



European Chapter of the  
Society for Ecological Restoration  
Annual Report 2021

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# FOREWORD

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*The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic with all its grief, and the new challenges emerged in 2021 strengthened our conviction that a systemic change is needed, and ecological restoration will be a key component of this change.*

*Over 2021 SERE has made a strong effort to respond to this challenge, grown in size, capacities, and ambition, promoted social awareness on the potential benefits of ecological restoration, and supported political initiatives to upscale nature restoration.*

*The creation of the working group on education, the series of webinars presenting the challenges of ecological restoration in Europe, the 12th European Conference on Ecological Restoration – our first online experience of this size, the creation of the focus group that allowed the definition of SERE 2021-2027 strategy, and our continuous support to national and international initiatives to advance the science and practice of ecological restoration, are among our achievements for this reporting period.*

*The Declaration “Scientists for An Ambitious European Nature Restoration Law” became a landmark for SERE, reflecting the growing interest in ecological restoration in Europe, with more than 1400 signatories and 30 supporting organisations. By the end of 2021, the Declaration allowed us all to bring the voice of ecological restoration in Europe at EU Commissioners Cabinet level.*

*The commitment and effectiveness of our newly appointed program manager was fundamental in SERE’s upgrade.*

*As I write these lines, ready to open SERE2022 Conference in Alicante, this process continues in fruitful mode. On behalf of SERE board, I want to thank you for contributing to the activities outlined in this report, and your continuing engagement with our Society.*

Jordi Cortina-Segarra, Chair



**Cover images:** SER Europe Webinar Series 2021. From top-right clock-wise: M.Halassy, Centre for Ecological Research, Hungary; W.A. Wiersinga, OBN, the Netherlands; A.Helm, University of Tartu, Estonia; A.Tolvanen, Natural Resources Institute-LUKE, Finland.

# ORGANIZATION

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## SER Europe status

Since June 2012 SER Europe is officially established as an international non-profit organization with legal seat in Belgium, hosted by the Research Institute for Nature and Forest in Brussels. The full text of the SER Europe statutes is available on the SER Europe website.

European Chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration (in short: SER Europe or SERE),  
p/o Research Institute for Nature and Forest  
Herman Teirlinckgebouw, Havenlaan 88 bus 73, 1000 Brussels, Belgium  
International non-profit company N° 849.548.764  
[www.ser-europe.org](http://www.ser-europe.org)  
[info@ser-europe.org](mailto:info@ser-europe.org)

The SER Europe Board was renewed in September 2021 with 3 members leaving and 2 entering the board. The board consists currently of 14 members from 12 different European countries.

## **Executive Committee members:**

- Jordi Cortina-Segarra (Chair), Universidad de Alicante, Spain
- Berit Köhler (Secretary), Norwegian Institute for Nature Research, Norway
- Kris Decler (Treasurer, webmaster, policy-interface), Research Institute for Nature and Forest INBO, Belgium



[Board details SERE website](#)



## **Board members (at large):**

- Anne Tolvanen (European representative in SER International), Natural Resources Institute, Finland
- Aveliina Helm, Institute of Ecology and Earth Sciences, Estonia
- Johannes Kollmann, Technische Universität München, Germany
- Melinda Halassy, Institute of Ecology and Botany, Hungary
- Sabine Tischew, Hochschule Anhalt, Germany
- Elise Buisson, l'Université d'Avignon, France
- Klára Řehounková, University of České Budejovice, Czech Republic
- Josu G. Alday, Universitat de Lleida, Spain
- Alice Nunes, Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal



**New board members (at large):**

- Richard Scott, UK Urban Ecology Forum – Eden Project, UK
- Kristin Svavarsdottir, Soil Conservation Service Iceland (SCSI), Iceland



We thank the **exiting members:**

- Agata Klimkowska, Eco-Recover, Netherlands/Poland
- Thorunn Petursdottir, Soil Conservation Service of Iceland
- Jonathan Mitchley, University of Reading, United Kingdom

**Program Manager:**

- Jordi Pietx

**Board meetings (all on-line) and Major agreements taken:**

- **18/03/2021:** Planning of a new Strategic Plan. Review of SERE's fundraising strategy. Approach and strategy for SERE participation in project partnerships following our Horizon 2020 Green Deal and LIFE 2021 experience. Working group activities and plan 2021, including webinar program.
- **05/07/2021:** renewal of board members, approval of Annual Report and Financial Statement 2020, strategic planning, science, and policy, H2020 and LIFE+ presentation and other.
- **01/09/2021:** overall review of SERE2021, renewal of board members, update on Strategy 2021-2027 and confirmation of SERE legal address.
- **18/11/2021:** planning new SERE Strategic Plan, confirmation of SERE fundraising strategy, approach and strategy for SERE participation in project partnerships, renewal of SERE Board members strategy and other.
- **13/12/2021:** approval of new SERE board members by SERE members, call for interns, SERE strategy.

**Bi-annual General Membership meeting: 9 September 2021**

A membership meeting was held as part of the virtual SERE2021 Conference in Alicante, Spain. Due to the pandemic crisis the Conference was postponed and is now planned in

virtual format on September 7<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> 2021 with a participation of 40 members. The agenda of the membership meeting included:

1. Summary of **activities** 2019-2021.
2. Summary of **current status**: 306 members, 37 European countries represented, 8 affiliated organisations.
3. Approval of Annual Report and Financial Statement 2020.
4. **Board composition and renewal** of representatives: Kristin Svavarsdottir - Iceland, Richard Scott - UK.
5. **SERE2022** Alicante
6. Presentation of SERE Strategy 2021-2027 process.
7. Proposal to change from **bi-annual to annual** General Membership Meeting.

#### **SER Europe Working Groups**

The Working Group of Education and Training (WGE) is the only informal and permanent work group of SERE as of 2021. Led by board member Melinda Halassy, it involves as main members Patrícia Rodriguez (Univ. of Lisboa, Portugal), Agustin Merino (Univ. of Santiago de Compostela, Spain) and Mark Nason (Eden Project Education, UK). The WGE met regularly throughout the year, developed the YOUNG#ER program to engage young restorers with the society, organised a session in SERE2021 and, took over the coordination of SERE webinars.

#### **Collaboration with SER International**

For the past years, SER Europe has been a driving force for a global restructuring of SER. Following the 2019 Memorandum of Understanding, SER Europe and SER International have started a first joint project on adapting WWF Spain Restoration Standards to the SER International Principles & Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration, with support of Foundation Audemars Watkins (Switzerland). In 2021 the organic relationships SER / SERE have increased, with the joint organisation of the monthly SERE webinars and the coordination on website and membership issues. Bethanie Walder, executive director of SER followed closely the process of the SERE Strategy 2021-2027 in view of the increasing leadership Europe is taking on ecological restoration policy.

Anne Tolvanen continued as representative of SER Europe in the board of SER International and chaired the Chapter Relations Committee, and Kris Decler has been at-large board member of SER International and member of the Science and Policy Committee. Vicky Temperton, Leuphana University (Germany) was SER Director at large, and is connected to SERE board, though not member of it.

# SER Europe Strategy 2021-2027

Once the previous SERE Strategy 2016-2020 ended its 5-year period during the summer SERE started a process for a new 2021-2027 Strategy, with different tools that allowed the participation of a range of internal but also external contributors, as shown on the table and the diagram of the Strategy process.



The renewed SERE strategy was achieved by collectively reviewing and evaluating the former strategy, by taking into account what has been achieved, how the current context has changed and what future trends, as well as regional and political frameworks might change SERE's work. SERE strategy was developed following an iterative and participatory process involving – in different steps and at different times – all stakeholders directly or indirectly involved and concerned by the work of SERE. Stakeholders included the board of directors, cooperation networks, affiliated members, external key stakeholders, as well as followers and the interested public at large. A defined focus group, composed of members of different stakeholder groups worked through the strategy development process in consecutive workshops. Their reflexions were fed by results from member surveys and votes, public polls, and interviews with key stakeholders.

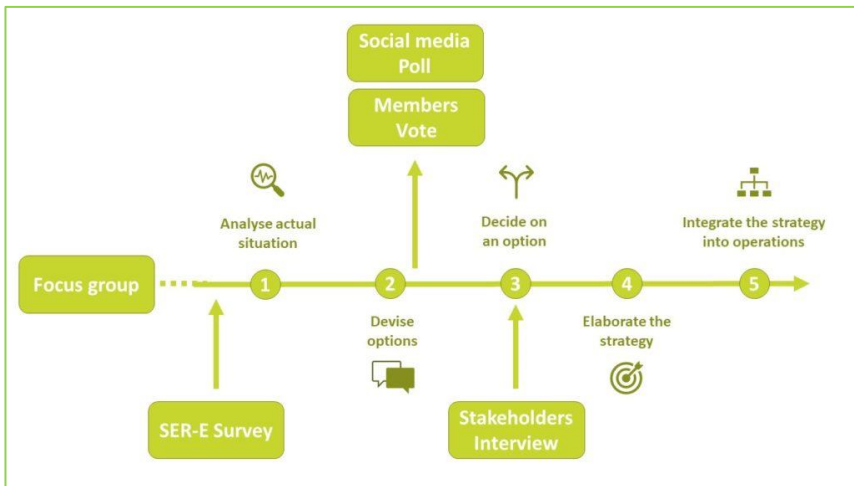


[SERE 2021-2027 Strategy](#)



The 4 Strategic Objectives on which the strategy is structured are shown below.

Group	Participation tool	Number of participants
<b>Open to general opinion</b>	On-line survey (September 2021)	141
<b>Members (on proposed actions)</b>	On-line survey (October 2021)	42
<b>Members</b>	Focus-Group (3 meetings in October December 2021)	13
<b>Open to general opinion</b>	Twitter survey (October 2021)	22
<b>SER representative (Bethanie Walder)</b>	Brief Exchange Sessions with Focus Group	1
<b>External invited stakeholders</b>	Dedicated Focus Group Session	3



Strategy process Diagram and image of the focus group sessions with Bethanie Walder (SER) and the external stakeholders consulted.



## SERE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & TARGETS (2021-2027)

①	Provide science-based evidence to mainstream SERE's influence on legal, political, and socio-economic agendas
②	Join efforts in promoting ecological restoration by further strengthening SERE's network and collaborations
③	Develop SERE's capacities to take the leading role in driving and shaping the momentum of ecological restoration
④	Promote societal awareness and build capacities by increasing SERE's visibility and outreach to individuals



# ACTIVITIES

## COMMUNICATION

### Newsletters

SERE newsletter was relaunched on March 2021 entitled “European Ecological Restoration Quarterly – SERE newsletter”. The newsletter was discontinued until December 2021. Therefore, the regularity of a Quarterly Newsletter remains pending.

- 8/3/2021 2021 Newsletter: European Ecological Restoration Quarterly – SERE **Newsletter Winter 2021**
- 29/12/2021 newsletter: SERE Quarterly – **Special, End of the Year 2021**

A special Newsletter was also sent in December 2021 to update all signatories of the SERE Declaration (see below). This message was received by 1,089 email addresses.

- 10.12.2021 **#science4EUrestorenature**

### Twitter

Board Member Jonathan Mitchley created a Twitter account [@SER Europe](#) in December 2016 and provided regular tweets on the latest news in ER in the EU. In December 2021 the account had gained 452 followers which brought it to **1121** followers in total,



### Publications

In 2021 we published:

- Annual Report 2020
- Abstracts Book of the 2021 European Conference on Ecological Restoration
- *Barriers to Ecological Restoration in Europe: expert perspectives*. Restoration Ecology, 29 (4). Authored by a range of SERE members and based on a Delphi Process involving 145 experts.

[Annual Report 2020](#)

[Abstracts Book SERE2021](#)

[Barriers paper](#)



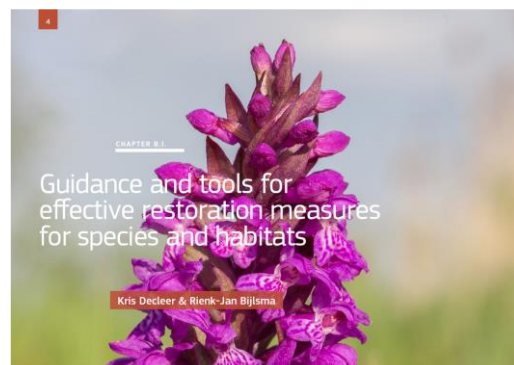
RESEARCH ARTICLE | Open Access | CC BY-NC-ND

#### Barriers to ecological restoration in Europe: expert perspectives

Jordi Cortina-Segarra, Ismael García-Sánchez, Miriam Grace, Pilar Andrés, Susan Baker, Craig Bullock, Kris Decler, Lynn V. Dicks, Judith L. Fisher, Jan Frouz, Agata Klimkowska ... [See all authors](#) ▾

First published: 12 January 2021 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.13346> | Citations: 14

Author contributions: JCS, IGS, MG, PA, SB, CB, JLF, JF, AK, APK, DMM, PMRG, SS, JV designed the study and discussed the results; JCS, IGS, MG, LD designed the questionnaires and analyzed the results; JCS, IGS, MG wrote the manuscript, assisted by PA, SB, CB, KD, JLF, JF, PMRG, SS; JCS, MG, JLF, JV coordinated the process.  
Coordinating Editor: Stephen Murphy



SERE contributed to a new **Handbook on Evidence-based Improvements in the Birds and Habitats Directives Implementation (E-BIND)** commissioned by the European


[E-Bind Restoration Guidance](#)

Parliament. *Scientific support for successful implementation of the Natura 2000 network* (Focus area B), which includes a chapter on *Guidance and tools for effective restoration measures for species and habitats* co-authored by SERE Board Member Kris Decler (INBO, Belgium).

### Website

SER Europe's website has been continuously updated, revised, and improved. A specific section on webinars was created in 2021, 16 news posts and 32 events were added to the portal during the year.

New pages on Webinars, SERE Strategy and SERE Declaration were created. Still several pages of the website need to be revised and updated. A new tool provided by SER and inserted on the SER Europe page heading now allows automatic translation of all the website in all languages available.



The image shows a screenshot of the SER Europe website. On the left, there is a green megaphone icon and a blue arrow pointing to a dropdown menu titled 'Seleccioneu l'idioma'. The menu lists various languages including català, afrikaans, amara, albans, alemany, ambàric, àrab, armeni, assames, àzeri, bambara, basc, bengali, bhutari, belonis, birma, bosnià, and búlgar. Below the menu, the text reads: 'www.ser-europe.org now with a tool allowing automatic translation to any language.' The website header includes the SER logo and the text 'Welcome to SER Europe, a chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration'. The main banner features the text '13th SERE CONFERENCE 5th - 9th SEP 2022 ALICANTE, SPAIN' and 'Registration Open - Conference Starts 5 September'. Below the banner, there are three promotional cards: 'CONTRIBUTE! SURVEY AVAILABLE NOW! TRAIN#ER Training needs in Ecological Restoration', 'Send us your opportunities to share! YOUNG#ER! Opportunities for Young professionals in Ecological restoration', and '500ERs Restoring Europe. Better together.'

A special webpage was created externally for [www.SERE2021.org](http://www.SERE2021.org) (now extinct, visit SERE website for info on the Conference)

## CONFERENCES, TRAINING AND OTHER EVENTS

In continuation with the exceptional conditions posed by Covid-19 pandemic, SERE did not plan any live event in 2021.

A successful webinar series was initiated with the 7 sessions listed below and a total participation of **502** attendants throughout the series. Access to all webinars is permanently open.

### **SERE Webinars 2021:**

- **February 11, 2021** State of Ecological Restoration in Finland, Anne Tolvanen.
- **March 10, 2021** State of Ecological Restoration in Hungary, Melinda Halassy.
- **April 8, 2021** State of Ecological Restoration in Spain, Josu Alday.

- **May 5, 2021** State of Ecological Restoration in Estonia, Aveliina Helm.
- **June 16, 2021** OBN, 30 years of science-practice collaboration in the Netherlands, W.A. (Wim) Wiersinga.
- **October 13, 2021** State of Ecological Restoration in Greece, Petros Kakouros.
- **November 16, 2021** State of Ecological Restoration in the Czech Republic, Kare Prach & Klára Řehouňková.



[SERE webinars](#)

## 12th European Conference on Ecological Restoration, SERE2021

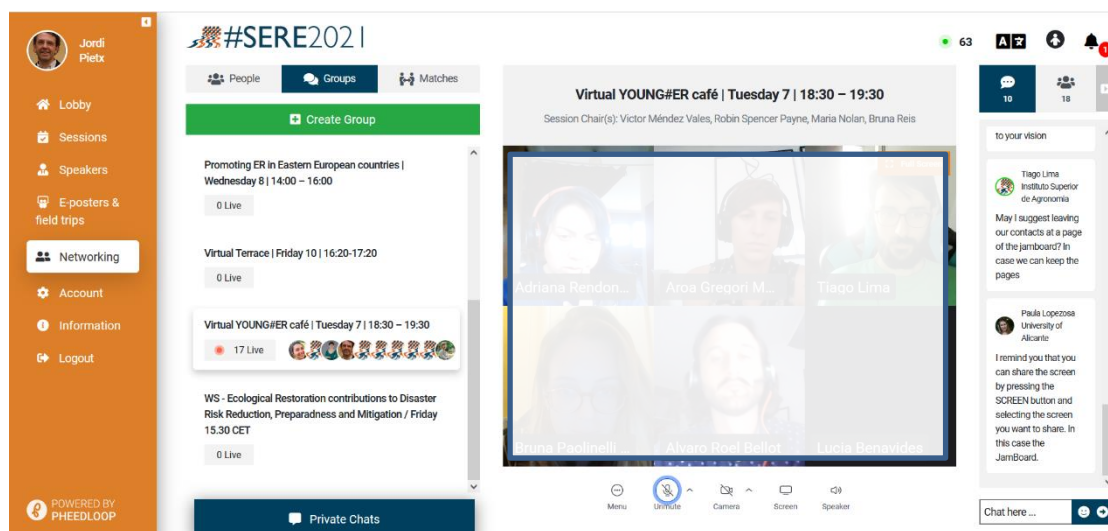


**350** scientists, practitioners and professionals participated from 7-10 September 2021 in the 12<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Ecological Restoration, held online and organised by the University of Alicante (Spain) on behalf of SER Europe. Participants discussed on hot topics such as how to reverse water pollution, manage forests in a sustainable way to reduce wildfire vulnerability, mitigate climate change and adapt to its consequences, manage rivers to reduce the risk of flooding, and recover degraded ecosystems to reduce risks to human health, among other timely issues. A virtual hall and conference rooms were lively and accessible on-line for the 4-day Conference. The Conference approved the *Declaration Scientists in Support of an Ambitious European Union Nature Restoration Law* (see below).

The resulting 49 session recordings are available in open access at the SER Restoration Resource Center (Resource Database section) filtering by keyword “SERE2021”.



[SERE2021 session recordings](#)



## SER Make a Difference Week

SER organised in 2021 the first global week of open civic events to celebrate ecological restoration. SER Europe contributed to disseminating the call for activities. 7 activities were organised in Europe.

## PROJECTS

- **Mediterranean Forest Restoration Certification Pilot.** A 2021-2023 project financed by the Swiss Foundation Audemars- Watkins, led by SER Global in partnership with SERE and WWF-Spain. The project pilots an innovative certification program to verify the quality of field-based restoration projects for Mediterranean forest restoration in Spain. The global objective of this project is to ensure high quality forest restoration projects by implementing a forest restoration certification program. In 2021 the project selected the pilot forest restoration sites and, in December, initiated an open process to contract a consultant for the project technical activities.
- **YOUNG#ER Opportunities.** A project funded by own SERE Funds, proposed and supervised by the Working Group on Education. The objective is to test an open on-line board with work, study, research, volunteering and other opportunities for students and young professionals, in the context of the YOUNG#ER initiative of SERE. In December 2021 an open call for a grant was sent for a young student or professional to manage the board.
- **#500EERs Membership Campaign 2022.** A project with support from SER Global Partnership Fund targeting chapter strengthening initiatives. The objective is to increase SERE membership substantially from the existing 318 members in 2021 and approach the 500 members' line. In December 2021, an open call was sent for an associate grant to give support to the campaign.
- **LIFE WoodMeadows.** A LIFE project on restoration of WoodMeadows habitats in the Baltic countries of Estonia and Letonia, led by public, academic and non-profit organisations. SER Europe participates in replication and dissemination roles at the wider European context. The project was approved in May 2021, and launched in 2022.



[SERE Projects summary page](#)

[YOUNG#ER Opps](#)

[#500EERs](#)

## POLICY AND STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

### Declaration 'Scientists in Support of an Ambitious European Union Nature Restoration Law'

This was certainly the major policy achievement for SER Europe in 2021 and through the Society timeline.

350 scientists participated from 7-10 September 2021 in the 12th European Conference on Ecological Restoration, held online and organised by the University of Alicante (Spain) and SER Europe. As a result, the Conference ended with approving the . The *Declaration 'Scientists in Support of an Ambitious European Union Nature Restoration Law'* approved by *SERE 2021 Conference attendants*, gathered **1432** individual supports of scientists and experts from 32 European countries. Most importantly, the Declaration was also supported by **33** European networks and associations (see list at the end of this section), at national (12) and European level (5). The Declaration addresses key issues for the future EU Nature Restoration Law. It included reference to an innovative 'legal principle on ecological restoration' which may help to achieve the highest recovery possible for natural and semi-natural ecosystems and avoid greenwashing. The Declaration emphasizes that monitoring and reporting of restoration success using multicriteria sets of standards are mandatory. It states that restoration must be recognised as an investment, not a cost, and long-term earmarked funding is necessary. Finally, the



[Declaration on EU restoration](#)

Declaration emphasizes that damage to nature from climate and other policies needs to be avoided and adverse subsidies dismantled

## Declaration “Scientists in support for an ambitious EU Nature Restoration Law”



In parallel SERE participated in several policy and capacity building events and activities

- Continue participation in meetings, positionings and other activities of **the European Habitats Forum** of conservation and restoration organisations. Kris Decler.
- Participation in meetings of DG ENV Nature Directives Expert Group, Kris Decler
- Participation in several EU seminars with EU Member States on a proposal for a nature restoration law, Kris Decler
- Participation in several EU seminars with EU Member States on the 30% protected area target of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, Kris Decler
- Participation in meetings of the SER International Science and Policy Committee, Kris Decler
- February. SER joint the **Global coalition “#UnitedforBiodiversity”**, created on the occasion of the World Wildlife Day 2020, the European Commission launched a new global coalition for biodiversity. With this communication campaign, the Commission is calling for stronger mobilisation in raising awareness about the need to protect biodiversity, ahead of the crucial CoP 15 meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2022.
- 13.4.2021. On-line panel of the "Biodiversity, Hunting, Countryside" Intergroup of the EU Parliament: **EU Nature Restoration Targets: State of play and next steps**. With participation of SERE Chair Jordi Cortina.
- April. EHF Open letter to the European Commission, the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and the European Parliament’s rapporteur on the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, **calling for the full implementation of the nature protection commitments in the Biodiversity Strategy**.
- 4.5.2021 (on-line). **Tools to support habitat restoration in Europe**. 3rd Natura 2000 seminar for the Mediterranean biogeographical region. Wageningen, Nature Bureau, TerraEcogest, CEEWeb, MAE d’Agua, Estonian Univ. Life Sciences. Jordi Cortina.
- 25.6.2021. **Effective ecological restoration to reverse land degradation**. Land Under Pressure. Online seminar European Presidency European Council-Republic of Portugal, SPECO, ICNF, School of Sciences, University of Lisbon. Jordi Cortina



[#UnitedforBiodiversity](#)

- 8.7.2021. **The NGO view on Ecological Restoration.** Closed online event organized by Birdlife international, The politics of nature restoration - an alliance for ambitious restoration in the EU and beyond. Jordi Cortina
- 20.9.2021. **The status of ecological restoration in Europe. A view from the south.** Training Program for Trainers, Assessors and Managers of Management and Conservation Plans under the Law 26.331. Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sustentable del gobierno Argentino, INNOVAT-CONICET and Red Forestal Nacional Argentina. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3c5Jw8gM6Kk>. Jordi Cortina
- 22.9.2021. 3d Global Forum on Ecological Restoration. Achieving Net gain for Biodiversity and Human Wellbeing: Integrating Ecological Restoration with Other Nature-based Solutions. Organized by SER, IUCN and CEM. Jordi Cortina
- 28.9.2021. **The scientific need for an ambitious nature restoration law.** The Science and Practice of Ecological Restoration. Online seminar organized by Birdlife, EEB, WWF. Jordi Cortina
- 8 and 9.11.2021. Participation at the IEEP event **Meeting the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 targets: the role of public finance in the EU.** Session 1: Tracking and reporting public expenditure for Biodiversity; Session 2: Where will the money come from? Financing the 2030 Biodiversity Strategy.
- 25.11.2021, webinar Youth and Environment on nature restoration, presentation: 'Science perspective: Why is large scale nature restoration needed? What is ecological restoration?', Kris Decler.
- 1.12.2022. **Meeting with representatives of the Cabinets of the European Commissioners** Frans Timmermans (**VicePresident - European Green Deal**) and Virginijus Sinkevičius (**Environment**), by a representation of SERE (Jordi Cortina-Segarra, Chair; Kris Decler, Treasurer and EC liaison; Aveliina Helm, Board member at large). 12.02.2021, bilateral meeting with DG ENV on the preparation of the NRL, presentation: 'Some thoughts and tools for a legally binding initiative for effective ecological restoration', Kris Decler.
- 17.12.2021, bilateral meeting with DG ENV on the preparation of the NRL, presentation: 'Proposal for a legal principle on ecological restoration', An Cliquet-Kris Decler.

# AFFILIATE/SISTER ORGANISATIONS

SERE affiliated organizations are networks at national and regional level in Europe who coordinate action and convey SERE membership in the country. There is no formal relationship between the affiliates and SERE, only a Memorandum of Understanding.

In such way, SER Europe hopes to contribute to a more effective restoration community outreach and interaction across (1) possible language barriers between practitioners, policy people and scientists, (2) differences between national restoration policy cultures and socio-economic conditions and (3) multiple knowledge disciplines and topics in the theory and practice of ecological restoration.



SER Europe and Eurosité updated the friendship agreement in July, to continue the collaboration between the two organisations.

What follows is a short report on the activity of the SERE affiliated organizations during 2021.

## Spanish Association of Terrestrial Ecology / Asociación Española de Ecología Terrestre



[AEET-ER website](http://www.aeet-er.org)

During 2021, the main aims of the Spanish Ecological Restoration Network's was to continue to dynamize the network and the information sharing, while we were developing scientific meetings in ecological conferences in Spain.

i) Regarding dynamizing the Spanish Restoration Network. We have been meeting regularly with Jordi Cortina-Segarra (SERE Chair), to organize actions and ideas to share within the Spanish restoration network. Therefore, during this year we have:

- Continuing to share the restoration information within the Spanish Restoration distribution list (scientists, private practitioners, and public managers). Over 2021 there was frequent exchange of information with a mean of 10 emails per month related with recently published papers and information about conferences, talks, and seminars related to ecological restoration.
- The past year we created a webpage and a blog to provide a place for sharing restoration projects' outcomes (positive and negative). However, site activation and blogging are still under way.
- We prepared a **Networking Area** in the SERE conference Alicante: 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021, SERE 2021: 14:30 – 16:00 AEET ecological restoration working group meeting. Session Chair(s): Josu Alday, Carolina Martinez & Technical Assistant: Jordi Cortina (<https://www.sere2021.org/index.php/programme-speakers/programme>). Here, we received feedback from the from WG members concerning priorities and needs for Restoration Ecology in Spain.
- We approved and maintained in the AEET ecological restoration working group webpage the **Scientists in Support for an Ambitious EU Nature Restoration Law** ([https://www.aeet.org/mm/file/211031\\_DeclarationSERE2021\\_DEF\\_All\\_supports.pdf](https://www.aeet.org/mm/file/211031_DeclarationSERE2021_DEF_All_supports.pdf)).
- We presented the webinar “State of Ecological Restoration in Spain” (Josu G. Alday), as part of SERE Webinar series ([State of Ecological Restoration in Spain, 2021](#)).

ii) Tasks related to the Conferences that we developed during 2021 were:

- We planned a **Networking Area** for the AEET Working Group on Ecological Restoration within SERE 2021 conference (more information above).
- For the SERE 2021, we granted 5 students with funds to participate as AEET-member students to participate in SERE 2021.
- We organized a **Special Session** entitled “Restoration in Spain within the framework of the UN 2021-2030. How can Spain contribute to the objectives of the strategy?”, within the **XV Congreso Nacional de la AEET**, that was held in Plasencia in October of 2021 (<https://congreso2021.aeet.org/Index/12/Sesiones-y-simposios>). The special session has **11 presentations** with restoration topics as main points.

These events have helped to mobilize the the Spanish restoration community, contributing to identify priorities/needs/problems to improve network strategy over the next years.

## Finnish Board on Ecological Restoration - FBER



The Finnish Board on Ecological Restoration FBER has two Chairs from two organizations: Kaija Eisto from Metsähallitus, Saija Kuusela from the Finnish Environment Institute.

[FBER website](#)

- There are twelve Members in the FBER from the following organizations:
  - Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of the Agriculture and Forestry, Tapio Forest consultancy, Finnish Environment Institute, Metsähallitus,



Natural Resources Institute Finland, University of Jyväskylä, and the Finnish Forest Centre

- Three expert groups work under FBER: forest restoration, peatland restoration and semi-natural grasslands expert groups. Each of these groups involve 15-20 members. Hence the total volume of FBER and its expert groups is approximately 60 members.
- SERE representative: Anne Tolvanen from the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke).

## 2. Communication activities (website, social networks, media appearances, etc.)

- Website for the Finnish Board on Ecological Restoration  
FBER <https://www.metsa.fi/en/nature-and-heritage/habitats/finnish-board-on-ecological-restoration-fber/>

## 3. Events and activities

- Board met three times in online meetings
- Expert groups met 1-3 times depending on the group.
- A webinar on the management of rich fens was organized by the expert groups on peatlands and semi-natural grasslands in April.
- A webinar on the role of retention trees in safeguarding biodiversity was organized by the forest expert group in April.
- Restoration theme days were organized in September as a webinar event. EU's restoration targets from the Finnish viewpoint were discussed.

## 4. Projects

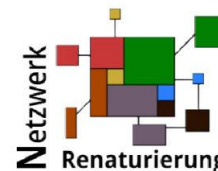
- There were no specific projects in FBER. Rather, FBER and its expert group members collaborated actively with related working groups and projects focusing on conservation and restoration in Finland.
- For example, many FBER members participated the METSO forest biodiversity programme (<https://www.metsonpolku.fi/en-US/METSO Programme>) by coordinating projects, educating or disseminating information on forest restoration and pollinators.
- Many FBER members were also involved in a peatland restoration report ordered from the Finnish Expert Panel of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (Finnish IPBES). The extensive report (in Finnish) summarizes the recent knowledge on the impacts of peatland restoration on biodiversity and ecosystem services: <https://luontopaneeli.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/suomen-luontopaneelin-julkaisu-3b-2021-soiden-ennallistamisen-vaikutukset.pdf>. In general, FBER aims at active collaboration with the Finnish IPBES during 2021-2025.
- Many FBER members were involved in the activities of the national Helmi habitats programme (<https://ym.fi/en/helmi-habitats-programme>) by carrying out restoration actions or monitoring their impacts in peatlands.

## 5. Policy actions

- EU biodiversity strategy to 2030 influenced FBER in 2021 by raising discussions on how the targets will be reflected to the restoration in Finland. Parallel to EU biodiversity strategy, Finland is preparing its own biodiversity strategy to 2035 (<https://ym.fi/en/national-biodiversity-policy>) and reforming the nature conservation Act (<https://ym.fi/en/reform-of-the-nature-conservation-act>). Many members of FBER are involved in these processes.

- FBER followed actively all work evaluating impacts of ecological restoration in Finland. For example, a report on the impacts of EU strategy 2030 on Finnish forests and their productivity and structure was published (in Finnish): <https://jukuri.luke.fi/handle/10024/547941>
- Discussion on carbon compensation related to peatland restoration, and effects on potential compensation markets on peatland restoration targets, was started.

## Restoration network (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Luxembourg) - "Netzwerk Renaturierung"



Due to the exceptional framework of the Covid-19 pandemic we were not able to organize face-to-face events in 2021 either. But we have reorganized the workshop planned for 2020 in Bernburg at the Anhalt University of Applied Sciences as an online event. More than 90 members of the network took part in that online event in June 2021. The topic of the workshop was the restoration of species-rich ecosystem structures in agricultural landscapes and urban areas: species-rich meadows, flowering strips, multifunctional erosion control strips, and species-rich field margins. In addition to lectures, instead of the planned field trips to restoration projects, we made short films about the experimental areas and presented them for the first time during the workshop. These lectures and short films are now also on the GNR website and have already been viewed very often.



[GNR website](#)

## French Network for Exchange and Valorisation in Restoration Ecology / Réseau d'Échanges et de Valorisation en Ecologie de la Restauration



REVER held its annual workshop in the French Alps, in Gap, from June, 29th to July, 1st 2021 - link - <https://reseau-rever.fr/event/rever-2020-restaurer-et-senraciner/>. It brought together 64 participants in Gap and 15 were connected online to attend and discuss around 23 oral presentations and 16 posters. This year had a focus on soil, with a plenary talk by Raphaël Gros "Soil: simple support or real challenge of ecological restoration?" and various presentations on pedogenetic reconstruction, phytoremediation or restoration of soil functioning. Participants enjoyed sunny field trips 1) on the shores of the Serre Ponçon lake to discuss sandstorm issues when the water level is low, 2) on Saint-Léger-les-Mélèzes ski pistes to tackle revegetation issues or 3) on the heights of Col Agnel to discuss the restoration of highly visited sites at high altitude.



[REVER](#)

For many people, this was the first opportunity in a long time to exchange views during a conference and everybody agreed it felt good to meet again after the previous cancellation in 2020.

The next Conference will take place in the Pyrenees (Bagnères-de-Bigorre) from October 4th to 6th 2022, organized by the Botanical Conservatory of Midi-Pyrénées. This Conference will enlarge the approaches, by including a larger component of human and social sciences. <https://reseau-rever.fr/event/rever-12/>

Through the French Ecological Engineering Stakeholder Network, REVER actively participated to the judging panel of the National Ecological Engineering Award which rewards exemplary projects notably in the field of ecological restoration and invasive species management. REVER also participated in discussions concerning the French National Strategy for Biodiversity and increased the visibility of ecological restoration in this strategy. REVER contributed to different documents produced by the French National Council of Biodiversity.

REVER initiated a reflection concerning the establishment of a global database of restoration operations in France. This work will be implemented by INRAE in close collaboration with REVER.



(photos left REVER, right: Sophie Bisuel, CBNA)

## Portuguese Ecological Restoration Network / Sociedade Portuguesa de Ecologia



The Portuguese Ecological Restoration Network (ResECO), a working group of SPECO – Sociedade Portuguesa de Ecologia, is coordinated by Alice Nunes (also representing the organization at the SERE Board) and Patricia Rodríguez-González. Currently, ResECO has more than 260 registered members (professionals and entities), representing the restoration of forests and agro-forests, quarries and mines, areas affected by the construction of infrastructure (e.g. roads), urban areas, rivers and wetlands, coastal areas including dune systems, marine ecosystems (e.g. marine grasslands) and island ecosystems, including more specific themes such as the recovery of burnt areas or the control and eradication of invasive species; and continues to grow.



[SPECO's](http://www.speco.pt)

During the year 2021 several activities were carried out within the scope of the network, namely: i) the continuous updating of the registration and mailing list of members; ii) regular dissemination to the members about national and international initiatives and events related to ecosystem restoration, communicated by members, from SER or from other sources; iii) ongoing preparation of a short note to submit to *Restoration Ecology* journal on “*Connecting ecosystem restoration in Portugal: launch of the Portuguese Ecological Restoration Network*”, co-authored by ResECO coordinators; iv) several communication activities about ResECO, listed below:

Organization of workshop:



2021 – Rodríguez-González P. and A. Nunes (2021). Trainer at the Workshop “Restauro Ecológico numa Paisagem Protegida da Rede Natura 2000: Lagoas de Bertandos e São Pedro de Arcos” (3 hr workshop), Centro de Interpretação Ambiental das Lagoas de Bertandos e São Pedro de Arcos, within the scope of ENE 2021 - XX Encontro Nacional de Ecologia – “Conhecimento ao Serviço das áreas Classificadas”, 1st of December, Ponte de Lima.

Workshop “Restauro Ecológico numa Paisagem Protegida da Rede Natura 2000: Lagoas de Bertandos e São Pedro de Arcos”, Ponte de Lima, Portugal.

Oral presentations and other dissemination activities:

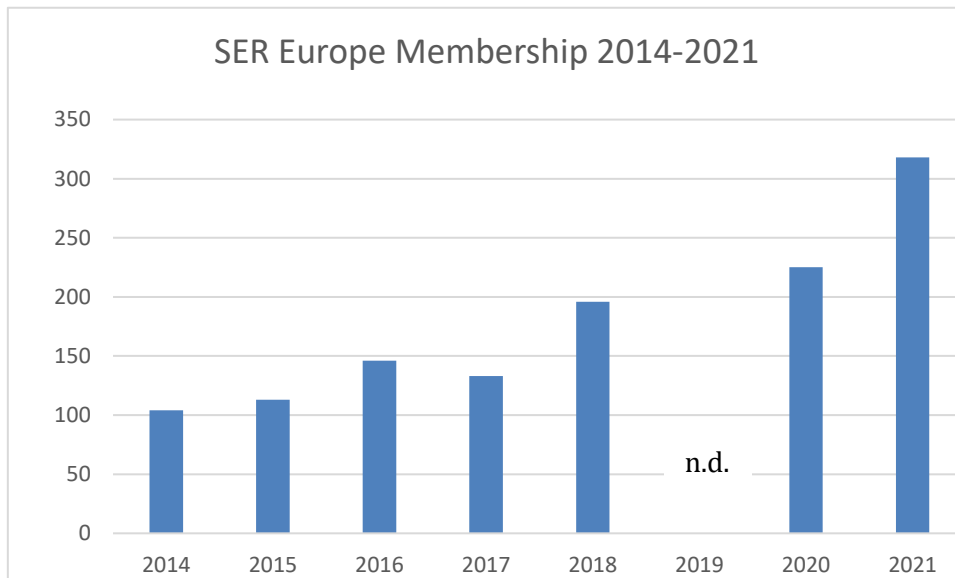
- Nunes A. (2021). Participation in the online debate “E agora? A inevitável urgência de restaurar os ecossistemas naturais”, organized by SIBECOL – Sociedade Ibérica de Ecologia, within the activities commemorating the Ecology day, 14th September, online.
- Nunes A. and P. Rodríguez-González (2021). Building up the Portuguese Ecological Restoration Network (ResECO). Oral presentation in the Session “Ecological restoration networking in Eastern Europe and Russia”, at the 12th European Conference on Ecological Restoration, held online on September 7-10, 2021.
- Nunes A. and P. Rodríguez-González (2021). Oral communication in the Webinar “Recuperação de Ecossistemas – de que se trata, qual a relevância e urgência”, organized by Associação Bandeira azul da Europa (ABAE), 17th March 2021, online.
- September 2021 - Translation into Portuguese, dissemination and support for the Declaration ‘Scientists in Support of an Ambitious European Union Nature Restoration Law’, approved in the 12th European Conference on Ecological Restoration, held online and organised by the University of Alicante (Spain) and SER Europe.
- Silva A., Nunes A., Salgueiro P., Serrano H., Silva C., A. Sampaio (2021). Trainer at the short course: “Integrating biodiversity value in quarry restoration: Linking business and applied science”, 2hrs course, We Value Nature (<https://wevaluenature.eu/>), Online 19 March 2021.
- Nunes A (2021). “Restoration in Urban Areas”. Invited lecturer of the cE3c advanced course: Urban Ecology – the green within the city. 15-19 February 2021, Lisbon (online).
- Updating of the contents ResECO’s page at SPECO's website
- Dissemination of ResECO for the scientific community and students, e.g. in Global Changes and Sustainability discipline within the MsC degree program in Biotechnology for Sustainability, at ITQB - Instituto de Tecnologia Química e Biológica António Xavier, Universidade Nova de Lisboa; Plant Ecology discipline

within the Biology degree course at Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Lisboa, etc.

## MEMBERSHIP

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At the end of 2021 SERE had 318 members, a very significant 41% increase compared to 225 in 2020. As this report is completed SERE membership is expected to peak well above 400 members by the end of 2022, once the membership campaign ends, but for reporting consistency this is not yet reflected on the graph.



# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Fundraising

During 2021 SER Europe submitted 9 project proposals, 4 individually and 5 in partnership with other organisations. With results received already in 2022, 5 of these were successful (67%) and in its duration are expected to report > 165.000 €, of which 45.000 € correspond to other partners.

SERE is currently working with a Fundraising Compact that outlines general funding priorities; in 2021 the focus has been on public European funding.

SER EUROPE BALANCE 2021		
Category of Costs / Revenue	Type of Costs / Revenue	TOTAL AMOUNT
General expenses	Bank charges	- 1 384,72 €
	General Office Costs	- 177,00 €
	Program Manager Office	- 10 000,00 €
<b>Total</b>		<b>- 11 561,72 €</b>
Membership fees	Affiliated Membership	2 000,00 €
<b>Total</b>		<b>2 000,00 €</b>
Projects	SER Chapter Partnership Fund Award + Chapter Grant	7 789,67 €
	Consultant Costs	- 3 260,00 €
	E-Bind Project	28 500,00 €
	FAW Certification Mediterranean Forest Restoration	30 912,61 €
<b>Total</b>		<b>63 942,28 €</b>
<b>Final Result 2021</b>		<b>54 380,56 €</b>

Current Account	Total income 2021 (includes 2020 existing funds)	64 533,67 €
	Total expenses 2021	- 13 536,36 €
Current Account 31/12/2021		50 997,31 €
Savings Account	Total income 2021 (includes 2020 existing funds)	38 770,80 €
	Total expenses 2021	- 10,00 €
Saving Account 31/12/2021		38 760,80 €

SERE current bank and savings accounts are located at the socio-environmentally friendly TRIODOS bank. The maintenance of both accounts is free of charge.



***SER Europe thanks all the members  
and other donors who contributed to the Society in 2021.***

***Join SER Europe and SER  
to support our efforts to advance ecological restoration.***

[info@ser-europe.org](mailto:info@ser-europe.org) · [www.ser-europe.org](http://www.ser-europe.org)

***European Chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration, Research Institute for  
Nature and Forest, Herman Teirlinckgebouw, Havenlaan 88 bus 73, 1000 Brussels,  
Belgium.***

**RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
NATURE AND FOREST**

***August 2022***

***Throughout the year we welcome contributions of news, events, or activities from members  
and collaborators to disseminate them throughout SERE network. Volunteers are welcome  
for remote tasks like website and database updating.***

***E-mail us with your proposals and offers.***



**UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON  
ECOSYSTEM  
RESTORATION  
2021-2030**