



PROJECT LIFEEL LIFE19 NAT/IT/000851
Urgent measures in the Eastern Mediterranean
for the long term conservation of endangered
European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*)



NEWSLETTER

THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE LIFEEL PROJECT

2022
4



@Mattia Nocchiola

Project title: Urgent measures in the Eastern Mediterranean for the long term conservation of endangered European eel

Acronym: LIFEEL

Specific financing EU programme: LIFE Biodiversity

LIFE Code: LIFE19 NAT/IT/000851

Duration of the project: 50 months - from 01/10/2020 to 31/12/2024

Coordinating beneficiary: Regione Lombardia - DG Agricoltura

Associated beneficiaries:

Regione Emilia-Romagna - D.G. Agricoltura, caccia, pesca
Parco Lombardo della Valle del Ticino
Parco Regionale Veneto del Delta del Po
Ente Parco Delta del Po Emilia-Romagna
Università di Bologna
Università di Ferrara
G.R.A.I.A. srl
Hellenic Agricultural Organization - "DEMETER" (GRECIA)

Co-financers:

Programma LIFE dell'Unione Europea
Canton Ticino (Svizzera) - Confederazione Svizzera,
Ufficio Federale dell'Ambiente
ENEL GREEN POWER
Fondazione Cariplo
Associazione Italiana Pesca Sportiva e Ricreativa

Project Manager: Franco Mari

Communication Manager: Cesare M. Puzzi

MORE EELS IN THE WILD

LIFEEL supports eel spawning in the wild

RELEASING SILVER EELS IN THE WILD, LIFEEL OFFERS DIRECT SUPPORT TO THE WILD STOCK OF *ANGUILLA ANGUILLA*

One of the conservation measures also identified in the Eel National Plans to cope with the critical situation in which the species finds itself, is to ensure the annual release of a part of the sexually mature adults (Silver eels) captured for commercial purposes; this guarantee a concrete contribution to the reproduction of the stock present in nature.

The LIFEEL project has fully implemented this measure starting from the development, by the University of Bologna in collaboration with the Greek Fishery Research Institute, of a

Nella foto: esemplare adulto pronto per la migrazione riproduttiva, marcato con T-bar anchor tag per il riconoscimento individuale.

Protocol for the identification of sexually mature eels, and therefore migrants, and planning during the project (2021-2024), the release of about 10,000 breeders in Italy and 1,200 in Greece.

A part of these released specimens is fitted with external marks and systems for tracking both of the sonic type, in Italy, and satellite type, in Greece.

The monitoring of these released marked specimens uses two interconnected techniques:

- **INDIRECT MONITORING:** linked in Italy and Greece to the reporting of the capture of externally marked specimens by the fishermen associations operating in the area and involved in the project;
- **DIRECT MONITORING (TRACKING):** in Italy, through the reception by a barrier of sonar receivers of the signals of the emitters of the specimens in transit, and in Greece by the position data received from the satellite transmitter (pop-up) after its release from the eels.

In Italy, the monitoring network was created by the staff belonging to the University of Ferrara in collaboration with that of the Regional Parks of the Po Delta in Emilia and Veneto, making the existing cooperation relationship between the LIFEEL project and the

Marking Silver eels

Measurement and marking of silver eels to be released in the wild.



professional fishing cooperatives through the direct involvement of fishermen operating in the Po Delta area in the north Adriatic coast of Veneto and Emilia Romagna.

In the first year of the project, between 25 October and 20 November 2021, 12 meetings were held, creating an active collaboration of the fisheries of Pila, Scardovari, Goro, Porto Garibaldi, Cervia, Cesenatico, Cattolica and the fish markets of the Veneto and Emilia Romagna coasts, also involving the main sport and recreational fishing associations (Italian Recreational Fishing Association and FIPSAS Sport Fishing Association). Also the Port Authorities were involved as competent bodies for control and surveillance at sea.

This articulated monitoring program permitted to have data from 10 externally marked eels on the approximately 700 released, while the sonar buoys made it possible to contact 6 specimens, out of the 49 released equipped with emitter, which moved about 35 km from the place of release in 15 days, showing a common migratory behavior, linked to rough seas, strong winds and lower temperatures.

We want to thank the professional fishing associations Confcooperative FedAgriPesca for the sensitivity and collaboration shown, in the figure of Vadis Paesanti and Legacoop Agroalimentare

Fisheries

on the side of LIFEEL



Release of eels at sea with the collaboration of fishermen involved in the project

national association of agro-food cooperatives for rural and coastal development E-R in the figures of Chiara Bertelli and Sergio Caselli. The cooperatives: Copego, Goro (Massimo Gennari and Paolo Piva); Adriatica, Gorino; Casa del Pescatore, Cesenatico (Mario Drudi); Casa del Pescatore, Cattolica (Nicola Tontini); M: A: R: E, Cattolica (Giuseppe Prioli); Lugj Credo, Cervia. The fish markets of Goro, Cesenatico, Pila and Scardovari and the Ass. Sagittaria, Rovigo (president Emiliano Verza) The recreational sport fishing associations of FIPSAS Emilia Romagna, Veneto, Rovigo and Ferrara sections, UPE Pescatori Estensi, Ferrara and the Capanni da Pesca Recreational Sports Association with the president Maurizio Braghittoni.

We want also thank for the availability and active support in the telemetry monitoring action through the installation and surveillance of sonar receivers, goes to the mussel farmers cooperative of Cervia, "La fenice", to all the associated fishermen, and to its vice president Filippo Domeniconi.

FONDAZIONE CARIPLO

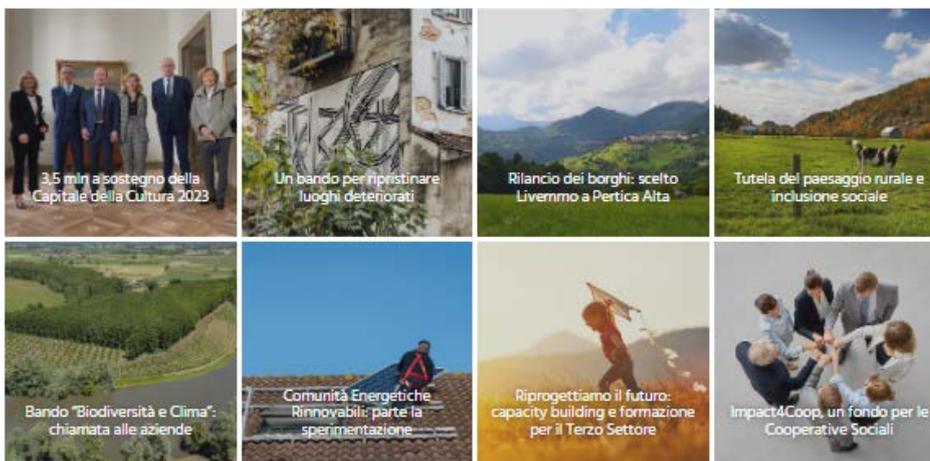
PAOLO SICCARDI, PROGRAM OFFICER OF THE ENVIRONMENT AREA OF THE CARIPLO FOUNDATION, ILLUSTRATES THE FOUNDATION AND THE REASONS THAT LED TO THE CHOICE TO FINANCE LIFEEL.

How was the Cariplo Foundation born and how does it work?

Cariplo Foundation is dedicated to philanthropy through its economic, planning and professional resources to encourage and support the implementation of projects that focus on the growth of people and the collective interest.

Tackle inequalities, especially by supporting the most fragile sections of the population, and promote the economic and social growth of the territory are today the main focuses of the Foundation's mission.

Cariplo Foundation was formally established in 1991, following the "Amato-Carli" law, but its history has a much more distant origin, in 1816; Since its inception, the Foundation has been committed to



<https://www.fondazionecariplo.it>

Fondazione
CARIPLO



Fondazione Cariplo
finances LIFEEL

creating value and opportunities for the people and communities of the area, by supporting projects in the fields of art and culture, environment, social and scientific research.

More than 1000 projects are carried out on average every year thanks to the grants for no-profit entities, distributed through tenders, emblematic, territorial and institutional payments, for a commitment of approximately 150 million Euros.

In 30 years of activity, the Cariplo Foundation has contributed to the realization of over 35 thousand projects in the field of Art and Culture, Environment, Scientific Research and the Social, making available to these initiatives over 3.5 billion EUR.

What is your commitment and vision for the environment?

The Foundation has reorganized its strategy into 9 Goals. Among these, I would underline those in which, as an Environment area, we are investing more energy: “**CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY**: addressing environmental challenges as a lever for sustainable development and community resilience”; “**CAPACITY BUILDING**: strengthening the skills and organizational dimension of the no-profit”; “**EMPLOYABILITY**: promoting the creation of new job opportunities and facilitating access to the market work”.

In particular, in recent years the increase in extreme weather

See:

<https://naturachevale.it/news/>



phenomena, air pollution, the disappearance of species and habitats, the loss of crops and the seasonality of products, the increase in environment-related diseases are always more frequent.

The vastness of the impact of anthropogenic activities on the environment no longer allows a response only based on individual sensitivity, but requires collective action on consumption models and production systems, involving different actors, such as citizens, businesses, public administrations, third sector, promoting sustainable development at all levels.

In this sense, the European (Green Deal), national (National Strategy for Sustainable Development) and regional (Sustainable Development Protocol of the Lombardy Region) strategies, together with the resources of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), represent a probably unrepeatable stimulus for green innovation in our economy that the Cariplo Foundation wants to help promote in a synergistic way.

Regarding the Objective relating to climate change, protection of the environment and biodiversity, there are several tools that have tried to counter and / or mitigate the effects of climate change and massive anthropization on natural resources and ecosystems, both by acting on communities as a whole, and by involving specific categories of stakeholders (e.g. public administrators, population school).

The presence of no-profit organizations as partners in a process of sensitization and involvement of the population necessary for the implementation of the values indispensable for true change should be emphasized.

In particular: the call for resilient communities (2014-2017), which aimed to increase the resilience of the territories with respect to the main environmental risks; the AttivAree program (2016-2020) which tested a model of sustainable development in the internal areas of Oltrepò Pavese and the Trompia and Sabbia Valleys (BS) and in which the Foundation played the role of community engager and facilitator public-private networks and partnerships.

Tools for energy efficiency of buildings (Project Territori Virtuosi, 2017-ongoing); tools for the protection of biodiversity and natural capital (Natural Capital call, 2017-2019) and for a more sustainable agriculture (Coltivare Valore, 2018 - 2021 call).

F2C - Fondazione Cariplo per il Clima (2019-ongoing), a large project aimed both at promoting the necessary change in strategies and policies at the local level to combat climate change, and at supporting specific mitigation and adaptation interventions in the territories.

In these processes, the Foundation operates with criteria of flexibility with respect to the geographical, cultural and social context, of

listening to and receiving the proposals of the territory, in many cases promoting paths of accompaniment and participatory planning and the creation of alliances between the various local actors indispensable to activate lasting initiatives that face complex challenges such as environmental ones.

What are the reasons to concretely support the Lifeel project?

The Environment area of the Cariplo Foundation has been supporting for over 10 years projects in the main European programs in the environmental field (eg Life, Interreg, Alpine Space ...) presented by non-profit organizations. Initiatives must focus on issues such as: climate change, resilience and climate-resilient cities; natural assets and biodiversity and their protection, development of ecological connections, identification and enhancement of ecosystem services and activation of payment schemes for ecosystem services; sustainable mobility; fresh water pollution and crop contamination; multifunctional and sustainable agriculture; collaboration for the defense of nature, active citizenship, relationship with public administrations and governance processes.

In addition to financial support, the Foundation organizes a training course on European projects planning, intended for third sector organizations, aimed at developing the skills to participate in European calls and consisting of meetings with experts who illustrate the various initiatives and funding opportunities at European level. A tutoring service is also provided by experts who accompany and support institutions in planning by organizing in-depth and orientation meetings. Regarding the LIFEEL project, we can affirm that it represents a very important first step towards the conservation of the Eel in the Po basin, an area in which the species is at risk of extinction, being completely in line with the Foundation's "natural heritage and their protection" theme.

The presence of a transversal partnership made up of subjects with considerable experience in the field of European project design and the involvement of institutional subjects that have the direct management of the water resource, allow a concrete application horizon. Addressing the issue of protection and conservation of

Fondazione Cariplo finances
LIFE Projects



the species at the Po basin scale is the only way to achieve the conservation of the species..

What are the indications for the future and what are the expectations also in relation to Lifeel project?

Cariplo Foundation has always been committed to protecting the environment and natural resources. The investments made in the last 10 years demonstrate this: only in the naturalistic sector of habitat and species requalification we have financed projects for over 50 million euros (<http://ubigreen.fondazioneCARIPLO.it/>).

Since 2020, however, started the collaboration with the Lombardy Region on the issues of environmental sustainability and the protection of natural resources, which led to the subscription of the “Lombard Protocol on Sustainable Development” and the “Framework Agreement in the environmental field”. The Protocol was launched in September 2019 and was signed by over 70 Lombard subjects who have identified and are developing over 100 different actions to support the Lombard sustainability.

Within the Regional Development Plan, this document represents the “place” in which the Lombardy Region, local authorities and representatives of the Lombard company share the sustainability objectives they intend to pursue. To increase the environmental sustainability of our territory it is necessary to collaborate with subjects who have a key role in change processes, identifying shared priorities and common objectives.

This approach gave life to the Framework Agreement in the environmental field signed at the beginning of 2021, where different actions are put into the system to generate a green impact in structural and cultural terms.

The Framework Agreement is therefore the first instrument that allows to give substance to the “Lombard Protocol on sustainable development” and provides collaborative initiatives in various areas: from the energy requalification of public buildings for office and residential use, to the installation of photovoltaic systems and the development of energy communities; from natural capital to ecological connections through the protection of biodiversity; from sustainable mobility to sustainability education actions. In short, a rich range of initiatives that will continue in the coming years to support our territory and the key players who live and feed it.

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Paolo Siccardi, Programme Officer of the Environment Area of Fondazione Cariplo. Naturalist, with expertise in natural resource management and conservation.



PROJECT LIFEEL LIFE19 NAT/IT/000851

LIFE Programme
Italy-Greece



**Do you have any information we might be interested in?
Do you have something to report?**

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20th May 2022 - Ravenna
LIFEEL participates to
THE EU4OCEAN SUMMIT
and takes this opportunity to celebrate
30 years of LIFE Programme