

## ECOLOGICAL GARDENING BETWEEN LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH



**Funding tool:** Citizen Science

**Project-ID:** FTI25-C-013

**Project start:** 01. April 2026

**Project end:** 31. März 2029

**Runtime:** 36 Monate / ongoing

**Funding amount:** € 360.000,00

**Lead partner:**

International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis

**Scientific management:**

Gerid Hager

**Additional participating institutions:**

NANU

**Field(s) of action**

Society and culture

Environment, climate and resources

**Scientific discipline(s)**

5090 - Andere Sozialwissenschaften (35 %)

4011 - Ackerbau, Gartenbau (30 %)

1070 - Andere Naturwissenschaften (35 %)

**Brief summary:**

The project explores the intersection between lived local gardening knowledge and ecological science to support biodiversity through sustainable gardening practices. It invites gardeners and young people to engage with biodiversity-friendly gardening as a human practice at the intersection of nature and culture. In storytelling workshops, gardeners share their local knowledge, experiences, and beliefs about biodiversity, reflect on their practices, and jointly develop a questionnaire to systematically capture gardening methods and their perceived effects. Biodiversity data are then collected using standardized survey methods and validated through scientific control assessments. In this way, the actual ecological effects of biodiversity-friendly gardening practices are empirically assessed and linked to the gardeners' experiential cultural knowledge. A central focus is placed on educational activities in collaboration with schools. Age-appropriate workshops, garden experiments, and biodiversity observations foster scientific thinking, environmental awareness, and hands-on biodiversity stewardship among children and young people. The project makes an innovative contribution to integrating local knowledge, environmental education, and applied biodiversity research, and develops practice-oriented recommendations for biodiversity-friendly gardening.

**Keywords:**

Ecological gardening, local knowledge, biodiversity