

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.)

 *Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).*

PROJECT	
Participant:	[101081558] - [National Society of Conservationists - Friends of the Earth Hungary] ([MTVSZ FoE HU])
PIC number:	[937388019]
Project name and acronym:	[Citizens'Observatory For Green Deal Financing] — [Citizens4EGDFunding]

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	13
Event name:	Citizen's research – Virtual tours to recovery projects in Hungary
Type:	conferences
In situ/online:	online
Location:	online
Date(s):	12/06/2023; 21/09/2023
Website(s) (if any):	<p>Link to the virtual tour video on the project landing page:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Garden of Eden or desert? Water retention in the Great Hungarian Plain: https://bankwatch.org/citizens-observatory?fbclid=IwAR2Jt1wrD327RT6gdHVltDznXWwg--IX8S6NdSyWXLrZS_F8TLerBh2pYxM#Hungary <p>Link to the virtual tour video on youtube:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tU3aMKrx6h8 <p>Recordings of the webinars available on youtube:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Webinar 'GARDEN OF EDEN OR DESERT? Water retention in the Great Hungarian Plain and the Recovery Facility' - 12/06/2023: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgPinPuUDws - Webinar 'TOWARDS THE GARDEN OF EDEN - How the water management and agricultural sectors can promote land use change in the Great Hungarian Plain' - 21/09/2023: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VQ_BdT8Taw&t=2015s <p>Article on MTVSZ website: https://mtvsz.hu/finanszirozas-es-termeszetvedelem</p> <p>Articles on the project landing page:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Webinar 'GARDEN OF EDEN OR DESERT? Water retention in the Great Hungarian Plain and the Recovery Facility' - 12/06/2023: https://bankwatch.org/event/147346 - Webinar 'TOWARDS THE GARDEN OF EDEN - How the water management and agricultural sectors can promote land use change in the Great Hungarian Plain' - 21/09/2023:

	https://bankwatch.org/event/webinar-towards-the-garden-of-eden-how-the-water-management-and-agricultural-sectors-can-promote-land-use-change-in-the-great-hungarian-plain	
Participants		
Female:	169	
Male:	120	
Non-binary:	0	
From country 1 [Hungary]:	266	
From country 2 [Austria]:	1	
From country 3 [Belgium]:	2	
From country 4 [Bulgaria]:	2	
From country 5 [Croatia]:	1	
From country 6 [Czech Republic]:	2	
From country 7 [Estonia]:	1	
From country 8 [Finland]:	1	
From country 9 [France]:	2	
From country 10 [Germany]:	1	
From country 11 [Ireland]:	1	
From country 12 [Italy]:	1	
From country 13 [Latvia]:	1	
From country 14 [Malta]:	1	
From country 15 [Poland]:	3	
From country 16 [Romania]:	1	
From country 17 [Slovakia]:	2	
Total number of participants:	289	From total number of countries: 17
Description		
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>		
As part of the Event nr. 13, National Society of Conservationists – Friends of the Earth Hungary produced a video on water retention in Hungary and organized two related webinars.		
Webinar 1: GARDEN OF EDEN OR DESERT? Water retention in the Great Hungarian Plain and the Recovery Facility (Date: 12 June 2023, 14:00-16:00)		
Two speakers: females. Roundtable with 4 experts: 2 males, 2 females.		
Webinar 2: TOWARDS THE GARDEN OF EDEN - How the water management and agricultural sectors can promote land use change in the Great Hungarian Plain (Date: 21 September 2023, 15:00–		

17:00)

Four speakers: 3 males, 1 female.

We made a conscious effort to have a balanced panel.

The 2022 drought demonstrated what experts have known for years, that Europe's next crisis will be about water. Ill-considered water management practices, damming, irrigation, and overuse of subsurface water have damaged entire landscapes on our continent. The presenters discussed how water retention in wetlands makes agriculture more resilient and what a good water-management project (like the ones in the NRRP) should look like. During the first webinar, the 15-minutes video on water retention in Hungary - [Garden of Eden or desert? Water retention in the Great Hungarian Plain](#) - was launched.

The discussion touched on the subject of tensions between sectors. Experts across sectors agree that water retention is necessary but differ on methods. Engineers prefer technological solutions, while conservationists push for nature-based solutions. Farmers want water when it is scarce and drainage when it is in excess. One key challenge identified by experts is stakeholder involvement and cooperation for better landscape management. For some large-scale water retention projects that involve flooding an area, hence many conflicts of interest arise, and a few organizations are ready or capable of managing such a situation. One way to reduce and manage conflicts is to create a forum for discussion and joint decision. The water management committee established by the NRRP is one such forum.

After the first webinar in June, we continued with a more in-depth look on water management and land use change. A change of mindset in the water management and agricultural sectors is already taking place. In the second webinar four different presenters discussed how water retention and land use change can be achieved through smart planning and CAP support.

Experts have shown the audience several good projects where water retention has been implemented with the support of stakeholders. Different projects have different contexts and different stakeholders. Thus, landscape management requires different approaches. In one area, it became clear that lands need to become state property to implement good agricultural practices, while in another area, there is hope to have an agreement with farmers on land use change.

The issue of irrigation and dams (hydropower plants) has been raised and discussed as well. Experts agreed that irrigation cannot balance out the hydrological imbalance of the Tisza River valley. Instead, the groundwater table needs to be raised using the excess water of the floods. While the approach to damming differed to some extent, experts agreed that costs would trump benefits and low-tech solutions yield greater returns.

There is a difference between the Upper Tisza and the Lower Tisza section of the river that requires different solutions to tackle desertification.

Both webinars were hugely successful and generated outstanding interest from the stakeholders. The questions and answers agenda point, and the following discussion filled the allocated timeframe entirely.

Both webinars have been recorded and made available on the MTSZ YouTube channel:

- Webinar 1: [GARDEN OF EDEN OR DESERT? Water retention in the Great Hungarian Plain and the Recovery Facility](#) - 1000 additional views on YouTube
- Webinar 2: [TOWARDS THE GARDEN OF EDEN - How the water management and agricultural sectors can promote land use change in the Great Hungarian Plain](#) - 140 additional views on YouTube

The first webinar had 201 attendees (plus 11 staff members and panellists); the second webinar had 118 attendees. Altogether **289 unique attendees** participated in the event, 58% female, 42 % male from **17 EU countries**.

People were coming from various backgrounds: government administration, municipalities, scientific institutions, political parties, NGOs but interested citizens were also abundant.

Summary of the evaluation results:

The EU Survey on Justice, Rights and Values has been provided for all attendees after the events by e-mail. 28 people have filled in the survey and the overall assessment of both webinars was either 4 or 5 stars. Participants valued the event for increasing knowledge and awareness. Format and content also received high values by all participants.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).