Expert input sheet

Conservation and management of Continental Grassland in Czech Republic

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Habitat(s):
6520 - Mountain hay meadows

Biogeographical region:
Continental

Member state:
Czech Republic

Region(s) (if applicable):
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Issues and pressures
The habitat is dependent on a traditional use (hay production, mowing, grazing). So, the most challenging pressures and threats nowadays are their abandonment, and nitrification allowing also to selected invasive species to deteriorate the habitat.

Conservation requirements
The management measures shall be applied as follows:
1) traditional way of regular grazing in a combination with hay cutting
2) special management measures protecting the habitat against invasive alien species (Rumex, etc.).

Conservation management
The current measures are based on what is written in a management requirements.

Species specific management:
Yes

These in relation to protect the FCS of the habitat against invasive alien species. It relates also to a need to decrease a nitrification and fertilization that is in general unnatural there.

There is a long list of diagnostic species: Agrostis capillaris, Anthoxanthum odoratum, Arnica montana, Avenella flexuosa, Campanula bohemica, Cardaminopsis halleri, Carex pilulifera, Crepis conyzifolia, Festuca rubra, Galium saxatile, Geranium sylvaticum, Gymnadenia conopsea, Luzula luzuloides, Nardus stricta, Phleum rhaeticum, Phyteuma spicatum, Poa chaixii, Potentilla aurea, Potentilla erecta, Rumex acetosa, Silene dioica, Silene vulgaris, Veronica officinalis.
Barriers and bottlenecks
1) A lack of money available to pay for special management measures to owners (or even to an administration of the site). Regular budget is missing.
2) Unwillingness of owners to manage areas at all or to follow requirements. E.g., they do not need a hay and so they have not any idea what they could do with this when harvested. There is a need to explore a new ways of utilization.
3) In general, upper areas with occurrence of this habitat are often designated as national parks under IUCN category II (unmanaged areas at a majority of plots), which would be in a contradiction with management of the habitat.

Solutions and opportunities
1) Fund raising.
2) Communication with stakeholders presenting importance of the habitat for the area.

Cross cutting issues
The climate change is definitely a challenge for the habitat as well as land abandonment, because these areas are usually remote from bigger settlements.
The Natura 2000 should be integrated (merged if possible) with nationally designated areas in an overlap in order to highlight also the national importance of protection.

Lessons learned / best practice
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Opportunities for joint action
To share information about threats to the habitat between managers from different countries in the Continental region.

References
Catalogue of biotopes of the Czech republic (the second edition, 2010, the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic)

Krkonose National Park Administration: www.krnap.cz