assessment, structures it and determines its procedures. It defines the principles of tree assessment at three levels: area assessment, basic assessment/inspection and specialist assessment, including instrumental diagnostics. It concerns the entire assessment process, including field data collection, their description, the preparation of documentation and its use in recommendations. | The standard concerns the protection of all trees, shrubs and other greenery, in the vicinity of which works related to the investment process are planned and carried out. The standard indicates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the procedures and methods of greenery protection in relation to the investment stage,</li> <li>- tools for the protection of greenery and methods of their use,</li> <li>- good practices and recommendations for the greenery protection.</li> </ul> The standard is applicable in the area of the investment and within the range of its impact. |

The standard specifies the recommended qualifications of people performing the work and indicates examples of guidelines useful for the preparation of related documentation, e.g. provisions in the contract. It does not cover the full spectrum of differentiation in this regard and should be used as a suggestion rather than a definite catalogue of possible options.

The Standard is not a textbook, which means that it does not deliver information or guidelines on how to shape the skills necessary to perform the work in the scope it covers. However, it might be helpful in educational processes.

The standard does not apply to pruning and maintaining trees that belong to the following areas:

- forest management,
- fruit trees intended for fruit production,
- decorative forms of greenery (cutting and pruning them),
- veteran and ancient trees.

The standard does not cover justified work, including:

- shading (limited access to daylight),
- hindered reception of television, radio, etc.,
- leaf and fruit fall,
- pollinating (allergies),
- dampness of walls of buildings and structures.

The standard does not refer to nurseries. It can only be used to a limited extent for ancient and veteran trees, trees under forestry management, horticulture (fruit trees intended for production), and decorative forms of greenery.

The standard does not specify how to control the performance of the assessment ordered by the commissioning party, although it might give some hints and examples helpful in creating criteria for that.

The standard does not include guidelines on the current tree management, unrelated to investments in a given area. However, the selected elements of the Standard can be used for other purposes e.g. planning future work, supporting current tree management or comparing the current and past state.

### “Check Trees”

“Drzewa pod kontrolą” is a flexible, pay-per-use solution, particularly practical for smaller and medium land managers such as communes and counties. SEI will provide support to Check Trees users and prospective users. Check Trees will be promoted via internet media and during seminars for local authorities and road managers. SEI will use assistance by Tree Institute in dissemination of the application while conducting trainings and courses in tree assessment.