



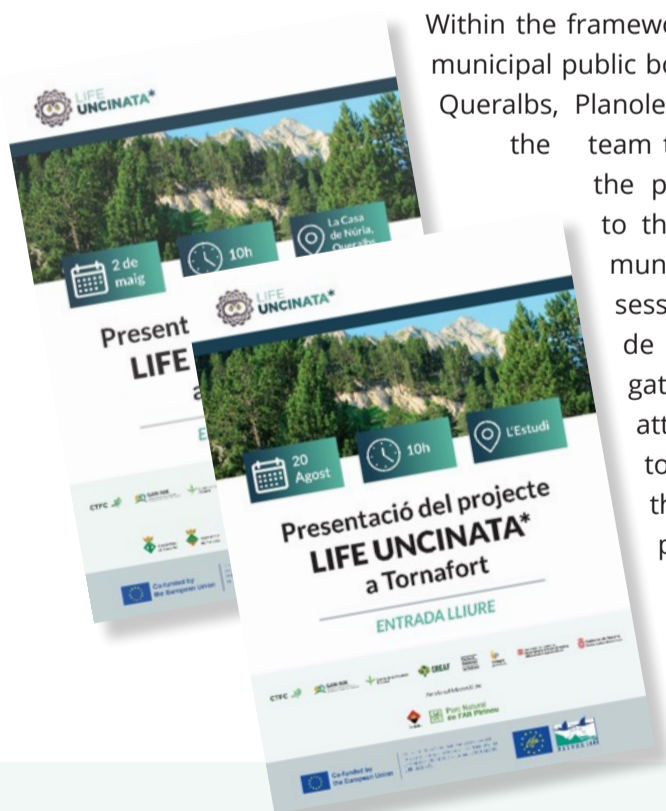
## Newsletter N°2

### Meetings with local councils and private landowners continue

As a result of the fieldwork carried out in 2023 to search for and identify the stands to carry out actions to improve and conserve habitat 9430\* (HIC), during the first months of 2024, the coordinators of the project have met with town councils and private forest owners, to incorporate their forests into the project.

During these initial meetings, the team explained the proposed actions and exchanged perceptions related to the management of the various pressures affecting the habitat.

Within the framework of these relations with municipal public bodies, the town councils of Queralt, Planols, and Campelles offered the team the opportunity to explain the project in a session open to the neighbors of the three municipalities. The information session was held at the Casa de Núria in Queralt and gathered about twenty attendees, who were able to learn first-hand about the specific actions of the project in the Ripollès and exchange views with the biodiversity technicians from the Forest Science



and Technology Center of Catalonia (CTFC), coordinators of the LIFE UNCINATA\* project, with the Ripollès county engineer of the Directorate General of Forestry and Environmental Management (DACC), and the technical director of the Consortium of Natural Interest Areas of Ripollès (CEINR).

In the same context, an open session was held for the neighbors of the Decentralized Municipal Entity (EMD) of Tornafort, in the Pallars Sobirà. The session was held at the Studio, taking advantage of the fact that the town was celebrating its local festival, gathering a dozen attendees who were able to learn and exchange information about their community forest and the actions developed and proposed by LIFE UNCINATA\*.

The event was led by the director of the Natural Park of the High Pyrenees, Marc Garriga and the coordination team of the LIFE UNCINATA\* project.

We want to thank the participants in the informative sessions and especially the various municipalities that have agreed to participate in the project by contributing their forests. Thank you very much!



## First biodiversity monitoring actions begin

With the beginning of spring, field sampling for biodiversity monitoring began with:

- **Saproxylic Coleoptera:** using flight interception traps, to know the species and their emergence peaks.
- **Bird community:** through listening stations for most species. Especial mentions for:
  - Western Capercaillie: surveys have been carried out and droppings accumulations have been located.
  - Boreal Owl: nest boxes have been placed and their occupation has been checked, pending more specific monitoring to be carried out in 2025.
- **Ants:** with a small capture (2-3 individuals) per anthill, to determine their “parental” relationship among anthills.
- **Vascular flora:** inventorying all vegetation present in 100m2 plots.
- **Deadwood:** measuring all pieces of dead wood, both standing and on the ground, present within the sampling plots.

- **Edaphic Biodiversity:** soil sampling and, through metabarcoding, knowing its most relevant communities.
- **Potential Biodiversity Index:** a system to evaluate “ordinary” biodiversity, facilitating the conservation and improvement of biodiversity in managed forest ecosystems.

The team has also implemented dasometric forest inventories, key elements for a good characterization of the stand and to create the most appropriate design of the improvements to be carried out in the naturalistic forest management stands.



## “Experimental projects”

In the framework of the LIFE UNCINATA\* project, we have proposed a series of experiments to evaluate several elements linked to biodiversity that can be found in black pine habitats.

Thus, with the intention of knowing in more detail the elements that make up several bases of the trophic chain of the system, we have promoted three experimental protocols: one linked to dead wood and saproxylics, another, to the management of the remains of thinnings and micromammals, and the last, to enrich plantings of fruiting shrub species in various environmental contexts.

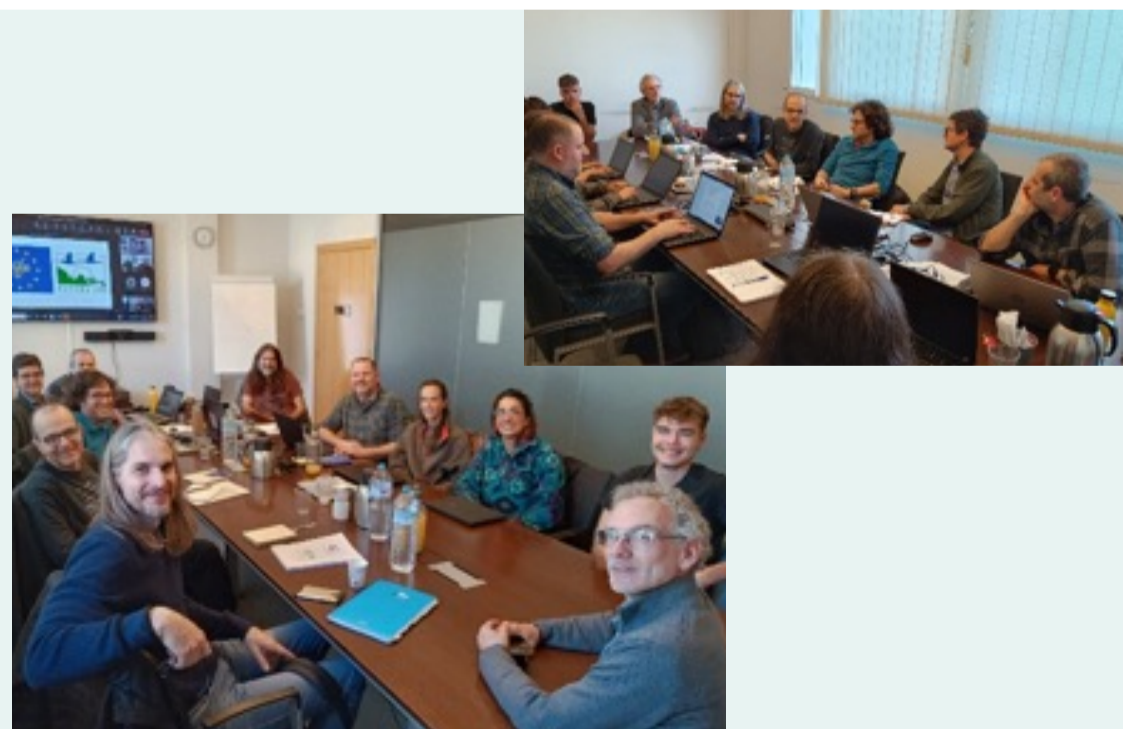
We will explain how the experiments are progressing and what results we are obtaining in future publications!

## First meeting of the Expert Advisory Council

On February 20th 2024, the first meeting of the Expert Advisory Board (EAB) of the LIFE UNCINATA\* project was held at the Center for Research and Forestry Applications (CREAF).

The Expert Advisory Board is a consultative body set up to provide scientific and technical support to all those questions arising from the project’s activities, thus helping to reach a consensus with a choral vision of the habitat.

This first meeting, where specialists from the fields of botany, edaphology, and ecology were invited, had the objective of debating and finding consensus around specific concepts of the ecology and definition of the habitat 9430\* Mountain pine forests on calcareous soils, based on the definition of the Habitats Directive and other official definitions and classifications.

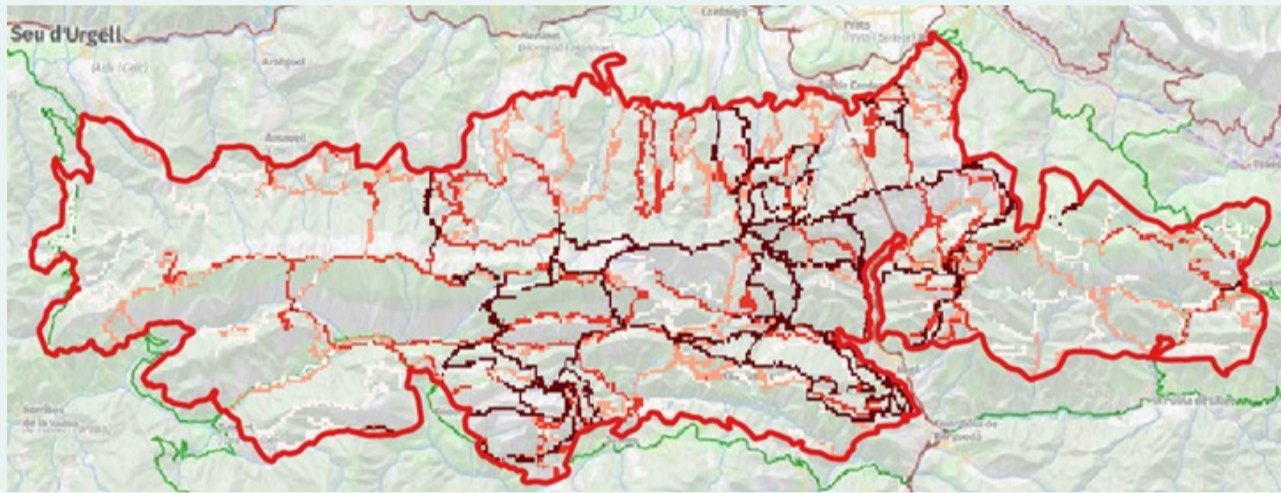


## Working for the regulation of over-frequentation in the Natural Park of Cadí Moixeró

The influx of people to the natural environment, especially for outdoor activities, has been increasing in recent years. When this type of activity is widespread or involves a very high volume of people, the conservation status of some species that inhabit the areas frequented, as well as the habitats where they are found, can be affected. In this sense, collecting information on the frequentation of a natural area is very important to apply targeted management measures that are compatible with the conservation of the habitats and species present in that same area.

The LIFE UNCINATA\* project has made it possible to conduct an ex-situ characterization and diagnosis study of human frequentation in the areas where the project is being developed. Subsequently, and after a few days in the field to specify the specific actions, in-situ measures will be applied to prevent and minimize the impacts that public use and leisure activities have on the animal communities present in the black pine forests of the Pyrenees. This study has been carried out in the framework of the actions linked to WP7 on the regulation of human frequentation in natural areas and specifically in susceptible areas from the point of view of habitat and endangered species.

The measures to be carried out can range from closures of forest tracks and roads, with barriers, to specific actions fencing trails and paths that have direct effects on the habitat and sensitive species.



## Work begins to define an action plan for black pine forests on the Catalan scale

Recently, work has started to define an action plan for black pine forests on a Catalan scale, including forests on calcareous substratum, the object of LIFE UNCINATA\*. This action plan will serve to define the generic measures that later will be adapted to the particular contexts of the management plans for the 6 protected natural areas included in the project, thus achieving the main objective of WP3. These preliminary works for black pine forests are performed in coordination among the Natural Heritage Planning Service and the Information and Knowledge Unit, both of the Department of Territory, Housing and Ecological Transition, and the CTFC LIFE UNCINATA\* team. At the moment, work is being done to define the methodologies that will allow the efficient transfer of information on the habitat and its threats in the action plan, as a previous milestone to the preparation of the management plans for each Special Area of Conservation (SAC) where the habitat is present.

On the other hand, it is also expected that the conservation and restoration actions developed by LIFE UNCINATA\* will serve as a model and be transferable to the rest of the *Pinus uncinata* forests in Europe that suffer, or may suffer in the future, the same conservation problems as the forests in which the project will work. Even so, LIFE UNCINATA\* will also allow testing of the methodology established in the preliminary work being carried out by the Observatory of Natural Heritage and Biodiversity for the establishment of the Habitat Monitoring Program of Catalonia, especially concerning forest habitats. This program, once up and running, will make it possible to assess the conservation status of habitats more accurately than at present. The results of the program will be a key tool for the establishment of conservation objectives in the management plans and so that the managers of the Natura 2000 network can develop adaptive management of habitats over time both in Catalonia as a whole and in each of the Natura 2000 network sites.



## We started monitoring linked to micromammal communities

The experimental monitoring campaign of micromammals in specific stands of the project began on June 10. In this case, it is planned to know the communities before and after thinning, and at the same time, there will be differentiated treatments of the woody debris generated by the forest management actions applied in each stand.

This monitoring intends to know if it is possible to extract proposals for actions focused on the management of woody debris generated by thinning, and which may be the most efficient actions in terms of cost/benefit and beneficial for biodiversity.



## Navarra finalizes preparations for its White Week 2024

As part of the project's dissemination actions, specifically in the Navarra area, a campaign is planned to be launched within the "White Week", where over 2,000 schoolchildren and visitors, who use the ski slopes near the habitat, will work to inform and raise awareness among the local population and visitors about the rich biodiversity of the Larra-Aztaparreta SAC, as well as the importance of its management to achieve habitats less vulnerable to global change and to make human activities compatible with its conservation.



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