

# PROJECT FREE FLOW

Working together for Free-Flowing  
Rivers by removing barriers

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**World Fish Migration Foundation**

**November 29<sup>th</sup> 2022 – International River Symposium**



Ministerie van Infrastructuur  
en Waterstaat



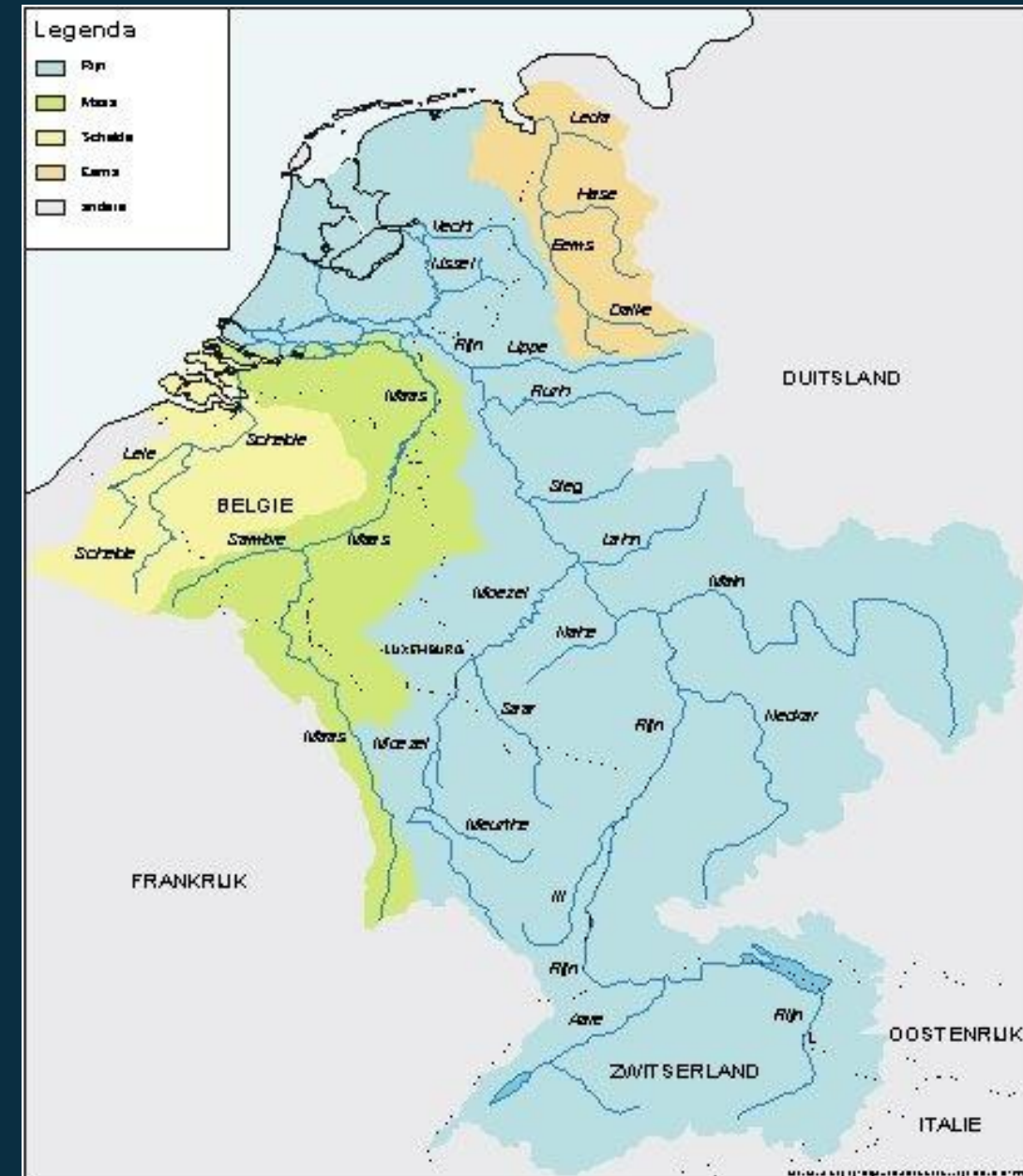
Ministerie van Landbouw,  
Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit



Rijkswaterstaat  
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# INTRODUCTION

- Part of 4 international river basins
- River and brook restauration since the 90's.
- Connectivity (fish ways) and habitat (bank restoration) measures since the EU WFD.
- Still a lot of river stretches lack riverine habitats with free flowing water.



# FREE FLOW

## TARGET

MAPPING THE POSSIBILITIES FOR FREE FLOWING RIVER RESTORATION

## DAM REMOVAL

SEARCHING FOR SHOWCASES

## NETWORK

BUILD A NETWORK OF EXPERT IN THE RIVERS RHINE, MEUSE, SCHELDT AND EEMS  
BASINS, IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH DAM REMOVAL EUROPE

## CELEBRATE SUCCESSES

CELEBRATE SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS WITH EXCURSIONS AND LIVE STREAMS OF  
RESTORATION MEASURES



# WHY?

## Migrating fish species under pressure

Fish stocks in Europe show a decrease of 90% in less than 50 years



# HOW?

## BLOCKED AND DROWNED RIVERS BY 1,2 MILLION BARRIERS



A brown trout is captured mid-jump, leaping over a low, wide waterfall. The water is turbulent and white with foam at the base of the falls. The background shows a riverbank with trees and a clear sky.

**PROBLEM SIZE?**

**EVERY RIVER KM A FISH IS  
HINDERED BY A BARRIER**

© Petteri  
Hautamaa





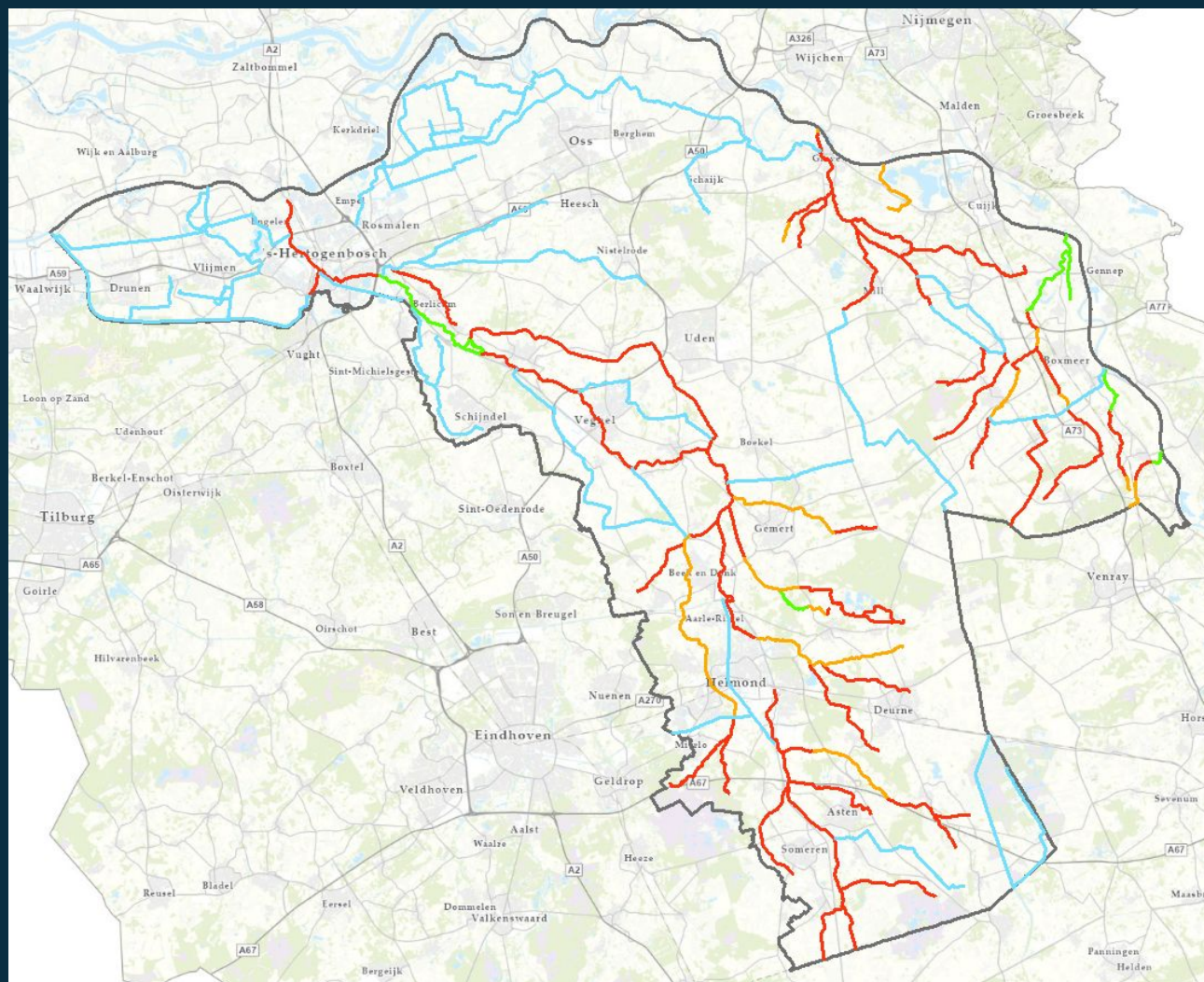
## UNIQUE MOMENTUM FOR DAM REMOVAL

GROWING SUPPORT BY COLLEAGUES,  
NATURE ORGANISATIONS,  
RECREATION SECTOR AND FUNDS



# FIRST RESULT: FREE FLOW MAPS

## SEARCHING FOR FREE FLOWING RIVER STRETCHES/ BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOTS





# FREE FLOWING BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOTS

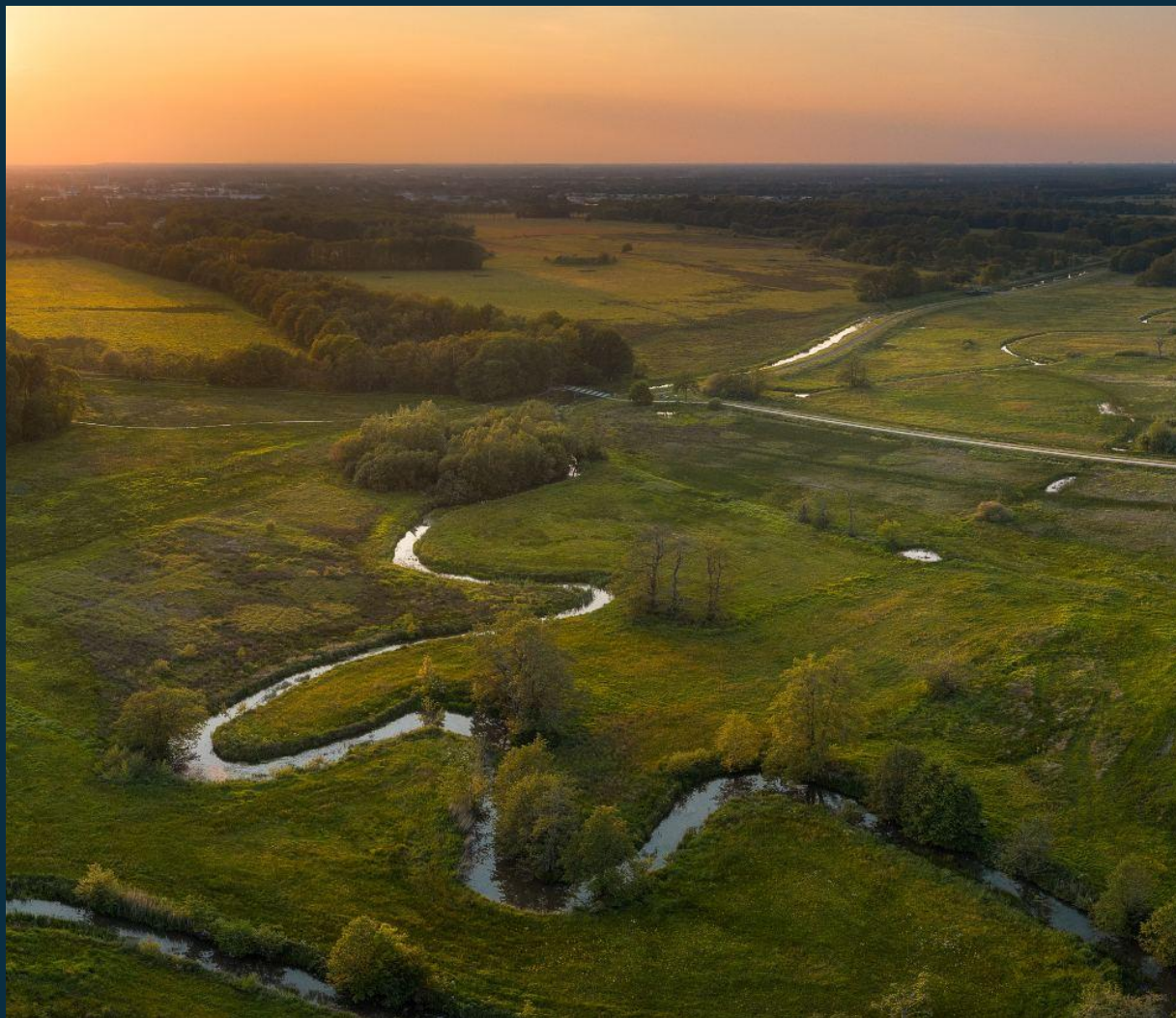


Photo left: Drentse Aa (source: ANWB), Photo right: Boven Slinge (Source: Saxifraga - Bart Vastenhouw)



# How to proceed?

- Currently only 10% of all river stretches is Free Flowing.
- There is already a fish route map about barriers, the additional FreeFlow map is about habitat.
- FreeFlow Map work session with involved regional Water Authorities.
- Where can we improve the status to free flowing to contribute to the EU biodiversity goals?
- Expand the FreeFlow approach to the rest of the rivers basins and Europe.
- Thanks to all the water authorities for the input so far!



# FREE FLOW MILESTONES

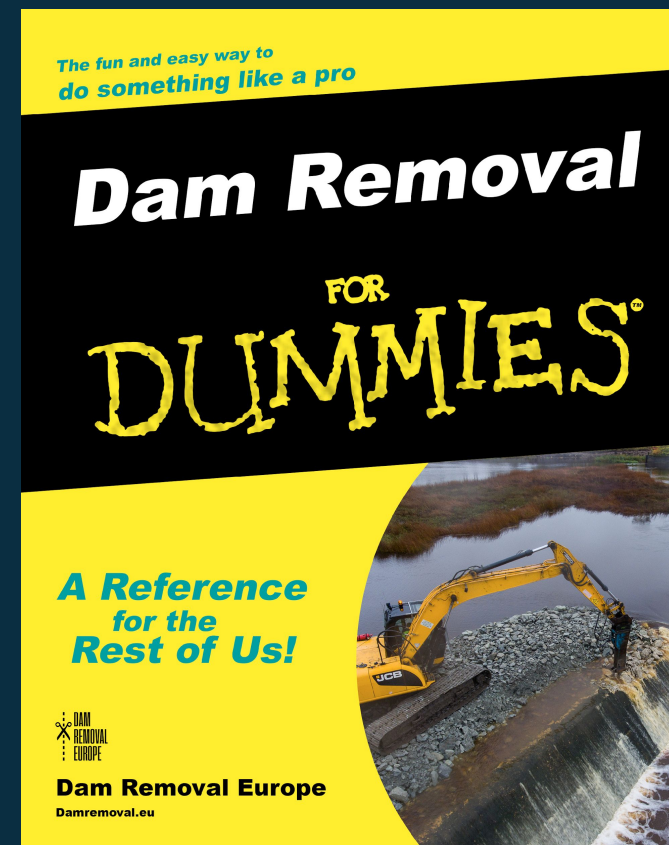
## ACTIONS

INT. WEBINAR (NOVEMBER 29th 2022)

INT. WEBINAR (SPRING 2023)

CONFERENCE (SPRING 2024)

GUIDANCE (SPRING 2024)





# FREE FLOW – DAM REMOVALS

**ANY IDEAS, DAM REMOVAL PLANS OR SUGGESTIONS? GET IN CONTACT!  
([INFO@FISHMIGRATION.ORG](mailto:INFO@FISHMIGRATION.ORG))**





An underwater photograph taken from a low angle, looking up at a woman with long braided hair wearing a light blue shirt and a white cap. She is smiling and holding a small, silvery fish in her open palm. In the background, another person is visible holding a white bucket. The water is clear with some bubbles and light filtering through from above.

***THANK YOU!***