

Malta

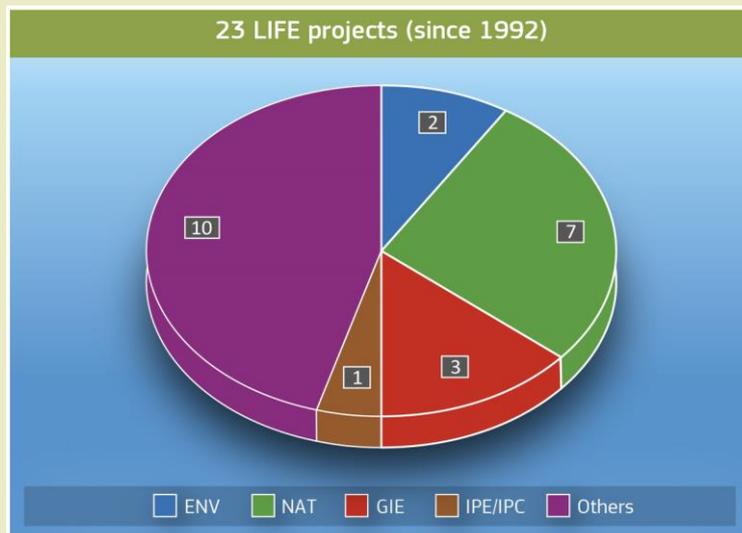


Overview

This document provides an overview of LIFE in Malta. It showcases key data and some of the latest LIFE projects.

You will also find contact details and other useful resources and a full list of current and recently-finished LIFE projects.

Every year calls for project proposals are launched covering the LIFE programme's priority areas.



Investment in LIFE projects in Malta (€ million)

	Total investment	EU contribution
ALL LIFE projects	55.5	31.5
Environment and Resource Efficiency (ENV)	2.7	1
Nature and Biodiversity (NAT)	13	7
Environmental Governance and Information (GIE)	2	1
Integrated (IPE/IPC)	17	10
Others	20.5	12.5

ABOUT LIFE

The LIFE programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action. It has been running since 1992 and has co-financed more than 4 500 projects across the EU and in third countries, mobilising over €9 billion and contributing more than €4 billion to the protection of the environment and climate. The budget for the LIFE programme for 2014–2020 is set at €3.4 billion in current prices, with a sub-programme for environment and a sub-programme for climate action.

Types of LIFE project:

- Traditional (Environment and Resource Efficiency; Nature and Biodiversity; Environmental Governance and Information; Climate Change Mitigation; Climate Change Adaptation; Climate Governance and Information).
- Integrated (Environment, Nature or Climate Action)
- Preparatory
- Capacity-building

Other types of LIFE funding:

- NGO operating grants
- Natural Capital Financing Facility (NCFF)
- Private Finance for Energy Efficiency (PF4EE)

NCFF and PF4EE are joint initiatives with the European Investment Bank, which manages the two funds. For more information visit: <http://ec.europa.eu/life>

LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency

This LIFE priority area is aimed at developing, testing and demonstrating best practices, solutions and integrated approaches to environmental challenges, as well as improving the related knowledge base.

To date, the LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency strand (formerly the LIFE Environment Policy and Governance component) has co-financed two projects in Malta, representing a total investment of €2.7 million, of which €1.1 million has been provided by the EU.

Malta's first LIFE Environment Policy and Governance project finished in 2015. The DemoEV project conducted the first demonstration action on the deployment of electric vehicles in Malta, by distributing a sample of vehicles to selected volunteers. The project was carried out by the Maltese Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs. The total budget amounted to €1.9 million, of which the EU contributed 50%.

The second project, LifeMedGreenRoof, aimed to construct two demonstration green roofs as case studies: one on the University of Malta's Faculty for the Built Environment campus building and the other on a building located on the campus of Fondazione Minoprio (a project partner) in Italy. The project was coordinated by the University of Malta. A more detailed description of the project's results is presented in the box below.



Constructing two demonstration green roofs to illustrate the potential of meeting environmental and energy targets (LifeMedGreenRoof) **LIFE11 ENV/MT/000732**

The LifeMedGreenRoof project represented a first major Maltese initiative to show the feasibility and benefits of green roofs. To this end it set up two demonstration green roofs: one in Italy and one in Malta. Initial efforts focused on identifying native plant species that are able to survive in a green roof environment. The plants selected were propagated and tested in green roof simulation beds to verify their compatibility with the exposed environment and with the substrate. Over 15 species of plants were eventually identified in both Italy and Malta. Given that soil is not an ideal growing medium on green roofs, studies were carried out of a range of components to be used as alternatives. An innovative material, Biochar, was selected to make up some of the substrates, owing in part to its ability to sequester carbon.

The green roofs were analysed to highlight their suitability for replication in a Mediterranean environment. Monitoring confirmed that native plants can be successfully grown on a green roof even when exposed to direct sunlight and wind. The project's growing media can retain between 60% to 90% of the annual precipitation depending on its depth, and the frequency and intensity of rainfall.

Furthermore, the presence of a green roof was shown to result in the reduced use of air-conditioning to cool the underlying rooms, due to the insulation effect of the substrate and plants. They also keep the temperature of the roof slab and damp-proof membrane stable, especially during the hot summer season; in winter most of the plants can go without irrigation, while during the dry season irrigation need not be intensive.

Another recorded benefit of the installation of the roofs is the creation of habitats for pollinator insects and other beneficial creatures, including birds and butterflies. Moreover, green roofs help create pleasant environments for those with windows overlooking the roofs.

The results of the project helped to draft two key documents: the Maltese standard for green roof construction, which provides professionals with information to ensure that green roof systems are planned, constructed and maintained in accordance with best practices and within the Maltese legal framework; and the green roof guidance document, which brought together all the findings of the project. The latter document proposes ways of integrating green roofs within national or regional policies and legislation. It was distributed to authorities, institutions, and government departments, which have an interest in the quality of the urban environment.

A great number of individuals and institutions visited the green roofs and participated in the project's events. In this way, awareness was raised among stakeholders on the need to adopt green roofs within urban areas. The long-term impact can be measured by the eventual uptake of the technology over a wide area and by the influence the project has on stakeholders in the coming years. Through the project it became clear that action must be carried out by local authorities to integrate the technology into the planning system and the construction industry.

For further information:

https://www.um.edu.mt/ben/faculty/the_lifemedgreenroof_project

LIFE Nature and Biodiversity

This LIFE priority area is aimed at developing, testing and demonstrating best practices, solutions and integrated approaches to contribute to the development and implementation of nature and biodiversity policy and legislation, as well as improving the related knowledge base.

To date, the LIFE Nature and Biodiversity component has co-financed seven projects in Malta. These represent a total investment of €13 million, of which €7 million was contributed by the EU.

The results achieved by closed projects were: reversing the decline in the Yelkouan shearwater (*Puffinus yelkouan*) population at Rđum tal-Madonna, a designated Natura 2000 site which hosts the largest colony of this bird species on the Maltese islands; creating an inventory of Marine Important Bird Areas (IBAs) for Yelkouan shearwater, Scopoli's shearwater and European storm-petrel breeding in Malta; implementing soil stabilisation measures aimed at protecting Annex I Habitats Directive habitats in the Buskett-Girgenti Natura 2000 site; surveying and collecting data on marine areas, helping the Maltese authorities to establish the identification, distribution and extension of these areas (namely, sandbanks, reefs, submerged and partially submerged sea caves) within the Natura 2000 network; implementing data-collecting activities and marine surveys (during the summers of 2014 and 2015) to understand the conservation status of the loggerhead turtle and common bottlenose dolphin, and to identify the best areas in Maltese waters to establish Natura 2000 network sites for these species; and securing the conservation of the Balearic shearwater and Yelkouan shearwater on the Maltese islands.

These projects were implemented by BirdLife Malta and by three national authorities: the Ministry for Sustainable Development, Environment and Climate Change, the Environment and Planning Authority, and the Environment and Resources authority.

There is one ongoing project, which started its actions in September 2020. It is aiming to improve the conservation status of endemic Yelkouan shearwater and other seabirds by ensuring their safety both on land and at sea. The project is being coordinated by BirdLife Malta.



Securing the Maltese islands for the Yelkouan Shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan* (LIFE Arcipelagu Garnija) LIFE14 NAT/MT/000991

The LIFE Arcipelagu Garnija project improved the conservation status of the Yelkouan shearwater (*Puffinus yelkouan*) in the Maltese islands, by reducing serious threats affecting the species. The measures taken also benefitted other seabirds. This was the first project in Malta, and one of the first in Europe, to reduce light pollution as a seabird conservation method.

The project conducted a successful localised predator management campaign, at eight sites where rat presence was verified, including five Natura 2000 sites. These areas account for more than half of the national population of Yelkouan shearwater. Fluctuating annual bird breeding success was observed, though reaching a satisfactory percentage for the species ($\geq 75\%$). The rat control led to an increase in the reproductive success of Yelkouan shearwater in three of the monitored colonies, with estimated percentage increase for these colonies from 2016 up to 2020 from 4.65% to 7.06%. Fifla islet has remained rat-free, as shown by the biosecurity monitoring performed. Therefore, 50% of the Mediterranean population of storm-petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*) was also safeguarded from predation.

The project team conducted pioneering work on the effects of light pollution on breeding seabirds. As a result, guidelines and recommendations for changes to policy and legislation on coastal light pollution were produced. These have increased awareness about coastal light pollution in Malta. Ċirkewwa Ferry mitigated light pollution was mitigated by changing 34 lights, resulting in 50% reduction in light pollution. This reduced light pollution improved habitat quality at ten sites for Yelkouan shearwater breeding colonies. The project's light pollution work also led to a reduced cost of energy use, by reducing unnecessary light and increasing lighting efficiency, in light pollution mitigation areas.

Other outcomes were two Notices to Mariners, aimed at reducing the disturbance of boat traffic to shearwater colonies, and a Code of Conduct aimed at mitigating disturbance by boats, which was signed by three operators. The project team's work led to the designation of a new Natura 2000 site, SPA Wied Il-Għasri (MT0000037), following submission of data collected by the project. Two more sites are being evaluated for SPA designation. In addition to Yelkouan shearwater, the project's ecosystem level analysis also involved collecting data on storm-petrel, Scopoli's shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*) and yellow-legged gull (*Larus michahellis*).

In total, the project actions affected 11 Natura 2000 sites along the Maltese coast. The implementation conservation measures were included in the management plans of these sites. The project enabled BirdLife Malta to complete the first fine-scaled study of each known breeding colony of the Yelkouan shearwater in Malta, and to provide useful information for long-term conservation and management actions. Furthermore, the monitoring activities also showed growing public awareness about seabirds and the threats they face.

For further information:

<http://birdlifemalta.org/arcipelagugarnija/>

LIFE Environmental Governance and Information

This priority area is aimed at raising awareness of environmental matters, supporting the communication, management and dissemination of environmental information, and promoting better environmental governance by broadening stakeholder involvement.

To date, this strand (formerly the LIFE+ Information and Communication component) has co-financed three projects in Malta. This represents a total investment of €2 million, of which €1 million was provided by the EU. The projects were carried out by two NGOs (BirdLife Malta and the Malta Business Bureau) and one national authority, the Ministry for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change. The project durations were around 30 months.

All three projects are closed. The main objective of the STOP-TRAPPING-MALTA project was to raise awareness among bird trappers and the general public about the ending of the transition period for trapping activities and about the damage trapping causes to wild bird populations. Through a series of information campaigns and audits, the Investing in Water project demonstrated that targeted stakeholders can contribute to the reduction of water (and energy) consumption in Malta. The InfoNitrates project improved the implementation of the national Nitrates Action Plan, by giving farmers and livestock breeders the necessary information and training to comply with it, and by establishing a Nitrates Action Unit. The results of this project are described in detail in the box below.



Information and communications campaign for the proper use and management of nitrates in agriculture and livestock breeding (InfoNitrates) LIFE10 INF/MT/000092

The project conducted extensive information and training campaigns, focusing on stakeholders' obligations under the Nitrates Action Plan (NAP) and raising awareness about the harmful effects on health of nitrates in drinking water.

Most farmers and livestock breeders in Malta were reached through training sessions at their farms or through 29 public meetings on two of the country's islands. In particular, farmers were instructed on the use of a fertiliser plan produced by the project beneficiary, through one-to-one training activities on farms. This tool, based on the analysis of soil fertility in fields, gives fertilising instructions for those specific fields for particular crops. The fertiliser plan reduced the Gross Nitrogen Balance on the farms where it was implemented. This enabled farmers to meet their obligations under the NAP and also to increase the efficiency of their fertilisation practices. By reducing the global Gross Nitrogen Balance levels on farms on a national scale, the project helped prevent degradation of water quality in groundwater aquifers, with health benefits for the Maltese population. Livestock breeders were made aware of their obligations relating to the proper storage and transport of manure, and learned how to find tailor-made technical solutions according to the number and type of livestock (dairy cows, cattle, sheep or goats). The project delivered, in total, training to 2 032 operators, around 73% of those available. In the case of livestock breeders, those not trained declined the project's intervention due to their involvement with similar activities, for example, those run by the Directorate of Agriculture and the Veterinary Service of the Ministry for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change.

Information campaigns on stakeholder obligations under the Nitrates Directive and awareness raising of the harmful effects on health of excessive application of nitrogen were carried out with the support of farmers' and breeders' associations and local councils. A total of 910 farmers participated in village meetings and around 300 people visited the InfoNitrates stand during the two-day national fair at MCAST Agribusiness (Malta's principal agriculture education institution). Over 1 600 information brochures were produced with the help of local councils and 20 000 copies of a 20-minute audio-visual DVD were distributed which contained key messages for farmers and livestock breeders about nitrate pollution and how to prevent it.

Information was also available directly from the project's office and a free phone service established by the project. Staff trained within the project framework answered 622 calls to this line, mainly dealing with technical issues such as storage requirements for manure and fertiliser specified by the NAP.

The project facilitated compliance with nitrate regulations. Its environmental benefits arose from the dissemination of information to the main rural stakeholders, but also by creating dialogues and providing feedback to the authorities regarding provisions that needed to be addressed to ensure better compliance with the Nitrates Directive. Finally, the project also provided insights on the main factors for the monitoring of provisions relating to the Nitrates Directive.

For further information:

<http://agriculture.gov.mt/en/agric/Pages/Info%20Nitrates/dproject.aspx>

LIFE Integrated Projects for the Environment and Climate

This LIFE priority area is aimed at implementing on a large territorial scale (regional, multi-regional, national, trans-national) environmental or climate plans or strategies required by specific EU environmental or climate legislation, primarily in the areas of nature, water, waste, air and climate change mitigation and adaptation. Integrated Projects ensure the involvement of stakeholders and promote the coordination with and mobilisation of at least one other relevant EU, national or private funding source.

To date, one LIFE Integrated Project (IP) has been co-financed in Malta. This represents a total budget of €17 million, of which the EU will contribute €10 million. The main aim of the RBMP MALTA project is to support the implementation of the Maltese River Basin Management Plan through the establishment of an integrated framework for the optimised management of all water resources on the Maltese islands. The project is coordinated by the Maltese Energy and Water Agency.



Optimising the implementation of the 2nd RBMP in the Maltese River Basin District (RBMP Malta) LIFE16 IPE/MT/000008

To achieve its objectives, the project will seek to address the key horizontal challenges identified during a gap analysis undertaken as part of the development process for the second Maltese River Basin Management Plan (RBMP). The challenges will be addressed through the implementation of best practice, demonstration, pilot study, and capacity building actions.

The key horizontal challenges are to:

- Increase the awareness of the need to conserve and protect water resources and dependent terrestrial, aquatic and marine ecosystems;
- Facilitate the uptake of measures, through demonstration actions and cases of best practices in addition to fiscal incentives, to build up the confidence of stakeholders and water users in the solutions proposed;
- Improve the institutional approach to measure implementation, achieving a high level of institutional and stakeholder dialogue; and
- Reduce uncertainty in water body status assessments through improved knowledge of water-related processes, ecosystems and ecosystem services, as well as on interactions with anthropogenic activity, with a view to inform appropriate ecosystem-based management regimes and increase the trust of stakeholders in the status assessments.

The project expects to achieve the following objectives:

- Reduced domestic water demand by around 5%, thereby generating annual savings of around 850 000m³ in the municipal water supply;
- A net increase in the mean annual recharge of around 1.2 million m³, coming from alternative water sources such as rainwater runoff and highly-cleaned treated effluents;
- Increased capacity of wastewater treatment plants to produce highly-cleaned water and increased use of this treated wastewater (instead of groundwater);
- Reduced flood risk and improved groundwater status;
- Increased awareness on the challenges facing the water sector; and
- Optimised management of coastal ecosystems.

For further information:

<https://www.facebook.com/RBMLIFEMT/>

Find out more about LIFE and LIFE projects

<p>LIFE website</p> <p>The LIFE website provides a wealth of information on the LIFE programme: https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/life_en</p>	
<p>LIFE project database</p> <p>For further information on LIFE projects in Malta or LIFE projects in general, please consult the online LIFE projects' database: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm</p> <p>This easy-to-use database is the authoritative source of information on all ongoing and completed LIFE projects. It also provides information on the beneficiaries, their contact details, and the projects' websites.</p>	
<p>Social media</p> <p>  twitter.com/LIFE_Programme  http://www.facebook.com/LIFE.programme  </p>	
<p>Contact</p>	
<p>The National Contact Point for Malta</p> <p>Ministry for Environment, Climate Change and Planning</p> <p>Name: Ms Evelina Maria COLACINO Address: 6, Triq Hal Qormi MT - Santa Venera MALTA</p> <p>Tel: +356 2292 6200 E-mail: evelina-maria.colacino.1@gov.mt life.mecp@gov.mt</p> <p>Website: Ministry of the Environment</p> <p>The Monitoring Team for Malta</p> <p>NEEMO EEIG – TIMESIS</p> <p>Address: Via Niccolini 7 I-56017 San Giuliano Terme</p> <p>Tel: +39 050 818800 Fax: +39 050 818801 E-mail: timesis@neemo.eu</p>	

Recently closed and ongoing LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency projects				
Project Title	Project Number	Website	Click on the icon to read the project summary	Project duration
Constructing two demonstration green roofs to illustrate the potential of meeting environmental and energy targets (LifeMedGreenRoof)	LIFE12 ENV/MT/000732	https://www.um.edu.mt/ben/faculty/the_lifemedgreenroof_project		07/2013-> 07/2017

Recently closed and ongoing LIFE Nature & Biodiversity projects				
Project Title	Project Number	Website	Click on the icon to read the project summary	Project duration
Creating an inventory of Marine IBAs for Puffinus yelkouan, Calonectris diomedea and Hydrobates pelagicus in Malta (MALTA SEABIRD PROJECT)	LIFE10 NAT/MT/000090	http://www.birdlifemalta.org		09/2011 -> 06/2016
Conservation Status and potential Sites of Community Interest for Tursiops truncatus and Caretta caretta in Malta (Project MIGRATE)	LIFE11 NAT/MT/000070	http://lifeprojectmigrate.com/		10/2012 -> 04/2016
Soil stabilisation measures to protect Annex I habitats in Buskett-Girgenti Natura 2000 site (LIFE SAVING BUSKETT)	LIFE12 NAT/MT/000182	http://msdec.gov.mt/en/Pages/Life%20Saving%20Buskett/Home.aspx		07/2013 -> 05/2018
Life+ Benthic Habitat Research for marine Natura 2000 site designation (LIFE BaHAR for N2K)	LIFE12 NAT/MT/000845	http://lifebahar.org.mt/		10/2013 -> 06/2017
LIFE Arcipelagu Garnija - Securing the Maltese islands for the Yelkouan Shearwater Puffinus yelkouan (LIFE Arcipelagu Garnija)	LIFE14 NAT/MT/000991	http://birdlifemalta.org/arcipelagu_garnija/		09/2015 -> 08/2020
Improving the conservation status of endemic Balearic and Yelkouan shearwaters by ensuring safe land and sea (LIFE PanPuffinus!)	LIFE19 NAT/MT/000982	N/A		09/2020 -> 08/2025

Ongoing LIFE Integrated Projects				
Project Title	Project Number	Website	Click on the icon to read the project summary	Project duration
Optimising the implementation of the 2nd RBMP in the Maltese River Basin District (RBMP Malta)	LIFE16 IPE/MT/000008	https://www.rbmplife.org.mt/		01/2018 -> 12/2025