



LIFE Programme

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LIFE+ Nature and agriculture platform meeting



22 April 2013 The European Commission's LIFE Nature Unit will be holding a platform meeting (thematic seminar) on nature conservation and agriculture in wet alluvial grasslands at the Éthic étapes Lac de Maine in Angers, France on 16-17 May, 2013.

The general objective of the event, which will be hosted by Ligue de la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO), is to exchange experience around the combination of nature conservation and farming practices. This will include discussion of such issues as: how to involve local farmers in nature conservation; greening the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP); management agreements with farmers on purchased land; and ensuring compatibility between pasture and the needs of ground-nesting birds.

The platform meeting will commence in the afternoon of 16 May and will be held entirely in English. As well as presentations, discussions and conclusions, there will be a field visit to sites associated with LPO's ongoing LIFE project '**LIFE+ Rôle des genets**' (**LIFE10 NAT/FR/000197 - www.life-rale-genets.eu**), which aims to conserve and restore the French breeding population of the corncrake and its favoured wet alluvial grassland habitats, including through close collaboration with farmers and the French authorities regarding the improvement of agri-environmental measures.

For further information about this event, please contact Mrs Maud Latruberce from the LIFE external monitoring team (ASTRALE EEIG): maud.latruberce@astrale.org.

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Have your say on the Natura 2000 newsletter



19 April 2013 The Natura 2000 newsletter was launched in 1996 and is now in its 33rd edition. To ensure that it continues to meet expectations, DG Environment has commissioned an online reader survey, which will remain open end of June 2013.

To have your say on the future of the newsletter - how useful is it to you, what would you like to see more or less of, do you prefer to read it on paper or online? - please visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/N2000newslettersurvey>

[/s/N2000newslettersurvey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/N2000newslettersurvey)

The survey should only take a few minutes to complete. By answering the supplementary question at the end, participants also have the chance to win one of 10 copies of the Commission's limited edition coffee table book on the Natura 2000 network.

Vulture TV 'joke' not funny – says Bulgarian LIFE team



18 April 2013 A popular Bulgarian TV comedy show recently broadcast an episode where the main characters discuss the benefits of eating Griffon vulture eggs for potency, while scheming to steal the eggs of the rare birds! Although meant to be amusing, the episode was viewed with alarm by the team coordinating the LIFE '**Vultures Return**' project (**LIFE08 NAT/BG/000278**), which is working to recover the populations of endangered vulture species in the country.

The LIFE team reacted immediately, disseminating a witty press-release challenging the show's script-writers and warning viewers of the potential threat to human health of consuming vulture eggs. To their surprise, the producers of the show - "*Stolichani v poveche*" (More than Metropolitans) - responded swiftly inviting the LIFE team to appear on the bTV channel's live Sunday evening chat show, "Let them talk... with Rossen Petrov", where they met the writers and together explained that the vulture story was fiction. As a result, the bTV Media Group agreed to run a screen warning to this effect in the episodes of the comedy series.

The project's press-release also caught the eye of one of the country's popular national newspapers, *Trud*, resulting in a one-page article in its Sunday edition.

"This is the first story of its kind we have come across," says project manager, Elena Kmetova. "Despite the intention of being funny, it has a great potential to ruin years of efforts related to vulture conservation in Bulgaria. We are very happy that the producers understood their responsibility, took us seriously and actually managed to obtain great publicity for vultures and their conservation."

For more information, including a video clip of the chat show interview, 'Vultures talk with Rossen Petrov' see the latest news on the **project website**.

Climate commissioner praises 'Carbon 20' project



17 April 2013 Connie Hedegaard, Climate Commissioner, paid tribute to the Danish LIFE project, '**Carbon 20**' (**LIFE09 ENV/DK/000366**), at the recent 'Allerødsmessen' climate fair. Two of the companies engaged in the project have been recognised for their efforts to reduce their CO2 emissions. Projects such as 'Carbon 20' are central to efforts to reduce our climate impact, according to the Commissioner.

"This is what it is about. I can try to make laws in the EU to change things, but these laws are not worth anything if they do not lead to changes. Therefore it is wonderful to see that there are people making actual changes through the Carbon 20 project," she said.

The awards event on 22 February was part of the on-going LIFE project's campaign to encourage at least 100 companies to reduce their CO2 emissions by 20%. In the municipality of Allerød, it has engaged 23 local companies, several of which have already achieved considerable reductions. Since joining in 2011 one local company has reduced its CO2 emissions by 46%.

The crane manufacturer, Krøll Cranes, was awarded the technical prize for its initiative to reduce energy consumption, particular in an industry that is not known for prioritising environmental concerns. Krøll Cranes plans to save 29 tonnes of CO2 in 2013 by changing the lighting in the production area.

In recognition of its action on climate change over the past 15 years, the joinery workshop, PP Møbler, was awarded the prize for innovation. Among its achievements, PP Møbler has planted a forest that, as well as absorbing CO2, can also be used as raw material for the company's furniture production.

The project is developing tools to support climate initiatives in businesses, as well as guidelines for public authorities to support and motivate the private sector to carry out climate-friendly initiatives. For more information about the 'Carbon 20' project visit: <http://www.carbon20.dk>

SOL-BRINE – 'Water is necessary' invite, Greece



16 April 2013 The Greek LIFE+ Environment wastewater treatment project **SOL-BRINE** (LIFE09 ENV/GR/000299) is holding its final conference from 19 to 21 September, on the island of Tinos, located in the Cyclades archipelago.

The international conference, 'Water Is Necessary for Life - WIN4Life' is open to all interested parties, providing participants with the opportunity to exchange views and ideas about water management, advanced wastewater treatment processes and sustainable brine management practices.

The event will include oral and poster presentation sessions. Authors wishing to submit a paper should send an abstract to the Scientific Secretariat, Dr. K. Moustakas (konmoust@central.ntua.gr) by 15 May 2013. There is no registration fee, but advanced registration is strongly recommended. More information on the conference is available at: www.uest.gr/win4life.

The best papers will be published in a special volume of the Journal, "Desalination & Water Treatment". The SOL-BRINE project aims to develop a solar-driven brine treatment system in order to eliminate the current practice of brine disposal. For more information, visit the **project website** (GR/EN).

Communication key to efficient N2000 sites in Romania



05 April 2013 Over 80 participants gathered in Brasov, Romania recently to learn more about developing communication skills to increase management capacity and support for Natura 2000 sites in the country. The event, "Efficient managers for Efficient Natura 2000 Network" was organised in the framework of the ongoing LIFE+ Information & Communication project, **EME Natura 2000** (**LIFE11 INF/RO/000819**).

The seminar, held on 4-5 March 2013, was organised by the project beneficiary, ProPark – the national foundation for protected areas, together with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Europarc federation and the Brasov agency for sustainable development.

Attracting participants from the key economic sectors: water management, fishing and hunting, forests, agriculture and strategic planning, the main aim was to increase the level of understanding of the importance of integrating natural resource management and specific biodiversity conservation measures for Natura 2000 sites; and to correctly reflect these concerns in the territorial planning processes. The seminar defined the necessary technical framework to reflect the value and importance of natural resources and biodiversity in the strategic and territorial development plan at a local, regional and national level.

Participants concluded that the natural resources included under the generic term 'biodiversity' are under pressure, and that their management must be carried out with greater responsibility to ensure

the foundations for sustainable development. Agreement was also reached on the need to promote a new, planned and integrated natural resource management related to sustainable development. The idea is that this will enable influencing future policies in these areas, as well as facilitating access to funding based on the real needs of the society.

The 2011-2015 LIFE+ project aims to increase management capacity and support for Natura 2000 sites in Romania by developing the communication skills of site managers and by supporting the integration of biodiversity concerns in territorial planning processes in and around Natura 2000 sites. For more information, see the project website, www.propark.ro.

Best LIFE Project Award-winners for 2012 revealed



05 April 2013 The winners of the 2012 'Best of the Best' and 'Best' LIFE Nature and LIFE Environment projects have been selected and will be presented at a combined awards ceremony to be held during Green Week in Brussels, the theme of which is Air Quality.

The winning projects will be acknowledged at a special event on 5 June from 6.30-9.30 pm in The Egg Conference Centre, rue Bara 173-177, B-1070

Brussels. Winning projects who wish attend the ceremony must register for

Green Week and also contact Paula.Lopez-Paredes@ec.europa.eu for further information.

The 'Best of the Best' LIFE Nature projects:

- **LIFE Obera Drau II (LIFE06 NAT/AT/000127)** – Improved the ecology of the Drava River over a stretch of 5 km while strengthening its flood protection. It also helped extend the Natura 2000 site 'Obere Drau' and led to its nomination as a bird reserve.
- **Introduccion Lince Andalucia (LIFE06 NAT/ES/000209)** – Significantly contributed to the recovery of the Iberian lynx, helping to both increase and extend populations. It led to the appropriate management of more than 200 000 ha of target territory for the species.

The 'Best' LIFE Nature projects 2012 (in chronological order):

- **DOMMELDAL (LIFE05 NAT/B/000091)**
- **RERABOG-DK (LIFE05 NAT/DK/000150)**
- **HUNSTEPPICOAKS (LIFE06 NAT/H/000098)**
- **LIFE FRIULI FENS (LIFE06 NAT/IT/000060)**
- **Corredores oso (LIFE07 NAT/E/000735)**
- **WETLIFE (LIFE07 NAT/LT/000530)**

The 'Best of the Best' LIFE Environment projects:

- **IWPM (LIFE06 ENV/D/000478)** – Introduced an innovative and automated system to control inflows to wastewater treatment plants and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of removing contaminants from the water.
- **TRUST (LIFE07 ENV/IT/000475)** – Improved the management of groundwater resources in the Upper Plain of Veneto and Friuli. It also improved stakeholder involvement in river-basin management.
- **EcoPest (LIFE07 ENV/GR/000266)** – Developed and implemented a low-input agricultural crop-management system for hazard and risk minimisation, focused in particular on water protection and reduced pesticide use.
- **OXATAN (LIFE08 ENV/E/000140)** – Demonstrated the technical and financial feasibility of chrome-free leather tanning using oxazolidine. Tanneries in Spain and Italy tested the production of leather using the oxazolidine tanning technique on an industrial scale.

The 'Best' LIFE Environment projects (in chronological order):

- **SLUDGE2ENERGY (LIFE06 ENV/D/000460)**
- **ArtWET (LIFE06 ENV/F/000133)**
- **ECOSMA (LIFE07 ENV/D/000229)**
- **From Roof to Road (LIFE07 ENV/DK/000102)**
- **INTEGRAL-B (LIFE07 ENV/E/000820)**
- **WATER CHANGE (LIFE07 ENV/E/000845)**
- **BIOCELL (LIFE07 ENV/E/000847)**
- **WEEE-NET (LIFE07 ENV/ES/000842)**
- **VACCIA (LIFE07 ENV/FIN/000141)**
- **HEC PAYT (LIFE07 ENV/GR/000271)**
- **CARBOMARK (LIFE07 ENV/IT/000388)**
- **POLPROP-NATURA (LIFE07 ENV/LV/000981)**
- **TOSCA (LIFE07 ENV/S/000912)**

For more information on the selection process and previous winners, including links to project summaries, layman's reports and websites, visit the **Best Projects** section of the LIFE website. Finally, two new publications on the winning LIFE Environment and LIFE Nature projects will be published later in the year.

'ETA-BETA' project points the way to eco-managed business areas



03 April 2013 The LIFE Environment project, 'ETA-BETA' (**LIFE09 ENV/IT/000105**) has announced its final results.

Since September 2010, the project has been promoting the development of Eco-managed Industrial and Business Estates (EIBEs) and ecologically equipped productive areas (EEPAs)

as local governance and policy tools for implementing the EU's Environmental Technology Action Plan. The ETA-BETA approach offers an organisational model for the management of EIBEs, which consists of a set of operational instruments for area managers and for individual SMEs for implementing the European Commission's Eco-Innovation Action Plan (EcoAP) at local level.

The project also demonstrated a governance model for the management of eco-areas (*Carta di Bologna*); regional governments in Italy agreed to the establishment of a national network and registry of EIBEs.

Another key outcome of the project was the production of a guideline with criteria and procedures for assessing the innovative eco-technologies that can be applied in EIBEs, in line with the EU's Environmental Technology Verification programme (ETV).

Seven pilot areas were selected in Italy and Spain for the use of innovative technologies and techniques in order to improve their environmental management. Measures entailed the appointment of an environmental manager; promoting eco-efficiency in the use of raw materials and water resources; waste reduction/recycling/re-use; common environmental monitoring and auditing; and energy efficiency.

Cultural shift

Finally, the project has helped introduce a new eco-innovation culture in productive areas: the new approach has been proposed and applied for selecting, disseminating and transferring solutions and techniques, based on the joint management of the environmental aspects of industrial and business estates. Thanks to the role of the environmental manager of the area, SMEs have been helped and encouraged to make greater use of eco-technologies.

For more information, visit the project website: www.progettoetabeta.eu

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