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Safeguarding European wild pollinators

[Grant and Award Announcement](#)

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image: Safeguard logo [view more](#)

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Wild pollinators are a key part of European biodiversity and provide a wide range of benefits to crops, wild plants, and human wellbeing.

At the same time, wild pollinators face multiple threats in Europe and around the world, including climate change, land use and habitat loss. That is why pollinators are declining in number and diversity. The full extent of their decline, its complex causes and the most effective ways to respond to it are still not well understood.

[Safeguard](#) is a newly funded EU project receiving 7.8 million Euros from the [European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme](#).

Safeguard aims to expand current assessments of the status and trends of European wild pollinators, including bees, butterflies, flies, and other insects. It will use research, knowledge synthesis and state-of-the-art models to reveal current and future impacts of pressures on wild pollinators, paying particular attention to emerging threats, how different threats interact, and what the long-term and cumulative effects are.

25 institutions from 15 countries will collaborate

A team of researchers, NGOs, industry and policy experts from 25 institutions spread across 14 European countries and China are joining forces to contribute to Europe's capacity to reverse the losses of wild pollinators.

“This interdisciplinary project will make a significant contribution to the protection of pollinators and their functions in European ecosystems and has the potential to reinforce global initiatives that aim to halt biodiversity declines,” comments Safeguard coordinator Prof. Dr. Ingolf Steffan-Dewenter, head of the [Department of Animal Ecology and Tropical Biology](#) at Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg in Bavaria, Germany.

Reducing multiple pressures on wild pollinators

Safeguard will conduct empirical research for systematic assessment of multiple threats to wild pollinators at scales from the local to global, and will provide an evaluation of what are the most effective ways to halt declines in different.

One of Safeguard’s objectives is to improve understanding of the diverse values of European pollinators and develop new and diverse approaches to benefit pollinators – from field to landscape scales, and across agricultural, natural and urban systems.

Mobilising concerted multiple actions

With the support of key stakeholders, Safeguard will co-develop an integrated assessment framework, including guides to decision makers, so our research insights can more effectively support evidence-based management and policy at national, European and global scales.

Safeguard will increase awareness of wild pollinators and their societal value, especially with the general public, industry, business and policymakers, in order to mobilise concerted multiple actions towards reversing wild pollinator decline across Europe.

Start of the Safeguard project

Safeguard will hold its official kick-off meeting between 7 – 9 September 2021. In an effort to provide a safe environment in the face of COVID-19, the start of the four-year project will take place in an entirely online environment.

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