EU LIFE Programme integrated project
"Implementation of River Basin Management Plans of Latvia towards good surface water status"

International conference

"Waterside – A Space for Water, Land and People Interactions: Practices and Challenges in River Basin Management"

8-9 October 2025 in Tukums/Riga Latvia

Aim of the conference: To foster the exchange of knowledge and experience for developing management measures in the interaction zones between water, terrestrial ecosystems, and human activities. By exploring the dynamics of diverse waterside environments, the conference seeks to identify improved management approaches, practices, and governance solutions for effective river basin management.

Agenda

Wednesday, October 8, 2025 (full day 8:45:00-18:30)

Joint field trip to the Tukums county/Kurzeme region in the western part of Latvia to visit both rural and urban locations and explore water ecosystems and human interactions through various planning and management practices. We will visit our demonstration river water bodies - the River Slocene, as well as other relevant sites. Transportation for participants to and from Riga will be provided.

The detailed agenda is provided separately.

Thursday, October 9, 2025

Conference day | hotel "Pullman Riga Old Town" | Jēkaba Iela 24, LV-1050, Old Riga

9:00-9:30	**Arrival & registration**	**Tea/ coffee**	**Expo**
9:30-9:40	**Opening of the conference** *Kristīna Veidemane, Baltic Environmental Forum-Latvia (BEF-Latvia)*		
9:40-10:00	**Introduction to the LIFE GoodWater IP project** *Jānis Šīre, Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Centre*		
10:00-10:30	**Keynote on multi-functionality and interactions between water ecosystem and other ecosystems, their use, and people** *Miguel Villoslada, University of Eastern Finland*		
10:30-11:15	**Panel discussion (invited policy makers, experts and community representatives)** • *Panellists in the process of confirmation*		
11:15-11:45	**Tea/ coffee**	**Expo**	
11:45-13:15	**Parallel thematic sessions (in groups)**		

Session A.	**A. Forestland – water ecosystem interactions** The interface between forests and water is vital for maintaining healthy ecosystems. These zones function as natural filters, regulating the flow of nutrients, sediments, and carbon, while enhancing water quality. They also support rich biodiversity by providing complex habitats and movement corridors for species. Additionally, forest stands offer economic and social values, highlighting the need for sustainable management. **Presentations** (20 min presentation +10 min discussion for each): Moderator: Arta Bārdule, Latvian State Forest Institute "Silava"		
	Presentation I	Enhancing Riparian Zones through Forest Management and Infrastructure, LIFE GoodWater IP	Toms Štāls, Latvian State Forest Institute "Silava"
	Presentation II	Environmentally friendly maintenance of forest land drainage systems, LIFE SIP WetEST	Jürgen Sarjas, University of Tartu
	Presentation III	Riparian Forest management: LIFE is Salaca project experience	Mārcis Saklaurs, Latvian State Forest Institute "Silava"
Session E	**E. Water banks – people interactions** River and lake banks are vital interfaces where human activities—such as angling, tourism, and recreation—interact with freshwater ecosystems. These areas provide social and economic benefits through leisure, cultural value, and local livelihoods. Effective management requires balancing public access with ecosystem protection, supported by sustainable tourism, community involvement, and spatial planning. **Presentations** (20 min presentation +10 min discussion for each): Moderator: Agnese Reķe, BEF-Latvia		
	Presentation I	Comprehensive framework for assessment of freshwater cultural ecosystem services in Latvia, LIFE GoodWater	Anda Ruskule, BEF Latvia Co-authors: A. Zariņa, A. Reķe, M. Fonteina-Kazeka
	Presentation II	Improving the ecological quality of Lake Sila by mowing common reeds, LIFE GoodWater IP	Kristīna Skriba, Augsdaugava municipal county
	Presentation III	Restoration of shallow bays and lakes, focusing on the biomanipulation experiment at Lake Harku, LIFE SIP WetEST	Paul Teesalu, Estonian University of Life Sciences Co-author: A. Rei, Estonian Environmental Board
Session D	**D. Farmland – water ecosystem interactions** The interface between agricultural land and aquatic ecosystems significantly influences environmental quality. Farmland runoff often carries nutrients, sediments, and agrochemicals into waterbodies, leading to pollution and ecosystem degradation. However, edge zones can support biodiversity and provide ecosystem services, especially when managed with buffers, constructed wetlands, or conservation tillage. Improving the management of these transitional areas is key to enhancing water quality and sustainable agriculture. **Presentations** (20 min presentation +10 min discussion for each): Moderator: Ingrīda Brēmere, BEF-Latvia		
	Presentation I	Practices for water and nutrient management in riparian zones of agricultural streams in Latvia	Ainis Lagzdiņš, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies

	Presentation II	Advancing Modelling for Better River Governance: Insights from SGGW	Svajunas Plunge, Warsaw University of Life Sciences/ LIFE SIP VANDUO
	Presentation III	Springs as a bridge between surface and groundwater: science, management, and citizen engagement or What a spring can tell us about how we manage our waters and land	Inga Retiķe, University of Latvia
13:15-14:15	**Lunch**	**Expo**	
14:15-15:45	**Parallel thematic sessions (in groups)**		
Session D	**D. Farmland – water ecosystem interactions** The interface between agricultural land and aquatic ecosystems significantly influences environmental quality. Farmland runoff often carries nutrients, sediments, and agrochemicals into waterbodies, leading to pollution and ecosystem degradation. However, edge zones can support biodiversity and provide ecosystem services, especially when managed with buffers, constructed wetlands, or conservation tillage. Improving the management of these transitional areas is key to enhancing water quality and sustainable agriculture. **Presentations** (20 min presentation +10 min discussion for each): Moderator: Ainis Lagzdiņš, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies		
	Presentation I	Beyond Buffer Zones: Socio-Economic Insights from the ENGAGE Project for Improved River(side) Nutrient Management	Annija Danenberga, Baltic Studies Centre
	Presentation II	Latvian case study on exploring nature bases solutions for addressing eutrophication in the Lielupe river basin and the Gulf of Riga, Water4All: CREATE project	Anda Ruskule, University of Latvia
	Presentation III	Similarity between the pesticide cocktails detected using POCIS in the river Daugava and the Gulf of Riga waterside in autumn 2024	Daiga Cepīte-Frišfelde, University of Latvia
Session B	**B. Floodplain – people interaction** Floodplains are dynamic zones where natural processes and human activities intersect, carrying both environmental and societal significance. They supply essential ecosystem services – like flood control and nutrient cycling. Land use changes, infrastructure development, and climate variability have increased flood risks. Understanding people's behaviour within floodplains is key to developing adaptive, risk-aware land and water management strategies. **Presentations** (20 min presentation +10 min discussion for each): Moderator: Linda Fībiga, Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Centre		
	Presentation I	LIFE GoodWater IP/ Lake Lubāns Through Different Lenses: Communities, Institutions, and Nature	Karlīna Putniņa, Latvian Fund for Nature Co-author L. Brizga-Kalniņa
	Presentation II	Expert perspectives on beavers in small river management: how	Anita Zariņa, University of Latvia Co-authors: A. Svece, K. Lakševics, M. Lūkins, I. Vinogradovs

		challenges and opportunities are perceived	
	Presentation III	Social measures in the portfolio of the flood risk management: case study of Jelgava city, IMPETUS project	Ingrīda Brēmere, BEF- Latvia
Session F	**F. Riparian sanctuaries – habitat for protected species** Riparian areas provide critical habitats for protected species by preserving water quality, offering sanctuaries, nursery, and spawning grounds, and maintaining habitat connectivity. These zones support biodiversity and ecological resilience, making their conservation essential for protecting vulnerable and already threatened water-dependent species. **Presentations** (20 min presentation +10 min discussion for each): Moderator: Kristīna Veidemane, BEF-Latvia		
	Presentation I	Ecologically vulnerable riverine fish and where to find them – FPV experience of importance of natural riverbanks	Kaspars Abersons, Institute of Food safety, Animal Health and Environment "BIOR"
	Presentation II	Preliminary monitoring results of biological quality elements in LIFE GoodWater IP project demo streams	Laura Grīnberga, University of Latvia Co-authors: A.Skuja, D.Ozoliņš, N.Uztica
	Presentation III	The impact of climate change on the availability of ecological flows and distribution of riverine habitats	Jolanta Jēkabsone, Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Centre
15:45-15:55	**Comfort break**		
15:55-16:25	**Plenary**: Reflection on parallel sessions/ joint discussions Key messages of the conference		
16:25-16:40	**Open floor for announcements by participants on future events, etc.**		
16:40-17:00	**Closing of the event**		

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