9 partner beneficiaries, 1 shared aim

Conservatoire d'espaces naturels des Hauts-de-France
(Bénéficiaire coordinateur)
cen-hautsdefrance.org

Conservatoire botanique national de Bailleul
www.cbnbl.org

Conservatoire du littoral - délégation Manche Mer du Nord
www.conservatoire-du-littoral.fr

Département de l'Oise
www.oise.fr

Fédération des Conservatoires d'espaces naturels
reseau-cen.org

Natagora
www.natagora.be

Parc naturel régional Scarpe-Escaut
www.pnr-scarpe-escaut.fr

Syndicat mixte Baie de Somme Grand Littoral Picard
www.baiedesomme.org

Syndicat mixte Oise-Aronde (SMOA)
oisearonde.wixsite.com/smoa

Institutional support :

More details on:

www.life-anthropofens.fr

Conservatoire d'espaces naturels des Hauts-de-France
1 Place Ginkgo - Village Oasis
80480 Dury
Tel: 03 22 89 63 96
contact@cen-hautsdefrance.org

Financial partners:

Budget:

A budget of 18.7 million euros financed as follows:

- 60% by the European Union
- 29% by the Artois Picardy Water Board
- 5% by the Seine-Normandy Water Board
- 1% by the Department of Oise (as well as initiatives extended to Les Marais de Sacy)
- 1% by the French Office for Biodiversity
- 3% by the Coca-Cola Foundation

Plus contributions from the beneficiaries of the project themselves.

LIFE 18 NAT/FR/000906

LIFE ANTHROPOFENS

Coordinated by
Conservatoire d'espaces naturels
des Hauts-de-France

Preserving & restoring alkaline fens in Hauts-de-France and Wallonia regions

- 480 hectares of restored and studied peatland in Northern France and Southern Belgieum
- 6 natural habitats of community interest
- 13 sites in the Natura 2000 network of 8 different areas
- 39 municipalities involved
- 6 years (from 2019 to 2025)
- 1 cross-border project

N. Cottin / CEN HDF

R. Monnehay / CEN HDF

M. Héraud / CEN HDF

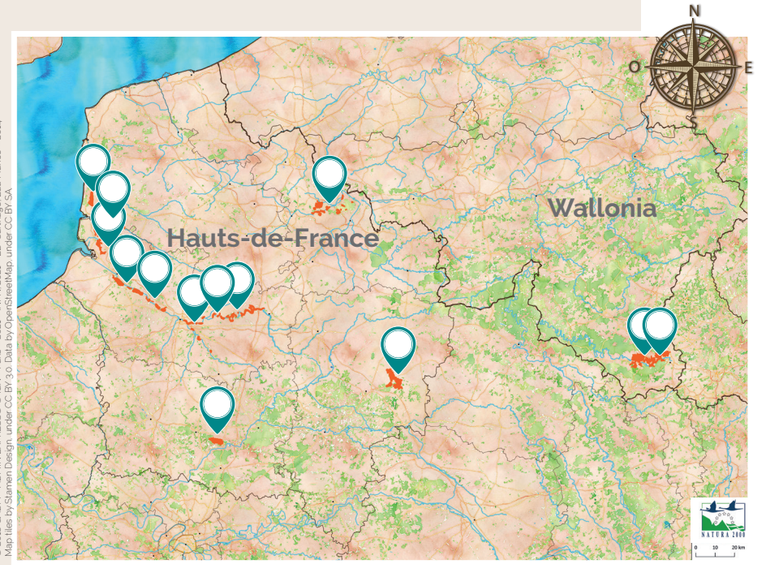
Peatland, a fragile ecosystem

Peatland is a type of wetland in which the soil is saturated with water all the year round. The lack of oxygen in the water prevents organic matter (leaves, branches, etc.) from decomposing.

The accumulation of poorly decomposed material forms peat at a rate of 0,2 to 0,6 mm per year.
A peat layer with several metres of thickness can then be considered a real millenial heritage, bearing witness to the geological and human history of our region.

LIFE Anthropofens initiatives focus on a specific type of peatland : alkaline fens. These are low marshy areas with an underground water supply. In the region, the supply of water enriched in calcareous elements due to a chalk substrat gives the peat an alkaline pH. This is why the fens are known as alkaline fens.
They contrast with more acidic peatlands named bogs (mainly supplied by rainwater) which are less common on our plains.

The knowledge acquired in the course of the project will help us to initiate more restoration projects in other peatland areas, in the regions or even beyond.



The 13 Natura 2000 sites concerned by LIFE Anthropofens in Hauts-de-France and Wallonia

LIFE ANTHROPOFENS, an ambitious project

The "LIFE Anthropofens" is a 6 year project with an ambitious aim and a budget of 18 million euros to fund the restoration of 480 hectares of alkaline fens in the Hauts-de-France and Wallonia regions.
The action plan was launched by the Conservatoire d'espaces naturels des Hauts-de-France and is mainly funded by the European LIFE programme. It is implemented by 9 different bodies, that pool their complementary skills together in order to preserve and restore alkaline fens, which are fragile and endangered habitats, hosting a rich biodiversity.

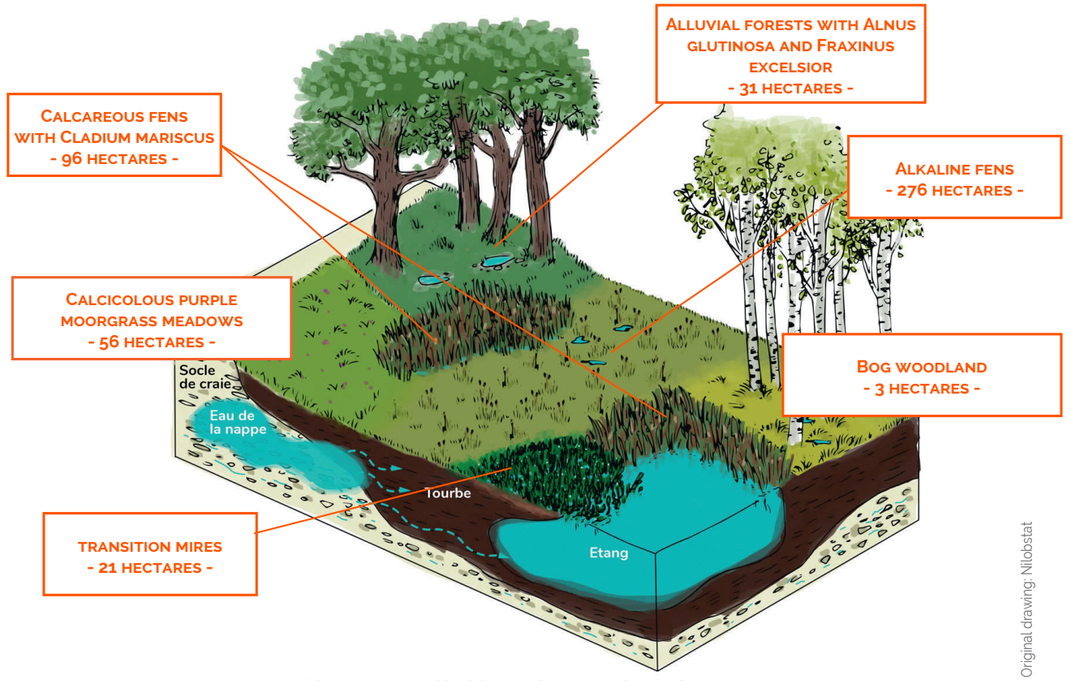
During the **Anthropocene** era, in a region where human influence has been active for thousands of years, the challenge for the LIFE Anthropofens project is to provide a way to restore and conserve alkaline **fens**.

The project aims

LIFE Anthropofens is based around a number of large-scale goals:

- **restoring** ecological systems and their processes
- **improving** the water supply to peatland (in quantity and quality)
- **preserving** peatland habitats in a wide range of landscapes
- **understanding** the processes shaping our peatlands
- **sharing** the knowledge acquired thanks to the project implementation
- **raising awareness** and **involving** local stakeholders in peatland preservation

LIFE Anthropofens focuses on 6 typical peatland habitats of major interest to the European Union.



Original drawing: Nilobstat

The 6 targeted habitats of LIFE Anthropofens

Peatlands, useful and precious habitats ...

When well functioning, peatlands provide a wide range of ecosystem services:

- storing carbon (globally, fens store twice as much carbon as the biomass of the world's forests),
- acting as a filter and sponge, stocking water during periods of high water levels and releasing it in dry periods,
- a refuge for endangered species,
- a reproduction area for many animal and plant species,
- areas for leisure activities and for exploring nature,
- a scientific archive for human history and climate evolution ...

... but endangered!

The peatland areas in northern France and Wallonia are fragile and vulnerable. They have sharply diminished over the past few millennia, with an acceleration in recent centuries.

There are several reasons for this:

- draining and pumping of water and disruption to water processes generally,
- diffuse water pollution,
- extraction of peat in the past,
- spontaneous afforestation following the end of extensive farming practices,
- planting of poplars (poplar tree farming),
- new farming (timber, market gardening, etc.),
- drought in the context of climate change,
- urbanisation, construction of recreational shelters and associated facilities (waste water, introduction of ornamental species, etc.) ...

The damage to peatland, especially through drying, leads to a massive release of CO_2 due to the decomposition of organic matter, increasing climate change. This is why it is so important to conserve our fens.