

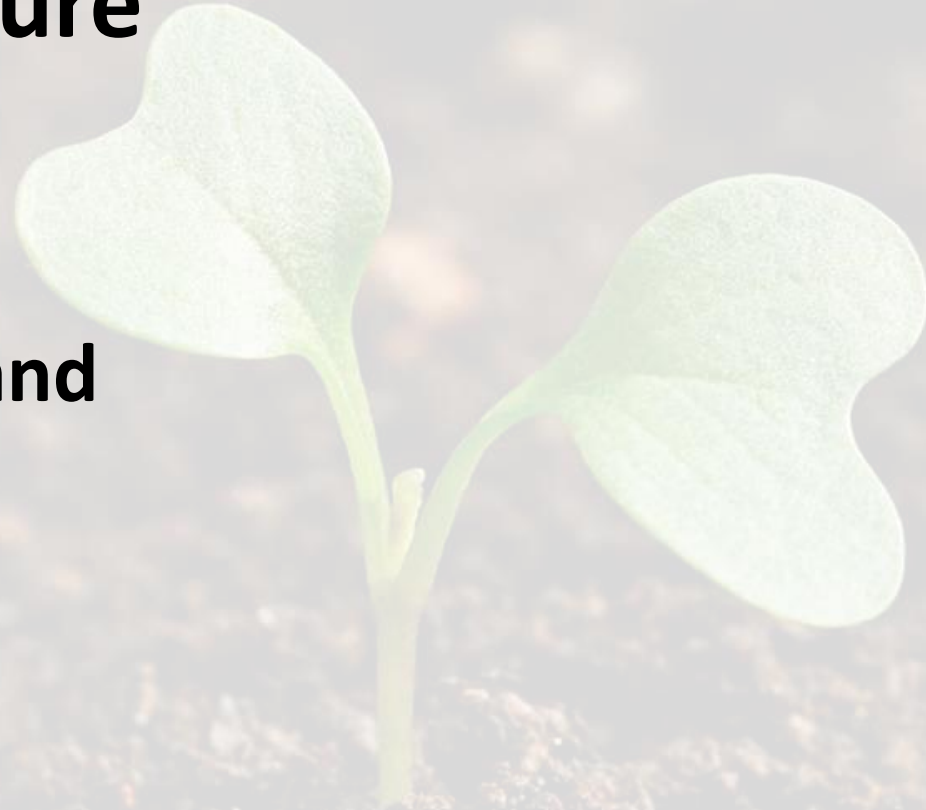
Challenges for Nature conservation in Lithuania.

**Focus on agriculture and
nature**

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Few broader highlights on nature conservation

- Development of site specific conservation objectives for Natura 2000 sites
EU law infringement procedure
- Development of national pledges for:
 - a) 30/10 PA target and
 - b) for species&habitats conservation status improvement target
- Amendment of Law on Protected Areas
streamlined procedure for necessary conservation measures; system of private protected areas; state support system
- Amendment of Law on Special Land Use Conditions
reinforced conservation mechanisms for natural habitats and for localities of species
- Revision of rules for water protective shore belts and zones
Constant width of shore belts and continuous zones along all waterbodies proposed; electronic maps will be approved.

Lithuanian Strategic Plan (SP) for Agriculture for 2023-2027

- In March 2021, historical memorandum between MoE and MoA signed
- Aim on joint work in preparation of environmental part of SP
- Working group established: MoE, MoA, State Service for Protected Areas, National Paying Agency
- Intensive consultations with protected areas administrations and environmental NGOs
- First set of proposals successfully prepared with high level of environmental ambition
- Public presentation of draft SP received energetic negative feedback from farmers organizations; public campaign against the minister of agriculture has been launched
- In December 2021, working group was terminated
- Level of ambition moderated 😞

How did it go:

SMRs and GAEC

- **SMR 3 and 4** — protection of birds, other protected species and natural habitats: ban on conversion of grasslands into any other land-use type **(proposal accepted)**
- **GAEC 1** — maintenance of area of permanent grassland: application of the requirement at farm level rather than at national level & zero tolerance for reduction of permanent grassland area **(not accepted)**
- **GAEC 2** — ban of ploughing in peatlands **(proposal accepted)**
- **GAEC 5** — prevention of soil erosion: ban on ploughing on +12% slopes **(proposal partially accepted)**
- **GAEC 6** — post-harvest soil cover during the winter period: winter crops or stubble or other crop residues must be left on the surface **(proposal partially accepted)**
- **GAEC 9** — Natura 2000 habitats must not be ploughed or re-sowed **(proposal partially accepted)**

How did it go: Eco-schemes

- Non-productive activities on arable land - establishment and maintenance of landscape features (e. g. strips of trees, shrubs, permanent or flowering grasslands) **(proposals accepted)**
- Protection of migratory birds and prevention of their damage **(proposals not accepted)**
- Nature-friendly management of orchards **(proposals partially accepted)**
- Complex activities for grassland maintenance (extensive grazing; extensive management of wetlands; management of natural grasslands/species habitats with specific requirements for rearrest bird, butterfly, reptile species and natural habitats, e.g., postponed or mosaic mowing, reduced number of animals per Ha, ban on grass chopping, etc. **(proposals partially accepted)**)

Proposed scoring system for balancing eco-schemes activities on arable land

The inspiration for this tool was the Dutch points-based system for collective eco-scheme.

Reasoning to use it in Lithuania:

- the most serious environmental challenges related to arable land
- clear need to balance farmers' contribution to all environmental goals: climate, soil, water, landscape & biodiversity
- balancing and promoting the desired activities on arable land in regions with specific environmental problems, e.g. with waterbodies at risk
- avoidance of cherry-picking behavior
- promotion and reintroduction of landscape elements in severely altered agricultural regions with monocultural land-use patterns.

The proposal was not accepted! ☹️

What new proposals for Rural development measures?

- Control of invasive alien plants (**proposal not accepted**)
- Non-profit investment measure: Restoration of natural habitats and of habitats of protected species (**proposal accepted**)
- Conservation of wild birds outside the Natura 2000 network (as a conflict mitigation measure): maintenance of permanent grasslands with little postponed mowing date and the request not to chop the grass (**proposals partially accepted**).

Other suggestions

- Broadening the definition of “permanent grassland” according to the Regulation 2021/2115: *..it may include other species, such as shrubs or trees, which can be grazed and, where **Member States so decide** ...* provided that the grasses and other herbaceous forage remain predominant (proposal partially accepted)
- Reduction of use of herbicides on no-till land (proposals not accepted)
- Pollinators protection - ban on grass chopping on the landscape elements areas, e.g. grass stripes along water bodies or between the landholdings, grass under the trees or bushes stripes etc. (proposal not accepted)

On-going/recently implemented LIFE projects related to agriculture&nature conservation

- LIFEfarms for birds - Adaptation of wet grasslands and mires for sustainable farming to ensure long-term protection of Corncrake and threatened waders.
- 2022-2027
- LIFE21-NAT-LT-101074711



On-going/recently implemented LIFE projects related to agriculture&nature conservation

- LIFE MarshMeadows - Piloting integrated wetland restoration approaches in Latvia and Lithuania
- 2021-2027
- LIFE20 NAT/LV/000273



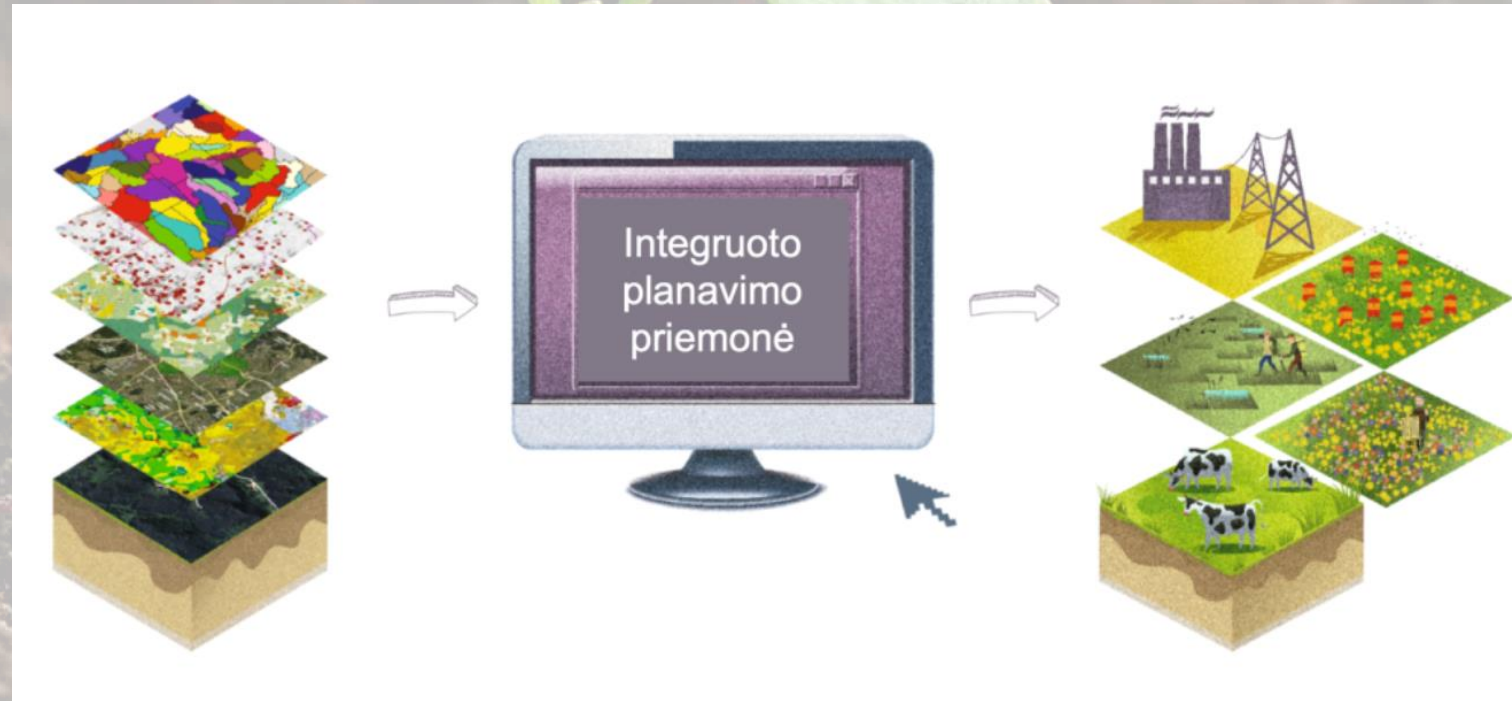
On-going/recently implemented LIFE projects related to agriculture&nature conservation

- Baltic Aquatic Warbler - Securing Sustainable Farming to Ensure Conservation of Globally Threatened Bird Species in Agrarian Landscape
- 2010-2015
- LIFE09 NAT/LT/000233



On-going/recently implemented LIFE projects related to agriculture&nature conservation

- LIFE Viva Grass - Integrated planning tool to ensure viability of grasslands
- 2014-2019
- LIFE13 ENV/LT/000189



On-going/recently implemented LIFE projects related to agriculture&nature conservation

- LIFE MagniDucatusAcrola - Stepping stones towards long-term favorable conservation status of Aquatic Warbler in Lithuania and Belarus
- 2016-2026
- LIFE15 NAT/LT/001024



LIFE Integrated project Naturalit

Optimizing the management of Natura 2000 network in Lithuania, 2018-2027

11 institutions. Project budget 17,2 MEUR

Project aims to ensure the full protection of the Natura 2000 network in Lithuania

Specific objectives:

- **Setting SMART conservation objectives** for Natura 2000 network at national and local levels, in line with defined favorable reference values of natural habitats and species of Community interest
- **Improving efficiency of management, surveillance and analysis processes** towards achieving and maintaining FCS of species and habitats
- Assurance of the integration and implementation of the nature conservation measures into other sectors, especially **agriculture**, forestry and tourism
- **Capacity building of the institutions** responsible for the implementation of Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for the Natura 2000 network management.



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Naturalit project activities on agriculture

Main results:

- 2018-2019 Proposals for new biodiversity related measures for the Lithuanian RDP
- 2019 Review of EU best practices of result-based and collective approaches for the agri-environmental measures & recommendations for Lithuania
- 2020 Proposals for innovative agri-environmental measures & pilot testing
- 2020 Pilot testing of result-oriented AE measure “Species rich natural meadows”
- 2021 Good Farmer's Championship started
- 2022 Policy brief „Impacts for grass chopping on grassland habitats and biodiversity: recommendations for policy makers“
- 2022 Proposals for new AE measures for the national CAP strategic plan
- 2023 Proposals for improved effectiveness of administrative procedures for new CAP period



An aerial photograph of a calm lake. In the center-right, there is a large, densely forested island with lush green trees. To the left of the island, a small, light-colored boat is visible on the water's surface. The water is dark and reflects the surrounding environment. The overall tone of the image is serene and natural.

Thank you!