

WP4: Socio-economic assessment of rewilding options

T4.3: Identifying community-based mechanisms of social innovation and social acceptability in rewilding and rewilded areas

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WildCard: Effects of rewilding in forests and agricultural lands on carbon sequestration and diversity (January 2024 – December 2027)

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What is social innovation?

“the reconfiguring of social practices, in response to societal challenges, which seeks to enhance outcomes on societal well-being and necessarily includes the engagement of civil society actors.” (Polman et al., 2017; Secco et al., 2019)

**SIMRA evaluation framework
(EU Horizon 2020 - 677622 project)**

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Methodological framework

The social innovation case-studies will be selected to cover examples of **good practices** in managing the forest vegetation on abandoned/marginal lands to cope with the following issues:

WILDCARD rewilding schemes

- 1. Natural rewilding of abandoned agricultural land
- 2. Proforestation

Responsible WILDCARD partners

- UNIPD
- EFI
- USV

Issues to be addressed:

- a. Loss of cultural heritage of landscape
- b. Reducing human costs of rewilding and assessment of conflicts related to wildlife-crop/livestock interactions
- c. Managing wildfire risk

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Methodological steps

1. Initial identification and assessment

- Create database with literature review and snowball sampling result
- Score cases using a two-dimensional framework (0-2 Rewilding, 0-2, Closely as Target (2,2), Hybrid (0,1 or both), or Excluded (any 0))

2. Exploratory contact

- Contact stakeholders of Target and Hybrid cases with formal invitation
- Collect data via 9-question survey (email or Zoom, SIMRA-based framework)

3. Collaborative selection meeting

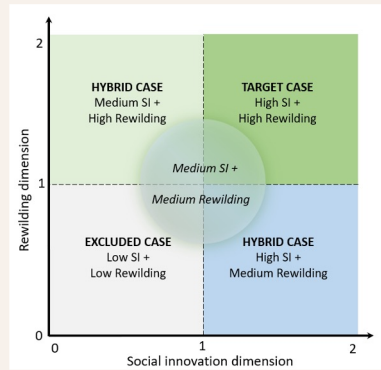
- Meeting with WP4 members to evaluate confirmed cases
- Final case selection based on: case type, priority, thematic relevance, geographic diversity, quality of information

CASE STUDY ASSESSMENT

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Scoring framework



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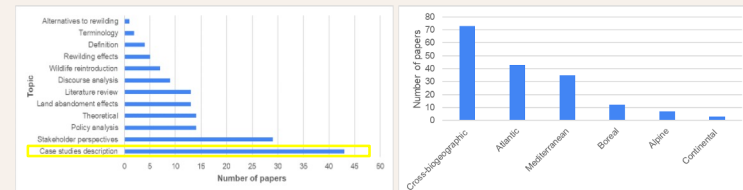
Preliminary results (ongoing)

Selected issue No. 1 → Preventing the loss of cultural heritage of landscapes
(Lead: UNIPD).

177 papers identified (only 24 papers targeted social innovation)

Broad range of topics/angles (multiple topics/angles possible)

Uneven distribution across biogeographic regions



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Preliminary results (ongoing)

39 papers selected as relevant for our study (topic: case study description)



only 20 case studies were selected after the scoring framework was applied

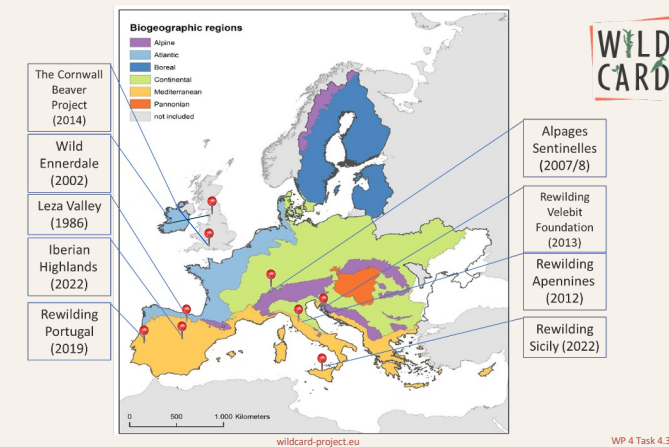
- + **3 case studies** identified from snowball sampling
- + **3 case studies** identified from grey literature

In total, **26 initiatives** contacted to participate in the survey
So far **9 (35%)** replied

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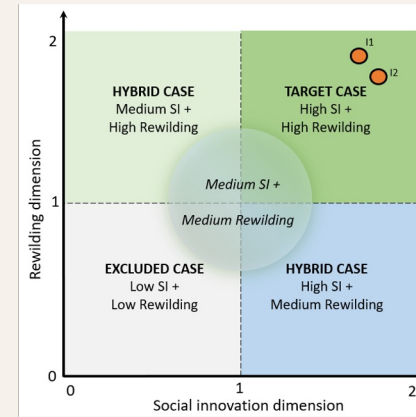
Table. List of initiatives who participated in the survey

No.	Case	Social Innovation	Rewilding	Type
1	Rewilding Portugal	2	2	Target
2	Rewilding Apennines	2	2	Target
3	Cornwall Beaver	1	2	Hybrid
4	Iberian Highlands	1	2	Hybrid
5	Rewild Sicily	2	1	Hybrid
6	Leza Valley	1	1	Hybrid
7	Wild Ennerdale	1	1	Hybrid
8	Alpages Sentinelles	2	0	Excluded
9	Rewilding Velebit Foundation	1	2	Hybrid

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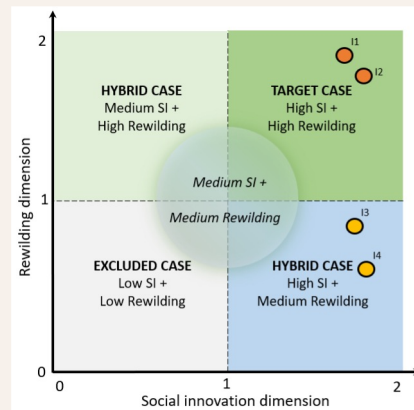
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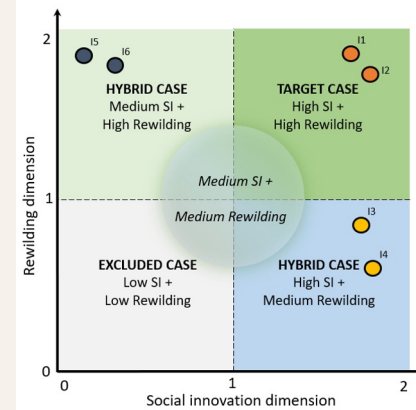
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High Social Innovation (2) + Medium Rewilding (1)

I3: Rewild Sicily (2,1)
I4: Rewilding Velebit (2,1)

Why:

- Emphasis on social mobilisation, awareness, partnerships, and community networks
- Rewilding explicit and central, but:
 - mediated through institutions (Velebit)
 - more advocacy- and movement-oriented than operational (Rewild Sicily)



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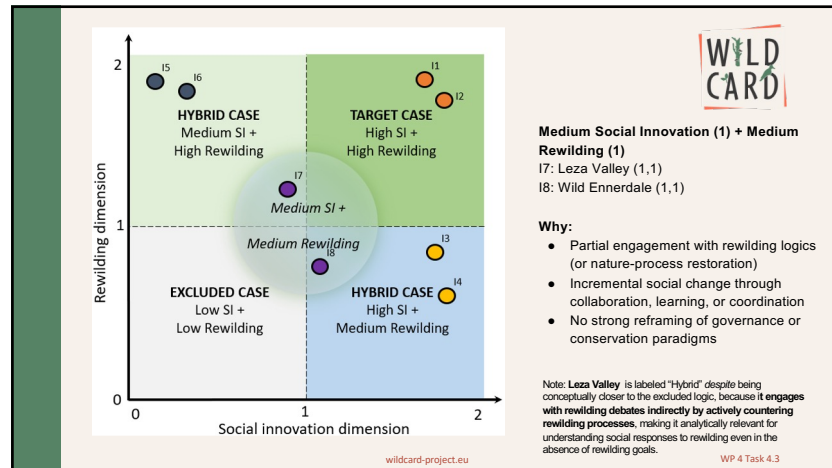
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Medium Social Innovation (1) + High Rewilding (2)

I5: Cornwall Beaver Project (1,2)
I6: Iberian Highlands (1,2)

Why:

- Strong, measurable ecological rewilding outcomes
- Social innovation present but:
 - More incremental
 - Expert- or NGO-led
 - Embedded in conventional governance frameworks



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WILD CARD

Preliminary case study survey: challenges and triggers/I

ID	Case study	Challenge	Trigger
1	Rewild Sicily	Loss of cultural landscape; Wildlife-human conflict; Wildfire risk	Anthropogenic threats to animal species; Disastrous wildfires in the last years
2	Leza Valley	Wildfire risk	Livestock development; Increase in shrubland
3	The Cornwall Beaver Project	Loss of cultural landscape; Wildlife-human conflict	Flood risk
4	Alpages Sentinelles	Adaptation to climate change	Vulnerability of mountain pastures to climate change
5	Rewilding Portugal	Loss of cultural landscape; Wildlife-human conflict; Wildfire risk	Landscape degradation and biodiversity loss

In the SIMRA framework, the **challenge** dimension refers to the specific societal, economic, environmental, or territorial problems that **trigger** the need for social innovation.

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WILD CARD

Preliminary case study survey: challenges and triggers/II

ID	Case study	Challenge	Trigger
6	Rewilding Apennines	Wildlife-human conflict	Loss of habitat and endemic species
7	Iberian Highlands	Loss of cultural landscape; wildfire risk	Loss of socio-economic activities, landscape homogenization, biodiversity loss, ecological degradation
8	Wild Ennerdale	Loss of cultural landscape	Ecological degradation of land and waterscapes
9	Rewilding Velebit Foundation	Loss of cultural landscape; Wildlife-human conflict; Wildfire risk	Environmental conservation and community awareness promotion

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WILD CARD

Example of a case study: "Collettivo Rewild Sicily"/I

Mission: to make Sicily, a greener, more conscious and wilder place by shifting towards a pro-rewilding culture through tangible actions on the ground. It operates primarily as an advocacy/awareness movement.

Emergence Year: 2022

Triggers: the need to safeguard animal species affected above all by adverse anthropogenic processes; the devastating wildfires of the last five years

Rewilding approaches: Natural afforestation and Proforestation

Focal issues addressed: Loss of Cultural landscape, Wildlife-human conflict, Wildfire risk

Tools: agroforestry, anti-wildfire measures, grazing systems, citizen science and wildlife monitoring.

Social innovation through: Bottom-up collective, multiple collaborative stakeholders, co-leadership by NGOs, new participatory social practices

Source: <https://collettivorewildsicily.com/>

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Example of a case study: “Collettivo Rewild Sicily”/II



Stakeholders involved: grassroots, involving institutions or public administrations that support this participatory popular movement:

- **LAND** – Social Enterprise that transforms sustainability visions into concrete actions, with a specific focus on social and territorial regeneration – Co-leader
- **FORME** – Association that works on youth activism and environmental prevention through the Erasmus+ program – Co-leader
- **Regione Sicilia** – Public administration – Advisory role / Active participant
- **As.Fo** – Land association for the management of land and agricultural/forestry heritage – Voluntary organization – Active participant
- **Pro Loco** – Local tourism association – Voluntary organization – Active participant
- **Civil protection** - Voluntary organization – Active participant



Source: <https://collettivorewildsicily.com/>

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Example of a case study: “Collettivo Rewild Sicily”/III



ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Rewilding governance:** Municipal-level forestry and environmental management planning
- **Ecosystem connectivity:** Census and categorization for the removal of local river barriers and small dams
- **Landowners engagement:** Creation and management of a database of landowners interested in rewilding actions
- **Sustainable livelihoods:** Socio-economic Design and establishment of Mediterranean agroforestry systems
- **Community awareness:** Direct and indirect awareness-raising on rewilding targeting local communities

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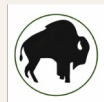
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Thank you for your attention

How can rewilding and social innovation concepts become actionable insights?

We now invite you to take part in one of the three thematic groups (one per focal issue), supported by clear guidance.



in WILDCARD project

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