



Ecosystem service concept for support of grassland biodiversity, land use planning and rural development

Final conference of the project LIFE Vivagrass

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LIFE Viva Grass LIFE13 ENV/LT/000189

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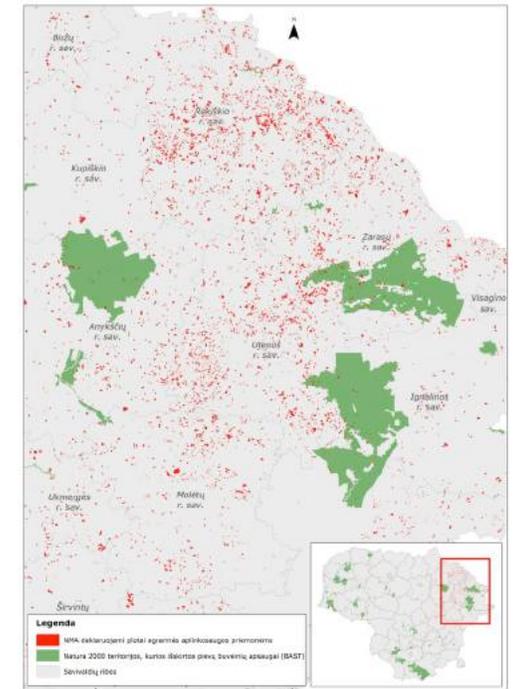
Vivagrass project objectives

- Analyse **synergy potential** & shortcomings in **land use & nature conservation** policy and provide proposals for policy improvement;
- To offer **integrated, ecosystem based planning solutions** based on economically viable grassland management scenarios;
- **Encourage implementation of economically viable grassland management models** within areas of different **natural and socio-economic contexts**;
- **Raise awareness and capacity of planners and local stakeholders** on economically viable approaches to management of grassland ecosystems and services they provide.



How the project idea originated? What were initial expectations?

- Natural and semi-natural grassland ecosystem are under big threat – we need to address this threat not only by direct conservation measures, but also conceptually in designing policy and planning developments;
- At that time, Ecosystem services assessment was new and promising concept, which we wanted to link it to practical decisions;
- Environment and Agriculture sectors, holds a lot of spatially explicit data, which if linked – could have a big added value potential for decision making.
- We wanted to create a tool, which would link data from various sectors and provide support for planning and decision making, which would help in survival of valuable grassland habitat and landscape.
- We wanted to raise awareness and illustrate the complex value of grasslands;



2012 (Lithuania): agri-environmental measures (red) "overlapping" with Natura 2000 sites (green) by 1%



Why we focused on grasslands?

Conservation status of grassland habitat types in the Baltic States

Grasslands at Boreal region	Habitat code	LT			LV			EE		
		2001-2006	2007	2013	2001-2006	2007	2013	2001-2006	2007	2013
Fennoscandian lowland species-rich dry to mesic grasslands	6270	U1 -	U1-	U1-	U1	U2-	U1	U1 -	U1=	U1 -
Fennoscandian wooded meadows	6530	U2-	U2-	U2-	U2	U2-	U2	U1	U1=	U1
Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels	6430	U1	U1=	U1	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV
Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)	6510	U1	U1=	U1	U1	U2-	U1	FV	FV	FV
Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>)	6410	U2-	U2	U2-	U2	U2-	U2	FV	FV	FV
Northern boreal alluvial meadow	6450	U1	U1=	U1	U2	U2-	U2	U1 -	U1=	U1 -
Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* in mountain areas (and submountain areas in Continental	6210	U1	U2	U2-	U1	U2-	U2-	FV	U1=	U1 -
Xeric sand calcareous grasslands	6120	U2-	U2-	U2-	U2	U2-	U2	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nordic alvar and precambrian calcareous flatrocks	6280*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	U1 -	U1 -	U1 -

Source: European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity

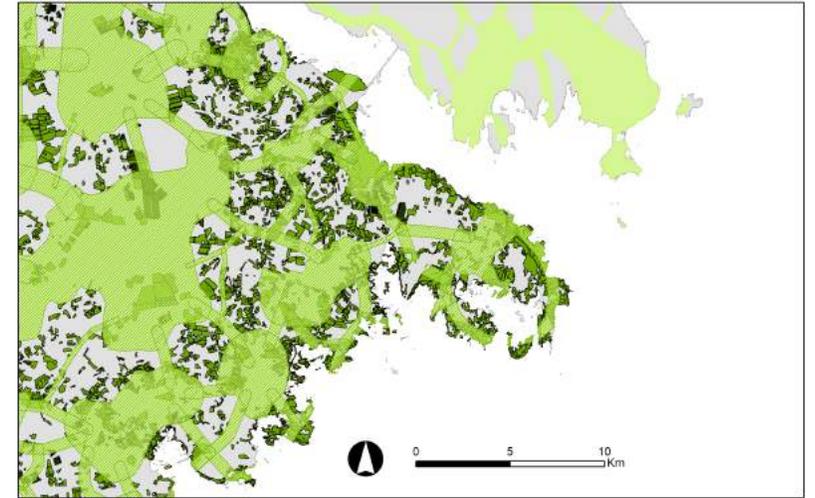
According to the HD Article 17 reporting data



(U2-) bad and deteriorating, (U2) bad, (U1-) Inadequate and deteriorating, (U1) Inadequate, (FV) Favourable
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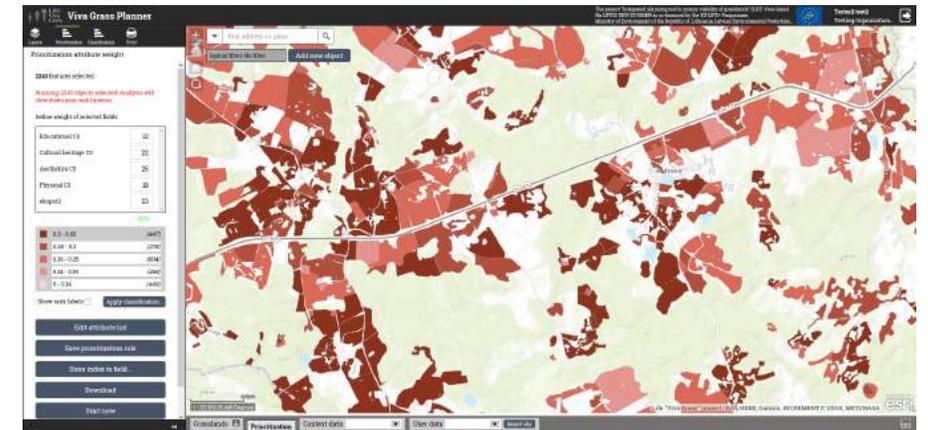
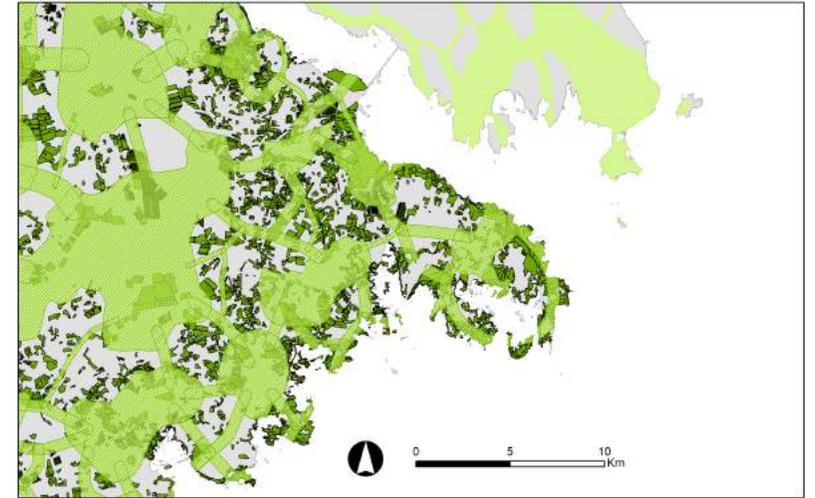
What we managed to achieve? How it correspond to initial objectives?

- We have contributed to the MAES process in the Baltic States and actually made ES mapping of agroecosystems (Tier1 level, but with good potential of going deeper);
- Contributed to the building of Intellectual think tank in Baltic States on ES concept practical application - this knowledge remains in the region and has big potential for further developments;
- We even applied ES concept in practical decision making processes, the Tool delivers instrument integrating ES in regional and national planning process;



What we managed to achieve? How it correspond to initial objectives?

- We make a tool, which can really be applied in planning and helps ensuring maintaining of valuable grasslands;
- The Tool helps preserving grasslands, but it is open for modification to include other ecosystems.
- Grasslands in our pilot sites: performed either restoration or setting up enabling preconditions for its maintainance;
- Awareness raising events with high public participation on demonstrating value of the grasslands;
- We did NOT created artificial intelligence tool.



Program of the day

	Arrival, registration of participants
8:30	
9:00	<p>Opening and Introduction to the Final Conference of project “LIFE Viva Grass”</p> <p>Presentation: “LIFE Viva Grass” result reflection vis-à-vis project idea – what we wanted to do, what did we achieve?</p> <p>Žymantas Morkvėnas, Project manager, BEF Lithuania</p>

Session I: Ecosystem service assessment: process and methodologies

9.30	<p>Assessment of ecosystem services on national scale: 3 Baltic states</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short pitch speeches from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia: what is the state of national MAES processes & methodologies used. Representatives from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia Methodology used to assess agro-ecosystems in “LIFE Viva Grass”. Miguel Villoslada, Estonian University of Life Sciences Discussion: lessons that can be learnt from each other & future plans of national assessments. Moderated by Anda Ruskule, BEF Latvia
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10 ³⁰ – 11 ⁰⁰	Coffee break
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Session II: the “Viva Grass Integrated Planning Tool”

11 ⁰⁰ – 13 ⁰⁰	<p>Presentations on the Tool’s functioning and operationalizing eco-system services in different land-use decision making contexts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Idea behind the Tool and how it integrates the ES approach. Arvydas Dotas, BEF Lithuania <p>Three different land-use decision making contexts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green network. Miguel Pecina-Villoslada, Estonian University of Life Sciences Green Infrastructure. Ivo Vinogradovs, Latvian University Protected area management. Justas Gulbinas, BEF Lithuania <p>Stakeholder involvement in all project areas. Kristina Veidemane, BEF Latvia</p>
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13 ⁰⁰ – 14 ⁰⁰	Lunch break
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Session III: Future policy development

14 ⁰⁰ – 14 ⁴⁵	<p>The ecosystem service concept: where we are now and what lies ahead? Kalev Sepp, Estonian University of Life Sciences</p> <p>EC perspective: Integrating ecosystem service concept in policies. Kristina Veidemane, BEF Latvia</p> <p>Recommendations from the “LIFE Viva Grass” project: applying the ES approach in rural development plans and spatial planning practices. Anda Ruskule, BEF Latvia</p>
14 ⁴⁵ – 16 ⁰⁰	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Moderated by Žymantas Morkvėnas, BEF Lithuania</p>
16:00	Closing of the conference and light buffet dinner