

I progetti LIFE « Nature & Biodiversity »

Inspiring LIFE restoration projects

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LifeDrylands PARTY! - 20 febbraio 2025

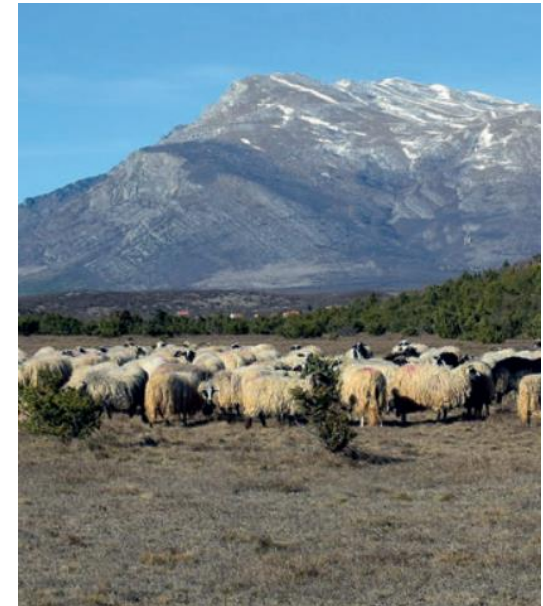


What makes a good LIFE restoration project?

- Solid analysis of the proven problems, state of play and solution proposed (baseline).
- Have a clear vision.
- In line with the policy priorities.
- Concrete, in terms of proposed actions and expected results/impacts.
- Clear and coherent logic.
- Key stakeholders involved. Good partnership.
- Good monitoring mechanism.
- Good assessment of the expected impacts. Ambitious and impactful.
- Room for adaptation (buffer time, etc.).
- Clear strategy on how to sustain and multiply the impacts and results.
- Good communication, throughout the project (as from from planning).
- Can be of different types: best practice, innovation, or upscaling.

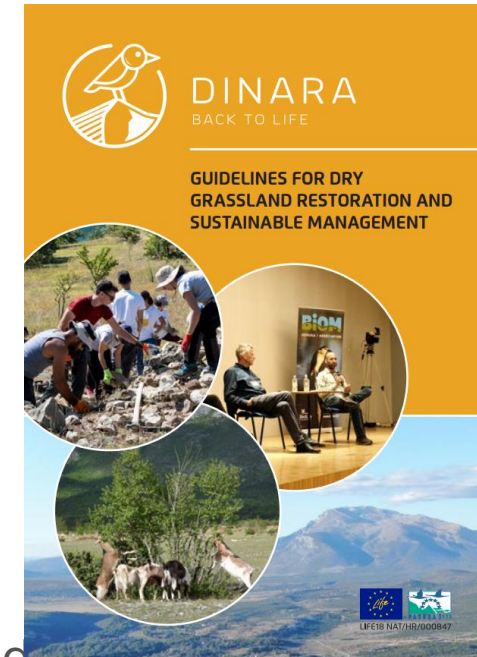
Dinara Back to LIFE (LIFE18 NAT/HR/000847 – 3 years 11 months - ended)

- What?
 - Addressed an important conservation challenge: land abandonment and loss of grasslands (Natura 2000 dry grasslands, calcareous grasslands).
- How?
 - Nature conservation through sustainable use.
- With whom?
 - With firefighters, farmers, forest service.
 - Collaboration with farmers.
- Actions:
 - Controlled burning.
 - Grazing with mixed herds.
 - Removal of overgrown vegetation.
 - Restoration of water ponds.
 - Etc.



Dinara Back to LIFE

- Results:
 - Restoration of 705 ha of grassland, of which 57 ha of controlled burning.
 - 20 wells or ponds (important for breeders).
 - Restoration of 11,600 m of livestock and mountain paths.
 - Restoration of 2,050 m of dry stone walls.
 - Policy developments.
- Highlights:
 - Has successfully tested new techniques (controlled burning to prevent « wildfires »).
 - Benefits for the people and the local economy (herding, tourism, prevention of wolf damage, etc.).
 - Management experience taken on board in the management plan of a recent nature park.
 - Change to the forestry law (removal of shrubs on state-owned areas now legally possible).
 - Reconnection between the people and the pastoral tradition.
- [LIFE Dinara Back to LIFE](#)



LIFE CAÑADAS (LIFE18 NAT/ES/000930 – 5 years 41 months - ended)

- What?
 - Used the drove roads (transhumance roads) to connect Natura 2000 sites. Improvement of a green infrastructure.
- How?
 - Nature conservation through sustainable use.
- With whom?
 - Partnership: Autonomous University of Madrid, 2 regional authorities in charge of the drove roads, SEO BirdLife, etc.
 - Collaboration with farmers.
- Actions:
 - Restoration of drove roads by grazing.
 - Materializing drove roads.
 - Restoration of water points and shelters for transhumant herders.



LIFE CAÑADAS

- Results?
 - Reactivation of livestock movements on 200 Km of drove roads (Madrid).
 - 3 shelters restored for 14 farmers still maintaining transhumant use (Castilla-la-Mancha).
 - 13 water points and ponds restored.
 - Production of a “*Handbook of Good Practices for the Conservation and Restoration of Drove Roads*”.
- Highlights?
 - Design of restoration measures with the shepherds (participatory process).
 - Providing the necessary conditions to allow transhumance to continue (benefits for the people and nature).
 - Testing another way (less costly, better for nature) to reintroduce woody vegetation.
 - Solid monitoring of biodiversity indicators (soil conditions, reptiles, etc.).
 - Support to cultural traditions and tourism.
- [LIFE Canadas](#)



LIFE-TRANSFER (LIFE19 NAT/IT/000264 – 5 years - on-going)

- What?
 - Improving the conservation status of the coastal lagoon habitat (1150*) in 8 Natura 2000 sites (Italy, Spain, Greece).
- How?
 - Transplantation of submerged phanerogams (sods or rhizomes) to promote ecosystem self-sustainability.
- With whom?
 - Partnership: universities, regional authorities, nature parks.
- Actions:
 - Selection of donor sites.
 - Transplantation by hand.
 - Channel dredging to improve circulation.
 - Training for transplantation.
 - Monitoring.



LIFE-TRANSFER

- Results?
 - New seagrass meadows have started to grow.
- Highlights?
 - Builds on the outcome of another LIFE project (LIFE Seresto).
 - Improvement of the whole ecosystem (benefits for fisheries).
 - Collaboration with fishermen.
- [LIFE Transfer](#)



LIFE Ricoti (LIFE 15 NAT/AT/000167 – 6 years - ended)

- What?
 - Implement measures to protect Dupont's lark and its habitat in two Natura 2000 sites in Soria (Castilla y Leon region).
- How?
 - Restore favourable habitat conditions.
 - Improve knowledge on habitat management.
 - Awareness-raising among stakeholders.
- With whom?
 - Partnership: Autonomous University of Madrid, regional and local authorities, foundation, etc. (8 partners).
- Actions:
 - Improvement of livestock management.
 - Removal of shrubs.
 - Signing land stewardship agreements.
 - Monitoring of the habitat and the species.



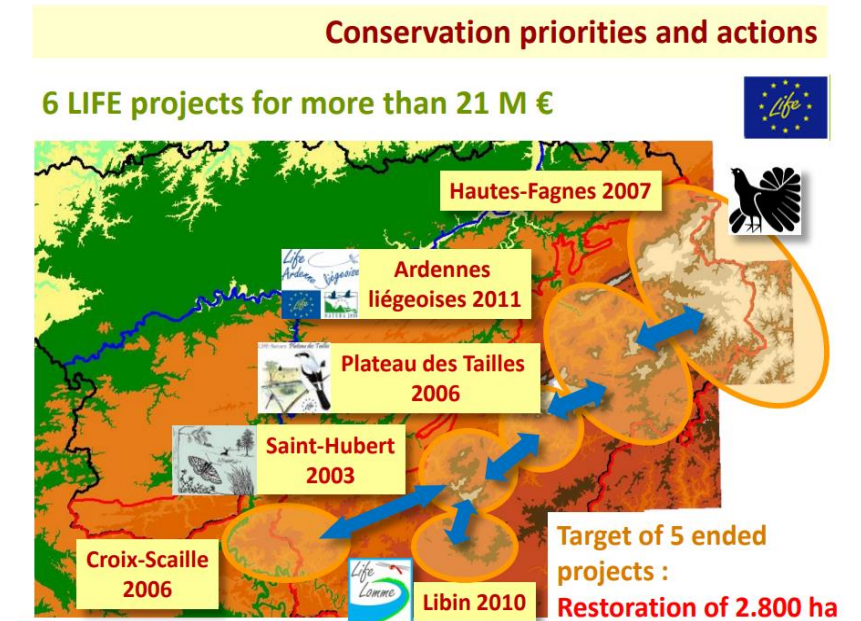
LIFE Ricoti

- Results?
 - Restoration of 330 ha of high-quality habitat.
 - 3,000 ha under land stewardship agreements with 6 landowners.
 - Improved population on the restored areas (+189%).
 - Sheep grazing secured.
 - Development of ornithological tourism on 3,000 ha.
 - Definition of management measures incorporated in official documents (Natura 2000 site and at national level).
- Highlights?
 - Long-term commitments of landowners (30 years).
 - Benefits for the birds and the landowners or the farmers.
 - Has inspired the LIFE Connect Ricoti project.
- [LIFE Ricoti](#)



Six LIFE projects in the Belgian Ardenne (2003 - 2020)

- What?
 - Restoration of peat wetland areas at regional scale on the plateau, mostly on Natura 2000 sites.
 - In addition, restoration of meadows in the valleys.
- How?
 - Conversion from conifer plantation to open wetlands.
- With whom?
 - Partnership: NGOs and regional nature and forest authority.
 - Collaboration with public and private forest landowners.
- Actions:
 - Removal of spruce plantations and plugging ditches.
 - Fencing and grazing or mowing.
 - Removal of the soil surface.
 - Plantation of broad leaved trees.
 - Creation of ponds.
 - Monitoring of the habitats and the species.



Six LIFE projects in the Belgian Ardenne

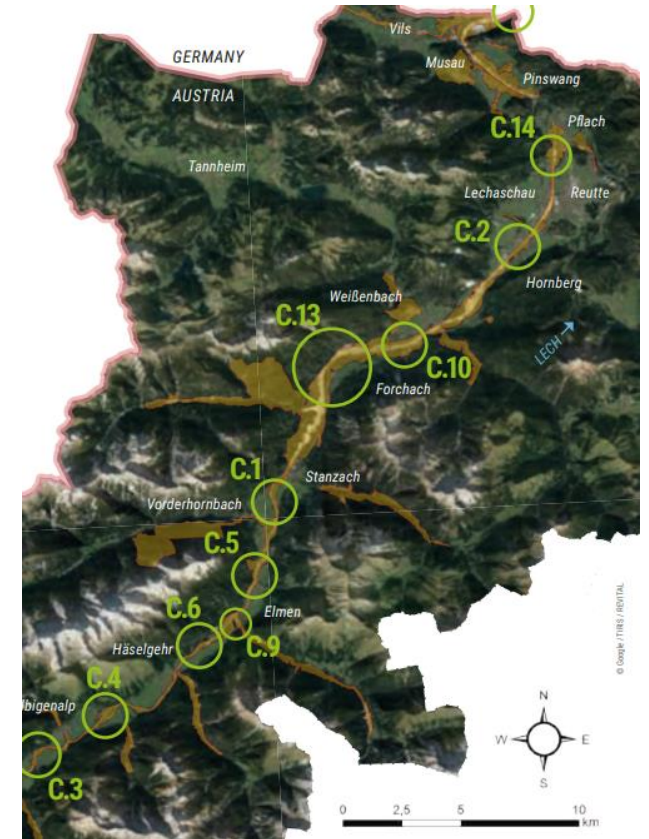
- Results?
 - 4,500 ha restored (after 6 projects).
 - Improved connectivity.
 - Significant recovery of threatened birds and insects.
 - 2,700 additional ha of nature reserves.
- Highlights?
 - Strategy at regional level.
 - Successful replication. Higher acceptability.
 - Shift in ecosystem services: water retention, tourism.
- [Meta project LIFE Peatlands Ardenne](#)



LIFE Lech

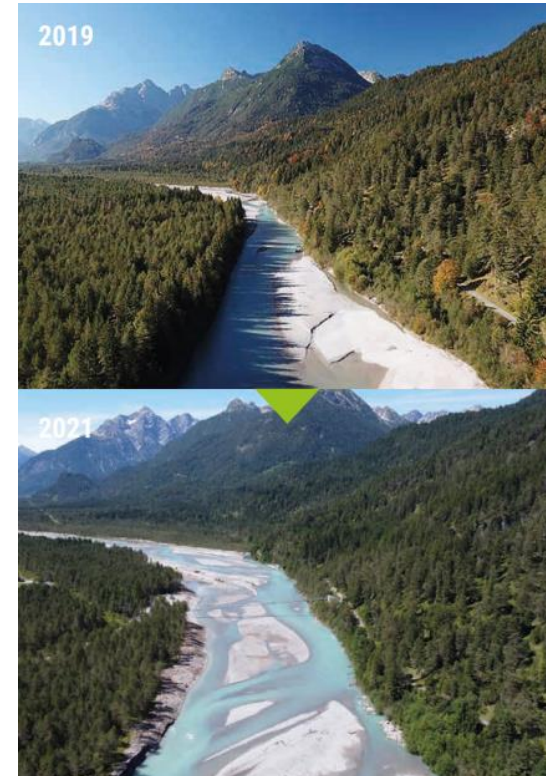
(two projects from 2001 to 2022: LIFE00 NAT/A/007053 & LIFE 15 NAT/AT/000167 - ended)

- What?
 - Re-dynamisation of the Lech river landscape.
 - Stop the riverbed deepening and stabilize the groundwater table.
 - Restore pioneer habitats (gravel surfaces)..
- How?
 - Give more space to the river.
- With whom?
 - Partnership: Water Engineering Administration of Tyrol, Regional government of Tyrol, Water Management Administration (Germany).
 - Collaboration with a Nature Park.
- Actions:
 - Removal of retention dams.
 - Shortening or removal of bank protections and widening of river beds.
 - Restoration of side arms.
 - Creation of ponds.
 - Information and awareness raising measures.



LIFE Lech

- Results?
 - 23 ha of active channel areas restored
 - Restored habitat for fishes, increase in small fish populations and several other target species
 - 20 additional ha of water retention areas
 - Good acceptance of the restoration works
- Highlights?
 - Strategy at valley level
 - Targeted species protection measures
 - Combining nature restoration and ecosystem services (flood protection, recharge of the groundwater table, recreation and tourism)
 - Development of the management plan for the Nature Park
- [LIFE Lech II](#) and [LIFE Lech – Multiannual Work Programme](#)



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