

Project Update: April 2023

Initial steps of the Project

1. Data collection on local social communication

In the last months of 2022, we conducted field research to investigate how local stakeholders communicate with each other and collaborate in projects, especially those related to biodiversity conservation. The data collected are currently being analysed and will feed directly into the social communication strategy of the project.

This research was approved by an ethics committee and by the local protected area management agency.



Figure 1. Interview with a representative of one of the stakeholder groups in the region of the protected areas. © Luciane Ferreira (project collaborator).

2. Local mobilisation

Since the beginning of 2023, the project has focused on setting up a local team for implementing the main, post-research activities. The team is composed of a local coordinator, a budget manager and a technical assistant who will manage the scientific and legislation-related data required for the project.

In several interviews during the data collection phase, participants voiced their desire to be part of a type of regional forum that would bring together the management boards of the four local protected areas. Following their recommendation, we started the phase of mobilisation of local communities to organise such a forum and prepare the necessary awareness material. One in-person meeting was conducted with the main representatives of local communities, followed by three virtual meetings. We are

currently also engaging the governmental manager in this phase. At these events we were able to organise the mobilization, logistical, programme around the first forum of protected areas in the Bragança region.

The next milestone of the project is the actual forum event, which will take place in May 2023.



Figure 2. In-person meeting with the representatives of users' associations of the protected areas. © Ana Célia Costa (project collaborator).

The in-person events comply with local COVID-19 regulations. We chose to have a reduced number of people in all the meetings so far (under 15 people) and we gave preference to outdoor events or venues with ample ventilation. Participants are advised not to join in case they show flu symptoms.