Expert input sheet

Conservation and management of Continental Woodland and forest in Poland

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Habitat(s):
5130 - Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands
6210 - Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)

Biogeographical region:
Continental

Member state:
Poland

Region(s) (if applicable):
Lublin province, SE Poland

Issues and pressures
Issues: lack of management resulting in the increased production of necromass (loessy grasslands), overgrowing with trees and shrub (calcareous grasslands and Juniperus shrublands). With todays prices of meat and milk, keeping livestock and grazing grasslands is unprofitable.

Pressures and threats: ploughing, creation of illegal waste dumps, eutrophication, afforestation, overbuilding, digging out of rare, ornamental plant species (e.g. orchids).

Conservation requirements
Controlled grazing for calcareous grasslands, grazing and controlled burning for loessy grasslands, clearing undesirable tree and shrub species for calcareous shrublands with Juniperus communis, eradication of invasive and alien plant species (Heracleum sosnowskyi, Solidago gigantea/canadensis, Robinia pseudoacacia).

Conservation management
Over 90% of grasslands and shrublands in the Lublin province are unmanaged. Things start to change with various EU-donated activities and projects but the solution they provide is mostly temporary (the management stops when the funds run out).

Species specific management:
No

Iris aphylla
Adonis vernalis
Veratrum nigrum  
Carlina onopordifolia 2249  
Echium russicum 4067  
Orchis purpurea  
Chamaecytisus albus  
Senecio macrophyllus  
Cerasus fruticosa  
Scorzonera purpurea  
Orobanche arenaria

**Barriers and bottlenecks**  
As previously stated, the biggest concern is the fact that the management of calcareous habitats is unprofitable and requires a lot of hard work. The other issues like lack of knowledge, skills are secondary. Even with today's agro-environmental schemes, the management does not calculate because the grasslands in the Lublin region are mostly small and divided between many landowners (shrublands and grasslands are in most cases divided into countless small parcels of land - e.g. the Niedzieliska site PLH060044).

**Solutions and opportunities**  
The solution should be merging of the parcels of land with grasslands and shrublands and fund raising for the grazing to become profitable. Of course, education and communication measures should follow.

**Cross cutting issues**  
The most vital cross-cutting issue is the complicated land ownership structure. There are many examples in the Lublin province of abandoned land parcels with grasslands or shrublands whose original owners are long gone but the matters of heirdom are still unresolved. Fixing this problem would require some significant changes in the Polish law.

**Lessons learned / best practice**  
One of the best examples of successful grassland conservation is the "mobile grazing" used by the Klub Przyrodników which owns a large flock of sheep and drives them to the neighbouring grasslands.

**Opportunities for joint action**  
The issue of changes in land use (abandonment of land and grazing).

**References**  