LIFE SandBoil

Natural-based solution to mitigate flood risk due to SAND BOILS reactivations along the Po River

Co-funded by the European Union

FINAL SYMPOSIUM

Mitigating backward erosion piping in river levees

From research to practice | Results and future perspectives from LIFE SandBoil

FRIDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2026 | **10:00 – 13:00** | **Ecomondo** · Gardenia Room, Rimini, Italy

CONCEPT

The LIFE SandBoil Final Symposium brings together researchers, river-basin authorities and practitioners to reflect on the evidence and lessons generated by the European LIFE project SandBoil. Addressing backward erosion piping and sand boil reactivation, SandBoil has investigated an innovative nature-based mitigation approach through laboratory research, prototype development and demonstration activities along the Po River and in the Danube basin. The Symposium will review the scientific basis of the solution, experimental findings and field experience, while identifying conditions for its transferability to other river systems. A forward-looking discussion will connect these results with emerging tools for levee vulnerability screening and with the practical requirements of public authorities. The aim is to define research, planning and cooperation priorities for safer, more resilient and sustainable levee management.

Programme of the symposium - Moderator: **Maurizio Melis,** Journalist and radio presenter

TIME	SESSION	
10:00–10:10	**Welcome and opening** Purpose of the Symposium and institutional greetings	**Laura Tonni** Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna (DICAM)
10:10–10:40	**Keynote speech** Backward erosion piping in river levees: open challenges	**Henk Van Hemert** Rijkswaterstaat
10:40–10:50	**LIFE SandBoil: from the challenge to the mitigation strategy** Project objectives, rationale and nature-based solution	**Laura Tonni** Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna (DICAM)
10:50–11:20	**Experimental research and prototype validation** Insights from laboratory investigations and large-scale tests	**LIFE SandBoil research team** Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna (DICAM) Officine Maccaferri Italia
11:20–11:50	**From validation to the field implementation: the Po and Danube demonstration sites** Experiences, monitoring and implementation lessons from Po river (Revere - Italy) and Danube river (Marcal - Hungary)	**LIFE SandBoil research team** Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna (DICAM) Interregional Agency for the Po River North-Transdanubian Water Directorate
11:50–12:50	**Roundtable · Future trends in river levee management** From screening and risk assessment to planning, mitigation and institutional uptake	**Valeria Licata** Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research **Lucia Marchetti** Unione della Romagna Faentina – BEAVER4LIFE project **Luca Morreale** Po River Basin District Authority **Gianluca Zanichelli** Interregional Agency for the Po River **Sara Vannoni** Emilia-Romagna Region
12:50–13:00	**Closing remarks** Conclusions from LIFE SandBoil and perspectives beyond the project	**Maurizio Melis** Journalist and radio presenter

From 13:00 ◆ Informal networking lunch