

# THE GUIDEBOOK TO SUPPORT INNOVATION IN ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION IN THE DANUBE REGION

## An introduction

**This guidebook was developed to support innovators, support organisations, and other key actors working to advance ecological restoration and sustainability in the Danube region.**

For instance, this guidebook could be beneficial for project developers and practitioners implementing NBS, start-ups and SMEs developing environmental technologies or services, research and innovation teams, public authorities and river basin organisation, NGOs, and intermediaries such as incubators, accelerators, and innovation hubs that support sustainable innovation.

This Guidebook helps users to **navigate innovation-related challenges and to identify practical support services** that can accelerate the development, scaling, and implementation of innovative solutions.

Its objectives are the followings:

- **Provide actionable insights and practical guidance** tailored to the specific needs of innovation actors in the region; and
- **Assist in identifying and understanding the types of support available** and how to access them.

### What you will find in this section:

The guidebook provides information and insights on the following topics:

- ✓ Financial support (grants, venture capital, subsidies), as access to funding remains the most critical barrier to scaling innovation.
- ✓ Market intelligence and networking opportunities, responding to stakeholders' need for better access to market data, visibility, and collaboration platforms to foster connections and synergies within the regional innovation ecosystem.
- ✓ Regulatory procedures, addressing strong concern over complex or unclear regulations that can hinder or delay innovation processes, particularly in areas related to ecosystem restoration and sustainability.
- ✓ Access to expert mentoring and coaching, highlighting the importance of strategic guidance, experience-sharing, and individual support throughout different innovation stages.
- ✓ Training on business models and commercialisation and tailored consulting on business model design and market analysis, as these were recognised as valuable enablers.

These support services are seen as essential for helping innovators refine their strategies, improve market readiness, and successfully scale their solutions. .

## HOW TO USE THE GUIDEBOOK

This Guidebook is made of a series of fiches, one for each of the support services identified above. Each fiche includes practical information, tools, figures and practical examples, as follows:



A summary of the contents of the fiche



Figures and key insights



Operational tools



Practical examples



Challenges to be addressed

# THE GUIDEBOOK TO SUPPORT INNOVATION IN ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION IN THE DANUBE REGION

## An introduction

## WHERE TO FIND THE FICHES COMPOSING THE GUIDEBOOK

You can find all fiches on the EcoDaLLi portal!

<https://portal.ecodalli.eu/wp5>

## HOW IT WAS DEVELOPED

This guidebook was created by the EcoDaLLi project as part of the Work Package on fostering innovation in the Danube region. It builds on a structured analytical process designed to capture both theoretical and practical perspectives on innovation support within the Danube region.



### The EcoDaLLi PROJECT

EcoDaLLi is the acronym for „ECOsysteM-based governance with DANube lighthouse Living Lab for sustainable Innovation processes“ and a Horizon Europe project within the EU Mission “Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030“.

The main objective of EcoDaLLi is to centralise Danube governance structures in terms of innovative solutions for improved ecological restoration, protection and preservation of the Danube basin and its delta by fostering a stronger innovation ecosystem within a well-connected Living Lab system.

A mixed-method approach was adopted, combining desk-based research with direct input from regional stakeholders, to ensure that the findings reflect both established knowledge and current on-the-ground realities. The development of the Guidebook built on:

- 1. A thorough review of existing literature**, project reports, policy frameworks, and relevant European initiatives.
- 2. A dedicated survey was carried out among stakeholders in the Danube region**. The survey targeted a broad range of actors—innovators, research institutions, businesses, NGOs, and public bodies — who are engaged in developing or supporting innovative solutions for ecosystem restoration. The goal was to better understand the challenges they face in accessing the support they need and to identify unmet needs that hinder the development or scaling up of their actions.



Funded by  
the European Union

### Disclaimer

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Grant Agreement No.: 101093908