



Information & Communication

LIFE PROJECTS 2013

LIFE Information
& Communication

Environment



LIFE+ Information & Communication 2013: Commission funds eight innovation projects in six countries with €3.9 million

The European Commission has approved funding for eight (8) new environmental awareness projects in six countries under the LIFE+ Information & Communication programme 2013. These projects will either raise the profile of environmental issues, or provide training and awareness-raising for the prevention of forest fires. The projects are led by 'beneficiaries', or project promoters, based in Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Poland and Romania. They represent a total investment of €8.3 million, of which the EU will provide some €3.9 million.

LIFE Information & Communication in 2013

LIFE+ Information and Communication projects disseminate information, raise the profile of environmental issues, and provide training and awareness-raising for the prevention of forest fires. Of the 165 proposals received in 2013, the Commission selected eight projects for funding. These projects will be carried out by a range of public and private sector nature and/ or environmental organisations located across nine Member States.

Half of the eight projects are concerned with EU environmental policy campaigns, three aim to raise awareness about nature and biodiversity matters and the remaining one is focused on forest fire prevention. Together, they represent a total investment of €8.3 million, of which the EU will provide some €3.9 million.

Background

LIFE is the EU's financial instrument to support environment and nature conservation projects throughout the EU, and in certain non-EU countries. Since 1992, LIFE has co-financed some 4 100 projects, contributing approximately €3.4 billion to the protection of the environment. LIFE+ is the European financial instrument for the environment with a total budget of €2 143 billion for the period 2007-2013. The Commission launches one call for LIFE+ project proposals per year.

LIFE+ Information & Communication is one of three thematic components under the LIFE+ programme. The other two components, LIFE+ Nature & Biodiversity and LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance, focus respectively on improving the conservation status of endangered species and habitats; and on supporting pilot projects that contribute to the development of innovative policy ideas, technologies, methods and instruments.

The LIFE programme will continue from 2014-2020 under the new LIFE Regulation for Environment and Climate Action. The programme has a total budget for the period of €3.4 billion in December 2013 prices.

More information on each LIFE+ project is available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm>

Contact details for the relevant national authorities can be found at: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/contact/national-contact/index.htm>

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| GREECE | LIFE13 INF/GR/000188 LIFE Natura2000ValueCrete | The ecological services, social benefits and economic value of the Ecosystem Services in Natura 2000 sites in Crete |
| | LIFE13 INF/GR/001342 LIFE – INFOCYCLE | Development of a Communication and Training Campaign for the recycling of Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment |
| HUNGARY | LIFE13 INF/HU/000827 FIRELIFE | Hungarian forest fire prevention and training program |
| | LIFE13 INF/HU/001163 LIFEinFORESTS | Improved communication, cooperation and capacity building for preserving biodiversity in Natura 2000 forests |
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| ROMANIA | LIFE13 INF/RO/000090 ECOTIC LIFE+ Caravan | Raising awareness of the importance of environmentally sound management of WEEE among identified target groups - Romania |

Nature & Economy - establishing regional win-win relationships

Project background

Regional companies lack awareness of the importance of protecting biodiversity. Focus on the climate programme of Lower Austria is jeopardising efforts on biodiversity. The business sector would benefit from being confronted with the need to halt biodiversity loss and to protect ecosystem services. But in recent years, the benefit of safeguarding natural resources for industries has been little communicated.

Project objectives

The EcoBusiness project aims to increase support for the protection of natural ecosystems and to foster sustainable spatial development. To reach this goal, the project aims to increase cooperation with its partners to establish fresh links with other sectors.

The project aims to raise awareness among SMEs (including the employees) of the relationship between enterprises and biodiversity, increasing the knowledge and understanding of regional ecosystems.

Another key aim of the project, 'Action follows knowledge', is to strengthen the capacity of those enterprises to act in favour of biodiversity. For example, the project will jointly develop guidelines through pilot nature activities, the ecological planning of company premises and two pilot training sessions. The information campaign will extend to the wider public to highlight the value of biodiversity and the activities of the enterprises involved.

Expected results

- Increased awareness of the economic importance of biodiversity and the capacity of enterprises to act in favour of biodiversity;
- Of a total of 21 000 companies informed by the project:
 - 300 deal intensively with this subject;
 - 25 implement measures within the project period;
 - 20 participate in pilot consultations concerning the ecological planning of company grounds, six of which will implement measures within the project period;
 - 15 take part in nature cultivation activities on 10 areas (e.g. combating invasive species, conservation of a moor, installation of bat roosts and the reduction of soil sealing, sponsorships); and
 - 150 participate in the final conference, leading to more biodiversity consultations and company projects.

LIFE13 INF/AT/000143

LIFE+ EcoBusiness



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

32 months (01/09/2014 – 30/04/2017)

Total budget in euro:

422,198.00

EC contribution in euro:

211,090.00

Themes: Information-Communication: Awareness raising - Information

- Specific results of biodiversity conservation:
 - 10 areas maintained within the project;
 - Reduction of invasive species in two of these areas;
 - Two alternative roosts for bats installed on company grounds; and
 - One company contributing financially to bat conservation measures in the region; and
- The general public informed about the economic value of biodiversity and the activities of individual companies.

Awareness raising campaign for the promotion of waste Reduction, Re-use and Recycling in Cyprus

Project background

About 252 million tonnes of municipal waste is generated each year in the EU (2010 statistics), of which 37% is landfilled, 24% recycled, 14% composted and the rest incinerated with or without energy recovery. Although the EU has built a strong set of waste legislation, adequate implementation is still missing in many parts of the EU.

In Cyprus, the per capita generation of municipal waste is one of the highest in the EU. Furthermore, municipal waste production in the country increased by 19% in the last decade; while the EU average decreased by almost 1% in the same period. Some 80% of the produced municipal waste in Cyprus is landfilled in more than 100 unregulated landfills or dumpsites, resulting in significant environmental impacts.

Recycling accounts for only 16% and composting for 4% of the produced municipal waste. Cyprus shows one of the largest gaps in the implementation of EU waste management policies and severe deficits in all criteria including waste prevention and reuse policies.

Project objectives

The project's main goal is to promote waste reduction, reuse and recycling (RRR) in Cyprus, through an awareness-raising campaign based on an integrated communication strategy to inform, educate and motivate. The project aims to bring about notable changes in perceptions, awareness and the habits of the general public and targeted groups.

The specific project objectives are to:

- Assess the present knowledge and awareness levels regarding the RRR concept of waste management;
- Develop and implement a Reduce-Reuse-Recycle communication strategy to support the implementation of the EU Waste Framework and the landfill directives and the Cyprus Waste Management Plan;
- Develop comprehensive communication tools to promote the RRR concept
- Implement a range of communication and training actions to inform and educate the public and to encourage all target groups to change their habits towards more sustainable waste management practices; and
- To monitor the project impact on the target audiences.

LIFE13 INF/CY/000919
LIFE KNOW WASTE



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Public enterprise

Name of beneficiary

Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation

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Duration of project:

34 months (09/06/2014 – 10/04/2017)

Total budget in euro:

2,181,960.00

EC contribution in euro:

925,845.00

Themes: Information-Communication: Awareness raising – Information / Waste: Waste recycling

Key messages will be repeated and the results of actions highlighted. The campaign is divided in two parts:

- a) The awareness-raising part, which involves radio, TV, electronic media and printed press campaigns; and
- b) The RRR education and motivation part, with more interactive activities, such as conferences and festivals, group meetings and workshops.

Expected results

- All proposed activities delivering quantifiable results – i.e. the proportion of the population that the messages reach;
- Qualitative survey (consisting of at least 1 000 interviews) carried out to assess people's perception and awareness of the waste hierarchy;
- Viewing figures of television programmes;
- Coverage in the printed press, including press adverts and outdoor advertising;
- Events/workshops organised to increase public awareness; and
- Daily hits on website.

The ecological services, social benefits and economic value of the Ecosystem Services in Natura 2000 sites in Crete

Project background

The main threats to the Natura 2000 network sites in Crete are the destruction of coastal habitats by the development of tourism, the degradation of mountain landscape and the loss of biodiversity due to intense agriculture, abandonment of traditional farming practices and the human-related mortality of certain species. Most of these problems are intensified by inadequate law enforcement and the poor implementation of EU regulations and environmental policy.

Raising awareness in local communities about the importance of species and habitat protection, in combination with the application of management measures, is often a more effective way of achieving conservation goals than implementing national or European legislation. Greater awareness among certain groups has proven to be a practical and effective conservation action. Encouraging cooperation among different groups is vital for the implementation of appropriate protection and management measures within and around Natura 2000 sites.

Project objectives

The project aims to support conservation efforts targeting Natura 2000 sites in Crete by motivating the public to participate in relevant decision-making processes and by highlighting the socio-economic damage that will result from biodiversity loss in Crete.

Specifically, the project aims to:

- Inform and change the negative attitudes of stakeholders, targeted audiences and the local public, who view Natura 2000 as an inhibitive factor for economic development;
- Inform stakeholders, targeted audiences and the local public about the ecological significance of Natura 2000 sites and about funding opportunities for green development of rural areas;
- Provide targeted audiences with the appropriate skills to engage in biodiversity conservation and value sustainability development;
- Incorporate obligations originating from the existence of the Natura 2000 network into all human activities in non-urban zones; and
- Provide guidance to other managing bodies of Natura 2000 sites in Greece on ways to develop information and communication strategies to highlight the ecological, social and economic value of ecosystem services.

LIFE13 INF/GR/000188
LIFE Natura2000ValueCrete



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

University

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

48 months (01/07/2014 – 30/06/2018)

Total budget in euro:

1,085,171.00

EC contribution in euro:

530,960.00

Themes: Information-Communication: Awareness raising - Information

Expected results

- The development of a positive attitude and behaviour towards Natura 2000 site conservation;
- The reduction of human pressure on sensitive mountain and coastal habitats and the elimination of deaths of priority and protected species as a result of human activities;
- The inclusion of the ecological value of Natura 2000 network sites in considerations of the potential economic development of the local economy and the enhancement of social cohesion in less-developed regions and areas of the EU; and
- The provision of a blueprint for the transition to a 'greener' economy, focusing on job creation, green skills development and the sustainable growth of the project areas.

Development of a Communication and Training Campaign for the recycling of Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment

Project background

Generation of electronic waste in Greece is estimated to be around 14 kg/per capita annually, significantly higher than the EU average (3.5 kg/capita). However, the existing collection system is facing significant issues, resulting in poor management of the specific waste stream leading to severe ecosystem degradation.

The WEEE Directive sets exact specifications for the treatment of WEEE and quantitative targets for Member States. The collection rate of WEEE in Greece is low due to the poor participation by citizens, among other reasons. The public is often poorly informed about environmental issues and disregards WEEE recycling schemes. Furthermore, the limited participation of local government bodies creates a sense of mistrust of the schemes. In fact, studies carried out by Appliances Recycling S.A. show such mistrust to be a leading factor. The problem is also exacerbated by peddlers illegally collecting and trading WEEE parts at extremely low prices. Even those companies cooperating with the scheme are not fully implementing the foreseen environmental techniques when managing the end-of-life equipment. As a result, collected WEEE is of low quality and specific hazardous substances such as mercury, cadmium, lead, asbestos and PCBs are extracted without specific precautions, endangering the natural environment.

Project objectives

The project aims to address the limited available quantity of WEEE in the Ipirus and Thessaly regions. Actions will aim at increasing the quality of processes by the partners of the existing collective recycling scheme, thus minimising its environmental footprint. Several complementary are foreseen to increase environmental awareness and local culture regarding the risks of maltreating WEEE.

More specifically, the project has planned significant communication actions such as numerous campaigns in the local press and the Internet, organisation of local road shows and a series of training activities for the partners of the recycling scheme and for local authorities.

The project will generate significant policy implications. Currently, Greece is implementing a new solid waste management policy for the next 15 years. The results of this project may be useful not only to the management of WEEE but also to other waste streams.

LIFE13 INF/GR/001342
LIFE – INFOCYCLE



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

24 months (01/07/2014 – 30/06/2016)

Total budget in euro:

739,875.00

EC contribution in euro:

369,937.00

Themes: Information-Communication: Awareness raising – Information – Environmental training – Capacity building / Waste: Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

Expected results

- A 10% increase in spontaneous awareness of different types of appliances that are recycled;
- A 10% increase in spontaneous awareness of appliances' recycling environmental benefits;
- An estimated 3 000 visitors to the project's website;
- A 20% increase of the collected WEEE from the collaborating network of the beneficiary one year after the start of the communication campaign in the areas of interest; and
- A 10% reduction of the damaged appliances entering the alternative waste management system in the application areas, after the completion of the two-year project period.

Hungarian forest fire prevention and training program

Project background

The incidence of forest fires has greatly increased in the last few decades in Hungary. This is due to climate extremes, less precipitation, the increase of mean annual temperature and a series of winters without snowfall. As a result, the period of risk of fire has extended. Not only has the frequency of fires increased, but also their intensity and the speed with which they spread. This has been especially true during the extremely hot summers of recent years. A larger area is burnt in these intense forest fires, as they are more difficult to extinguish. Fires are having an increased negative impact on vegetation, as well as the structure of the forest.

Project objectives

The project FIRELIFE is aiming to enhance effective, proactive and continuous forest fire prevention in Hungary. It aims to provide targeted information and messages on the basis of an up-to-date communication framework plan. Some target groups will be contacted personally. As 99% of forest fires are caused by human activity in Hungary, targeted communication can cut the number of forest fires.

In order to extend the range of available communication channels and better reach the specified target groups, training courses for teachers, social workers and farmstead caretakers are also planned. Training will also be provided for forest fire prevention experts – foresters, conservationists, fire fighters – through practical indoor and outdoor studies. The courses promote building relationships and better inter-agency cooperation on forest fire prevention.

Expected results

- A 25% fall in the number of forest fires on forest fire hazardous days in the spring forest fire season by the end of the project;
- A 30% fall in the number of forest fires in the summer forest fire season;
- A 30% fall in the number of forest fires started near roads;
- A 50% rise in awareness of forest fire issues among the general public in highly endangered zones and drivers who smoke;
- A 70% rise in awareness of forest fire issues among school teachers, authors of schoolbooks, farmstead caretakers and social workers;
- A 100% rise in awareness of forest fire issues among farmstead owners, farmers and hikers;

LIFE13 INF/HU/000827
FIRELIFE



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

48 months (01/07/2014 – 30/06/2018)

Total budget in euro:

943,830.00

EC contribution in euro:

458,002.00

Themes: Information-Communication: Environmental training - Capacity building / Land-use and Planning: Forest management / Risk management: Natural risks

- A 150% rise in awareness of forest fire issues among secondary, elementary and pre-school pupils in forest schools;
 - Hired billboards (5.04 x 2.38 m) on timely forest fire danger alongside main roads and motorways;
 - Information and warning boards (2 x 1 m) on timely forest fire danger alongside main roads and minor roads in endangered areas;
 - Information and warning boards on timely forest fire danger near recreation sites, public welfare structures, visitor centres and forest schools; and
 - Printed information leaflets for hikers, forest visitors, car drivers, forestry workers, teachers, forest owners and the general public.

Improved communication, cooperation and capacity building for preserving biodiversity in Natura 2000 forests

Project background

Around 833 000 ha of forests (41% of all forested areas) can be found on Natura 2000 sites in Hungary. This includes 412 000 ha forests under national protection as well. Most of the state-owned forests are managed by state forest companies; only a minor part is in the trusteeship of national park directorates. Because of the unique biogeographical features of Hungary – the majority of Pannonian biogeographical region is within its borders – several forest types are considered to have unique value for the EU. For example, the largest extent of Pannonic forest types listed in the Annex I of the Habitats Directive can be found in Hungary. Their condition is thus important not only a national level, but also on a European level. Currently, the conservational status of forest habitats in Hungary, however, is not satisfactory.

Project objectives

The objective of the LIFEinFORESTS project is to identify, develop and implement a set of tools to support the development of skills, active communication and cooperation among key stakeholders in the management and conservation of Natura 2000 network forests. The project aims to create a common viewpoint on the implementation of the Natura 2000 objectives.

Specific objectives are to:

- Improve and broaden the existing knowledge base on forest habitats and species of the Pannonian region;
- Enhance the adoption in Hungary of European best practices on cooperation and stakeholder involvement in Natura 2000 management;
- Promote communication and improve cooperation among the Natura 2000 forest managers, conservation experts and forest planning professionals in order to establish a management consensus;
- Enhance the integration of biodiversity aspects in forest planning and management, based on the consolidated knowledge base and jointly agreed consensus;
- Raise awareness of the ecological and socio-economic benefits of close-to-nature forest management among the foresters; and
- Improve the utilisation of available EU funds.

Expected results

- Specialist studies on 13 forest habitats and 10 functional groups of species, and a handbook published. Around 50 experts from the 10 national park directorates and the conservation authorities form a specialised discussion panel;

LIFE13 INF/HU/001163
LIFEinFORESTS



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

45 months (01/07/2014 – 31/03/2018)

Total budget in euro:

1,190,753.00

EC contribution in euro:

588,378.00

Themes: Habitats: Forests / Information-Communication: Environmental training – Capacity building

- Fifteen best practice examples collected from EU Member States, and the EU guidance document adopted. Six study trips for 200 multipliers, and dissemination of forest management experience through different channels;
- At 10 'round tables', 200 experts from conservation and forestry are involved in the exchange of experiences and conflict resolution to establish consensus on the management principles of Natura 2000 forests;
- A Natura 2000 forest planning toolkit delivered to the forestry authorities;
- At least 700 foresters are informed on 'close to nature' forest management, and at least 35 forest managers start an assessment on how to shift their management towards it; and
- The use of EU support for Natura 2000 forest conservation management increased.

Preparation of a strategy of adaptation to climate change with use of city climate mapping and public participation

Project background

Climate change is causing more and more extreme weather events affecting metropolitan regions. The need to prepare for those events and to undertake relevant investments has become urgent. In line with the White Papers of the European Commission concerning adaptation to climate change in cities (COM/2009/0147 and COM/2013/216) adequate actions and solutions for the management of water, energy and green areas are required. The problem of adaptation is of crucial importance to local authorities. A possible way to address the problem is through a climate change adaptation city strategy.

Project objectives

The main aim of the project is to reduce the negative impact of climate change on the city ecosystem of Warsaw and to use the Warsaw experience to encourage other Polish cities to undertake actions for climate change adaptation.

The proposed actions include drawing up an adaptation strategy for Warsaw, which aims to prepare the city authority and citizens for dealing with climate change and implementing adaptation actions.

Specific project objectives are to:

- Prepare a climate change adaptation strategy for Warsaw based on an ecosystem approach where technical and green infrastructures work together in line with EU Communication "Green Infrastructure - Enhancing Europe Green Capital" (COM/2013/0249);
- Encourage city administrations and their municipal service providers to implement climate change adaptation based on the Warsaw experience;
- Promote climate prediction maps as a tool for building climate change adaptation strategies for cities; and
- Raise awareness of the climate change issues among city authorities and encourage them to engage in activities on a national and European level.

Expected results

- A climate map for Warsaw (including climate risk assessment for the city) and promotion of the map among citizens, business and non-governmental organisations;
- Social groups involved in the preparation of a climate adaptation strategy for the metropolitan area of Warsaw;
- Raised awareness of climate change adaptation among Polish city authorities;

LIFE13 INF/PL/000039
LIFE_ADAPTCITY_PL



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

54 months (01/07/2014 – 31/12/2018)

Total budget in euro:

1,359,960.00

EC contribution in euro:

679,980.00

Themes: Climate change – Energy: Adaptation to climate change / Information-Communication: Public and Stakeholders participation / Land-use and Planning: Urban design

- Warsaw city council resolutions devoted to climate change adaptation;
- At least two actions foreseen in the adaptation strategy should be included in the city budget;
- Two adaptation undertakings and at least one dedicated investment put in place during the project lifetime;
- At least 100 local initiatives included in the climate adaptation strategy for Warsaw;
- A series of local conferences and an international conference to promote the climate change adaptation measures implemented in Warsaw;
- A study tour to Stuttgart and three study tours to exchange experience with other LIFE projects;
- A climate change adaptation in urban areas manual;
- At least three other cities following the Warsaw actions and preparing their own climate change strategies; and
- Increased involvement of Polish cities in international initiatives on climate protection and climate change adaptation.

Raising awareness of the importance of environmentally sound management of WEEE among identified target groups - Romania

Project background

As stated in the final report of the European Commission study on RoHS (Restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances) and WEEE directives, waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) is one of the fastest growing waste streams in the EU. It makes up around 4% of municipal waste. According to the 2007 United Nations University study, WEEE gathered from across the EU-27 currently amounts to some 8.3-9.1 million tonnes per year. A large proportion of WEEE is disposed in landfills or iron scrap sites, depending on local or national practices.

The quantities of collected WEEE in Romania are well below average, compared to other EU countries (Eurostat report 2010). Moreover, collection in Romania is significantly less efficient than the best EU practices. For example, about 3-3.5 million mobile phones were sold in 2012 in Romania alone (according to a survey by GFK). 'Urban mining' and recycling of these phones could lead to the recovery of around 1 tonne of silver, 100 kg of gold, 30 kg of palladium and about 40 tonnes of copper.

Project objectives

The main objective of the project is to raise awareness of the environmental issues surrounding the manufacture and use of electrical and electronic equipment, the handling of WEEE and its treatment and recovery (including reuse and recycling). The project also aims to promote green energy with a special emphasis on households and school children in Romania. The project aims to engage all the relevant project stakeholders in a joint effort to tackle the problem of WEEE at national, regional and local level.

An awareness campaign will alert target audiences, stakeholders and the general public of the risks WEEE poses to the environment and human health if it is not properly managed, treated and recovered. Separate collection and the sorting and treatment of WEEE will be encouraged as a precondition for further actions in effective WEEE management. The campaign will focus on:

- Hazardous substances in WEEE;
- The recycling of electronic devices;
- Electronic equipment that is potentially the most harmful to the environment and human health;
- The location of collection facilities; and
- Further treatment and recovery of e-waste.

LIFE13 INF/RO/000090
ECOTIC LIFE+ Caravan



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

24 months (02/06/2014 - 02/06/2016)

Total budget in euro:

361,321.00

EC contribution in euro:

159,711.00

Themes: Information-Communication: Awareness raising - Information / Waste: Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

Expected results

- Better understanding of the need for effective WEEE treatment and handling;
- Better awareness of environmentally-friendly handling and treatment of WEEE, including knowledge of existing collection facilities;
- Behavioural change among the target audiences;
- Stronger relationships with local and central authorities and stakeholders;
- Promotion of the use of energy from green resources; and
- An increase in the quantity of collected WEEE in the ECOTIC system of 10-15% annually over the course of the project, and of 2.5-4% in all Romania, based on ECOTIC's current market share.

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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2014

LIFE Publication / Information & Communication – Projects 2013

ISBN 978-92-79-37957-4

ISSN 1977-2297

doi:10.2779/90758

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Cover photo: LIFE06 NAT/A/000127/Revital Unterlercher

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