

## We celebrate the migratory fish



Together with **WWF Germany, Patagonia, the Angling Association, flow:europa** and 45 interested guests, the Living Rivers Foundation celebrated this year's World Fish Migration Day with a film evening at the Patagonia Store Berlin.

**Theresa Schiller** (WWF Germany), **Tobias Schäfer** (WWF Germany), **Dr. Ruben van Treeck**

(IfB: Institute for Inland Fisheries) and **Olaf Lindner** (DAFV: German Angling Federation) discussed wild rivers, migratory fish and hydropower and shed light on the new Renewable Energy Sources Act, which is currently being discussed in the Bundestag.

Four short films were shown as well as the multi-award-winning documentary film "Was Fische wollen. Last Chance for the Tyrolean Inn." by Christoph Walder. It shows the causes and background of the dramatic decline of the Tyrolean Inn and gives a voice to the committed fishermen and conservationists who are fighting for the return of the free-flowing rivers. At the same time, the operators of hydroelectric power also have their say. The film was also shown in the evening programme of the 9th and final workshop of the Forum Fischschutz in Dessau. (Photo: Claudia Kristine Schmidt)  
A trailer is available here: <https://vimeo.com/567821999>.

## WWF's EEG commentary: Advance change in hydropower and end support for small hydropower!

In its commentary for the Act on Immediate Measures for an Accelerated Expansion of Renewable Energies and Further Measures in the Electricity Sector of 6 April 2022, WWF sees an opportunity to make the use of hydropower in Germany more ecological, to support the urgently needed revitalisation of degraded river ecosystems and to correct serious mistakes in the previous EEG support practice and sets out the following premises:

- Decommissioning and dismantling ecologically harmful plants, especially inefficient small power plants,<sup>3</sup>
- compliance with strict environmental requirements (under water and nature conservation law) for fish protection and ecological continuity for remaining existing plants<sup>4</sup> and
- increasing the output of larger power plants (repowering), provided that significant ecological improvements for fish protection and river ecology are achieved in the course of modernisation.

According to WWF, small power plants below 1 MW should not receive any subsidies under the EEG in future. WWF welcomes the government's draft regulation on the preconditions

for and elimination of entitlement to EEG subsidies (compliance with requirements for minimum water flow, passability and fish protection in accordance with Sections 33 to 35 WHG) and opposes the blanket classification of hydropower as a public interest.

The WWF commentary on the EEG is available here:

<https://www.wwf.de/fileadmin/fmwwf/Publications-PDF/Germany/WWF-commentary-EEG-2023-change-in-hydropower-advance.pdf>

Further comments can be found on the WWF blog:

<https://blog.wwf.de/kleine-wasserkraft-eeg/>

## **ONA - Environmental Short Film Festival in Venice with River Film Award**

From 8-10 September 22, Venice will host the 3rd ONA - Short Film Festival, featuring nature, environment and outdoor films. This year, for the first time in the history of the ONA festival, a Freshwater Award will be presented.

<https://onafilmfestival.com>

Wetland International and CIRF (Italian Centre for River Restoration) are calling on filmmakers\* working to protect and restore streams, lakes, rivers or wetlands to submit their maximum 10' long entries by the end of June.

You can apply at this link: <https://europe.wetlands.org/news/call-for-freshwater-short-films/>

Contact: CIRF [www.cirf.org-info@cirf.org](mailto:www.cirf.org-info@cirf.org) - Paul Brotherton: [paul.brotherton@wetlands.org](mailto:paul.brotherton@wetlands.org)

## **World Fish Migration Foundation: Dam Removal Progress Report 2021**

At the Lisbon "Connecting fish, rivers and people" conference, the World Fish Migration Foundation presented its 2021 report on dam and weir removal across Europe. The report counts a record 239 removals in 17 countries, of which 87% were weir removals and 76% had a drop of less than 2 metres. According to the report, Spain removed more dams last year (108) than all other European countries combined in 2020 (101). Three countries (Portugal, Montenegro and Slovakia) recorded the first removals of transverse structures.

You can find the report at the following link: <https://damremoval.eu/report-2021/>

The data in the report is based, among other things, on the results of verifiable responses from enquiries to the responsible agencies. The installation of fish ladders etc. was not counted. For Germany, 2 weir deconstructions were indicated, including the deconstruction of the Leucherhof weir in the Baunach. More on this in the WWF blog: <https://blog.wwf.de/baunach-wehr-rueckbau/>

## **New program “Measures for adaptation to climate change” from Steffi Lemke, Minister of Environment (die Grüne)**

Steffi Lemke, the Federal Minister of Environment (die Grüne) announced a new funding program called “Measures for adaptation to climate change” (DAS in German) in May 2022.

This program aims to bring solutions and promote projects providing answers to extreme weather events (droughts, heat waves, floods etc) caused by global warming. This program takes place in the framework of the German Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change. The funding program aims to protect and support in priority the most affected by climate change in the future, by supporting actors like municipalities. Climate adaptation managers and generally staff for Environmental Protection Agency and Climate Protection Authority, developing integrated strategic adaptation plans to climate change in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals, will be promoted by receiving 14 million euros, in addition to the 60 million euros already injected in the head program.

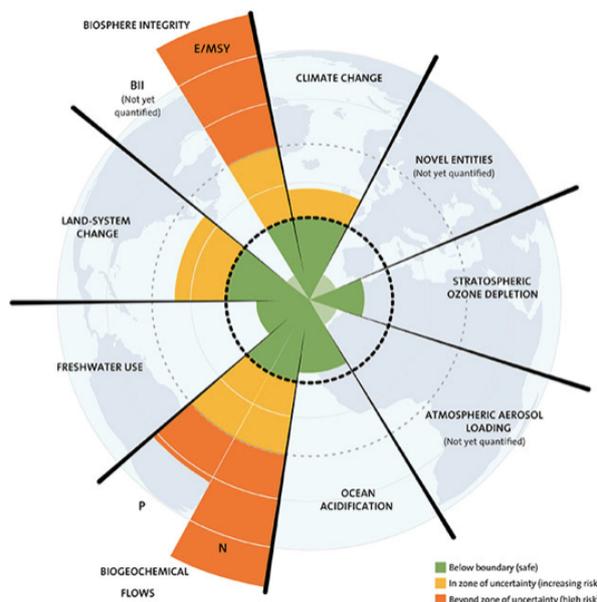
Another long-term goal is to present a new law on climate adaptation, in order to create a legal framework for measurable climate adaption goals, analogous to the already existing Federal Climate Protection Act.

You can find the Interview of Steffi Lemke by the Deutschlandfunk following this link: <https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/klimaschutz-im-ukraine-schatten-interview-steffi-lemke-umweltministerin-dlf-b8d5cdb8-100.html>

You can discover more on the DAS Program on the website of the Ministry of Environment: <https://www.bmu.de/programm/foerderung-von-massnahmen-zur-anpassung-an-die-folgen-des-klimawandels>

## The 6th planetary boundary has been reached

The concept of planetary boundaries was defined by an international team of 26 researchers in a study published in 2009 in the scientific journals Nature and Ecology and Society. Global limits are global thresholds that humanity should not exceed in order to continue to live under favorable conditions and to maintain a safe ecosystem, i.e. a certain stability of the planet. Exceeding these limits [there are nine of them: climate change, biodiversity loss, global disruption of the nitrogen and phosphorus cycle, land use, ocean acidification, ozone depletion, atmospheric aerosols, freshwater use and chemical pollution] could lead to abrupt, hardly predictable changes in humans and their environment.



(source: Steffen et al. 2015)

The cycle of sweet water is under great risk due to human activities and climate change, as well as the loss of biodiversity.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2022 a new study called “A planetary boundary for green water” (Lan Wang-Erlandsson et al., 2022) was published in the journal Nature. This publication aims to frame a planetary boundary for green water. The root-zone soil moisture rate in ice-free land area, the precipitation and evaporation rates are control variable for green water. According to this study the green water boundary has already been transgressed, compared to Holocene variability.

You can find the entire publication following this link:

[https://www.nature.com/articles/s43017-022-00287-8.epdf?sharing\\_token=hier2n7O\\_tPCIC8-r06bmdRgN0jAjWel9jnR3ZoTv0P2KmS6Qajb2nZuUVCQ0Vp\\_P0L\\_fySeHBsRgAaquylOp9LnWtWwctu\\_gtf2IN3rQca4cpkK1yn9HaZMp0U7\\_CeAUSZHD1Xu5KL\\_\\_3KimuwqoA5hdvBx21Dt1POSVkJdo%3D](https://www.nature.com/articles/s43017-022-00287-8.epdf?sharing_token=hier2n7O_tPCIC8-r06bmdRgN0jAjWel9jnR3ZoTv0P2KmS6Qajb2nZuUVCQ0Vp_P0L_fySeHBsRgAaquylOp9LnWtWwctu_gtf2IN3rQca4cpkK1yn9HaZMp0U7_CeAUSZHD1Xu5KL__3KimuwqoA5hdvBx21Dt1POSVkJdo%3D)

You can find more information on the concept of planetary boundaries on the website of the Stockholm Resilience Centre following this link:

<https://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/planetary-boundaries/the-nine-planetary-boundaries.html>

## **National Park Lower Odra River Yearbook 2021**

The last yearbook (2021) of the Lower Oder Valley National Park Foundation published in May 2022 presents the results of several studies regarding the River Basin Management Plan of the lower Oder River. Especially interesting are the studies on migratory fishes and transversal barriers (serving the purposes of generation of electricity, irrigation for the agriculture, waterways etc) at time of the implementation and improvement of the Renewable Energy Law of the EU. In the framework of the WFD and the Biodiversity Strategy 2030, natural dynamic of rivers and therefore natural migratory ways for fishes and other species must be restored or kept. Unfortunately, more and more projects of dams are planned in the river basin of the Odra River.

In the study “Management of small water bodies – the ultimate ratio for the protection of amphibians in dry periods” (Norbert Schneeweiss, 2021, p.65), Norbert Schneeweiss recommends priority measures such as preservation, improvement and creation of amphibians spawning waters in open cast mining and pond areas; water retention in catchment areas; revitalization and creation of small water bodies; use of rainwater and, in emergencies, of ground and drinking water (retention basins, fire-fighting and garden ponds).

According to the study "Every debit is unique - and yet part of the whole" (Gunnar Lischeid, 2021, p. 76), sinkholes are small standing waters that play a major role with regard to the water and material balance and the biodiversity of the landscape. The diversity of the marshes also poses a great challenge for research.

The study „What disturbs the sturgeon? First findings from the Baltic sturgeon reintroduction project“ (Christian Höhne & Jörne Gessner, 2021, p.82) presents the programme „HELCOM Action Plan for the Protection and Recovery of Baltic sturgeon” (2019-2029), willing to restore the population of Baltic Surgeons which completely disappeared at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, due to human activities on the water course, water pollution and the development of alien predatory species. The sturgeon fish group is composed of more than 27 different kind of sturgeons. They are worldwide spread and especially in the north hemisphere in seas and rivers. They are one the oldest species (more than 200 million years) but at the same time also one of the most endangered animal group (IUCN 2010). The Baltic Sturgeon is an anadromous fish and can live until 140 years (for the female especially). They are a key specie for researchers due to their life cycle characteristics and genetical biodiversity. It has been shown that the sturgeon supports the populations of salmon and eels in rivers.

According to Georg Moskwa in the study “Rivers as ecological corridors -Passage of watercourses and their function in the ecosystem” (2021, p. 92), the natural course of rivers

must be restored in order to promote the stability of the hydromorphological component, as well as the physico-chemical components, and the biodiversity and its habitats. Fish ladder must be adapted when the removal of transversal barrier is not intended. No more dams should be planned on the remaining natural rivers (oppositely to a lot of projects in the East European Countries).

All these studies show the need to implement as fast as possible the WFD and the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, presently at risk due to the development of several damming projects.

An entire version of this National Park Yearbook 2021 is available for 6,50 euros on the website of the National Park of the Lower Oder River Foundation following this link: <https://www.nationalpark-unteres-odertal.de/en/publications/national-park-yearbook/>

## **AöW: 15th anniversary of the founding of the Alliance for Public Water Management**

On the 17.05.2022 was held the year event of the AöW on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the founding of the Public Water Alliance, in the House of Agriculture and Food (HdLE). The event and panel discussion focused on "Climate Change: Challenges of Water Management for Future Generations".

Speakers included Parliamentary State Secretary Dr. Bettina Hoffmann from the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUV), UBA Vice President Dr. Lilian Busse and legal expert on the successful climate law constitutional complaint Prof. Felix Ekardt. After a lecture by AöW Vice President Olaf Schröder on fields of action in water management, there was a subsequent discussion with the new or re-elected water policy spokespersons of the parliamentary groups in the Bundestag. This was followed by an evening talk with founding Vice-President Hans-Hermann Baas and AöW President Prof. Lothar Scheuer about the issues in the AöW founding period, the development and future of water management in public hands.

The press release and the program of the event of the Alliance for Public Water Management are available here: <https://aoew.de/allgemein/15-jaehriges-jubilaem-der-gruendung-der-allianz-der-oeffentlichen-wasserwirtschaft/>

## **EU-Life Blue Lakes Project: no microplastics, just waves**



On 01.07.2022 will be held a Zoom Conference in the framework of the EU-Life Project "Blue Lakes". You can register to

this event following this link:

<https://www.globalnature.org/38911/HOME/Events/Registration-for-Life-Blue-Lakes-Partner-Event-EU-Green-Week/resindex.aspx?addhilite=blue&addhilite=lakes>

This project was launched by 7 partner organisations (<https://lifebluelakes.eu/en/i-partner>), led by the Italian NGO “Legambiente”. It is funded by the European Commission to the tune of E 2,530,927 and co-financed by PlasticsEurope, Association of Plastics Manufacturers. This project aims to reduce the amount of microplastics in lakes in Europe. In Germany and Italia, the measures have already been implemented and show great results, to be used by other organisations engaged in lakes’ protection in Europe. This project is a multi-faceted: raising awareness of the citizens, as well as developing solutions and technical practices in the wastewater treatment for industries and local authorities.

This online seminar is part of a three-part seminar series with the topic “Microplastics in Lakes”.

This event is a co-event of the EU Green Week 2022 (30.05.2022 – 05.06.2022).

You can find more information on the EU-Life Blue Lakes Project following this link: <https://lifebluelakes.eu/de/il-programma-life/>

## **The horn-leaved stonewort (*Chara tomentosa*) is the aquatic plant of the year 2022**

The Association of German Scuba Divers (VDST), together with the Austrian Scuba Diving Association (TSVÖ) and the Swiss Underwater Sports Association (SUSV), has chosen the hornleaf stonewort (*Chara tomentosa*) as the "Aquatic Plant of the Year 2022". The aim is to draw attention to the increasing endangerment of a characteristic species of clearwater lakes as one of the most threatened habitats in clearwater lakes, bodden waters and also secondary waters throughout Europe.

With the "Aquatic Plant of the Year" campaign, the three associations want to draw attention to the still continuing deterioration of many sensitive diving waters in Germany, Austria and Switzerland and make recreational divers, but also all other water sports and nature lovers, aware of the need to protect underwater vegetation.

In the lakes of Schleswig-Holstein, the horn-leaved stonewort was once one of the most widespread species in the shallow and deep waters of the large lakes. All occurrences have fallen victim to eutrophication. In Hesse, the species is currently considered extinct. But also in the Mecklenburg Lake District this species has disappeared from many lakes or the populations are being reduced by eutrophication and fish stocking. Protection against eutrophication and extensive fishing, including a fish stock adapted to the type of water body, are considered the most important measures for the recovery of the stocks.

## **On the road with the Action Network Small Bodies of Water Berlin**

On the occasion of the Long Day of Urban Nature, NABU Berlin will be conducting a water sampling event at the Schwarze Graben in Reinickendorf on 11 June.

Children aged 12 and over, young people and adults can register at: <https://www.langertagderstadtnatur.de/angebote/details/6611>

On the same day, the Berlin State Working Group invites you to a bike tour along the 3.5 km long Heidekampgraben, starting at 2:00 pm at S-Bf. Treptower Park.

Registration: <https://www.langertagderstadtnatur.de/angebote/details/6499>

At the GRÜNE LIGA Berlin - Environmental Festival on 12 June at the Brandenburg Gate, the Aktionsnetz Kleingewässer will be at the start with a joint stand and can also be visited without registration.

## Dates preview 2022 International :

7 – 9 June 2022 Telford, UK	<b>Flood and Coast 2022</b> <a href="https://www.floodandcoast.com">https://www.floodandcoast.com</a>
11 – 12 June 2022 Berlin	<b>Long Day of Urban Nature</b> <a href="https://www.langertagderstadtnatur.de/">https://www.langertagderstadtnatur.de/</a>
Saturday 11 June 13-18:00 <b>At Schwarzen Graben</b> Reinickendorf, Septimerstr. 44 B	<b>Water sampling at the Septimer Basin</b> Measurements of water structure and quality. Small animals under the microscope. <a href="https://www.langertagderstadtnatur.de/angebote/details/6611">https://www.langertagderstadtnatur.de/angebote/details/6611</a>
Saturday, 11 June 2-5 p.m. Meeting: <b>Treptower Park S-Bahn</b> station Park side	<b>Bicycle excursion at Heidekampgraben</b> 3.5 km tour to Späthsfelde. Ecological features and challenges. <a href="https://www.langertagderstadtnatur.de/angebote/details/6499">https://www.langertagderstadtnatur.de/angebote/details/6499</a>
12 June 2022 11:00 – 19:00 Berlin, Festmeile at the Brandenburger Tor	<b>Environmental Festival</b> Of the Grüne Liga Berlin e.V.. The Environmental Festival is dedicated this year to the elixir of life: water. With a stage programme and stands. <a href="http://www.umweltfestival.de/">www.umweltfestival.de/</a>
21 June 2022 10:00 – 12:00 Online	<b>Water bodies drying up - an increasing symptom of climate change – DWA (in German)</b> <a href="https://eva.dwa.de/details.php?id=5194">https://eva.dwa.de/details.php?id=5194</a>
28.06 – 02.07.2022 <b>Hannover Congress Centre</b>	<b>36<sup>th</sup> German Nature Conservation Day</b> <a href="https://www.deutscher-naturschutztag.de">https://www.deutscher-naturschutztag.de</a>
1 July 2022 14:00 - 16:30 Online	<b>EU-Life Blue Lakes Project: Capacity Building Workshop</b> <a href="http://www.globalnature.org/en/home/events/life-blue-lakes-capacity-building-workshop">www.globalnature.org/en/home/events/life-blue-lakes-capacity-building-workshop</a>
24 – 30 July 2022 <b>Barby</b> – At the ferry <a href="http://www.elbe-saalecamp.de/html/anfahrt.html">http://www.elbe-saalecamp.de/html/anfahrt.html</a>	<b>Outlook Elbe - 30th years of commitment to living river landscapes</b> International Elbe-Saale Camp 2022. In 2022, the Elbe-Saale Camp will enter its 30th year. A good occasion to look back as well as forward. A warm invitation to all friends of free-flowing rivers! <a href="http://www.elbe-saale-camp.de/">http://www.elbe-saale-camp.de/</a>
23 August – 1 September 2022 <b>Stockholm, Sweden</b>	<b>World Water Week 2022</b> <a href="https://www.worldwaterweek.org">https://www.worldwaterweek.org</a>

5 – 6 October 2022	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Symposium “Vital waters in Baden-Württemberg”</b> <a href="http://www.vitale-gewaesser-bw.de">www.vitale-gewaesser-bw.de</a>
6 – 8 December 2022 <b>Paris, France</b>	<b>UN- Water Summit for Groundwater</b> <a href="https://www.un-igrac.org/agenda/un-water-summit-groundwater">https://www.un-igrac.org/agenda/un-water-summit-groundwater</a>
Wednesday, 22 March 2023	<b>World Water Day</b>
22 March – 24 March 2023	<b>United Nations 2023 Water Conference</b> <a href="https://sdgs.un.org/un-2023-conference-water-action-decade">https://sdgs.un.org/un-2023-conference-water-action-decade</a>

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