

ACT.

Hey everyone!

We are back with another edition of our newsletter and we're looking back at a busy end to 2025 and sharing what we're building towards in 2026.

Winter is the nursery's busiest and most rewarding season. As temperatures cool, propagation begins and we welcome volunteers and interns who seek to give a helping hand around the greenhouse.

In early autumn we collected European Nettle and Holm Oak seeds, and took cuttings from Tamarisk, White Poplar and White Willow. This year we have successfully raised **Coronilla valentina** (shrubby scorpion-vetch), **Glaucium flavum** (yellow-horned poppy), **Salix alba** (white willow) and the endemic **Euphorbia melitensis** (Maltese spurge). Come spring, these will bring even more shades of yellow to the nursery.

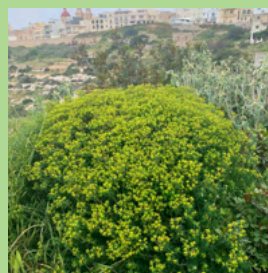
Coronilla Valentina |
shrubby scorpion-vetch



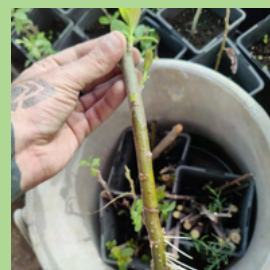
Glaucium flavum |
yellow-horned poppy



Euphorbia melitensis |
Maltese spurge



Salix alba |
White Willow



In 2026, ACT is taking a big step forward by launching **habitat rehabilitation projects** with public and private landholders. You can support our work by sponsoring trees individually, making a CSR contribution or partnering with us to regenerate your land. These projects go beyond planting - they start with the collection of indigenous seeds and involve watering, research, invasive-species removal and maintenance. Stay tuned for the official announcement in the weeks to come.

Policy



Government's Vision 2050 proposals feedback

Our feedback focused on practical, forward-looking reforms that can deliver meaningful change. We called for clear sustainability targets backed up by transparent public reporting alongside stronger planning procedures with greater accountability in decision-making.

A decisive shift away from car dependency is a central priority through reliable and efficient public transport, creating safer infrastructure for walking/cycling while strengthening ferry links as viable everyday alternatives.

We also emphasised the importance of safeguarding ODZ land, exploring the long-term potential for a metro system and advancing ecological rehabilitation using locally sourced native stock. Such measures would set a clear direction for a more sustainable, resilient future.



Widnet Who? Indigenous plants, natural habitats and ancestral knowledge

In October, our President Claude Ebejer joined a panel at the Malta Festival of Ideas alongside Stephan Schmitz from CropLife and Damjan Attard from Friends of the Earth Malta to discuss biodiversity. Public discourse on environmental loss often overlooks the natural assets that we still have. Speakers reflected on indigeneity in a region shaped by constant exchange, noting for instance how the lemon tree is not always well-suited to increasingly arid conditions.

Claude also addressed contradictions in Malta's food system. Despite local farmers producing only around a fifth of national consumption, some of this food goes to waste. He called for a shift towards more distinctive, value-added products and a broader change in food culture. While highlighting the inefficient use of dryland given over to wheat monocultures, he suggested reviving more sustainable and economically resilient alternatives such as hemp which was once abandoned for reasons related to status.

Policy

ACT.

Project Green's recent tree planting campaign has attracted great interest from landholders across Malta. Having pushed for such initiatives since 2018, ACT sees this as a positive step.

However, it's not just about how many trees we plant... but **what we plant and how**.



Project Green tree-planting scheme feedback

In our response to Project Green's tree-planting scheme, we welcomed the momentum behind afforestation efforts. However, we emphasised that real success lies not in the number of trees planted but rather in how they are planted.

We called for a strong focus on local genetics, cautioning against the ecological risks of imported species, while highlighting the importance of creating diverse and resilient planting landscapes that genuinely support biodiversity and generate green jobs.

Strengthening Environmental Protection Through Law (Green Paper) - Policy feedback

Drawing on our experience at different levels in the environmental sector, we focused on the legal and administrative backbone needed to turn this ambition into action. This includes coordinated enforcement across entities, greater transparency through publication of enforcement data and recognition of a meaningful right to a healthy environment. We also highlighted the importance of aligning public procurement and restoration measures with environmental objectives, ensuring that practices such as invasive alien species control are embedded within a coherent, accountable framework.



ERA Workshop on first National Restoration Plan

Claude reiterated that public procurement should prioritise trees and plants grown from local stock, ensuring that planting initiatives are grounded in sound ecological principles. He also highlighted the urgent need for greater intergovernmental coordination and closer collaboration between public entities, calling for an end to siloed working practises that lead to short-term fragmented interventions and undermine long-term progress. Claude underlined the importance of creating real opportunities for green entrepreneurship, positioning environmental action as a driver of innovation and sustainable economic growth.

Social Events

To close off summer 2025, we gathered at the Mosta Scouts Campsite and Activity Centre for **Iklata Sajfija**, bringing ACT members and volunteers together to celebrate a year of hard work and shared commitment. It was a great opportunity to reconnect with old friends, welcome new faces and exchange updates over a home-cooked meal.



Last October, we hosted our very first **open day** and welcomed numerous visitors to our nursery. We were very pleased with the turnout and the interest visitors showed in the species we nurture. We currently offer **60+ indigenous species** suited for homes, gardens and open fields, including options for hedging, attracting pollinators and biodiversity hotspots with plenty of spring colour. We look forward to welcoming you at the nursery and continuing to grow a greener, more resilient Malta together!



Erika | *Erica multiflora*

A striking shrub which produces beautiful pink flowers, adding a vibrant colour to the landscape



Gharghar | *Tetraclinis articulata*

Malta's national tree and a perfect ecological barrier around fields, valued for its resilience and habitat benefits



Rihan | *Myrtus communis*

Ideal for hedging, highly aromatic and hence sought after by pollinators



Widnet il-bahar | *Cheirolophus crassifolius*

Malta's national plant known for its striking blooms and uniquely shaped leaves

Social Events

Over the Winter months, we also hosted stands at **Fier' Ambjent** and the **Eco Christmas Market at Ta' Qali**. We met many people curious about indigenous plants and the work happening at the nursery. One visitor, who later joined as a volunteer, recounted memories of his mother making ointments when he was a child upon spotting a **Fejġel** plant (*Ruta chalepensis*) on our stand – a powerful example of how native plants are woven into cultural memory as well as our landscapes.



In January 2026, we welcomed a team from the Directorate for Financial Governance and Planning (MSPCR) for a workshop at the nursery. They supported essential work including sowing holm oak (*Quercus ilex*) seeds and repotting sandarac gum tree (*Tetraclinis articulata*). We are grateful for their invaluable contribution towards our efforts.



Contributions

In 2025, we've made significant investments in ACT's operational capacity. Thanks to the support of the **Badur Foundation**, we can retain a dedicated nursery manager, ensuring continuity and oversight of our growing operations. Funding from the **MEF Foundation** has also enabled us to recruit an officer to coordinate projects, communications and volunteers, thus reinforcing the organisational backbone behind our work.



We're also grateful to **APS Bank** for backing key nursery infrastructure upgrades and supporting our collaboration with **Natura Maltija** to produce visual media showcasing the indigenous species we cultivate. Further proposals are currently in development and we look forward to share more news as soon as upcoming projects are confirmed.



If you are interested in purchasing indigenous trees and shrubs, or would like to partner with us on land rehabilitation initiatives, reach out to us at actorgmalta@gmail.com, on our socials or visit us at our nursery during one of our open days. And keep an eye out for the launch of our **Plant Your Tree campaign!**

In the meantime, we're at the greenhouse **every Saturday morning** so feel free to drop by, say hello and bring a pair of gloves if you'd like to roll up your sleeves and join in!