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NEWSLETTER VOL.1



NEWS FROM THE BASIN

Safeguarding and restoring European natural lakes and their ecosystems

EUROLakes is a Mission Ocean project which main goal is to propose an **innovative, holistic and science-based approach** to safeguarding and restoring **European natural lakes and their ecosystems**.

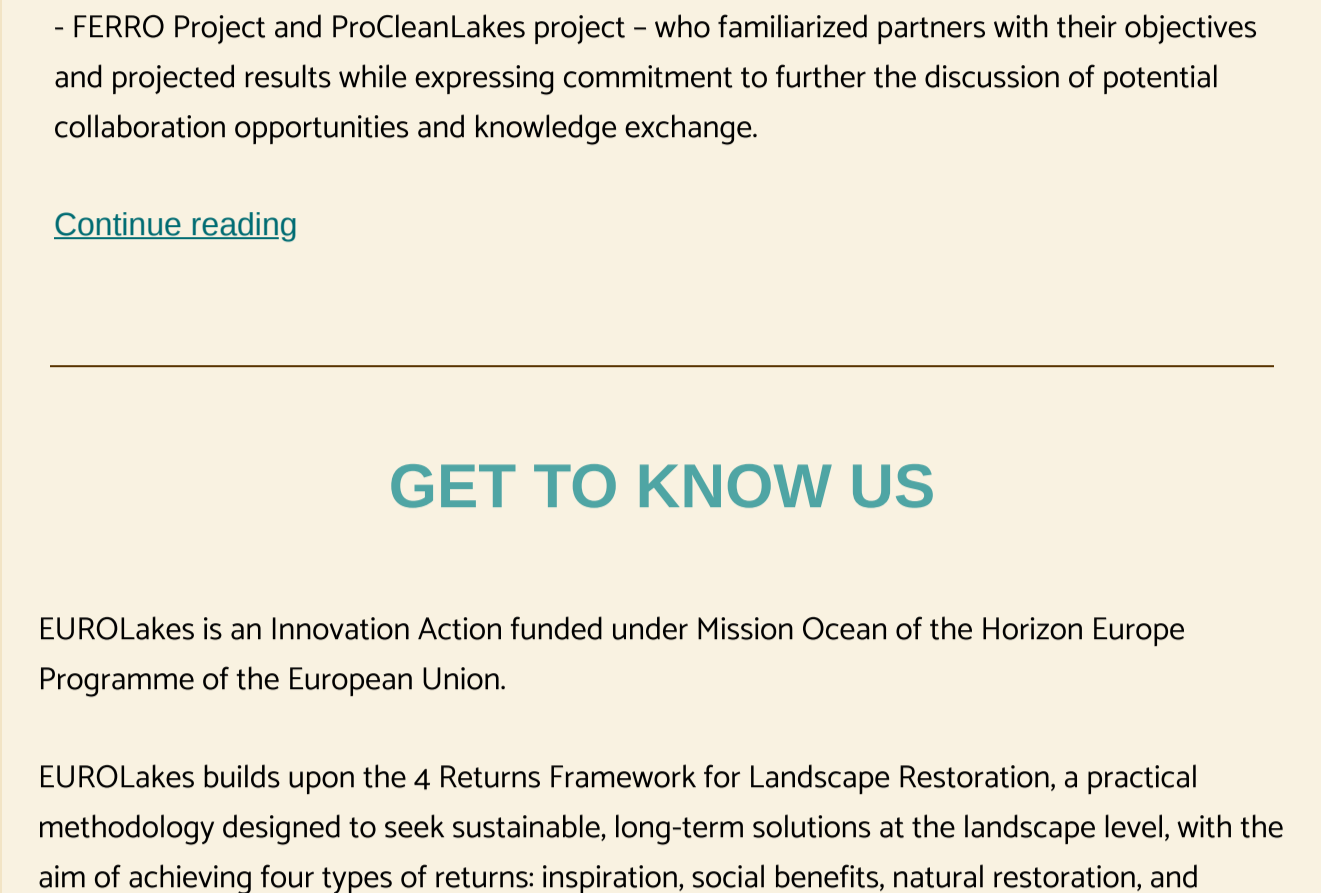
Through establishing **local communities of practice**, **EUROLakes** will apply the principles of **co-creation and inclusivity** to develop and showcase novel, integrated protection and restoration solutions, focusing particularly on **nature-based solutions**.

EUROLAKES KICK OFF MEETING



Mid-October brought together representatives of 13 partnering organizations from 7 European countries at the University of Tuscia in Viterbo, Italy for the kick-off meeting of the new EU funded MissionOcean project EUROLakes. Everyone looked eager to join the conversation about the project's integrated approaches for the protection and restoration of the European lake ecosystems and their biodiversity.

The meeting was opened by the project coordinator Ruba Hilal and project manager Aleksandra Starčević from Wetlands International Europe, welcoming participants and introducing our distinguished guest presenters – Danielle de Bernard from CINEA – European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency and Marcin Sadowski, DG MARE – who talked about the scope of the project, its expected outcomes and the vision of Mission Ocean in the policy context.



The first day also marked our first synergy activity with the introduction of two sister projects - FERRO Project and ProCleanLakes project – who familiarized partners with their objectives and projected results while expressing commitment to further the discussion of potential collaboration opportunities and knowledge exchange.

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GET TO KNOW US

EUROLakes is an Innovation Action funded under Mission Ocean of the Horizon Europe Programme of the European Union.

EUROLakes builds upon the 4 Returns Framework for Landscape Restoration, a practical methodology designed to seek sustainable long-term solutions at the landscape level, with the aim of achieving four types of returns: inspiration, social benefits, natural restoration, and financial gains. This holistic approach is operationalized through five key elements:

- a. establishing a landscape partnership,
- b. fostering shared understanding,
- c. collaboratively envisioning the landscape,
- d. taking coordinated action, and
- e. continuous monitoring and learning.

In collaboration with local communities of practice, the project will develop and showcase innovative, integrated protection and restoration solutions, with a particular focus on nature-based solutions (NBS). These solutions will be demonstrated in three specific areas: Lake Vico in Italy, Lake Bistretj in Romania and Lake Dümmer in Germany.

The long term potential of these solutions will be highlighted by replicating the methodology at three other lakes. These approaches will be complemented by modelling activities and dissemination of knowledge regarding nature finance, contributing to a comprehensive adaptive management strategy seeking restoration of the ecological and chemical health of natural lakes to a "good" status.

EUROLakes Consortium and Objectives

The consortium of EUROLakes consists of 13 partners from 7 European countries, and comprises an interdisciplinary mix of competencies and expertise. It brings together a unique mix of partners, integrating disciplines across ecological and conservation biology, agroforestry, soil science, environmental engineering, data science, socio-economics, environmental law and IT to develop a comprehensive approach to lake conservation.



The project will create and deploy localized restoration plans, replicating objectives like pollution reduction, habitat protection and enhanced biodiversity monitoring.

Key activities

- **Tailored Nature-Based Solutions:** reed bed protection, nutrient runoff control and habitat restoration to enhance biodiversity.
- **Advanced Digital Twins and Modeling:** innovative simulations to predict the impact of restoration activities under different scenarios, offering actionable insights for adaptive management and optimized strategies.
- **Local Communities of Practice:** to be established to empower stakeholders to actively engage in co-designing and implementing sustainable restoration strategies.
- **Capacity Building:** training programs on ecosystem services valuation and novel strategies for lasting financing mechanisms, ensuring long-term support for lake restoration at landscape level.

Contributing to society, economy and the environment

Scientific Impact

Demonstrated effectiveness of integrated restoration measures for improved ecological and chemical lake status, monitoring changes in quality elements under the Water Framework Directive

Political Impact

Enhanced implementation of EU policies, particularly in alignment with the 4 Returns Framework
Improved collaboration between municipalities and regional authorities

Societal Impact

The establishment of new local Communities of Practice (CoP) empowers communities to take an active role in their lake conservation

Economic Impact

Attracted additional funding for lake restoration projects from both public and private sources, ensuring continued investment in water and ecosystem quality

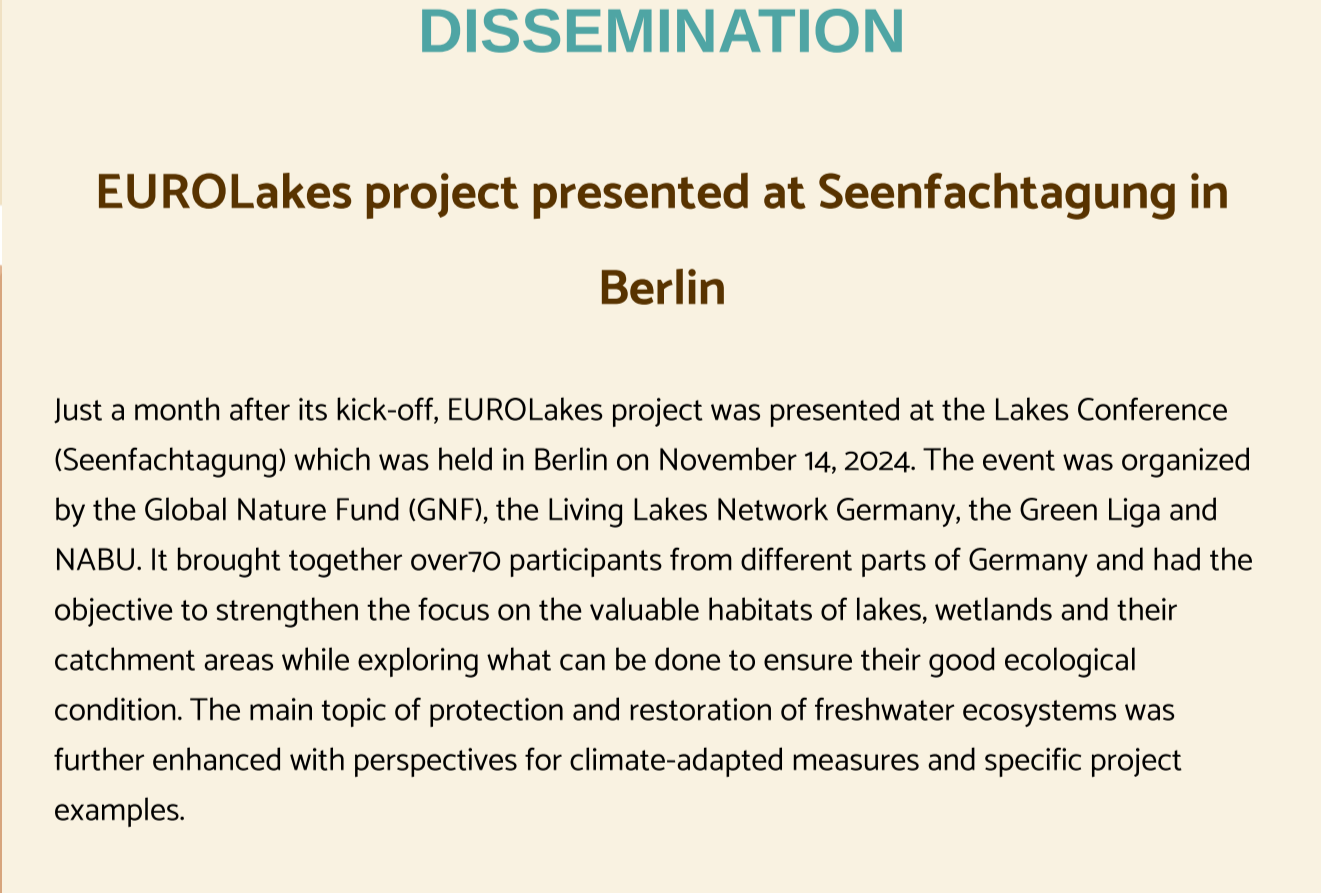
Environmental Impact

The integration of nature-based solutions (NBS) into lake ecosystems contributes to long-term reduction in human impact and a shift towards more sustainable land management practices

Find out more about EUROLakes on our website!

[EUROLAKES.EU](https://eurolakes.eu)

WEBSITE LAUNCH



End of October 2024, we were excited to launch the Home page of [EUROLakes website](https://eurolakes.eu) and have continued building it ever since then. The website is conceived as the project's main public interface. The main function of the platform is to serve as a single point of reference about the project, in an integrated and coherent way. It comprises public access sections and subsections featuring EUROLakes ambition and key innovation approaches, specific objectives and related challenges, partners' network, news, events, demo lake sites, and outcomes and results. Furthermore, the website has been designed to provide logical and user-friendly navigation paths, so that our visitors reach the information they are looking for in a least number of clicks.

The content on the website is being continuously updated with the progress of the project and the ongoing activities.

FIRST WORK ACTIVITIES

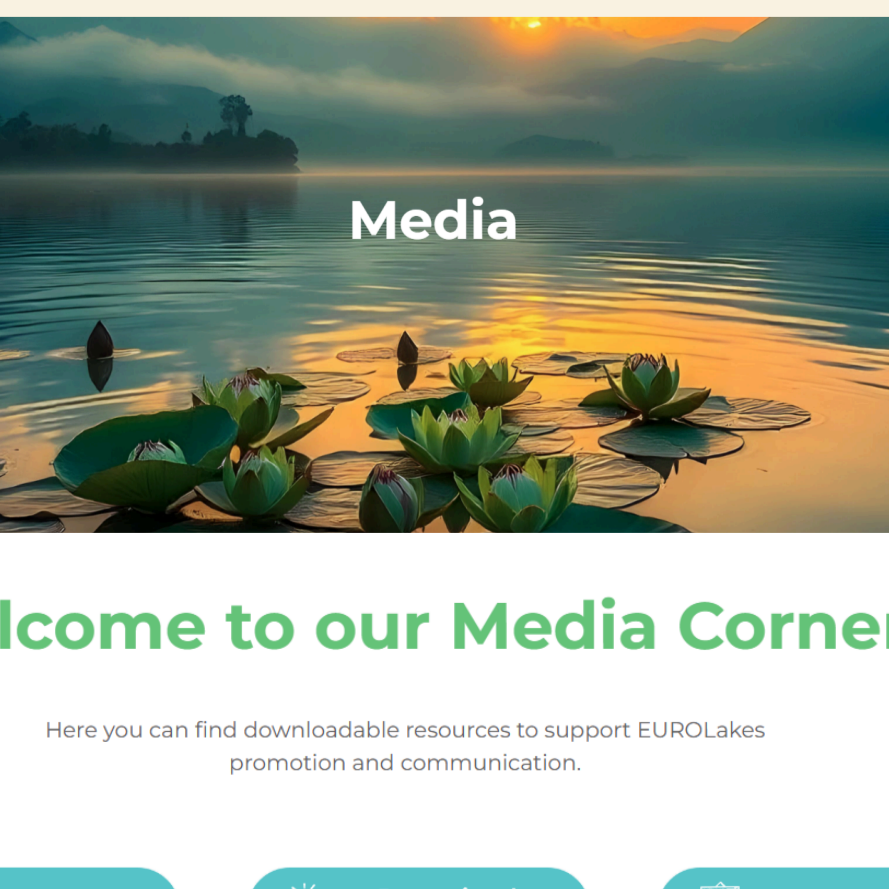
The 4 Returns Framework: familiarization workshop for EUROLakes consortium



During the kick-off meeting at the University of Viterbo "Tuscia" held in Italy in October 2024, partners participated in their first internal workshop dedicated to the 4 Returns Framework (4RF) integration in EUROLakes methodology. The event was conducted by Wetlands International (WIFI) and Landscape Finance Lab, who have worked with Commonland since 2021 to improve the Framework with a focus on enabling its application on the ground.

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Participatory Multicriteria Analysis Workshop



Shortly before Christmas, EUROLakes partners enjoyed a special introductory workshop on **Participatory Multi-Criteria Analysis (PMCA)**, organized by Fondazione Eri Enrico Mattei (FEEM). The main objective of the event was to equip the consortium members with the required knowledge and tools to evaluate how PMCA can support strategic decision-making within the project's demo-sites. It also served as an opportunity to explore potential integration with other methodologies that are used in the project.

In 90 minutes, we covered the following topics:

- Introduction to PMCA
- Exploring Mulino Decision Support System (mDSS)
- Application to EUROLakes' Demo-Sites

One of the proposed innovations in EUROLakes is to combine PMCA with the 4 Returns Framework (4RF) methodology, which is also looking for adaptive management practices through clear understanding of local dynamics, and to achieve one integrated approach for participatory communities, allowing for higher flexibility in responding to changing conditions.

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DISSEMINATION

EUROLakes project presented at Seenfachtagung in Berlin

Just a month after its kick-off, EUROLakes project was presented at the Lakes Conference (Seenfachtagung) which was held in Berlin on November 14, 2024. The event was organized by the Global Nature Fund (GNF), the Living Lakes Network partners, the Green Liga and NABU. It brought together over 70 participants from different parts of Germany and had the objective to strengthen the focus on the valuable habitats of lakes, wetlands and their catchment areas while exploring what can be done to ensure their good ecological condition. The main topic of protection and restoration of freshwater ecosystems was further enhanced with perspectives for climate-adapted measures and specific project examples.

[Read more](#)

COMMUNICATION CORNER

The first Press Release of EUROLakes is out!

PRESS RELEASE

EUROLakes positions itself as leading the way in transforming how we care of natural lake conservation! By combining nature-based solutions, advanced digital modeling, and community-driven approaches, we're creating innovative methods towards a sustainable future for our vital freshwater resources.

Download and read the project's first press release [here](#).

Be part of change! Help us build a like-minded community caring about our nature by sharing the press release with your audience!

Media section on EUROLakes website. What's in there?

Swing by the Media section on our website where you can find a load of downloadable resources to support EUROLakes promotion and communication.

Media

Welcome to our Media Corner!

Here you can find downloadable resources to support EUROLakes promotion and communications.

- Visual Identity
- Promotional Materials
- Newsletters
- Press Release
- Video

[Click on the image to find out more](#)

In case you landed on EUROLakes newsletter by chance, make sure you subscribe to it, to stay on top of all news coming from the basin.

Share the passion for natural lakes restoration by forwarding this newsletter to friends and colleagues to learn together how improving our lake ecosystems benefits the environment, local economies and communities, for a sustainable future.

EUROLakes is social. Let's connect!

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