

EUROPEAN RIVERS SYMPOSIUM 2021

Session 1

How can the EU Biodiversity Strategy help achieve the WFD objectives, and vice-versa?

Wednesday 26th May, 10h30 – 12h00 (CEST), Room A

<https://wwf.zoom.us/j/94855508114?pwd=d0NBUWtlcVV5MmlVR1dTb0xGYmFLUT09>

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CONTEXT:

The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 recognises that greater efforts are needed to restore freshwater ecosystems and the natural functions of rivers, and ultimately comply with the Water Framework Directive (WFD). It sets an ambitious target: “at least 25,000 km of rivers restored into free-flowing rivers by 2030 through the removal of primarily obsolete barriers and the restoration of floodplains and wetlands”. This can help achieve good status or potential of all surface waters and

good status of all groundwater by 2027 at the latest, as required by the WFD. The hydromorphology restoration will directly contribute to aquatic ecosystem restoration.

However, in order to meet this target, there is a need to exchange between, on the one hand, the European Commission, which has announced it will provide in 2021 technical guidance and support to Member States, and on the other hand, the practitioners, including Member States and basin organizations that develop and implement River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) and can share their field experiences and (best) practices of river natural processes and hydromorphology restoration.

This session will showcase exemplary case studies of river continuity & hydromorphology restoration (at all stages of planning, assessment and implementation) and call for their replication to achieve the objectives set in both the WFD and EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

SESSION DRAFT PROGRAM:

Introduction (5 min)

Ms. Bettina Doeser, Head of unit water, Directorate-General for Environment, European Commission

Keynote speech (10 min)

*Mr. François Omnès, Head of the Department “Biodiversity Uses and Management”,
French Biodiversity Office*

Questions & answers to the European Commission & the keynote speaker (15 min)

Moderated by:

Mrs. Julie Magnier, International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO)

Case studies (30 min)

*Mr. Nuno Bravo, Director of the Center River Basins District, Portuguese Environment Agency
(Portugal)*

*Mr. Turo Hjerppe, Senior Specialist, Department of the Natural Environment,
Ministry of the Environment, Finland*

*Ms. Pao Fernández Garrido, Dam removal specialist, World Fish Migration Foundation (WFMF),
Dam Removal Europe coalition*

Poll, questions & answers to the speakers (25 min)

Addressing two questions: What limits Member States ability to successfully design and implement river continuity restoration, & what support from the European Commission could be helpful?

Conclusion (5 min)

Mr. Eric Tardieu, Secretary General, International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO)