



## Top EU biologists gather in Koblenz to launch the “ProtectFish” research project



**Description of the image:** ProtectFish partners and the External Advisory Board experts at the University of Koblenz.

**Author:** Aliénor

Brussels, 27-08-24 // The Horizon EU-funded research project “Protecting threatened river fish against predation (ProtectFish)” aims to study the ecosystem balance and conflicts between EU protected river fish and the Great Cormorant. It is a four-year collaboration of partners from eight EU countries, coordinated by the Danish Technical University (DTU). The project was launched last week at the University of Koblenz (Germany).

The Consortium carrying out this research will consist of EU universities, research institutes and SMEs including the University of Koblenz that was hosting this first





meeting. The ProtectFish partners will receive guidance from an External Advisory Board, which includes specialists in cormorants and river fish, EU and FAO representatives, as well as other stakeholders like environmental and angling organisations. All of them met in person in Koblenz for the first time to coordinate and launch their activities for the months ahead.

The project is expected to deliver ambitious data collection work, knowledge tools and test practical management solutions over the next 4 years. With this research, ProtectFish will contribute to the achievement of the EU Biodiversity Strategy objectives and of the “good ecological status” objectives for rivers set by the Water Framework Directive (WFD) in the year 2000.

Throughout the project’s course, ProtectFish members must overcome numerous barriers and obstacles to achieve successful results from field studies in a highly complex and dynamic environment such as rivers. Areas where extreme weather events constitute a great challenge for research nowadays.

“ProtectFish” is a project funded by the European Union “Horizon Europe” research and innovation program, under the call “Nature protection: better methods and knowledge to improve the conservation status of EU-protected species and habitats”. One of its objectives will also be to build dialogue among all the parties involved in the biodiversity conflicts so that the scientific results obtained can be useful for all.

A project website is under construction and will be launched by November 2024.

**Media contact or for any further information:**

Thibault Van Lierde – Aliénor : [thibault.vanlierde@alienor.eu](mailto:thibault.vanlierde@alienor.eu)

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**Note to the Editors:**

The consortium partners of this project are:

- University of Koblenz: <https://www.uni-koblenz.de/en>
- University of Aarhus: <https://international.au.dk/>
- BOKU University: <https://boku.ac.at/en/>
- Czech Academy of Sciences: <https://www.avcr.cz/en/>
- Sveriges Lantbrukuniversitet: <https://www.slu.se/en/>
- CNR Istituto di Ricerca sulle Acque: <https://www.irsra.cnr.it/wp/>
- Sakowicz Inland Fisheries Institute :  
<https://www.infish.com.pl/en/content/about-institute>
- Aliénor : <https://alienor.eu/>

**Contact:**

- Niels Jepsen | Danish Technical University (DTU): [nj@aqu.dtu.dk](mailto:nj@aqu.dtu.dk)
- Thibault Van Lierde | Aliénor: [thibault.vanlierde@alienor.eu](mailto:thibault.vanlierde@alienor.eu)

