

★ **SELINA** SCIENCE FOR EVIDENCE-BASED
AND SUSTAINABLE DECISIONS ★
ABOUT NATURAL CAPITAL

Country Fact Sheet
CZECH REPUBLIC



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Country Fact Sheet: Czech Republic (CZ)

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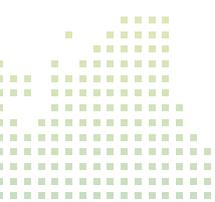
If you feel there are ongoing or upcoming research projects, policy initiatives or legislations, concerning the use of biodiversity, ecosystem condition and ecosystem services knowledge in decisions and policies, missing please contact inge.lieken@vito.be and we update the country fact sheet (until March 2027)

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Update on projects concerning biodiversity, ecosystem condition and ecosystem services assessment and accounting since 2022

The MAES process in the Czech Republic was initiated by a national assessment of grassland ecosystem services (Hönigová et al., 2012). Later, an integrated assessment of ecosystem services was performed using value transfer and the Consolidated Layer of Ecosystems of the Czech Republic (Frélichová et al., 2014). Meanwhile, ecosystem services assessments were a component of several case studies focusing on ES modelling, trade-off analysis, participatory mapping, evaluation of nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction. All assessment projects were conducted as part of research initiatives funded by national or European projects, but no official MAES program was launched in Czechia by authorities.

A National Platform for Ecosystem Services (NPES) was established in 2022 in the Czech Republic. NPES evolved within the Integrated Project LIFE, LIFE-IP: N2K Revisited – Integrated LIFE project for the Natura 2000 network in the Czech Republic, called One

Nature. NPES was established as a scientific-political body with a vision to support and coordinate the creation of policies and strategies focused on ecosystem services in the field of nature conservation and biodiversity, as well as other departmental policies. NPES meets annually and gradually develops an agenda of mutual information and discussion of ecosystem services issues, including participatory prioritisation and identification of important topics, barriers and further developments.

Ecosystem accounting emerged as important and progressive topic. Since 2022, a Working Group on Ecosystem Accounting was established under the auspices of the Czech Statistical Office. It associates around 25 experts mainly from ministries, governmental agencies, academic and non-governmental institutions. The aim is to communicate and support the development of ecosystem accounts according to current EU and Eurostat guidelines. Czechia has been also involved in voluntary reporting.



2

Examples of uptake in decision processes, regulations and/or legislation

In Czechia, ecosystem services are addressed in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. It is also a component of other national policy documents, namely National Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan and others. There is an ongoing update of the Nation-

al Biodiversity Strategy which will incorporate current needs, including role of the National Platform on Ecosystem Services and others. There is no direct legislative basis.

3

Perceived barriers and needs to enhance uptake

3.1 Barriers

Following key barriers have been identified in participatory discussion within NPES and SELINA Community of practice:

- Lack of Awareness about ES: Limited knowledge among politicians, officials, the general public, and even professionals (e.g., among architects or farmers). The need for cooperation across various sectors and creating simple, concrete examples to explain ES concepts.
- Diversity of Approaches: Lack of uniform terminology and existence of various, non-unified methodologies.
- Insufficient Practical Implementation: Gap between extensive research and political action, especially in areas like carbon production charges.
- Legislative Inertia vs. Research Progress: Difficulty in updating legislation to reflect new scientific findings.
- Complexity of Funding Titles: Challenges, especially for smaller farmers, in navigating numerous funding titles related to ES.
- Limited Influence of Environmental Policies: Environmental considerations should be as important as economic ones, but often face unfavourable conditions.
- Lack of Data-Based Policies: Conflict between political decisions and scientific research.

- Absence of Legislation Adjustments and Environmental Economists: Need for more specialized professionals in the field.

3.2 Needs

- Awareness-raising about ecosystem services concept and assessment
- Mainstreaming of ES in various policies, such as urban planning, forestry, agriculture, education, ecological assessments, and anti-erosion measures.
- Creating discussion forums for sharing and communicating different opinions among nature conservationists, scientists, and others
- A unified methodology anchored in legislation, customized for each sector, and a standardized evaluation system.





4

On the way to transformative change

The overall conclusion of the IPBES global assessment (IPBES 2019) was that Goals for conserving and sustainably using nature and achieving sustainability cannot be met by current trajectories, and goals for 2030 and beyond, may only be achieved through transformative changes across economic, social, political, and technological factors.

Transformative or transformational change refers to “a fundamental, system-wide reorganization

across technological, economic and social factors, including paradigms, goals and values” (IPBES, 2019). Simply said, doing things really differently, rather than doing less or optimising the system.

A means to enhance uptake is bringing people of the quadruple helix together and exchange information and learn from each other. Another is to establish projects that can show that it works and lead to possible pathways of transformative change.

4.1 Community of practice

NPES was established as a scientific-political body with a vision to support and coordinate the creation of policies and strategies focused on ecosystem services in the field of nature conservation and biodiversity, as well as other departmental policies. The goal of NPES is to support the exchange of information and the sharing of experiences in the area of assessment and use of ecosystem services in decision-making. The activity of the platform will also facilitate international cooperation and support the development of a national network of institutions cooperating in the field of ecosystem services and further developing individual key themes.

The NPES associates over fifty nominated representatives across the spectrum of nature protection, state and local government, academic institutions, organisations operating in the field of water management, agriculture, and forestry, as well as non-profit organisations.

The establishment of NPES was preceded by extensive consultation process, inter alia interviews and workshops with key stakeholders relevant for nature conservation, including Natura 2000 management, and ecosystem service assessments and policy uptake of results. Therefore, NPES represents diverse stakeholders from various sectors and policy areas.

SELINA Seeds of change discussions about successes, barriers, visions, and transformative projects were participative component of the program at the 2nd (June 2023) and 3rd (April 2024) NPES meetings.

4.2 Seeds of transformative change

The following projects were nominated:

LIFE-IP One Nature, including National Platform on Ecosystem Services

The Integrated LIFE project for the Natura 2000 network in the Czech Republic, called One Nature, contributes to the conservation of biodiversity and the promotion of ecosystem services in the protected areas of the Natura 2000 network. Thanks to more efficient management planning, research and using its results in practice also thanks to a good cooperation with landowners and land users located in protected areas, the project helps to ensure the most suitable management and, above all, to preserve these valuable sites for the benefit of nature and people in the future. It initiates cooperation at the national scale on implementation of ecosystem services through the National Platform on ecosystem Services.



Additional projects with transformative potential were identified at the NPES third meeting in April 2024:

Planting for the Future (Czech Environmental Partnership)

This initiative wants to connect all those who plant trees. Whether they are municipalities and cities, associations, state institutions, companies, schools, farmers or landowners, volunteers, and donors. It aims to achieve the goal of planting 10 million trees outside of the forest, over the next 5 years. It would help to cool down Czech cities and support the resilience of the Czech landscape from the effects of climate change. The Initiative provides finances for tree planting by communities, provides advice and guidance and aims to change the legislation.

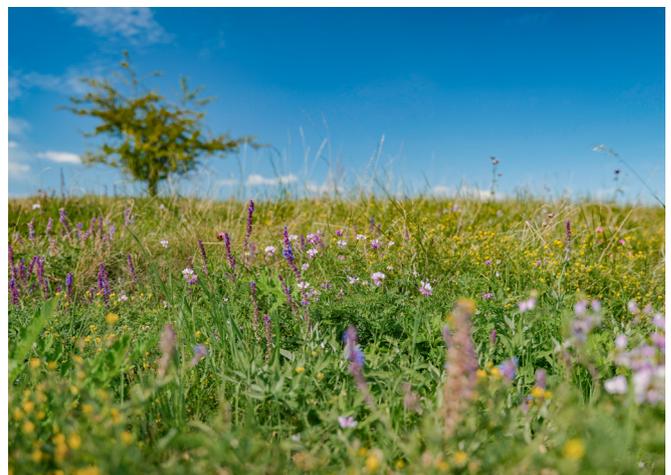
Farmer School – Vocational School of Organic Agriculture

The only school of organic and biodynamic agriculture in the Czech Republic that offers a comprehensive programme of practical training on organic farms at home and abroad. They strive for sustainable agriculture that does not plunder the landscape but heals it, agriculture that thinks about future generations. Their graduates are expected to disprove the economic clichés and build up organic farms showing both environmental and financial sustainability. **Farmer school** educates and supports young farmers who have the desire to establish new farms and thus contribute to the restoration of natural farming, healthy landscapes and rural life.

Fem4Forest – Forests in Women’s Hands

Fem4Forest identifies and analyses the innovation needs of labour market and forest entrepreneurs and demonstrates the transferability of ideas and good

practice examples (GPE) by a series of pilot actions within the Danube region (DR) territory to push forward the ability of women actors to gain a foothold in the workforce resp. innovate their forest business to boost the competitiveness of the forest-based sector on the European market. Therefore, the main objective of Fem4Forest is to strengthen the forest sector at local, regional and interregional level through increased involvement and ability of women actors by supporting their equal presence and competences at the market in DR.



5 **References**

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Project duration: 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2027

Keywords: biodiversity, ecosystems, ecosystem services, natural capital accounting, evidence-based decision-making, transformative change

Project coordinator: Prof. Dr. Benjamin Burkhard, Leibniz University Hannover (LUH), Institute of Physical Geography and Landscape Ecology

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PROJECT PARTNERS

-  Leibniz University Hannover
-  Stichting Capitals Coalition
-  Ecostack Innovations Limited
-  University of Trento
-  Pensoft Publishers
-  Centre for Ecological Research
-  Mykolas Romeris University
-  Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
-  University of Patras
-  space4environment
-  National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography
-  Rey Juan Carlos University
-  University of Salzburg
-  University of Bucharest
-  Flemish Institute for Technological Research
-  Foundation for Sustainable Development
-  Baltic Environmental Forum
-  Adam Mickiewicz University
-  National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment
-  Copenhagen University
-  Norwegian Institute for Natural Research
-  Estonian University of Life Sciences
-  The Cyprus Institute
-  Wageningen University
-  The Finnish Environment Institute
-  Global Change Research Institute SarVision
-  Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic
-  Gaspar Frutuoso Foundation
-  Flemish Agency for Nature and Forest
-  Municipality of Trento
-  Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania
-  Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia
-  Research Centre in Biodiversity and Genetic Resources
-  University of Haifa
-  COHAB Initiative Secretariat
-  KTH Royal Institute of Technology
-  Croatian Forest Research Institute
-  SEAcoop
-  Macroplan
-  University of Reunion Island
-  Spatial Services
-  Asplan Viak
-  denkstatt
-  Wolfs Company, part of Grant Thornton
-  Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge
-  ETH Zürich
-  Joint Research Centre
-  UNEP-WCMC
-  South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute

