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The LIFE RIPARIAS project: Reaching Integrated and Prompt Action in Response to Invasive Alien Species - Poster presentation

Tackling Invasive Alien Species (IAS) requires a coherent approach across administrative boundaries, especially so in continuous aquatic habitats. LIFE RIPARIAS targets a selection of invasive aquatic and riparian plants, including species of the following genera from the EU list: *Hydrocotyle*, *Lagarosiphon*, *Ludwigia*, *Myriophyllum*, *Heracleum*, *Impatiens* and *Lysichiton*. Its goal is to optimize the management of these IAS at river basin scale within a multiregional pilot area in Belgium (Dyle, Senne, and Marcq river basins). LIFE RIPARIAS provides 1) early warning and management reporting; 2) decision support for prioritizing management actions; 3) river basin management strategies adopted by all stakeholders; 4) prioritized IAS field management; 5) monitoring of management actions; 6) the sharing of expertise and best management practices. A novel evidence-based workflow for decision making

on IAS management at the river basin scale has been developed, maximizing cost effectiveness. The decision support tool will be made available to IAS managers across EU Member States. Active participation and cooperation between decision makers, field managers and the public are essential. The ten project partners include public bodies, public research institutes, academia, and associations. Additionally, species identification sheets, booklets and best practice management guides will aid identification and management in the field. Information and training sessions will spread knowledge as widely as possible. This innovative project (2021-2026) is co-funded by the LIFE programme of the European Union and the three Belgian regions for a total budget of about 7 million euros (LIFE19 NAT/BE/000953).

