

# NEWSLETTER



Fig.1: A picture from the GI day event in Burgenland

## GREEN HIGHLIGHTS

The last months were very intense for FRACTAL project! **Two products** have been finalized: a brochure explaining the meaning of Green Infrastructure (GI), and a technical report about the state of the art of local GI implementation in the Alps.

### 1. Report on the state of the art of local GI implementation in the Alps

FRACTAL partnership finalized a joint report on the state of the art of local Green Infrastructure (GI) implementation in the Alps (Deliverable 1.3.1). The European Union emphasises GI in the Alps through various initiatives and strategies such as Natura 2000 and the Biodiversity Strategy. Member states such as Austria, Italy and Slovenia follow these strategies and present international projects for example aiming at combating climate change and improving urban well-being through the implementation of GI. As the Alps move towards a greener future, such continuous innovation, adaptive strategies, and a holistic understanding of the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental factors will be of paramount importance. In our report, we present the relevance, key elements and challenges of GI, different European and national strategies to support its implementation, as well as international and local projects related to GI in partner countries. The full report is **available [here](#)** (see fig.2).

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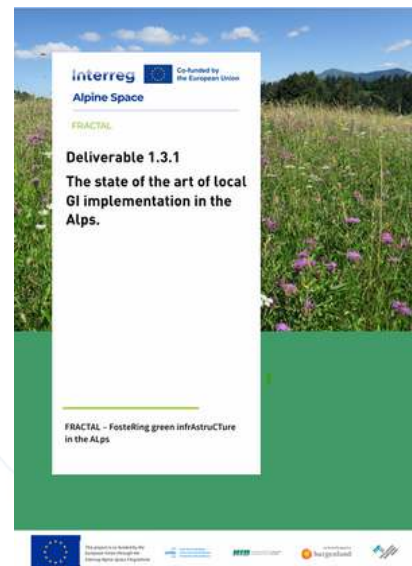


Fig. 2: Cover of the FRACTAL Report of the state of the art of GI in the Alps



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## 2. The 1st FRACTAL Brochure

The first FRACTAL brochure introduces Green Infrastructures (GIs) and their links to ecosystem services, ecosystems and human well-being. It is already circulating primarily among FRACTAL main target groups such as young and adult citizens, farmers, future farmers, beekeepers, and public administrations, but also among people interested in learning more about what green infrastructures are and why they are so relevant for the resilience of Alpine ecosystems.

To increase the range of readers, it has been translated into English, German, Italian and Slovenian. The brochure is **available [here](#)** (see *fig.3*).

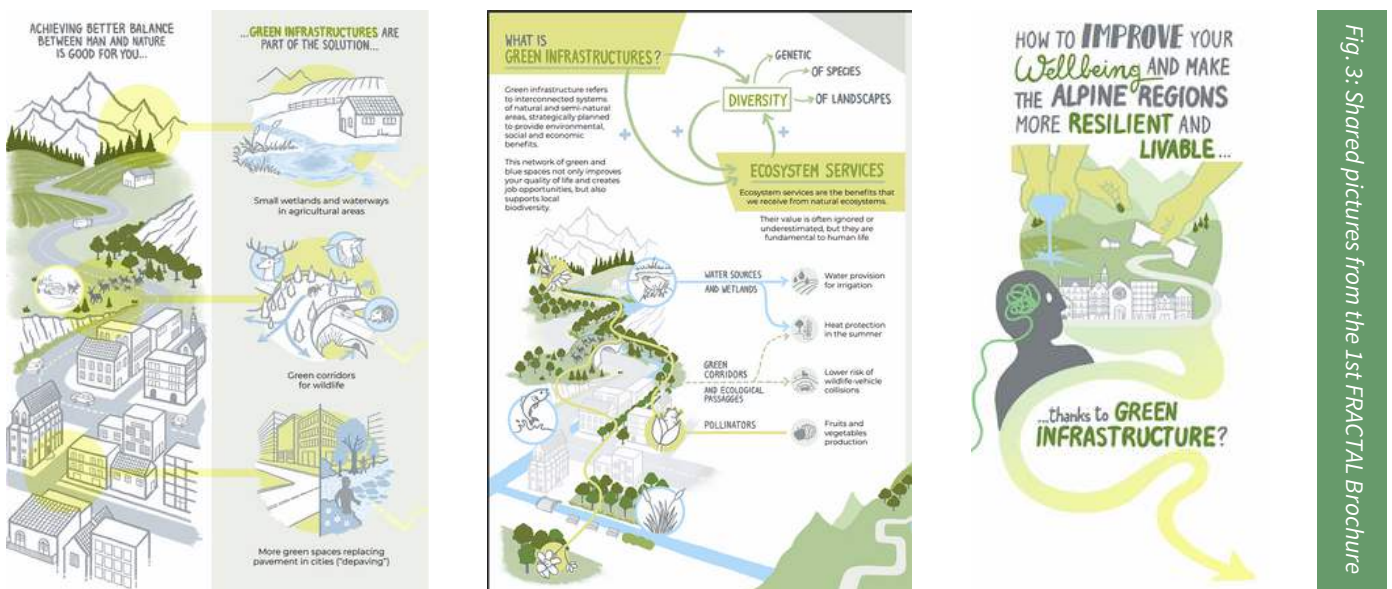


Fig. 3: Shared pictures from the 1st FRACTAL Brochure

## 3. An open-access article on the project FRACTAL

In October 2023 the high-ranked Journal “Open Access Government” invited the Lead Partner UNIBZ to prepare an article presenting the main characteristics and innovative points of FRACTAL. In fact, the FRACTAL Project had been headlined as one of the best practices in the implementation of the Green Infrastructure (GI) initiatives at international level! The article, published on the 5th January 2024, first highlights the scientific background behind FRACTAL and the reasons why an all-round bottom-up approach for the implementation of GI is urgently needed. These are primarily the lack of communication and knowledge transfer at the community level, both in the governance and educational sectors, due to an insufficient knowledge level about the great benefits brought by the GI solutions. Irreplaceable benefits are for instance pollination, food, air quality regulation, carbon sequestration, flood management, water treatment, local climate regulation, and soil erosion prevention. These and other benefits are the so-called ecosystem services and, together with biodiversity preservation, are of utmost importance for our well-being now and in the future. Just thinking of the exacerbating effects of climate change, the need of green areas and nature-based solutions like GI are going to be vital to enhance our resilience. FRACTAL has a holistic approach, that propels alpine communities into active participation in the local implementation of GI, pioneers an educational toolkit tailored to diverse age groups (young and adult citizens, farmers, future farmers, and beekeepers) and foresees large outreach initiatives in each partner country engaging citizens and public administrations in demonstration activities. The whole article is **available [here](#)**.





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## FRACTAL ENGAGING ACTIVITIES

### GI Days in Austria

Two GI Days were successfully carried out in Austria, as part of the FRACTAL project. The First GI Day in the Nature Park Weinidylle, more precisely in Kohfidisch, was a planting campaign of various different types of hedges, about 110 trees and bushes, and took place in November 2023 with students of Kohfidisch school and their teachers. Furthermore about 300 trees were planted with a few volunteers from the community and their surroundings. Some of the trees were planted near the school, in a place called a “phenomenon hedge” and a “sweet hedge”, which the children from primary school, middle school and the kindergarten plan to use regularly in the future. This means that they will all benefit from the GI Day in the long term. For interested citizens there was also a lecture on the subject of native trees (see *fig.1 and fig.4*).

On February 2024, a second GI Day took place as part of a “Seed and Tuber Exchange”. It was an information event on the topic of green infrastructure. Our nice infographic served as illustrative material. Interested parties obtained exciting information on how to improve green infrastructure in cities and their surroundings.



Fig. 4: A picture from the GI day event in Burgenland

### Local Workshop for GI Pact development in Slovenia

On 21st of February 2024, a workshop on the secretive life of solitary bees and bumblebees was held by Posoški Razvojni Center in Tolmin, Slovenia, as part of the FRACTAL project. The presenters from the National Institute of Biology prepared a lecture on the biodiversity of wild bees in Slovenia, the ecosystem role they have as pollinators in nature, and their importance in agriculture. The interested audience participated with questions and learned how to help solitary bees and bumblebees in the wild (see *fig.5*).



Fig. 5: A picture from the Workshop in Slovenia

They discovered the importance of preserving colourful meadows, which serve as vital feeding habitats, and nesting habitats for solitary bees and bumblebees. Workshop participants gained insights into making their own backyards more inviting to wild pollinators by planting native flora and ensuring biodiversity. They also learned how to construct solitary bee and bumblebee nesting boxes. Recognizing the importance of GI, particularly flowering meadows, for wild pollinators—and consequently for humans—was a key takeaway. With newfound knowledge, attendees are now well-equipped to create welcoming environments for wild bees not only in their own gardens but also in nature.



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## NEXT STEPS

### EVENTS

The **Re-green festival** is a large outreach event that will take place in each partner country in the coming months.

It will feature a wide range of actions for citizens engagement in GI preservation. Its goal is to enhance awareness towards the benefits of GI solutions, the conservation status of pollinators and how GI can support them, so to ensure healthy food for us! Here are the dates of the coming Re-green festivals, save them in your agenda!

-  • **Re-green festival in Austria:** 26-27 April 2024
-  • **Re-green festival in Slovenia:** 24-25 May 2024
-  • **Re-green festival in Italy:** 19-21 July 2024

## ACTIVITIES

### Educational activities:

- 27-28 May 2024 > event for high school students In Italy;
- 15 June 2024 > event for agricultural school students in Austria (two sessions with theoretical principles of GI and practical implementation).

### Local Workshop for GI PACT Development:

- 02 April 2024 > in Austria;
- 13 April 2024 > in Italy.

### Participation in external events:

- 20 May 2024 > World Bee day in Slovenia (Ljubljana);
- 22 May 2024 > Biodiversity festival in Slovenia (Ljubljana);
- 26-28 June 2024 > National Congress of the Italian Landscape Ecology Society ([siep-iale.it/](http://siep-iale.it/)) at the Free University of Bolzano-Bozen, Campus Bressanone.

## PRODUCTS

### Toolkit for formal and non-formal education on the role of GI

The innovative educational toolkit contains an infographic, a movie, a board game, and an illustrated booklet for pupils and students. The movie will be a mute short film. The board game will be a “serious game” to experiment the relevance of GI to face climate change in the alpine context. It will be in four languages (EN, ITA, DE, SLO) and freely downloadable & developed with two expansions so to be used at different school levels and in non-formal contexts.



The illustrated book “*Sky and Scrab – Special Messengers*” is almost ready for the official launch. The digital version of the book will be available soon with an additional file containing cards and instructions for playing a little game after reading the book. The book is for kids who are curious and want to take a journey through the Alps to learn about ecosystems, ecosystem services and how Green Infrastructure can help us mitigate the effects of climate change (see *fig.6*).

*Fig. 6: A piece of illustration from the cover of the booklet "Sky and Scrab – Special Messengers"*

### Transalpine GI Pact

The GI Pact is a jointly produced document. It will contain a set of GI-based solutions for municipalities and for the agricultural sector. The Pact will be delivered to the administrations and each PA, signing the Pact, will commit itself in implementing the proposed solutions in a defined timeframe.