



Inspiring4Biodiversity

“BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF A REGION”

Organising online presentations – online event series



Erasmus+

Introduction

Biodiversity means the variety and variability of life on Earth. It represents the diversity, and thus the richness of nature: the diversity of species, the diversity of genetic resources and the diversity of ecosystems.

Every aspect of our lives is influenced by the diversity of life in the Earth. Thus, we can say biodiversity is our most precious natural treasure. Any human activity that causes a loss of biodiversity also depletes the foundations of life, reduces the resources available to us and ultimately threatens the survival of our own grandchildren. The richness of the natural environment around us is a major determinant of the quality of our lives, since a liveable environment is a prerequisite for us to feel balanced and creative and behave responsibly.

Our emotional and mental well-being and health depend on the diversity of plants, animals and ecosystems located in our environment. We need sufficient space for leisure activities, cool and shady parks in hot summer days, chirping of birds in the noise of cities, while our children need space to play and explore the beauties, wonders, and challenges of life. Nowadays, the majority of people spend most of their lifetimes in cities. They rarely go outside to explore nature. So the only chance is to discover its beauties, if we protect and increase biodiversity within populated areas. If diversity of natural ecosystems decreases in populated areas, life becomes more monotonous and tense. All in all, the quality of life is getting worse.

The protection of biodiversity is our responsibility. Even small actions can have big impacts. If we can call the attention of people to the danger of loss of biodiversity, we are already getting a step forward. In the “Inspiring for Biodiversity” project, pedagogical tools are developed by the project partners, focusing on different target groups. The Lake Balaton Development Coordination Agency increases the knowledge of local residents on the importance of biological diversity. The developed tools are independent, but still completes each other, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the given tools.

Regarding the online presentations, the Lake Balaton Development Coordination Agency (LBDCA) organises an awareness raising online workshop in every month. The aim of the workshops is to call the attention of local actors (local residents, students and municipalities in particular) to environmental problems. Although the workshops focus on sustainability issues in general, many of the workshop directly linked to the protection of biodiversity of the Lake Balaton region.

Online Presentations – Online pedagogical materials

The aim of this tool is to introduce the biodiversity and the natural habitats of a given area to the local population and weekend house owners. The online presentations provides detailed information about the wildlife of their closer and wider environment. Moreover, the online presentations and the shared educational materials inspire participants and



give them practical guidance to act and implement counter-measures in their homes as well.

It is difficult to reach the population, but not because they are not interested in the protection of environment or not due to the lack of channels, because a lot of tools and methods exist. People can get a lot of theoretical information of the importance of biodiversity, but they often face the problem of not finding proper practical information about measures and practices that they could implement in their own gardens as well. The online presentations aim to fill this gap.

Online presentations address this problem by taking advantages of the opportunities offered by the online space, which has become even more important during the COVID-19 pandemic. As the world went into lockdown, a completely new virtual world opened. Of course, keeping contact online is not the same (and never will be the same), as meeting personally, but we cannot ignore the advantages that online meetings and online workshops provide both for the attendees and both for the organizers.

Online presentation offer flexibility for the participants. They can watch the presentations any time they want. If they are interested, they may watch them several times as well. Moreover, they do not have to go to the venue. They can follow the lectures even from their homes, thereby saving significant time and energy.

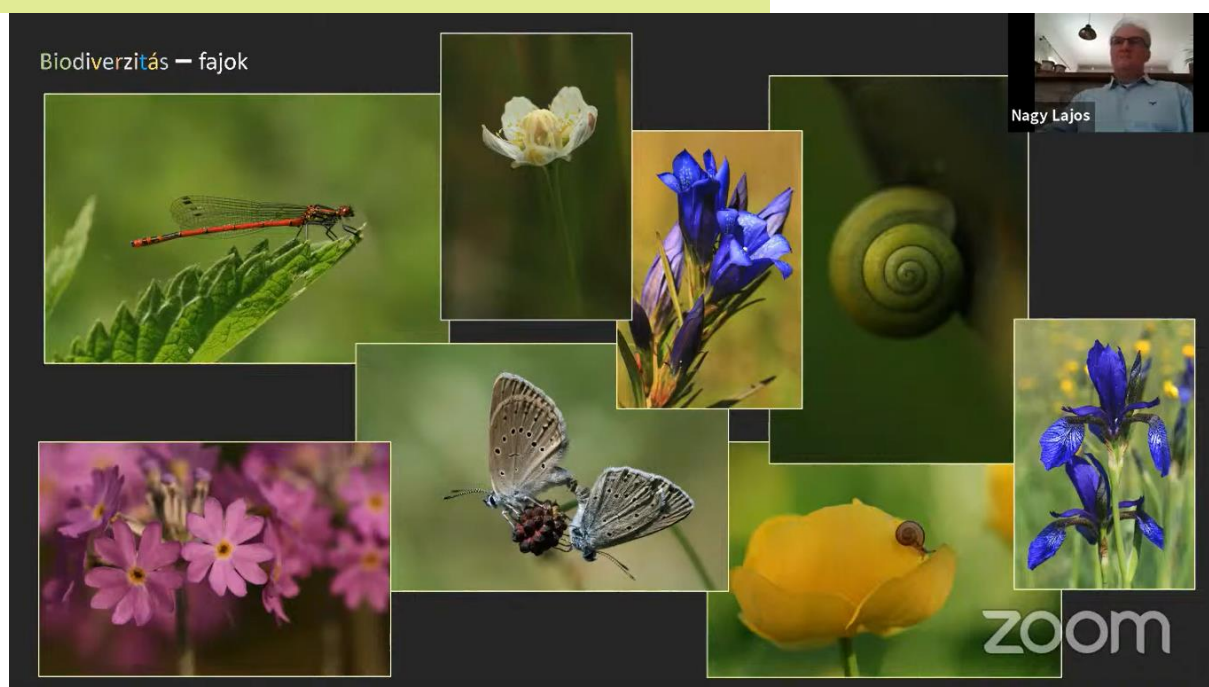
Holding online presentations is also beneficial for the organizers. First of all, you can speak to a global audience from the comfort of your office or even from your own home. Similarly, as the presenters can also join to the event from anywhere on the Earth, you can invite them to deliver an online presentation more easily, than in the case of personal meetings. In addition, the presentation materials are saved in digital form, which can be re-used from time-to-time. If needed, the materials can be easily updated and modified too. Last, but not least, one of the biggest benefit of hosting a virtual presentation is that it is relatively inexpensive – you do not have to rent a space or pay for catering.

How to organise online presentation / online workshop series?

Organising an online event is not difficult and neither requires any special skills. However, many different aspects have to be taken into account during the organisation process. In this document, we will give practical guidance how you can organise fruitful awareness raising workshops in the virtual space and how to held online presentations to shape the attitudes of local population about the protection of biodiversity.

Presentation of Lajos Nagy, Balaton Uplands National Park Directorate (March 2021)





Set the goal

The goal of the online presentations is to raise the awareness of local population to environmental problems and inspire them to act and implement measures in their own homes in order to protect our natural values. LBDCA is focusing on local residents; therefore, it is important to deliver the scientific presentations in an interesting and an easy-to-understand way. Thereby, they can recognize their own responsibility and they can also implement actions together.

Decide on the form of the event

In accordance to the main goal, we have to decide on the form of the event. Shall we organise online conference, webinar, workshop etc.?! As we would like to reach the local population, it is recommended to organise an interactive meeting, with pleasant and indirect atmosphere. Organising an online workshop can be a good solution for that.

As the next step, we have to decide on the length of the event. If it is too short, we might cannot share all the necessary information about the topic. However, if it takes too long, there is the risk that participants might get bored. To get started, we suggest to organise a 2-2.5 hour long event first, with 3-4 presentations (30-40 min each), with leaving time for questions and answers too. Thereby, the invited speakers have enough time to talk about their topics in details, but still not become too long and boring for the participants. After organising a couple of events, we will receive enough information about the needs and preferences of the audience. And if necessary, we can modify the composition of the event accordingly.



Presentation of Boglárka Somogyi, Balaton Limnological Research Institute
(April 2021)

Napenergia

Az algák és az árvaszúnyogok helye a Balaton ökológiai rendszerében

A P terhelés megnövekedése az algabiomassza növekedéséhez vezetett a Balatonban

Ezért megnőtt az árvaszúnyog produkció

Végeredmény= nagyobb haltermés

20. Dévérkeszeg (*Abramis brama*)

zoom

Móra Arnold és Tóth Mónika

Plan the frequency and themes of the online presentations / online events in advance

It is important to decide on the frequency of the online presentation series. Will we organise it weekly, monthly or less frequently? If we organise the presentations frequently, participants will not have time to loose attention. Thereby, we can maintain a closer relationship with them. But on the other hand, if we organise the presentations too often, we may not have sufficient time to organise everything for the event. We will hurry, be in rush, and therefore there will be the risk of forgetting about something or making mistakes. LBDCA organises its awareness raising workshops on a monthly base, which provides enough time for us to prepare everything for the event, but still frequent enough to maintain the interests of participants. In addition, as we organise the workshops on the same day in each months (every first Wednesday in the month), participants can schedule these events in their calendars well in advance.

Suggested topics for the series of presentations:

- Flora of the area
- Fauna of the area
- Protected species in the area
- Invasive species in the area
- Human-wildlife conflicts in the area
- Water consumption
- Sustainable gardening: tips and practices
- Adaptation to climate change in our gardens
- Ecosystem services, biodiversity



The next step is to plan the themes and topics of the online presentations / online events in advance, taking into account the frequency. For instance, if you organise the online presentations on a monthly base, it worth to plan the topics of the events for at least 6-7 months (preferably for a year). Of course, if you organise the online presentations more frequently (maybe on a weekly basis), the plans can be prepared for a shorter period of time (e.g. for 2-3 months).

As a sample, here is a collection of online presentations that the Lake Balaton Development Coordination Agency organised in 2020-2021:

Month	Topic	Link
2020		
November	Water consumption	https://youtu.be/-lvjDNladB4
December	Diversity of our crops	https://youtu.be/9vn1lneFpGs
2021		
February	Sustainability	https://youtu.be/g_mYJULcocw
March	Biodiversity	https://youtu.be/zsDCi1ggGZc
April	Algae	https://youtu.be/Nu2H0ChXaaQ
May	Sustainable food production	https://youtu.be/i43C0GEI0ug
June	Responsible pet ownership I.	https://youtu.be/Bd7lpbh4o5M
September	Responsible pet ownership II.	https://youtu.be/FuGu_JUs490
October	Material use and sustainability	https://youtu.be/mS48RkN2QIk
November	Ecosystem services, biodiversity	https://youtu.be/wlPaKcToiW8
November	Climate change	https://youtu.be/SW5kzGm-Jmk



Invite speakers

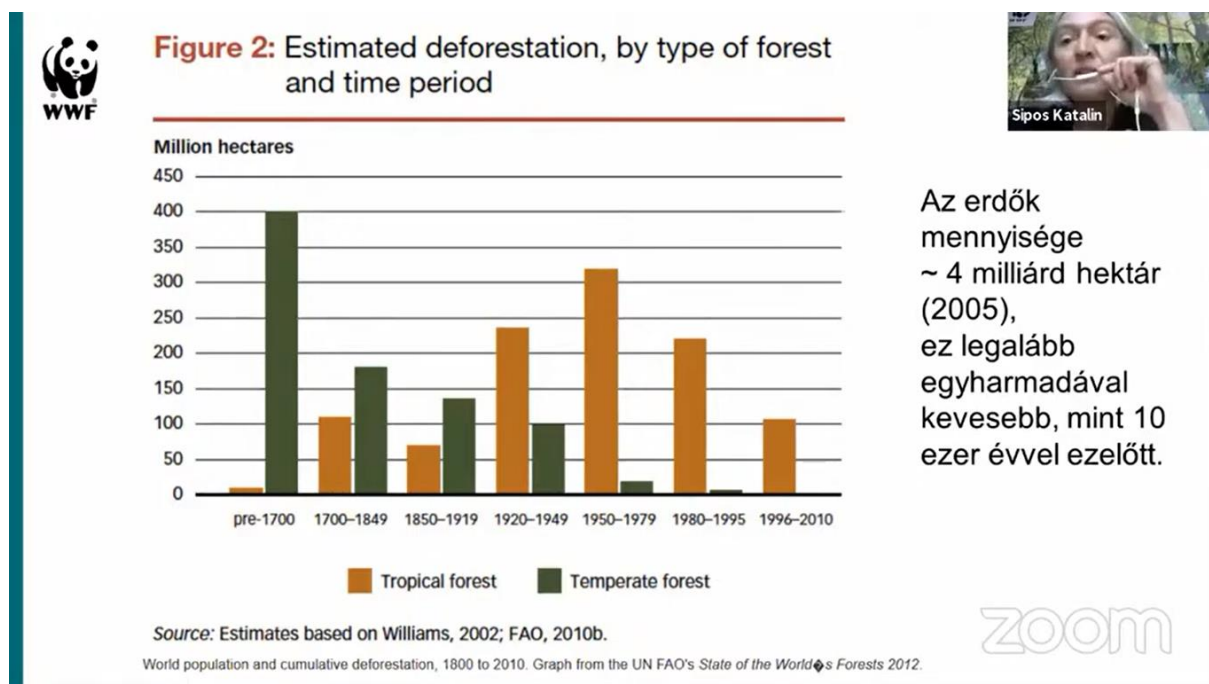
After deciding on the main topics, our next task is to find the competent organisations and experts, who we can invite to deliver a presentation and share his/her knowledge and experience with the audience. You have to contact them and invite them to deliver a presentation. As the event is organised online, the presenters do not have to travel to the meeting. Thereby, we can easily invite speakers from the other part of the country, or even from abroad as well. You can invite only one presenter to introduce the given topic, or you can also invite more speakers to share their experiences related to the given topic, but from different point of views. It is important, that you have to prepare a clear agenda that includes speakers and timeframes. Thereby, presenters and participants can easily plan ahead.

And who you can invite as speakers? In order to call the attention of local residents to protect the biodiversity, it is suggested to invite experts on the topic, who has comprehensive theoretical and practical knowledge. You can invite for example:

- Biologists and researchers (e.g. Balaton Limnological Institute, Georgikon Campus of the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences)
- Agronomists and farmers (private farmers or representatives of agricultural companies)
- Gardeners and gardening companies
- National parks and nature conservation authority of the area (e.g. Balaton Uplands National Park Directorate)
- Authorities responsible for the management of coastal and water habitats (e.g. Balaton Fish Management Non-profit Company, Central-Transdanubian Water Management Directorate)
- Government offices responsible for the management of green areas
- NGOs focusing on environmental issues (e.g. World Wide Fund for Nature)
- Fishing and hunting organisations
- Forestry companies
- Chief Veterinary Officers

Presentation of Katalin Sipos, WWF Hungary (March 2021)





Az erdők mennyisége ~ 4 milliárd hektár (2005), ez legalább egyharmadával kevesebb, mint 10 ezer évvel ezelőtt.

Technical settings

There are various platforms, on which we can organise online meetings and conferences. ZOOM is a widely used videoconferencing app available on computers and smart tools, but you can also try other platforms as well (e.g. Eventzilla, Demio, Livestrom, etc.). The various platforms offers various services. You can choose the one, which is most suitable for you. Please keep in mind that you have to register and (in most of the cases) to pay a given fee for using these platforms.

If you want, you can also livestream your event on YouTube, Facebook or other social media platforms. If you stream your event, interested people can follow the online presentations on various platforms as well, thereby, reaching more people. In addition, YouTube saves the streamed video files, which will be available for the public (based on the settings) after the event as well.

Important to know! If you record the meeting, do not forget to inform the speakers and the audience in advance in order to comply with the GDPR requirements!

When you record an online presentation /event, you will collect personal data. This means that your organisation will be the data controller for this data. Pursuant to the Article 5 of the GDPR, you can collect only what you need, the recording is stored securely and access is limited, and that the recording is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. All of the principles that apply to personal data will apply to the recording, and you need to be able to demonstrate that you complied with all of them in order to carry out the recording lawfully.

In order to comply with the requirements of GDPR, you have to inform the participants (both the presenters and audience) that the presentation / event will be recorded. You have to inform them about purposes of recording and the process of managing their personal data. You must provide this information at the point when data is collected (i.e. at the start of the event). However, it can be impractical to provide all of this information at each events. Therefore, it can be a good solution to include this information in your privacy notice, and at the start of the event, you simply have to draw the participants' attention to the privacy notice.



Invitation and dissemination

After setting the date and theme/programme of the event, you have to start the dissemination and invite the target audience to attend the event.

Sending direct invitation letters to the target audience is a good solution in most of the cases. However, if local population is the target group of our online presentations, we cannot send invitation letters to everybody. Instead, we have to promote the event on social media sites and on our website. In addition, we should also publish articles / news in the local / regional media in advance to make attendees know when the presentation will take place and how they can participate.

Implementation of the event

Moderation is the key to creating engaging events, both offline and online. We can moderate the event by yourself, or we can invite a professional moderator, who will facilitate the event.

Engaging the audience is one of the main goals. Therefore, plan activities that involve their active participation. Encourage the participants to ask questions, share their own experiences, and have conversations with the speakers. To help the exchange of ideas, in the chat we can also ask relevant, even provocative, questions from the audience, to which they can answer in details. For example, in connection with the protection of biodiversity, you can ask local residents:

- Have you experienced changes in the ecosystem of your environment? If yes, what kind of changes?
- What measures have you made to protect the biodiversity? How successful were these measures?
- What challenges have you faced during protecting the biodiversity?
- What kind of support would you need to implement more actions to preserve biodiversity?

Presentation of Ágnes Kalóczkai, Centre for Ecological Research (November 2021)





Monitoring participants' feedbacks

It is important to know the opinion of participants. How did they like the event? Do the presentations meet their expectations? Did the speaker provide sufficient information on the topic? In which other topics they would be interested? May they have any suggestions for improvement?

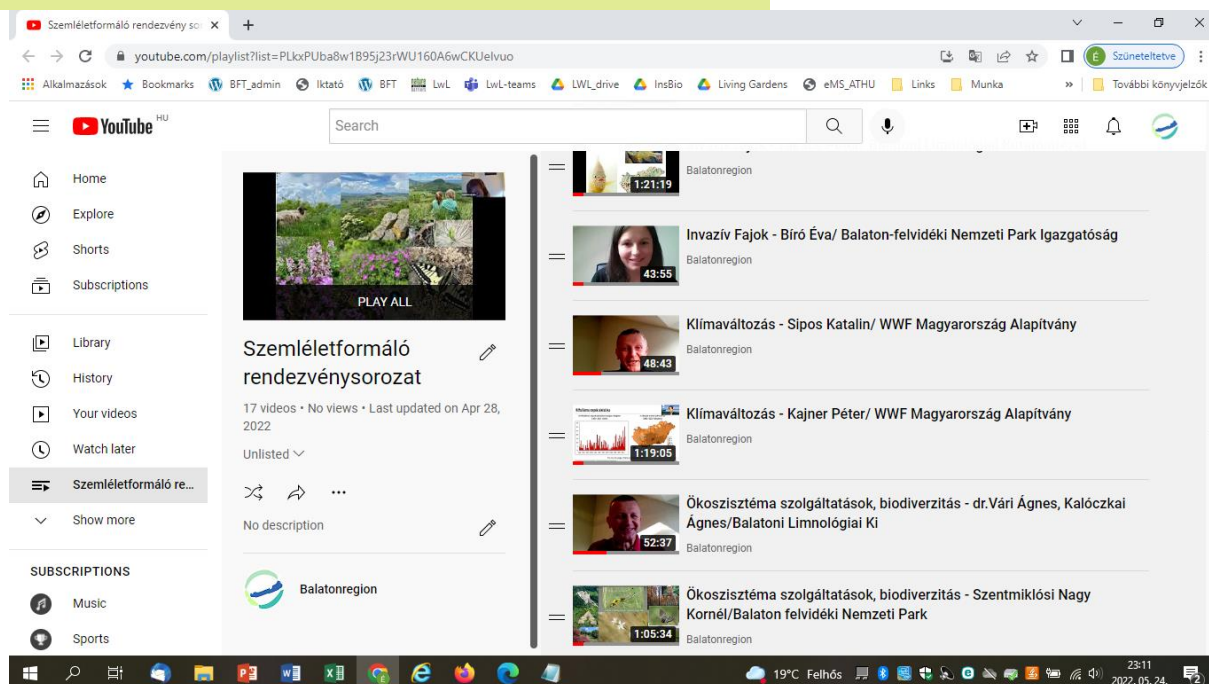
In other to measure the satisfaction of attendees, it is recommended to use event surveys (questionnaires that are designed to collect feedback from the participants). In the questionnaire, you can include multiple-choice and open-ended questions as well. You can send the survey to participants before, during, or after the event. By filling out the questionnaire, you will receive detailed information on the needs and expectations of participants. By analysing the answers, you will be able to improve your future events and plan the themes of presentations accordingly.

Make a collection of the presentations

If you record the presentations, you can make a collection and share the videos with the public. If you livestream the presentations on YouTube, the videos will be available on YouTube after the event as well (depending on the settings, the videos will be public, private or unlisted). You can create a specific playlist for these presentations, you can add hashtags, etc. Moreover, you can also create an online community platform (which will be described in details as part of the Tool 3), to where you can also upload the videos and all relevant presentation materials (e.g. ppt files, background studies, downloadable posters, online tests, etc.). These materials can help people to learn and remember for the heard information.

**Collection of presentations of the awareness raising online event series,
available on YouTube**





Conclusion

Online presentations can have big impact! They can be useful tools to raise their awareness of local residents on the importance of biodiversity. They help you to build a strong community with citizens who are interested in nature conservation and who are willing to act to protect their environment. In addition, online presentations also contribute to build good cooperation with the invited speakers, such as the nature conservation experts and gardeners. In the framework of the cooperation, relevant information, actions and videos can also be shared, thereby contributing to provide further information and knowledge on biodiversity. Organising online presentations is not difficult, nor complicated. So do not be afraid to go virtual!



Imprint

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