



“Restoration of the Lower Shannon SAC (Mulkear River) for Sea Lamprey, Atlantic Salmon and the European Otter”

Press Release

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LIFE and Invasive Alien Species – New LIFE Nature Publication

The latest LIFE Nature Focus publication from the European Commission’s LIFE Nature Unit takes a timely look at one of the greatest threats to Europe’s biodiversity, ecosystem services, human health and economic activities.



OPW Team treating non-native invasives on the Annagh River (Image: Ruairí Ó Conchúir)

The publication has just been launched and features LIFE projects across Europe, including Ireland, which have been dealing with Alien Invasive Species. The 76-page ‘LIFE and invasive alien species’ brochure links the work of LIFE projects with the aims of the new EU Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Regulation.



American Mink – one of the AIS discussed in the publication (Image: Ruairí Ó Conchúir)

There are an estimated 1200-1800 IAS in Europe and the impact of such species is of growing concern. The LIFE programme has been addressing the problems posed by invasive alien species for more than two decades.



Volunteers addressing giant hogweed in a recreational area (Image: Ruairí Ó Conchúir)

Indeed, in that time some 265 LIFE projects have included measures to deal with IAS, ranging from steps to prevent their spread to control and eradication actions in places where invasive alien species are already present and having a negative impact on native species and habitats. LIFE also provides a deep well of learning on trans-border cooperation, dissemination and awareness-raising efforts with regards to IAS.



Extent of Himalayan Balsam at Annacotty weir before removal (Image: Ruairí Ó Conchúir)

The new brochure examines the lessons learned from the LIFE programme's extensive experience of dealing with the impacts of IAS. As such it is essential reading for policymakers and practitioners in this field. This will be a valuable support for the implementation of the new [EU Regulation on Invasive Alien Species](#).

To download this very useful LIFE Nature publication (6.92 mb PDF) please see:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/publications/lifepublications/lifefocus/documents/life_ias.pdf

Notes for Editors

1. High Resolution Digital Images are available to accompany this Press Release.
2. Interviews can be arranged with the Project Manager by using the contact details below.
3. MulkearLIFE is a new €1.75 million European Commission funded LIFE Nature project working on the restoration of the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (with a focus on the Mulkear River catchment) for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otter. Further details may be viewed on the project website www.mulkearlife.com
4. Inland Fisheries Ireland (Limerick) is lead partner together with the OPW and Limerick County Council. Additional funding support comes from National Parks and Wildlife Service. Other supporters include Teagasc, IFA, ICMSA, and local angling groups.
5. The project is one of the first and most important integrated catchment management projects in Ireland. It is a flagship EU LIFE Nature project –covering some 650 sq km which contain a variety of habitats and protected

species. Much of the area is designated as a Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the EU Habitats Directive and forms part of the Natura 2000 Network.

Issued by:

Ruairí Ó Conchúir, Project Manager – MulkearLIFE

Inland Fisheries Ireland (Limerick Office)

Ashbourne Business Park, Dock Road, Limerick

Tel: 061 300 238 / Fax: 061 300 308 / Mob: 087 062 5582

E-mail: info@mulkearlife.com

Web: www.mulkearlife.com / www.inlandfisheries.ie