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13th October 2015

LIFE NEWS

MoorLIFE 2020 becomes UK's largest ever LIFE Nature project...

The recent news article on the [LIFE portal](#) confirmed that the **Moors for the Future Partnership**, which works to protect priority international habitats in the Peak District and South Pennines, has received €16 million to deliver the MoorLIFE 2020 project.

This includes €12 million from LIFE, the largest award the programme has ever given to a UK-based conservation project. Additional funding is provided by the utility companies, Severn Trent Water United Utilities and Yorkshire Water. The new project builds on 12 years of partnership work protecting large areas of the moors, including actions carried out as part of an earlier LIFE project ([MoorLIFE – LIFE08 NAT/UK/000202](#)).

The €16 million of funding will enable the partnership to expand its work hugely, protecting the integrity of 9 500 hectares of active blanket bog through re-vegetating bare peat, improving hydrology and diversifying existing vegetation.

Further information is available at www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk including their own [press release](#)

Protecting Europe's nature: more ambition needed to halt biodiversity loss by 2020...

The mid-term review of EU biodiversity strategy shows progress in many areas, but highlights the need for greater effort by Member States on implementation to halt biodiversity loss by 2020.

[The mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy](#) assesses whether the EU is on track to achieve the objective of halting biodiversity loss by 2020. The results show progress in many areas, but highlight the need for much greater effort to deliver commitments on implementation by Member States. Nature's capacity to clean the air and water, to pollinate crops and to limit the impacts of catastrophes such as flooding is being compromised, with potentially significant unforeseen costs to society and our economy. An [EU-wide opinion poll](#), published (2 Oct 2015), confirms that the majority of Europeans are concerned about the effects of biodiversity loss and recognise the negative impact this can have on human health and wellbeing, and ultimately on our long-term economic development.

The EU is calling for entries for the 2016 Natura 2000 Awards...

The [Natura 2000 network](#) consists of over 27,000 terrestrial and marine sites and is a vital part of the EU's nature and biodiversity policy. They help ensure the protection and survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species, and their functioning ecosystems benefit human health, society and the economy (to the tune of €200 to €300 billion per year).

Also, around 4.4 million jobs are directly dependent on the maintenance of healthy ecosystems, a significant proportion of which are situated within Natura 2000 sites. But despite all these benefits, most EU citizens don't

even know about them. This is why, in 2014, the European Commission launched the annual [European Natura 2000 Award](#).

The aim of the award is to demonstrate what the network is, what it does to preserve Europe's biodiversity, and how it benefits all of us. It recognises excellence in the management of Natura 2000 sites through five categories of awards : Conservation; Socio-Economic Benefits; Communication; Reconciling Interests/Perceptions, and Cross-Border Cooperation and Networking. The third edition of the award was announced earlier this month.

For more information, visit the [Natura 2000 website](#).

Can nature help reduce the impacts of climate change?..

Building and managing a well-planned network of natural areas might provide an effective and, in many cases, cheaper solution for coping with natural disasters such as floods or landslides. A new report published today by the European Environment Agency (EEA) explores how 'green infrastructure' can help Europe prepare for and reduce the loss from weather- and climate-related hazards.

Weather- and climate-related hazards, including extreme precipitation, floods, wet mass movement (e.g. avalanches and landslides) and storm surges are among the costliest and deadliest natural hazards in Europe and globally. The EEA's new report '[Exploring nature-based solutions](#): the role of green infrastructure in mitigating the impacts of weather- and climate change-related natural hazards' focuses on certain types of extreme events and hazards in Europe that are likely to be amplified by ongoing climate change.

[More information](#)

How Belgium is using the internet to find and get rid of invasive alien species..

Invasive Alien Species are animals and plants that are introduced accidentally (like by passengers on international flights) or deliberately (like through trade) into an ecosystem where they are not naturally found, spreading rapidly and disrupting the complex and delicate ecological balance in the area.

There are different ways in which these species achieve this. For example, grey squirrels (native to North America but now common in the UK) carry squirrel pox, which they are immune to but has led to huge declines in the population of the native red squirrels. In the last 500 years, species like rats, cats and mice have driven over 70 bird species to extinction.

While reports indicate that only one in 1,000 alien species becomes an ecological threat, those that do can cause enormous damage. Not only do they threaten endemic species with possible extinction, but economically, invasive alien species cost the EU an estimated 12 billion euros a year through destroyed crops, disrupted ecosystems, spread of diseases, etc.

This is why it is important to find out quickly when a new invasive species arrives and where it settles. While the EU's regulation on the issue came into force only on 1 January, 2015, the BirdLife Invasive Alien Species Programme and Natuurpunt's (BirdLife in Flanders, Belgium) online early warning system, which it has been working on since 2012 with Natagora (BirdLife in Wallonia, Belgium) and respective local and national governments have already been working on this issue. [For more](#)

Brussels outlines EU Forest Strategy...

The European Commission presented the Multi Annual implementation Plan (MAP) of the EU Forest Strategy to the European Parliament's Agriculture Committee in Strasbourg on Monday 5 Oct.

Aimed at ensuring the long term sustainable management and development of forests in the EU, the MAP is a follow-on from the 2013 Forest Strategy, updating the challenges that the sector faces in line with the objectives for 2020.

European Commissioner for Agriculture & Rural Development Phil Hogan said: "I believe that forestry is key in the transition towards a low carbon and climate friendly economy. It is therefore important to keep the sector resilient to the ever-changing challenges it faces, and maintain the balance between the economic, social and

environmental benefits of forests.

[For more](#)

EVENTS

Reminder about the UK LIFE Information Day, 9th November 2015, London...

Ahead of the event, a draft agenda has been prepared which may be subject to refinement as final presentation arrangements etc. are agreed. Please note that due to the room size available at Europe House, the number of places is limited, and whilst registration does not automatically confirm a place, final attendee confirmation will be sent 2 weeks prior to the event for all those who have registered.

As mentioned previously, it's also intended to address any key questions, which may be submitted in advance to Life@betatechnology.co.uk, and to discuss the 'concept note' led process for proposal development as with last years call. An updated version related the 2016 call is available on the [Beta Europe portal](#), and any further refinements will be reflected in due course.

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Beta Technology

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- 2) Assistance with project planning, partner searching, proposal writing and preparation.
- 3) Liaison with UK government and the EC. If you have a question or query we are happy to ask it on your behalf.
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