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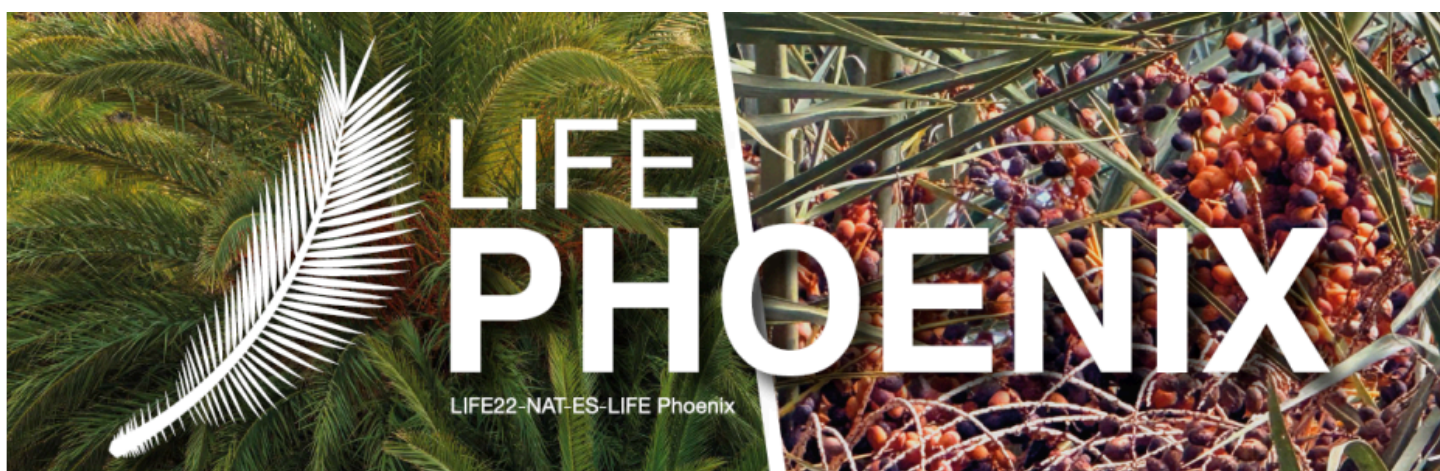
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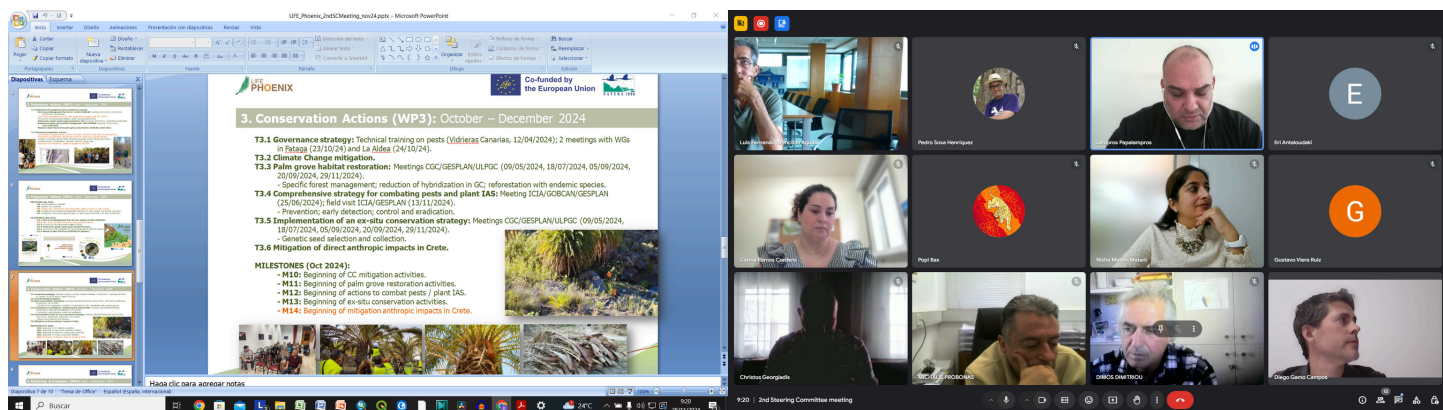
# NEWSLETTER

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## 2nd Steering Committee Meeting

The LIFE Phoenix project held the second meeting of its Steering Committee on the 28th of November 2024. This online session allowed a complete review about the technical implementation of the active project actions, mainly including Project Management (Work Package 1), Preparatory Actions (WP2) and Communication and Dissemination (WP6). Concrete Conservation Actions (WP3) have officially started at the end of October in Crete and in Gran Canaria. The next project coordination meeting is planned to be held in person on the island of Crete, coinciding with a new technical follow-up meeting scheduled before the end of the first half of 2025.



# Networking with other LIFE projects

The LIFE Nieblas Final International Conference took place in Gran Canaria on the 17th and 18th October 2024, bringing together almost 150 people. The LIFE Phoenix technical team attended the conference and took advantage of the event for networking with international experts and representatives of other European projects, such as LIFE Nieblas and LIFE Primed. A specific field visit to one of the LIFE Phoenix project areas was organised on Saturday 19th October with five of the attendees from Italy, Chile and Spain.



# Participation in scientific conferences

Expert Carina Ramos from partner ICIA participated in the XIX Scientific Conference of the SEEA (Gijón, 4th-11th October 2024) with the poster entitled “Preserving the Priority Habitat 9370\* *Palm groves of Phoenix* on the island of Gran Canaria against *Diocalandra frumenti* (Fabricius) (Coleoptera: Dryophthoridae)”, as well as in the XXXI Gran Canaria Forestry Conference (13th-16th November 2024) with an oral presentation entitled “*Diocalandra frumenti* (Fabricius): Advances and challenges in its control”.

**Preservando el Hábitat Prioritario 9370\* “Palmerales de Phoenix” en la isla de Gran Canaria frente a *Diocalandra frumenti* Fabricius (Coleoptera: Dryophthoridae)**

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**Introducción**

Los palmerales del género Phoenix en Europa, presentes en España y Grecia, crean ecosistemas de valor ecológico y socioeconómico. España alberga Phoenix canariensis H. Wildpret en las islas Canarias, mientras que en Grecia se encuentra P. theophrasti Creuter en Creta. Su singularidad justifica la inclusión en el Anexo I de la Directiva 92/43 de la UE y la designación como Hábitat Prioritario 9370\* “Palmerales de Phoenix”, con sólo 53 lugares Natura 2000 designados para su conservación.



**Objetivos**

El proyecto LIFE Phoenix (LIFE22-NAT-ES-LIFE Phoenix) busca:

- Mejora del hábitat mitigación del cambio climático, reducción del riesgo de hibridación y reforestación.
- Estrategia para combatir plagas y especies exóticas invasoras (EEI).
- Estrategia de conservación ex-situ: banco de germoplasma y producción de palmeras de calidad genética.
- Reducción de impactos antrópicos directos: sobrepastoreo y presión de visitantes.
- Gobernanza ambiental, sensibilización y comunicación.



# Fieldwork in Gran Canaria

## Elimination of deadwood and invasive vegetation

Two fieldwork teams started to work on the ground since October 2024 in the two project areas of Gran Canaria. The first tasks have been mainly focused on elimination of deadwood and control of invasive vegetation within the target palm grove habitats, creating clearings that will be planted with endemic species in further restoration stages.

### 1.- Stacking of plant debris in Fataga ravine



### 2.- Elimination of reedbed in Guguy Grande



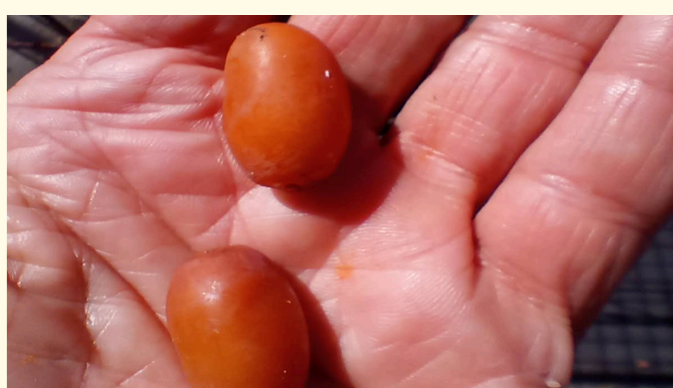
## Collection of new leaf samples, seeds and cuttings

After the unexpected genetic results obtained for the Guguy Grande palm grove in a previous study as part of the preparatory actions, new leaf samples have been collected in December 2024 from another population located in the higher part of the ravine, in order to obtain a new genetic characterisation. In parallel, collection of seeds and cuttings of selected endemic species is also in progress; this reproductive material will feed the public nurseries of the Council of Gran Canaria to produce new seedlings to be used during the project implementation.

### 3.- Collection of new leaf samples



### 4.- Collection of seeds for the nurseries



# Fieldwork in Crete

HOMEOTECH (Kontos, Papalampros) implemented a second field trip to the six habitats 9370\* in Crete, between 11th – 16th of June 2024. At this trip HOMEOTECH, jointly with FPIRC and its local representatives per Directorate (Dimitriou; Chania FD, Stivachtaki; Heraklion FD and Koudoumas; LasithiFD), decided the necessary interventions to enhance habitats' protection against specific threats and discussed on the project's elaboration.

In October 2024 eight technical forest studies were submitted to the Forest Services for approval and further implementation. These forest studies proposing measures per habitat that are based on necessities detected on the first and second field trips (fences, paths, soil restraint measures, etc.). Collection of seeds for the nurseries will be done in January 2025.

## 1.- Preveli, touristic pressure



## 2.- Souda – Plakias, olive and *Phoenix* trees



## 3.- Martsalos, erosion



## 4.- Agios Nikitas, feral goats near fences



## 5.- Vai, touristic pressure



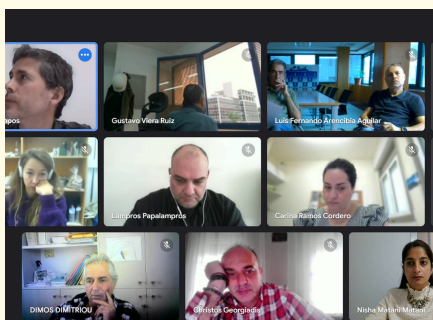
## 6.- Martsalos, working group



# Project performance

After a year and a half of implementation, LIFE Phoenix has completed the first phase of preparatory actions and field studies in both islands (Crete and Gran Canaria). Besides, its core set of conservation actions started in October 2024 and will run until the end of 2027.

## WP1. Project Management



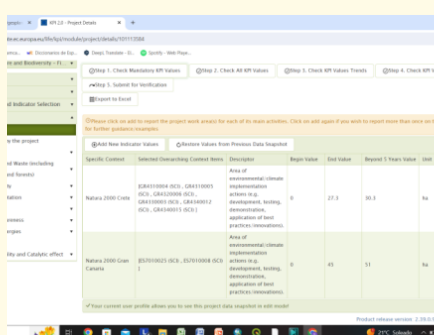
## WP2. Preparatory Actions



## WP3. Conservation Actions



## WP4. Monitoring/Evaluation



Activity	Start Date	End Date	Progress	Status
Natura 2000 Crete	01/01/2024	31/12/2024	27.5	NA
Natura 2000 Gran Canaria	01/01/2024	31/12/2024	43	NA

## WP5. Sustainability



## WP6. Communication



Five different types of field studies have been conducted within the project areas of both regions, including biodiversity (pollinators) assessments, pest prospections (*Diocalandra frumenti* and *Rhynchophorus ferrugineus*), surveys on invasive vegetation, genetic analyses and hybridisation assessments, as well as studies on soils and hydrology. The results of these studies have been taken into account to produce the Palm Grove Management Plans for both islands, which represent the roadmaps for habitat restoration in the target project sites.

Recently started conservation actions have been focused on control and eradication of invasive vegetation in Gran Canaria, as well as collection of seeds in both regions. Pest management and first reforestation tasks are expected to begin by the end of January 2025.

Some more progress has been also confirmed with the rest of work packages, especially regarding communication actions.

# Highlights

<b>Project Management</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contracts: 6 field workers, external services and public tenders.</li><li>• CINEA Financial and Technical meetings (3rd, 22nd Oct 2024).</li><li>• 2nd Steering Committee meeting (28th Nov 2024).</li><li>• 2nd Technical Activity Report (Jul 2024).</li></ul>
<b>Preparatory Actions</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Authorisations obtained.</li><li>• Studies: soils and hydrology, hybridisation, pests and plant IAS, anthropogenic impacts, pollinators.</li><li>• 2 Management Plans, 5 protocols and 1 Best Practice Manual.</li><li>• Governance: 2 Working Groups, 2 participatory networks, first Codes of Conduct and Collaboration Agreements.</li></ul>
<b>Communication</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Networking: LIFE Nieblas conference (17th-20th Oct 2024); technical meeting on palm nutrition products (15th Nov 2024).</li><li>• Mainstream Media: News in press and website; radio interviews.</li><li>• Social Media: new posts in Facebook and Instagram.</li><li>• New materials: newsletter, leaflet, information boards.</li><li>• New video footage with drone (Nov-Dec 2024).</li></ul>
<b>Training &amp; Conservation</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Webinar training (25th June 2024) on pest detection and control/eradication (<i>D. frumenti</i> and <i>R. ferrugineus</i>).</li><li>• First pheromone traps for <i>D. frumenti</i> installed in Gran Canaria.</li><li>• Invasive vegetation control in Gran Canaria.</li><li>• Ex-situ conservation: seed collection and seedling production.</li></ul>

## Visit the LIFE Phoenix Website

The project website (<https://lifephoenix.gesplan.es>) was published in December 2023 and has been regularly updated with new contents. Stay tuned for our last news and don't miss any of our videos!

- Updated news
- New picture galleries
- Links to our social networks
- New technical documents
- Videos: more “video-pills” featuring partners CGC and HOMEOTECH



## Contact

For feedback, partnerships, or further information, please feel free to contact us at:  
[lifephoenix@gesplan.es](mailto:lifephoenix@gesplan.es)



[lifephoenix.gesplan.es](http://lifephoenix.gesplan.es)



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