

# **The Role of SER-Europe and the EU Nature Restoration Regulation**

Marie-Lise Benot, Elise Buisson



# **1. What is SER?**



**NGO with the Mission to SER advances the science, practice and policy of ecological restoration to sustain biodiversity, improve resilience in a changing climate, and re-establish an ecologically healthy relationship between nature and culture**

### **SER Vision**

**Ecological restoration becomes a fundamental component of conservation and sustainable development programs throughout the world by virtue of its inherent capacity to provide people with the opportunity to not only repair ecological damage, but also improve the human condition.**

# STANDARDS BASED RESTORATION



## INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS FOR THE PRACTICE OF ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

SECOND EDITION: September 2019

George D. Gann, Tein McDonald, Bethanie Walder, James Aronson, Cara R. Nelson, Justin Jonson, James G. Hallett, Cristina Eisenberg, Manuel R. Guariguata, Junguo Liu, Fangyuan Hua, Cristian Echeverría, Emily Gonzales, Nancy Shaw, Kris Decler, and Kingsley W. Dixon

Coordinating Editors: George D. Gann, Tein McDonald, and Bethanie Walder





## develops resources → **STANDARDS BASED RESTORATION**



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- International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration, 2nd Edition
- International Principles and Standards for the Ecological Restoration and Recovery of Mine Sites
- International Standards for Native Seeds in Ecological Restoration
- Standards of Practice to guide ecosystem restoration: A contribution to the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030
- Restoration Guidelines for Shellfish Reefs

## develops resources → **STANDARDS BASED RESTORATION**



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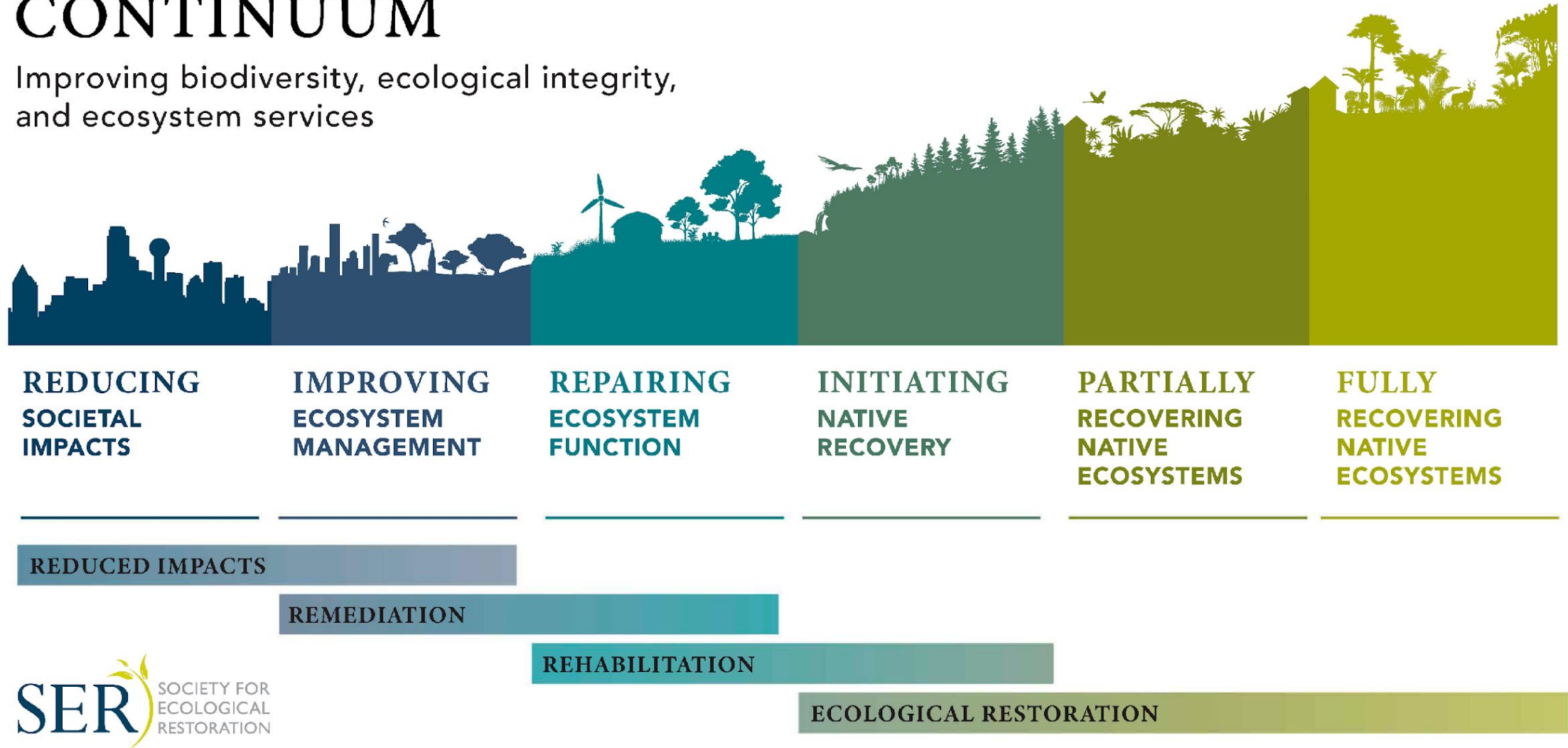
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- improve the quality of projects and their associated outcomes in landscapes and seascapes.
- build a common foundation
- reduced risk and uncertainty associated with restoration design and implementation
- increase return on restoration investment
- create consistency in restoration design and delivery without stifling innovation and creativity
- improve opportunities for quality assurance and quality control
- provide a basis for project certification

# THE RESTORATIVE CONTINUUM

Improving biodiversity, ecological integrity,  
and ecosystem services



**SER STANDARDS** are leading source on technical guidance and capacity building about ecological restoration for international policymakers, implementing agencies and practitioners.



# SER2025 - WORLD CONFERENCE, DENVER COLORADO

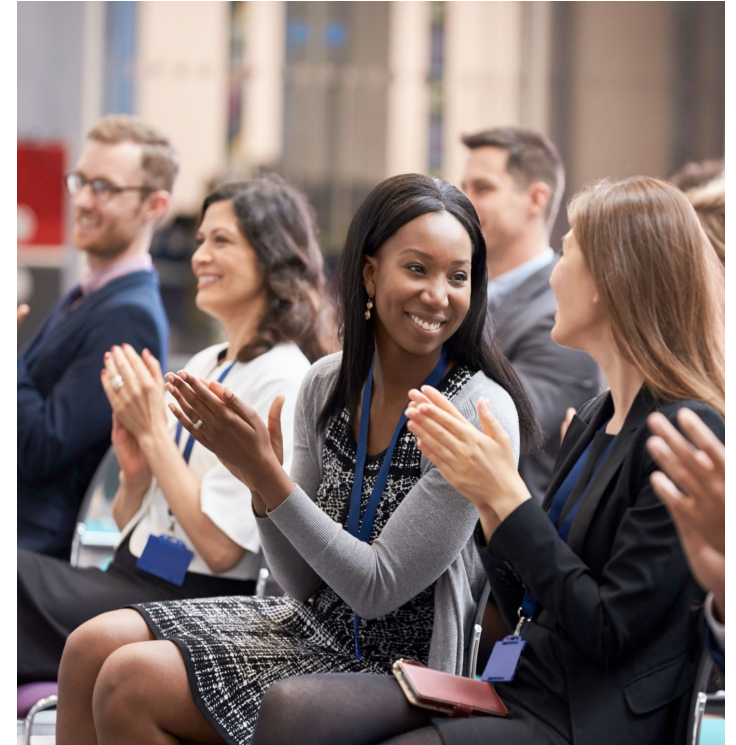
SER World Conferences provide a dynamic and engaging platform for knowledge sharing with **more than one thousand delegates** through plenary talks, oral presentations, field trips, and networking.

## REGISTRATION OPEN

**11th World Conference on  
Ecological Restoration (SER2025)**






*25 September - 4 October 2025*

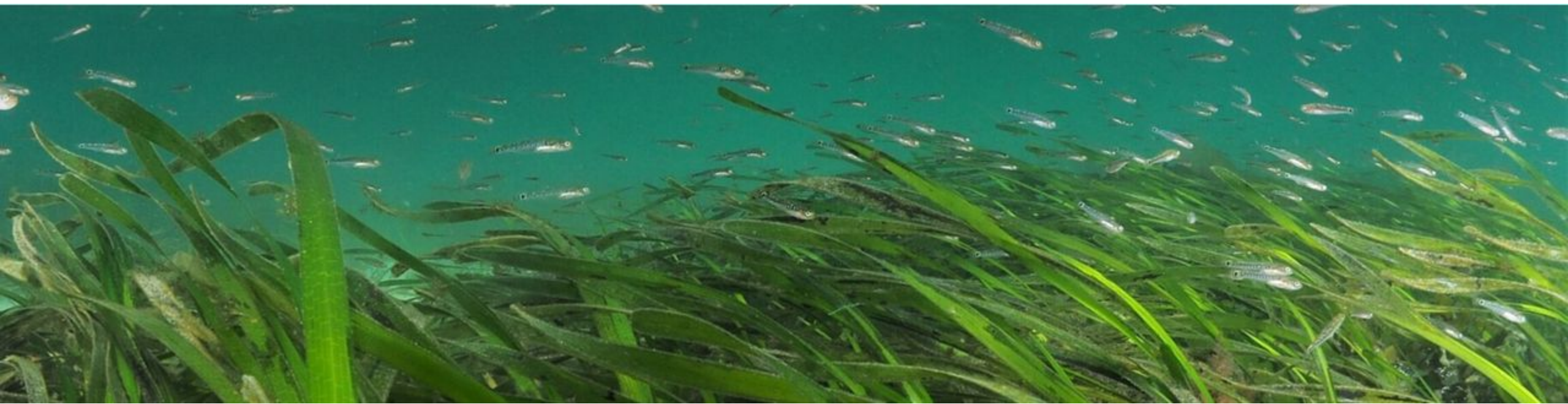
[ser2025.org](https://ser2025.org)







-  SER-Africa
-  SER-IberoAmerica & Carribean
-  SER-Europe
-  12 chapters in North America
-  SER-Australasia
-  Asia Network



## 2. What about SER-Europe?



- contributes to **bridging the gap between science, policy and practice** of ecological restoration
- contributes to **standard setting** in ecological restoration
- provides **education** and **vocational training** of the next generation of ecologists and practitioners through extensive online programmes
- is a **network-of-networks**, bringing together voices of national ecological and restoration societies, professional organisations, researchers and practitioners from across Europe

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# in France

# REVER



Réseau d'Échanges et de Valorisation  
en Écologie de la Restauration

<https://reseau-rever.fr/>

- contributes to **bridging the gap between science, policy and practice** of ecological restoration in France
- links up with **SER-Europe**
- provides **opportunities for**
  - **a dialogue** between ecological restoration stakeholders: annual workshops
  - **training**: summer schools
- mailing list

# KEY ACTIVITIES





# Biannual conferences

**2024 - Tartu, Estonia**

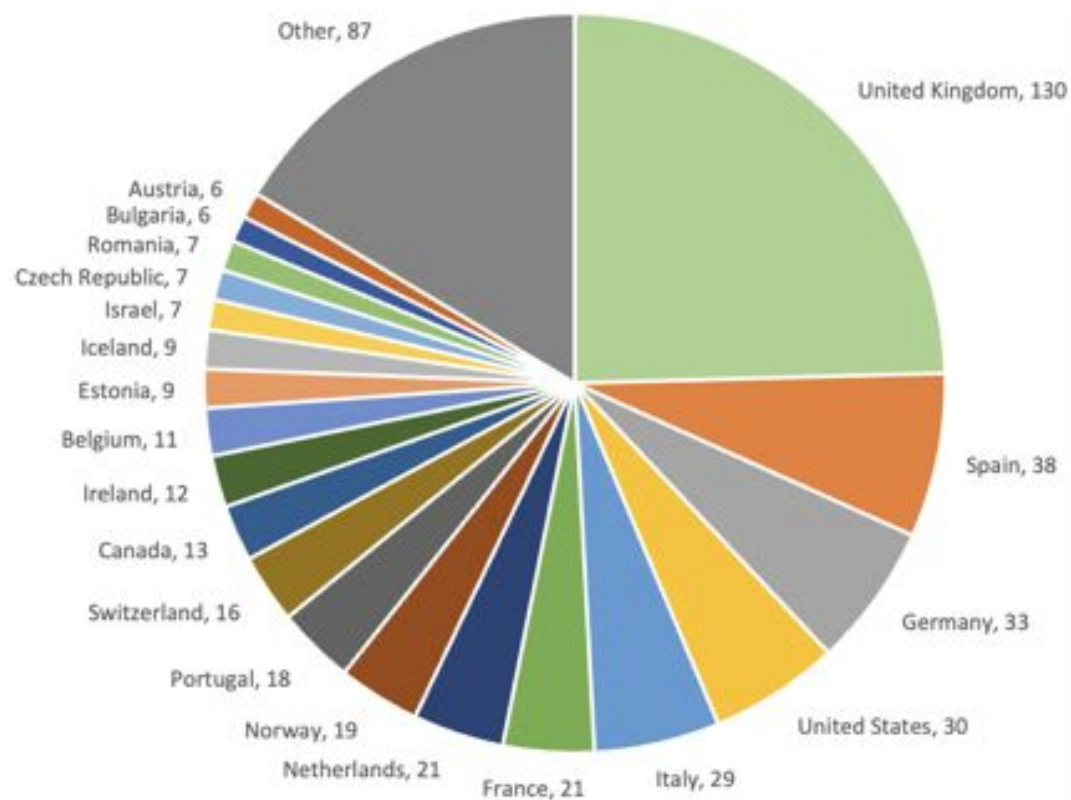


**2026 - Brest, France**

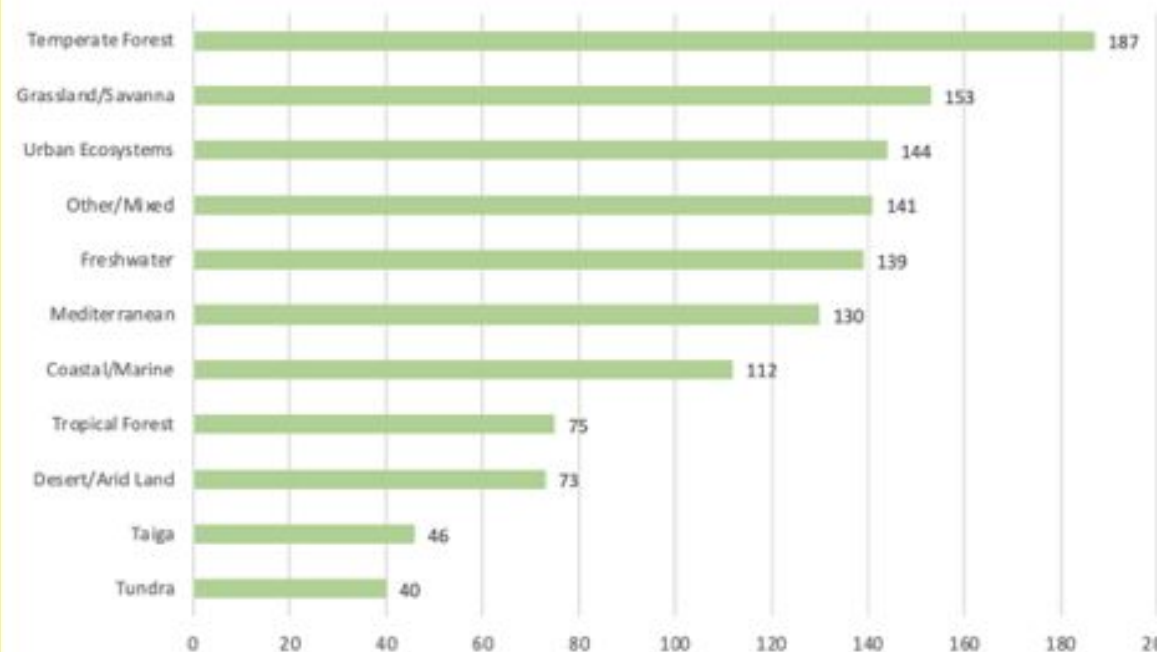


# OUR MEMBERS ARE OUR EXPERIENCE CAPITAL

## ACTIVE MEMBERS PER COUNTRY



## ACTIVE MEMBERS BY BIOME OF EXPERTISE



## CURRENT PROJECT INVOLVEMENT





# WORKING GROUPS



[www.ser-europe.org/lwg](http://www.ser-europe.org/lwg)



[www.ser-europe.org/mrwg](http://www.ser-europe.org/mrwg)



[www.ser-europe.org/etwg](http://www.ser-europe.org/etwg)



## MARINE RESTORATION **WORKING GROUP**

DEDICATED TO PROMOTING BEST PRACTICE  
IN MARINE ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION



**CHAIR:** ROBERTO DANOVARO  
**VICE-CHAIR:** JOEL LINDHOLM  
**COORDINATOR:** SAHAR STEVENSON-JONES



# MARINE RESTORATION WORKING GROUP

## WHO WE ARE

5

TASK  
FORCES

61

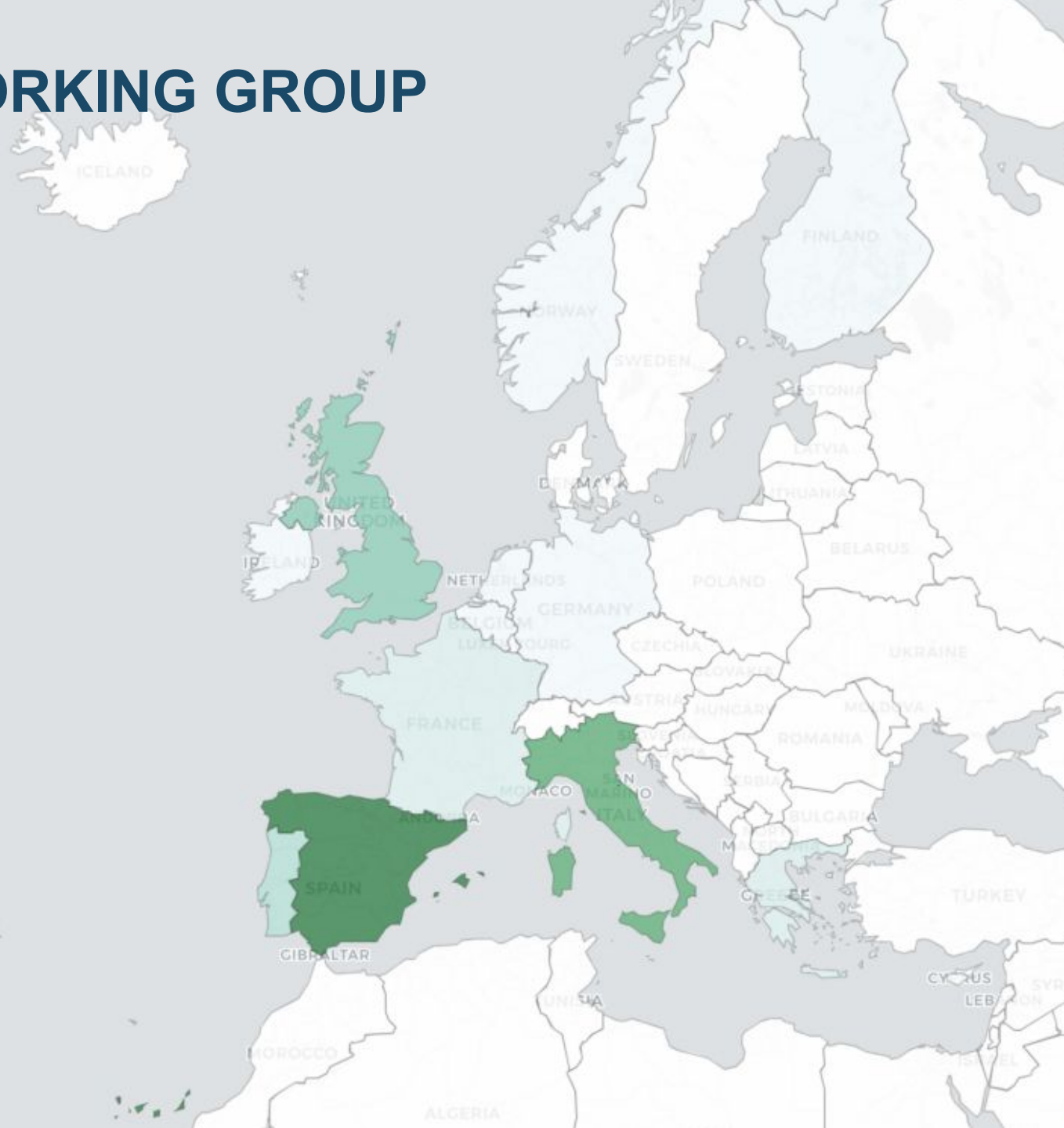
MEMBERS

46

INSTITUTIONS

11

MEMBER  
STATES





# MARINE RESTORATION WORKING GROUP

## WHAT WE DO



The Marine Restoration Working Group aims to **foster collaboration and knowledge exchange** among experts and stakeholders **dedicated to the restoration** of marine environments, initially with a focus on coastal and deep sea ecosystems.

This sharing of expertise will drive the development of **marine restoration standards and methodologies**, by promoting best practices.



PART OF THE

# EU MISSIONS

RESTORE OUR OCEAN & WATERS

Funded by  
the European Union



## TASK FORCES

1

### POSITION PAPER

integrating lessons  
learned and identify  
common principles

2

### MER STANDARDS

adapt the SER  
Principles & Standards  
for Ecological  
Restoration to the  
marine space

3

### KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

facilitate knowledge  
exchange on the  
implementation of the  
NRR across member  
states

4

### INVENTORY OF MERGs

compile an inventory  
of existing guidelines  
and interventions  
across Europe

5

### ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

contribute to a  
comprehensive EAF for  
MER that evaluates CBA  
and funding mechanisms



PART OF THE

# EU MISSIONS

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# BECOME A MEMBER OF SER-EUROPE

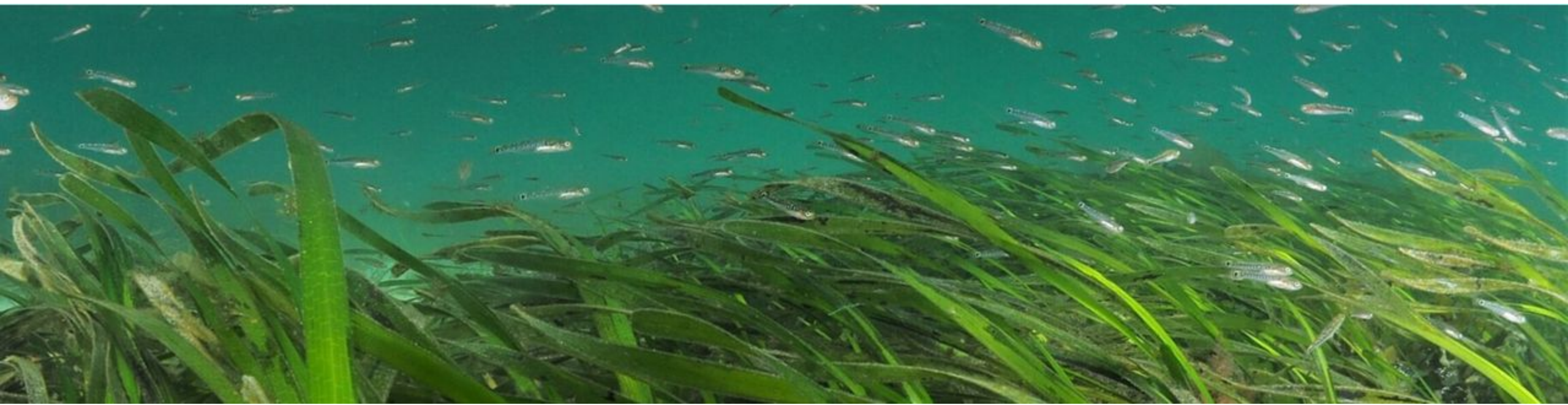
- network of like minded people
- professional and scientific development
- knowledge exchange and sharing
- national or thematic sections
- reduced participation fee to SER events
- involvement in a variety of expert working groups

## Early Career Professionals!

- learn and have fun with YOUNG#ER

**BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE**





### **3. The NRR - Nature Restoration Regulation**

# Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR)

Overarching objectives

Restoration targets and obligations

Implementation framework

Financing

20% of EU land  
and sea by 2030

All ecosystems in  
need of restoration  
by 2050

Recovery of  
ecosystems

Climate action and  
land degradation  
neutrality

Enhancing food  
security

EU international  
commitments

**Article 3(3):** ‘restoration’ means the **process of actively or passively assisting the recovery** of an ecosystem in order to improve its structure and functions with the aim of conserving or enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem resilience [...]





## Specific restoration targets

Protected  
Habitat Types  
(Annex I HD)



Habitats of  
protected  
species (BHD)



Marine  
Habitats  
(beyond HD)



Urban  
ecosystems



River  
connectivity



Pollinators



Agro-  
ecosystems



Forest  
ecosystems





# Marine ecosystems (Article 5)

## Restoration of seabed habitats (Annex II) important for biodiversity and climate

- Groups 1 to 6: seagrass beds; macroalgal forests; shellfish beds; maerl beds; coral, sponge and coralligenous beds; vents and seeps
- Group 7: soft sediment (not deeper than 1000 metres of depth)

## Improvement to good condition of area not in good condition

- 2030 – at least 30% of total area of all groups 1 to 6
- 2040 – at least 60% of each group from 1 to 6, 2/3 of a percentage so as not to prevent good environmental status (MSFD) for group 7
- 2050 – at least 90% of each group from 1 to 6, a percentage so as not to prevent good environmental status (MSFD) for group 7

## Re-establishment for reaching favourable reference area

- 2030/2040/2050 – 30%/60%/100% of additional area for each group from 1 to 6

## Restoration of habitats of species

- Covered by the Birds and Habitats Directives + additional species (Annex III)
- Quality, quantity, connectivity

## Filling the knowledge gap

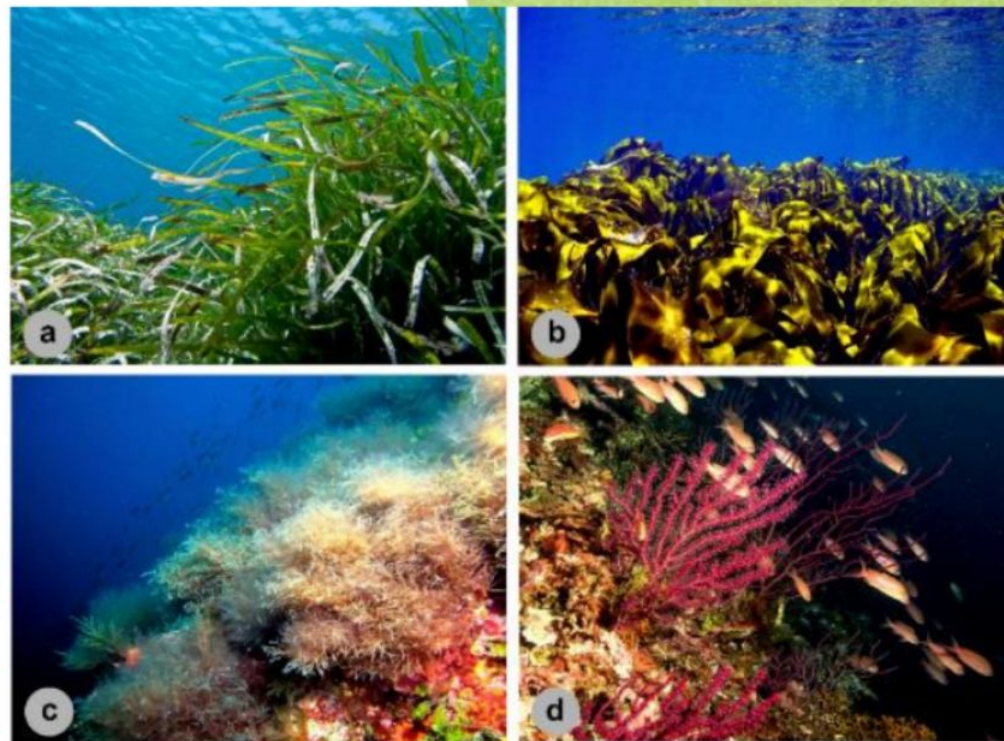
- 2030 – at least 50% of total area of all groups 1 to 6
- 2040 – all areas of all habitat types in groups 1 to 6, 50% of total area of group 7
- 2050 – all areas of all habitat types in group 7

## Non-significant deterioration requirement

- Area where good condition has been reached
- Area in good condition or necessary to reach restoration targets

## Use of tools from the common fisheries policy (Art. 18)

- Submission of joint recommendations - 18 months before deadline for targets



## Derogations and flexibilities

- Re-establishment at 90% if 100% not possible
- Non-deterioration: derogation for force-majeure, unavoidable habitat transformations directly caused by climate change, overriding public interest, action or inaction of third country
- Further derogation for renewable energy and defence activities



# Nature Restoration Regulation

## Target 2:



### Why now?

EU Nature Restoration Regulation since **August 2024**

EU Member States shall:

submit **National Restoration Plans** to EC by **1st September 2026**

monitor and report on their progress

whilst the European Environment Agency will draw up regular technical reports on progress towards the targets.

#### Obligations

Member States shall:

- **Improve areas of marine habitat types** that are not in good condition
- **Re-establish marine habitat types** in areas where they no longer occur
- **Restore areas of habitats of marine species** covered by the Nature Directives or Annex III of the Regulation where this is needed to ensure the longer-term survival of the species

In addition, Member States shall:

- Ensure that areas subject to restoration do not subsequently deteriorate once they have reached a good condition
- Endeavour to prevent areas of habitat types that are already in good condition or needed to reach the targets deteriorating significantly.

#### Actions and targets

Member States shall put in place restoration measures necessary to **improve to good condition** areas of marine habitat types listed in Annex II. Such restoration measures should be put in place on:

- **at least 30% of the total area covered by habitats in groups 1-6** not in good condition as quantified in the national restoration plan by 2030
- at least 60% the total area of habitats in groups 1-6 not in good condition by 2040, and 90% by 2050

Member States shall **re-establish marine habitat types (groups 1-6)** in areas where they no longer occur. Such restoration measures should be put in place on:

- **at least 30% of the additional surface needed to reach the total favourable reference area** for each group of habitat type as quantified in the national restoration plan by 2030
- at least 60% of the additional surface by 2040
- at least 100% of the additional surface by 2050

**233** marine habitat types targeted (Annex II), classed in 7 groups.

Habitat groups in Annex II of the Nature Restoration Regulation	Number of habitat types
Group 1: Seagrass beds	25
Group 2: Macroalgal forests	35
Group 3: Shellfish beds	25
Group 4: Maerl beds	8
Group 5: Sponge, coral and coralligenous beds	54
Group 6: Vents and seeps	6
Group 7: Soft sediments (not deeper than 1000m)	80
Total	233



# ORGANISATION OF NRR GOVERNANCE

## GOVERNANCE

Member States

EUBP

Restoration  
Expert Group

EEA, LIFE

SER-Europe

Biodiversa+  
Restoration  
Knowledge Hub

Practitioners

NGOs

Scientists

Site managers

Stakeholders

Projects e.g.  
Horizon,  
Biodiversa

## PLANNING

Geographic & Thematic Networks

## IMPLEMENTATION

Authorities, public and private actors



# **NATIONAL RESTORATION PLANS = IMPLEMENTATION BLUEPRINTS**

- **What, where to restore?**
  - Background data, diagnosis, objectives & targets
  - Monitoring and research
- **How to restore?**
  - Planning of restoration measures / by target
- **How to finance restoration?**
  - EU, national, public/private funds
  - Business and private financing
- **How will it link to other land and sea use activities?**
  - Renewable energy go-to areas, benefits and co-benefits for climate change mitigation/adaptation...
  - Agro-environment and forestry, hydrology, spatial planning
  - Public safety and security
- **Public/stakeholder participation**
  - in preparing the plans, acceptance of measures, delivery of restoration actions

# **MAXIMISING BENEFITS OF RESTORATION**

## **Policies, restoration programmes, plans and projects must:**

- deliver ecological, socio-economic and cultural value
- engage society for fair and sustainable development
- align with relevant legislation and strategies
  - Nature Restoration Regulation
  - Nature/Water/Marine Directives
- Fit into socially and ecologically meaningful timescales
- Strengthen land/seascape connectivity



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THANK YOU



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