

A European initiative to foster action in 7 regions of global importance

BEST

VOLUNTARY SCHEME
FOR BIODIVERSITY AND
ECOSYSTEM SERVICES
IN TERRITORIES OF
EUROPEAN OVERSEAS

BEST (Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of European Overseas) aims to strengthen biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, sustainable development and management of ecosystems and ecosystem services, as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation in the 7 European Overseas regions by:

1. Profiling key biodiversity areas (KBAs) & priority areas for action
2. Defining investment niches & supporting actions on the ground through project funding
3. Raising awareness & building capacity

Regional profiling - a scientific & participatory process

- Proven assessment tool to efficiently guide conservation efforts and investments
- A division of work smartly combining central coordination and regional teams
- A participatory process through consultations and workshops with regional and local stakeholders and experts
- Regional assessments based on most recent scientific data, experts and stakeholders' inputs & observations
- A tailored approach to define investment niches & priorities matching EU Overseas stakeholders' needs for future project funding

Caribbean region

- Coral reef restoration
- Marine protected area
- Sea turtle conservation
- Coastal wetlands preservation
- Agroecosystems - ecosystem services quantification
- Invasive alien species control
- Payment for ecosystem services

Polar/Sub-Polar

- Habitat conservation
- Community biodiversity monitoring

Global

- Global partnerships
- Multilateral agreements

Indian Ocean

- Island dynamics and conservation
- Terrestrial reptile conservation
- Environmental education
- Whale conservation
- Forest protection
- Loggerhead turtle conservation & Fisheries by-catch mitigation

Pacific

- Regional marine conservation
- Dry forest restoration
- MPA management capacity building
- Endangered species conservation (2 projects)
- Environmental management strategies
- Coral reef ecosystem services
- Spatial planning



Legend

- EU Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)
- EU Overseas Regions (ORs)
- African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states and island states of the same regions
- Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the EU
- BEST projects funded in 7 EU Overseas regions & project icons

For more information
<http://ec.europa.eu/best/>
<https://portals.iucn.org/best/>



Objectives

- 1. **To facilitate access to EU funds** for actors in the **EU Outermost Regions (ORs)** and **EU Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)** so as to **unlock initiatives** and potential in the fields of biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of ecosystem services, including ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation, as a basis for sustainable development.
- 2. **To increase the capacity** of ORs and OCTs actors to access and effectively manage EU funds.
- 3. **To increase the visibility** of EU ORs and OCTs as key contributors to the achievement of EU and global biodiversity targets and strategies.



A flexible scheme

A wide scope

Promoting conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services in European Outermost Regions and European Overseas Countries and Territories.



A tailored scheme

*Letting local stakeholders to define their projects according to their needs

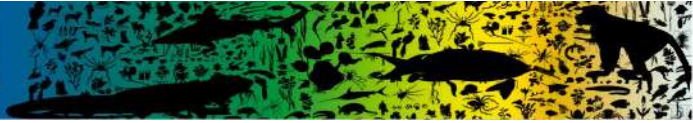
*Offering a diversity of grants to address the diversity of needs & capacities:

Swift Grants ≤ € 50,000

Small Grants ≤ € 100,000

Medium Grants ≤ € 400,000

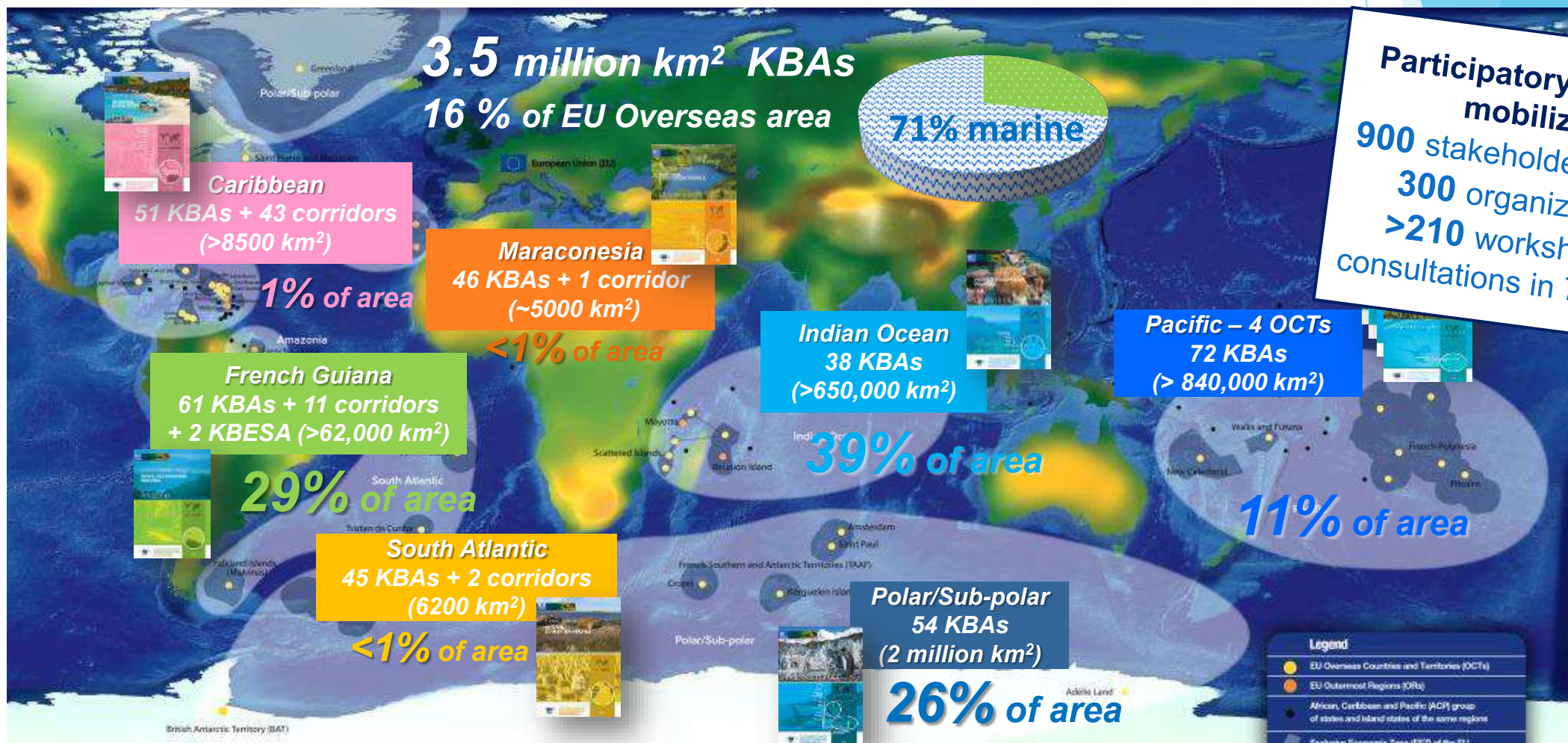
*More accessible : No co-funding for swift and small grants only 5% for Medium Grants



Results



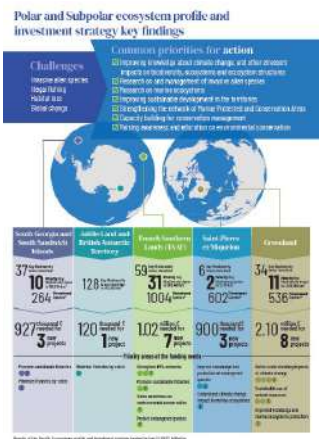
- ✓ **7 regional ecosystem profiles**
- **400 new key biodiversity areas (KBAs)**
- & ecological corridors identified (3.5 million km²)**



Results

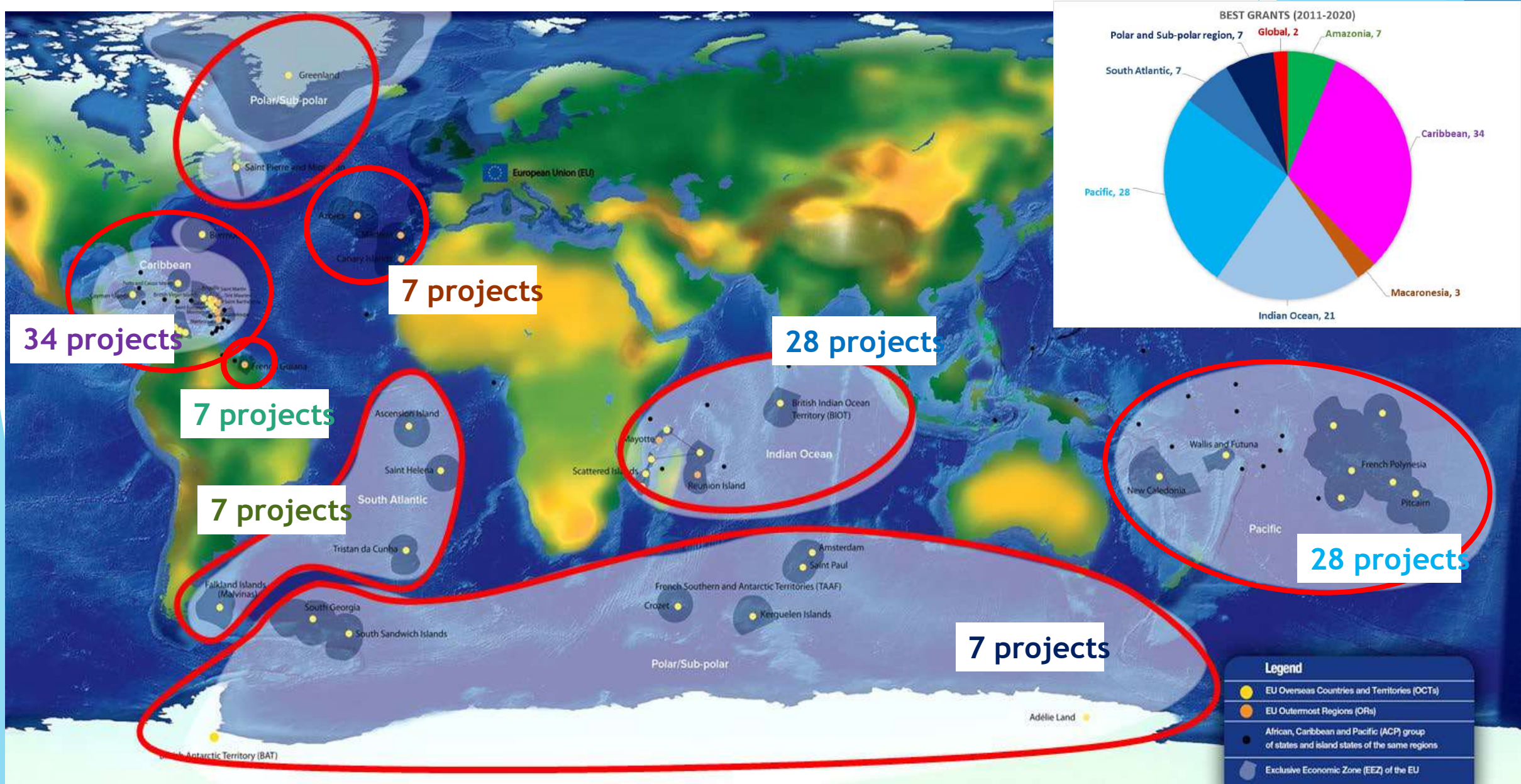


- ✓ **7 regional ecosystem profiles**
 - **400 key biodiversity areas (KBAs) & ecological corridors identified (3.5 million km²)**
- ✓ **7 regional investment strategies**
 - **450 projects ready-to-be funded projects identified as investment niches**
 - **> € 90 million funding needs next 5 years**



+100 projects funded

+ new to come in 2021!





Awakening vocations :
more than **120 jobs** created



Involving communities and citizens :
more than **650 volunteers** mobilised





Capacity building :
More than **100 workshops** organised



Raising awareness :
More than **500 awareness-raising events**
reaching circa **50,000 people**



Enhanced conservation measures :

More than **475,000 km²** of marine and coastal areas

More than **1400 species** benefited from new inventories

12 new species discovered

3 new protected areas created

Sustainability & leverage effect :

more than **40 projects** continued

beyond BEST grants

More than **400 collaborations** initiated





Lessons learned

- **Small grants can have an important impact not only locally but as well at the EU and international levels. They have a multiplier effect;**
- **Diversity of needs and capacities requires a diversity of approaches grants and mechanisms that can play in synergy and complementarity;**
- **When empowered, local stakeholders and citizens can make a difference: they are key for the EU Biodiversity strategy implementation**
- **Presence on the ground and regional expertise to assess/monitor is key**
- **Capacity-building and Monitoring activities are a must and should not be underestimated;**
- **Participative preparation of a pipeline of projects is fundamental;**
- **Make it as simple as possible!**

Thank you!



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<https://www.best2plus.org/>

<https://www.life4best.org/en/home/>