



## CASE STUDY

# LEAF Programme



***"We are bringing children closer to nature"***

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## PROFILE SNAPSHOT

<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.leaf.global">www.leaf.global</a>
<b>Social channels</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/leaf.global">@leaf.global</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/leaf_int">@leaf_int</a>
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<b>Country</b>	Denmark
<b>Main sector</b>	Private
<b>Uforest thematic discipline</b>	Socio-economics
<b>Stage of development</b>	Implementation



By spreading environmental knowledge and skills that develop critical thinking on real-life sustainability issues.



By promoting access to green spaces for children, and by developing natural-cultural bonds.



By fostering actions to increase and preserve biodiversity and tree canopy.





## START-UP

LEAF –Learning about Forests– is an international programme that promotes **tree-based outdoor learning for children**. Stemming from the 'Forest in Schools' programme in Norway, Sweden and Finland, since 2000 it operates on a global scope through the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).

### LEAF'S GOALS:

- Ensure students learn to enjoy, experience and observe nature.
- Ensure students understand the ecological web and the interplay of human and nature.
- Ensure students can make decisions on environmental issues and take responsibility for their future.



## INITIATIVE MODEL

### MAIN ACTIVITIES:

#### What does LEAF do?

It offers 4 **Pedagogical Steps** for schools. The 4 LEAF Pedagogical steps are: **1) Look and observe, 2) Explore, 3) Analysis, 4) Function**. As part of their work with the LEAF pedagogical steps, schools are invited to:

- Create a forest committee that **engages students** to help plan and implement LEAF activities.
- Carry out a **research project** on a problem to solve or a question to answer connected to the four functions of forests: ecological, economic, social, and cultural.
- Develop an **education plan** to implement awareness-raising actions about forests (e.g., tree planting, creation of pollinator-friendly gardens, installation of bird feeders or insect hotels).
- Monitor and report progress about increased levels of awareness and changes in behaviour directly related to the research project and the educational plan.
- Inform and involve the whole **school and the wider community**, spreading the LEAF message.
- **Develop a forest code** that reflects on the school values in connection to the forest and nature. It can take the form of a poem, a poster, a song, or a mission statement.

LEAF also produces resources to execute the programme and help teachers engage with students effectively in outdoor activities. In addition, it maintains a FEE Academy and e-learning platform for the professional development of teachers and national operators, and develops an outdoor education course for teachers.

### BENEFICIARIES:

#### Who benefits from LEAF's activities?

1. **Young students** understand and reconnect with nature, gaining knowledge and a sense of responsibility towards the nature around them. They also build interpersonal and social skills and experience active citizenship.
2. **Teachers** use a structured methodology to enrich their curricula with outdoor learning and assessment. They also enhance their professional skills and knowledge.
3. **The local community** is engaged in the learning/teaching process, which helps develop social bonds.
4. **Schools** that fulfill LEAF goals are awarded with a certificate that recognise their work, which helps them build a positive reputation among the educational community.
5. **Public bodies** enrich their national and regional education curriculums with environmental programmes.

### PROMOTION:

#### What is LEAF's promotion strategy?

LEAF's communication strategy and channels:

- LEAF promotion global and national websites.
- FEE website.
- E-mail.
- Online newsletter.
- Social media.
- National Operators meetings.



- LEAF brochure.
- Thematic campaigns (e.g., biodiversity, global action).

## GOVERNANCE:

### How does LEAF implement its activities?

LEAF is managed and coordinated from the **FEE Head Office** in Denmark:

- The **FEE Head Office** manages the programme and its activities, supports the development of the programme in new countries, and shares best practices with existing member countries.
- The **International Steering Committee** advises the FEE Head Office.

Activities are executed by FEE members at national level through a **LEAF national operator** that:

- coordinates and oversees the programme.
- encourages schools to work on the current LEAF theme.
- assesses and delivers the LEAF Award certificates.

In countries without a LEAF national operator, international schools report to the FEE Head Office.



## FINANCES:

### What are LEAF's main resources?

FEE member organizations running the LEAF programme pay an annual 400€ levy to the FEE Head Office. The costs of running LEAF at national level are covered through:

- **Private funding:** fees, corporate sponsorship, and donations.
- **Public funding:** government grants.

## POLICY AND STANDARDS LEADING THE INITIATIVE:

LEAF is part of the FEE's '**GAIA 20:30 10-year strategy**' to address the climate crisis, biodiversity loss and environmental pollution. Moreover, the project was selected by HundrED, an NGO for innovation for education, as an inspiring initiative for a post-COVID world.



## UNIQUENESS

### What makes LEAF a one-of-a-kind project?

- It targets environmental challenges from an educational point of view, offering a **holistic methodology** that takes into account the cultural, economic, social and ecological aspects of forests.
- Through its international scope, there are over 960,000 students and 43,200 teachers involved.
- In several LEAF countries, the programme runs through an existing forest school programme.



## EXPECTATION

By **2025**, LEAF aims at further scaling-up by reaching new countries, member organisations and more students. At the same time, it seeks to promote school ground greening projects and to engage in research opportunities.

### What does LEAF need to be successful?

- Economic and human resources both for the FEE Head Office and for LEAF national operators.
- New assessment and evaluation tools to measure the programme's impact.

### What are today's main challenges?

- Scale and adapt activities to different national contexts, realities, and academic curricula.
- Overcoming teachers' reluctance to conduct classes outdoors.

Promoted by:



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