

NEWSLETTER N°3 – NOVEMBER 19

E2 Action: Life Alnus al “Restauraríos 2019”

The Life Alnus project has been presented at “Restauraríos”, the third Iberian Conference on River Restoration held in Murcia from 12th to 14th of June. It is organized by CIREF, the Iberian Centre for River Restoration. The conference’s objective is to become a forum where different river management and restoration experts from the Iberian Peninsula can reflect on the role that river restoration must play during the second cycle of hydrological planning, indicated by the Water Framework Directive for the 2015-2021 period.



E1 Action: The first stage of environmental education and awareness actions has begun

During the last term of the 18-19 course, it has begun the environmental education and awareness pilot test of LIFE ALNUS project with 4 groups of 1st ESO from the Institut del Ter, in Manlleu. The aim is to make the riverbank forest known, and discover the functions of it. A journey in the river was made, where students did an educational activity which consisted of doing a simplified calculation about the two biological index: the QBR – riverbank forest quality – and the IHF – river habitat index. It was also made a river walk in order to identify the features of the riverbank vegetation, and find out the elements of the river biodiversity. Finally, 2 experiments were made to understand the riverbank forest effects on the water quality, and also to know how the bank protects from the river erosion. All the students have a small worksheet that was used to gather all the observations and the work done during the activity.



F1 Action: Annual coordination meeting of Life Alnus project

The annual coordination meeting of the Life Alnus project took place on the 23rd of July, where all the partners involved were present. The project is in its equator, and several communication and monitoring actions have been revised. The actions in each basin have started.

The botanical and forestry inventories are being taken in order to know the habitat quality.



A2 Action: A fluvial safekeeping agreement has been signed in the context of LifeAlnus

ACA and Canovelles, les Franqueses del Valles and Granollers local governments have signed a fluvial safekeeping agreement which includes more than 106 hectares from the Congost river. Some of them are within the Life Alnus project. The aim is to protect and develop the aquatic ecosystem, and contribute to the objectives of the European project achievement.

There will be done restitution, protection, maintenance, dissemination and environmental education actions.



C3 Action: Work begins in Basses de Gallissà (Bellver de Cerdanya)

The work has started in Basses de Gallissà, in order to return the ecological conditions that will permit the riverbank forest recuperation. Even though the zone is beside the river, it is disconnected due to the location of the specks next to the river, which stop the flood of the adjacent zones during the seasonal flash floods. These flash floods help to maintain the water table in a high level, and also bring nutrients and sediments into the land. They are essential for the riverbank forest survival. This kind of forest has the effect of laminating and reducing the speed of the water flow when floods happen, as well as holding the sediment, which prevents the water to transport all of it. Summarizing, the riverbank forest behaves as a shock-absorbing of the effects coming from the big floods.



The work will consist on move the specks away and connect the river to the three pools of the zone with a semi-permanent water flow, which will contribute to elevate the water table and will be permeable to the fish passage. This will improve the ecological conditions and the zone naturalization. Alder trees, willows and ash trees will be planted in the surroundings of these zones, in order to permit the riverbank forest proliferation. These actions have to be a model useful to be extrapolated to other zones with similar problems.

C3 Action: The work in Gallissà continues

The work in Gallissà pools continue during the month of November. These are the actions that have been made since now:

- The hillock has been removed and the land for the plantation has been prepared.
- The piping that goes to the first pool has been installed. This will allow the Segre's water to come in. It is planned to plant in the areas where the land is shacked in order to naturalize and stabilize the slopes.
- A footbridge has been built beyond the open section that is going to connect the first pool and the second.
- Alder trees, willows and ash trees have been planted to help in the consolidation of the riverbank forest that existed in this area in the past.



F2 and D4 action: Meeting of partners, the Advisory Committee and collaborators of Life Alnus

There was a meeting in UVic-UCC on the 19th of November. It was about forestry actions and restoration of the continuity and the ecological quality of alder groves.

In this meeting, the Life Alnus partners, the Expert Advisory Committee and collaborators have discussed the techniques about forestry improvement, exotics treatment and restoration of the alder groves in potential sections where they have disappeared.



E1 Action: The itinerant exhibition of Life Alnus starts

The itinerant exhibition “Els boscos del riu, els grans desconeguts” has been installed. It is composed by 8 interactive panels which gather the goals of the european project Life Alnus.

From 29/11/19 to 07/01/20 they will be exposed in the Sciences and Technology department of the University of Vic.

The purpose of the exhibition is to raise awareness on the riverbank forests, which, despite being one of the forests with the greatest biodiversity, are unknown to most of the population.

These forests provide many advantages in terms of river regulation, flood mitigation and its effects and water quality and also are the habitat of a great biodiversity with a high landscape value. However, their situation in flat and accessible areas has often caused different agricultural, urban or industrial uses to gain ground, making them disappear or degrading them.

In existing forests, river courses are regulated with a series of dams, locks, breakwaters or moles causing the small seasonal floods of the river that temporarily flooded these forests have almost disappeared. These floods provide nutrients and raise the water table, so if floods disappear, the necessary ecological conditions for good health are increasingly difficult to find.

The exhibition details the main problems forests present, and what actions can be taken by the citizens to improve their situation, comparing the distribution of the current habitat and what it could reach. Finally, the areas and pilot actions that have been executed to improve the ecological conditions that allow the riverbank forest to recover their habitat are also detailed.



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