

LIFE Platform Meeting: Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) Challenges and Opportunities in Europe Santander, Spain - 22-24 May 2024

Wednesday 22 May 2024		
Plenary room Palacio de la Magdalena		
08:00	Registration	At the Registration and Help Desk at the main entrance
09:00 – 13:00 Morning session: Plenary keynotes on policy and technical advances		
Session Chair: Lynne BARRATT (ELMEN)		
09:00	Organisation, programme and housekeeping rules	Lynne BARRATT
09:05	A warm welcome to the City of Santander	<i>Speaker:</i> Gema IGUAL ORTIZ (The Major of Santander)
09:10	The Steps for LIFE project	<i>Speaker:</i> Pilar GÓMEZ BAHAMONDE (Director the Fundación Camino Lebaniego Cantabria)
09:15	Institutional presentation	<i>Speaker:</i> Eva GUILLERMINA FERNÁNDEZ ORTIZ (Regional Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport)
09:20	Keynote 1: “Amphibian and reptile conservation in EU nature conservation legislation and policy”	<i>Speaker:</i> Frank VASSEN (European Commission, DG.ENV.D3 – Nature Conservation) Video presentation from Brussels
09:35	Keynote 2: What would CINEA like to achieve? Objectives and expected outcomes of the Platform meeting	<i>Speaker:</i> Maria Jose ARAMBURU (CINEA)
09:50	Keynote 3: The Steps4LIFE project – Improving ecological connectivity in a fragmented landscape by providing vital stepping stones for amphibians and reptiles	<i>Speakers:</i> Marta VALLE AGUDO (LIFE project coordinator for STEPS4LIFE) and Antonio URCHAGA (SEO/BIRDLIFE)

LIFE Platform Meeting: Amphibian and Reptile Conservation - Challenges and Opportunities in Europe

10:05	Keynote 4: Promoting conservation of European herpetofauna – working with the EU Nature Directives	<i>Speaker:</i> Balint HALPERN (IUCN Species Survival Commission and Societas Europaea Herpetologica SEH Chair of the Conservation Committee)
10:20	Keynote 5: LIFE and Amphibians and Reptiles – past, present and future	<i>Speaker:</i> Teresa CATELANI (ELMEN)
10:35	Q&A session	
11:00	Coffee break	
11:30	Keynote 6: Promoting Important Herpetofauna Areas in Europe – what are they and where could they be?	<i>Speaker:</i> Ronald ZOLLINGER (RAVON, RACE/Bern Convention Group)
11:45	Keynote 7: What could the new Restoration Law mean for Amphibians and Reptiles?	<i>Speaker:</i> Tony GENT (ARC, UK, and RACE)
12:00	Keynote 8: Ensuring the survival and diversity of amphibian species focusing on those that cannot currently be safeguarded in their natural habitats.	<i>Speaker:</i> Jonathan WILCKEN (IUCN, Amphibian Ark AArk)
12:15	Keynote 9: Practical amphibian conservation in Spain	<i>Speaker:</i> Laura Moreno RUIZ (WWF Spain)
12:30	Keynote 10: Conservation Palaeobiology: Information from the Past to Conserve the Present and Prepare for the future	<i>Speaker:</i> Rafael Marquina BLASCO (Cenozoic Vertebrate Palaeontology Research Group, University of Valencia)
12:45	Discussion	
13:00	Lunch break	
14:00 – 17:30 Afternoon session: Practical measures for amphibian and reptile conservation		
14:00	‘Elevator Pitch’ knowledge market session to get a brief insight into as wide a range of projects as possible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4’ short intro from each presenter • Estimated 20 projects presenting • Presentations will be targeted towards one of the 4 themes • We will ask participants to end on their policy message 	Facilitators: Lynne BARRATT & Karen LUNAN (ELMEN)
15:40	Coffee-break and networking	
<i>Setting the scene for Day 2.</i> Session Chair: Karen LUNAN (ELMEN)		
16:15	<u>Working Group I: Impact of Climate Change on Protected Areas for Amphibians and Reptiles</u> Protected areas for amphibians and reptiles in the context of climate change – have we protected the right areas?	VulneraWeb (ES) – Identification of populations under climate risk (Horizon 2020) Focus: Knowing which species are in danger (how ambient temperatures vary in space and time, where species are distributed, maximum temperature tolerance, what can animals

LIFE Platform Meeting: Amphibian and Reptile Conservation - Challenges and Opportunities in Europe

		do to hide from the hear? The VulneraWeb provides services to identify species under potential climate risk. <i>Speaker:</i> Dr Agustin Camacho GUERRERO
16:30	Working Group II: Practical measures for dealing with Invasive Species A review of the management of invasive alien reptiles of Union concern	IUCN/SSC – Invasive Species Specialist Group Focus: Review of methods, effectiveness of scale and acceptability. Work done by specifically by IUCN for European Commission. Acceptable use of pesticides including animal welfare. Awareness raising, monitoring and citizen science. <i>Speaker:</i> Riccardo SCALERA (Consultant for the SSG)
16:45	Working group III: ARC and land management Long-term future for amphibians and reptiles considering the increasing pressure on habitats through fragmentation, urbanisation and changing agricultural practices	LIFE AMPHICON (SI) – Amphibian Conservation and habitat restoration Focus: Measures for conserving amphibian species in Slovenia, Germany and Denmark, including habitat creation, establishing breeding populations and development of best practice guidelines. <i>Speakers:</i> Katja POBOLJŠAJ and Anja BOLCINA
17:00	Working group IV: EU and national policies, financing amphibian and reptile conservation To what extent are amphibians and reptiles taken into account in policy agendas and how will we finance active conservation measures?	LIFE for Species (LV) – Threatened species in Latvia: improved knowledge, capacity, data and awareness Focus: The Protection of Threatened Herpetofauna in Latvia, with an emphasis IUCN-based taxa evaluations and proposals for the protected species list criteria. <i>Speaker:</i> Andris ČEIRĀNS
17:15	Q and A session and open discussion	
17:30	Arrangements for Day 2 and closing remarks	
19:00	Joint networking dinner Palacio de la Magdalena	

Thursday 23 May 2024 – Working Groups

[Palacio de la Magdalena](#)

All **four groups** will run simultaneously. There will be **four rounds** during the day allowing each participant the opportunity of joining all the workshops on a rotational basis, we expect to have around 15 participants in each round and that the participants in each working group will change during the day.

Each Working Group will occupy one room for the whole day. Each round will start with one project presentation (i.e., 16 presentations in total), focusing on a specific issue within the thematic focus of each Working Group. Each Working Group will have a dedicated Facilitator to guide discussion and foster inclusion and Rapporteur to accurately record the main points of the discussion. Each session will be interactive with audience participation throughout – we encourage all participants to bring along their own results to share during the sessions.

There will opportunities for bi-lateral and small group networking, private conversations, and destressing in the coffee area outside the workgroup rooms! Posters will also be on display in this common area.

Each round:

- Presentation project (approx. 15' content) to stimulate discussion.
- Discussion
- Conclusions and drafting recommendations

Working Group I: ARC, Climate change and Protected Areas

Facilitator: María-José ARAMBURU (CINEA). Rapporteur: Ainhoa Darquistade (ELMEN)

09:00	Round 1	<p>Emys PL LIFE (PL, DK) – Active protection of rare amphibian and reptile species on the Natura 2000 network in the Czech Republic (LIFE17 NAT/PL/000011)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Measures to address problems related to the decline of European pond turtle and fire-bellied toad in five Natura 2000 sites. New challenges in the light of climate change. <p>Speaker: Jaromir KRAJEWSKI</p>
10:30	Coffee break – Networking and Poster Session	
11:00	Round 2	<p>LIFE INSUBRICUS (IT) – Urgent actions for long-term conservation of <i>Pelobates fuscus</i> INSUBRICUS in the distribution area (LIFE19 NAT/IT/000883)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Planning new habitats and restoration of existing habitats with changing climatic conditions and increasing drought episodes. <p>Speaker: Valentina PARCO (Parco Lombardo della Valle del Ticino)</p>
12:30	Lunch break – Networking and Poster Session	
13:30	Round 3	<p>LIFE Clima-Bombina (DK) – New habitats for Bombina bombina other amphibians and birds to counteract problems from climate change in coastal areas (LIFE18 NAT/DK/000732)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Securing existing areas by comprehensively extending agricultural areas – increasing connectivity through a range of habitat types. <p>Speaker: Carsten HORUP</p>
15:00	Coffee break – Networking and Poster Session	
15:30 - 17:00	Round 4	<p>RAVON, RACE/Bern Convention Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: How to select the important Herp areas in Europe – how do we accommodate climate change? - Speaker: Ronald ZOLLINGER
	Wrap-up	Debrief and informal wrap up by facilitator including instructions for field trip
		Free evening in Santander

Working group II: ARC and Invasive Species

Facilitator: Teresa CATELANI (ELMEN). Rapporteur: Riccardo SCALERA (IUCN)

09:00	Round 1	<p>LIFE RESQUE ALPYR (ES - LIFE20 NAT/ES/000369) and LIFE LimnoPirineus (ES - LIFE13 NAT/ES/001210) - Recovery of amphibian communities in high mountain lakes after the eradication of invasive fish species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Applying the techniques for eradication in pilot project at the large scale and in more complex lake systems - Speaker: Marc VENTURA
10:30	Coffee break - Networking and Poster Session	
11:00	Round 2	<p>LIFE EOLIZARD (IT) - Conservation of the Aeolian wall lizard through translocation, reintroduction and habitat restoration (LIFE22-NAT-IT-101114142)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Controlling predators - Sanctuary islands – removing competing species Italian wall lizard - Balancing populations with reintroductions (releasing captive bred individuals) <p>Speaker: Leonardo VIGNOLI</p>
12:30	Lunch break - Networking and Poster Session	
13:30	Round 3	<p>LIFE+ LAMPROPELTIS (ES) - Control of the invasive species <i>Lampropeltis getula californiae</i> on the island of Gran Canaria (BIODIV) (LIFE10 NAT/ES/000565)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: tools for tackling invasive species - Removal and eradication - Risk analysis manual of trade in exotic species - Watch list of Invasives - Early warning system <p>Speaker: Ramón GALLO BARNETO</p>
15:00	Coffee break - Networking and Poster Session	
15:30 - 17:00	Round 4	<p>IUCN/SSC – Invasive Specialist Species Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability and effectiveness of methods, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o detectability of target animals, o acceptability by the general public o dispatch of animals - Relevant IUCN activities <p>Speaker: Riccardo SCALERA</p>
17:00 – 17:15	Wrap-up	Debrief and informal wrap up by facilitator including instructions for field trip
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LIFE Platform Meeting: Amphibian and Reptile Conservation - Challenges and Opportunities in Europe

Working group III: ARC and land management

Facilitator: Karen LUNAN (ELMEN). Rapporteur: Stefania DALL'OLIO (ELMEN)

09:00	Round 1	Emys-R (FR, DE, LV, PL) – Bringing together people and nature (EU Biodiversa+ Programme) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Mitigating the decline of the European Pond Turtle through habitat restoration and reintroduction of the species - Speaker: Jean-Yves GEORGES, Kathrin THEISSINGER on behalf of the Emys-R Consortium
10:30	Coffee break - Networking and Poster Session	
11:00	Round 2	LIFE in Salt Marshes (CZ) – Complex ecological restoration of degraded and disappearing salt marshes in Moravian Pannonia (LIFE22 NAT-CZ-101113725) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Pollution control, high nature value farmland, engaging with stakeholders for a sustainable solution. - Speaker: Marie KOTASOVA ADAMKOVA
12:30	Lunch break - Networking and Poster Session	
13:30	Round 3	LIFE Atlantic Region (DE) - The exemplary implementation of the EU 2020 target with a focus on oligotrophic habitats on sand in the Atlantic region of Germany (LIFE15 IPE/DE/000007). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Restoration across 15 Atlantic sandy landscapes for improved conservation status of 6 amphibian and reptile species. - Speaker: Martina RAFFEL
15:00	Coffee break - Networking and Poster Session	
15:30 - 17:00	Round 4	LIFE DIVAQUA (ES) – Improving Aquatic Diversity in Picos de Europa (LIFE18 NAT/ES/000121) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Reducing anthropogenic pressure on biological diversity – improvement of amphibian habitats and reducing mortality risks - Speaker: David VIEITES
17:00 – 17:15	Wrap-up	Debrief and informal wrap up by facilitator including instructions for field trip
		Free evening in Santander

Working group IV: EU and national policies, financing amphibian and reptile conservation

EU Restoration Law

Facilitator and Rapporteur: Lynne BARRATT (ELMEN)

09:00 – 10:30	Round 1	<p>LIFE Tritó Montseny (ES) Conservation of the Montseny Newt (<i>Calotriton arnoldi</i>): management of the habitat, its population and environmental education ((LIFE15 NAT/ES/000757)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Improvement of the conservation status of the endemic Montseny brook newt and its riparian habitat – possible policy lessons - Speaker: Daniel Guinart Sureda
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break - Networking and Poster Session	
11:00 – 12:30	Round 2	<p>LIFE HUNVIPHAB (HU) – Viability improvement of Hungarian meadow viper populations and habitats in the Pannonian Region (LIFE18 NAT/HU/000799)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Preparation of viper friendly land management guidelines and recommendations for the CAP. Contribute to the conservation of the EU's natural capital (7th EAP), Biodiversity strategy and Climate change programme. - Speaker: Bálint HALPERN
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break - Networking and Poster Session	
13:30 – 15:00	Round 3	<p>CEO of the ARC Trust (UK) and RACE – Why are we monitoring?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus: Monitoring at the local level does not match with monitoring at the national level to feed Article 17 reporting – can we bridge the gap? - What are appropriate indicators of success? - What does good conservation status look like? - Speaker: Tony GENT
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee break - Networking and Poster Session	
15:30 - 17:00	Round 4	<p>Conservation Director of the ARC Trust (UK) – Is Nature's recovery imperilled by a false choice between wildlife and economy – or can we really blame greater crested newts for our economic decline?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What kind of policy advice should we be giving to our competent authorities on Amphibian and Reptile Conservation - How much is conservation effort dictated by economics – and how can we overcome this? - Species conservation strategies and how they could benefit amphibians and reptiles - Using Favourable Conservation Status to guide conservation efforts and set more ambitious goals - Is the threat of climate change just another distraction to prevent us from accomplishing action on the ground? - Speaker: Jim Foster
17:00 – 17:15	Wrap-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Debrief and informal wrap up by facilitator including instructions for field trip
		Free evening in Santander

LIFE Platform Meeting: Amphibian and Reptile Conservation - Challenges and Opportunities in Europe

Friday 24 May 2024 – Fun Field Day and Feedback Session		
NOTE: All timings are approximate except for the start time, embarkation to buses, due to traffic and road works		
08:00	Embarking to buses – please be prompt!	Assembly Point Palacio de la Magdalena (TBC)
10:00	Mirador de Santa Catalina Several stopping points along the way to visit project works including stepping stone ponds until we arrive at the beautiful location of Mirador Santa Catalina to see more project work and have many brilliant photo-opportunities in this spectacular landscape.	You will be hosted by project staff from the Steps4LIFE project who will be proud to demonstrate their important work to a wider audience.
13:30	‘Feedback in the Field’ at the beautiful outdoor location of Habario de Pendes Report on conclusions and policy recommendations with discussion and final reconciliation. 15 mins per workgroup	Outdoor Lunch: cold lunch boxes (meal, drink, fruits) in the delightful surroundings of the Habario de Pendes Facilitators and Rapporteurs from each workgroup will present the main findings to the whole group and you will have a chance to vote on the most important messages you would like to convey to the policy makers.
15:00	Closing remarks and thanks	Pilar GÓMEZ BAHAMONDE (Director the Fundación Camino Lebaniego Cantabria) and Maria Jose ARAMBURU (CINEA)
15:30	Village of Potes	Some further project interventions and a chance to look around the picturesque village of Potes
16:30	Return to Santander	
19:00	Arrival at Santander, free time, departure of delegates	