



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

Press Release

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Important LIFE Environment Publication - Water Blueprint

The EU LIFE Programme has this week unveiled an important publication entitled “LIFE’s Blueprint for Water Resources”. The publication forms part of the “lessons from LIFE” series of publications. It is designed to inspire responses to the major water challenges the people of Europe and the World face today and into the future.

Last year (2012) was the ‘Water Year’ for the European Commission. This week’s publication notes, that in 2012 the EC published ‘The Blueprint to Safeguard Europe’s Water Resources’ (“Water Blueprint”), together with the 3rd Implementation Report on the Water Framework Directive and a review of the Strategy on Water Scarcity and Droughts. To achieve the Water Framework Directive objective of good water status by 2015, the Water Blueprint sets out a three-tier strategic approach: it will concentrate on better implementation of current water legislation; integration of water policy objectives into other policies; and, where necessary, on filling gaps with regards to water quantity and efficiency. The objective is to ensure that a sufficient quantity of good quality water is available for the needs of citizens, the economy and the environment throughout the EU. To this end, the Water Blueprint should be seen as a “toolbox” that Member States can use to improve water management at river basin level. The time horizon of the Water Blueprint is closely related to the EU’s 2020 Strategy and, in particular, to the 2011 Resource Efficiency Roadmap, of which the Blueprint is the water milestone. However, the analysis behind the Blueprint looks ahead to 2050 and is expected to drive EU water policy over the long term.

MulkearLIFE forms part of a wide range of LIFE project’s across the EU 27 dealing with water. This week’s publication notes, that the project-based approach of the EU LIFE programme has proved a good fit with water policy, providing practical examples of sustainable and equitable ways of using water. The publication contains examples from LIFE Environment (and Nature) projects across Europe. LIFE co-funding has been used to address crucial water-related issues, from the quantity and quality of ground and surface waters to the impact of water scarcity in the Mediterranean (and other) areas. LIFE Projects have contributed to the development of ‘green infrastructure’ by supporting natural water retention measures, have improved water efficiency and water re-use in agriculture and industry and provided examples of ways to improve water governance and pricing methods.

The publication “LIFE’s Blueprint for Water Resources” provides a “blueprint” of practical actions that implement crucial water-related policy objectives. The full 5mb report, together with a range of other technical and non-technical reports, is available for download from the MulkearLIFE website here: [LIFE’s Blueprint for Water Resources](#)

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.mulkearlifecom

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.

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