



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Commission invests € 63.8 million in new environmental projects across Member States

New LIFE funding will help bring over € 1 billion of support to environmental plans across the EU.

Brussels, 26 January 2015

The European Commission today announced an investment of € 63.8 million for the first-ever "[Integrated Projects](#)" to be funded under the [LIFE programme](#) for the environment. "Integrated Projects" were introduced to implement environmental legislation on a wider scale and increase the impact of funding for plans developed on the regional, multi-regional or national level. The six projects selected have a total budget of € 108.7 million, including € 63.8 million of EU co-financing. They could leverage and coordinate over € 1 billion in complementary funding from EU agricultural and regional funds, as well as national and private funds. The money will support projects in Belgium, Germany, Italy, Poland, Finland, and the UK.

The main feature of these projects is their all-encompassing approach, ensuring involvement of multiple stakeholders and promoting the mobilisation of at least one other funding source, be it EU, national or private. LIFE Integrated Projects were introduced to help Member States comply with key EU legislation in four areas: [Nature](#), [Water](#), [Air](#) and [Waste](#).

Karmenu **Vella**, EU Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said: "*This is an example of Europe directly investing in citizens' quality of life. To best tackle major environmental and health challenges such as air and water pollution or biodiversity loss, existing policies must be made to work towards the same goals. Integrated Projects deliver precisely that.*"

The Integrated Projects in Belgium, Finland and Italy will help conserve Europe's nature, on a far wider scale than has previously been the case. The Nature projects have a combined budget of € 56.3 million, of which € 33.3 million is EU-funded. The projects can facilitate the coordinated use of € 393 million of complementary funding, such as for infrastructure through other available EU funds, in the management of environmentally protected Natura 2000 sites.

The Integrated Projects in Germany and the UK will contribute to the implementation of [River Basin Management Plans](#), while the project in Poland will support implementation of a regional [Air Quality Plan](#). Together, these three projects have a combined budget of € 52.4 million, of which € 30.4 million is EU-funded, and could facilitate the coordinated use of over € 1 billion of complementary funding.

Descriptions of all six projects can be found in the [Annex](#) to this press release.