



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

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## Press Release

21<sup>st</sup> May 2012

### Happy Birthday LIFE - Join Us to Celebrate

Today Monday, 21st May 2012, marks the 20th Anniversary of the EU LIFE Programme across Europe. Happy Birthday LIFE. Since 1992, LIFE has co-financed over 3,500 LIFE projects, contributing approximately €2.5 billion to environmental and nature conservation projects. It also marks the 20th Anniversary of the Habitats Directive and the establishment of the Natura 2000 Network.

To mark this key milestone in Ireland, MulkearLIFE is hosting a big celebration today in Annacotty, Co. Limerick on the banks of the Mulkear River. The events include the official launch of the ‘Mural of LIFE’ at Annacotty and the unveiling of related habitat work on site by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Michael Noonan TD. The work on this important High Nature Value (HNV) river site is a partnership between MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland, Limerick County Council and Annacotty Tidy Towns.

It has involved thousands of hours of voluntary input over the last nine months from local residents including a major clean-up of the site over the week-end. It is a great example of an effective local partnership for conservation of an important Natura 2000 site. Today is a celebration and acknowledgement of all that effort.

MulkearLIFE will also announce the full list of prize winners in MulkearLIFE’s amateur photo competition ‘Exploring Biodiversity on the Lower Shannon SAC’ which has been a remarkable success with hundreds of entries received. The winner of the Annacotty Tidy Towns art competition run in local national schools will also be announced as part of today’s events.

Finally, to top it all there will be a big birthday party to celebrate LIFE @ 20 in Annacotty village. The event will be attended by local school students, local residents and a range of project partners and local dignitaries.

Today’s celebrations are open public events. If you would like to attend, and to help us with numbers, please e-mail [info@mulkearlifecom](mailto:info@mulkearlifecom) or phone 061 300 238. The events take place today, Monday 21st May @ 12.15 in Annacotty village, under the bridge. We sincerely hope that you can join us make this event.

The work of MulkearLIFE to restore the Lower Shannon SAC for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and Otter is an EU funded LIFE project (€1.75m over five years till January 2014) and a partnership between Inland Fisheries Ireland, Limerick County Council & the Office of Public Works with significant co-financing from the National Parks & Wildlife Service.

## 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.mulkearlifeproject.com](http://www.mulkearlifeproject.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:**

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