

Restoring Europe's Rivers

RESTORE newsletter

Issue 2 June 2012

news

The 20th anniversary of the European Union's LIFE programme, the first dedicated financial instrument for funding environmental activities, was celebrated at the Europe House in London in May. Launched in 1992, LIFE was timed to coincide with the EU Habitats and Birds Directives coming into force, both aimed at preserving Europe's biological diversity.



The River Restoration Centre (UK) and the RESTORE partnership for river restoration are and have been beneficiaries of LIFE. During the event Martin Janes from RRC presented the first UK LIFE river restoration project, on the River Cole, demonstrating the benefits of river restoration. Exploring the legacy of this LIFE project the links to wider initiatives following that project (New forest LIFE II and III, STREAM) were highlighted. Finally, the spotlight was on the current LIFE+ funded RESTORE partnership and its work of communicating and sharing knowledge on river restoration, and how RRC is helping to deliver more LIFE work.

The EU LIFE programme has co-financed more than 3,500 pilot and demonstration projects. A review of the types of key achievements from LIFE's previous two decades is included in a **LIFE 20 years: toolkit** - <http://life20.eu/?view=toolkit>

Jonathan Scheele (Head of UK office for the EU) with Tony Grayling (Head of Climate Change & Communities, Environment Agency) at Life 20 years celebration

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The RESTORE project is made possible with the contribution of the LIFE+ financial instrument of the European Community



and works in partnership with



Safeguarding Europe's Waters

RESTORE and several partners have made a submission to the European Commission's public consultation process to Safeguard Europe's waters. Our analysis highlighted the importance of river restoration and green infrastructure for improving the health of Europe's waters and the role networks such as RESTORE partnership for ecological river restoration can play in achieving these goals.

Given RESTORE's role in sharing river restoration knowledge and strengthening networks, we hope to further engage with the Commission throughout the Blueprint process.

At the end of 2012, the Commission will release a Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources, assessing the current status of EU water policy and identify ways to improve the health of Europe's water environment.

View the submission at:
<http://www.restorerivers.eu/Publications/tabid/2624/mod/11083/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/3297/Default.aspx>

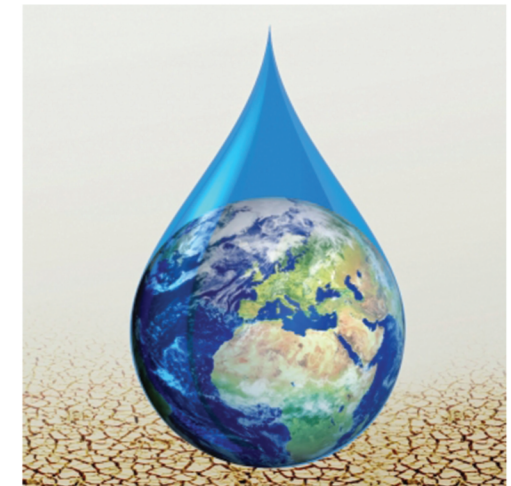
RESTORE partnership launches European River Prize at Green Week, The Water Challenge

The RESTORE partnership for river restoration launched the European River Prize at the Green Week, held in May in Brussels. This prize is the regional version of the International River Prize and will be awarded in 2013 for the first time.

During their session at the Green Week, the partners looked at good practice case studies from previous winners of the International River Prize. The team also presented experiences of sharing information through online resources and discussed how initiatives such as the Water Framework Directive and trans-national approaches to basin programs have advanced water quality and biodiversity at the river basin scale across the EU.

Green Week is Europe's biggest annual conference on the environment. This year's event explored the European Union's approach to water policy and attended by RESTORE partners Toni Scarr of the Environment Agency (England and Wales), Chris Baker of Wetlands International, Bart Fokkens (Chairman of the European Centre for River Restoration) and Philip Weller of (International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River).

The presentations given by the RESTORE partnership, together with all of the Green Week sessions, can be found on: <http://www.greenweek-2012.eu/sessions/advancing-european-integrated-river-basin-management>



Sharing River Restoration Knowledge and Experience in Eastern Europe

An international RESTORE workshop, was held in Iasi, Romania. The event included presentations on best practice on river restoration in Europe with examples from the UK, the Netherlands, Romania, Bulgaria, Austria and Hungary.

Experts gave training sessions on river habitat and geomorphology including the restoration measures on the Austrian-Slovakian border section of river Morava. Discussion was held on how the RESTORE partnership can help to share experience in different areas of Europe. A field visit to a restored wetland at Ciobarcu, on the Jijia River within the Prut River Basin ended the three day event.

Ciobarcu wetland, Romania



Learning from successful examples. In Romania, former governments had tried unsuccessfully to convert the wetlands into agricultural land, resulting in a loss of floodplains and habitats. With local partners, Romania is restoring some of these areas back to their natural state. Three of the projects were presented: the Ciobarcu Wetland, Lower Prut Floodplain schemes and the Danube Delta restoration which is part of the Lower Danube Green Corridor wetlands restoration initiative.

The event was organized by the National Institute of Hydrology and Water Management (Romania) with the support of the Government Service for Land and Water Management (NL). View presentations on Slide Share - <http://www.slideshare.net/Restoreeurope rivers/>



River Wandle released from captivity in Croydon !

Less than 50 years ago, the River Wandle in South West London was officially a sewer. Last summer it was declared one of England's 10 most improved rivers, supporting all sorts of wildlife and even spawning trout. One of the most recent projects, nearing completion, is the restoration of a branch of the river through Wandle Park in Croydon which until recently was buried in a culvert. It won't be long before the newly excavated channel is reconnected to flow freely through the rejuvenated park, for everyone to enjoy.

For more information, see www.wandlepark.com, or visit the park yourself!



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Presenting the RESTORE partnership at launch of river corridor project in London

The RESTORE partnership was invited to give a presentation at the launch of the London Borough of Lewisham's European River Corridor Improvement Project (ERCIP). Susan Sheahan of the Environment Agency spoke about the development of the RESTORE partnership and its project and presented an overview of the online case study database – RESTORE River Wiki, the handbook and website.

The event consisted of 30 people from the five partner countries, UK, Germany, Italy, Romania and Greece, who came to the event to hear about the UK experience between Lewisham Council and the Environment Agency in delivering a jointly owned local river corridor improvement plan.

The river corridor project is lead by the London Borough of Lewisham and is aimed at developing and improving existing examples of local river corridor improvement plans through staff exchanges and sharing knowledge to produce a European best practice model. It runs from January 2012 to December 2014 and is funded through the European Union's INTEREG IVC fund.

For further information contact Paul Chapman
paul.chapman@lewisham.gov.uk

Visit www.restorerivers.eu or contact Toni Scarr: restore@environment-agency.gov.uk

Environment Agency on the Catchment Pilots, WFD, & the Catchment Based Approach

In April 2011 the Environment Agency began piloting new approaches for engaging with people and organisations at a catchment level in ways that can make a difference to the health of all our waters and habitats. The pilots will run until December 2012.

There is a host of useful information on the pilot programme including details of individual catchment pilots, information about access to Environment Agency data, and bulletins which detail some of the learning around collaborative working that's emerging from the Environment Agency hosted pilots. Further information can be found on the Environment Agency's website:
<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/131506.aspx>

New publications

Woodlands for Water - A review by the Forest Research and ADAS, jointly commissioned by the Forestry Commission and the Environment Agency has shown the important role of woodlands in delivering WFD objectives.

A summary of the report is available on the Environment Agency website (<http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/PDF/SCHO0711BTYR-E-E.pdf>), and the detailed scientific review is available on the Forest Research website (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-8JHELN>).

Upcoming Events

8TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION, University of South Bohemia, eské Budjovice, Czech Republic 09 - 14th September 2012. The main theme of the 8th Conference of the Society for Ecological Restoration, Europe is 'Near-natural restoration'. The event will present and discuss restoration ecology as a practice and as a scientific discipline, covering restoration of a range of habitat types including wetlands, fresh water ecosystems and marine and coastal ecosystems. There will also be opportunities to network and for post-event field trips. For further information see <http://www.ecer2012.eu/>

2nd Italian Conference on River Restoration - Libera Università di Bolzano (Italy) 5 - 7th November 2012. River Restoration in the River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) in Europe. There are only 3 more years to achieve the first WFD objectives and so it seems to a good time to discuss this issue and to look at ways of implementing river restoration measures in the RBMPs. A RESTORE workshop on this subject will be held as part of the 2nd Italian conference on river restoration. More information can be found on the CIRF (Italian Centre for River Restoration) website: www.cirf.org

If you have any comments or questions, or you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact us by email: restore@environment-agency.gov.uk