



ascendi



Biodiversity



on the road





Life on Earth depends on the right ecological balance, which results from the existing relationships between all living organisms. The disappearance or introduction of any given species may bring about significant changes, which often have serious effects. According to recent studies, the COVID-19 pandemic is directly linked with the loss of Biodiversity and ecosystem services. Continuous deforestation may also lead to an increase in this type of zoonoses (diseases transmitted from animals to humans).

### A species can make all the difference – The iconic case of Yellowstone

In the 1920s, the extermination of the grey wolf at the Yellowstone National Park (Wyoming, United States) triggered an ecosystem collapse. Without their primary predator, elk populations exploded. Simultaneously, the coyote became the apex predator, feeding on small mammals, which nearly resulted in the extinction of these species.

Without wolf kills to feed on, many other species also suffered.

The reintroduction of the grey wolf, a few decades later, restored ecosystem balance, representing a success case.

As elk numbers dropped, overgrazing ceased, leading to a growth in vegetation and an increase in songbird, insect and beaver populations.

On their turn, beaver dams allowed otter, duck, fish and amphibian species to thrive. As coyote numbers came under control, vole and antelope populations increased, thus allowing other predators (namely ravens, eagles and grizzly bears) to survive.



This action also had a positive impact on geographical features, since the regrowth of plant species stabilised riverbanks, allowing for salmon spawn.

This chain of events shows how the loss of a single species may affect the entire ecosystem and how fragile ecological balance effectively is.

### Biodiversity at Ascendi

At Ascendi, we intend to turn our infrastructures into opportunities, by adopting measures that help preserve the balance of Nature. In this sense, we have launched the “Biodiversity on the Road” programme, which aims to promote the defence and preservation of Nature’s richness and variety through the sharing of relevant tips and information.

Presented by biologist Pedro Moreira, this programme comprises 5 episodes, which will be made available every Monday, between the 16th May and the 13th June, on several platforms, namely YouTube and the Ascendi website and social networks, as well as in podcast format.

Focusing on the importance of Biodiversity, this programme will present useful tips and suggestions for protecting Biodiversity, and show us how these small gestures can be decisive to its defence and preservation. This initiative is part of Ascendi’s commitment to fostering the sustainable use of resources, ecological transition and the protection of Biodiversity across its network.

### Biodiversity matters to all of us

Therefore, we would like to invite you to join us! Every week, we’ll suggest a series of simple, daily actions that may help preserve Biodiversity.

### We can all be scientists

If you have always wished to help preserve Nature, we would like to encourage you to use these Portuguese “Citizen Science” platforms.

Click [here](#) to find more information about our fauna and flora, interact with people who share these interests and contribute to increasing scientific knowledge by submitting your observations.

You will also find tips about eco-friendly walks and activities you can enjoy with your friends and family.

Useful links:

[BioDiversity 4All](#)

[Wilder](#)pt/especies/

## Nature thanks you!

