

Nordic-Baltic LIFE Platform Meeting

# Human meets Nature: Stories of LIFE

Field Trip No 1.

## Rivers and Mires

9th of September, 8:30-17:30



adaptest



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REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA  
MINISTRY OF CLIMATE

This field trip gives an overview of Lahemaa National Park's mires and fast-flowing rivers which rush from Harju plateau over the North Estonian Klint (limestone escarpment) to the Baltic Sea. These rivers are home to salmonid species and to the longest-lived and one of the rarest animals in Estonia – freshwater pearl mussel. In recent decades rivers, streams and mires have been the focus of several nature conservation projects to restore habitats for water-loving species.



The first stop takes us to the **Ojaäärse dams** on the Võsu river in Lahemaa National Park. The river flows into the Baltic Sea and its lower course is protected as a spawning habitat for salmonid species. We visit LIFE-SIP AdaptEst project sites, where one of the dams was recently removed and the other will be removed in coming years.

For second stop we will arrive to one of the most scenic mires in Estonia – **the Great Kõnnu Bog**.

While the central part of the mire – the raised bog is quite intact and in good condition, the surrounding fens and transitional mires have been heavily drained during last decades. In 2025 State Forest Management Centre closed more than 50 ditches and built 378 peat dams, to restore the natural water regime of the mire in LIFE Revives project. We walk 3 km back and forth on the boardwalk over the raised bog to a small observation tower. Faster participants can extend the walk to visit restoration site and peat dams (5-6 km back and forth).



At our final stop, we will visit a unique rural and historic **Sae farm** where **freshwater pearl mussel** conservation and traditional farming practices come together. We will explore the breeding station completed in 2025, established to support the recovery of Estonia's only freshwater pearl mussel population. The restoration work carried out here is part of the LIFE Revives project. This stop also serves as our lunch break, with a traditional food prepared from local ingredients.



In addition to freshwater pearl station, a traditional local heritage breed – the native Estonian landrace sheep – is raised in the farm. Visitors can learn how long-standing practices such as grazing semi-natural habitats and the full use of raw materials for food, yarn, and leather remain an integral part of everyday life. Locally made handicrafts will also be available for purchase.

*The field trip is guided by State Forest Management Centre experts. Comfortable and weather-appropriate clothing is recommended for the mire hike.*