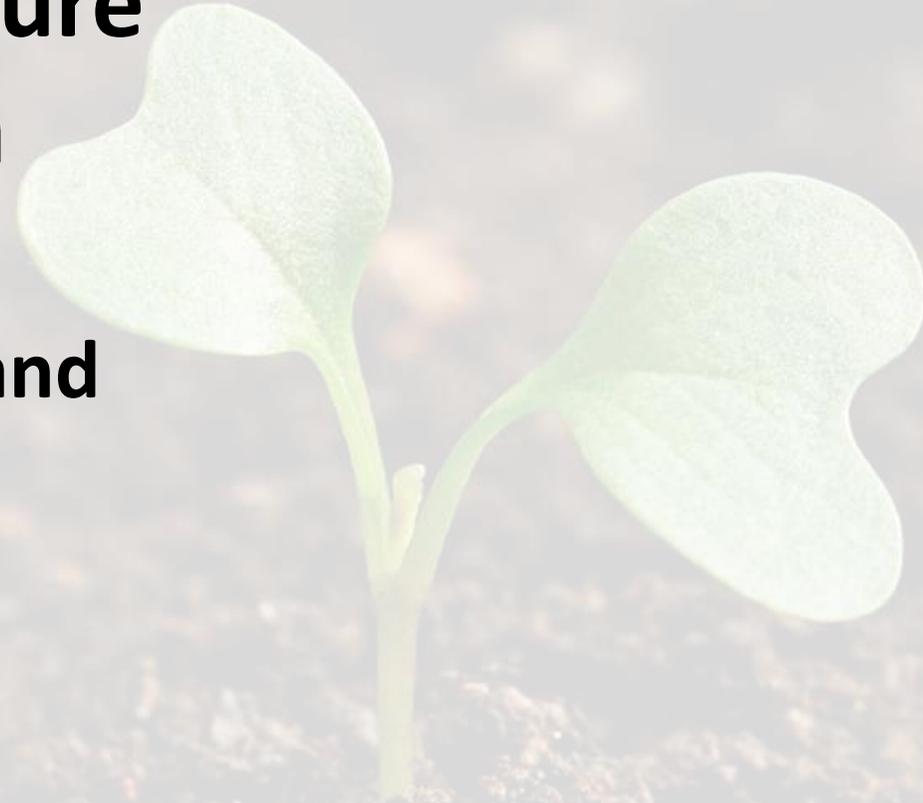


Challenges for Nature conservation in Lithuania.

**Focus on agriculture and
nature**

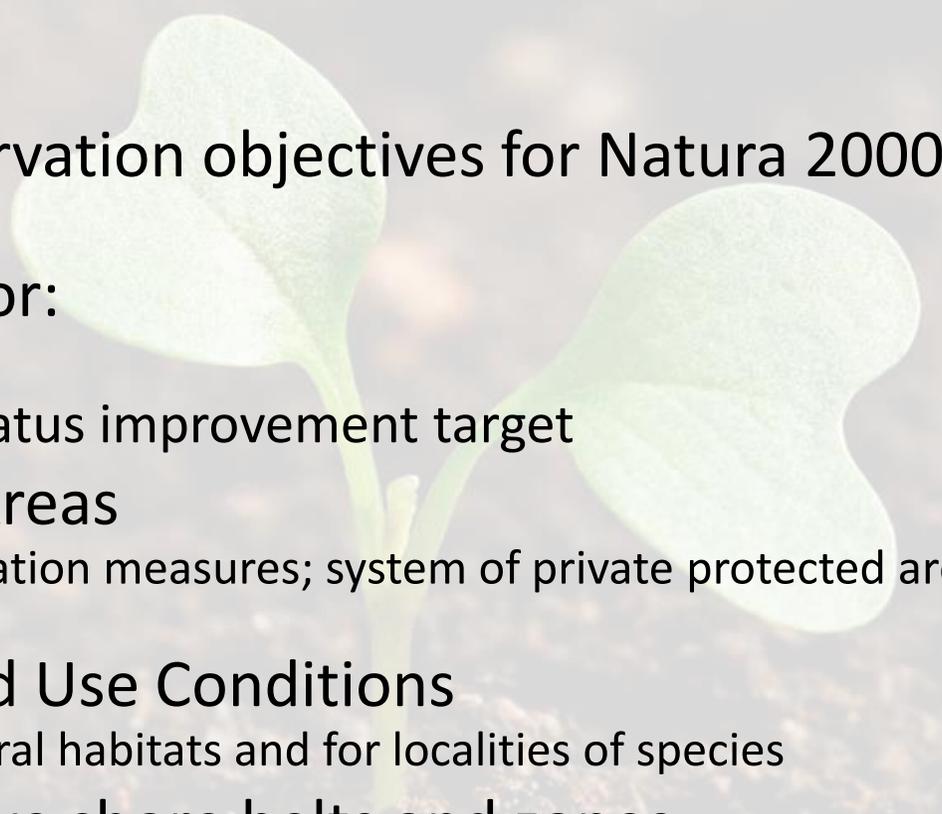


Algirdas Klimavičius

Lina Burbaitė

Ministry of Environment, Nature conservation policy group

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

- LIFE farms 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



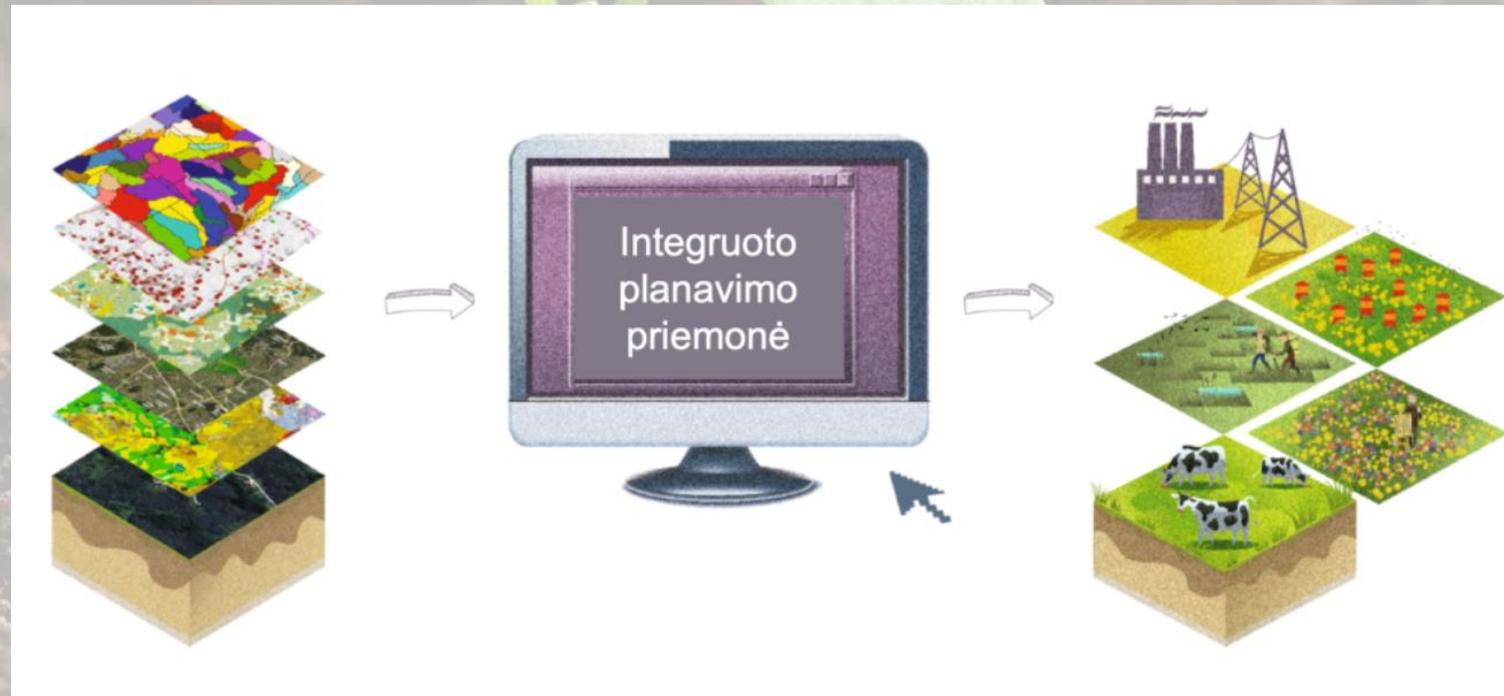
On-going/recently implemented LIFE projects related to agriculture & nature conservation

- 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.



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 large body of water, likely a lake or reservoir. In the center, there is a large, densely forested island with a vibrant green canopy. To the right of the island, the water curves into a bay or inlet. A small, light-colored boat is visible on the water in the lower-left quadrant. The overall scene is serene and natural.

Thank you!