



**Special edition
National Centre's
for River Restoration**

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Editorial ECRR newsletter special

Dear readers,

It is with great pleasure that I present you this special edition of the ECRR newsletter. In this newsletter specific attention is paid to the role and position of the National Centres for River Restoration in various countries in different parts of Europe.

The ECRR is an European network for river restoration practitioners with a framework of national networks: National Centres for river restoration (NC's). In practice, a NC is regarded as a good representative for river restoration actors, practitioners and experts in a specific country, and is commonly considered to be the proper institution to act as such. The NC's thus form a basis for the ECRR network, and are highly relevant for the existence and performance of the ECRR.

Both ECRR's and the NC's mission is to enhance and promote river restoration and sustainable river management throughout Europe, disseminating information on river restoration experiences and approaches and fostering the establishment of national river restoration networks in as many European countries as possible.

I am grateful to the NC's that contributed to this newsletter, providing information, articles and photographs on this theme. In addition two European partners of ECRR, International Network of Basin Organisations (INBO) and Wetland International (WI), contributed with information about their role and position, as related to ECRR activities.

The general objective of ECRR is clear: good ecological and sustainable status of rivers, their floodplains and streams. It is of great interest to all our partners to learn about the way how NC's operate to achieve this objective. As NC's are taking part in the ECRR, they can use this network to exchange information on ecological restoration of rivers and streams:

exchange of good practices on both practical as theoretical level, to create and elaborate networks as to spread and share information with one another and to learn about management of the causes of degradation. The NC's should not only try to enhance river restoration and to facilitate information sharing in their own region, but also try to do the same to other NC's with comparable problem cases and regional circumstances.

The ECRR could be of assistance by providing support to organizations in countries when setting up (new) NC's and developing products and methods in order to exchange the information on ecological river restoration. Occasionally and if possible the ECRR can assist and provide support and help in organizing events, workshops, field visits etc.

In this special edition of the newsletter of ECRR a clarification is given of some of the existing NC's in Europe to illustrate why is an NC is founded – history and targets -, how it is organized (structure, members), how it works. Also aspects as finances, partners, position and status and activities are described. Moreover information is given by the two main partners of ECRR, INBO and WI.

Finally, a short announcement is incorporated, about the first results and proceedings, of the RESTORE and REFORM projects, the ECRR is actively cooperating with.

Apart from that, you will find as usual the agenda of the upcoming events in 2012-2013.

I wish you pleasant and fruitful readings.

Hil R. Kuypers
Secretary ECRR

The Iberian Centre of River Restoration (CIREF)

History.

The Iberian Centre of River Restoration (CIREF) was officially founded in 2009 in Barcelona, where the first assembly was held. Three milestones preceded and set the basis for the creation of CIREF: Water Framework Directive (2000), the Spanish National Strategy for River Restoration (2004) and the 4th ECRR International Conference (2008).

Objectives.

CIREF is an NGO formed by members from all over the Iberian Peninsula and most of the work is carried out by volunteers. Its objectives are:

- To encourage participation, to promote and assess all public or private activities that have as objective to protect, preserve and restore river systems;
- To establish relationships and maintain presence on public and private organizations that have some form of influence on river management, assessing in what ways they might be beneficial for river system conservation or its ecological improvement;
- To disseminate and defend the ecological values of river systems, to prevent further deterioration from pollution, dredging, channelization, flow regulation, reservoirs, river forest degradation and floodplain occupation;
- To promote international projects or any cooperation activities that pursue sustainable development, preservation and restoration of fluvial systems;
- To promote the exchange of information among river restoration experts with the aim of improving the quality of river restoration actions.



Organisation and tasks.

There are around 120 members who are organized in different categories, e.g. founding member, individual member, honorary member and corporate member with a common objective, to defend river systems and promote its restoration.

There is a board of 11 members who are in charge of different tasks and working groups such as the river restoration database, management, media and dissemination, web page and e-bulletin, events, publishing and research, membership and raising public awareness and the Portuguese delegation.

Members.

CIREF members pay an annual fee depending on their member type e.g. individual, corporate, younger and senior members.

Activities.

The www.cirefluvial.com website publishes the activities and all the information related to fluvial restoration. In addition, the e-bulletin keeps the members informed about activities and developments related to river restoration. So far, annual workshops have been organised as well as the I Conference on Iberian River Restoration has also been organized in October 2011. Additionally an e-learning programme has been developed together with INBO during 2011-2012 academic year, in which more than 140 students are participating in the different courses of the programme.



Author:

Ascoa Ibisate: Centro Ibérico de Restauración Fluvial

The Finnish Watercourse Restoration Network

History

Finland has a tradition of river and lake restoration accomplished by the state water administration. As timber floating, which had deteriorated most rivers and brooks, had ended in 1980's, a restoration network was established between environment centers, national board of waters and the environment (later Finnish Environment Institute SYKE) and ministries. The needs of fisheries and techniques of restoration were discussed in the network. In 1990's the scope of river restoration widened into all water construction by applying the practices of environmental river engineering and restoration. During 2000's the network seminars of river restoration were opened also for people outside the state environmental administration. According to the national watercourse restoration strategy, an open watercourse restoration network was established in January 2012, coordinated by SYKE.

Reason, objectives and mission

The average goal of the administration in Finland is to reduce the duties of the state. Also the responsibility of watercourse restoration will be directed more for end users with interest of waters. The funding basis and practical expertise of watercourse restoration must be widened to municipalities and local financing and actors. This is according to the goal of concentrating more to small watercourses, basin scale approach and social benefits of river restoration.

The goal of the network is to form a platform between administrators, planners, researchers and practitioners in the area of river and watercourse restoration. The



network will present experience of case studies and promote voluntarily based actions.

Organization

The responsibility to host the network is given for SYKE, which has the overall duty of promoting best practices in environmental issues. SYKE also serves as a national RR centre in ECRR. Expertise of methods will be developed and monitored also by environment authorities and other research institutes.



Method of working

The network is mainly based on information sharing through web pages, with possibility for discussion and asking advice. Open network seminars will be organized yearly or every second year.

Members/contacts

There are no member fees. People who are interested will get information through the network and seminars and they are supposed to learn practical work through their local communities. To establish regional networks will be promoted.

Position or status

The network is formally based as one of the goals of the national watercourse restoration strategy. It has official web pages hosted by SYKE.

Finances

The hosting of the network is budget based with a part time working of one person in SYKE.

Partners

SYKE is supported by the ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and also by regional environment administration. SYKE works in close cooperation with other national research institutes and ECRR.

Benefits

ECRR gives an international status for the national network and SYKE as a national centre, which is recognized in the ministries and regional and municipal authorities. International contacts and access to relevant RR projects as examples, as well as distributing information of own cases, are made easier through ECRR.

Activities

The activities until now have been the establishment seminar of the network as a RESTORE Life + event and restructuring the previous web based restoration information to serve the new network.

**Author: Jukka Jormola: SYKE
Finnish Environment Institute
www.ymparisto.fi**

The Italian Centre for River Restoration (CIRF)

History

The Italian Centre for River Restoration – CIRF was founded as non-profit organisation in 1999 by a group of people with different technical and professional background, but sharing a common interest on river ecosystems and sustainable river management.

Development

At that time in Italy “river restoration” was just a research issue for few forerunners, even the term was virtually unknown in most public administrations and practitioners contexts. One of the first efforts of CIRF was therefore to clarify and formalise what river restoration actually meant, particularly in Italy, incorporating and integrating the knowledge, approaches and languages of all professional sectors that need to collaborate to implement river restoration. This choral work involved tens of people from all over the country and led to the “Italian handbook on river restoration”, that still remains a cornerstone of CIRF’s approach in terms of rationale for implementing river restoration and as a basis to further develop and update methods and guidelines.

Mission and tasks

CIRF’s main mission has been since its foundation to foster the restoration of river ecosystems in Italy and more in general to promote a more sustainable approach in river basin planning and management. A primary goal is therefore to increase public awareness, at various levels, of the benefits provided by restored rivers. Secondly, a sound and scientifically based technical approach for the implementation, monitoring and assessment of river restoration measures has to be promoted. To do so, CIRF carries out training and educational activities mainly for public authorities and private consultants, focuses on networking and dissemination of national and international know-how, through its website, a dedicated online magazine, the participation in and direct organisation of local and national events, including national conferences on river restoration. CIRF also promotes pilot stud-



The Tagliamento, the most iconic large Italian river, with close to natural geomorphological dynamics (photo A. Goltara)

ies and projects, often within international partnerships, the exchange with subjects from other countries, often with more experience and public support on river restoration, being vital to foster it in Italy. Interacting on planning and legislative issues, at basin/regional and national levels, always on a technical basis, is also a relevant component of CIRF work.



“Riqualficazione Fluviale”, the online magazine published by CIRF

Organisation and activities

CIRF is a truly independent non-profit organisation: it is funded through the fees of its few hundred members (consultants, researchers, public officers, but also some public administrations, such as municipalities, provinces, or natural parks) and through projects and educational activities. It is directed by a board of ten people, elected every three years by members. The president of CIRF board is at present Miss Ileana Schipani. Technical activities are carried out by CIRF technical secretariat, a light and flexible structure, whose components are based in different Italian regions; moreover, specific projects involve different CIRF members, as well as external experts. All activities are coordinated by CIRF general manager, at present Mr Andrea Goltara.

For more information on CIRF activities visit www.cirf.org or contact:

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Netherlands Centre for River Restoration in the Netherlands

History

The Netherlands Centre for River Studies (NCR) was established in 1998 and has come about as a result of renewed societal interest in rivers, in particular concerning the interaction between the main functions: transport of water, ice and sediment (protection against flooding), transport over water (accessibility) and nature preservation, recovery and development (quality of life). Such interest is reflected in policy development and planned infrastructural intervention, on international scale (International Rhine Commission, Interreg Rhine Meuse Action programme (IRMA)) and national scale (Fourth Policy Document on Water Management) Organisations involved in these issues (from Rijkswaterstaat to the EU) increased their expertise on rivers by means of several research programmes.

The NCR is merely a network organisation aimed at connecting researchers, managers and practitioners in the field of (larger???) river hydro-morphology and ecology. The NCR aims to integrate research and practise and generate possibilities for common research among its partners. The partners are: Rijkswaterstaat (Waterdienst), Deltares, Alterra, Unesco-IHE, Universities of Delft (TUD), Nijmegen (RU), Twente (UT) and Utrecht (UU)..

Developments

At this moment only informal River Restoration Networks exist in the Netherlands, that cover comparable aspects and stakeholders as the ECRR and National Centres in other countries. There are several expert platforms active, covering more or less topics and for a shorter or longer period specific fields of interests and/or stakeholders.

A special partner in the river restoration network is DLG, the Dutch Government Service for Land and Water management. DLG is actively involved in river restoration projects, with a focus on land banking, land use planning and project management. DLG thus has a lot of experiences with these issues in the framework



of river restoration.

At present DLG also hosts the secretariat of ECRR.

Objectives and tasks of NCR

NCR has a network function, for all parties in the Netherlands involved in river-related research. In line with this, NCR also has an educational function. Knowledge of the structure and functioning of river systems is a very important element in the effort to keep the Netherlands habitable in a sustainable way. Through the transfer of such expertise at an academic level, from undergraduate level courses to Ph.D. programmes. NCR stimulates dissemination of expertise and reinforces the international position of river experts who have been educated in the Netherlands.

Disciplines of importance for NCR are: hydrology (of the river basin); fluvial hydraulics; geomorphology; sedimentology; river ecology; social sciences and spatial planning. Each discipline is present in at least two of NCR's partners, thus enhancing the cooperation between the partners.

Organisation and activities of NCR

The NCR is based on a program committee, with meetings about 4 times a year, and an annual meeting of the steering committee. The Secretariat is based at Deltares and mutually funded by Deltares and the Waterdienst (Rijkswaterstaat). The other members contribute in kind, mostly by organising the NCR-days on a rotational basis.

The program committee initiates the activities such as theme-days and the yearly 2-day NCR symposium (NCR-days) and makes contributions to the

NCR-website (which is currently being restructured). During the 2-day symposium the national Dutch river manager, two major Dutch research institutes and five universities present their latest research on river hydro-morphology and ecology. The aim is to provide an informal setting that fosters discussions among both experienced and less experienced researchers, managers and other interested professionals.

National Centre function in transfer

At the moment, the function of National Centre is being transferred to the 'Platform Beek- en Rivierherstel' (Platform for brook and river restoration). This platform was recently set up to enhance exchange of knowledge and expertise on river restoration within the Netherlands, bridging the gap between rivers and streams, and between existing platforms that cover specific fields of interest. The aim is to integrate NCR as a scientific community within the platform to be able to address the freshwater stream community as a whole while keeping the NCR's main activity of organising a scientific 2-day symposium intact.

More information can be found on:

The website of Deltares

<http://www.ncr-web.deltares.nl/>

The website of Stowa, thema Platform Beek- en Rivierherstel:

www.beekenrivierherstel.stowa.nl/?pId=1923

The website of DLG:

www.dienstlandelijkgebied.nl/onderwerpen/water/water/dossier/cop-hermeandering

The ECRR website: www.ecrr.org.

Norway: Restoration network website

History

At the end of 2011, a restoration network and web-site was launched in Norway. Previously two national seminars on restoration have been in place.

Method and objectives

During the conclusion of the second national seminar in November 2011, a proposal for the national restoration network website was presented, and got a massive support.

The restoration network website presently contains:

- news and information on relevant national and international conferences;
- a list of national and international literature on restoration and rehabilitation issues;
- links to restoration centers like the ECRR, RCC, CIREF etc.

Members get automatic e-mail messages when new items are added to the website.

Organisation, contacts and partners

The network website is administered by the Directorate for Nature Management, as part of the national web-site for implementation of the Water Framework Directive.



Point rehabilitation for stream continuity and fish migration: improvement of culvert pass under road filling. (2 photos before and after). (Knut Aune Hoseth, Directorate for Water Resources and Energy).

The contacts include a mix of professionals from government, research, companies and NGOs, who have signed up to get e-mail notices whenever any news is posted on the network web site, and can be used as a mailing list for disseminating information, invitations to seminar etc.

The main partners for the web-site are the Directorate for Nature Management as well the Directorate for Water Resources and Energy. The Norwegian Water Association is an important partner for organizing the national seminars.



Point rehabilitation of secure fish migration past hydroelectric installation. (Odd Terje Sandlund, Norwegian Institute for Nature Research).

Status and financing

The status of the restoration network website is very informal, as no authority in Norway has any dedicated funding or clearly stated mission to secure national coordination of the many scattered restoration efforts that occur. The website is thus a low cost and low effort solution to secure a minimum of network functions, and a positive spin-off effect of WFD implementation. Financing of the national seminars has been secured by a participation fee.

Objectives and planned activities

The purpose of the network web-site is to create an arena for exchange of information, examples and experiences, as well as available knowledge and tools, seminars and training courses on restoration and rehabilitation of watercourses. The most important benefit is the sharing of all this information, securing a wider learning experience and synergy in the field of watercourse restoration.

Upcoming plans for the website include:



reopening of urban river stretch at Ila in Trondheim city, 70 years after it was enclosed in underground tubes. (Terje Nøst, Trondheim Municipality).

- A database of fact sheets for completed, on-going and planned restoration projects.
- A list of contact information for professionals in the network, including government, research, consultants and NGOs.

Reason and benefits

Implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) has been a driving force for increased focus on restoration, and paved the way for the initiative for the national seminars as well as the website. Complete River Basin Management Plans covering the whole country will be finished in 2015, including Programs of Measures covering the necessary protection, improvement and restoration measures to reach good ecological status. In this work, the water boards at both river basin and district level depend on access to information and examples of ambitious but realistic restoration measures. The restoration website can be helpful in finding the examples, tools and links collected at one site.

Contact for the restoration network and website in Norway:

Anders Iversen at the Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management.
E-mail: anders.iversen@dirnat.no

Russian Center of River Restoration – Network organisation based on the progressive development of the Russian Research Institute for Integrated Water Management and Protection (Federal State Unitary Enterprise RosNIIVH)

History

The first steps in creating a professional association of Russian Center for River Restoration have been made in 1998 by RosNIIVH Institute, when it became a member of the ECRR during the primary installation conference in Denmark. Since then, the Institute is the leading Russian organization in matters of river restoration, which has the scientific and material resources, and has developed a network of branches (affiliates). However, the Institute does not coordinate the work of non-governmental network organization "Russian Rivers Network," but often serves as a center of expertise, when it comes to principles, technologies and methods of use of any rehabilitation measures to conserve and restore aquatic ecosystems.

Development.

By now the Russian Federation has no concrete plans for the establishment of a developed national river restoration center, able to take the initiative to coordinate the activities of various environmental organizations concerning the restoration, rehabilitation and management of water bodies in river basins. On the basis of the regional environmental centers and associations various projects were initiated and still under implementation, such as "Help the River" (Nizhny Novgorod), "Protection of Rivers," (Novosibirsk), "White River" (Ufa). Many of them are members of the voluntary association of environmental organizations, called the Russian Rivers Network



(Nizhny Novgorod). The Russian Rivers Network welcomes equal partnership and action in defense of rivers. Thus, the RosNIIVH Institute functions as a center for exchange of experience and expertise in the field of restoration of aquatic ecosystems, participating in the implementation of scientific and applied projects throughout Russia. Nevertheless, the main task of the Institute is the scientific and methodological support of activities and decisions of the Water Agency of the Russian Federation.

Tasks

- 1) In terms of activities in the field of river restoration the Institute does not have a special structure for the organization of river restoration activities at the national level, as long as there is no concept for further development in this direction. But fortunately, the first steps to create a network of partners in the restoration of aquatic ecosystems are already being made for many years. This means that RosNIIVH is an institution in the classic sense, the main task of it is to conduct research and implement innovative solutions in the field of water resource management.
- 2) Relationships with partner organizations are realized through permanent cooperation, by the website of the Institute www.wrm.ru, through the issue of the journal "Water Economy of Russia", by biannual organizing of International Conference "Clean Water", and partnerships in the implementation of major

Federal Projects.

A non-governmental network organization "Russian Rivers Network," has its own website at www.pomreke.ru. This is a community of like-minded enthusiasts for the protection and restoration of aquatic ecosystems. "Russian Rivers Network" is an informal network, where members pay no dues. Profit is not the purpose of the existence of this organization. In the case of RosNIIVH profit is a necessary condition for a successful functioning of the organization.

Cooperation and results.

In implementing its mission RosNIIVH collaborates with many organizations, like the ECRR, IAWA, IEPA, World Water Forum, Aquatech (Moscow), Aquaterra (S-Petersburg). Cooperation is focused on submission of materials for conferences, seminars, thematic sessions etc. Membership of the RosNIIVH Institute of the ECRR helps to maintain the staff having a high level through a continuous exchange of information, knowledge and new technologies in the field of protection and restoration of water resources. Completed results of the RosNIIVH Institute activities for the protection and restoration of water resources cannot be submitted, because many of the projects are in the process of implementation, or in the planning phase.

Author: Timur Pavluc: Russian Research Institute for Integrated Water Management and Protection

Slovenian Centre for River Restoration

History

The Slovenian Centre for River Restoration was established within the Institute for Water of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter IzVRS). The centre became formally affiliated with the ECRR during the international seminar »Forging targets and solutions for rivers and water ecosystem restoration«, that was organised in cooperation with the LIFE+ Project "RESTORE" in November 2011. IzVRS is the lead research and advisory institution in integrated water planning and common European water policy in the Republic of Slovenia, which encompasses also activities in the field of river restoration. During the preparation of the 1st River Basin Management Plan it was found out that there is not enough attention being given to river restoration in Slovenia. IzVRS should emphasize activities in this field of work and present the significance of river restoration to water experts as well as to the wider public.

Objectives.

The main aim of the national centre is to bring into force river restoration within water management and present river restoration as development opportunity instead of obstacle in spatial planning. It is also important to incorporate river restorations in notable development and strategic planning documents as well as establish network between different stakeholders. It is our goal to build common inter-sector and interregional platform for further river restoration development, together with ECRR



River restoration on the Bača River - dam removal (Photo: M. Habinc)

Activities.

The working programme of the Slovenian Centre for River Restoration is closely connected to the working programme of the IzVRS as well as with the programme of the Slovenian Ministry for Agriculture and Environment. Activities are partially financed by the ministry, and partially by additional non-government pecuniary resources. Together with the IzVRS, the Centre has established a strong stakeholder network for building knowledge on river restoration and exchanging information, which is possible also via its' website at www.izvrs.si. Our centre has official representative and main coordinators of activities in key positions within the government. In this year, the working programme is mainly oriented to preparation of a cata-

logue of river engineering good practices. Among the various good practices that were recognized in Slovenia, one practice on near-natural bank protection constructed from wood and stones will be presented in detail. Together with company Si.mobil we are planning demonstration of this technique on the Ljubljanica River near the city centre of Ljubljana, where the educational value of this project will be very important for further river restoration strengthening within water management. Our centre also collaborates with ECRR through Life+ project "RESTORE", where we share experiences on river restoration in Slovenia.

Future.

We do believe that in the future we have to put more attention to river restoration and connect different stakeholders within water management and other sectors and that for achieving of this goal it is very important to exchange experiences and knowledge also with other national centres for river restoration as well as with ECRR as main international connecting organization in Europe.

Author: Petra Repnik Mah, Institute for Water of the Republic of Slovenia



River Restoration on the Mura River - new oxbow-lake (Photo: P. Repnik Mah)

Romanian National Centre for River Restoration

History

The Romanian Centre for River Restoration (RCRR) was established on 01.09.2001, by Order of the Minister of Waters and Environmental Protection as a technical and consulting body for the Ministry, in view of joining the efforts of Romanian experts towards river restoration.

Romania, through the National Administration "Romanian Waters" / "Apele Romane" is a founding member of the European Centre for River Restoration (ECRR), which was established in Silkeborg, Denmark in 1999.

Objectives

The main goal of the Centre is, according to the genuine Ministerial Order "to assure the conceptual approach of specialists from different activity fields, most of all biologists - ecologists versus civil engineers, water management engineers, hydropower and hydrotechnical engineers".

Activities

During the last twelve years RCRR developed diverse activities as: organization of seminars, meetings with specialists working in different fields (water resources management, environment protection, hydrology, hydrotechnics, land reclamation), trainings, common projects, as follows:

- 1999 – Bucharest, first national Workshop regarding "the Ecological River Restoration", organized by the National Administration "Romanian Waters" and National Environment Research Institute ;
- 1999 – Bucharest - Board Meeting of ECRR ;
- 2000 – Bucharest - "The Training Course on River Restoration" – organized by the National Administration "Romanian Waters" together with the Romanian Centre for River Restoration (RCRR) in co-operation with experts from RIZA – The Netherlands and WWF- Germany;
- 2003 – Inter-ministerial Committee Working Meeting on Green Corridor of Lower Danube under the presi-



dency of the State Secretary within the Ministry of Waters and Environmental Protection and President of Romanian Centre for River Restoration;

- 2010 – Bucharest - "National River Restoration Centers/ Networks" Seminar organized by ECRR and National Administration "Apele Romane" in cooperation with Romanian Centre for River Restoration;
- 2011 – Slovenia – participation, at the invitation of ECRR, at the Conference „Forging Targets and Solutions for Rivers and Water Ecosystem Restoration”.

Due to the cooperation between the RCRR and ECRR, a river restoration project was developed in Romania "Ciobarcu wetland", which was implemented in 2006 and, currently is under monitoring by the specialists of River Basin Administration Prut – Barlad.

Partners.

Another achievement of the good cooperation between ECRR and RCRR is participation of the National Institute of Hydrology and Water Management in the international project RESTORE as subcontractor of DLG – Netherlands, supporting afferent activities in Central and East Region of Europe (covering Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania). In this regard, NIHWM organized in Iasi - Romania training sessions within RESTORE project on different interesting topics (river habitat and geomorphology, morphological challenges, restoration measures: concepts, experience and outlook), for Romanian experts from National Administration "Apele Romane" and River Basin Water Authorities. The trainers came

from The Netherlands, Austria, UK – European Environment Agency.

The National Administration "Apele Romane" through the National Institute of Hydrology and Water Management will fully support all the activities of ECRR, in order to build a common platform for a better understanding of the river restoration field and their present and future benefits, for nature, environment, economy and humankind equally.

Future.

For the future we intend to develop and improve the activities in the framework of the National Centre through:

- sharing the experience and knowledge exchange between experts from different field of activities from ecologists, biologists, engineers, river basin managers, stakeholders to academical media, large public organisations, NGO-s, etc;
- cooperation between experts from the RCRR and other national centers for river restoration from Europe and also from European Centre for River Restoration;
- reactivating the web-site of the RCRR;
- fully support the RESTORE project, including the dissemination of the results and river restoration best practices in Romania as well as in whole Central and East Region of Europe.

Authors : Ovidiu GABOR, Deputy Director - National Administration "Apele Romane" Daniela RADULESCU, Director - National Institute of Hydrology and Water Management (NIHWM) Elisabeta CSERWID, Head of River Basin Development Plans Unit - NIHWM www.rowater.ro/sites/en/default.aspx

The River Restoration Centre, United Kingdom

History and rationale

In the UK in the early 1990s it was recognised that the concept of restoring rivers by linking physical processes and ecology needed to be better explained. Funded by EU-LIFE, three flagship demonstration restoration sites were completed namely: the Cole, Swindon, and Skerne, Darlington in the UK and the Brede, Nr Tonder in Denmark. As a result of this initiative, other restoration projects started to develop across the country. The need to have a central depository of information about the success of these projects and a place to tap into expertise and knowledge became imperative. The not-for-profit River Restoration Centre (RRC) was therefore born in 1998 to allow for the exchange and dissemination of knowledge as more understanding was gained about best practice restoration.



Objectives and mission

To this day the RRC exists to promote, facilitate and support best practice in river, watercourse and floodplain restoration and management across the UK with core activities focusing on: **Knowledge Exchange** on river restoration and management activities; **Case Specific Advice and Assessment** of river projects and the on-going management of rivers and; **Guidance and Mentoring** to inform best practice river management and restoration. Over its 14 years of existence the



RRC, has established a unique set of support services dedicated to developing best practice river management and restoration of the UK's rivers by linking science with practice. It aims to work closely with its members and funders and to collaborate with other organisations to meet the expanding challenges and needs of river restoration in the UK and Europe.

The organisation and status

The Centre operates as an independent, not-for-profit registered Company limited by Guarantee. RRC therefore complies with all formal UK companies legislation and reporting. The Centre currently employs nine core staff, through its agreement with Cranfield University, with an overseeing Board of Directors (9) and Agency representatives (6). Additional advice is provided where necessary through the paid support of a number of technical 'Expert Advisers' with many years of experience in their field.

Method of working/activities and products

Key to the Centre's existence is the management of the 'National River Restoration Inventory' which provides a

unique evidence-based source of river restoration and management information with data collected from over 2000 specific cases in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Information is disseminated through a number of mediums including an e-bulletin and newsletter, Facebook, Linked-In and the annual networking conference that attracts around 200 delegates from the UK and further afield.

This collated information, together with a wealth of in-house expertise and knowledge, enables the Centre to provide its unique set of services including initial project scoping visits, independent review of design proposals, advice on new best practice techniques, monitoring current success and input to future policy through advising national steering groups.

Members/contacts

Members and contacts include government agencies, non-governmental organisations, a range of rivers trusts and charities, local government, academic institutions, water companies, contractors and consultants. The Centre holds in the region of 3000

contacts. Members are able to call on the RRC for independent advice, the extent of which is dependent on the level of membership (**see below**).

Finances and partnerships

The RRC is year-on-year 'core' funded by the England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland statutory environment agencies, to ensure support availability for their staff. Additional funding comes from 'Corporate', 'Organisation' and 'Individual' membership levels. Specific pieces of work such as on-site project advice, the delivery of technical workshops or involvement in research and development studies are all self-funded by charging out staff at a cost-recovery day rate.

ECRR Benefits

RRC (as its predecessor RRP) has been in existence longer than the ECRR and is one of the founding members. RRC and ECRR's objectives are similar and the association offer benefits to both organisations. The UK benefits from the wider range of experiences and understanding available outside of the country, accessed via ECRR members, and ECRR benefits from the 'case study' of RRC's long standing success in communicating river restoration in a single country. RRC is able to respond to wider European issues and legislation in partnership with ECRR and other national centres, which it could not justify doing individually.

Success

RRC operates in identified gaps in the current UK river management sector, to support better understanding and use of best practice river restoration, and its implementation in relation to national and European legislation. RRC support is available across private and public organisations. RRC has built a reputation of 'independence and impartiality' by actively not competitively bidding against others for work, which complicates funding arrangements but more importantly secures the support and essential information flow from these otherwise potential 'competitors'. RRC's current Business Plan is available on-line www.therrc.co.uk/rrc_overview.php

Wetlands Internationaal

Wetlands International is a global organisation that works to sustain and restore wetlands and their resources for people and biodiversity. It is an independent, not-for-profit, global organisation, supported by government and NGO membership from around the world. Based mostly in the developing world, it consists of 18 regional, national or project offices in all continents and a head office in Ede, the Netherlands.

Mission

Wetlands International's mission is "to sustain and restore wetlands, their resources and biodiversity".

How Wetlands International works

Wetlands International combines local community action and know-how with scientific research and policy advocacy. Bringing these three elements together, we enable communities, governments and the private sector to take effective action for wetlands. We believe this is the most effective way to conserve wetland biodiversity, address water scarcity and pollution, enhancing local livelihoods and tackle climate change.

The organisation works on all the continents of the world and at several, very different scales – from specific key wetlands



Morokko: field sampling for ecological monitoring of water

to international conventions such as the UNFCCC - to tackle the most pressing problems affecting wetlands. Its wide range of projects is executed with the support of dozens of governmental, NGO and corporate donors, as well as an extensive specialist expert network and tens of thousands of volunteers.

History

Wetlands International was founded in

1954 as the International Wildfowl Inquiry and the organisation was focused on the protection of **waterbirds**. Later, the name became International Waterfowl & Wetlands Research Bureau (IWRB). The scope became wider; besides waterbirds, the organisation was also working on the protection of wetland areas.

Later, organisations with similar objectives emerged in **Asia** and the **Americas**: the

Asian Wetland Bureau (AWB) (initiated as INTERWADER in 1983) and Wetlands for the Americas (WA) (initiated in 1989). In 1991, the three organisations started to work closely together and in 1995 became Wetlands International.

Work on European rivers and wetlands

Wetlands International has a track record of protecting and restoring rivers and related wetlands in Europe, e.g. through field projects and policy influencing of the EU. Most recently, one strong focal country has been the Ukraine, where the ecological networks of the Dnipro River and Southern Bug have been strengthened with the designation of a multitude of protected areas,

government policies and awareness raising on their importance.

RESTORE partnership for ecological river restoration in Europe

The partnership for ecological river restoration in Europe consists of partners from the UK, Italy, Finland and the Netherlands. In this partnership project Wetlands International coordinates the communications and advocacy activities. It uses its international network together with its expertise to support and provide strategic direction to all communications for RESTORE. It is responsible for developing the website and communication strategies. Thereby it sup-

ports the improvement of the effectiveness of the services currently offered by River Restoration network centres.

European Centre for River Restoration (ECRR)

Wetlands International is partner organisation of the ECRR and is represented on its board by Chris Baker, Head of the Water Programme and Strategy. With many of the ECRR partners it forms the RESTORE partnership for ecological river restoration in Europe, which is funded by the European Commission's LIFE+ programme.

More information at: <http://www.wetlands.org>.

International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO)

INBO is not a national centre but is seen as an important partner by ECRR. INBO and ECRR have a history of working together that goes back almost 10 years. The latest cooperation were the activities surrounding the World Water Forum and the preparatory meeting in Ljubljana.

INBO's main objective is to promote integrated water resources management at the level of river basins, as an essential tool for sustainable development. According to this objective, INBO endeavors:

- to develop lasting relations between the organizations interested in such a comprehensive management, and favor exchanges of experiences and expertise among them;
- to facilitate the implementation of tools suitable for institutional and financial management, for knowledge and follow up of water resources, for the organization of data banks, for the concerted preparation of master plans and action programs in the medium and long term;
- to develop information and training programs for local elected officials, for users' representatives and for the different stakeholders involved in water management as well as for the execu-



Jean Francois Donzier, General Director

- tives and staff of the organizations in charge of water management at the river basin level;
- to encourage education of the population regarding these issues;
- to promote these principles in international cooperation programs;
- to evaluate ongoing actions initiated by the member organizations and disseminate their results.

The Network exists of 189 members from 71 countries.

INBO was present at the **WORLD WATER FORUM 6**. Tangible progress for basin management and trans boundary cooperation has been made.

The topic of basin management and trans boundary cooperation has been widely discussed during the recent World Water Forum in Marseilles.

- UNESCO and INBO jointly coordinated the nine official sessions of Priority 1.5 "Contribute to cooperation and peace", mainly on the management of the basins of trans boundary rivers, lakes and aquifers.
- INBO also coordinated «target» 3, Condition for Success 1 «Good governance» related to the development and implementation of national or trans boundary Basin Management Plans.
- The European Commission and UN-ECE also coordinated two sessions of the European process on the «Water Convention» (Helsinki 1992) and on the implementation of the European Water Framework Directive (WFD), in liaison with «Europe-INBO».
- INBO was invited as a key note speaker at the ministerial round table on trans boundary basins, chaired by the United States of America, Tajikistan and Zimbabwe.
- INBO Member Organizations were also invited to present their experiences and recommendations at an event dedicated to the management of large trans boundary basins, organized by the International Office for Water, INBO Secretariat.

All the papers and photos of these events can be downloaded at : www.inbo-news.org

INBO, the Global Water Partnership (GWP), UNECE, UNESCO, the GEF, EVREN and the French Development Agency presented the **Handbook for Integrated Water Resources Management in the Basins of Trans boundary Rivers, Lakes and Aquifers**, at the World Water Forum in Marseilles.

This handbook aims to provide practical advice to improve trans boundary basin management, using more than 60 practical examples of actions already successfully

initiated in various basins.

Digital versions of the English and French Handbook can be downloaded, free of charge, on INBO and GWP websites : <http://www.riob.org/inbo/information/handbook-for-integrated-water-resources-2012>

Initiated by INBO, its Regional Networks in Africa, America, Asia, Europe and the Mediterranean, and 12 French metropolitan and overseas Basin Committees, the «**World Pact for better basin management**» have already been signed by more than 100 organizations from all continents.

More information at : [http://www.riob.org/inbo/information/article/the-pact-for-better-](http://www.riob.org/inbo/information/article/the-pact-for-better-basins)

[basins](#)

On a regular base INBO organizes conferences.

The meeting is open to all INBO member organizations and observers, and also to the water administrations and organizations, interested in the implementation of the Framework Directive, and its "Daughter Directives" of the member and candidate countries of the European Union and of all the other countries of Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia and the Mediterranean basin.

More information at : <http://www.inbo-news.org/inbo/agenda/article/europe-inbo-2012>

Acknowledgement

Various National Centres on river restoration and two European Partner organizations, all taking part in the European Centre for River Restoration, present themselves in this newsletter by short articles. These presentations make clear that these organizations are of vital importance for a sound functioning and good performance of the European Centre for River Restoration in the field of promoting enhanced river restoration, disseminating and sharing river restoration information and supporting the development of best practices of ecological, hydro-morphological and economical river restoration. But what also should be mentioned that these organizations are also responsible for the management of the ECRR.

Representatives of the National Centres and partner organizations are members of the Management Board of the ECRR. The Board meets at least twice a year for governing the ECRR. Meetings are preferably held in different countries and when possible in combination with national or international thematic meetings. In addition to these meetings "virtual meetings" by tele- or videoconferences are held on demand. Decisions are preferably taken by consensus and only when this is not possible by a majority. Up till now the ECRR has no legal status, what means that formal obligations can only be made by either the Secretariat or one or more National Centres.

ECRR's secretariat is with a turnover of three to four year with one of the National Centres or related organizations. The secretariat, acting as the international centre, is taking care about the executive management of the ECRR. All management board members have first of all the task of proposing and evaluating the (new) activities of the ECRR. Moreover they need of course to approve the multi annual strategic plan and the hereon based annual work and communication plan. This includes also the organization of a periodical International ECRR River Restoration Conference to be prepared by the secretariat by the end of its secretarial period.

Therefore I like to thank the National Centres and the European Partners and all persons involved, not only for their primary task on promoting, enhancing and supporting ecological river restoration, but also for all their efforts for establishing, supporting and governing the ECRR by any means through almost 15 years. This is especially important now where the ECRR is taking the challenge for real new developments.

Bart Fokkens,
Chairman ECRR.



News about EU projects REFORM and RESTORE.

As is mentioned before in the ECRR newsletter, 2 EU funded projects on River Restoration are running at the moment: REFORM and RESTORE. Both projects have been and are supported by the ECRR during respectively the initial and preparatory phase and the executing phase in order to help to disseminate results and encourage implementation.

REFORM

REFORM – supported by FP7 funding from the EU – is targeted towards development of guidance and tools to make river restoration and mitigation measures more cost-effective and to support the 2nd and future River Basin Management Plans for the WFD. REFORM will also develop

a web-based tool for exchanging experiences with river

The first REFORM newsletter is released!

REFORM will prepare a newsletter every half year to inform interested people on the progress of our project and on other connected developments.

There is an option for online subscription to REFORM news, so interested colleagues can subscribe for future issues:

<http://reformrivers.eu/newsletters/83>

RESTORE

RESTORE is a [partnership](#) for sharing knowledge and promoting best practice on river restoration in Europe. It is supported

by LIFE+ funding from the EU and works closely together with the European Centre for River Restoration (ECRR).

RESTORE's River Wiki will become available online this summer. It will contain hundreds of river restoration case studies from around Europe. Keep an eye out for it to come online, browse through the case studies, and upload your river restoration projects.

The second newsletter of RESTORE is released.

Please find below a link to the second RESTORE newsletter.

<http://www.restorerivers.eu/Portals/27/News/RESTORE%20bulletin%20June.pdf>

Call for articles

The newsletter of the ECRR should also be a way to share with one another what interesting work is being done, information about seminars or literature.

One way of doing this is by writing an article of any project, event or literature you may be acquainted with. Send this article (**maximum of 500 words**) to the secretariat of the ECRR at info@ecrr.org.

We will take a close look to the content and if it is coherent with the philosophy of ECRR (ecological river restoration and sharing knowledge) your article will be published with pleasure in the next edition (s) of the ECRR Newsletter.

The secretariat of the ECRR hopes to receive any article on ecological river restoration from any of its members.



Free Membership ECRR!

All who are interested in river restoration and sustainable water management are encouraged to join. Members receive the ECRR newsletter approximately four times per year, and are the first to be informed about activities by the ECRR, its members and partner organisations.

To register, go to www.ecrr.org, and click contact.



Events calendar

For events in other continents please consult the website

Date / periode	Titel/issue	Location	Further info / links
26 Aug 2012	World Water Week	Stockholm	http://www.worldwaterweek.org/
9 Sept 2012	High Priority 8th European Conference On Ecological Restoration	České Budějovice, Czech Republic	http://www.ecer2012.eu
14-15 Sept 2012	Sim-Stream 8.0 Introduction course	Vienna	http://www.mesohabsim.org/
17-21 Sept 2012	9th International Symposium On Ecohydraulics 2012	Vienna	http://www.ise2012.boku.ac.at
17 Sept 2012	RR And Natural Fish Passage	Vienna	www.reformrivers.eu
10-15 Sept 2012	Reform General Assembly	Poland	Tom.Buijse@deltares.nl
24 Sept 2012	Hydropredict 2012: Predictions For Hydrology, Ecology And Water Resources Management	Vienna	http://web.natur.cuni.cz/hydropredict2012
25 Sept 2012	RESTORE: Sharing Good Practice Event	Scotland	martin@therrc.co.uk
3 Oct 2012	Institute Of Fisheries Management's Annual Conferences	Edinburgh	e.mcintyre@apemltd.co.uk
8 Oct 2012	Vth International Symposium On Transboundary Waters Management, Slovenia	Bled, Slovenia	http://ksh.fgg.uni-lj.si/bled2012/main.htm
8-11 Oct 2012	Riversymposium	Melbourne	www.riversymposium.com
17 Oct 2012	Resource Ireland	Dublin	http://www.resourceireland.net/irish10/website/HomePage.aspx?refer=1
17, 18, 19 Oct 2012	10th conference of EUROPE-INBO	Istanbul	www.inbo-news.org/inbo/agenda/article/europe-inbo-2012
5 Nov 2012	RESTORE Workshop: River Restoration In The River Basin Management Plans In Europe	Bolzano	RESTORE events page
19 Nov 2012	International and Scientific Conference "Room for the River": An international benchmark for a new governance approach in flood risk management?	Rotterdam, Netherlands	http://www.ruimtevoorderivier.nl/meta-navigatie/registratie/
Feb 2013	REFORM Stakeholder Workshop	Brussels	www.reformrivers.eu
22-24 May 2013	7th International Conference On River Basin Management	New Forest, UK	http://www.wessex.ac.uk/13-conferences/river-basin-management-2013.html
18 Aug 2013	11th Intecol International Congress Of Ecology	London	http://intecol2013.org/
4-8 Nov 2013	International Water Week (IWW)	Amsterdam	http://www.internationalwaterweek.com/

