Expert input sheet

Conservation and management of Continental Wetlands in Poland

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Habitat(s):
7120 - Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration

Biogeographical region:
Continental

Member state:
Poland

Region(s) (if applicable):
Pomenarian Province

Issues and pressures
1. Drying of regenerating peat post excavation pits.
2. The presence of non-native species such as Vaccinium macrocarpon.
3. Penetration regenerating peat post excavation pits by collectors undergrowth.
4. The emphasis on exploitation of opencast peat,

Conservation requirements
Ensuring adequate moisture allowing the development of peat forming vegetation

Conservation management
• Active protection. Maintaining proper hydrological regime by applying water damming barriers. Monitoring of water levels in regenerating the peat bed using piezometers. Removal of trees in order to maintain the open character of habitats.

• Planning in the protection plan of Natura 2000 sites tasks, associated with the removal from regenerating peat post excavation pits, alien species which have been there introduced.

Species specific management:
Yes

Protection of breeding sites, feeding grounds of crane
Grus grus – kod A127

Barriers and bottlenecks
• The existence of drainage systems, aimed at drying of peat deposit.
• Diversified depth and large areas of peat post excavation pits, hinder planning and carrying out conservation activities.
• Drainage impacts caused by opencast mine of peat located in the vicinity of of Natura 2000 sites.
• The reluctance of the mine management to discontinuance of exploitation of peat.
• The reluctance of local communities to mine closure due to the risk of losing jobs.
• The perception nature conservation as a factor of inhibiting economic development.
• Putting in the first place financial gains from the exploitation of peat.
• The superiority of the mining law and policy over the law nature conservation,
• Sustained high market demand for horticultural and agricultural products with the use of peat.
• Reluctance to replace products containing peat by other organic raw materials with similar properties as for example compost or coconut fiber, etc.
• Issue or extension of concessions for the extraction of peat, regardless of losses in nature.
• Pumping water into rivers, from the exploited bogs causes their water pollution.

Solutions and opportunities
Inhibition of draining the water from peat deposit by the use of new barriers and unconserved ditches where develops natural vegetation hinders the outflow.
• Failure to peat mining outside the Natura 2000 sites and carry out activities to reclamation.
• Failure to mine further mining concessions.
• Replacement of products made of peat coming to the market, by the organic products with similar properties.

Cross cutting issues
• Work with the management of the mine for the reclamation of mined peat post excavation pits.
• It is necessary retraining workers mine on liquidation and assistance in finding new jobs
• Restoration of peat forming vegetation, and ensuring the proper moisture and inhibiting the outflow of water is key to reducing CO2 emissions released by the decomposition of organic matter.

Lessons learned / best practice
Maintaining proper soil moisture status is a condition of the occurrence of the respective species composition and a beneficial effect on the condition of peatlands. Renaturalisation of degraded raised bogs and restoring the natural capacity to retain water through a bed of peat, prevents sudden fluctuations in soil moisture level areas adjoining to them and reduces the risk of fire. Large areas of regenerating bogs are attractive to the crane, which uses it as a place of reproduction and food base. In autumn on regenerating post excavation pits are held one of the largest in Europe concentrations crane - 7-8 thousands of birds in one place.

• Bad practice:
  - total exploitation of peat deposits, prevents the return of peat forming vegetation,
  - leaving a layer of dried rotten peat, makes that peat forming vegetation have difficulties to return.
  - pits exploited connection with the river, causing a risk of flooding waters of the river which disrupt the chemistry of peat and affect the composition of the combination of species from this habitat
Opportunities for joint action
The exchange of information on the protection of peat lands and their re-naturalization.

References
Link to protection tasks for Slowinski National Park
http://dziennikuredowy.mos.gov.pl/attachments/article/350/zarz%C4%85dzenie%20nr%2020131.pdf

Link to the draft protection plan of Slowinski National Park and Natura 2000 sites
http://planymochrony.slowinskipn.pl/

http://www.frug.ug.edu.pl/?rensiedtorf,86

http://www.frug.ug.edu.pl/?rensiedtorf,86