

LIFE Programme in Bulgaria



Facts and figures

The LIFE Programme has funded 50 projects in Bulgaria, over 30 coordinating beneficiaries, with total project costs of €105 m, of which the EU contributed €67 m.

The LIFE Programme is the EU's funding instrument for environment and climate action. It has been running since 1992 and has co-financed more than 5500 projects across the EU and in third countries, mobilising more over €12 billion and contributing with more than €5 billion to the protection of the environment and climate. The LIFE programme contributes fully to the objectives and targets of the European Green Deal.

The budget for the period 2021–2027 is set at €5.4 billion.

The following sub-programmes are covered (*):

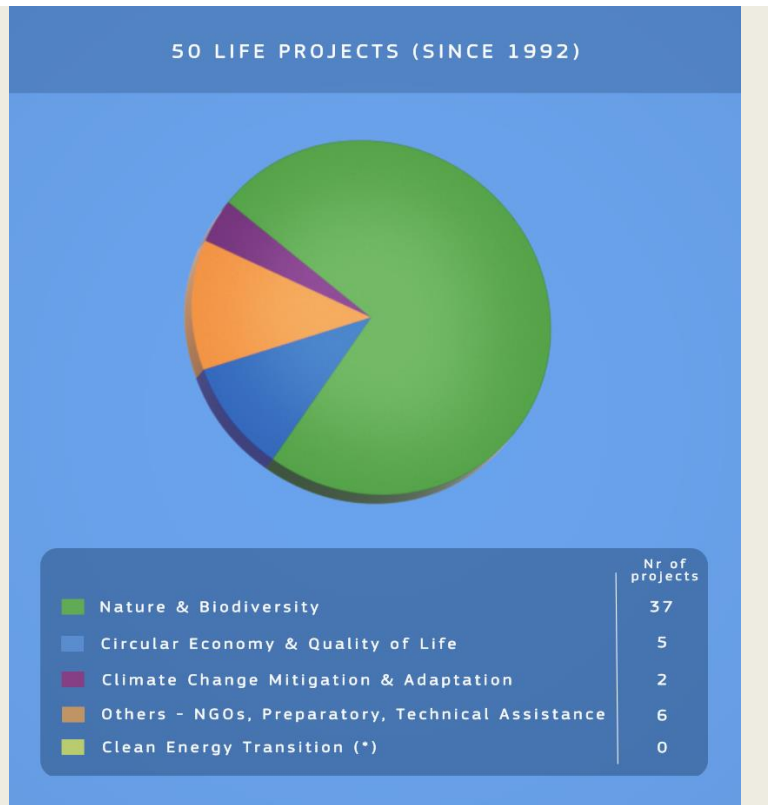
- **Nature and biodiversity**
- **Circular economy and quality of life**
- **Climate change mitigation and adaptation**
- **Clean energy transition** (first call for projects in 2021) (*)

For more information:

https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/life_en

'The future is green. The future is LIFE' leaflet

Past and closed projects are designated in this document with the new LIFE programme 2021–2027 nomenclature



INVESTMENT IN LIFE PROJECTS IN BULGARIA (€ million)

	TOTAL INVESTMENT	EU CONTRIBUTION
ALL LIFE projects	105	67
Nature & Biodiversity	71.5	49
Circular Economy & Quality of Life	27	15
Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation	5	2
Others - NGOs, Preparatory, Technical Assistance	1.3	0.9



LIFE Nature and Biodiversity

The Nature and Biodiversity strand includes support for standard action projects for developing, applying and promoting best practice in relation to nature and biodiversity, as well as “Strategic Nature Projects” (SNAP). These new projects support the achievement of Union nature and biodiversity objectives by implementing coherent programmes of action in Member States in order to mainstream those objectives and priorities into other policies and financing instruments, including through coordinated implementation of the prioritised action frameworks adopted pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC.

To date, 37 projects were co-funded under this strand in Bulgaria. These represent a total investment of €71.5 million, of which €49 million was contributed by the EU.

The closed projects aimed to conserve and restore the following species: red-breasted goose, imperial eagle, Egyptian and griffon vultures as well as other birds of prey, lesser kestrel, Eurasian black vulture, rheophilic fish, molluscs and highly-endangered plants. The habitats targeted by the projects were: lakes (Mandra-Poda, Atanasovsko), forests and coastal lagoons. These projects were carried out by NGOs, a research institute (the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research), and regional and national authorities. They had durations of between 51 and 66 months. Amongst these projects, five received Best LIFE Nature Project awards.

16 projects are ongoing. Their objectives include the conservation/restoration of the following habitats: key forest habitats of the lesser spotted eagle; priority forest habitats within the Bulgarian Natura 2000 network; habitats for the conservation of the red-breasted goose within the EU and also along its global migration flyway; three of the rarest and most vulnerable natural forest and grassland habitat types in Bulgaria; coastal lagoons in the Atanasovsko Lake Natura 2000 site; the Pomorie Lake coastal lagoons and Lake Varna; Bourgas wetlands; and forest habitats. Other projects target the protection/conservation and improving the status of species, such as the Balkan population of the Egyptian vulture; nine bat species listed in the Habitats Directive (Annexes II and IV) in eight Natura 2000 network sites in Bulgaria; saker falcon; lesser spotted eagle; European vultures; red-breasted goose; and the imperial eagle. Two projects specifically aim at protecting the breeding, wintering and migrating populations of threatened bird species by reducing mortality caused by electricity infrastructure. Another one tackles the cohabitation of bats and people.

Four projects have been co-funded under the former Environmental governance and information strand. Two of them are closed. The SusHerb LIFE 2012 project aimed to promote the sustainable harvesting of wild herbs in Bulgaria. The NaturAll LIFE project delivered a series of carefully planned communication and information actions designed to raise awareness in Bulgaria of the Natura 2000 network.

The two other projects are ongoing. The LIFEforBgNATURA project will raise public awareness about the Natura 2000 network by focusing on the conservation of flagship species, including wolves, bears, vultures, eagles and sturgeons in Bulgaria. LIFE SWiPE aims to discourage, and ultimately reduce, wildlife crime in Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovakia, Hungary, Spain, Italy, Ukraine and Poland.



Circular Economy and Quality of Life

Actions supported under the Circular economy and quality of life strand will help in reaching major EU policy objectives such as the transition to a circular economy, as well as protecting and improving the quality of the environment and life. Under this strand, Strategic Integrated Projects (SIP), will implement, on a regional, multi-regional, national or transnational scale, environmental or climate strategies or action plans developed by Member States' authorities and required by specific environmental, climate or relevant energy legislation or policy of the Union. These projects will also ensure that stakeholders are involved and promoting coordination with and mobilisation of at least one other Union, national or private funding source.

This strand [formerly LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency and Environmental Governance and Information] has co-financed five projects in Bulgaria, representing a total investment of €27 million, of which €15 million has been provided by the EU.

The first project co-funded under this strand, LIFE RECYCLING DEMONSTRATION, started in January 2010 but did not achieve its objectives due to financial constraints. The project had aimed to demonstrate the effective separation, collection, treatment and recycling of waste from electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) in Bulgaria. The LIFE Eco-HeatOx project introduced heat recovery systems for small- and medium-size furnaces using natural gas through an innovative HeatOx technology for tableware glass furnaces.

There are two ongoing projects. LIFE RESKIBOOT project's objective is to provide high-quality and cost-competitive ski boots made with recycled materials. The LIFE WATEROIL project aims to demonstrate a sustainable water treatment approach of relevance to high water-demanding industries.

One Strategic Integrated Project has been co-funded in Bulgaria under this strand. The LIFE IP CLEAN AIR project's objectives are summarised below.



Bulgarian municipalities working together to improve air quality (LIFE IP CLEAN AIR) LIFE17 IPE/BG/000012

The LIFE IP CLEAN AIR project will encourage and streamline the efforts of the 6 partner municipalities (Sofia, Burgas, Veliko Tarnovo, Montana, Ruse, and Stara Zagora) to improve air quality in these cities by decreasing pollutants emissions particularly from domestic heating; support their administrative capacity-building; raise awareness and create a well-informed community of citizens and NGOs who can partner and challenge the administrations and drive change; and improve the transfer of know-how and experience in the field of air quality through networking with other EU municipalities, institutions, projects and partners.

[Project summary](#)



LIFE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

The LIFE Climate change mitigation and adaptation strand will support actions which help implement the 2030 energy and climate policy framework and meet the European Union's commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Projects under this strand will contribute to climate neutral and resilient economy.

Strategic Integrated Climate Projects (SIP), will implement, on a regional, multi-regional, national or transnational scale, climate strategies or action plans developed by Member States' authorities and required by specific climate or relevant energy legislation or policy of the Union. These projects will also ensure that stakeholders are involved and promote coordination with and mobilisation of at least one other Union, national or private funding source.

The Climate Change strand has co-financed two projects in Bulgaria. The LIFE Smart Oxy-Boost came recently to an end, demonstrating partial oxy-fuel conversion of a side-fired regenerative (air-fuel) float glass furnace.

The ongoing LIFE CleanOx project aims to demonstrate an innovative radiative heat exchanger-based HeatOx solution, validated at a tableware glass plant, which facilitates waste heat recovery in oxy-fuel furnaces.

Both projects represent a total investment of €5 million, of which the EU contributes €2 million.



LIFE Clean Energy Transition

Building on the Intelligent Energy Europe (2003-2013) and Horizon 2020 Energy Efficiency (2014-2020) programmes, the LIFE Clean Energy Transition sub-programme continues to support the delivery of EU policies in the field of sustainable energy. In particular, it aims at facilitating the transition towards an energy-efficient, renewable energy-based, climate-neutral and -resilient economy across Europe.

The LIFE Clean Energy Transition sub-programme supports projects in the following five areas of intervention:

- 1) Building a national, regional and local policy framework supporting the clean energy transition;
- 2) Accelerating technology roll-out, digitalisation, new services and business models and enhancement of the related professional skills on the market;
- 3) Attracting private finance for sustainable energy;
- 4) Supporting the development of local and regional investment projects;
- 5) Involving and empowering citizens in the clean energy transition.

Want to know more about LIFE?

- Visit the [LIFE website](#) and [LIFE project database](#)

- Follow the LIFE programme on social media:



- Sign up to the [LIFE Programme](#) and [CINEA Clean Energy](#) Newsletters

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Ongoing LIFE Nature & Biodiversity projects				
Project Title	Project Number	Project acronym and link to the online summary	Website	Project duration
Bright Future for Black Vulture in Bulgaria	LIFE14 NAT/BG/000649	Vultures back to LIFE	http://www.greenbalkans.org/VulturesBack	07/2015 → 07/2022
Conservation of threatened birds through retrofitting of hazardous overhead powerlines in Natura 2000 sites in W Bulgaria	LIFE16 NAT/BG/000612	LIFE BIRDS on POWER LINES	http://bspb.org/en/projects/preview/269.html	10/2017 → 12/2022
Conservation of the Red-breasted Goose along the Global Flyway	LIFE16 NAT/BG/000847	LIFE FOR SAFE FLIGHT	http://savebranta.org	09/2017 → 10/2022
Collaborative management for conservation of forest and grassland habitats negatively affected by IAS in Bulgaria	LIFE16 NAT/BG/000856	LIFE IAS Free Habitats	https://invasiveplants.eu	10/2017 → 10/2022
Urgent Action to Strengthen the Balkan Population of the Egyptian Vulture and Secure Its Flyway	LIFE16 NAT/BG/000874	Egyptian Vulture New LIFE	http://lifeneophon.eu/en/About-the-project.html	10/2017 → 12/2022
the Lagoon of LIFE	LIFE17 NAT/BG/000558	The Lagoon of LIFE	https://www.lagoonsforlife.com/	10/2018 → 09/2024
Bats and men - sharing LIFE under one roof	LIFE17 NAT/BG/000602	LIFE UNDER ONE ROOF	https://batslife.eu/life-under-one-roof/	08/2018 → 07/2023
Conservation measures for the Lesser Spotted Eagle and its habitats in Bulgaria	LIFE18 NAT/BG/001051	LIFE for Eagles habitats	http://www.eagleforests.org	08/2019 → 08/2024
Conservation of Pomorie Lake coastal lagoon	LIFE19 NAT/BG/000804	LIFE FOR POMORIE LAGOON	https://lifeforpomorielagoon.eu/	09/2020 → 08/2023
Demonstration of a pilot green infrastructure as a win-win solution for biodiversity and development in Lake Varna	LIFE19 NAT/BG/000839	LIFE for Lake Varna	http://www.bgports.bg/en/page/142	09/2020 → 08/2025
Enhancing the restoration, climate resilience and biodiversity value of priority forest habitats within Natura 2000 SCIs	LIFE19 NAT/BG/000986	LIFE REFOREST	https://www.wwf.bg/what_we_do/forests/life_reforest/	09/2020 → 12/2024
Better Life for Lesser Kestrel in South-East Balkans	LIFE19 NAT/BG/001017	LIFE for Lesser Kestrel	https://lesserkestrellife.greenbalkans.org/	09/2020 → 09/2025
Eradication of IAS, recreation and conservation of priority forest habitats within Natura 2000 network in NE Bulgaria	LIFE19 NAT/BG/001133	LIFE IASHAB	https://sidp.bg/life19-nat-bg-001133-life-iashab/	09/2020 → 12/2024

Securing the recovery of the Endangered Saker Falcon in Bulgaria and Southern Romania	LIFE20 NAT/BG/001162	LIFE for Falcons	N/A	10/2021 -> 12/2026
Conservation of threatened bird species through retrofitting of hazardous overhead power lines around Burgas Lakes	LIFE19 NAT/BG/001234	LIFE Safe Grid for Burgas	N/A	09/2021 -> 09/2026
NATURA 2000 IN BULGARIA – NEW HORIZONS National awareness raising campaign on NATURA 2000 using flagship species	LIFE17 GIE/BG/000371	LIFEforBgNATURA	https://greenbalkans.org/natura2000/newhorizons	09/2018 -> 08/2023
Successful Wildlife Crime Prosecution in Europe	LIFE19 GIE/BG/000846	LIFE SWIPE	https://www.wwfadria.org/wh-at-we-do/all-initiatives/life-swipe/	09/2020 -> 08/2023

Ongoing LIFE Circular Economy and Quality of Life projects				
Project Title	Project Number	Project acronym and link to the online summary	Website	Project duration
TAKE-BACK & RE-USE SYSTEM FROM SKI BOOT RENTALS FOR SORTING AND RECYCLING OF MULTI-PLASTICS COMPONENTS	LIFE19 ENV/BG/000059	LIFE RESKIBOOT	https://www.lifereskiboot.eu/	09/2020-> 02/2024
Process water treatment unit for better river basin management	LIFE20 ENV/BG/001042	LIFE WATEROIL	N/A	09/2021-> 08/2024
Bulgarian municipalities working together to improve air quality	LIFE17 IPE/BG/000012	LIFE IP CLEAN AIR	https://lifeipcleanair.eu/	10/2018-> 10/2024

Ongoing LIFE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation projects				
Project Title	Project Number	Project acronym and link to the online summary	Website	Project duration
Cleanest oxy-fuel combustion technology with radiation based waste heat recovery for glass melting furnaces	LIFE16 CCM/BG/000059	LIFE CleanOx	https://www.lifecleanox.com/	07/2017 -> 12/2023