

## **EU Nature Restoration Law in the European Parliament**

The EU Nature Restoration Law will be voted on in the European Parliament on 12 July 2023. It is one of the most important legislative projects within the framework of the so-called Green Deal, which the EU Commission under Ursula von der Leyen had proclaimed. The restoration of the free-flowing character of European rivers over a length of 25,000 kilometres is a core element of the EU Nature Restoration Law. Restoration here means removing useless barriers such as sills or weirs that divide the river into ecologically isolated sections and hinder the migration of fish and sediment transport downstream.

Messages of support to MEPs can be sent to: <https://www.restorenature.eu>.

At the invitation of MEP César Luena (S&D), MEP Maria Soraya Rodriguez Ramos (Renew Europe) and MEP Jutta Paulus (The Greens), the event "Choose your own ending: Restoring nature in Europe" took place on 24 May 2023 at the European Parliament in Brussels.

The short films shown there were selected, compiled and screened by the EEB in cooperation with the Living Rivers Foundation, including a time-lapse video of the demolition of a weir in Finland, which reopens the way for salmon in Lake Ladoga to reach their spawning grounds in Finland; the Czech trailer for the film "Water lost & returned" about the revitalisation of peatlands and water bodies in the Bohemian Forest and Bavarian Forest National Parks; and the short film "In the river. My dream of more freedom" by WWF Austria.

## **Join in! Vote for the Fish of the Year 2024!**

Since 1984, the German Angling Association, in coordination with its project partners, the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), the Association of German Sports Divers (VDST) and the Society for Ichthyology (GfI), has chosen the "Fish of the Year" every year. From now on, however, all interested parties have the opportunity to take part in an online vote and choose from the four candidates, which are: the Minnow (*Phoxinus phoxinus*), the Thornback Ray (*Raja clavata*), the Asp (*Aspius aspius*), and the Atlantic Cod (*Gadus morhua*L.), better known as Cod.

Detailed information on the candidates can be found at DAFV: <https://dafv.de/projekte/kandidaten>



You can vote here: <https://survey.lamapoll.de/Fisch-des-Jahres-2024/> or via the QRCode.

## **Let's protect the oceans so they can protect us**

With the global "Protect the Ocean" campaign launched for World Oceans Day on 6 June, Patagonia is raising awareness of the importance of the ocean and calling for the protection of this precious ecosystem. Practices such as bottom trawling threaten valuable coastlines and marine ecosystems, destroy our seabed, endanger traditional small-scale fisheries, exacerbate the climate crisis and contribute significantly to marine overfishing and biodiversity loss. The appeal to the governments of the countries in Europe reads: "Bottom trawling is destroying our seabed, endangering traditional small-scale fisheries and exacerbating the climate crisis. We call for a halt to this destructive practice - as a first step, through an immediate ban on bottom trawling in marine protected areas and nearshore zones" and can be signed here: <https://you.wemove.eu/campaigns/end-bottom-trawling>

## **Save Britain's Rivers Campaign**

Against a backdrop of years of neglect, pollution and overuse of rivers, New Scientist magazine (in partnership with iNews) has launched a wide-ranging campaign to save and restore degraded rivers in the UK.

More on the campaign: <https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg25734263-300-save-britains-rivers-why-were-campaigning-to-rescue-uk-waterways/>

One example of the projects highlighted in the campaign is the restoration of the Turkey Brook, a London river. The Turkey Brook has been massively artificialised, resulting in low flora diversity (moss on concrete) and heavily polluted water. Dr Matilda Biddulph, a geomorphologist at the Environment Agency and committee chair of the British Geomorphological Society, explains: "People thought it was just a drain or a ditch. Restoring waterways like this not only improves the ecosystems themselves, but also raises awareness and gives people back natural areas for recreational activities.

Read more about the restoration of Turkey Brook (London) here: <https://inews.co.uk/news/turkey-brook-london-river-save-uk-waterways-2312081>

## **WWF-Asia Pacific: 380 new species discovered in the Lower Mekong River**

WWF-Asia Pacific scientists have discovered 380 new species (290 plants, 19 fish, 24 amphibians, 46 reptiles and one mammal) in the Lower Mekong River over the past two years. In 2022, 34% of the newly discovered fish species came from Asia. The Mekong River and Asia are home to a large number of freshwater fish, but they are under pressure from pollution, overfishing and fragmentation due to the construction of dams and hydropower plants.

Only 1% of the Earth's water is freshwater, but it is home to more than half of all fish species. Freshwater habitats are poorly studied compared to terrestrial ecosystems. Yet the rate of species extinction in freshwater ecosystems is four to six times higher than in marine or terrestrial ecosystems. According to the WWF Living Planet Index, freshwater populations worldwide have declined by 83% since 1970. It is very important that the Mekong region is considered a biodiversity hotspot and is protected and managed accordingly.

WWF-Asia Pacific report here: <https://wwfasiapacific.exposure.co/out-of-sight-outof-mind-and-underwater?source=share-wwfasiapacific>

Radio Free Asia reports here: <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/environment/mekong-species-05212023164209.html>

### **Exploring the importance of ponds**

This animated video from PONDERFUL explores the role of artificial and natural ponds in conserving a wide range of species and biodiversity. They enable the control of insect pests and help mitigate extreme water-related events such as floods and droughts, as well as climate change. They are also considered a nature-based solution and provide ecosystem services for humans. Ponds account for 30-50% of the world's standing water bodies. In Europe, they are home to about 70 % of regional freshwater species.

Link to animation video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s16LCC\\_wLvE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s16LCC_wLvE)

**PONDERFUL** (Pond Ecosystems for Resilient Future Landscapes) is an EU-funded project under the H2020 Research and Innovation Programme on "Interactions between climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem services".

Discover more about PONDERFUL here: <https://ponderful.eu>

### **FREE-FLOW - International Conference on the Protection and Restoration of Free-flowing Rivers in Europe**

The next FREE-FLOW conference, organised by the World Fish Migration Foundation and the Institute for Fisheries Management, will take place in Oosterpoort, Groningen, the Netherlands, from 15-17 April 2024. As usual, it will provide an opportunity for policy makers, river managers, ecologists, researchers, students and industry stakeholders to exchange best practices and latest developments in the field of river protection and restoration. This year, the focus will be on the need to increase resilience to climate change. The EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 aims to restore 25,000 km of free-flowing rivers and needs to be implemented now to address the current climate and water crises. Other topics include international water protection policy, successful practices, research and assessment studies, the value of free-flowing rivers, food security, species conservation, nature-based solutions and river connectivity. 120 speakers will have the opportunity to share their experiences. The call for papers runs until 13 October 2023.

Learn more about the FREE-FLOW conference here: <https://freeflowconference.eu>

Submit your abstracts there: <https://freeflowconference.eu/call-for-abstracts/>

To pre-register, follow this link: <https://www.eventbrite.nl/e/free-flow-2024-preregistration-tickets-657942532827>

### **The Oder - a valuable ecosystem under stress – Recording**

You can follow this BMUV conference from 6 June 23 in Schwedt (Germany) again in full length. You can find the recording here: <https://bmuv-events.de/IR8r76Yu5vm1g8toQD> with German and Polish subtitles here: <https://bmuv-events.de/IXYARDxiOX5RMpc97j>

The speech by Environment Minister Steffi Lemke can be read here: <https://www.bmuv.de/rede/rede-der-bundesumweltministerin-steffi-lemke-zur-oderkonferenz-die-oderwertvolles-oekosystem-unter-stress>

## Water protection in the big city

The presentations of the Lebendige Alster - Fachtagung 2023 on 8 June 23 in Hamburg are available online at: <https://www.lebendigealster.de/tagungen/>



### Dialogue event + CleanUp Berlin on the Landwehr Canal

On Wednesday, 12 July, we will clean the Landwehrkanal from plastic and other rubbish together with you. We will start at 5pm. The Landwehrkanal is an important place of recreation for the people of Berlin. Unfortunately, a high number of visitors also means pollution of all kinds. From disposable plastic packaging to bottles and cigarette butts, the water and wildlife of the Landwehrkanal are severely affected by litter and plastic pollution. In order to raise awareness among users and to give the canal back its charm, the Clean River Project e.V. and the GRÜNE LIGA Berlin e.V. in cooperation with Wassernetz Berlin invite you to a CleanUp in kayaks and a discussion. We will provide rubbish collection equipment and at least 20 boat places. If you are not able to participate at short notice, please contact us so that the spot can be reallocated. If you have your own boat or SUP, you can of course bring it along. All those who prefer solid ground under their feet are welcome to join in on land. The researcher Christine Beusch will start by discussing the risks of nicotine pollution for water bodies and organisms.



"Trashy, the (cigarette butt) fish" was created during a spontaneous rubbish collection action on and in the Spree in Berlin on 16 October 2015, our first action with the Clean River Project: <https://vimeo.com/145278299>

Please register here to reserve a boat place: <https://cleanriverproject.de/termine/dialogveranstaltung-cleanup-berlin-auf-dem-landwehrkanal/>

If you have any questions, please contact Michael Bender [wasser@grueneliga.de](mailto:wasser@grueneliga.de) or Franziska Braunschädel [franziska@cleanriverproject.de](mailto:franziska@cleanriverproject.de)

## Dates preview 2023 International :

Wednesday, 12 July 2023 5 pm – 9 pm <b>Urbanhafen</b> , on the field in front of the Boat Restaurant Van Loon Berlin- Kreuzberg	<b>Dialogue event + CleanUp Berlin on the Landwehr Canal</b> Short introduction to the Landwehr Canal and to cigarette butts and nicotine, then: kayak - litter collection action on the Landwehr Canal and if necessary on land. Further information and registration: <a href="https://cleanriverproject.de/termine/dialogveranstaltung-cleanup-berlin-aufdem-landwehrkanal/">https://cleanriverproject.de/termine/dialogveranstaltung-cleanup-berlin-aufdem-landwehrkanal/</a>
Friday, 14 July 2023 10 am <b>Online via MS Teams</b>	<b>Round Table in the framework of the LIFE Blue Lakes Project</b> The participation is free of charge. Please register per mail at Mrs Rebecca Mahler ( <a href="mailto:mahler@globalnature.org">mahler@globalnature.org</a> )
31 July – 4 August 2023 <b>Kutzow See (Odra Delta)</b> Transfer from Trainstation Löcknitz or 7km by bike	<b>Water pollution &amp; Risk management</b> Monday 31.07 - European and National Focus, Tuesday 1.08 - Local Action Day, Wednesday 2.08 - Transboundary River Basins, Thursday 3.08 - Ecology of Living Rivers. Friday, 4.08. Exchange and conclusion. RIVER UNIVERSITY ISSUE 2023. <a href="https://www.ccb.se/river-university-2023">https://www.ccb.se/river-university-2023</a>
Saturday, 9 September 2023 11 am at the <b>IGB</b> , Berlin Müggelseedamm 310	<b>Open Day at IGB in Berlin</b>
15 and 16 September 2023 <b>Berlin</b>	<b>World Cleanup Day in Berlin</b> <a href="https://wir-berlin.org/aktionstag-2023/">https://wir-berlin.org/aktionstag-2023/</a> Registration under: <a href="https://wir-berlin.org/aktionstag-2023/#Anmeldung">https://wir-berlin.org/aktionstag-2023/#Anmeldung</a>
26 – 28 September 2023 <b>Wissenschaftszentrum Bonn</b> Ahrstrasse 45	<b>5th European Conference on Biodiversity and Climate Change Riverine and Coastal Wetlands</b> Lectures, parallel workshops, poster exhibition, excursion. Participation fee: 65,- €. <a href="https://bioclim2023.adelphi.de/">https://bioclim2023.adelphi.de/</a>
11 – 12 October 2023 <b>Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad)</b>	<b>Magdeburg Water Protection Seminar 2023</b>
17 October 2023 4 pm – 5:30 pm	Online-Dialogue "90 minutes in conversation with experts "Registration at: <a href="http://www.undekade-restoration.de/online-dialoge">www.undekade-restoration.de/online-dialoge</a>

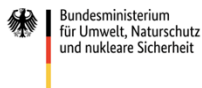


Friday, 17 November 2023 1 pm – 4:30 pm <b>Online</b>	<b>Near-natural water balance and nature-based solutions - thinking about the landscape from the water perspective</b> Water Protection Forum of the Environmental Associations on the Water Framework Directive
Following	Movie evening of the Living Rivers Foundation

The Water Network Berlin (Wassernetz Berlin) offers a series of dialogue events and workshops as well as practical upgrading measures. You can subscribe to the newsletter and the latest event information at <https://wassernetz-berlin.de/>

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