

## **Annex**

### **LIFE Awards: Finalists 2018**

The 15 projects shortlisted for the LIFE Awards represent an EU investment of some €18.4 million. These projects had a total budget of more than €33.2 million.

#### ***Nature category***

##### **BULGARIA (BG)**

###### **Helping rare birds of prey to breed again**

Lesser kestrels are breeding in Bulgaria for the first time in decades, thanks to LIFE Programme. The **Lesser Kestrel Recovery** project established a breeding colony for the birds in the village of Levka in south-eastern Bulgaria. By 2017, there were over 20 nesting pairs, boosting birdwatching tourism in the village. The project also pioneered new ways of protecting birds of prey from poachers and predators. And it tracked the lesser kestrels, revealing new knowledge about their lives in Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, as well as about wintering sites in Africa.

###### **Website**

##### **ITALY (IT) (2 projects)**

###### **An ecological network boosts sustainable development in conservation areas**

Around 30% of the Italian province of Trentino is made up of protected areas, including Natura 2000, the network of sites containing Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. The provincial government used LIFE funding to better manage this nature. The **TEN** project gave a new impetus to the **Trentino Ecological Network**, establishing a management model based on integration, empowerment and participation of thousands of farmers. Local institutions became responsible for safeguarding Natura 2000. Pilot actions showed how to combine social and economic development, for instance by producing natural wool products from the sheep that graze habitats used by the protected rock partridge. The project's strategy on sustainable development of protected areas in Trentino is now part of regional tourism policy.

###### **Website**

###### **Alpine wolf packs howl again**

Wolves are returning to the Alps. The **LIFE WOLFALPS** project coordinated conservation actions in the Alpine regions of France, Italy and Slovenia, to minimise conflict with people and improve the prospects for the species. This involved protecting livestock to stop wolves being poisoned or shot. It also worked to make hunters, shepherds and local communities more tolerant of wolves, and addressed the loss of breeding sites and interbreeding with dogs. As a result, the number of wolf packs doubled, the species increased its range by 2 000 km and the Apennine and Dinaric wolf populations were joined up for the first time in over 200 years.

###### **Website**

##### **POLAND (PL)**

###### **Protecting bats and history**

Bat populations are in decline across Europe. The **LIFE PODKOWIEC+** project in

southern Poland increased the number of sites capable of housing bat colonies. It took measures to protect winter roosts. And it improved bat habitats along flyways by planting trees and reducing light pollution. Initial monitoring indicates a positive impact on the populations of three protected species: the lesser horseshoe bat, greater mouse-eared bat and Geoffroy's bat. By connecting conservation actions with the restoration of churches and historical buildings, the project has made building owners, managers, parishioners and residents more positive towards bats and the Natura 2000 network of protected areas.

[Website](#)

## **SLOVAKIA (SK)**

### **Restoring rare habitats along the Danube**

**PANNONICSK** restored inland salt marshes and sand dunes by the Danube in Slovakia. By the end of the project, several key species had returned and nearly half of the sand dunes had recovered. Over 20% of the salt marshes are now in a favourable condition. The project is recognised for influencing regional and national conservation and farm policy and for its excellent cooperation with local farmers and communities. This should ensure that long-term site management to conserve the habitats continues.

[Website](#)

## **Environment category**

### **SPAIN (ES)**

#### **Giving rural communities reliable access to clean water**

Over half a million people in rural Galicia, Spain are not connected to the water network. They depend on wells and communal groundwater supplies that are often unsanitary. The **LIFE RURAL SUPPLIES** project built four pilot sustainable neighbourhood water supply systems in the town of Abegondo, including water purification and storage. These gave a clean and reliable water supply at a comparable cost to mains water networks, showing that it is possible to ensure access to clean drinking water for vulnerable and marginalised population groups. The team drew up a regional action plan to extend the approach to 24 000 settlements in rural Galicia. And they built partnerships with organisations in Ireland, Denmark and Austria.

[Website](#)

#### **Successful pest control without pesticides**

The **LIFEAGROINTEGRA** project showed that integrated pest management is a viable alternative to the use of chemical pesticides on farms. More than 2 000 farmers took part in trials in Navarre, using natural predators, bio-insecticides, cover crops and other methods. This enabled a 45% reduction in pesticides used on fruit trees, vineyards and vegetables. The project developed a pest monitoring and warning system. It also provided farmers with a decision-making tool to help them select the most effective and sustainable methods of pest control and improve crop treatments. Widespread uptake of these methods could mean fewer pesticide residues in food.

[Website](#)

### **ITALY (IT)**

#### **Making tiles that cut indoor air pollution**

Ceramic tiles coated with photocatalysts such as titanium dioxide can improve indoor

air quality. The **LIFE+ DIGITALIFE** project used digital printing technology to halve the amount of titanium dioxide needed in manufacturing and almost totally eliminate waste. It also significantly cut energy and water consumption. The new tiles can break down nitrous oxides and formaldehyde. They are also resistant to bacteria, including the 'super bug' MRSA. The success of the project has encouraged the company behind it to invest more than €7 million in a full-scale industrial plant to bring the new tiles to market. The first ones will be installed in hospitals in Europe and a commercial centre in Mexico City.

[Website](#)

### **Using waste tomato skins to cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from tinned food**

Most tinned food comes in cans coated with oil-based lacquers, such as epoxy resin. The **LIFE BIOCOPACPlus** project replaced this with a bio-lacquer made from cutin, a water-repellent substance found in waste tomato skins. The project manufactured 3 thousand cutin-coated cans using standard techniques at a farm in Italy. These matched the functional and hygienic properties of cans on the market, while saving 730 mg of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent emissions per can. As well as tackling climate change, the project's success could give tomato growers a new source of income and create rural jobs by turning waste into a resource.

[Website](#)

## **UNITED KINGDOM (UK)**

### **Reuse hubs reduce waste and build communities on London estates**

The **REPURPOSE LIFE** project enabled community groups on housing estates in London to reuse more, tackle waste dumping and improve their local environment. It helped residents create their own social enterprises and turn redundant spaces into re-use hubs - training communities to collect, repair and reuse bulky waste, building skills and income and enhancing social inclusion among the disadvantaged. In-depth engagement with people on the estates encouraged positive change. The project's activities can be easily replicated by a community groups looking to reduce waste in other locations.

[Website](#)

## **Climate Action category**

## **GREECE (EL)**

### **Storing more carbon in olive groves through sustainable farming techniques**

The **oLIVE-CLIMA** project investigated the potential of olive-growing areas to capture more carbon in soils, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It worked closely with farmers in Greece to boost the net ecosystem carbon balance. This was done through measures such as no-soil tillage and proper winter weed management. These techniques also make soils more fertile, enhance biodiversity and raise crop yields. The project's success encouraged Greece to revise its rural development programme to pay farmers to return pruning waste to the land. Olive-growers across the Mediterranean could follow their lead.

[Website](#)

## **SPAIN (ES)**

### **A smart hospital for a healthy climate**

The health sector is often known to be unhealthy for the climate. In the Spanish city of Valladolid, the LIFE programme showed how to make a hospital more resilient to

climate change and how to contribute to emission reductions. The **LIFE SMART Hospital** project improved energy performance and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. It installed water-saving technologies and revamped the sorting, handling and tracing of medical waste. Energy, water and waste audits showed the positive impact of these actions on Hospital Universitario Rio Hortega. Benefits include 17% less greenhouse gas emissions, 30% less water consumed and 43% less waste going to landfill. The project's actions are a blueprint for any hospital or health centre to follow.

**Website**

## **ITALY (IT)**

### **Cutting gas leaks through improved pressure control**

Gas leaks waste resources and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Losses of methane and carbon dioxide from natural gas are directly proportional to network operating pressure. This is often set too high using current methods. In Lombardy, the **LIFE GREEN GAS NETWORK** project tested a new management and control system for regulating pressure levels in gas distribution networks. This cut greenhouse gas emissions by 6% without compromising service delivery. The project team calculated that applying the control system across low and medium-pressure areas of Italy's gas network would save 3.9 million tonnes per year of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent. It could also save gas companies and consumers money.

**Website**

## **CYPRUS (CY)**

### **Linking solar panel owners in a decentralised network pays dividends**

The **LIFE+ SmartPV** project connected around 300 solar panel owners in Cyprus to a decentralised power network. Using innovations such as remote monitoring and net metering to pay these consumers for the power they produce makes solar power better value. The Cypriot authorities have extended the payment scheme used for the pilot network to all owners of solar panels in the country. The University of Cyprus is including the results of the project in a European Joint Research Centre study. This will be used to revise the country's energy policy to favour renewables and energy efficiency, in line with EU targets. Smart net metering can be replicated in other countries, especially when combined with domestic energy storage.

**Website**

## **POLAND (PL)**

### **Raising awareness of the need for climate action**

The **LIFE\_WZROST\_PL** project led an information campaign to promote climate change and sustainable development policy. It raised public awareness in Poland about the need for action to boost renewables, improve energy efficiency and consume sustainably. More than 8 million people viewed 10 short films made by the project, shown on the Discovery Channel and associated networks. The project worked with bloggers to build substantial public interest in its 5-minute movies and award-winning documentary film. This approach contributed to increased support for climate action and renewable energy at regional and national level in Poland.

**Website**