



# Restoration and management of Estonian semi-natural grasslands

Experience of LIFE to alvars and LIFE Connecting Meadows projects

18.04.2023, Klaipeda

Annely Holm, project manager

Estonian University of Life Science



## LIFE to alvars- 2014-2019

Restoration of Estonian alvar grasslands, LIFE13NAT/EE/000082

2018 - LIFE awards- Socio-economic benefits award

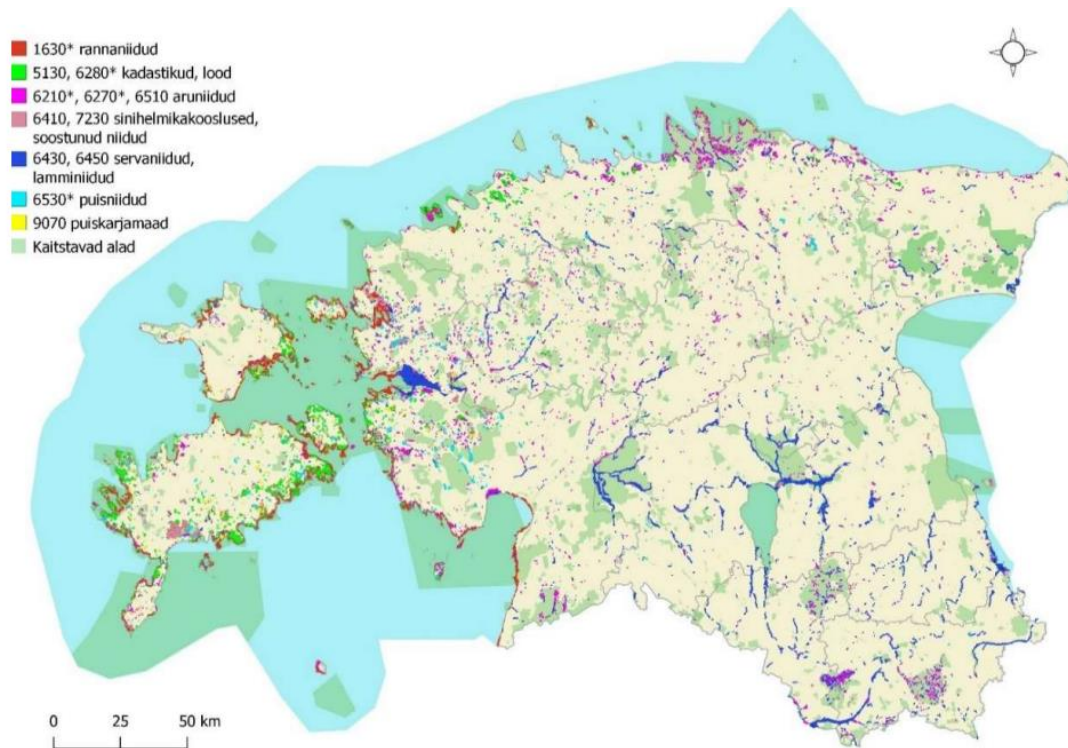
2022 - LIFE awards, absolute best LIFE project implemented in Natura 2000 network, 30 LIFE anniversary special award



## LIFE Connecting Meadows –2020-2025

Restoring and connecting semi-natural meadow habitats on Muhu island, LIFE19 NAT/EE/001006

## Estonian seminatural grasslands



130 000 hectares

88 000 hectares on  
nature conservation  
areas

40 000 hectares  
managed annually

<https://keskkonnaamet.ee/media/1268/download>



# What we do with LIFE projects

## Semi-natural grassland restoration –

LIFE to alvars – restoration work  
carried out on 2500 hectares  
of alvar grassland

LIFE Connecting meadows –  
restoration work ongoing on 200  
hectares of alvars, coastal meadows  
and wooded meadows



# Re-starting the management

- For sustainability of the restoration results management must follow
- We support the farmers from the project with fencing, watering facilities, animal shelters, animal collection systems, animal trailers, mowing machinery ect.



# We do it together with the farmers and landowners

Direct involvement in the project

Participating landowners 800 + 80

Participating farmers 40 + 8

Participating entrepreneurs 45 + 8





## Spinn-off of LIFE to alvars project- Muhu Island Meat

As a spin-off of LIFE to alvars projects  
“Added value products working group”  
Muhu Island Meat was founded by 9 farmers.  
Farmers are now marketing semi-natural  
grassland grown lamb and beef together.

[www.muhuliha.ee](http://www.muhuliha.ee)



# We do it together with the local community

Involving people through  
public meetings, training days,  
hikes, information materials, social media,  
TV, articles ect – about 200 events since 2019





## We do it together with scientists

**Monitoring the biodiversity on restoration sites-** birds, pollinators, plants, soil, management regime

**Socio-economic impact and ecosystem services** – influence to the local community, awareness and ecosystem services





## Results

Monitoring shows the increase in the number of species and abundance in every monitored taxa. Most visible is the change in plants cover and species composition.



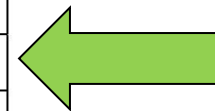
Final report of the LIFE to alvars project

[https://landscape.ut.ee/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/KIK2021\\_lopparuanne\\_loonealaste\\_tootmine.pdf](https://landscape.ut.ee/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/KIK2021_lopparuanne_loonealaste_tootmine.pdf)

## Results

Alvar restoration project LIFE to alvars managed to change the trend of alvar grassland condition to favorable on national level

Kood	Levila	Pindala	Struktuur	Tulevik	Üldhinnang	Trend
1630*	FV	FV	U1	FV	U1	↑
5130	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV	→
6210	FV	FV	U1	U1	U1	→
6270*	FV	FV	U1	U1	U1	→
6280*	FV	FV	U1	FV	U1	↑
6410	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV	→
6430	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV	→
6450	FV	FV	U1	U1	U1	↓
6510	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV	→
6530*	U1	U1	U2	U2	U2	?
7230	FV	U1	U1	U2	U2	↓
9070	FV	FV	U1	U1	U1	↑







Thank you!

More information:

<https://pk.emu.ee/connecting/>

<https://landscape.ut.ee/mis-me-teeme/projects/eesti-loopealsete-taastamine/>

FB and instagram “Life-connecting-meadows” “LIFE-to-alvars”  
annely.holm@emu.ee

