



Kemeri - Conservation of wetlands in Kemeri National Park

LIFE02 NAT/LV/008496

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Project description:

Background

Established in 1997, Kemeri National Park was one of Latvia's first national parks. It contains 380 km² of diverse habitats including a number of EU importance such as bog woodland, black alder swamps, raised bogs (including one of the largest intact examples of such a habitat type in Europe), rich fens, coastal dunes etc. Altogether some 30 habitat types listed in the Habitats Directive and Bern Convention are found here. Protected birds like *Botaurus stellaris* (12-15 booming males) and *Aquila pomarina* (8-15 pairs) have also been recorded within the Park.

Threats had emerged to the conservation status of the habitats and species. These were linked to land use changes which had drained wetland environments and many of the hay meadows were becoming increasingly overgrown following the abandonment of traditional agricultural practices by local farmers. Urbanisation and visitor pressure were also noted as representing ongoing problems for the Park's nature assets.

Objectives

The main objective of the LIFE project involved helping to implement a pre-prepared management plan. Land acquisition was a priority for the project which aimed to purchase around 730 ha of meadows and restore 450 ha of the natural flood plain meadows. Another key goal was to identify mechanisms for mainstreaming the LIFE project's methodology on a long-term basis.

Results

The project achieved its objectives and provided useful capacity building experience for Latvian authorities involved in nature conservation work. Drainage ditches in the Lielais Kemeris bog were blocked to restore more natural hydrological flows. Engineering works at a sluice gate system constructed the country's first artificial fish migration infrastructure. Introducing livestock to graze the meadows by river Slampe was a first step in shifting to away from mechanised hay-making methods towards self-sustainable meadow management in Kemeris national park.

Many useful lessons were learnt during the forging of closer cooperation between landowners, farmers and local communities. Outcomes here led to more land in the park being managed from a conservation perspective.

Project processes and results also provided valuable learning experiences for Latvian nature bodies as well as education services. Schools were encouraged to visit and study the project works as part of their curriculum. This included involving pupils in part of the project's environmental monitoring work (along stretches of the restored river Slampe initially).

Further information on the project can be found in the project's layman report (see "Read more" section).

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Habitats - Bogs and Mires

Keywords

drainage system, environmentally responsible behaviour, environmental education, environmental impact of agriculture, environmental impact of recreation, environmental impact of tourism, forest ecosystem, grassland ecosystem, land use planning, landscape conservation policy, renaturation, wetlands ecosystem, site rehabilitation, periurban space, public awareness campaign, integrated management, sustainable development, development planning, touristic zone, land restoration, land purchase, management plan, informal negotiation, restoration measure, water resources management, conflicting use, management contract

Target EU Legislation

- Nature protection and Biodiversity
- Directive 79/409 - Conservation of wild birds (02.04.1979)
- Directive 92/43 - Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora- Habitats Directiv ...
- Decision 93/626 - Conclusion of the Convention on Biological Diversity (25.10.1993)

- COM(95) 189 - "Communication on the judicious use and conservation of wetlands" (12.12.1995)
- COM(98)42 - "Communication on a European Community Biodiversity Strategy" (05.02.1998)
- COM(2001)162 - "Biodiversity Action Plan for the conservation of natural resources (vol. I & II)" ...
- Land & Soil
- Regulation 2078/92 - Agricultural production methods compatible with the requirements of the prot ...
- Marine environment and Coasts
- Recommendation 2002/413 EC - "Implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Europe" (30 ...

Target Habitat types

- 6430 - Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels
- 7110 - Active raised bogs
- 7120 - Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration
- 7140 - Transition mires and quaking bogs
- 7230 - Alkaline fens
- 9010 - Western Taïga
- 9160 - Sub-Atlantic and medio-European oak or oak-hornbeam forests of the Carpinion betuli
- 91D0 - Bog woodland
- 91E0 - "Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)"
- 3140 - Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara* spp.
- 3150 - Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation

Natura 2000 sites

Not applicable

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	Kemeri National Park
Type of organisation	Park-Reserve authority
Description	The Kemeri National Park administration is a governmental institution under the Ministry of Environment in Latvia, established in 1997. It is responsible for the nature conservation and management of the National Park`s area.
Partners	Stichting Ark, The Netherlands WWF-Latvia

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE02 NAT/LV/008496
Duration	01-SEP-2002 to 31-DEC -2006
Total budget	1,321,210.00 €
EU contribution	990,908.00 €
Project location	Associated Latvia (LV)(Latvia Latvija)

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Read more:

Project web site	Project's website (LV/EN)
Publication: Layman report	Title: Layman report (LV/EN) Year: 2005 No of pages: 12

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