

Attachment 1

Student Projects+ re(de)fining student field work CERES International Project

The Student Projects+ is an innovative approach to student field work creating added value for **students, supervising researchers** and the **local community**. Your BSc, MSc, PhD field project, practical training or work placement becomes a vital part of current research to help **protect, conserve and make sense of the natural world**. Your work will make a difference (...and you will receive **3-7 ECTS + a Certificate**).

Importance of field work abroad

Science depends on field work. Environmental research in geography, ecology, geology and biology **hinges on data collected in the field**. It is imperative for your career to **acquire the practical skills** to either collect relevant data yourself or adequately judge the quality of data collected by co-workers. Practical experience gained during the SP+ is recognised for **professional accreditation** in [geology](#) , [ecology](#) , [geography](#) and [environmental sciences](#) and often counts as work experience required by universities.

Work or **study abroad** leads to **gains in academic, cultural, intercultural, linguistic, personal and professional domains**, and confers a [competitive advantage](#) when it comes to finding a first or subsequent job. [Professional Networks](#) build during the SP+ are avenues to create **long-term relationships** with [mutual benefits](#). You will learn how to **communicate your findings effectively** to academic and non-academic audiences.

Importance of transdisciplinarity and stakeholder involvement

The **most significant advances** in [science](#) come from the realization that complex modern problems cannot be adequately addressed by researchers from just one discipline. Transdisciplinary study allows for **synthesis of ideas** from many disciplines.

Community engagement, the close inclusion of local stakeholders in the transdisciplinary process ensures [solution-oriented](#) research, transferable knowledge and **implementation of new scientific evidence in management practice**. You will be involved in the development of virtual materials using a range of media such as videos/drone footage and **VR and AR assisted 3D models**.

Long-term vision

While federal and foundation grant support typically lasts for two to three years, the aim of the SP+ is to collect **long-term ecological datasets**. Coordinating individual student projects and managing

data from different academic subject areas with [EpiCollect5](#) allows for **meta-analysis, increasing spatial and temporal scale** as well as improving data quality.

Format of the Student Project+

The SP+ are a vibrant mix of **challenge-based learning, interactive sessions and site visits**. You will carry out an individual field project of your choice as part of an **international, [multidisciplinary team of students](#)** with academic backgrounds in earth, life and social sciences. Team members help and learn from each other in the field with the **support and guidance from scientists** from CERES.

Where and when : in 2022 three SP+ with up to 20 participants will be held in Aljezur, Portugal in January, June/July and September/October.

Costs : funding is available for EU university students through Erasmus+ KA131. Accommodation, on-site travel and all meals with tasty bio-regional food are covered by the grant. Additional subsidies are available for green travel.

Location and focus topics

The Project Weeks take place in the [Parque Natural do Sudoeste Alentejano e Costa Vicentina](#) . The PNSACV is Portugal's **largest protected coastal zone** (IUCN category V), is part of the **Nature 2000** network, an **Important Bird Area** and includes a **Marine Protected Area**. It is one of **Europe richest regions** in terms of aquatic and terrestrial animal and plant biodiversity and offers superb coastal geology. You will work in teams to follow one of the **thematic blocks** :

1. **Coastal science, management and policy**
2. **Science and management of water resources**
3. **Rewilding Southwest: Sustainable forest management**

Coastal science, management and policy

The Portuguese Southwest coast is one of the **best preserved littoral systems of Europe**. A 130km long and 2 km wide protected marine zone has been designated along the coast of the natural park with oceanic **sandy beaches**, extensive **rocky shores**, small **estuaries, cliffs**, recent and Pleistocene **dune systems**. Local stakeholders identified **tourism, invasive species** and **pollution** as the two main threats to the coastal system.

Water resources management

Ribeira de Aljezur is a **rich ecological area**. It is classified as an ecological target area that requires specific conservation actions and belongs to the Natura 2000 network. In the Aljezur area are some of the main centres of **temporary ponds** (Habitats Directive 3170) at national level. Misguided

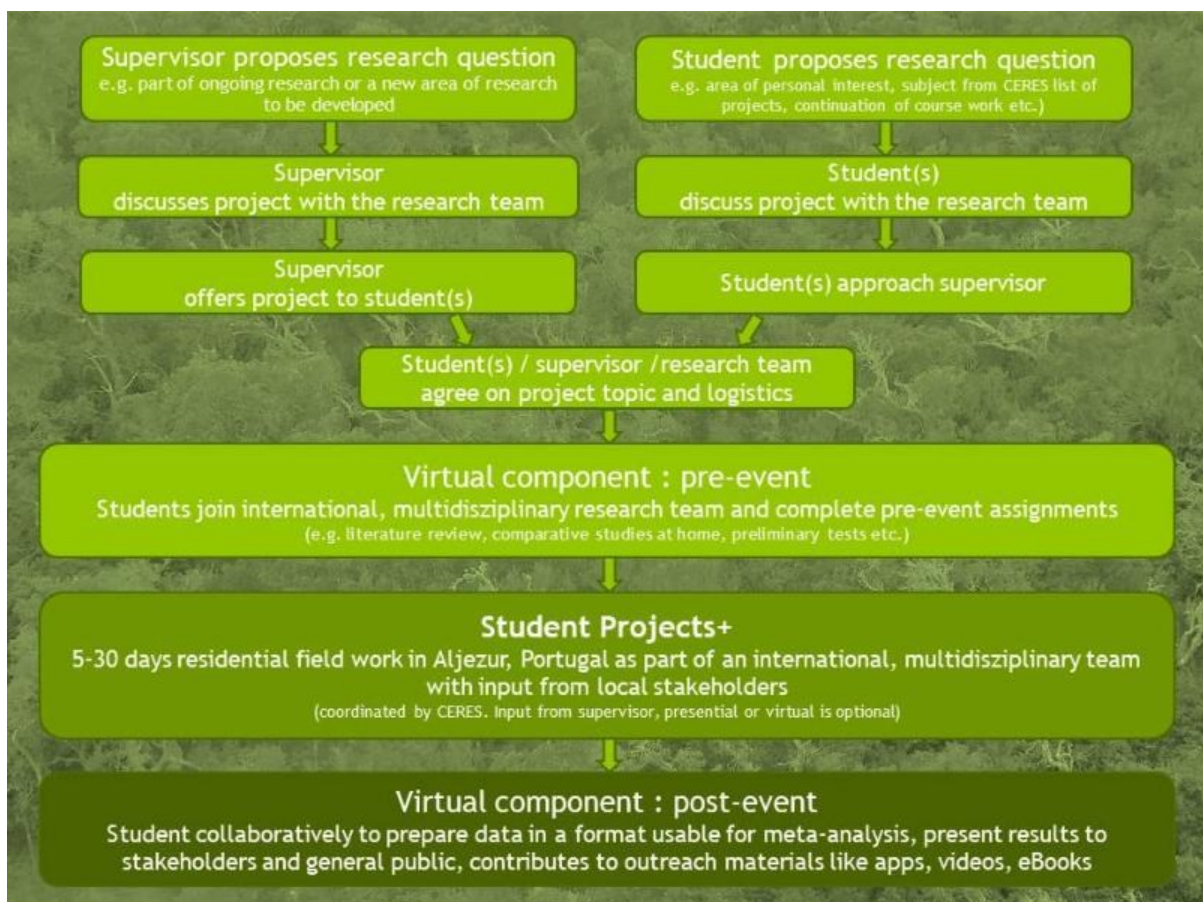
riverine management strategies, invasive species, water abstraction and climate change increasingly put this resource under pressure.

Rewilding Southwest

Native forests in Portugal have been gradually **replaced by exotic eucalyptus and pine plantations**. Most recently invasive Australian *acacia* species spread widely. Exotic trees have been referred as a major factor of **ecosystem disturbance**. A conservation priority is to recreate a **healthy, functioning landscape**, restored after decades of habitat loss and degradation by "[rewilding](#)" with **native tree species**.

Individual project topics

Each focus topic describes an area of study from which you can **develop your own research questions**. CERES provides a **project database** that contains a number of interesting, interdisciplinary project suggestions. Yet, we encourage you to **formulate your own ideas** together with your supervisor. You will have access to previous research and we will put you in **contact with the network** of SP+ alumni, researchers working on your focus topic and local stakeholders. **Comparative studies** where data from the Algarve are compared with results from your home country are also welcome.



Environmental costs of your trip

Your host CERES is an [ECG accredited company](#). We aim to respect and protect the wellbeing of people and the environment - including our staff, visiting researchers, students and the places we work. We are aware that visiting us inevitably involves international travel. We promote environmentally friendly ways of mobility (there is additional funding available). If there are no real alternatives to flying we set up a **transparent, local [carbon offset scheme](#)** to compensate for the emissions with an equivalent carbon saving.

Social life

Cultural immersion creates [cultural awareness](#), promotes effective **global citizenship** and furthers **self-efficacy**. During the SP+ you will work, live together, cook, eat, play, and have interesting discussions with **other students from different nations**. You will buy fresh ingredients at the **farmers market**, engage in [community projects](#) and have the option to join [local music events](#) (after all Portugal is once again voted the **best tourist destination in the world** by World Travel Awards).

Health and Safety

According to the 2020 Global Peace Index rankings, Portugal is the **3rd most peaceful country** in the world. According to the 2019 Global Finance Safety Index rankings, Portugal is the **4th safest country in the world**. Portugal has a **high-quality [healthcare system ranked as 12th in the World](#)** in overall performance by the World Health Organization, and virtually **no dangerous animals**. Still the environment, climate, history, culture and life style of Portugal is **exotic enough** to provide an adventure and challenge for most students.