



PRODVEGEUR: Development of an autonomous plant production unit for the restoration of habitats and the biological reinforcement of populations of plant species on the island of Europa

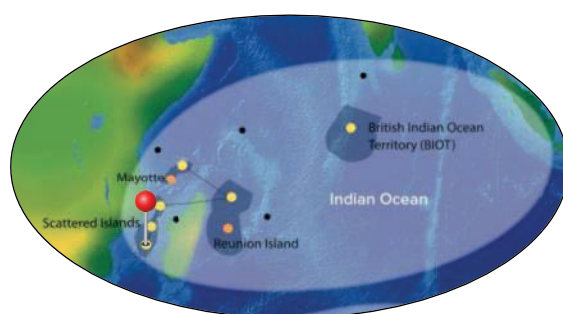
Targeted territory: Scattered Islands (Europa)

Total project budget: 98,644 Euros

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 98,644 Euros

Duration: March 2018 – January 2019 (11 months)

Lead organisation: Conservatoire Botanique National et Centre Permanent d'Initiatives pour l'Environnement de Mascarin



Background:

The island of Europa shows an exceptional state of conservation and is a veritable sanctuary of terrestrial and marine biodiversity providing scientists with an ideal open-air laboratory for understanding many evolutionary, ecological and ecosystem processes.

Since 2011 the island has been a designated RAMSAR site and this project is fully integrated in the management plan has been drafted for the period 2017-2021. Since 2016, two TAAF conservation officers reside on Europa ensuring the permanent presence for the management of the site.

Two programs tackling invasive alien species are being carried out on Europa to eradicate: i. Choca (*Furcraea foetida*) and Sisal (*Agave sisalana*), thanks to a partnership between the TAAF, the armed

forces of the southern Indian Ocean and CBN-CPIE Mascarin started in 2011; ii. the Fataque (*Urochloa maxima*), through a collaboration since 2016 between the TAAF and CBN-CPIE Mascarin.

In order to achieve certain conservation objectives for the site (reduce threats to native flora, promote the restoration of bird nesting habitats, better understand and reduce the impact of goats as well as the human footprint, etc.), the restoration of natural habitats and the conservation of the island's flora is necessary.

Description of the Project:

The general objective of the project is the in situ installation of a functional plant production unit in an environment favorable to an ecological restoration operation on Europa Island while transferring skills to the TAAF officers who are responsible for the management of the site.

Following the reception of the seeds of native plant species harvested on Europa by the conservation officers, training sessions on the propagation and rearing methods of these species will be provided to the TAAF officers within the production unit of CBN-CPIE Mascarin.

A field mission on Europa will be undertaken to install the functional production unit and to eradicate the exotic woody plants around the TAAF station so as to transform this space into an area favorable for the multiplication of the native plants necessary for future ecological restoration operations that will support the return of the fauna associated with this native vegetation and to provide an educational space for the discovery of the flora of Europa for visitors to the island. A wider 'Communication' component will also be developed.



Intended results:

- Acquisition of new knowledge by the conservation officers of the island of Europa related to the multiplication of native plant species of Europa.
- Establishment of a functional production unit on Europa.
- Eradication of exotic woody plants around the TAAF station.

CONTACT

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