

## LIFEDrawaPL - Active protection of water-crowfoots habitat and restoration of wildlife corridors in the River Drawa basin in Poland

The Drawa River basin, and to a lesser extent most of the Pomeranian rivers are spawning grounds for many migratory species of ichthyofauna and have been research sites for years. One outcome of this research was the establishment of the Drawa National Park.



Thanks to these studies, unfavourable changes were identified and detected, resulting first in the disappearance of Atlantic salmon in most river basins, and finally, in the 1980s, also in the Drawa River basin. The proposed project is an attempt to halt this unfavourable trend. The LIFE13 NAT/PL/000009 project is co-financed by the European Commission and the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in Warsaw. The Beneficiary of the project is the Regional Directorate of Environment Protection in Szczecin (RDEP). The main objective of the project is to improve the ecological conditions of the Drawa River system and parts of the neighbouring Radew/Parsęta and Grabowa/Wieprza river systems in the areas of N2000 in Poland, with particular emphasis on improving the condition of the habitat of rivers supporting water-crowfoots (3260 N2000 code). To achieve the main project goals, this list of actions were implemented over a more than five year period: 1) Restoring natural riverbed morphological elements based on inventories of flora, fauna and river habitats, as well as on plans and projects; 2) Creating gravel and rocky bottom for *Groenlandia densa* reintroduction and *Batrachium sp.* development; 3) Shading reduction for the reintroduced species – *Groenlandia densa* and the natural habitat – Lowland and submontane rivers with *Ranunculion fluitantis* communities; 4) Constructing anti-erosive structures to protect sites with *Ranunculion fluitantis* communities located in the Drawa River; 5) *Groenlandia densa* introduction at selected sites; 6) Constructing spawning habitat for 1099 river lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*), 1106 Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), 1163 European bullhead (*Cottus gobio*) and 1149 spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*); 6) Restoring ecological connectivity through barriers, including opening one of the oldest dams in the World, Kamienna Dam in Głusko, which was blocking migration 32 km up the Drawa River for 116 years; 7) Reducing the tourism pressure in Drawieński National Park by creating camping sites by the Korytnica and Drawa Rivers outside Drawieński National Park and 8) Taking actions against poaching and creating partnerships to protect river ecosystems. Part of the project addressed improvement in public awareness by education and information actions, as workshops, participatory education, and social media.