

Guidance on Barrier Removal for River Restoration Commission Guidance Document published

The EU 2030 Biodiversity Strategy calls for greater efforts to restore freshwater ecosystems and the natural functions of rivers. Besides calling for better implementation of existing legislation on freshwater, the Biodiversity Strategy sets the target to make at least 25 000 km of rivers free-flowing again by 2030, by removing primarily obsolete barriers and restoring floodplains and wetlands. This document aims to support Member States and other actors involved in river restoration as they seek to achieve this target. The document seeks to clarify the terms and concepts of the target and its objectives, while recognising the need for such definitions to be translated into operational terms. It also provides general principles, and examples of existing approaches and methods that could be used to select and prioritise barriers that would need to be removed in order to reach the target of at least 25 000 km of free-flowing rivers in the EU. Finally, the document sets out an overview of the different EU funding mechanisms that could support river restoration projects.