**Purpose and Benefits of the Capacity Training for Target Groups**

The Capacity Training has been developed to provide the defined target groups with practical knowledge and relevant skills. The training aims to equip participants with comprehensive competencies in spatial planning and the implementation of Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) networks, effectively enhancing ecological connectivity. Specifically, this includes skills in analyzing spatial structures, identifying and resolving land-use conflicts, and utilizing digital analytical tools. Interactive elements, such as role-play scenarios and decision-making simulations, are also integrated into the training to facilitate practical understanding and enhance collaborative problem-solving skills.

**Target groups:**

For **spatial planner**s, the training is particularly valuable as it enables them to gain in-depth knowledge on integrating and implementing ecological networks within spatial planning processes, effectively applying existing planning instruments to achieve ecological objectives. **Agricultural** and **forestry** actors (authority) benefit by learning ecological principles and their targeted application in land management practices, fostering more sustainable and resilient landscapes. **Conservation professionals** and **ecologists** expand their competencies in practically implementing biodiversity and conservation measures and learn to integrate these effectively into planning processes. **Local decision-makers/Majors** gain essential tools to better align ecological objectives with local development strategies, promoting sustainable planning in their communities. **NGOs and supra-national organizations** enhance their abilities to successfully coordinate and implement ecological networks at regional and cross-border levels.

Overall, the training sustainably supports participants in expanding their planning and operational competencies, effectively integrating and achieving ecological and spatial objectives.

**Table 1.** Matrix of learning objectives and relevant practical skills

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| **Overall Objectives** | **Practical Skills** |
| 1. Definition, Background and EU Legal framewok of Alpine Ecological Connectivity | |
| a. Participants learn about background and definition of ecological connectivity elements | -they know about definitions and significance of ecological connectivity in the Alps and its relevance for biodiversity and ecosystem services  -they can explain key concepts (Ecol. Corridors, barriers, stepping stones habitats) |
| b. Participants know about the importance of Ecological Connectivity and learn about the European legal framework in the alpine context | - they get familiar with frameworks and are aware of international, European, national and regional strategies and legal frameworks related to ecological connectivity  - they can identify causes of fragmentation  – they understand interrelations |
| 2. Green and Blue Infrastructure Network Design (no interactive elements) | |
| a. Participants learn about what is a GBI and what is not, how to map and analyze elements of a Green and Blue Infrastructure Network and its ecological functions | - they understand GBI concept and can explain its role in maintaining ecological connectivity  - they are familiar with the elements of GBI such as green corridors, wetlands, river systems, forests |
| b. Participants understand how to map and analyse a network using existing data on different planning levels | - they can assess how landscape features and spatial configurations influence effectiveness of GBI  - Understand the role of spatial planning in implementing GBI networks |
| c. Participants gain a deeper understanding about the role of spatial planning for implementing GBI networks | - they are aware of planning principles for designing GBI network including multi-functionality, connectivity, resilience |
| d. Participants understand the process of implementing a GBI network with stakeholder role plays | - they can incorporate GBI into different spatial planning levels by aligning it with land-use planning, zoning regulations and strategic development plans |
| e. Participants learn about the challenges but also potentials that exist in GBI implementation with scenario role plays | - they understand ecological, social, and economic benefits of GBI as well as challenges of implementation |
| 3. Identifying land use conflicts with ecological connectivity (interactive element: decision-making simulation) | |
| a. Participants dive into the role of different land use conflicts (including settlement expansion, agriculture, renewable energies) with decision-making simulation | - ability to identify conflicts between different land uses (e.g. urban expansion, agriculture, infrastructure) and ecological connectivity  - assessment of how land use decisions affect habitat fragmentation, species movement, and ecosystem services |
| b. Participants explore mitigation options on how to deal with land use conflicts on different planning levels | - participants understand perspectives of different stakeholders  - they can propose planning strategies and balanced solutions to mitigate those conflicts |
| c. Participants critically reflect on solutions by planning frameworks | - participants practice making planning –decisions and critically reflect on land use priorities and needs |
| 4. Using digital tools and Geographical Information Systems to analyse Alpine Ecological Connectivity | |
| Participants explore GIS methods to analyse connectivity structures via ArcGIS | - planners gain ability to use existing data and analyse connectivity with specific tools  - they gain understanding for the importance of digitals tools to make connectivity visible |
| 5. Knowledge for Alpine wide action | |
| Participants understand the need for action on an alpine-wide level with supra-national institutions (Alpine Convention, EUSALP, CIPRA, AlpPlan) to foster the safeguarding of Green and Blue Infrastructures or to renaturalise built-up infrastructures | - understanding for institutional importances and ability for strategic planning  - ability to connect different planning principles to foster connectivity |