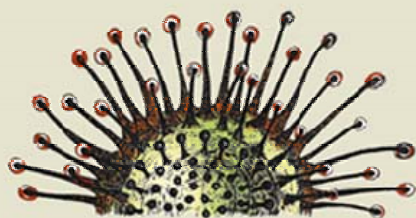


Bulletin No. 6
December 2015



LIFE · TREMEDAL Nat/Ess/707

Inland wetlands of the Northern Iberian Peninsula: Management and restoration of peatlands and wet environments



Technical officers from the European Commission and the Tremedal Project visiting the Belate Mire do the butterfly hand sign in recognition of International Natura 2000 Day.

Communication and engagement activities
in the European LIFE TREMEDAL project

Communication and engagement activities in Navarre as part of the European LIFE TREMEDAL project

Final Seminar

More than 70 experts got together in the Bertiz Natural Park for the Seminar of the European LIFE TREMEDAL project



On Thursday the 22nd of October 2015, experts from different fields related to wetland management and members of the TREMEDAL International Advisory Committee presented the work performed in the different actions involved in LIFE Tremedal and other similar projects (France, Canada, etc.).

On Friday the 23rd, the group visited the Arxuri and Belate Mires to see and evaluate the actions and studies carried out at the two Navarrese sites.

Children's activities

European Natura 2000 Day 2015 celebrated in Belate on the 21st of May

Students from the Pamplona Agroforestry Institute and pupils from the Ziga and Alman-
doz schools, both in Baztan, visited the Belate mire and took part in activities organised by the European LIFE TREMEDAL project on Thursday the 21st of May to celebrate European Natura 2000 Day.



Activities for the general public

World Wetlands Day 2013 celebrated in Navarre under a mantle of snow

Some 40 people gathered in Auritz/Burguete on Sunday the 13th of February to celebrate World Wetlands Day. The mantle of freshly fallen snow on a cold but sunny day made the visit to the Jauregiaroztegi wetland special. Jokin Larumbe from the Department of the Environment, Asun Berastegi from Gestión Ambiental de Navarra and the Mayor of Burguete Joxepe Irigarai acted as guides for a tour which highlighted the environmental importance of the Linga de Jauregiaroztegi, the significance of the management work being performed and even a few anecdotes from the site's recent history after more than 6,000 years of bountiful biological activity.



Following the tour, the group got together in the local Culture Centre to present the European LIFE Tremedal project "Inland wetlands of the Northern Iberian Peninsula: Management and restoration of peatlands and wet environments", still in its infancy at the time.

World Wetlands Day 2014 celebrated in Navarre with a tour of the Arxuri and Belate mires



The event was celebrated on Sunday the 16th of March and, following a bite to eat in Zugarramurdi, got under way with a guided tour of the Arxuri mire, on which, in addition to explaining the uniqueness of this Baztan mire, the LIFE TREMEDAL project, its objectives and planned action programme were presented to those attending. After lunch, the group headed for the Belate mire, where the unique features and conservation plans designed for the mire were outlined.

World Wetlands Day 2015 celebrated in Navarre with a tour of the Palace of Bertiz and the Belate mire



Those attending this year's event to celebrate World Wetlands Day were informed about the LIFE TREMEDAL project in detail at a talk held in the Palace of Bertiz. They also enjoyed a presentation on the palaeoenvironmental studies carried out in Navarre highlighting the importance of mires as historical archives and then went on a guided tour of the Belate mire.

Meetings with local authorities

The local councils of Baztan, Anue, Ultzama, Ituren and Burguete have all helped to implement the restoration projects designed for the Navarrese mires included in TREMEDAL.

Government of Navarre and GANASA technical officers have explained the projects and shared the information available in order to receive input and suggestions from the local populations at work meetings. There have also been field trips to allow mayors, municipal technical officers and residents to find out about the natural importance of areas of this kind and the valuable records of past climates and landscapes which their peat deposits preserve.



The Mayor, local councillors and residents of the Valley of Anue visit the Gesaleta mire with TREMEDAL technical officers.

Monitoring

In May 2015 the European Commission verified the progress of the TREMEDAL project in the field



Two European Commission technical officers visited Navarre on Monday the 11th of May to oversee the progress of the European LIFE-TREMEDAL project. In addition to seeing how the project was coming along on the basis of the documentation generated since it began in 2012, the Commission's representatives also visited the Belate Mire to check up on the evolution of its state of conservation following the work performed there within the framework of the TREMEDAL project.

Dissemination

Exhibition in Bertiz and elsewhere



An exhibition on the TREMEDAL exhibition opened in the Bertiz Natural Park in February 2015. The exhibition uses twenty panels to explain what mires are and why it is important to conserve them, and also provides an outline of all Navarre's mires and their natural and historical values.

The exhibition material is available to all local bodies and associations interested in displaying it and plans already exist for it to be put on show at the Government of Navarre's Nature Interpretation Centres and other similar facilities (Valley of Ultzama).

6 information bulletins on the LIFE TREMEDAL project published



6 information bulletins reporting on the project at different points in its development have been published in the time span of the LIFE TREMEDAL project. These bulletins, which contain news on the four areas of action (Galicia, Picos de Europa, the Basque Country and Navarre), have been published in four languages: Spanish, Basque, Galician and English.

Voluntary work

Environmental volunteer day at the Belate Mire in October 2015



An environmental volunteer day was held on Friday the 16th of October 2015 at the Belate Mire as part of the LIFE TREMEDAL project in order to assuage the environmental impact on birds of fencing the area off. Following a brief explanation of the project and the characteristics of the mire, the volunteers were organised into groups, the material needed to carry out the tasks was handed out and jobs and work areas were assigned. A good part of the work performed by the 40 participants consisted of fitting systems on the perimeter fence to protect birds, although the opportunity was also taken to remove waste from the area. Those attending had something to eat mid-morning to get their strength back.

Communication and engagement activities in the Basque Country as part of the European LIFE TREMEDAL project

The different changes of government have hampered official project events in the Basque Country.

It has been possible, however, to present the project to the municipalities affected and the Board of the Foundation of Valle Salado (an area which includes the Lake of Caicedo Yuso – Arreo), and celebrate World Wetlands Day, the latter in spite of heavy snowfall which meant that the speakers had to be driven to the venue by off-road vehicle even though the event was held at the Salburua – Ataria Wetland Interpretation Centre in the city of Vitoria-Gasteiz itself.

The project and its results to date (February 2015) were outlined and then, on a day with better weather, a fun handicrafts workshop for children aged from 6 to 12, accompanied by grown-ups, which focused on wetland awareness-raising and conservation was organised at the centre. 50 children, accompanied by adults, took part and material on the project was handed out to all those who visited the centre that day: some 300 people.

The project sites themselves have received a lot of visitors. Official visits, day-trippers and the work and monitoring teams have meant a significant flow of people.

This flux of visitors has mainly been channelled through specially prepared areas designated in order to reduce impact, except at the Lake of Caicedo Yuso – Arreo, where the intense movement has proved particularly critical: a balance has had to be struck between the work carried out on the lake and the values it harbours.

Despite all the equipment involved (boats, electrode testing areas, video cameras, generators, etc.) and the great extent to which they needed to be used, we believe that the objective of avoiding disruption has been achieved to a reasonable degree.

A good indication of this is the nesting of the Western Marsh Harrier at the location. The work carried out was adapted to cater for this situation and a pair nested and successfully bred there in 2015.



Family workshop to celebrate World Wetlands Day. Ataria, Vitoria-Gasteiz.

Interviewing those in charge of the project. Lake of Caicedo Yuso – Arreo.



Tree removal work. Jaizkibel.



Track correction with permeable material. Usabelartza.



Collaboration between the crayfish control team (Ramiro Asensio) and the hydrological team (TELUR). Lake of Caicedo Yuso – Arreo.



Visitors consulting the information panel. Jaizkibel.



Installing the underwater enclosure to evaluate fish behaviour (ECOHYDROS). Lake of Caicedo Yuso – Arreo.



Project presentation by Javier Pérez (HAZI) and Patxi Heras (Bazzania). Ataria, Vitoria – Gasteiz.



Official UNESCO visit to assess the nomination of the Valle Salado de Añana, which encompasses the Lake of Caicedo Yuso – Arreo, as a World Heritage Cultural Landscape site.



Project visit to the Lake of Caicedo Yuso – Arreo.

Communication and engagement activities in Vega de Comeya and Vega de Liordes (Picos de Europa National Park)

The communication and engagement activities related to the actions of the LIFE Tremedal project carried out in Picos de Europa were performed by INDUROT (University of Oviedo), the Picos de Europa National Park and the Atlantic Botanical Garden in Gijón, both individually and jointly.

Life Tremedal project dissemination activities in Asturias

The main LIFE Tremedal project dissemination activities, open to the general public and widely covered in the media, were conducted jointly by the staff of the University of Oviedo and the Botanical garden involved in the project. The inaccessibility of the sites meant that it was not possible to carry out these activities in Picos de Europa and so the Botanical Garden was chosen as a venue for the different talks delivered to highlight the importance of mires, the value of the Natura 2000 network and the relevance of the proposed activities of Tremedal within the framework of the LIFE programme. It was also possible to visit the recreations of peatland ecosystems set up at the Garden, which included the species most characteristic of wetlands of this kind, and the installations of the Germplasm Bank, where the wetland seed collections gathered over the length of the project are kept.



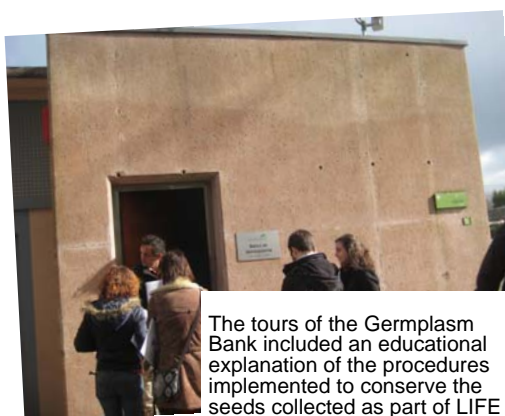
Dissemination activities at the Atlantic Botanical Garden in Gijón.



Tour of the Germplasm Bank at the Atlantic Botanical Garden in Gijón.



Tours explaining how mires work at the Atlantic Botanical Garden in Gijón.



The tours of the Germplasm Bank included an educational explanation of the procedures implemented to conserve the seeds collected as part of LIFE Tremedal.



LIFE Tremedal activities with families to make the public, particularly youngsters, more aware of peatlands.

Environmental education activities at the Botanical Garden in Gijón

In collaboration with INDUROT (University of Oviedo), the Gijón Botanical Garden conducted dissemination and awareness-raising activities on mires and the LIFE Tremedal project aimed at families, particularly children, involving the awareness material designed as part of the project.

Environmental education activities in the Picos de Europa National Park

Environmental education activities on peatlands were conducted by the team of guides at the Picos de Europa National Park as part of the LIFE TREMEDAL project. A total of 400 schoolchildren aged from 3 to 11 from the Park's area of socioeconomic influence took part.



Puppet of Drosera from the story "Lucia, Drosera and a very bothersome mosquito".



Puppets of Lucia, Drosera and the mosquito from the story "Lucia, Drosera and a very bothersome mosquito".



Game of the Goose adapted to peatlands at the Picos de Europa Centralised Rural School in Mestas de Con (Asturias).



"Investigating the mire" activity at the Centralised Rural School in Oseja de Sajambre (Leon).



Box representing the different strata of a mire, material for the "Investigating the mire" activity.

The activities varied depending on the age of the children and ranged from a puppet show of “Lucia, Drosera and a very bothersome mosquito” to the simulation game “Investigating the mire”, in which the investigation of a mire and its different strata was reproduced and the children uncovered fossilised pollen, amber and even primitive tools in a specific chronological order.

All the material was designed and produced by the National Park’s team of guides.

Agreements with farmers to erect fencing

From the very start of the LIFE TREMEDAL project, the need to reach agreements with the owners of the action sites regarding the types of action to be implemented was recognised. These actions consisted of fencing off communal pastures belonging to the Board of Farmers of the Town Council of Cangas de Onís (Asturias) and the Neighbourhood Council of Posada de Valdeón (Leon) in order to keep herbivores out.

In compensation for the loss of grazing land for livestock as a result of the fences, two different types of work were carried out. The route of the track leading to Vega de Comeya, home to an interesting mire on which three fences were erected, was improved for the Farmers of Cangas de Onís. In Valdeón, work was performed to improve the roof and interior walls of a farmers’ shelter in Vega de Liordes, where two fences were put up. The actions were performed with the full acceptance of those using the land.



Farmer's shelter in Vega de Liordes with renovated roof and interior. Work performed to compensate for the erection of fencing in Liordes.



Track to Vega de Comeya following a new, gentler route. Work performed to compensate for the erection of fencing in Comeya.

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Communication and engagement activities in Galicia

Children's activities

Children's activities highlighting the importance of wetlands to humans and all the environmental services they provide have been conducted at different schools all over Galicia throughout the Life Tremedal project. The children have discovered that there are many more wetlands in the areas where they live than they had imagined.



Celebration of World Wetlands Day at the CEIP Santa Maria do Valadouro infant and primary school



Children from the CEIP Monte dos Postes infant and primary school in Santiago de Compostela discovering wetlands .



Children from the CEIP López Ferreiro infant and primary school in Santiago de Compostela with Life Tremedal dissemination material.

Activities for grown-ups

Public dissemination of the Life Tremedal project in Galicia has not been restricted to schools. People of all ages have had the chance to enjoy the seminars, summer courses and trips focusing on wetlands. Members of environmental associations, university students and teaching staff, local authority technical officers and many more people concerned about the environment have attended these events. We have had the good fortune to rely on the participation of great experts in the study and management of wetlands, each with their own particular point of view on the subject.



University teaching staff from Japan visit the Life Tremedal action sites.



University class on the Island of San Roque.



Visit to the blanket bogs of the Serra do Xistral as part of a USC summer course.

Life Tremedal and land custody

In 2014, the Provincial Council of Lugo and the Galician Land Custody Association reached an agreement on the management of two Life Tremedal action sites in Galicia, the Island of San Roque and Ollos de Begonte, two of the wetlands of greatest interest in the upper basin of the Miño River. Both the Provincial Council of Lugo and the Galician Land Custody Association have collaborated in the development of Life Tremedal at these sites, contributing to their improvement.



Meeting between members of the Life Tremedal project, the Galician Land Custody Association and the Provincial Council of Lugo on the Island of San Roque.



Member of the Life Tremedal project attend the wetlands days organised by the Galician Land Custody Association.

Life Tremedal and its relationship with other wetland conservation projects

One of the areas addressed in the Life Tremedal project has been the exchange of experiences with other projects focusing on wetland conservation. To this end, visits have been made to international projects such as the Life Higo project in Portugal, where the project managers showed us the activities carried out to conserve wet heaths and wet matgrass swards in the Portuguese mountains. We have also received visits from representatives of other projects, such as the project for the conservation of *Eryngium viviparum* in France, the Life MedWet Rivers project for the management and monitoring of wetland areas and banks in Castile and Leon, and the Life Activa Red Natura 2000 project, which aims to publicise the Natura 2000 network in Spain.



Visit to the Portuguese Life Higo project action sites.



Presentation of the Higo project.



Staff from the Conservatoire Botanique National de Brest, accompanied by members of Life Tremedal, collecting samples of *Eryngium viviparum* from Galician wetlands.



Puppets of Lucia, Drosera and the mosquito from the story "Lucia, Drosera and a very bothersome mosquito".



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