

LIFE Programme in Belgium



Facts and figures

The LIFE Programme has funded 316 projects in Belgium over 139 coordinating beneficiaries with total project costs of €808m, of which the EU contributed €359.5m.

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 (*):

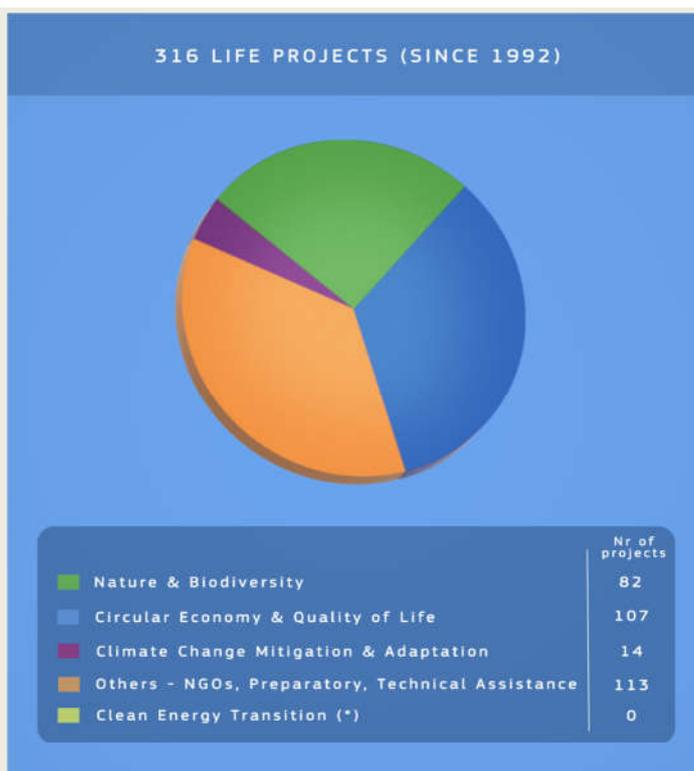
- **Nature and biodiversity**
- **Circular economy and quality of life**
- **Climate change mitigation and adaptation**
- **Clean energy transition** (first call for projects in 2021) (*)

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 BELGIUM (€ million)

	TOTAL INVESTMENT	EU CONTRIBUTION
ALL LIFE projects	808	359
Nature & Biodiversity	329	182.5
Circular Economy & Quality of Life	260	102.5
Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation	74.5	29
Others - NGOs, Preparatory, Technical Assistance	144.5	45.5
Clean Energy Transition (*)	0	



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, the LIFE Nature and Biodiversity component has co-financed 82 projects in Belgium. These represent a total investment of €329 million, of which €182.5 million has been contributed by the EU.

The completed projects focused mainly on the restoration, conservation and management of habitats. These included the Ardenne liégeoise region, Uitkerkse polders; the Dommel valley; woods in the Flemish Ardennes; the calcareous habitat types in the region of Lesse and Lomme; the fossil estuary of the Yzer Dunes; the upper Meuse dry grasslands; the minerotrophic mires and heath ecosystems in the Zuiderkempen; Hageland; peat and wet habitats on the Saint-Hubert Plateau; the lowland mire “Damvallei”; marshes along the river Scheldt; the pond complex of Central-Limburg; the oligo-mesotrophic aquatic habitats in de Kempen; the wetlands in Belgian Lorraine; the salt meadows in the Flemish polders; the valleys and turf moors of Croix Scaille and the Tailles Plateau; heathland in various areas; bird habitats in Abeek; the bocage landscapes of the Fagne and Famenne; forests in the Most-Keiheuvel; Zwin tidal area; the Bosbeek, Itterbeek, Groote and Kleine Nete valleys; grassland in the Vochtig Haspengouw and Southern Lorraine areas; grasslands in the east coast polders; and alluvial forests and creeks within the flood-controlled Scheldt estuary site Kruikebeke-Bazel-Rupelmonde. One project specifically worked on the protection of natural habitats for critically endangered species in the Sonian forest. Another developed innovative techniques for the creation and maintenance of forest corridors for overhead power lines, in order to maximise their potential benefits for biodiversity. The projects also aimed to protect certain species (the pearl mussel, the corncrake, endangered bat species in Flanders, and threatened butterflies in Wallonia). NGOs constituted by far (more than 80%) the largest category of coordinating beneficiaries. The remaining projects were coordinated by regional, local and park authorities, as well as a professional organisation.

There are 11 ongoing LIFE Nature projects in Belgium. These aim to restore habitats (coastal dunes between Dunkirk in France and Westende in Belgium; Demer valley; grassland and forest habitats in Wallonia (Belgium) and Grand Est (France) regions) or species (*Nardus* and *Limosa* in the Kempen). Some project have more specific objectives: LIFE Pays mosan focuses on the connectivity of the Natura 2000 network across the Belgian-Dutch borders in the Meuse basin. LIFE4FISH aims at creating a fish migration way along the Meuse river; and connecting habitat conservation with long-term biomass management in Flanders (Belgium) and Poland. LIFE 3n-Bullfrog will control aquatic invasive fauna, with a pilot project on the American bullfrog. The LIFE DUNIAS project aims to fight IAS in the Belgian coastal zone in a structured and concerted way.

One closed project, co-funded under the former Information & Communication strand, AlterIAS, increased awareness to curb horticultural introductions of invasive plants in Belgium.

One ongoing Strategic Nature Project has been co-funded in Belgium. The BNIP project’s objectives are described below.



BNIP

Integrated action for nature conservation in Belgium LIFE14 IPE/BE/000002

The Belgian Nature Integrated Project (BNIP), implemented since 2015, aims to facilitate the implementation of the Prioritised Action Frameworks (PAFs) for Natura 2000 in the Flemish and Walloon regions, as well as at Federal level in the Belgian part of the North Sea. The project team, coordinated by Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos, is working along seven axes: improve Natura 2000 governance; drafting management plans and action plans both for species and habitats; capacity building; communication towards stakeholders; creating technical instruments and tools; implementation of projects with demonstration value; monitoring, including scientific and socio-economic surveys to gain a better knowledge of habitats and species and ecosystem services. As BNIP approaches its end, its achievements increasingly drive other actions (e.g. traditional LIFE projects, agri-environment schemes, small-scale pilots) and national policy (the new PAFs). Until now, approximately 192 million euro has been identified as being used to implement the PAF in the frame of LIFE BNIP. Also, the project has increased the collaboration and dialogue between the regions.

[Project summary](#)



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 107 projects in Belgium thus far, representing a total investment of €260 million, of which €102.5 million has been provided by the EU.

Completed projects were mainly concerned with issues such as: integrated environmental management (green and blue infrastructure in Flanders' grey peri-urban landscapes); wastewater treatment; water supply; groundwater protection and decontamination; diffuse and dispersed sources of pollution; air quality management; construction and demolition waste (e.g. gypsum); eco-design; clean technologies (innovative recycling and upcycling methods in the glass industry); processing of e-waste; coordinating human bio-monitoring on a European scale; public procurement (in the gardening sector); sustainable soil management; environmentally-friendly techniques in the building sector (silicon-based water repellents); cleaner technologies (production of highly-purified polyphosphoric acid); waste recycling (development of novel marker; and use of biowaste and re-use of spent grains as a raw material for the production of two types of non-alcoholic beverages); and climate change mitigation (zero-emission and low-noise garbage trucks). The projects were coordinated by international enterprises, local authorities, an NGO, SMEs, research institutions and professional organisations.

There are six ongoing projects in Belgium. These focus on: water quality improvement (increased available water storage capacity by removing metal pollutants from watercourses and floodplains through nature-based remediation); waste recycling (solution for the economic recovery of thermoplastics and by-products) and waste use (innovative technologies to process new streams of former foodstuff into high-quality feed); risk assessment and human health protection (ecological control of the oak processionary caterpillar); decontamination/site rehabilitation (in situ soil remediation on low-permeability sites through hydraulic/pneumatic fracturing); and industrial risks (development of lignin-based epoxy resins on a pre-industrial scale to demonstrate their technical and commercial viability as an alternative to BPA in epoxy resins for high-performance applications).

Two projects were co-funded under the former Information & Communication strand. The closed Life EWR+ project promoted the yearly European Week of Waste Reduction between 2013 and 2017. The ongoing LIFE SWEAP project's objective is to better detect, disrupt and prevent illegal waste trafficking.

Two ongoing Strategic Integrated Projects have been co-funded in Belgium under this strand. The IP Belini project will focus on a well-designated part of the Scheldt IRBD that is representative of the whole district – i.e. the catchment area of three Belgian tributaries of the main river Scheldt: the Zenne, the Dyle and the Demer. The LIFE-IP C-MARTLIFE project's objectives are described below.



Closing loops for less plastic waste (LIFE-IP C-MARTLIFE) LIFE19 IPE/BE/000008

Plastics and packaging waste prevention and management need innovation and knowledge investment to make additional improvements in Flanders. The Flemish government has developed a Plastics Action Plan, which aims to reach the targets of the European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy.

This LIFE integrated project will implement Flemish Waste Management policy, with a specific focus on accelerating and reinforcing the Plastics Action Plan, but targeting as well with as well other waste streams such as textiles, marine litter, construction and demolition waste, diapers, food waste or transboundary shipments.

Expected results include, among others:

- 90% collection of drink packaging by 2022.
- All packaging is reusable, recyclable, compostable or biodegradable by 2025, with 25% and 50% recycled content in PET-bottles by 2022, respectively 2025.
- Increased recycling rate with closed loops by 80% for plastics in food packaging, textile, construction.
- Regulation on use of single-use catering material at events and for governments.
- A Green deal on waste prevention in the distribution sector.

[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 a renewable energy based- and climate- resilient economy. 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.

To date, the Climate Change strand has co-financed 14 projects in Belgium. The total investment for these projects amounts to €74.5 million, of which the EU is contributing €29 million.

Three of them are closed. LIFE-Dairyclim contributed to the mitigation of climate impacts and to decreasing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in dairy farming. LIFE DRB, whose objective was to reduce GHG emissions from a steelmaking industry plant and LIFE_SF6-FREE, which aimed to demonstrate, validate and roll-out climate-friendly alternatives for SF6 in particle accelerators, both finished without achieving the expected results. LIFE Beverage, which aimed to reduce GHG emissions caused by beverage production in Belgium and the UK, concluded with partial results only. LIFE FRONT developed a methodology to remove obstacles to standardisation of flammable refrigerants used in refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump applications. LIFE MaxiMiseR made a very valuable contribution to the enabling environment around 2050 planning at the EU level.

There are five ongoing projects. The overall aim of the LIFE UNIFY project is to help EU Member States transition quickly and effectively to low carbon and resilient economies by facilitating horizontal and vertical coherence between: 1. programming of EU funds, 2. National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs), and 3. Long Term Strategies (LTS). LIFE SPARC proposes measures to make the Scheldt estuary and its highly urbanised area resilient to climate change. Life SMART aims to develop an innovative and cost-effective solution that integrates renewable energies into the steel manufacturing process. NATURAL HVACR 4 LIFE aims to demonstrate innovative, integrated Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration (HVACR) installations with a natural refrigerant. The overall objective of LIFE ETX is to enhance climate governance and optimise the functioning of the EU ETS through scientific assessment, advocacy, broader and stronger civil society participation, and international collaboration. The overarching objective of the LIFE PACT project is to develop and test an integrated approach to urban climate change adaptation that draws on the efforts of multiple stakeholders, including local government, citizens, universities and private actors, to more effectively implement Nature Based Solutions (NBS). The main objective of LIFE ACLIMA is to demonstrate technologies and tools for the agricultural and horticultural sector to increase water availability and strengthen the resilience of the water landscape to adapt to the effects of climate change (heatwaves, drought and flooding).

One Strategic Integrated Project has been co-funded in Belgium under this strand. The LIFE IP BE REEL! project's objectives are described below.



Renovation for energy-efficient living in Belgium (LIFE IP BE REEL!) LIFE16 IPC/BE/000005

The Belgium Renovates for Energy Efficient Living (LIFE IP BE REEL!) project will create the necessary conditions for the full implementation of the strategic housing renovation plans of the Flanders and Wallonia regions. The project team will develop, evaluate, refine and demonstrate the most appropriate structural measures for long-term increases in renovation rates and improved energy performance of all existing residential buildings by 2050. They will also design and implement innovative technical concepts and tools for renovating and retrofitting buildings, along with financial instruments to boost renovation. In addition, the project team will support capacity building and training; produce guidelines for the construction sector; enhance cooperation between stakeholders, administrations and local authorities; and create synergies between the Flemish and Walloon regions, and the Brussels Capital Region.

Demonstration actions will be undertaken in Ghent, Antwerp, Mechelen, Mouscron and La Louvière, which will directly contribute to the implementation of the sustainable energy and climate action plans (SECAPs) in these cities. In the longer term, the project aims to influence the low-emission strategies of all cities and communities in Flanders and Wallonia, as well as the Brussels Capital Region.

[Project summary](#)



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

- Contact the LIFE National Contact Point in your Member State:

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The Monitoring Team for Belgium

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Ongoing LIFE Nature & Biodiversity projects				
Project Title	Project Number	Project acronym and link to the online summary	Website	Project duration
Connectivity of the Natura 2000 network across the Belgian-Dutch borders in the Meuse basin	LIFE13 NAT/BE/001067	LIFE Pays mosan	https://www.lifepaysmosan.eu/	07/2014 -> 09/2022
Action Plan for the Improvement of Habitats of Threatened European Species in the Demer Valley through Broad Cooperation	LIFE15 NAT/BE/000760	LIFE Delta	https://www.natuurpunt.be/pagina/life-delta	09/2016 -> 08/2022
Restoration and conservation of semi-natural and natural habitats in eastern Ardennes (Belgium)	LIFE15 NAT/BE/000774	LIFE NARD-US	http://www.life-nardus.eu	07/2016 -> 06/2023
Downstream fish migration along the low Meuse River	LIFE16 NAT/BE/000807	LIFE4FISH	https://edfluminus.edf.com/en/edf-luminus/our-activities/produce-energy/hydroelectricity/life4fish/innovation-at-the-service-of-wildlife	10/2017 -> 03/2022
Green valleys: connecting habitats' conservation with long term biomass management and multi-stakeholder approach	LIFE17 NAT/BE/000445	LIFE Green valleys	https://www.natuurpunt.be/pagina/inleiding-life-green-valleys	09/2018 -> 08/2025
Life Nardus & Limosa, large scale restoration of Nardus grasslands & conservation of meadow birds in De Kempen (BE-NL)	LIFE18 NAT/BE/000576	LIFE Nardus & Limosa	https://www.natuurpunt.be/pagina/doelstellingen-life-nardus-limosa	07/2019 -> 11/2025
The sterile triploid method for population control of aquatic invasive fauna: pilot project on American bullfrog	LIFE18 NAT/BE/001016	LIFE 3n-Bullfrog	https://www.natuurenbos.be/stierkikker	10/2019 -> 03/2025
Ecological restoration of rivers and forests in the deep valleys of Ourthe, Amblève, Vesdre and Our basins	LIFE19 NAT/BE/000054	LIFE VALLEES ARDENNAISES	http://biodiversite.wallonie.be/fr/life-vallees-ardennaises.html?IDC=6290	09/2020 -> 09/2028
Priority actions for grasslands, forests and associated species connexions in Wallonia (BE) and Great East region (FR)	LIFE19 NAT/BE/000093	LIFE Connexions	https://www.life-connexions.eu/	09/2020 -> 09/2028
Reaching Integrated and Prompt Action in Response to Invasive Alien Species	LIFE19 NAT/BE/000953	LIFE RIPARIAS	http://www.riparias.be/	01/2021 -> 12/2026
DUNe restoration by tackling Invasive Alien Species	LIFE20 NAT/BE/001442	LIFE DUNIAS	N/A	10/2021 ->10/2026
Belgian Nature Integrated Project	LIFE14 IPE/BE/000002	BNIP	https://www.life-bnip.be/	12/2015 ->12/2023

Ongoing LIFE Circular Economy and Quality of Life projects				
Project Title	Project Number	Project acronym and link to the online summary	Website	Project duration
Nature-based Remediation of Metal pollutants in Nature Areas to increase water storage capacity NARMENA	LIFE18 ENV/BE/000286	LIFE NARMENA	https://www.ovamenglish.be/life-narmena-0	07/2019 →08/2025
Recycling of high-quality secondary thermoplastics and critical raw materials coming from mixed WEEE and EoL vehicles	LIFE18 ENV/BE/000368	Life PlasPLUS	https://www.lifeplasplus.eu/	07/2019 →12/2022
Ecological control of the oak processionary caterpillar (Thaumetopoea processionea) as a non-chemical solution	LIFE19 ENV/BE/000102	LIFE oak processionary	https://eikenprocessierups.life/	09/2020 →08/2025
Demonstration of innovative technologies to process new streams of Former Foodstuff into high quality Feed	LIFE19 ENV/BE/000244	LIFE F3	https://life.trotec.be	09/2020 →08/2023
Enabling in situ soil remediation on low-permeability sites through hydraulic/pneumatic fracturing	LIFE20 ENV/BE/000597	FRAC-IN	N/A	01/2022 →12/2025
Valorisation of lignin biomass into competitive components gradually replacing BPA in the formulation of Epoxy resins	LIFE20 ENV/BE/000671	LIFE VIABLE	N/A	09/2021 →08/2025
Shipments of Waste Enforcement Actions Project	LIFE17 GIE/BE/000480	LIFE SWEAP	https://www.sweap.eu/	07/2018 →06/2023
Belgian Initiative for making a leap forward towards good status in the river basin of the Scheldt	LIFE15 IPE/BE/000014	BELINI	https://www.life-belini.be	07/2018 →06/2023
Circular Material Approach on Residual waste Targets and a Litter Free Environment	LIFE19 IPE/BE/000008	LIFE-IP C-MARTLIFE	https://www.vlaco.be/kenniscentrum/onderzoeksprojecten/cmartlife	04/2020 →12/2027

Ongoing LIFE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation projects				
Project Title	Project Number	Project acronym and link to the online summary	Website	Project duration
Replacing F-gas: demonstration of innovative, integrated HVACR installations with natural refrigerant	LIFE18 CCM/BE/001182	NATURAL HVACR 4 LIFE	https://www.naturalhvacr4life.eu	06/2019 → 06/2022
New torrefaction technologies applied to CO ₂ abatement: integrating waste biomass into the steelmaking process	LIFE19 CCM/BE/001215	Life SMART	https://www.life-smart.eu/	06/2020 → 05/2023
Space for Adapting the River Scheldt to Climate Change	LIFE16 CCA/BE/000107	LIFE SPARC	https://www.natuurenbos.be/sparc	09/2017 → 08/2022

Bringing the EU together on climate action	LIFE18 GIC/BE/001190	LIFE UNIFY	https://unify.caneurope.org/	09/2019 -> 08/2022
LIFE ETX - Emissions trading extra. Making emissions trading work for EU citizens and the climate	LIFE20 GIC/BE/001662	LIFE ETX	https://etextra.org/about/	07/2021 -> 06/2024
Belgium Renovates for Energy Efficient Living	LIFE16 IPC/BE/00005	LIFE IP BE REEL!	https://www.be-reel.be/	01/2018 ->12/2024