



Belgium for  
Biodiversity



2023 - 2031  
BELGIUM

# LIFE B4B NO.1

## THE PROJECT

WHY LIFE B4B?

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## PARTNERS

WHO IS WORKING ON  
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WHAT IS THE  
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# THE PROJECT

The LIFE Belgium for Biodiversity project (LIFE B4B) will contribute to the protection and restoration of biodiversity in Belgium.

## 4 PILLARS

The project focuses on 4 pillars, based on the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, and will facilitate the implementation of the 'prioritized action framework' and other regional strategic programmes, strategies and action plans.

### **Improving the integrity of protected areas**

This will be achieved by expanding and connecting protected areas, as well as installing appropriate nature management and preventing violations of the nature regulations in these protected areas.



### **Restoration**

A dedicated large-scale restoration agenda will be designed and implemented with additional funding. Species protection programs and action plans for species and habitats will be developed and implemented with additional funding. Biodiversity in an agricultural context receives the necessary attention through "nature-inclusive agriculture"-projects. Lastly, various pilot projects will be set up to test instruments for the conservation of biodiversity on privately owned land in Belgium.

## Environmental pressures

Reducing the impact of environmental pressures on Belgian biodiversity, such as light pollution, waste water and recreation. Several pilot projects will be launched to reduce the impact of these environmental pressures. If successful, these will be further scaled up using additional funding. Hydrology and climate change have an impact on biodiversity and therefore deserve the necessary attention in the context of this project.



## Enabling system change

Many stakeholders and actors are involved in the restoration and conservation of our biodiversity. To further strengthen this network, various horizontal measures are being taken. This includes providing training, communicating with stakeholders, knowledge sharing, Natura 2000 branding and using ambassadors to place biodiversity higher on the agenda of other policy areas. On an international level, LIFE B4B will also contribute to the European biogeographical process Natura 2000.

## THE BUDGET

The LIFE B4B project has a total budget of 36 million euro. The project will also mobilise over 603 million euro by means of complementary funding.

## THEMES

The LIFE Belgium for Biodiversity project works within 7 clearly determined themes



**Trans European  
Nature network**



**Reducing  
environmental  
pressures**



**EU project office &  
financing  
biodiversity**



**Capacity building  
& knowledge  
exchange**



**Branding Natura  
2000**



**Restoring  
biodiversity**



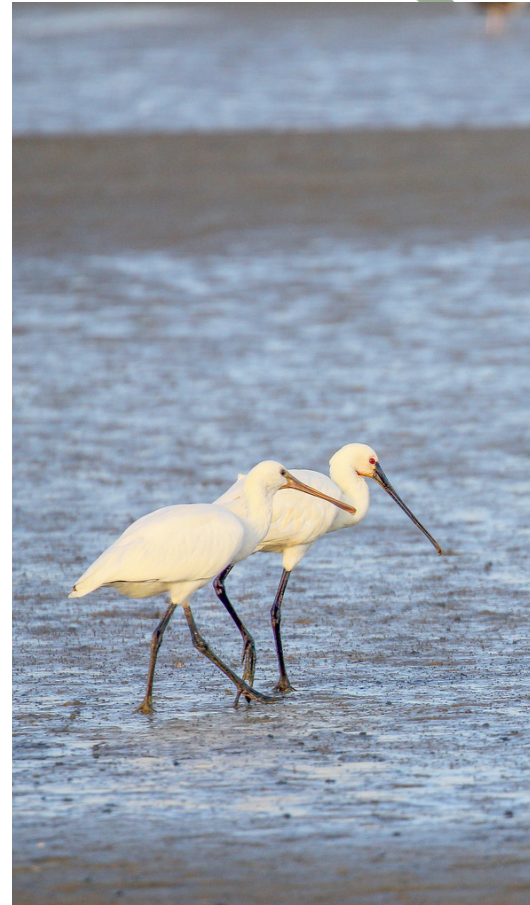
**Monitoring &  
evaluation**

# PARTNERS

## THE CONSORTIUM

The project is implemented by all Belgian authorities responsible for the Natura 2000 policy and 10 other partners (14 partners in total) including other authorities and stakeholders.

The focus will be on facilitating the implementation of existing regional policy frameworks and the program of measures for Belgian territorial waters.



## TERRITORY

LIFE B4B will be active throughout the whole Belgian territory, including the Belgian part of the Northsea.

# IMPACT



## BRING NATURE BACK TO THE PEOPLE

Through transformative change, capacity building and branding of Natura 2000, we want to bring nature closer to the people. The project focuses on a positive story, with respect for people and nature.

## MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON BIODIVERSITY IN BELGIUM

The LIFE Belgium for Biodiversity project is committed to facilitating processes that contribute to the implementation of nature goals in Belgium. In this way, this project contributes to the implementation of the EU Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 and the new planned EU legal frameworks.



# REALISATIONS

## NATURE RESTORATION IN THE BELGIAN PART OF THE NORTH SEA

On 5 December 2023, the **Marine Environment Department** of the FPS Public Health organised a study day on nature restoration in the Belgian part of the North Sea.

## NATURA 2000-HIKES IN WALLONIA

As part of a LIFE B4B task focusing on ecotourism in the Natura 2000 network, the non-profit organisation **Natagriwal** works with the association "Les Sentiers de Grandes Randonnées" ([www.grsentiers.org](http://www.grsentiers.org)) to promote the natural heritage along hikes that cross Natura 2000 sites.

## ECOPEDIA

Since 13 November 2023 Ecopedia has a brand new website. The knowledge platform from **Natuurinvest/Inverde** has a new, fresh look in terms of both content and design. The website was optimised for mobile use, so you can now easily look things up in the field. The goal? Informing you about nature management in the most accessible way possible.

## BREEDING PROGRAMME

**INBO** is working on the breeding programme of the weatherfish, European common spadefoot and midwife toad in the frame of the LIFE Belgium for Biodiversity project.







## DAY OF THE SONIAN FOREST 2023

On 15 October 2023, the **Sonian** Forest was in the spotlight during the Day of the Sonian Forest.

The public could meet those who care for and protect the forest and find out how they themselves can contribute to the protection of this forest, which, with its rich fauna and flora, is not only exceptional, vulnerable and ancient but also a Unesco World Heritage Site.

## START OF THE LIFE ATLANTIC VALLEYS PROJECT

One of the LIFE Belgium for Biodiversity project objectives is to submit at least 3 new EU project proposals/year. These projects will be closely linked to the different LIFE Belgium for Biodiversity processes and tasks. LIFE Atlantic Valleys is one of the first new approved projects. Our project partner, **Natagora**, is the project coordinator. This new LIFE project is aiming to restore humid and transition biotopes in the Atlantic Valleys of Wallonia.

## BUSINESS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS

In 2023, **Natuurpunt** secured €947,000 in Business conservation Partnerships (BCPs). For 2024, we already have visibility of 330,000€ in BCPs. These are partnerships with Google, Wolf oil, Coca-Cola, Cummins, Candriam and Belfius, among others.

## VAPEO

In early spring 2024 around 20 new animal escapes will be build along the canal Dessel-Tunrhout-Schoten. This project is the result of the preparatory meetings that are being held in order to launch a VAPEO (Flemish action plan on defragmentation) for waterways. **The Department of Environment** is taking the lead in this action.

## NATIONAL PARKS AND LANDSCAPE PARKS

On 13 November 2023, the Flemish government recognised 4 National Parks and 5 Landscape Parks. Together, these 9 parks form the Flemish Parks.

- In a National Park, nature and biodiversity are central. They are robust parks, with exceptional nature to be sustainably protected. It covers:
- In a Landscape Park, the emphasis is on the various functions of the area. Landscape development, recreation, nature, heritage, agriculture, housing, business and tourism go hand in hand.

In wallonia there are also 2 National Parks recognised.

## LIGHT POLLUTION

**Brussels environment** is working on a study to reduce the impact of light pollution on birds. The first test cases are in place.





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