MERLIN Bringing Europe's freshwaters back to life.

Fact sheet #04

June, 2022

CS number: 4 – Room for the Rhine branches

Case study cluster: large transboundary rivers

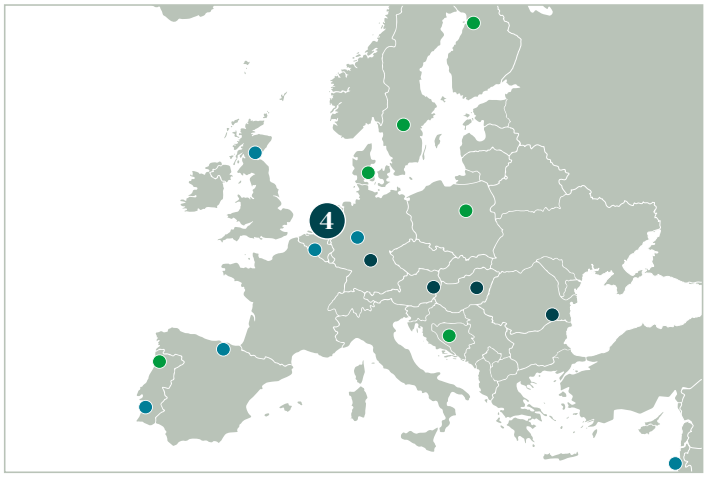
Country: The Netherlands

Scientific partner: Deltares

Implementation partner: Rijkswaterstaat (RWS)

Twinning case study: Po river (Italy)

Website: www.rijkswaterstaat.nl/en/water/water-safety/room-for-the-rivers



Demonstration

- **Type of restoration:** Room for the Rhine branches
- **Size:** total length 300 km of large floodplain rivers; 50,000 ha
- **Location(s):** Rhine branches starting at the Dutch/ German border
- **Value of the case:** flood risk reduction & environmental quality, side channel and riparian restoration, floodplain reconnection, biodiversity enhancement, recreation potential, land use transition
- **Stakeholders involved:** NGOs, State Forest Management, Municipalities, Sand and gravel mining companies, Farmers, Recreational Fisheries, Provincial landscape foundations, and numerous local stakeholders
- **Sectors involved:** nature protection, flood protection, navigation
- **Innovations being applied:** integrated flood and nature protection, longitudinal main channel dams benefitting both shipping and nature

Further implementation plans

- **Type of restoration:** creation of ecological flood retention by changing land use, reconnecting floodplains and change of sluice management in summer dikes
- **Size:** approx. 300 ha
- **Scope:** regional
- **Vicinity:** rural to urban
- **Stakeholders to involve:** State forestry agency, Agriculture, Water boards, Local municipalities, NGOs, Rijkswaterstaat (RWS)
- **Innovations to be applied:** use of existing sluices in summer dike rings to retain water enhancing ecological productivity

Additional information

The implementation case builds on a few pilots in which flood water was retained in the floodplains by closing summer dike sluices. The pilots proved that water could be retained long enough to foster biological production structured in a food web of invertebrates, fish, and opportunistic predators.

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