



# Business and nature working together: action by the tourism sector to protect wild pollinators

## What about pollinators?

Pollinators – such as bees, hoverflies, moths, butterflies and beetles – are declining dramatically around the world, and Europe is no exception. With pollinator populations being essential in underpinning the stability of pollinator services over time, this decline of pollinators puts managed and natural ecosystems functioning at risk.

## Why should your business care?

All tourism – even in city centres – relies on natural resources for supplies of food, clean water and other ‘ecosystem services’ that ultimately depend on a functioning nature. For most other types of tourism, wild pollinators and wider biodiversity contribute significantly to the attractiveness and quality of destinations, and therefore to their competitiveness: for example, water quality and natural vegetation are both ecosystem services that contribute to



Figure 1. A snapshot of the diversity of wild pollinators

destination attractiveness. Furthermore, biodiversity is a direct attraction at the heart of nature-based tourism products, such as tourism in protected areas like the Natura 2000 network.

Clearly, biodiversity is a vital asset to the tourism industry. Tourists often take advantage of natural landscapes, including national parks, coastal environments and mountainous regions – all of which harbour rich biodiversity. Wild pollinators indicate a clean and healthy environment, which is what every tourist expects. Many tourists will not return to polluted or spoiled destinations. As tourism consists of a crucial pillar for the local economy, and at the same time depends on nature, it is important to ensure development of tourism that safeguards biodiversity. Potential negative impacts of tourism activities on biodiversity should be effectively mitigated.

### What can your business do?

The tourism sector is well placed to contribute towards stopping the decline of wild pollinators. The tourism sector should:

- ▶ implement land planning continuously, and from an early stage of destination development, and regulate the location, intensity and type of tourism development in accordance with ecological carrying capacities;
- ▶ assist destination managers with sustainable tourism development;
- ▶ implement supply chain management, especially green procurement;
- ▶ introduce environmental requirements into contracts or ask suppliers to sign legally binding codes of conduct that specify minimum environmental criteria and/or give permission to be environmentally audited;



- ▶ develop and promote tourism packages that exclude environmentally damaging options;
- ▶ inform and raise awareness of the role of pollinators to its stakeholders (i.e. sector professionals, elected representatives, tourists, local communities) and encourage them to partake in actions that promote biodiversity conservation;
- ▶ support innovation and environmental performance within the sector through the funding of sector-specific and applied research;
- ▶ monitor and evaluate the impacts of tourist activities as well as actions taken for the conservation of wild pollinators;
- ▶ lead reporting on actions for the planet by sharing its results on pollinator state improvement;
- ▶ partner up with NGOs, local nature authorities and/or academics when drafting, implementing and evaluating actions for pollinators, whether they focus on company's site or the supply chain