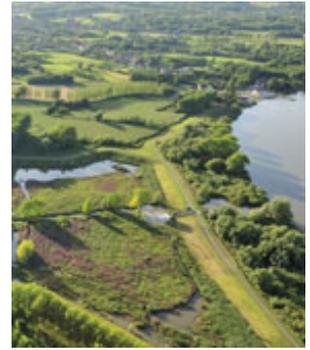




LIFE+SCALLUVIA - Habitat Restoration of alluvial forests and creeks within the flood controlled Scheldt estuary site Kruibeke-Bazel-Rupelmonde.

LIFE12 NAT/BE/000596



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Project description:

Background

The project area, 'Kruibeke-Bazel-Rupelmonde' (690 ha), is located in Flanders, near the border of the province of East Flanders and Antwerp. Here, the Sigma-plan is being implemented by the Flemish authorities, in collaboration with stakeholders in the agricultural and nature sectors. One of the aims of the plan – which is linked to the economic development of the port of Antwerp – is to make the area around the river Schelde more natural, safer and more accessible. This forms part of a long-term vision for the Schelde estuary, which was agreed by authorities in Flanders and the Netherlands. In the project area, the Sigma plan provides for the construction of a flood area, which is expected to be completed in 2013. However, the plan does not foresee restoration works to improve the quality of existing degraded habitats, in particular alluvial forests habitats and small lake, which are in an unfavourable state. The project area is the first and the largest flood area covered by the Sigma plan to combine safety and nature conservation, so it could serve as a model for other projects.

Objectives

The main aim is to develop a sub-area of Kruibeke-Bazel-Rupelmonde (89.97 ha) as a high-quality site, in a good state of conservation, that functions as a flood and recreational area. The project will help restore a total of 79.64 ha of alluvia forests and 10.23 ha of small lakes. Such restoration will have a beneficial impact

on the European bitterling, spined loach, bluethroat, common kingfisher, little bittern and purple heron. The project will also introduce a specially tailored forest management plan for Kruibeke-Bazel-Rupelmonde, as well as regulating its use for recreation through the creation of an accessibility plan. It will also try to increase local public support for nature conservation.

Restoration measures for the alluvial forest habitats and small lakes will include:
- Optimisation of water management. - Construction of a fish passable flood-control dam. - Ecological reconstruction of banks. - Restoration of a forest complex that is rich in structure. - Removal of foreign material and illegal constructions. - Total depletion and removal of burrowing fish species with a view to fish stock management.

Tailored nature and forest management measures will include: - Drafting of an integrated nature and forest management plan for Kruibeke-Bazel-Rupelmonde, with a view to the establishment of a Flemish nature and forest reserve. - Conclusion of a management agreement between the owner of Waterwegen en Zeekanaal NV and the administrator ANB, in order to achieve long-term conservation objectives.

Control of recreational activities will include: - Refining the visitor's management plan for woods and creeks in the sub-areas of Bazel and Rupelmond polder. - Reorientation of recreational flows with clear zoning.

Increasing public support will entail: - Translation of scientific information about the ecosystem services of alluvial forests and creeks into comprehensible information for the general public. - Participatory drafting of the content of welcome nodes through the concept of 'time capsules'. - Drafting of a communication plan - Creation of a website - Installation of billboards. - Drafting and distribution of a Layman's report.

Participatory actions with local volunteers will include : - Nature-educational actions aimed at raising awareness and boosting local public support - Extension and use of an existing smartphone game - 'Park App.' - The use of social media. - The use of written communication materials. - Construction of a 'Landart' arts route. - Information evenings and brochures aimed at the general public. - Information videos.

Expected results:

- A total of 79,64 ha of the habitat relic forests on alluvial soil, and a total of 10.23 ha of the habitat 'natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation' will be restored;
- The area will obtain the protection status of a Flemish nature and forest reserve;
- The implementation of the accessibility plan will improve access to the forests for hikers;
- Communication actions will help to make the new hiking paths better-known, and to enhance the appeal of the forests to visitors.

Results

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Habitats - Forests

Habitats - Freshwater

Keywords

forest ecosystem, freshwater ecosystem, protected area, integrated management, management plan, recreational area

Target species

Alcedo atthis Ardea purpurea Cobitis taenia Ixobrychus minutus Luscinia svecica

Target Habitat types

- 91E0 - "Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)"
- 3150 - Natural eutrophic lakes with *Magnopotamion* or *Hydrocharition* - type vegetation

Natura 2000 sites

SCI BE2300006 Schelde- en Durmeëstuarium van de Nederlandse grens tot Gent
SPABE2301235 Durme en Middenloop van de Schelde

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator

Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos

Type of organisation

Regional authority

Description	The Agency for Nature and Forests of the Flemish ministry of the environment is the competent public authority in the Flemish region for nature conservation and forestry policy, as well as for the management of nature reserves and publicly-owned forests (total surface: 42 300 ha). It is also responsible for the implementation of the Natura 2000 network in Flanders. The agency was created in 2006 through a merger of former nature and forests and parks divisions.
Partners	Gemeente Kruibeke, Belgium Kruin vzw, Belgium Waterwegen en Zeekanaal NV, Belgium

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE12 NAT/BE/000596
Duration	01-SEP-2013 to 31-AUG -2018
Total budget	1,744,732.00 €
EU contribution	872,366.00 €
Project location	Vlaams Gewest(België - Belgique) Région Wallonne(België - Belgique) Bruxelles-Brussel(België - Belgique)

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Read more:

Brochure	Title: "Europese topnatuur aan de Schelde" Year: 2014 Editor: Marleen Evenepoel, Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos No of pages: 13
Project web site	Project's website
Publication: Article-Paper	Title: "SCALLUVIA - Herstel van zeldzame elzenbroekbossen" (Kruibeke Infoblad Nr. 3 - September-November 2014) Year: 2014 Editor: Kruibeke Info No of pages: 2
Publication: Article-Paper	Title: Nieuwsbrief oktober 2014 Year: 2014 No of pages: 4

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