

# Nature and wildlife tourism

Rewilding  
Europe  
Capital



**Rewilding Europe** aims to create more space for wild nature in Europe, by allowing natural processes to shape our landscapes, promoting wildlife comeback and developing nature-based local economies. The organisation takes an entrepreneurial approach to conservation by helping to develop nature and wildlife tourism models that support, reinvigorate and conserve wild nature as 'natural capital' and contribute positively to the socio-economic environment of rural areas.

**Rewilding Europe Capital** provides business loans to nature and wildlife tourism businesses in Europe that generate positive rewilding and environmental impact.

# Rewilding Europe Capital – Nature and wildlife tourism



## Interest in nature and wildlife tourism

The core product of nature and wildlife based tourism is wild nature – landscapes, forests, wild rivers, birds, plants and wildlife.

With a comeback of a wide range of iconic wildlife species in Europe, the opportunities for wildlife watching and commercial activities thereof is growing. Local communities benefiting from non-consumptive use of wildlife, such as wildlife watching and photography, can generate direct benefits from these 'renewable' resources, as well as through multiplier effects. This type of tourism is developing fast in Europe and is instrumental to create further tolerance among European society - both rural and urban - to see this wildlife comeback as a positive development and thus an opportunity instead of a threat.

Forms of outdoor tourism such as walking, mountain biking, sea kayaking, canoeing, ski touring and sailing can all be major economic contributors for countries and regions, and are enhanced if experienced in a wild and natural setting, and when done in a sustainable way.

Tourism offers a means to generate direct finance for rewilding (through fee structures and lease arrangements), and will create local jobs and benefits which will incentivise local people to support rewilding. People who visit rewilding areas can also be stimulated to engage with rewilding and conservation generally.

## Qualifying tourism activities

REC is looking to finance tourism businesses interested in:

- **Access to nature & wildlife:** Enable direct access to nature and wildlife in ways which facilitate rewilding and conservation. Such businesses may include lodges, camps, wilderness trails and guiding companies;
- **Wildlife watching:** Provide access to wildlife through mechanisms that can be harnessed to appreciate and support wildlife comeback or protected natural landscapes they rely on – for example wildlife watching hides;
- **Reducing human-wildlife conflict:** Mitigating of human-wildlife conflict through smart solutions and support coexistence between humans and wildlife in a positive way;
- **Communication:** Promoting nature and wildlife to wider audiences through visual imagery, film and social media.

## Finance conditions

REC issues finance loans on the following terms to businesses meeting the required investment and impact requirements:

Principal loan capital:	€25,000 to €600,000
Geographic focus:	EU-28 countries
Investment structure:	Debt only
Currency restrictions:	Euro (€) loans and repayments only
Loan terms:	6–8 years
Interest rate:	2.5%–6%

## Nature and Wildlife Tourism impact indicators

- Variety of wildlife present in the area that can be seen on a regular basis;
- Existence of a 'code of conduct' for wildlife watching to avoid disturbances of wildlife;
- Number of professionally trained wildlife and nature tourism guides, and existence of a certification system;
- Availability of professionally designed and operated wildlife hides;
- Level of acceptance/tolerance of local communities to live with wildlife, in particular large carnivores and large herbivores;
- Number of jobs created and income generated from wildlife- and nature related tourism.

## Making Europe a Wilder Place