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# NEWSLETTER

**May/June 2023**

LIFE EUROKITE

(LIFE18 NAT/AT/000048)



  
MEGEG





"The LIFE EUROKITE project is an important initiative that provides us with further knowledge about bird mortality in Europe. Policy makers need scientific knowledge and data to make informed decisions. The LIFE EUROKITE project will provide this data so we can better protect these stunning bird populations that are threatened by human activity across Europe. I will continue to work to protect wild species, especially those that are already threatened. I look forward to work with the LIFE EUROKITE project to see what European decision makers can do to better protect these precious species in the future."

**Maria Noichl**

**Since 2014 Member of the European Parliament  
(MEP) – Germany**

**Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and  
Democrats**





## **AMUS CONTINUES WITH THE RELEASES OF RED KITES TO REINFORCE THE POPULATIONS OF SOUTHWEST SPAIN**

During June and July 2023, AMUS continues with the releases of red kites within the framework of the LIFE EUROKITE project and with the aim of reinforcing the breeding populations in the southwest of Spain.

The red kite is considered to be a threatened species in Spain, which due to the marked decline in its populations (mainly the south), is listed as endangered.

In total 100 birds will be released over a period of three years (2022-2024) with the aim to reinforce the threatened populations of red kites in the southwest of Spain (Extremadura and Andalucía), and very probably also in the south of Portugal, being all of them in a situation of continuous decline in the last 30 years.

In 2022, 30 individuals from the United Kingdom were already released in the same area. This year another 32 red kites will be released. The group of 32 young red kites from UK already arrived in Spain. They were brought to the acclimatization facilities in Valencia del Mombuey (municipality of Badajoz).

This release has been being prepared for the first years during the LIFE EUROKITE project. A feasibility study has been carried out on an area of more than 600,000 ha between the provinces of Badajoz and Huelva. This study has revealed the suitability of the area for this population reinforcement action and has been reviewed and approved by a committee of 12 experts in conservation and reintroduction of the red kite from Spain, the United Kingdom and Italy.



First group of red kites which were released in 2022. © AMUS/LIFE EUROKITE



The birds that AMUS will release in the LIFE EUROKITE project come from England. This donor population was chosen for two main reasons:

- The large size of the breeding population of red kites in this country (6,000 pairs, being the second largest population in Europe), with which the potential consequences of the extraction of these chicks in this donor population are non-existent.
- The genetic proximity of these birds to those present in Spain, since the red kite population in England has been the result of various reintroduction projects over the last 30 years where Spain was one of the donor populations.

In just a few weeks, the facilities will be opened and the young red kites will begin their first flights and the dispersal process, which will take them to a large part of southern Iberia and perhaps to more northern areas and even to North Africa.

This period will be the most critical phase. The birds are tagged with GPS devices which gives the opportunity to follow the birds very close. The monitoring of these birds, especially the mortality reasons, during the next years will be essential for the success of the population reinforcement program.

The arrival of this first group of red kites has been presided over by representatives of the Ministry for Ecological Transition, the General Directorate of Sustainability of the Junta de Extremadura and the mayor of Valencia del Mombuey, with representatives of other institutions such as the Civil Guard, Natural Environment Agents of the Junta de Extremadura, Birding in Extremadura and we especially highlight the participation of the entities that support this action within the LIFE EUROKITE project, such as ENDESA, Fundación Banco de Santander, Mossy Earth and the Badajoz Provincial Council and this year with the support of Iberia airlines.



Representation of the entities that participate in the LIFE Eurokite in the context of the community of Extremadura during the introduction of the birds in the acclimatization facilities. © AMUS/LIFE EUROKITE



## TAGGING OF RED KITES IN FRANCE

With the support of the LIFE EUROKITE project, 31 juveniles red kites were tagged with GPS devices by the LPO and Lorraine Association Nature (LOANA) between 7 and 10 June 2023 in the Pyrenees and the Grand Est (North-East) in France. The tagging operation was part of the European LIFE EUROKITE programme, which aims to protect this threatened species.

On 7 and 8 June 2023, GPS tags were fitted on 10 juvenile red kites in the Special Protection Area (SPA) of the Nive des Aldudes valley (Pyrenees-Atlantiques). A further 21 tags were fitted on 9 and 10 June in the Bassigny region (Haute-Marne and Vosges). By 2021, 26 kites had already been tagged in the Massif Central, followed by a further 20 in Aveyron, Haute-Marne and the Vosges in 2022. Unfortunately, 22 of them were already found dead in Spain and France.

Co-funded by the EU's Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE), the EUROKITE project, coordinated by the MEGEG, uses telemetry to identify, locate and quantify the main causes of mortality affecting the red kite across Europe in order to propose appropriate conservation measures. On the French side, the programme is co-financed by the French Ministry for Ecological Transition (MTE) and the LPO and is being implemented by LPO France with the support of its regional associations in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Aquitaine and Champagne-Ardenne.

Endemic to Europe, the red kite is a diurnal bird of prey living in agricultural areas where livestock farming and mixed farming are combined. It can be recognized in flight by its light plumage and notched tail and can be seen throughout the year in France. Poisoning, shooting, collisions, electrocution: the anthropogenic threats to raptor populations across Europe are diverse and fearsome. Considering the status of concern of the red kite in France, a new National Action Plan (NAP), coordinated by the DREAL Grand Est and implemented by the LPO, was launched in 2018 for 10 years. The data collected within the LIFE EUROKITE project will complement and guide the conservation action of this NAP.



Left: Red kite with transmitter in France 2023, Right: Tagging team 2023 in France.



## INVITATION

### LIFE EUROKITE MIDTERM CONFERENCE & ADVISORY BOARD

Dear supporters and cooperation partners of the LIFE EUROKITE project,

Over the last two and a half years, we have worked together to reach the goals of the LIFE EUROKITE project. Now it is already halftime and we would like to come together with you. We would like to use this opportunity to meet in person to have the annual Advisory Board meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

Please see the agenda on the next page.

**Date: 05.10.2023**

**Place: KH Seminarhotel GmbH, Kirschallee 6, 38820 Halberstadt (Germany)**

Please note that we want to start with the program on the 5<sup>th</sup> already in the morning, so please consider arriving already on 4<sup>th</sup> October.

There is a special contingent of hotel rooms reserved for us, which can be booked until the 01.09.2023 (please book your room as soon as possible). Please use the booking code "LIFE EUROKITE".

Please note that the costs for the hotel rooms and the arrival and departure are on your own cost.

K6 Seminarhotel GmbH  
Kirschallee 6  
38820 Halberstadt  
Deutschland  
+49 3941 575-8  
info@k6-seminarhotel.de

Please send a confirmation or rejection and the list of persons who will join the event to [Hannah.boeing@tbraab.at](mailto:Hannah.boeing@tbraab.at) latest until 15<sup>th</sup> July 2023.



## **5.10.2023 – MIDTERM CONFERENCE & ADVISORY BOARD LIFE EUROKITE**

Please note that the event will be recorded and photos will be taken. Records and pictures will be partly distributed on social media and the webpage [www.life-eurokite.eu](http://www.life-eurokite.eu)! As soon as you attend the event you agree with this. In case you have any concerns please let us know before the start of the event.

### **08:00 – 09:00 Registration & Welcome**

### **09:00 – 10:30 Presentation Block I – LIFE EUROKITE**

**(moderation Andreas Gärtner)**

(20 minutes presentation + 10 minutes discussion & questions)

09:00 – 09:30 Interim Results LIFE EUROKITE

Rainer Raab, Technical Manager LIFE EUROKITE

09:30 – 10:00 Breeding monitoring Saxony-Anhalt (Germany)

Martin Kolbe, Rotmilanzentrum Museum Heineanum

10:00 – 10:30 Reinforcement of red kites in southwest Spain

Alfonso Godino, AMUS

### **10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break**

### **11:00 – 12:30 Presentation Block II – Conservation and persecution of raptor species**

**(moderation Hannah Böing)**

(20 minutes presentation + 10 minutes discussion & questions)

11:00 – 11:30 Pathological research

Oliver Krone, Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research

11:30 – 12:00 Raptor persecution in France

LPO France

12:00 – 12:30 Raptor persecution

Committee Against Bird Slaughter

12:30 – 13:00 Vulture conservation work & success

Jovan Andevski, Vulture Conservation Foundation

### **13:00 – 14:00 Lunch**

**14:00 – 15:30 Presentation Block III – Publications (moderation Rainer Raab)**  
(20 minutes presentation + 10 minutes discussion & questions)

14:00 – 14:30 Population dynamics of red kites

Patrick Scherler, Swiss Ornithological Institute Sempach

14:30 – 15:00 Habitat modelling for red kites

Moritz Mercker, Bionum GmbH

15:00 – 15:30 Mortality reasons of red kites in whole Europe

Patricia Mateo-Tomás, University of Oviedo (Spain)

**15:30 – 16:00 Coffee break**

**16:00 – 17:00 Advisory Board Discussion round (moderation Andreas Gärtner)**

**17:00 – 22:00 Networking and feedback**

Please note that the conference language will be English.

We will try to stream the event online as well. Information on this will be announced later.





# Visit us on



[www.life-eurokite.eu](http://www.life-eurokite.eu)



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## Contact persons



**Werner Falb-Meixner**

President of the Central European Society for Raptor Protection (MEGEG)

[Werner.Falb-Meixner@Raptorprotection.eu](mailto:Werner.Falb-Meixner@Raptorprotection.eu)



**Dr. Hans Peter Kollar**

Vice president of the Central European Society for Raptor Protection (MEGEG)

[Office@Dr-Kollar.at](mailto:Office@Dr-Kollar.at)



**Mag. Dr. Rainer Raab**

LIFE EUROKITE  
Technical Manager

[Rainer.Raab@TB Raab.at](mailto:Rainer.Raab@TB Raab.at)



**DI Andreas Gärtner**

LIFE EUROKITE –  
Project Administrator

[Andreas.Gaertner@TB Raab.at](mailto:Andreas.Gaertner@TB Raab.at)



**Hannah Böing, MSc**

LIFE EUROKITE  
Public Relation

[Hannah.Boeing@TB Raab.at](mailto:Hannah.Boeing@TB Raab.at)



**Manuela Löwold**

President of the Central European Society for Raptor Protection Germany (MEGEG Germany)

[Manuela.Loewold@MEGEG.de](mailto:Manuela.Loewold@MEGEG.de)





## Coordinating Beneficiary



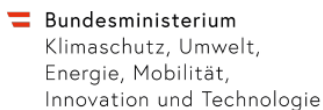
The TB Raab was commissioned to implement the LIFE EUROKITE project after a pan-European public tender.



## Project partner (Associated Beneficiary)



## Co-financier



LE GOUVERNEMENT  
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG



This project is co-financed by the LIFE Nature Programme of the European Union



## Cooperation partner



This project is co-financed by the LIFE Nature Programme of the European Union

