

Bruxelles, le 9 septembre 2004

LIFE Nature 2004: la Commission octroie 76 millions d'euros à 77 projets en faveur de la protection de la nature

La Commission européenne a approuvé le financement de 77 projets en faveur de la protection de la nature au titre du programme LIFE Nature 2004. Ces projets contribueront à la mise en place du réseau Natura 2000 qui regroupe, à l'échelle de l'UE, les zones abritant des habitats naturels importants et des espèces menacées d'extinction. Les projets ont pour objectif la remise en état des zones protégées, ainsi que de leur faune et de leur flore, l'établissement de structures de gestion durables et la sensibilisation du public. 75 des projets sélectionnés seront menés dans les États membres de l'UE et les deux projets restants seront réalisés en Roumanie. LIFE Nature est l'un des trois volets du programme LIFE de l'UE en faveur de l'environnement qui vise à soutenir la mise en œuvre des politiques et de la législation de l'UE en matière d'environnement. L'enveloppe budgétaire approuvée en 2004 pour le programme LIFE s'élève à 160 millions d'euros.

«Le réseau Natura 2000 constitue la principale contribution de l'UE à la lutte contre la réduction de la diversité biologique en Europe», a déclaré Margot Wallström, Commissaire responsable de l'environnement. «Au travers de LIFE, nous avons été en mesure de soutenir financièrement le renforcement de Natura 2000 et de contribuer à la remise en état d'espèces animales et végétales menacées d'extinction. Nous avons besoin de la diversité biologique – pour des raisons affectives, éthiques, économiques et écologiques –, et le soutien financier au titre de LIFE contribue de manière appréciable à sa protection.»

LIFE Nature en 2004

La Commission a retenu 77 des 250 propositions qui lui ont été soumises en vue d'un financement dans le cadre de LIFE Nature. Ces propositions représentent ensemble un investissement total de 140 millions d'euros en faveur de la protection de la nature, dont 76 millions seront pris en charge par l'UE. Le reste du financement sera assuré par les bénéficiaires, les participants aux projets et les cofinanciers.

La plupart des projets LIFE Nature sélectionnés seront directement axés sur la conservation ou la remise en état de sites ou réseaux de sites Natura 2000 particuliers. D'autres visent à protéger des espèces animales ou végétales menacées d'extinction ou vulnérables.

Les activités les plus courantes prévues par les projets ont trait à l'élaboration et à la mise en œuvre de plans de gestion, à la gestion de cours d'eau, à l'achat de terres (notamment en Europe du Nord), à la gestion du pacage, à l'élimination des espèces exotiques et à la remise en état et à l'amélioration des sites.

Tous les projets comportent des mesures visant à diffuser les résultats et les enseignements tirés des travaux auprès des parties intéressées et du grand public. Le cas échéant, les participants s'attacheront également à surveiller et à constater l'impact des mesures menées au titre des projets.

Contexte

LIFE Nature fait partie du programme LIFE. Créé en 1992, LIFE est l'instrument financier au travers duquel l'UE soutient des projets de protection de l'environnement et de la nature dans l'ensemble de l'UE, dans les pays candidats et dans certaines régions voisines. L'objectif général de LIFE est de contribuer à l'élaboration et à la mise en œuvre de la politique de l'UE en matière d'environnement en finançant des actions spécifiques. Les deux autres volets de LIFE, à savoir LIFE Environnement et LIFE Pays tiers, sont axés sur les mesures innovantes de protection de l'environnement et sur la protection de l'environnement dans un certain nombre de pays voisins de l'UE. Depuis 1992, quelque 2400 projets ont ainsi bénéficié d'un financement de l'UE au titre du programme LIFE, soit une contribution totale de l'UE à la protection de l'environnement de 1,4 milliards d'euros.

Pour les projets approuvés au titre de LIFE Environnement et de LIFE Pays tiers, voir les communiqués de presse [IP/04/1087](#) et [IP/04/1089](#)

Pour un résumé des 77 projets financés dans le cadre de LIFE Nature, voir l'annexe. Pour de plus amples informations sur chacun des projets, consulter: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/project/index.htm>.

Pour des renseignements plus détaillés concernant le réseau Natura 2000, consulter: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/home.htm>

Overview of LIFE Nature projects 2004 by country

Austria

Number of projects funded - 4

Acting at a transboundary scale with altogether 13 partners (NGO, public and private), the first project will restore river dynamics and riverbed structures along almost the whole 112 km length of the river Lafnitz, from the Styrian mountains to the lowlands of Hungary. Obstacles for migrating fish will be removed from the river, old side arms and meanders will be reconnected and desiccated alluvial forests will be regenerated.

The second project, covering a transboundary section of the Danube on the German-Austrian border, seeks to protect the species-rich ravine woods, a forest habitat type on steep slopes that can not be appropriately conserved by applying the classical forestry management approach. Fire-bellied toad, crested newt, and stag beetle, amongst others, will benefit from the management actions in the floodplain and slope areas.

The third project aims to reconnect the river Danube to the Alpine foothill rivers Ybbs, Pielach, Melk and Erlach. Currently, the Melk power station is interrupting the river flow. This obstacle will be bypassed by a fish migration channel, thereby extending spawning opportunities to the free-flowing Danube section further upstream. The project will also recreate some typical but almost vanished river habitats like gravel islands and natural bank areas at the mouth of the river Ybbs.

Finally, the fourth project seeks to restore the remnants of the Pannonic steppes and dry grasslands found in Eastern Austria. These sites, now very isolated, have an important stepping stone function for a large number of highly specialised and endangered species. The project should boost the management of steppic grasslands, which are too often abandoned and inappropriately maintained, and will exchange experience with neighbouring Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary through an extensive international networking.

Belgium

Number of projects funded - 1

The project funded focuses on the restoration of grasslands and heathlands of the Liereman area, in the vicinity of Turnhout (Flanders). Building upon its past involvement at the project site, the beneficiary, a NGO, intends to secure additional land to connect or merge fragmented areas and will then restore them. It will also set up management structures to protect the threatened habitat types and their associated fauna and flora. The project will be implemented in collaboration with the local tourism sector.

Cyprus

Number of projects funded - 1

This project is aimed at implementing a series of pilot actions related to a range of habitats (marine, mountain and lowland forests, grasslands, wetlands) and species (mainly bird and plant species) in five different Natura 2000 sites in Cyprus. It constitutes Cyprus' first co-ordinated effort to set up a sound management planning system for Natura 2000 in the country. The project is undertaken by the Environment Service of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment in collaboration with three other competent authorities, one private consulting company and three Greek bodies (one university, one NGO and one private consultancy).

Czech Republic

Number of projects funded - 1

The selected project aims to restore limestone and steppic grasslands as well as endemic Pannonic oak and hornbeam forests in the Moravian Karst Protected Landscape, next to the city of Brno. Over the years, local farmers abandoned many of the most species-rich grasslands, whilst others have been converted into open limestone quarries. Much of the natural forest vegetation has been cut and replaced by plantations of Scots pine, larch and fir. Focussing on a 150 ha project area, the project will be an incentive to integrate sustainable agriculture, forestry and tourism in the management of this protected landscape area.

Denmark

Number of projects funded - 2

Using a strategic nation-wide approach, one of the two projects to be funded in Denmark this year will restore eleven of the most valuable grassland sites in Denmark and secure their long term management over 4300 ha. One of these sites, Mols Bjerger on Jutland, is also a pilot area for developing a model for national parks in Denmark.

The second project targets the Odense River and the adjacent shallow marine areas of Odense Fjord. Its main activity is the re-meandering and recreation of 12.2 km of the old river bed, to the benefit of the river itself, its rarest inhabitant, the fresh-water mussel *Unio crassus*, and threatened species of fish, such as Spined Loach (*Cobites taenia*) and Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*). Odense River is also one of 13 pilot river basins selected in Europe to test the Water Framework Directive guidelines. Thus the project has a considerable potential to result in good practices with regard to linking the Water Framework Directive and Natura 2000.

Estonia

Number of projects funded - 3

The Great Crested Newt is an amphibian with a wide distribution in Europe, but it has suffered from habitat decline in most of its range. Under this international project, a selection of sites on the north-eastern borders of the newt's distribution area in Estonia and Finland will be restored and protected with the assistance of Denmark.

Estonia also hosts significant parts of the European populations of Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*), Lesser Spotted Eagle (*Aquila pomarina*) and single pairs of rare Greater Spotted Eagle (*Aquila clanga*). One project aims to safeguard a network of the most important nesting sites from commercial forestry.

The third Estonian project concentrates on the mixture of sand dune, grassland and forest habitats concentrated on the Kopu Peninsula in the western part of Hiiumaa Island. Here, a balance needs to be found that will conserve this natural wealth and allow for tourism.

Finland

Number of projects funded - 2

One project from Finland will restore four valuable wetlands (all designated as Special Protection Areas under the 1979 Birds Directive) of the Pirkanmaa area in south-west Finland. The project area forms an important breeding, resting and feeding area for many wetland bird species mentioned in the Bird Directive. Actions include dredging and clearing of overgrown areas, building breeding islets for the avifauna and managing the flows of visitors.

The second project is located in an area of eastern Finland called the “green belt” – an extensive network of boreal forests and mires in the border zone of Finland and Russia. The aim of this project is to restore forests and mires in 13 Natura 2000 sites. An important aspect of the project is the controlled periodic burning of forests to promote biodiversity (to be done on 123 hectares in total). Local support and general awareness for nature conservation are foreseen.

France

Number of projects funded - 7

The seven projects selected in France for funding this year are spread over all four bio-geographic regions found in France.

Five projects target the conservation of animal species: two priority bird species (*Tetrax tetrax* and *Acrocephalus paludicola*), three cave-dwelling bats (*Rhinolophus euryale*, *Myotis capaccinii*, *Miniopterus schreibersii*), three fish species (*Zingel asper*, *Lampetra planeri*, *Cottus gobio*) and two invertebrates (*Margaritifera margaritifera*, *Austropotamobius pallipes*) are concerned.

In addition, the two bird projects dealing with *Tetrax tetrax* and *Acrocephalus paludicola* will provide an opportunity to develop partnerships between France and organisations involved in the conservation of these migratory species in Spain and Poland. Both projects will also contribute to the updating of the European Action Plans for their respective target species.

Another project covers the Poitevin marshes. It aims to restore a sample of habitat types and improve the capacity of the marshes to accommodate wetland birds of international importance.

The last project is a challenging pilot project dealing with 16 Natura 2000 sites in the Rhône-Alpes region. Its objective is to promote the integration of Natura 2000 into rural development policies designed at the local level.

Germany

Number of projects funded - 2

One of the two German projects, submitted by a NGO in northern Germany, tackles the remaining populations of *Bombina bombina*, the fire-bellied toad, in its most northern habitats around the Baltic Sea. It is part of a multi-national effort, closely cooperating with local and national authorities as well as two NGOs in Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark, Sweden and Latvia. Genetic analyses will be used to clarify population trends. In numerous project sub-sites, various actions will seek to improve habitats and fill them with toads bred in captivity. Another important aspect of this project is networking between the partners and various external bodies.

The second project focuses on the alluvial floodplain of the river Rhine, right next to the urban area of Karlsruhe. The habitats in this mixture of traditional, dynamic riparian environment and man-made landscape will be improved. The project includes actions in support of the declining white willow and black poplar woodlands, but also targets several other wetland and river habitats. The beneficiary has assembled an impressive number of partners: district authorities and municipalities as well as local angler associations and nature conservation NGOs. Due to huge local recreation demands, a substantial part of the project will develop new information strategies, including an electronic mobile nature guide that will be tested.

Greece

Number of projects funded - 3

All three Greek projects selected for funding this year will take place on islands. The first project targets three priority bird species (two raptor species and one marine bird species) on the small Aegean island of Tilos. It will seek to improve their habitats. Responsible for the project is the municipality in collaboration with the regional forest directorate and a private nature conservation company.

The second project, on Crete, will be undertaken by the Hellenic Centre of Marine Research in collaboration with a local research institute and two local NGOs. It targets the priority habitat type "Mediterranean temporary ponds". This will be the first time ever that an effort to conserve this particular habitat type in Greece is made.

The third project, put forward by Athens University in collaboration with a local research institute and the regional forest directorate, is aimed at creating a pilot network of seven micro-reserves in Western Crete to guarantee the conservation of several endemic priority plant species listed in the 1992 Habitats Directive.

Hungary

Number of projects funded - 4

One of the projects targets the national population of the great bustard. This project's aim is to increase the population of the world's heaviest flying bird by 10% during the project duration and by 50% within the next ten years. It is possible to reach these ambitious targets given that five National Parks, four NGOs, one university and the Ministry of Environment are involved in the project.

The second project seeks to save 95% of the world population of the Hungarian subspecies of the meadow viper, a small venomous snake that is threatened by extinction. Actions include habitat restoration, site management and captive breeding, all part of a detailed action plan. Very important for ensuring the survival of an unpopular species is the involvement of citizens and stakeholders, which the project envisages.

The other two projects in Hungary deal with habitats. The Egyek-Pusztakócs project takes a holistic approach to restoring the mosaic of Pannonic grasslands and marshes in this area. Restoration actions (transformation of arable land to Pannonic loess and salt steppes, grazing with grey cattle and racka sheep, reed bed management) will be carried out on 1,500 ha of priority habitats, but their conservation impact will extend over 5,000 ha because ecological corridors and buffer zones need to be established.

The fourth project will be the final step in protecting the highly endangered wetlands of the Central Bereg Plain, in the least developed region of Hungary near the border with Ukraine. Emergency actions have been taken since the 1980s, but now 430 ha of priority habitats (mires, fens, bogs and wetlands) can be fully restored and their water supply can be guaranteed. A number of highly valuable grassland and forest habitats in the surroundings will also be restored and then simultaneously act as buffer zones for the wetlands.

Ireland

Number of projects funded - 2

One project funded targets the Burren region in western Ireland, one of the largest and most important limestone pavement areas in Europe. The nature of the landscape owes much to many centuries of agricultural use, but in recent decades there has been a reduction in activity leading to degradation of priority habitats and scrub invasion. In the mild climate of the Burren region, the winter grazing of livestock is seen to be the key to maintaining biodiversity. The project seeks to develop a model for sustainable agricultural management by testing new support mechanisms on pilot areas. It has the full support of local farmers, who will be actively involved in promoting the results of the project.

The second project, proposed by the Irish Forestry Board, aims to restore a suite of raised bog sites in the Irish Midlands through the removal of conifer plantations and the blocking of drainage ditches. The work will complement wider management plans for the sites under which peat cutting will cease and natural hydrology will be restored. Fourteen sites have been chosen covering a total area of 570 ha. Two sites will be used to demonstrate the practical techniques, especially to the forestry sector, and to raise general public awareness through boardwalk access and interpretation.

Italy

Number of projects funded - 12

Out of the twelve projects funded this year, seven will deal with the management of extensive networks of Natura 2000 sites. More than 20 priority habitat types, including dunes, coastal lagoons, alluvial forests and mountain habitats, will be targeted.

One of these projects is aimed at managing 34 Natura 2000 sites administered by the State Forestry Corp. Another project will address seven Natura 2000 sites in the Lazio region. Still another project targets Mediterranean habitat types in Tuscany.

Five projects include measures aimed at animal species: the first of these is a multinational project to reduce the conflict between human activities and large carnivores in Italy and four other EU Mediterranean countries. The second species-project envisages the reintroduction of the endemic Adriatic sturgeon, which is highly endangered in its limited natural range, the Po basin. A project in the Italian seas proposes conservation measures for the sea turtle, while a project in north-western Italy will aid the endemic Aurora's salamander and other amphibians to maintain their populations. The fifth species-project funded in Italy this year targets the Audouin's gull in the Tuscan Archipelago National Park.

Five LIFE-Nature projects are aimed at managing habitats of EU interest, such as woodlands, grasslands and wetlands. The actions planned will also benefit several species of EU concern, including *Aster sorrentinii*, a strictly endemic plant of Sicily, considered a conservation priority under the Habitats Directive.

Latvia

Number of projects funded - 3

Two Latvian projects, both proposed by the Latvian Fund for Nature, take a strategic approach to protecting key habitats across Latvia. One targets 16 floodplain meadows covering altogether 14,085 ha. None of the sites have had much prior restoration or management and so they are in urgent need of action. The first step will be to draw up comprehensive management plans for each site in close collaboration with the stakeholders and land owners concerned, and then to implement the most urgent restoration actions on around 2,400 ha. An awareness raising campaign will be launched amongst the stakeholders to inform them of possibilities to manage their floodplain meadows through the forthcoming Rural Development Programme for Latvia and to assist them to access these funds.

The second strategic project concentrates on conserving four major mire complexes in Latvia covering altogether 9,947 ha. The project involves 17 partners, including the state forest services and 8 local municipalities. Together they will agree on detailed management plans for each of the sites and will begin implementing some of the most urgent restoration actions needed, such as extensive ditch blocking and scrub removal.

The final project concerns the Razna Nature park, which, covering 53,000 ha, is the second largest protected area in Latvia. A wetland complex of significant conservation value, the area contains 125 lakes and 90% of Latvia's freshwater fish population. The area is becoming increasingly popular for recreation and tourism so the first step will be to agree a management and zoning plan for the area in close consultation with the local municipalities and private landowners and then to establish and implement the necessary protection regulations identified.

Netherlands

Number of projects funded - 4

The four Dutch projects funded this year exhibit a wide variety of applicants, biotopes and species. Two projects focus on endangered species. The project Alde Feänen will take place in Fryslân, where an NGO aims to restore wetlands for the benefit of the endangered endemic Dutch subspecies of the root vole. The other species-project targets the conservation of amphibians in 14 sub-sites throughout the eastern part of the country through small-scale habitat restoration measures.

The Tiengemeten project is unique, as it will convert the entire 900 ha large island Tiengemeten in the Haringvliet (Rhine-Maas estuary, south of Rotterdam) into natural habitats. Dikes and levees will be removed to turn the island's farmland into an estuarine wilderness.

Finally, the Bargerveen project aims to restore one of the only remaining raised bog ecosystems in the Netherlands. Although raised bogs were once common, they were exploited or drained so that presently only a few degraded bogs occur. LIFE will pay for large-scale hydrological restoration to boost peat formation.

Common to all four Dutch LIFE Nature projects is the proximity of intensive farmland, large recreation areas or big towns. Therefore, the beneficiaries will involve local stakeholders and monitor the effects of the restoration measures.

Poland

Number of projects funded - 1

This project, managed by an NGO in the Pomerania and Western Pomerania regions, aims to protect two priority habitat types: active raised bogs (585 ha) and bog woodland (4180 ha). The project covers 23 sites, which are either protected by the law already (16) or will receive statutory protection in the course of the project (7). By the end of the project, a bog conservation manual is to be produced. The regional public bodies responsible for nature conservation and the regional forest administrations will be involved as project partners.

Portugal

Number of projects funded - 3

The first project seeks to implement the Birds Directive in the marine area under Portuguese jurisdiction, by identifying the most suitable coastal and pelagic areas for those breeding, migrating and wintering seabirds listed in the Birds Directive.

The second project targets several coastal habitats and endemic plants found in the Natura 2000 area Sintra/Cascais, some with very restricted natural ranges and most facing population declines, requiring urgent action. Coastal dunes will be restored and extended to stop the isolation of the target plant populations.

The third project is set up as a pilot scheme for the future management of two Natura 2000 sites in North-eastern Alentejo. The management plans to be produced under the project will integrate existing legal planning instruments and promote a sustainable management of *Quercus montados* and other priority habitats. They will also seek to minimise the impacts of last summer's forest fires. Awareness raising actions will target local stakeholders and the general public.

Romania

Number of projects funded - 2

The successful Romanian applications for this year's LIFE-Nature co-financing include a project focusing on one of the rarest goose species in the world: *Branta ruficollis*. Action will be taken to improve the wintering habitat of the species at Techirghiol Lake (South-East Romania), where wintering figures have reached 31% of the species' world population in peak years. The project aims to create safe roosting conditions and suitable feeding grounds at this key location by controlling disturbance and hunting, and by ensuring sufficient feeding resources during the coldest season.

The second project is an effort to conserve a sub-Mediterranean forest with *Pinus nigra banatica* at the Domogled-Valea Cernei National Park, in South-West Romania. The project aims to ensure the long-term conservation of this habitat by appraising its status and implementing a site-management plan. This includes visitor control and habitat restoration measures over 25 ha.

Partnerships in both projects involve both competent authorities at regional and local levels and NGOs or local stakeholders.

Slovakia

Number of projects funded - 1

The beneficiary of this project, the State Nature Conservancy, has set up a collaborative partnership with the Forest Research Institute, municipalities, and national and local NGOs to restore and conserve the habitat diversity and threatened flora and fauna of the Slovensky Rai ("Slovak Paradise") National Park. Measures include the development of a management plan (with special attention to visitors' impact on the fragile ecosystems), the repair of heavily frequented footpaths, the restoration of fens, dry rocky grasslands and mountain meadows and finally the improvement of beech forest and western Carpathian calcicolous pine forests. As so many tourists visit this site, voluntary rangers and forest managers will be trained to pay appropriate attention to this valuable Natura 2000 area.

Slovenia

Number of projects funded - 2

The first project, presented by the Institute for Nature Conservation, will make a significant contribution to the establishment of the Natura 2000 network in Slovenia, by producing a guidance document for the preparation of site management plans. These guidance documents will be elaborated in collaboration with all national competent administrations. The project will also establish an information system with a specific Natura 2000 database and will help preparing five specific management plans, ensuring habitats and species conservation over a total area of 67.000 ha. Finally, concrete conservation and public awareness measures will be carried out in all sites for which the plans are being prepared.

The second project is aimed at the conservation of the otter (*Lutra lutra*) in the Goričko Nature park in north-eastern Slovenia, along the Austrian and Hungarian border, where a viable population of this species survives.

The project foresees a detailed survey of the *Lutra lutra* population, a series of mitigation measures to reduce the impact of traffic and infrastructure threatening the otter's migration corridors. The project also includes measures to raise local public awareness of the importance of the otter.

Spain

Number of projects funded - 13

This year, representatives of many faunal groups are targets of the LIFE projects funded in Spain: from invertebrates (the freshwater mussel *Margaritifera auricularia*) to fish (the Spanish toothcarp), reptiles (the European Pond Terrapin) and mammals (ten chiropteran species).

The Ebro River freshwater mussel populations, which represent 99% of the world population and were once considered extinct, will be fully protected thanks to this and another ongoing LIFE-Nature project. For the other species, habitat management and conservation programmes will allow for an improvement of their status in important regional and EU locations. For example, the project on chiropterans aims to ensure the long-term conservation of the populations of bats in 23 areas proposed as Natura 2000 sites.

Four projects target the protection of bird species and their habitats. The urgent conservation of the Canarian subspecies of the Egyptian vulture will be addressed, and the main threats detected in its habitat will be tackled. The bearded vulture will be brought back to Southern Spain, where it became extinct some 20 years ago, through reintroduction and a wide anti-poisoning campaign.

The two remaining bird conservation projects have wider and more general scopes: while one of them will deal with the removal of generic threats to birds in the entire regional Natura 2000 network in Aragón, the other one is aimed at identifying a national network of marine IBAs (= Important Bird Areas) that will be the basis for developing Natura 2000 in such environments.

A series of projects intends to carry out management measures and restoration of different habitats in a range of environments. Coastal environments will be dealt with through projects to restore dunes in the Atlantic (Basque Country) and the Mediterranean (Valencia) coastline. Also in Valencia, a singular habitat in the interface of coastal and inland terrain will be duly protected. The forests and steppes of Community Interest found in River Canyon in the Spanish Castilian plateau, and the depleted endemic thermophilous forests of the Canary Islands complete the variety of habitats for which conservation solutions will be sought.

Sweden

Number of projects funded - 2

Sweden hosts a significant part of the European population of the Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*). Within a project targeting 20 river sites over the country, around 3 % of the EU population will benefit from habitat restoration in order to assure the long-term survival of the mussel populations.

The other Swedish project deals with the restoration of the wetland at Asköviken, a Natura 2000 site with a long tradition in the "ornithological history" in Sweden. It is located on the northern shore of Lake Mälaren around 100 km from Stockholm.

United Kingdom

Number of projects funded - 2

The first is a strategic project to safeguard and maintain the abundance and diversity of the Atlantic salmon in Scotland. The project will deal with eight salmon river Natura 2000 sites, seeking to remove obstacles to passage, improve riparian woodland and reduce the threat of silt from bank erosion and agricultural practices. In-stream works will improve the habitat for spawning and juvenile salmon, and commercial netting will be halted on two rivers. The project will also develop best-practice guidelines for wider dissemination.

The second is an international project, supported by Member States, to estimate the numbers of small cetaceans in European Atlantic waters. The main species targeted are harbour porpoise, bottlenose dolphin and common dolphin. Reliable, up-to-date information is essential for the development of management frameworks, which inform discussions on sustainable levels of by-catch. The survey will update work completed in 1994 and improve the methods for a regular monitoring of the species.