

LIFE living Natura 2000

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The LIFE living Natura 2000 project

LIFE living Natura 2000 is a communication project for the Natura 2000 Network in Bavaria funded by the LIFE programme of the European Union. Understanding, accepting and appreciating Natura 2000 is the key to protect the natural heritage, to successfully stop the loss of biodiversity as well as advancing a cooperative planning and implementation process for the Natura 2000 protected area network. Therefore, the main objective of the project LIFE living Natura 2000 is to improve the public perception of Natura 2000 through a widespread communication and information campaign about Natura 2000 in Bavaria, which is particularly addressing relevant stakeholders.

Natura 2000 in Europe

Natura 2000 is a Europe-wide network of areas dedicated to nature conservation, established by the European Union over the entire territory of the member states. These areas – protected by the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive – play a significant role in the Bavarian nature conservation policy and reflect the European response to the „Convention on Biological Diversity“ which was declared in Rio de Janeiro during the Earth Summit in 1992.

Natura 2000 in Bavaria

There is a high level of appreciation for an intact nature, a species-rich landscape and ecosystem services in the Bavarian society. Nature and the landscape are seen as essential factors of the branding of a touristic region and represent an important added value.

Natura 2000, the European network of protected areas, is a central pillar of nature conservation. However, widespread acceptance and broad understanding of Natura 2000 are often lacking in Bavaria, like in other German federal states and European member countries. This causes considerable difficulties for the implementation of Natura 2000, accompanied with an often negative image. Hence, a sustainable protection of Natura 2000 sites is not always supported by the main stakeholder groups and public acceptance is often limited. Therefore, the main objective of the EU-funded LIFE project is to improve the public perception of Natura 2000 in Bavaria through a widespread communication and information campaign.

Project Overview

LIFE living Natura 2000 is a LIFE project in the field of “Environmental Governance and Information” under general management of the Bavarian Academy for Nature Conservation and Landscape Management and targets the following main objectives:

- Raising awareness of Natura 2000, its importance and objectives, especially focusing on the relevant target audience
- Increasing the willingness to cooperate and implement Natura 2000, particularly addressing land owners/users (farmers, forest owners) and other stakeholders
- Establishing and exemplifying cooperations with policy and specific economic sectors
- Building networks on the international, national and regional scale to promote an exchange of information and experiences with regards to the implementation of Natura 2000
- Establishing Natura 2000 as a positive and future-oriented topic in the media

Target Groups

- Specific stakeholders (representatives of non-governmental associations) and the society in general
- Landowners and land users
- Political decision makers
- The young generation
- Representatives of the media

Timeline and actions

The LIFE project started in July 2017 and will end in March 2022. In 2017 the foreseen actions will focus on the project preparation–The LIFE project consists of four years of campaigning - each year of campaigning has been assigned to a topic according to a specific communication and information strategy.

- 2018: “Natura 2000 seeing and understanding“. Planned actions are for example: seven regional events, the first Natura 2000 Ambassador campaign, a Natura 2000 best practice brochure, student campaigns on the Natura 2000 day - such as a photography competition for Natura 2000 sites
- 2019: “Natura 2000 in need of partnerships“. Planned actions focus on establishing partnerships and sponsorships for Natura 2000 protection efforts, introducing Natura 2000 Hot Spots for highlighting attractive touristic/recreational spots and further student campaigns
- 2020: “Natura 2000 in Bavaria – that’s what we do!“ Planned actions embrace hands on campaigns, promoting products coming from Natura 2000 areas, additional student campaigns as well as a Natura 2000 award
- 2021: “Natura 2000 – fit for the future, as we believe it’s worth it!“ Planned actions involve a second Natura 2000 Ambassador campaign, an interactive biking/hiking guide and further student campaigns. A sports event, namely a relay with celebrity athletes, will take place in addition to the actions mentioned before

Funding

The overall project budget is around 3 Mio. Euro with an EU contribution of 60%. The other 40% of the budget will be financed by the Bavarian Academy for Nature Conservation and Landscape Management, the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection, the Bavarian Nature Protection Fund and the German Federal Environmental Foundation.

Project Team

Dr. Florian Wetzel

Leading Project Manager
Bavarian Academy for Nature Conservation
and Landscape Management
Seethalerstraße 6
83410 Laufen
Germany
Telephone: +49 8682 8963-49
florian.wetzel@anl.bayern.de

Veronika Dieplinger

Administration project
Bavarian Academy for Nature Conservation
and Landscape Management
Seethalerstraße 6
83410 Laufen
Germany
Telephone: +49 8682 8963-60
veronika.dieplinger@anl.bayern.de

Nicole Hoehna

Communication- and Media Design
Bavarian Academy for Nature Conservation
and Landscape Management
Seethalerstraße 6
83410 Laufen
Germany
Telephone: +49 8682 8963-37
nicole.hoehna@anl.bayern.de