

European Centre for River Restoration NEWSLETTER – June 2009

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ECRR SEMINAR

*“Synergies between River Restoration and River Management
focussing on Natura2000 and Ramsar sites”*



The 28-29 May 2009 the ECRR seminar “Synergies between River Restoration and River Management focussing on Natura2000 and Ramsar sites” was held in Lelystad (The Netherlands).

All the presentations of the speakers are now downloadable from the [ECRR website](#), where is it also possible to see the pictures of the seminar and the field trip the along the River IJssel, the northern branch of the River Rhine.



In the end of the seminar, the Lelystad Declaration was presented to all participants and it is currently downloadable as a draft version by clicking on [this link](#).

The file is open for comments from the seminar participants until the 1st of July 2009.

More then 100 seminar participants, all of them direct or indirect involved in river management, from about 15 (Pan)European countries and all continents and representing a wide range of expertise on river management and river restoration, discussed the latest developments in river restoration in relation to ecosystems and biodiversity, hydrology, geo- and hydro-morphology, ecosystem services and in relation to integrated river basin management, climate change and expected impacts of economic development.



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WILL PROTECTED AREAS REMAIN EFFECTIVE IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE? (Issue 153)

Protected areas conserve biodiversity, but there are concerns that they may be less effective if climate change causes shifts in the distribution of species. A new study models the future movement of sub-Saharan birds in protected areas. Although many species will move, most will find suitable habitats amongst the network of protected areas under a scenario of intermediate climate change. One per cent of endangered species will lose all suitable habitat from the region. To help stop biodiversity loss in Europe, the EU has set up a network of over 26,000 protected areas forming the Natura 2000 network¹. These represent more than 20 per cent of total EU territory. They have been established on the basis of the current distribution of species.

Climate change will have large impacts on biodiversity and will cause shifts in the distribution of species as they search for new, suitable habitat. In the case of the protected areas, these shifts could be outside the boundaries of protected areas or it could cause new species to move into the protected area. However, the designated sites constitute valuable space for nature, possibly allowing other species to move in.

The study looked at the network of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) across sub-Saharan Africa to test its resilience in the face of climate change. In total there were 1608 bird species, including 815 priority species (species that are vulnerable to extinction). The model projected data for three future time periods (2025, 2055 and 2085) and three future climate scenarios. For each IBA, it modelled turnover - the sum total of incoming and emigrating species, and 'species persistence' - the proportion of species for which the climate remains suitable.

Across all IBAs, the projected turnover of whole bird communities and subsets of endangered birds increased with time. Median turnover in 2085 was 20 to 26 per cent for all birds and 35 to 45 per cent for priority species. This indicates a large shift in ranges. There was variability across the continent. For example, areas of high turnover are evident in a band running east to south-east across southern Africa to the Ethiopian highlands. Despite these shifts, the projected proportion of species that would remain in all IBAs is remarkably high - about 74 to 80 per cent of all birds in 2085. For endangered species, the figures are even better - 88 to 92 per cent of endangered species are projected to retain suitable habitat by 2085 in at least one IBA where they occur currently. For a further 62 to 93 species, suitable habitat will become newly available in protected areas where they are currently absent. Only 7 to 8 endangered species are expected to lose all suitable habitat from the network. Nevertheless, the authors acknowledge the importance of the shifts in species distribution and suggest a number of recommendations. In particular, the results highlight the need for regionally focused management approaches. For example, increasing the number and size of protected areas, providing 'stepping stones' between habitats and protected areas and restoring critical types of habitat, as well as ensuring that the current IBA network is adequately protected into the future.

The authors are currently repeating the project for IBAs across Europe, including many Natura 2000 sites. They expect the results to be published in around a year's time.

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TOP NEWS

[2009 LIFE+ Call for Proposals](#)

For this third LIFE+ call for proposals, the deadline for the submission of proposals to the Member States is 15 September 2009. Up to €250 million is available for this call.

[LIFE+ Workshops for Potential Applicants](#)

To coincide with this call, the European Commission is organising LIFE+ Information Workshops in each Member State. The aim of the workshops is to inform potential applicants about the LIFE+ Programme and the requirements for submitting a proposal.

[Conserving priority habitats in France's lower Ain River](#)

The conservation status of otters, pond turtles, water plantain and other priority species has been boosted by a French LIFE Nature project that helped to restore the river Ain's natural flow dynamics.

[Observations on Sediment Management in River Basin Management Plans](#)

A key component of the Water Framework Directive is the development of River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) which set out the necessary actions within each river basin to achieve set environmental quality objectives. The plans will be reviewed on a six yearly basis.

News from the newsletter "Science for Environment Policy", a service from the European Commission

A STANDARD METHOD OF PUBLISHING AND SHARING SCIENTIFIC DATA (Issue 155)

A standard method for publishing different types of data generated from environmental observations has been developed. It allows researchers to publish data from many different sources so that they are freely available, can be easily understood, and can be integrated with observational data from other sources.

Scientific research is generating more information than ever before. Although technological advances allow greater sharing of results, the enormous variety of types of data makes it challenging to organise and integrate them into meaningful formats that are accessible to all users.

A Hydrologic Information System (HIS) has been developed by the researchers for publishing point observations (measurements made at a particular location, such as a weather station or stream gauge). The HIS components provide a framework that allows researchers working in different scientific domains to create and share multidisciplinary data within a common network.

To use the system, known as the CUAHSI HIS1, observational data are collected manually (for example, water quality sampling data) or from field sensors (for example, climate monitoring data). These data, which may come from many different sources and are recorded in different formats, are labelled with appropriate descriptions using terms that help users from other fields to interpret the data. A central registry informs the public of the availability of the data, which can be accessed via the internet. A dedicated web service enables communication between users and the databases, which can be accessed using a specialised search engine.

The system has been demonstrated within a national network of environmental observatory test beds. As part of the planning and development for a national network of large-scale environmental observatories, 11 observatory test bed projects have been established across the United States. Many types of data from a variety of scientific disciplines have been collected (e.g., groundwater levels and quality, and samples of nutrients and sediments from rivers and streams) and published using the CUAHSI HIS.

Using the system, the diverse test bed data are published as a national network of similar scientific research data. Each test bed maintains its own databases, and each decides which data to publish. For example, some make raw data available, while others publish only data that has passed through quality control checks. By June 2008, the environmental observatory test bed data network had established 31 databases covering 3767 monitoring sites and had published nearly 42 million point observations.

One advantage of this system is that it encourages and enables the publication of data that might otherwise be confined to the private files of individual investigators. In addition, the uniformity of the fully described data reduces errors in interpretation by users. Although set up to share data on water resources, the researchers suggest this framework can be applied to any other domain collecting point observations.

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[Wetland Technology and the Water Framework Directive](#)

The water environment in Europe is in a state of decline. For many years our rivers, lakes, coasts and wetlands have been used as natural sinks - a repository for sewage, slurry, and industrial effluents - in fact almost anything which was either too difficult or too expensive to get rid of in any other way. Water quality is an issue for even the most progressive countries and how to deal with the polluting effect of growth and economic development is an on going problem.

[World Water Forum 2012](#)

On Friday, the World Water Council selected Marseille (France) as the city and country to host the 2012 World Water Forum. The selection followed a process for evaluating the candidates and a final vote from the Council's Board of Governors. The World Water Forum is the world's largest water gathering that brings together over 20,000 political leaders, NGOs, government officials, water professionals, and scientists every three years

More news are available in the [news section](#) of the ECRR website.

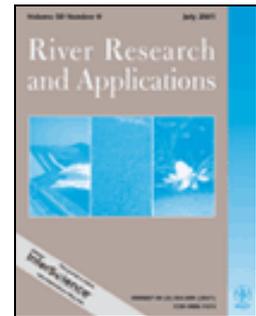
PUBLICATIONS

Special Issue on River Restoration: Advances in Research and Applications. Selected Papers from the Fourth European Centre for River Restoration Conference, Venice, June 2008

In the latest issue of River Research and Applications you can read a selection of papers from three sessions held at the Fourth European Centre for River Restoration Conference in Venice in June 2008 on:

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- Biodiversity and restoration of hydromorphological processes
- Restoration and management of physical processes and sediments
- Linking hydrology, geomorphology and ecology

Issue Edited by Massimo Rinaldi, Angela Gurnell, Walter Bertoldi, Bruna Gumiero.
Click [here](#).



Environmental Quality Standards for Sediments



Sediment is an essential, integral and dynamic part of our river basins. Where human activities interfere with sediment quantity or quality, sediment management becomes necessary. One of SedNet's main recommendations is to integrate sustainable sediment management into the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) related policy, legislation, and implementation process.

This is to achieve good ecological status, or potential, and at the same time to support the well-being of the European economy.

Central to the EU WFD are River Basin Management Plans, which have to be produced and published by 2009. Until now sediment related quantity and quality issues have played a relatively minor role in the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) process. SedNet aims at providing scientific and user oriented input into the WFD implementation phase.

On the basis of this background, SedNet organised a 2-day Round Table Discussion under the title "Sediment management – an essential element of River Basin Management Plans". The objective was to derive generic and specific recommendations for sediment management based on experiences in selected key river basins taking into account legal requirements, needs of users and scientific advice.

The Round Table Discussion brought together delegates from European river commissions, user groups, and scientists. The river basins represented were the Danube, Douro, Elbe and Humber. The ongoing work on the River Rhine sediment management plan was presented by the chairman of the ad hoc working group on sediments of the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR). Click [here](#).

EVENTS

[Second International Youth Symposium for Biodiversity](#)
5/9 July 2009 – Ottawa,
CANADA

[Stream restoration short course](#)
13/17 July 2009 – Logan,
Utah, USA

[Stream restoration short course](#)
10/14 August 2009 –
Logan, Utah, USA

[Stream restoration short course](#)
16/21 August 2009 –
Sagehen Creek Field Station,
Truckee, California USA

[World Water Week 2009:
"Responding to Global
Changes: Accessing Water
for the Common Good; with
Special Focus on
Transboundary Waters"](#)
16 August 2009 –
Stockholm, SWEDEN

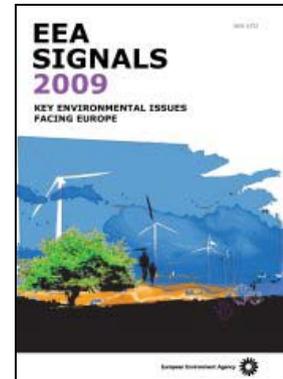
[WFD meeting of European
River Basin District
Authorities : The Water
Framework Directive -
Sharing experiences and
meeting future challenges](#)
19 August 2009 –
Stockholm, SWEDEN

[International Workshop on
the Restoration of Fish
Populations](#)
1 / 4 September 2009 –
Düsseldorf, GERMANY

EEA Signals 2009, key environmental issues facing Europe

Signals is published by the European Environment Agency (EEA) at the start of each year and provides snapshot stories on issues of interest both to the environmental policy debate and the wider public for the upcoming year.

Click [here](#).



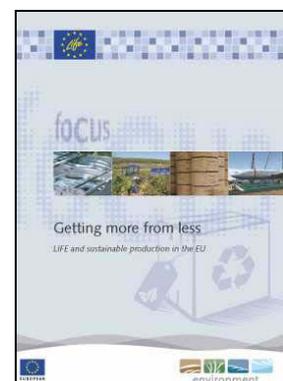
Progress towards the European 2010 biodiversity target



As the first indicator-based assessment of progress towards the European target of halting biodiversity loss by 2010, this report serves two purposes. First, it takes stock of the state of biodiversity and its loss in Europe based on the most recent data available. Second, it functions as a bridge to a comprehensive assessment of the 2010 target to be done in 2010. As such, the indicators in this report do not only show what is currently known. They also show where information is missing and what more needs to be measured and examined to enable a comprehensive assessment in 2010. Click [here](#).

Getting more from less: LIFE and sustainable production in the EU

This LIFE Focus publication aims to showcase how LIFE funding has helped to reduce the environmental footprint of production processes in five of Europe's main industrial sectors: Machinery & equipment; Chemicals & plastic; Metal & non-metallic minerals manufacturing; Food & Beverage; and Wood, pulp, paper & printing. The brochure features successful LIFE initiatives supporting companies that have taken proactive measures to strengthen their environmental performance. The results of these projects can help to reinforce the EU's action plans on sustainable consumption and production and on sustainable industrial policy. Click [here](#).





[2nd European Congress of Conservation Biology](#)
1/5 September 2009 – Prague,
CZECH REPUBLIC

[5th International Conferences on River Basin Management and Sustainable Water Management](#)
7/11 September 2009 –
MALTA

[International riversymposium](#)
21 / 24 September 2009 –
Brisbane, Queensland,
AUSTRALIA

[2nd International Conference Biohydrology 2009: A changing climate for biology and soil hydrology interactions](#)
21/24 September 2009 –
Bratislava, SLOVAK
REPUBLIC

[Stream Reconnaissance and Assessment Tools](#)
22/25 September 2009 –
Portland, Oregon, USA

[World Rivers Day](#)
27 September 2009

[Joint CIWEM/ASTEE/EWA Conference in Lille: Water Framework Directive - Emerging Challenges](#)
20/29 September 2009 –
Lille, FRANCE

BECOME A MEMBER!

Joining the ECRR is FREE!

Acting as an international network the ECRR is pleased to get contributions from its members: they are all very welcomed to provide us information on projects, events, news, training courses, etc.

The ECRR newsletter, for example, is thought as a tool (available to all members) for advertising to an international platform the outcomes of the project, important events worldwide, new publications, etc.

As a member of the ECRR, you will:

- keep on receiving a monthly newsletter with the most recent international information related to river restoration (conferences, projects, policy document, funding opportunities...);
- have the opportunity to share your experiences and spread the results of your projects;
- become a part of a network of people and institutions involved in river restoration and sustainable river management at European level, find partners for your project proposals and develop joint activities;

To Become a member of the ECRR fill in the [application form](#) in our website.

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