

**Conserving
*Acrocephalus
paludicola* in Poland
and Germany**

**Technical Task
Force visits report**
Poleski Park Narodowy
24 to 26 October 2007



Objective of visits


To acquaint the Technical Task Force members with each project site; to review existing or planned project activities; and to provide feedback and advice to site and project staff on any issues relating to implementation of the project



June: Lower Peene Valley (Ferne Wiesen and Murchiner Wiesen); Krajnik; Miedwie Lake; Rozwarowo Mire; Wolin National Park (Warnie Kepy island); Zajecze Legi and Karsiborska Kepa.



Franziska Tanneberger



August: Biebrza National Park – Bagno Lawki and Grobla Honczarowska/Batalionowa Laka on Bagno Lawki; and Biebrza National Park Buffer Zone – Bagno Lawki near Szorce, Laskowic-Zajki and Mscichy.



Overall impression

Despite major delays in starting the project, but thanks to the thoroughness of the proposal, most things are progressing well

However, implementation of some activities appears to lack a sense of 'urgency' and site staff may need to be more proactive in taking decisions etc if targets are going to be met



Key issues - biomass

Developing strategies for biomass removal is critical: options include - thermic use; composting; burning; shredding + decomposition; dumping on/off site; some would require lobbying for derogations

In addition to finding an 'end use' for biomass, it is important to consider the environmental impacts of removing and transporting large volumes of material



Geoff & Hilary Welch



Key issues – land acquisition and partnership agreements

Dramatic increase in land prices has hampered purchase and is reducing the area that can be bought and managed

Emphasis should be on large, contiguous blocks, ideally in upstream locations, to provide more opportunity for hydrological control without affecting neighbouring landowners



Key issues - mowing

Important to identify alternative areas for mowing in case this year's wet weather is repeated



Key issues – other interests

Important to consider what else your site is important for so as to reduce conflicts between Aquatic Warbler management and the maintenance of other important features

Thorough research and analysis during the management planning process should assist



Key issues – scrub control

Important to develop scrub control strategies

Options include:

treatment of cut stumps with herbicide or fungus

regular, repeated cutting

also consider establishing cleared 'buffer zones' around managed areas to reduce seed drift from remaining trees



Key issues - grazing

Cattle grazing could help solve the biomass disposal issue but we need to be able to demonstrate that grazing creates and maintains good Aquatic Warbler habitat

Also there are many practical considerations associated with grazing – type of cattle, control, over-wintering, economics etc



Dave Beaumont



Key issues – monitoring

Important that all activities – planned, accidental or carried out by others - that affect habitats are recorded and their impacts monitored



Geoff & Hilary Welch



Key issues – information

Important that maximum use is made of historical information to help understand changes in habitats, populations etc

Important that site managers keep up to date with relevant research that may be taking place outside the scope of this project

Very valuable that site managers maintain regular contact with each other to share experience



Key issues – public relations

Good relations with local landowners at many sites

Important to engage with local communities

Consideration to be given to forming local steering committees – increased ‘ownership’ of project, openness, support etc



Key issues – publicity

The project has been very successful in obtaining coverage at the local, national and international level



Thank you – and keep up the good work!

