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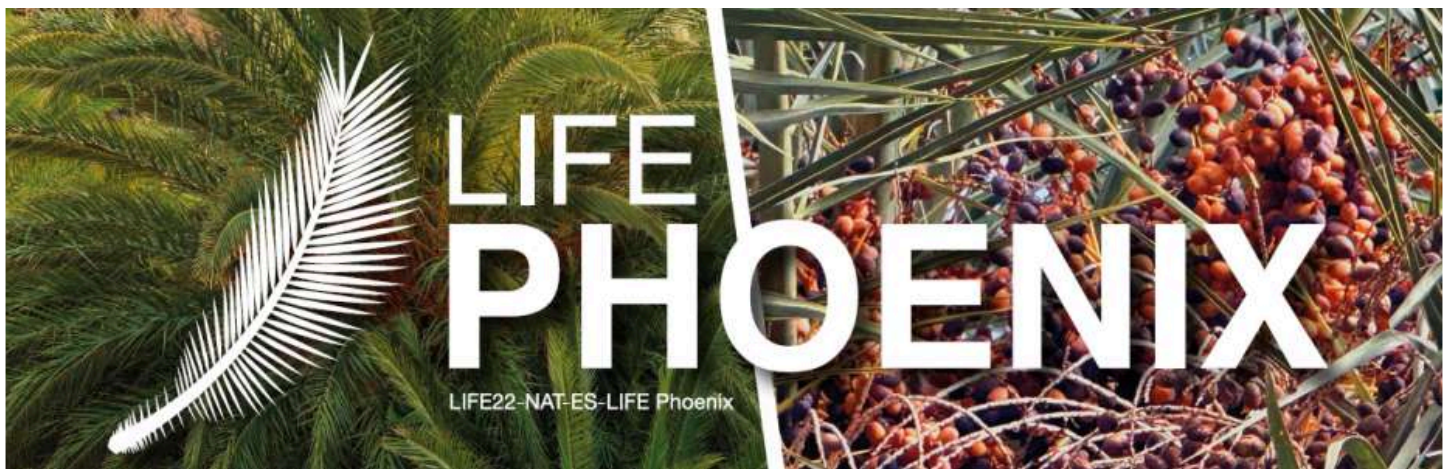
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3rd Steering Committee Meeting

The LIFE Phoenix project celebrated its third Steering Committee meeting on 23 May 2025 in Heraklion, after a whole week of technical coordination in Crete involving the complete consortium. Field visits were conducted during the first four days to most of the project areas. This provided a joint updated picture of the context for each target palm grove, as well as allowed *in situ* monitoring and knowledge exchange by technical staff from all project partners. The final meeting (in person and online) was devoted to a full technical and financial review of the project implementation. Special attention was paid to Concrete Conservation Actions (WP3) and financial issues, with the aim of preparing the interim report of the project, scheduled for the first quarter of 2026.





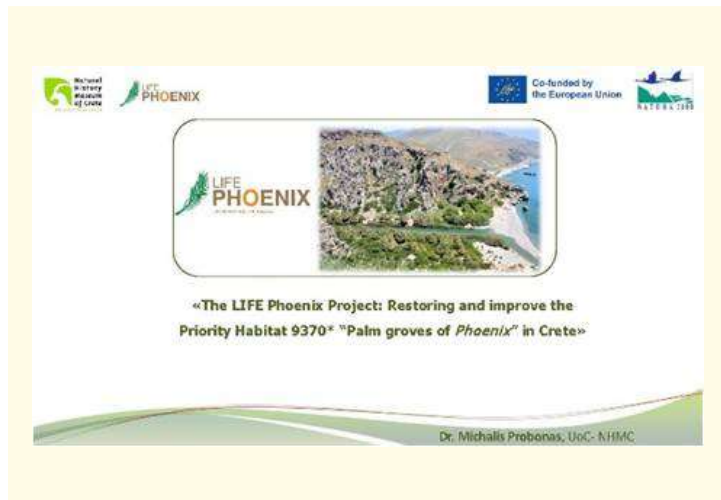
Networking and technical training

The LIFE Phoenix project was present at Foro ECOISLAS, an international environmental event celebrated in Gran Canaria (31-31 January 2025) which registered more than 500 participants. A presentation was also carried out by Gustavo Viera (GESPLAN) at the LIFE Platform Meeting recently organised by the LIFE Programme in Brasov, Romania (3-5 June 2025). On the other hand, Carina Ramos (ICIA) conducted a new training session (30 April 2025) in Gran Canaria on pest control and best practice for the management *Phoenix canariensis*. Finally, the University of Crete had an info kiosk in the biennial Agricultural-Livestock Fair of Arcalochori, Heraklion, Crete (25-29 June 2025), where copies of the project's leaflet (50) and of the Best Practice Manual (25) were distributed.



Participation in scientific conferences

Michalis Probonas (UoC) participated with an oral presentation about the LIFE Phoenix project in the 5th Mediterranean Plant Conservation Week celebrated in Cyprus (7-11 April 2025).



Governance strategy

Three info days with stakeholders have been jointly organised by partners UoC and HSPN in key locations of Crete: Spili (11 February 2025), Pyrgos (12 February 2025) and Siteia (21 March 2025). In addition, both partners co-organised the first online meeting of the project's Volunteer Team (16 June 2025), bringing together citizens and scientists with a shared conservation goal. In Gran Canaria, a technical visit was organised with competent authorities (14 May 2025) in Fataga area.



Fieldwork in Gran Canaria

Elimination of deadwood and invasive vegetation

The fieldwork teams keep working in the two project areas (SAC Fataga and SAC Güigüí) since October 2024. Progress is very notable in terms of the clearing of common reed and the removal of dead wood in both ravines, preparing the ground for the first plantings planned for next winter.

1.- Clearing a reed wall in Fataga ravine



2.- Elimination of reedbed in Guguy Grande



Collection of seeds/cuttings and production of keystone species

Collection of seeds and cuttings of selected endemic species has also continued during the last six months. At the same time, this has allowed the production of plants of these species in one of the public nurseries managed by the Council of Gran Canaria.

3.- Collection of seeds near the project areas



4.- Plant production in public nursery



Pest prevention and control (*Diocalandra frumenti*)

Work on the prevention and control of *Diocalandra frumenti* has increased its pace in the Fataga area (where infection is most pronounced) since March 2024. In addition, a new trapping network has been installed in the Guguy Grande ravine (with mild infestation) since April 2025.

5.- Technical training to project staff



6.- Placement of pheromone traps



Fieldwork in Crete

Seed collection and propagation of *Phoenix theophrasti*

Seeds were collected from all six target palm groves of *Phoenix theophrasti*, from selected trees, and propagated in the public nursery for later reinforcement or restoration of palm populations in their natural habitats.

1.- Seed collection in 6 target palm groves



2.- *Phoenix* production in public nursery



Second Year of Hand Pollination of *Phoenix theophrasti*

Hand pollination was applied for the second consecutive year to the westernmost population of *Phoenix theophrasti* in Chrysoskalitissa, where natural regeneration is extremely limited due to the small number of individuals and intense grazing and tourism pressure.

3.- Hand pollination in Chrysoskalitissa



4.- Hand pollination in Chrysoskalitissa



Installation of traps for a study on pollinators

Traps for the Baseline Study on the diversity and abundance of pollinators (Apoidea, Syrphidae, Lepidoptera, and other relevant taxonomic groups) were installed and samples were collected across the six palm groves of Crete.

5.- Detail of the traps for pollinators









6.- Traps placed within a palm grove



General project performance

After two years of project implementation, and based on the results obtained in the previous phase of preparatory actions, LIFE Phoenix is developing different types of concrete conservation actions in both islands (Crete and Gran Canaria). The latter are mainly focused on control and eradication of invasive vegetation, pest management and collection of seeds/cuttings, while the first reforestation tasks are expected to begin by the end of 2025. Furthermore, fieldwork monitoring has started, as well as the governance strategy and the communication plan continue to be important lines of intervention in the framework of the project. Exploitation of project results has also started, even ahead of schedule.

WP1. Project Management	WP3. Conservation (GC)	WP3. Conservation (Crete)
		
WP4. Monitoring/Evaluation	WP5. Sustain./Exploitation	WP6. Communication
		

Highlights

Project Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contracts: new staff, new external services and public tenders. ● 2nd Monitoring Visit in Crete (19-23 May 2025). ● 3rd Steering Committee meeting (23 May 2025). ● 3rd Technical Activity Report (Jan 2025).
Conservation Actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Control and eradication of invasive vegetation. ● New traps for pest control (<i>D. frumenti</i>, <i>R. ferrugineus</i>). ● Collection of seeds/cuttings and plant production. ● Working Groups, participatory networks and new collaborations.
Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information boards installed in Gran Canaria. ● News in press and website, interviews in TV and social media. ● Social Media: new posts in Facebook and Instagram. ● New materials: newsletter, manuals, booklets, videos.
Networking & Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Technical trainings on pest management in Gran Canaria (30 April 2025) and Crete (19-22 May 2025). ● Events: ECOISLAS (31-31 Jan 2025), LIFE Platform Meeting (3-5 Jun 2025), 5th Med. Plant Conservation Week (7-11 Apr 2025), Agricultural-Livestock Fair of Arcalochori (25-29 Jun 2025).

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 and dissemination documents
- Videos: more "video-pills" to be uploaded soon

Contact

For feedback, partnerships, or further information, please feel free to contact us at:
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