



# LIFE celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

28 June 2012

Alban de Villepin



## 20 years of LIFE – Key messages



*LIFE is the EU's financial instrument supporting **environmental and nature conservation** projects throughout the EU.*

### ***In 20 years***

***LIFE Environment** - > **co-financed 1 940 projects**, providing some **€1.2 billion** and mobilising a further **€3.6 billion** in other public and private contributions*

***LIFE Nature** - > **co-financed 1 256 projects**, providing some **€1.2 billion** and mobilising a further **€1.2 billion** in other public and private contributions.*





## 20 years of LIFE – Key sectors Environment

*Two thematic sectors – **water and waste** – account for the largest number of LIFE projects targeted since 1992 (**400 and 500 projects** respectively).*

### Improving water quality



*Contribution to the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and to the adoption of the River Basin Management Plans in order to improve the ecological status of all EU waters.*

### **LIFE has focused on :**

*Water efficiency and savings, improving Groundwater quality, Urban water Management, Wastewater Treatment, coastal managment mobilising **€ 427 million***





# 20 years of LIFE – Key sectors Environment



## Reducing waste

 *Integrated methods for better waste management, better ways of using resources, treating waste and awareness-raising are just some of the issues that have been addressed backed by **€220 million** of LIFE funding and which mobilised **€782 million** in total.*



## *More Reusing & More Recycling*

*(LIFE08ENV/IT/000437) Project on waste recovery, reuse and recycling in both urban and rural areas of the Lazio region.*



# 20 years of LIFE – Key sectors LIFE Environment



## *LIFE projects have boosted*



*Design of ‘eco-products’ (shoes, textiles, ceramics, packaging, etc.)*



*‘Resource efficiency’ helping to improve water and energy consumption, reducing the extraction of raw materials and producing valuable secondary raw materials*



*Improving the **urban environment and quality of life** of many Europeans*



*Approaches to **climate change** (eg. The **ROMAPERKYOTO** - project LIFE04 ENV/IT/000453)*





## 20 years of LIFE – Key sectors Nature

**Forests, grasslands and freshwater Habitats** are the habitat types that have been most often targeted by LIFE projects, while **birds and mammals** are the **most targeted species**.

More than **350 LIFE projects** have directly targeted species included in **Annex I of the Birds Directive** and more than one-third of all LIFE projects funded since 1992 have had some bird conservation actions.



## 20 years of LIFE – Key sectors Nature

More than **400 species** included in the annexes of the **Birds** and **Habitats** Directives have been by LIFE

**Brown bear** (*Ursus arctos*) with 40 projects since 1992, is the most targeted

**Brown bear** numbers in **Italy** increased from *10 to 20 in just ten years*





# 20 years of LIFE – Key sectors Nature



*LIFE as the **sole source of funding for the conservation, restoration and management** of certain species and habitats at EU level - according to the first assessment of the conservation status of Habitats Directive species and habitats (Article 17 report)*

***Significant impact on the Natura 2000 network**, targeting some 2 200 Natura 2000 sites, or approximately 8% of the network.*

***Restoration of approximately 320 000 hectares** in Natura 2000 sites, leading to the designation of hundreds of new sites.*

***More than 1 500 management plans** financed by LIFE projects across the Natura 2000 network*





# LIFE and the European Network for Rural Development

LIFE was allocated €3.2 billion in the European Commission's recent [proposal for a new financial framework](#) (that set out how EU's activities could be funded from 2014 to 2020), which amongst others emphasises a complementary approach between the different financial instruments.

Many LIFE projects have been already involved with actions that complement the aims of the Rural Development Programme (RDP). Their innovations can then be rolled out on a more established and wider basis by the RDP support measures, such as the agri-environment budgets.





# LIFE and the European Network for Rural Development



**Green approaches**, such as conservation actions, developed through LIFE projects, have helped introduce new environmentally-sensitive and resource-efficient agricultural systems whilst diversifying and sustaining rural communities. They have also:

- Safeguarded the productivity of farmland for future generations
- Provided agricultural communities to take advantage of growing markets in eco-tourism services or traditional and organic food products.
- Secure new forms of stable income with positive knock-on benefits throughout the countryside.

Such win-win benefits for Europe's environment and rural economy fit well with the EU's 2014-2020 budget proposal.





# LIFE and the European Network for Rural Development



The **BurrenLIFE** Project (LIFE04 NAT/IE/000125) developed a new model for **sustainable agriculture** (with practical solutions such as: scrub removal, improving access, water provision, rebuilding internal walls and developing new feeding systems) with the aim of conserving the remarkable biodiversity and habitats of the region whilst ensuring the profitability of farming



**20 farms** covering over **3,097 ha** were selected using individual farm plans drawn up by the project team.



**Key aspect:** the project was “**farmer-led**” and that support was very strong from the Burren farming community right as there were **80** or more ‘**expressions of interest**’ from farmers who attended the public meetings





# LIFE and the European Network Rural Development



Success of this LIFE project has resulted in its continuation and mainstreaming under the (2010-12) Burren Farming for Conservation Programme (BFCP) funded by the **Irish Rural Development Fund**

**€1 million** each year for three years has been allocated to support high environmental value farming, with tourism spin-offs in the Burren

**117** farmers participated in the first year and this increased to **143** farmers in the second year. A further increase is expected

**Objective** of the Programme is to conserve and support the heritage, environment and communities of the Burren, with an emphasis on protecting the unique biodiversity of the region, especially within the SACs. To receive financial support the farmers must undertake works under 3 Measures



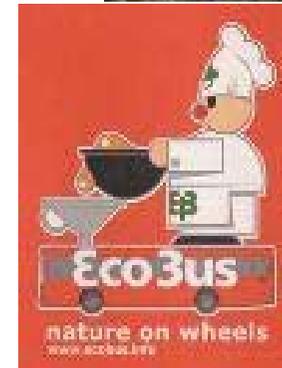


## 20 years of LIFE - Dissemination



*And finally ... LIFE projects have inspired more than **40 000 press articles** and created hundreds of **websites, posters, exhibitions etc.***

*These dissemination activities have made LIFE a **powerful tool** for promoting **nature conservation** and **environmental improvements** in the EU*





## The future of LIFE



*The Commission proposes to allocate **EUR 3.2 billion** over **2014-2020** to a new **LIFE Programme for the Environment and Climate Action**.*

*The proposed new LIFE Regulation will build on the success of the existing LIFE+ Programme, but will be better structured, more **strategic, simplified and more flexible**. Emphasis will also be placed on **better governance**.*

*To find out more:*

*<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/about/beyond2013.htm#proposal>*





**Thank you for your attention**

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm>

