

Traditional agriculture practices as sustainable management tool on Biebrza Wetlands

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Sustainable management practices

- Mowing of fen meadows
 - Mechanical mowing
 - Hand mowing with scythe
- Cattle grazing on floodplains







Goal: to restore openness of fen-moss meadow (*Scheuchzerio-Caricetea nigrae*) after 20 years of abandonment

Tool: traditional hand moving with scythe by local

farmers







Ecological effects after 5 years:

- Habitat morphology improved for breeding waders (increase of nesting birds density, including: Limosa limosa, Tringa totanus, Gallinago gallinago)
- Increased density of blooming flowers (including: Dactylorhiza incarnata, Caltha palustris, Menyantes trifoliata)
- Changes in structure of plant communities: covers of mosses and herbs increased.



Other results:

 Need of active conservation of wetlands widely communicated, eg. Poland Cup in Hand Mowing

for Nature









Other results:

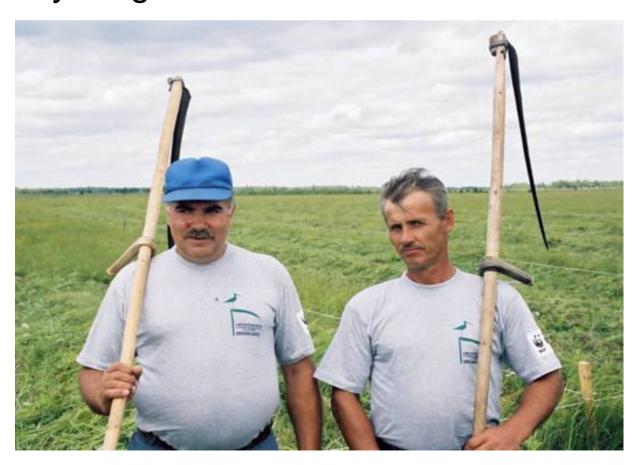
- Ecological education for school children workshops "Ruff Decoys"
- Educational events for adults: Haymaking, Orchid Day, Winter Hay Collecting
- Promoting of tourist attractions in project area
- 40 seasonal jobs for local people
- Experiences from the project used for Polish agroenvironmental schemes





Next step:

 Support for local farmers interested in hand mowing for money > agro-environmental schemes

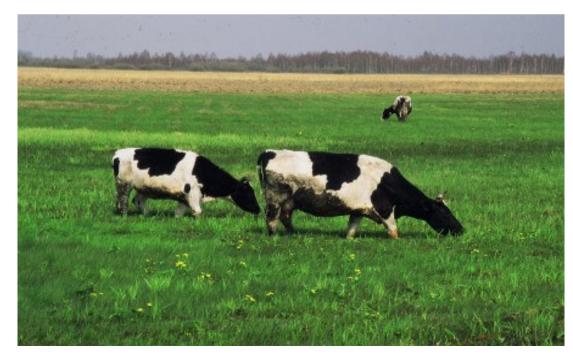




"Happy Cows from Brzostowo" model project

Goal: to conserve breeding site of water-fowl on Biebrza floodplains

Tool: to ensure economical sustainability of free cattle grazing (milk production, EU donations, eco-tourism development)



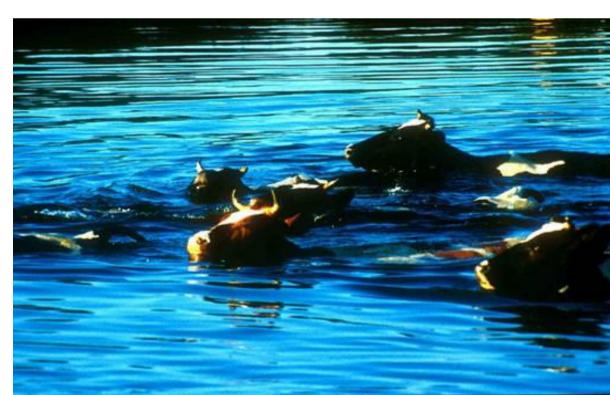




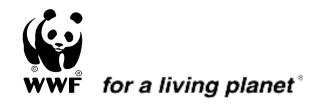
"Happy Cows from Brzostowo" model project

Effects:

- Cattle grazing impact on breeding birds recognized during 3 years of monitoring
- Most farmers from Brzostowo are going to apply for agro-environmental schemes
- Awareness of connection between cattle grazing, nature protection and local economy raised
- Brzostowo as tourism attraction promoted







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