

“Conserving Aquatic Warbler in Poland and Germany”

**an EU LIFE Nature project
of OTOP-BirdLife Poland**



**Lars Lachmann, RSPB Country Programme Officer
Palencia, 18th August 2005**

Applicant and Partners



Polish Society
for the Protection of Birds

in partnership with



The Royal Society for the
Protection of Birds



North-Podlissie Society for
Bird Protection



Western Pomeranian
Ornithological Society



Wolin National Park



Biebrza National Park



"Förderverein Naturschutz im
Peenetal e.V.",



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Project sites

2 main project regions (covering 2 of 3 Polish AW populations):

- Pomerania (highly threatened Western Population)
- Biebrza (Polish core population)



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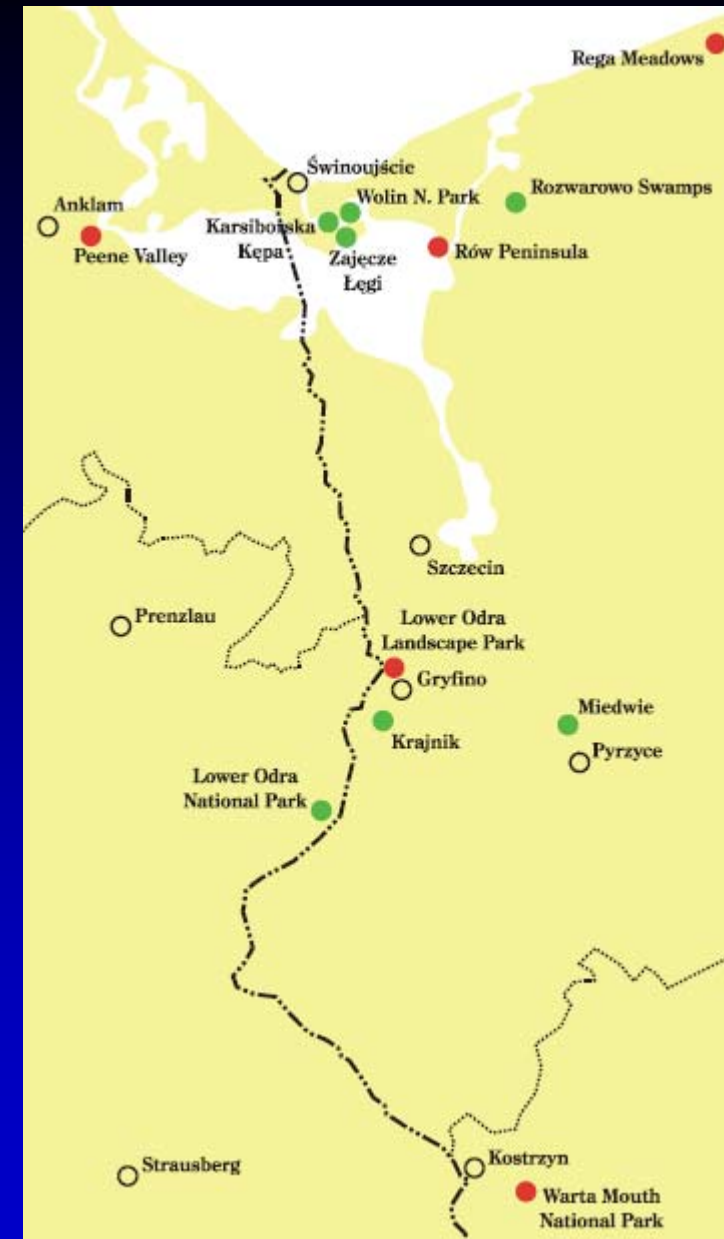
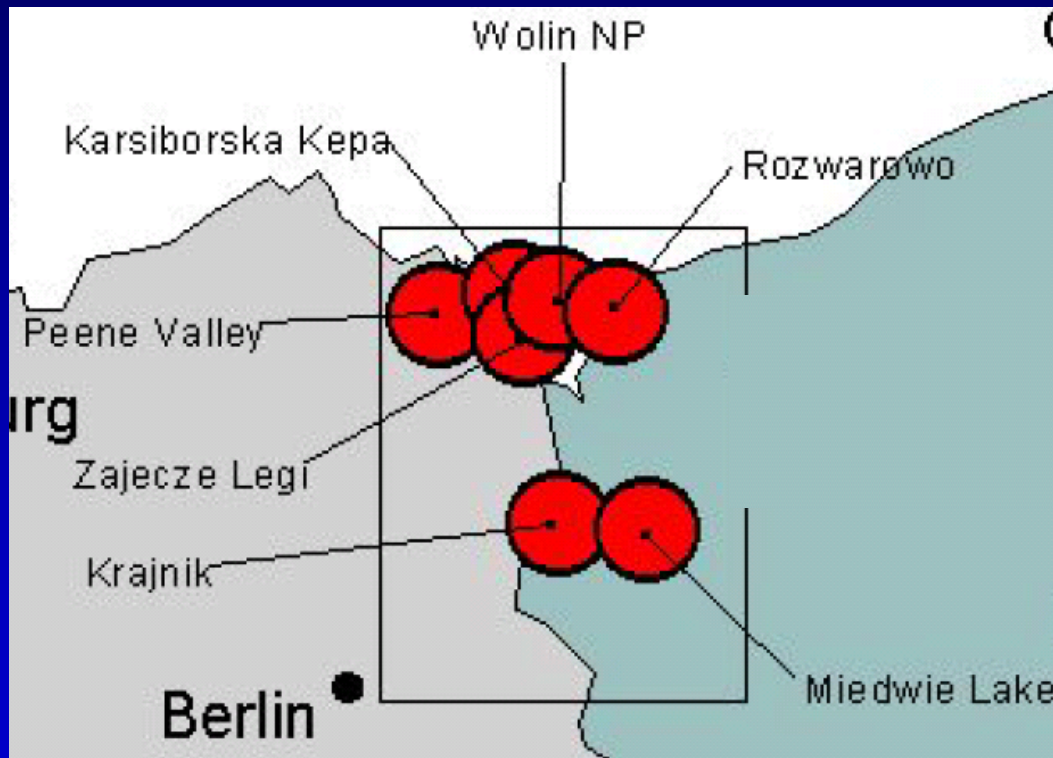


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Pomeranian Region:

- 7 project sites (6 in Poland, 1 in Germany)
- incl. 5 of 6 recent breeding sites
- plus 2 former breeding sites



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Delta Swiny

(Wolin NP, Karsiborska Kepa OTOP reserve, Zajecze Legi)



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Krajnik



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Miedwie



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Rozwarowo



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Peene Valley



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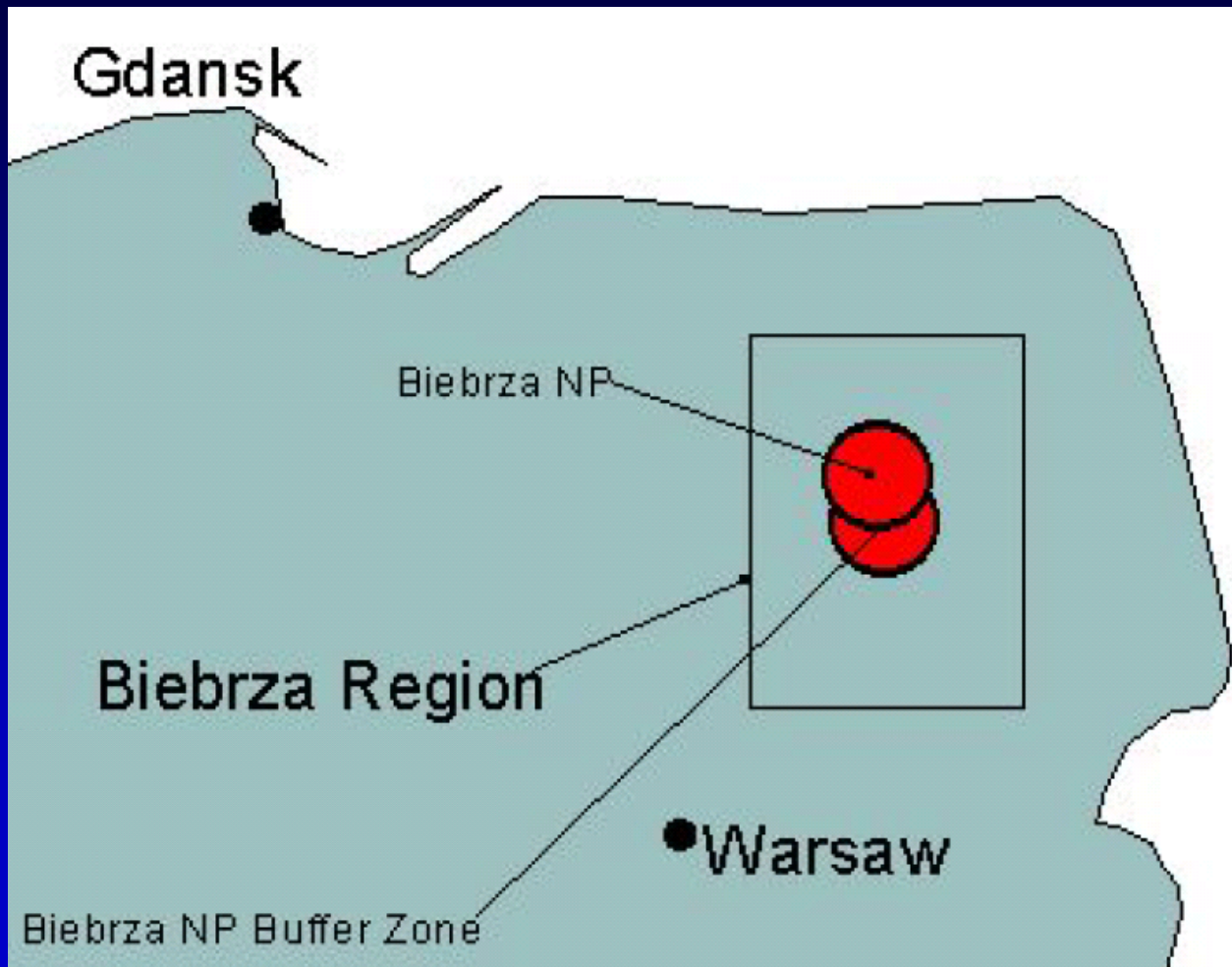
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Biebrza Region:

2 project sites:

- Biebrza NP
- Biebrza NP Buffer Zone (3 sub-sites)



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Biebrza NP



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Biebrza NP Buffer Zone

(sub-sites: Laskowiec-Zajki, Lawki, Mscichy)

Laskowiec-Zajki



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Biebrza NP Buffer Zone

(sub-sites: Laskowiec-Zajki, Lawki, Mscichy)

Lawki



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Biebrza NP Buffer Zone

(sub-sites: Laskowiec-Zajki, Lawki, Mscichy)

Mscichy



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Key project facts:

- **Duration: 2005-2010**
- **9 project sites in 2 countries (all NATURA 2000 sites)**
- **7 project partners in 3 countries (5 of them NGOs, 2 NPs)**
- **Budget:**
 - 5.4 m € (75% EU grant, 25% partners and co-financers)
 - Co-financers: RSPB, Swarovski Optics, RMC Aggregates
- **Targeting breeding sites of 81% of the Polish-German AW population = 76% of EU population = c. 15% of world population**
- **Key project for the implementation of the CMS AW MoU in Poland**



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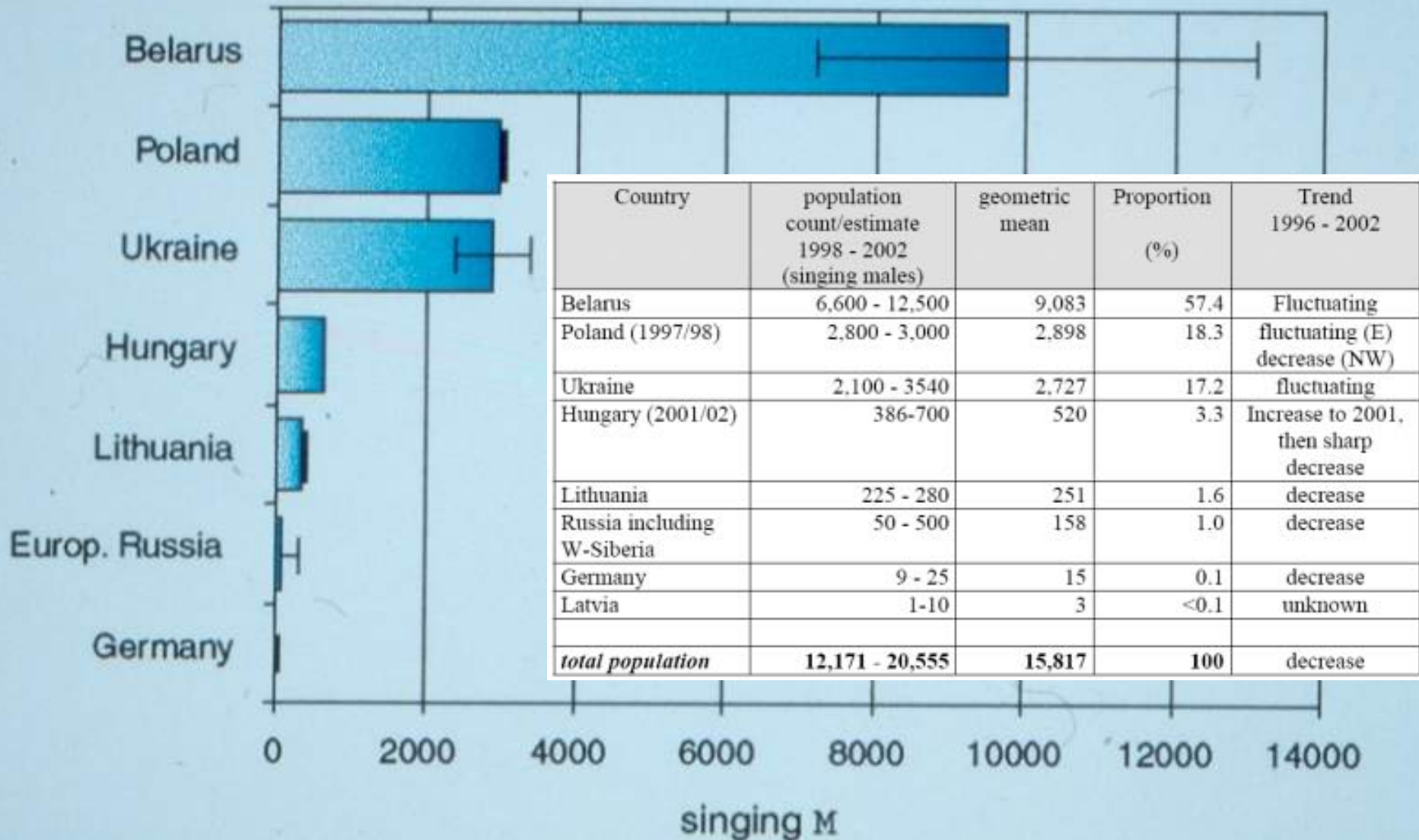


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Why this project?

Aquatic Warbler Populations in the world



Why this project?

Aquatic Warbler Populations in Poland

Region	Current number of singing males in 2003 [min-max]	Numbers of singing males in 1995-97 [min-max]
Biebrza Marshes	2693-2726	2041-2082
Lublin Polesie	557-607	451-498
Narew Marshes and the rest of North Podlasie	65-82	161
Western Pomerania	70-79	247-254
Central Pomerania	0	(no data)
Mazury, Kurpie	0	5
Central Poland	1	2-3
Poland - TOTAL	3386-3494	2883-2993



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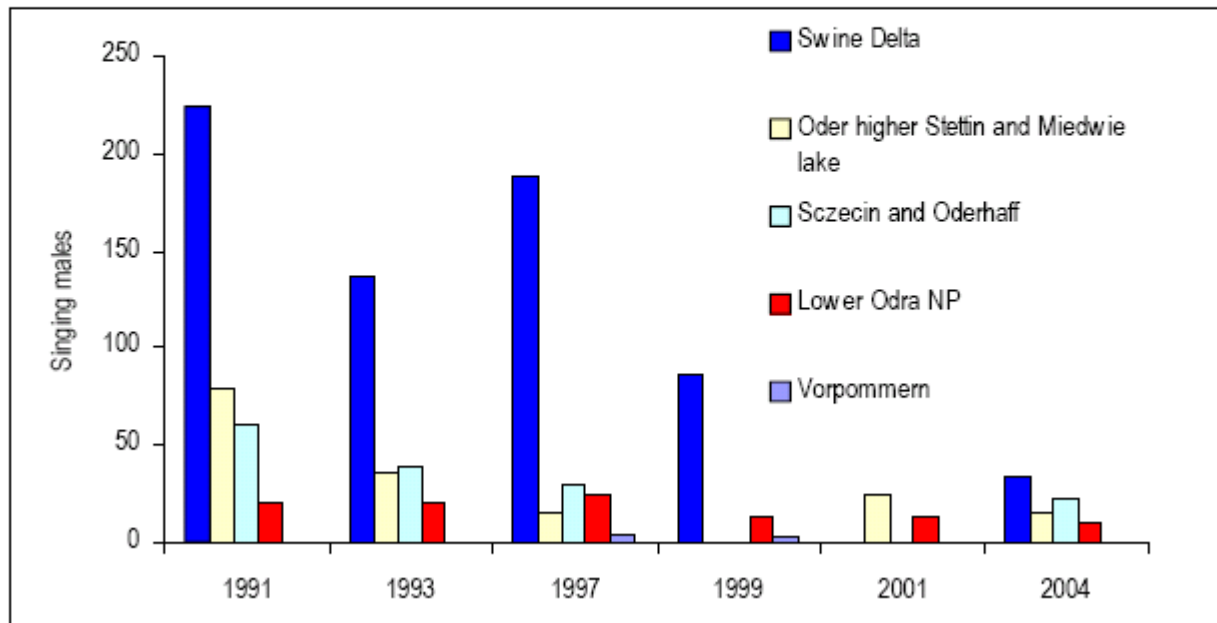


Why this project?

Aquatic Warbler Populations in Pomerania

The Pomeranian Population is believed to be genetically and behaviourally isolated and distinct

Picture 3. Population dynamics of Pomeranian (Germany and Poland) population of the *Acrocephalus paludicola*



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Project Approach



- **Concise: All current and potential breeding sites in Pomerania to be included**
- **Core sites in Biebrza population included**
- **All key stakeholders involved since project planning workshop in February 2004**
- **Sites that are now not included in the project, are still to be considered when implementing the project and its follow-up (Chelm, Warta Mouth NP, German Odra NP)**



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Project Aims

- Save the highly endangered Pomeranian Population of AW from extinction
- Strengthen the Polish core population of AW in the Biebrza Valley

Problem/Threats	Summary of Objectives/Activities	Objectively Verifiable Indicators
<u>Acrocephalus paludicola population in Germany and Poland is vulnerable to extinction</u>	Overall Goal: <i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i> re-established across its natural range in Germany and Poland in viable, less conservation dependant populations	
<u>The range and population of Acrocephalus paludicola in Germany and Poland are decreasing</u>	Project Purpose: The population of <i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i> in key areas of its range in Poland and Germany (Biebrza NP+buffer zone and Pomerania) is stabilized and the number of Pomeranian breeding sites increased, with potential for continued expansion assessed.	<p>The number of vocalizing males of <i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i> in Biebrza NP+buffer zone and Pomerania at the end of the project is at the same level or higher than at the beginning of the project ($t^0 \leq t^5$).</p> <p>Within the project's active land management area at Biebrza (1800 ha), the area occupied by breeding <i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i> increased by at least 300 hectares,</p> <p>In the same area the number of vocalizing males of <i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i> increased by 15% until the end of the project ($t^0 * 1.15 \leq t^5$).</p> <p>The number of <i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i> breeding sites in Pomerania increased from 6 in t^0 to 7 in t^5</p>



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Main Threats:



- **Disruption to optimal hydrological regime**
- **Successional deterioration of suitable habitat (due to abandonment of traditional land use and to hydrological changes)**
- **Low awareness of AW conservation needs**
- **Land is not available for conservation management**
- **No clarity about long-term management options and its financial feasibility**



Project Objectives

1. Awareness for AW conservation needs raised amongst key stakeholders
2. AW habitat improved and enlarged in Pomerania and Biebrza (land ownership, hydrology, succession, land use)
3. Replicable financial and legal mechanisms for sustainable management of AW sites identified and agreed, funding secured



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Main activities

Habitat management

- Management Plans for all project sites developed and agreed (42,000 ha)
- Purchase of land: 1800 ha in 6 sites
- Active habitat management on 3,000 ha (of these 1,500 ha currently occupied by AW), with experimental character:
 - Late mowing
 - Extensive grazing
 - Scrub and tree removal
 - Burning
 - Summer and winter reed cut
- Intensive monitoring (AW, vegetation, water, food base)



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Main activities

Land management within the proposed LIFE project

site name Biebrza region: turquoise Pomerania region: pink	number of ha											
	total site area	area to be covered by AW management plans	area covered by AW land management measures (apart from hydrol.)	part of land management area currently occupied by AW	B1 land purchase	C5 trees and scrub	C6 prepare site for pasturing	C8 grazing	D4 burning	A10 summer reed cut	D3 winter reed cut	D2 mowing
Biebrza NP	59223	36732	1228	1000	812	227	0	0	0	0	0	1028
Biebrza NP buffer zone	1253	1061	702	150	702	44	0	0	0	0	0	702
Karsiborska Kepa	300	200	80	60	0	0	40	40	0	0	40	0
Krajnik	365	365	217	31	179	0	0	0	0	0	0	217
Miedwie Lake	15921	759	200	70	140	0	200	200	0	0	0	80
Rozwarowo	1770	1770	19.5	15	0	4.5	0	0	0	15	0	0
Wolin National Park	10937	440	220	100	0	0	220	220	0	0	0	0
Zajecze Legi	400	340	140	0	0	0	100	100	0	40	0	0
Peene Valley	27800	662	232	0	0	0	0	0	90	0	0	142
area SUM in ha	117969	42329	3038.5	1426	1833	275.5	560	560	90	55	40	2169



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Example: grazing



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Example: mowing



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Example: summer mowing of reed



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Example: water management (adjustment of pumping operations)



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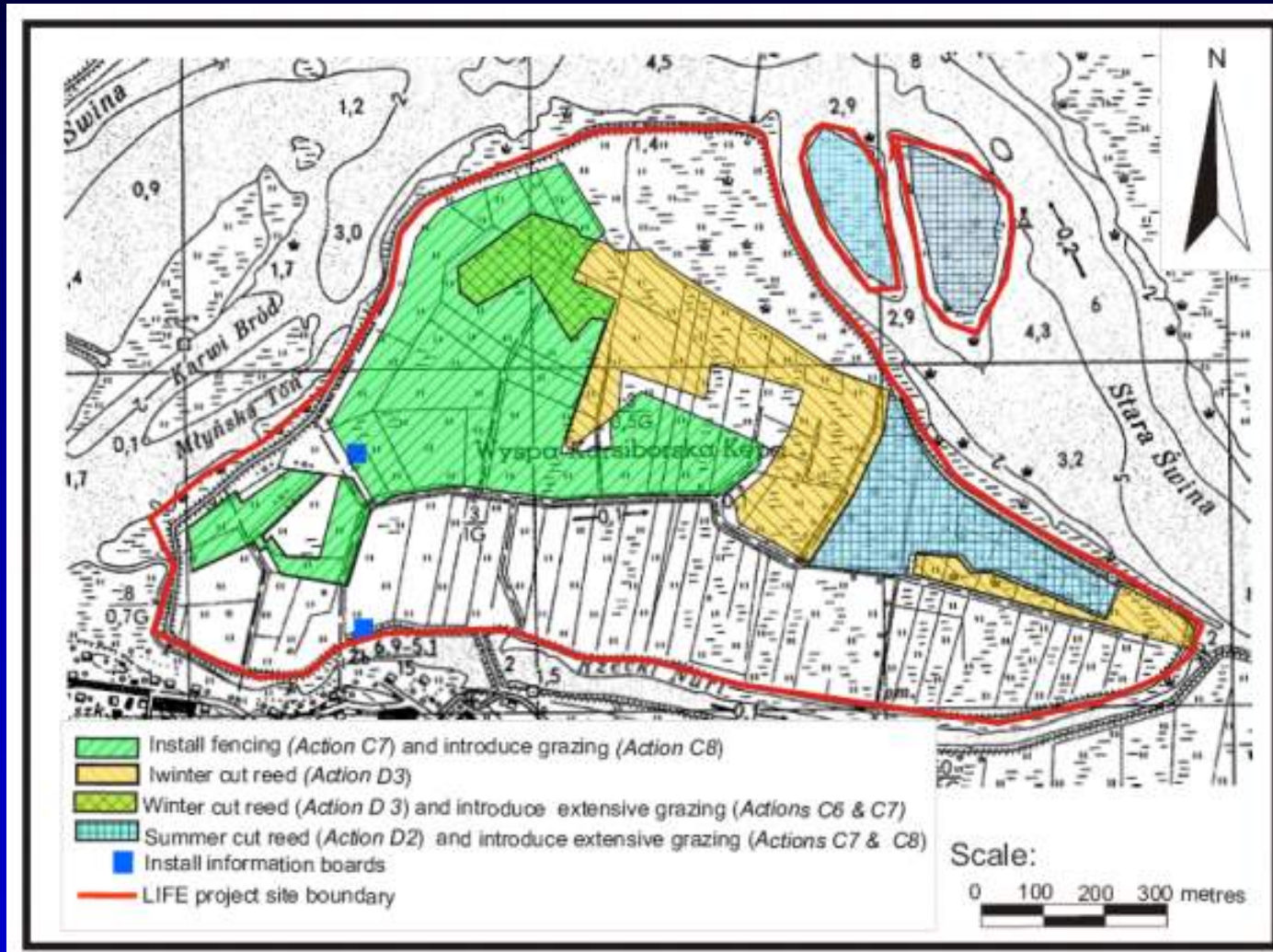


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Examples: Activity maps

Karsiborska Kepa (vegetation management)



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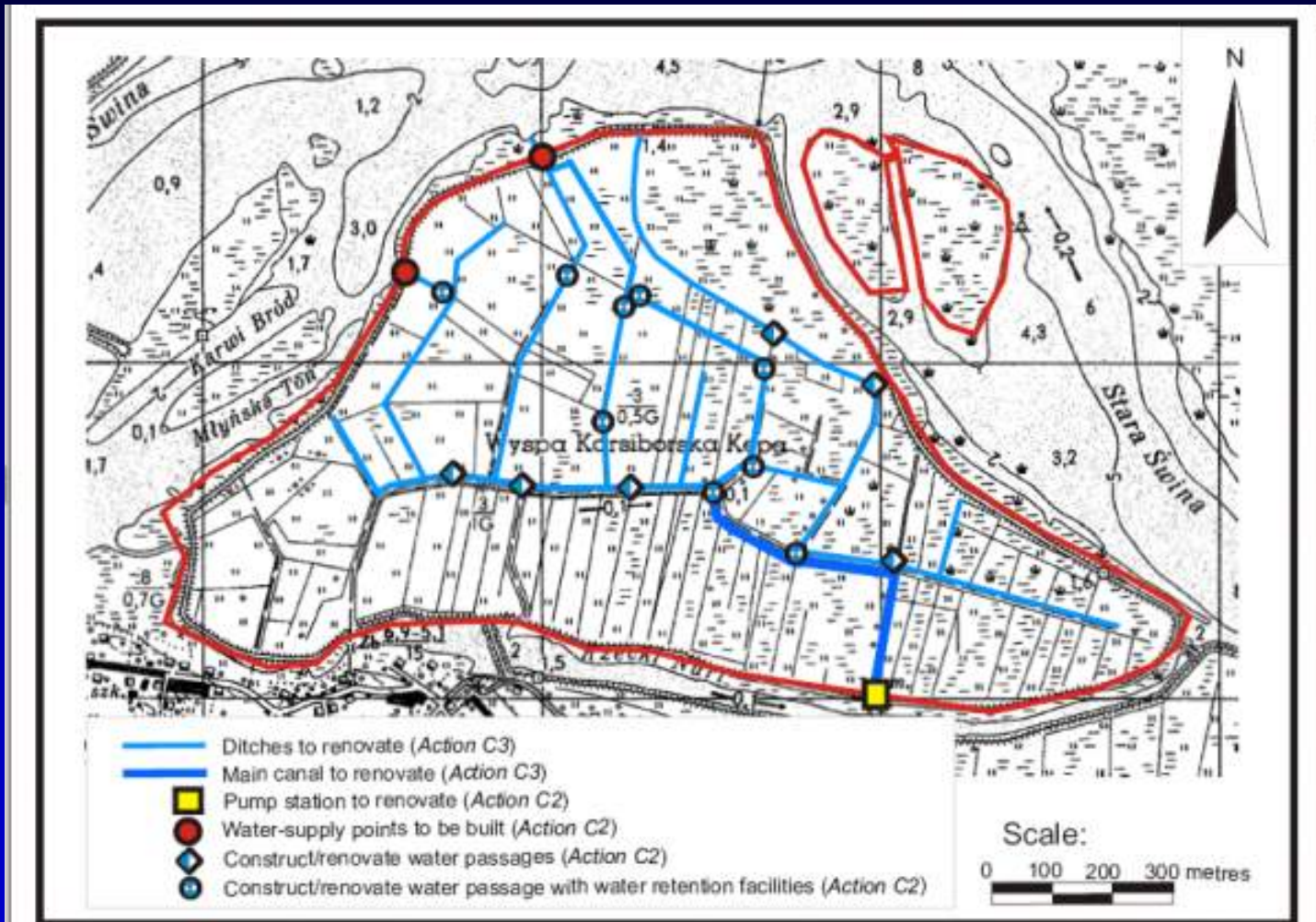


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Examples: Activity maps

Karsiborska Kepa (hydrological management)



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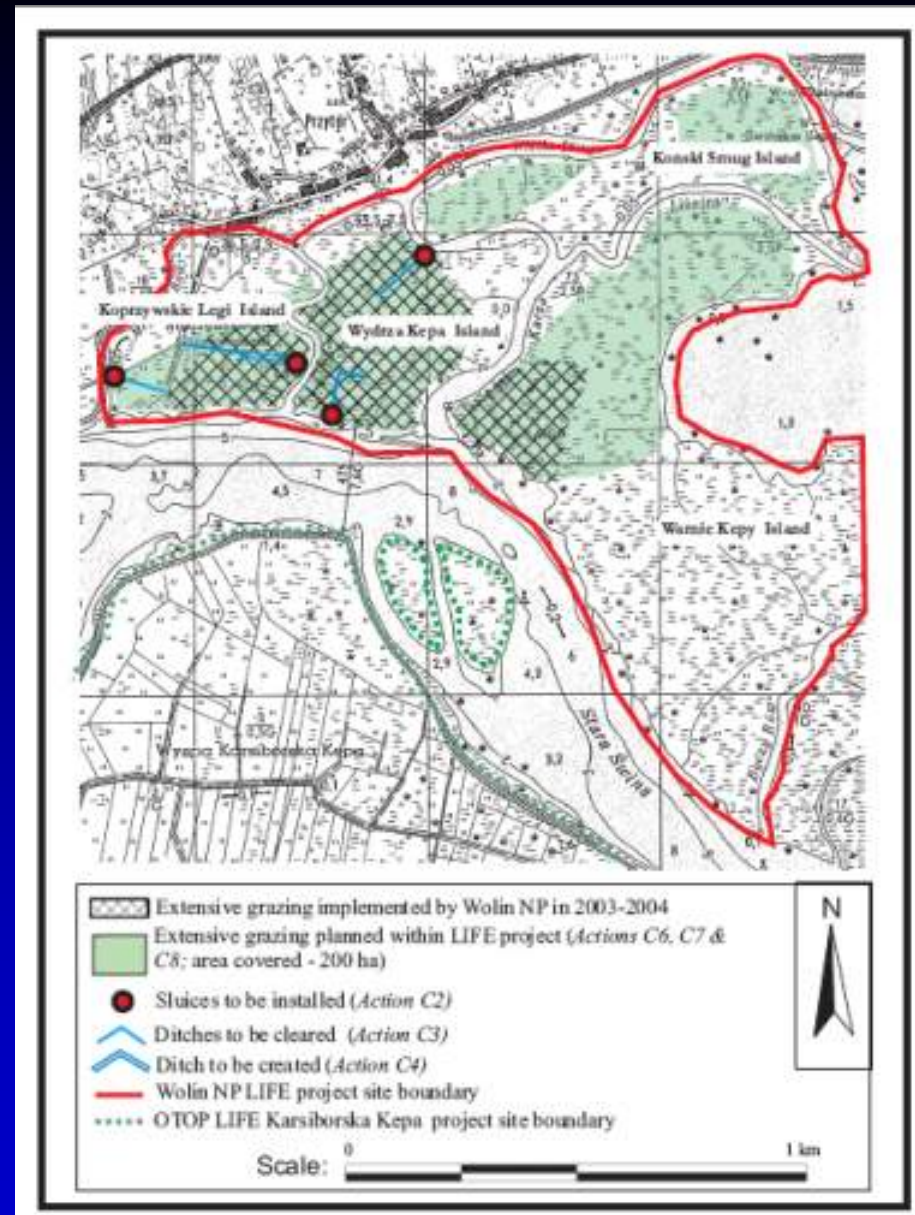


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Examples: Activity maps

Wolin NP (Delta Swiny)



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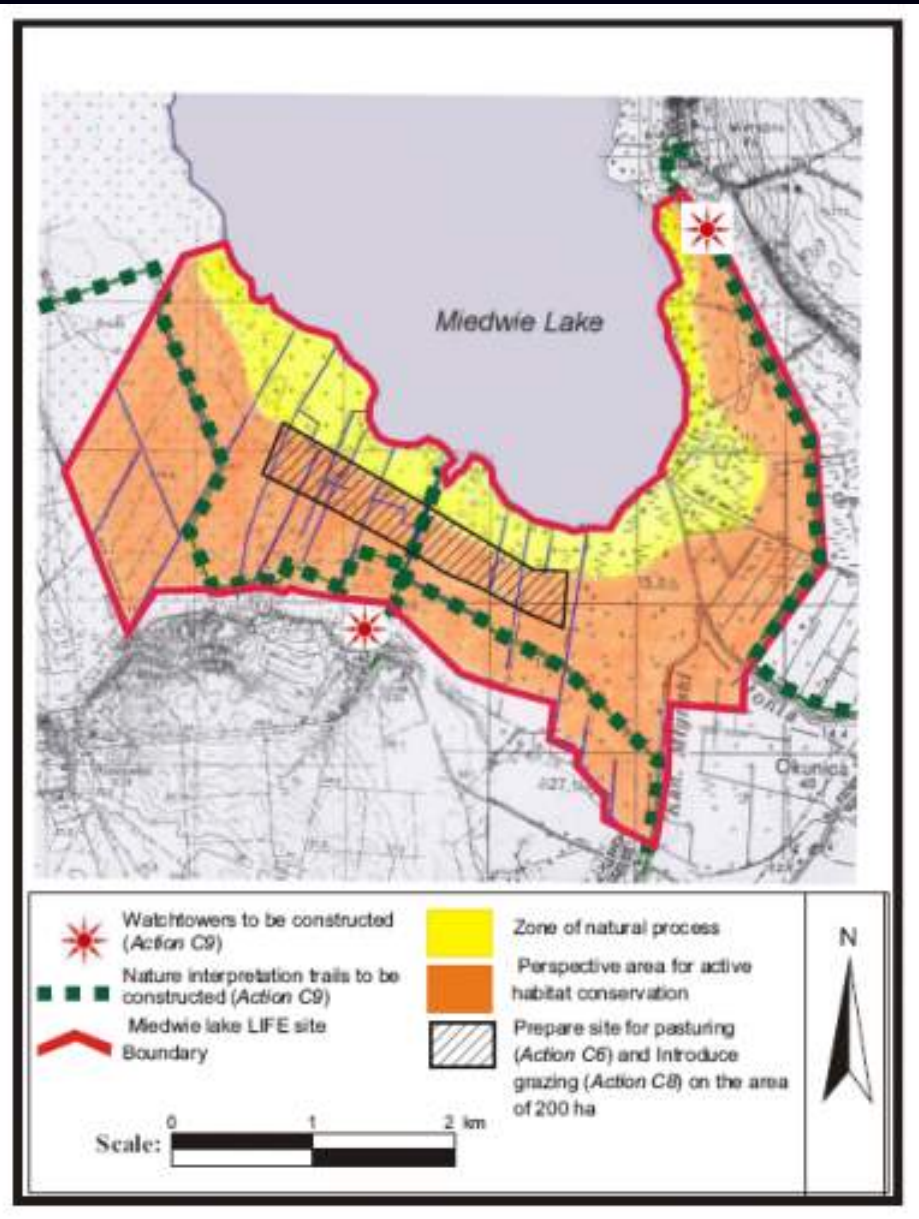


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Examples: Activity Maps

Miedwie Lake



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Main activities

Long-term management

- All project sites under conservation management with updated management plans
- EU Direct Farming subsidies
- Agri-environmental schemes (improvement of existing and development of new schemes; e.g. late mowing, reed plantations)
- EU NATURA 2000 funding
- Use of biomass
- Subcontracting farmers
- New cheap management methods (machinery, burning)
- Tourism



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Main activities

PR and awareness raising

- Full suite of brochures, signs, posters, video etc.
- 4 best practice conferences and proceedings
- Media work
- 2 AWCT meetings
- Technical Task Force visits to project sites
- Networking with other projects
- Educational programmes and tourist infrastructure



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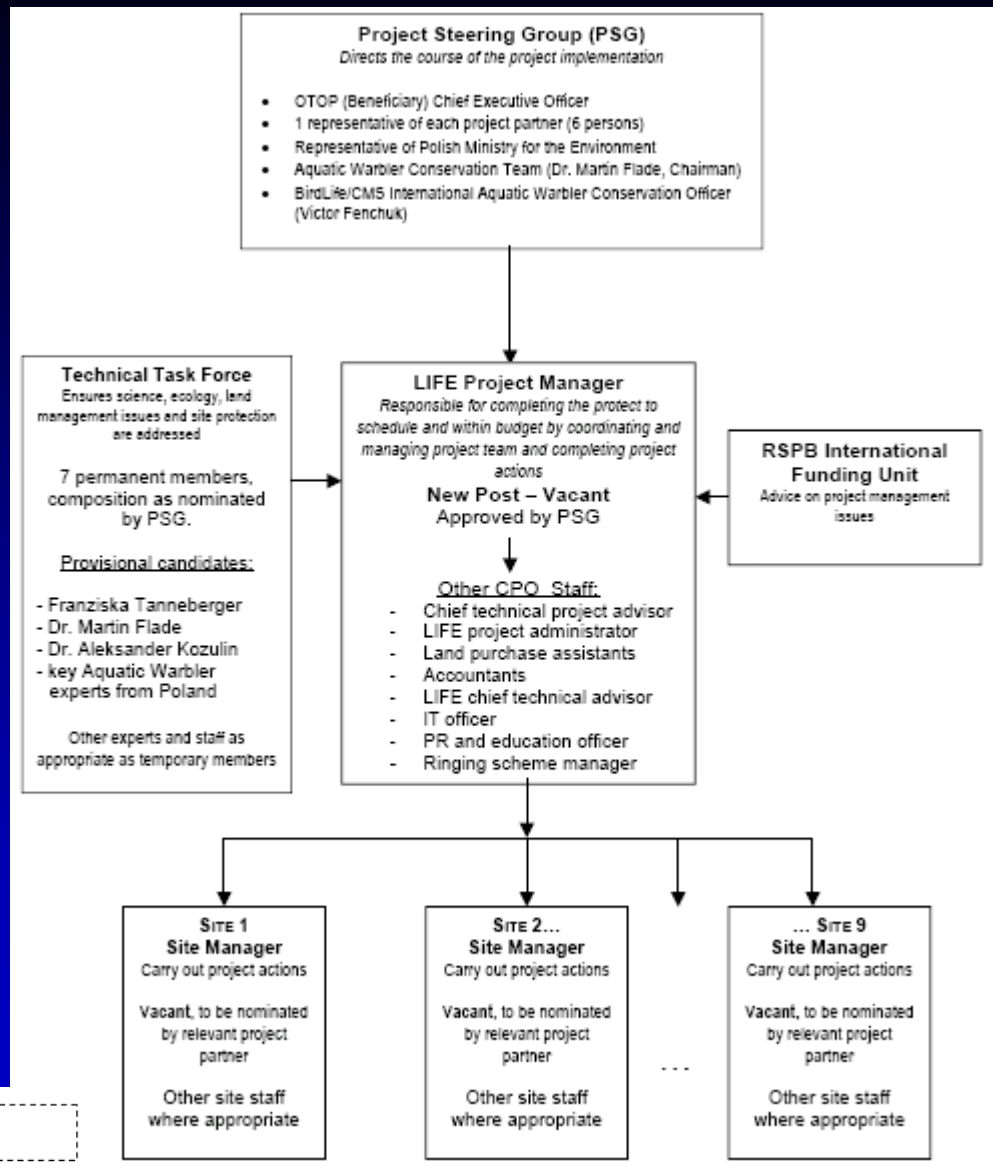


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Project Management Structure

- Project Steering Group
- LIFE Project Manager and staff
- Technical Task Force
- Site Managers and site staff



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Current project situation

- EU has approved adjusted project and budget
- Project has started 1st Feb 2005
- Grant and partner contracts now being signed
- LIFE project staff positions to be advertised end of August 2005 (all vacant to date!)
- Official project launch and partner training planned for Oct 2005



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NOT in the LIFE project:

- Search for potential restoration sites in Pomerania
- Development and implementation of restoration plans
- Site conservation at Chelm Marshes and secondary sites of the Biebrza/Narev



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Conclusions

The new LIFE project in Poland/Germany

- offers a great and probably last chance to save the Pomeranian population
- is a concise approach to the conservation of the species in all Poland
- will produce new evidence of suitable habitat management measures
- is bound to provide solutions for long-term site management



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