



LIFE GYPCONNECT - Restoration of connections between the Alpine and Pyrenean populations of bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*)

LIFE14 NAT/FR/000050



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Project description:

Background

The conservation status of the bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*) is listed as vulnerable on the European IUCN Red List and endangered in France. Before vulture reintroductions started, the Alps represented a huge barrier separating the Pyreneo-Iberian populations and those of the Balkans. To bridge the distance between the populations of the western Alps and the Oriental Pyrenees, it is essential to establish a new core population of bearded vultures and to favour an exchange of populations with a view to forming a true European meta-population.

Objectives

The LIFE GYPCONNECT project aims to develop new vulture populations in the Department of the Drôme and the Massif Central, thus creating a connection between the two existing populations, currently confined to the Alps and the Pyrenees.

The project's main objectives are to:

- Strengthen the population of bearded vultures by creating core populations in the Drôme and the Massif Central; and
- Facilitate bird movements between the Alps and the Pyrenees and thus enhance exchanges and genetic diversity of bearded vulture populations.

The project team comprises raptor conservation experts, managers of the electricity grid networks and sociologists. Specifically, the team plans to: 1. Coordinate a captive breeding programme and to reintroduce vultures on specific sites; 2. Enhance the availability of food resources; 3. Reduce existing threats; 4. Draw up a communication plan to increase the public's awareness and to spread results; and 5. Regularly assess the impact of the project and to develop a strategic implementation plan.

Expected results: 1. Establish new core populations by: a. Setting up several sites (2-3 new ones) where captive vultures can be released; b. Releasing up to four vultures per year throughout the project's lifetime; c. Having at least two couples established in the area by the end of the project; and d. Enhancing the exchange of birds between different core populations in the Alps and the Pyrenees from the second year of the project onwards.

2. Enhanced available food resources by setting up different feeding places.

3. Improve peacefulness and security of vulture sites by: a. Isolating the sections of the electric network considered to be dangerous for the birds; b. Mapping favourable vulture areas and integrating these in the relevant SRCAE (Energy, Air and Climate Regional Scheme); c. Managing poison threats; d. Testing lead-free ammunition; e. Taking care of unhealthy birds through a safeguard network; f. Reducing sources of disturbance by enhancing awareness actions; and g. Securing vulture releasing sites.

4. Improved knowledge and the monitoring of the reintroduction programme by: a. Analysing demographic and spacial data; b. Modelling population dynamics; c. Producing indicators and a technical guide to monitor the populations; and d. Producing at least one scientific publication.

Results

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Species - Birds

Keywords

animal corridor, carcass disposal, controlled hunting zone, hunting

Target EU Legislation

- Nature protection and Biodiversity
- Directive 79/409 - Conservation of wild birds (02.04.1979)
- COM(2011) 244 final “Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 ...

Target species

Gypaetus barbatus

Natura 2000 sites

SPA FR8210017	HAUTS PLATEAUX DU VERCORS
SPA FR8210114	Basse Ardèche
SPA FR9110033	Les Cévennes
SPA FR9110105	GORGES DU TARN ET DE LA JONTE
SPA FR9110111	Basses Corbières
SCI FR7301822	Garonne, Ariège, Hers, Salat, Pique et Neste
SCI FR8201654	Basse Ardèche urgonienne
SCI FR8201744	Hauts plateaux et contreforts du Vercors oriental
SCI FR9101385	CAUSSE DU LARZAC
SCI FR9101399	La Cèze et ses gorges
SCI FR9101424	Le Caroux et l'Espinouse
SCI FR9101444	LES CAUSSES DU MINERVOIS
SCI FR9101489	Vallée de l'Orbieu
SPA FR9112002	LE SALAGOU
SPA FR9112003	MINERVOIS
SPA FR9112004	Hautes Garrigues du Montpelliérais
SPA FR7312006	Gorges du Tarn et de la Jonte
SPA FR7312007	Gorges de la Dourbie et causses avoisinants
SPA FR7312008	Gorges de la Frau et Bélesta
SPA FR9112008	Corbières orientales
SPA FR9112009	PAYS DE SAULT
SPA FR9112011	GORGES DE LA VIS ET CIRQUE DE NAVACELLES
SPA FR9112012	GORGES DE RIEUTORD, FAGE ET CAGNASSE
SPA FR9112019	MONTAGNE DE L'ESPINOUSE ET DU CAROUX
SPA FR9112027	Corbières occidentales
SPA FR9112028	Hautes Corbières
SCI FR9101458	Vallée du Torgan
SCI FR9102007	MINES DE VILLENEUVETTE
SPA FR9112014	CAUSSE NOIR
SPA FR9112032	CAUSSE DU LARZAC
SPA FR9112033	GARRIGUES DE LUSSAN

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux
Type of organisation	NGO-Foundation
Description	Founded in 1922, the Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO) focuses on protecting bird habitats and associated wildlife. It is one of the largest nature conservation associations in France, with around 46 000 members. The LPO contributed to the drawing up of raptor protection legislation in 1972 and has taken part in several reintroduction programmes. The LPO has coordinated numerous LIFE programmes and other transboundary projects (e.g. Interreg, Feder and Leader).
Partners	CNITV(Centre National d'Informations Toxicologiques Vétérinaires), France SM-PNRV(Syndicat Mixte du Parc Naturel Régional du Vercors), France LPO Aude(Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux, association locale de l'Aude), France VEB(Association Vautours en Baronnie), France UPMC(Université Pierre et Marie Curie – Paris 6), France ERDF(Electricité Réseau Distribution France), France PNC(Parc national des Cévennes), France VCF(Stichting The Vulture Conservation Foundation), Netherlands

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE14 NAT/FR/000050
Duration	01-SEP-2015 to 30-NOV -2021
Total budget	5,631,742.00 €
EU contribution	4,157,440.00 €
Project location	Midi-Pyrénées(France) Rhône-Alpes(France) Languedoc-Roussillon(France) Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur(France) Groningen(Nederland) Friesland(Nederland) Drenthe(Nederland) Overijssel(Nederland) Gelderland(Nederland) Flevoland(Nederland) Noord-Brabant(Nederland) Limburg(Nederland) Utrecht(Nederland) Noord-Holland(Nederland) Zuid-Holland(Nederland) Zeeland(Nederland)

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Read more:

Brochure	Title: "Agissons pour demain en faveur du Gypaète barbu..." (2.01 MB) Year: 2016 Editor: LPO No of pages: 16
Newsletter	Title: "La plume du LIFE : Lettre d'information du Life Gypconnect, avril 2017 - N°3" (3.7 MB) Year: 2017 Editor: LPO No of pages: 14
Newsletter	Title: "La plume du LIFE : Lettre d'information du Life Gypconnect, novembre 2016 - N°2" (4.83 MB) Year: 2016 Editor: LPO No of pages: 7
Newsletter	Title: "La plume du LIFE : Lettre d'information du Life Gypconnect, juillet 2016 - N°1" (4.83 MB) Year: 2016 Editor: LPO No of pages: 7
Poster	Title: Poster (Kakemono) of the project Editor: LPO No of pages: 1
Project web site	Project's website
Video link	"Réintroduction du Gypaète barbu dans les Grands Causses" (video on Youtube)

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