



The 3WATER project - What have we done for you?

September 11, 2013– Kuringen (Hasselt)

On behalf of all the partners we would like to invite you to the **visitors' day** of the **Life+ 3WATER** project on **September 11, 2013**.

The 3WATER project near Hasselt primarily aims to improve the habitats of important European species such as the bittern and the tree frog; two endangered species that belong in the pond area Midden Limburg; the core of the water-rich area "de Wijers" in Midden-Limburg. This unique project has closely united public and private partners, especially the local private landowners (vzw OVML), the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forest (ANB), the local communities of Hasselt and Zonhoven, nature NGO Limburgs Landscape (LILA), regional landscape park Lage Kempen (RLLK), and the European Landowners' Organization (ELO), which acts as the Coordinating beneficiary. The project is embedded in our **3E approach**, where **ecological** goals are matched with **economic** and **educational** aspects. This way, a sustainable foundation has been laid for the conservation and further development of this invaluable area. More information is available on www.3water.eu

Program

- 9.15 a.m. Welcome, Nieuwbeek Estate, Galgebergstraat 74, 3511 Kuringen (GPS: 50.961995; 5.307255).** The Galgebergstraat is partially unpaved
- 9.40 Key address by Pia Bucella, Director, Directorate Natural Capital, Biodiversity and Land Use, DG Environment**
- 9.50 Word of welcome by Eric Smeets, chairman of the OVML**
- 10.00 First visits in the project area** - These will be guided by Wijers-guides, who have been specially trained for this project, and who will be supported by experts from the the Agency for Nature and Forests (ANB). Visitors can choose one walk from the 6 available. These walks will be offered both in the morning and afternoon



The project is supported by the European Commission Directorate General Environment under the LIFE+ programme (Grant Agreement N° LIFE08 NAT/B/000036).



WALKS:

1. De Platwijers, Zonhoven

The Agency for Nature and Forests has been doing its project parts here. Examples of the different measures to see include: the restoration of historic landscapes by improving and expanding the ponds and their infrastructure, as well as the opening up of the landscape. The northern part of the Platwijers has been restored for the tree frog, banks side vegetation, and the development of heather. The southern part has been restored as a habitat for the bittern, together with opportunities for commercial fish farming. By September, we will have seen the first growing season.



2. Wijvenheide, Heidestrand, Zonhoven

In this area, the development on the grounds of both ANB and the private landowners are in full swing. Trees have been chopped down to open up which will help the bittern fly, and in September the digging will be ongoing. The measures on the Wijvenheide focus on the bittern habitat, but high-value hay-lands, tree frog biotopes and small patches of heather will also be restored and expanded. Many reed islands will also be created. Those joining this walk will take advantage of the new lookout huts.



3. Nieuwbeek and Galgeberg, Hasselt



Here, the private landowners have restored ponds, chopped down the vegetation on the dikes, created a large reed island and restored both wet and dry heather areas.

4. Vogelsanck en Terlaemen, Bolderberg, Heusden-Zolder

The private landowners have restored ponds, chopped down vegetation on the dikes, created reed islands and restored the grasslands. On the Bolderberg natural area, maintained by Limburgs Landscape, open heather has been restored.



5. Fish farmer Vandeput and the surrounding area, Zonhoven

On this walk, we will demonstrate how fish farming works as an

The project is supported by the European Commission Directorate General Environment under the LIFE+ programme (Grant Agreement N° LIFE08 NAT/B/000036).

economic, ecological and educational activity.

6. Wijvenheide, Heidestrand campsite, Zonhoven

During this walk on the grounds of a private owner the tree frog (and the necessary measures) takes central stage! There is even the chance of meeting the tree frog itself.



Through these six walks, we will show you the highlights of this project!

Maximum of 25 people per walk. Please select an alternative walk with registration, in case your first choice is full. The participation in the event is free of charge.

12.15 Welcome by Thierry de l'Escaille, the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) and Bert Vanholen, the Agency for Nature and Forests (ANB)

12.45 Lunch and press event: during lunch, both experts and the project partners will be available to answer any questions you may have.

2.00 p.m. Second walks in the project area.

Please choose a second walk from this morning's selection

4.00 End of the visitors' day with a cup of coffee

Registration is mandatory, and will be possible up to August 31, 2013

Registration is possible through the website <http://www.amiando.com/KPTPGSU.html> or by calling at +32 2 234 30 00 or emailing 3water@elo.org

Responsibility for the contents of this day and the conference lies with the authors. Any views expressed may not necessarily conform to the vision of the European Union. The European Commission is not responsible for the use of information during this conference.