



“Conserving Aquatic Warbler in Poland and Germany”

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



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OTOP LIFE Project Manager**

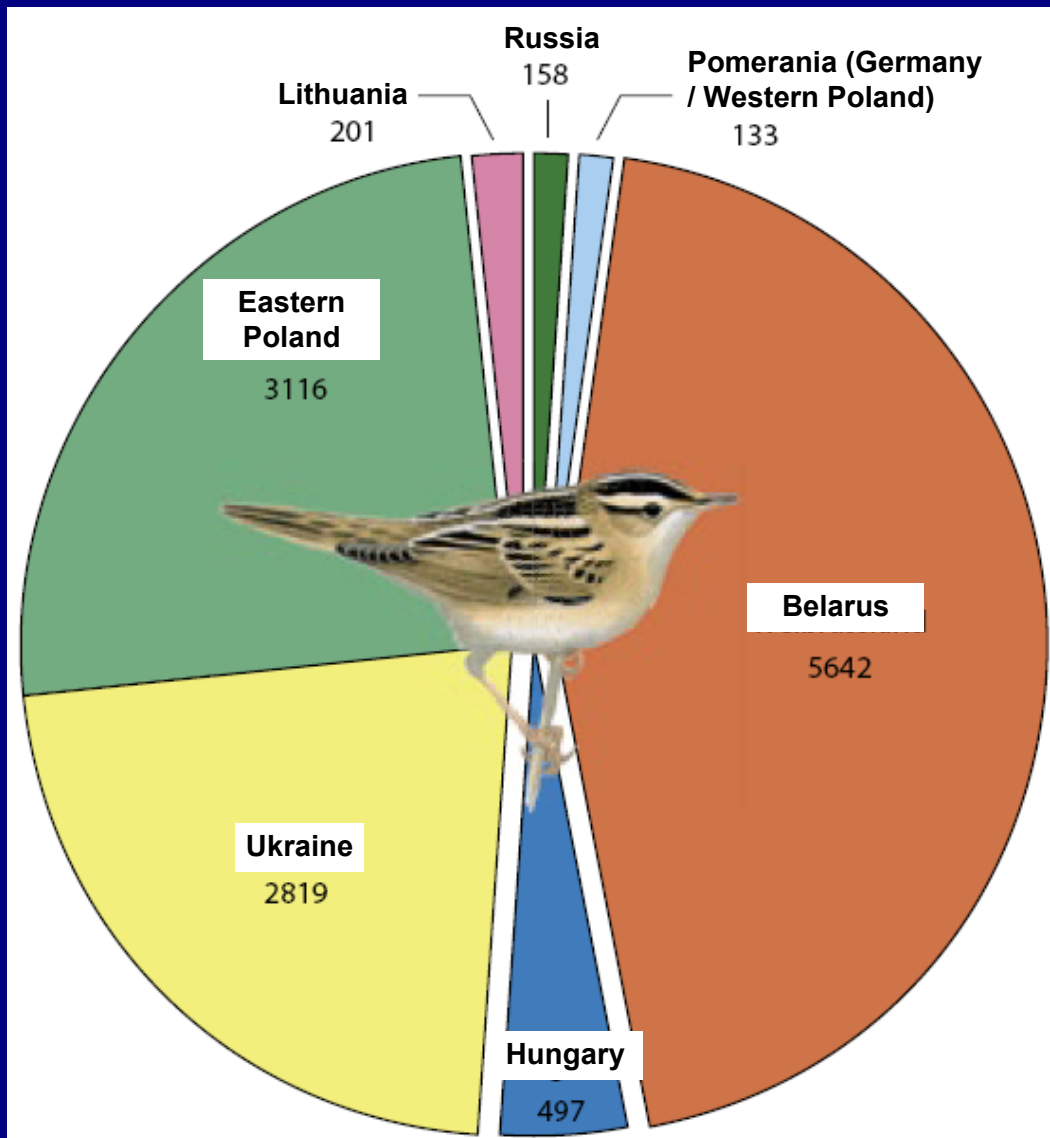
Quimper/France, 12 September 2008





Why this project?

Poland's responsibility for the species:



- 25% of all AW breed in Poland
- The Pomeranian population is threatened with immediate extinction



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Distribution and numbers at smaller sites are in decline:

Region	1997	2003	2007
Biebrza	2041-2082	2693-2726	2195-2225
Narew	161	65-82	65-82
Lublin marshes (Chelm, Polesie)	451-498	557-607	343-350
Pomerania (polish part)	247-254	70-79	69
Central Poland	2-3	1	2
RAZEM	2883-2993	3386-3494	2672-2726

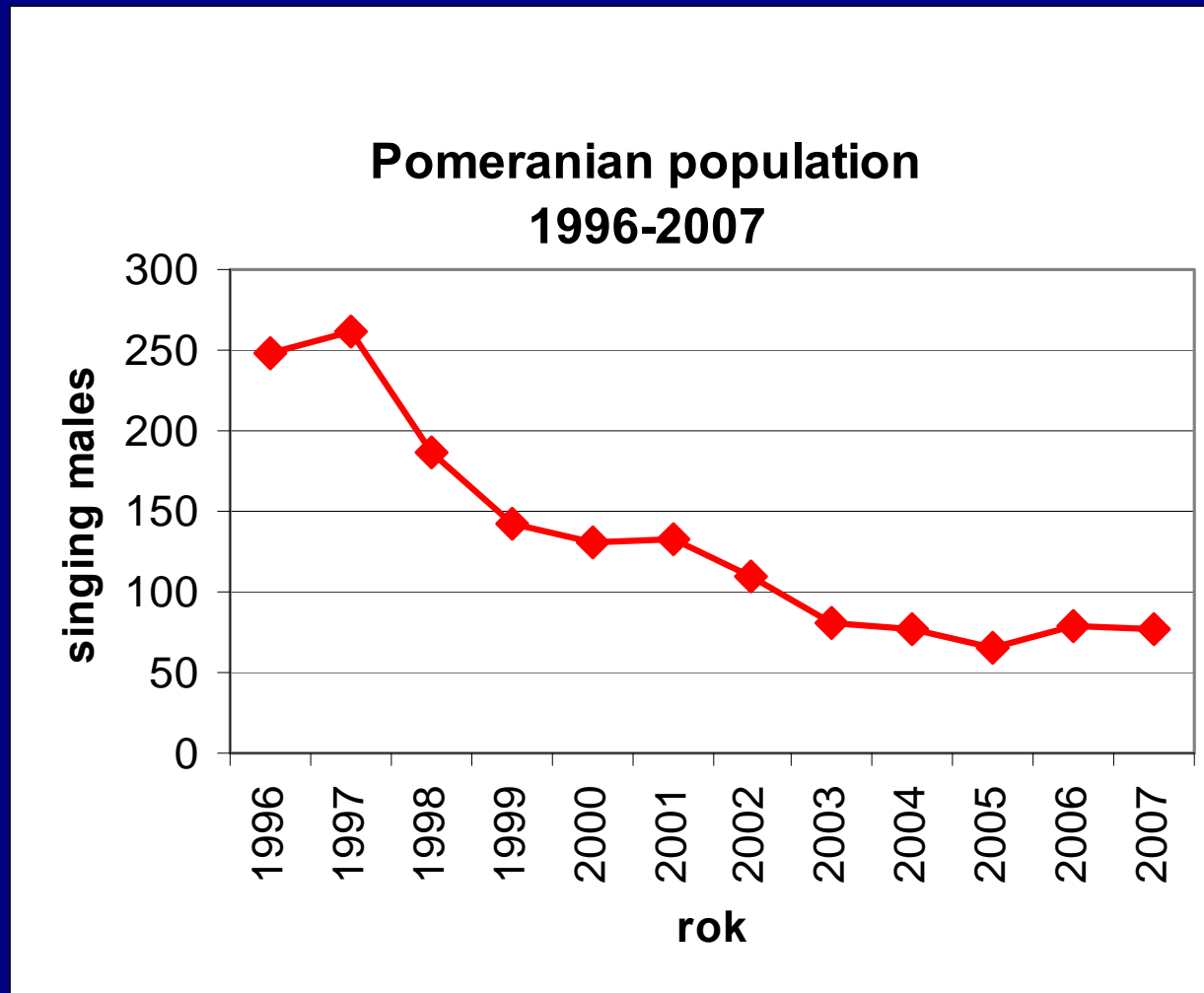


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The Pomeranian population needs urgent help:



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Poland and Germany have signed the AW MoU:

Convention on the Conservation of
Migratory Species of Wild Animals
(CMS)



Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Aquatic Warbler



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The Aquatic Warbler has been a focus species for OTOP since many years:



OTOP created the Karsiborska Kępa Reserve in 1995



This Reserve is
dedicated to the
Protection of Birds

Tu chronimy
ptaki

1995



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Conserving the Aquatic Warbler, you are protecting important sites and other species:



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**The AW population declined by 95%
in the past century.**

Why?



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Melioration of peatlands and intensification of land use



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Industrial peat extraction



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**Now:
Many sites destroyed or
left with disturbed
hydrology and increased
mineralisation through
water and air**



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An aerial photograph of a forest landscape. The foreground is dominated by a dense stand of young, green coniferous trees. In the middle ground, there is a mix of taller, more mature trees, including some deciduous species with lighter green foliage. The background shows a vast, flat landscape under a clear sky, likely a wetland or a large open field, with a distant horizon line.

Successional overgrowth due to abandonment of land use



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**Abandonment leads to:
overgrowth with trees and
bushes**



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**Abandonment leads to:
overgrowth with reeds**



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**Abandonment leads to:
accumulation of a thick
litter layer**



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Too intensive land use:

- early mowing
- additional drainage



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Key project facts:



- **Duration: 2005-2010 (2011)**
- **9 project sites in 2 countries, covering 42,000 ha**
- **5 project partners in 3 countries (4 of them NGOs, 1 NP)**
- **Budget:**
 - 5.4 m € (75% EU grant, 25% partners and co-financers)
 - Co-financers: RSPB, Swarovski Optics, Cemex
- **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**
- **Concise approach**



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Project goals:

**Prevent the extinction of the
Pomeranian population**

**Improve and increase habitat
in Biebrza Valley**



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The Aquatic Warbler LIFE Project is a project of:

The Polish Society for the Protection of Birds
(OTOP - BirdLife Poland)



Partners:



The Royal Society for
the Protection of Birds
(RSPB, BirdLife Partner in the UK)



Western Pomeranian
Nature Society (ZTP)



Förderverein Naturschutz
im Peenetal e.v. (FVP)



Polish Society for the
Protection of Birds (PTOP)



Biebrza National
Park (BPN)

Main Sponsor:



The EU LIFE Nature Fund



Additional Sponsors:



CEMEX Polska



Swarovski Optik



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The LIFE Project sites:



A. Project sites in Pomerania:

1. Karsiborska Kepa
2. Zajecze Legi
3. Wolin National Park
4. Rozwarowo mires
5. Krajnik
6. Lake Miedwie
7. Lower Peene Valley/Germany

B. Project sites in the Biebrza Valley:

1. Biebrza National Park
2. Biebrza National Park Buffer Zone



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Swina Delta

(Wolin NP, Karsiborska Kępa OTOP reserve, Zajęcze Łęgi)



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Bagna Rozwarowskie



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**Krajnik
near Gryfino at
the lower Odra**

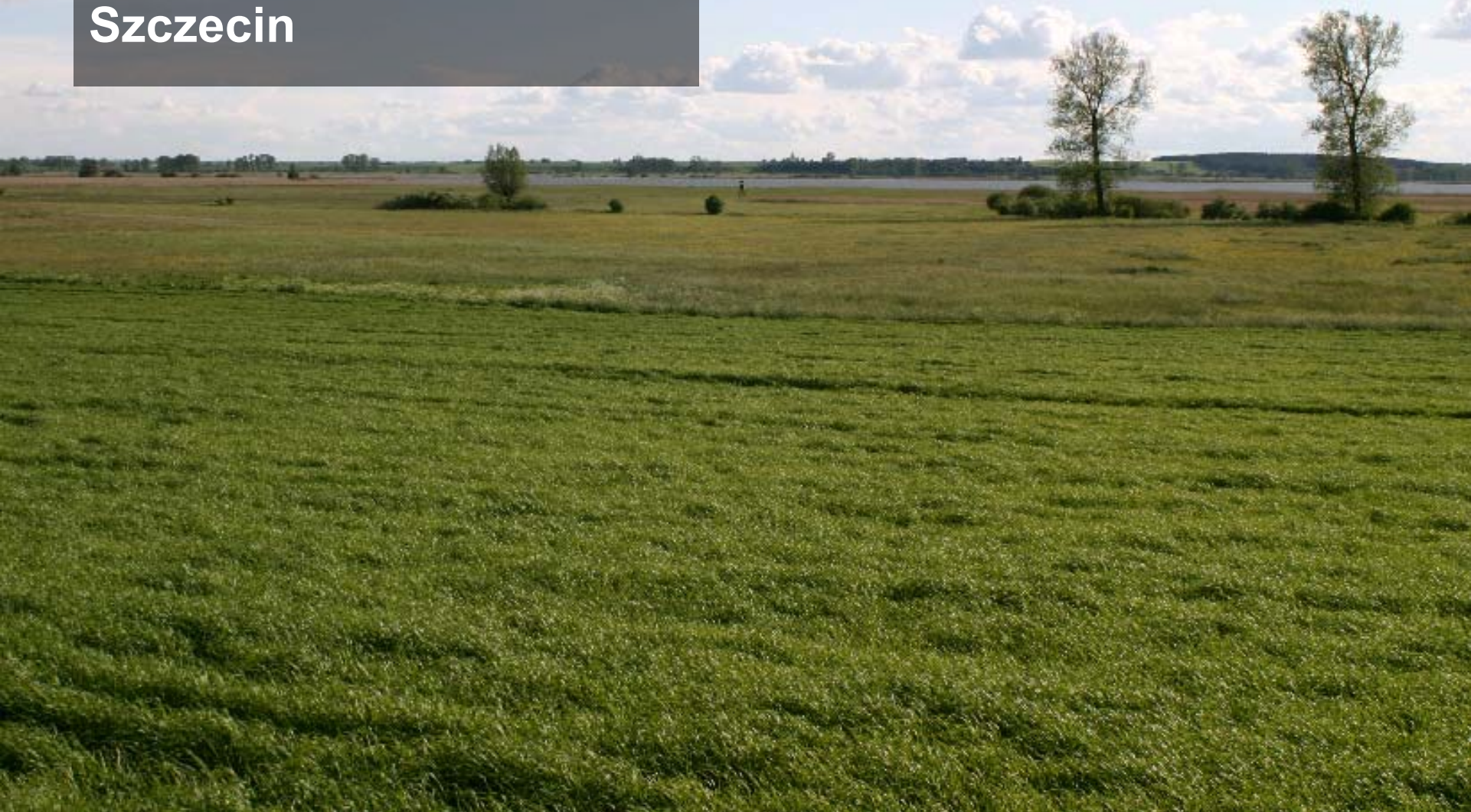


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Lake Miedwie near Szczecin



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**Lower Peene Valley /
Germany**



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Biebrza National Park

- Legend:**
- Buildings
 - Forests
 - Water
 - Roads
 - BNP boundary
 - Project site boundaries in BNP buffer zone
 - Aquatic Warblers



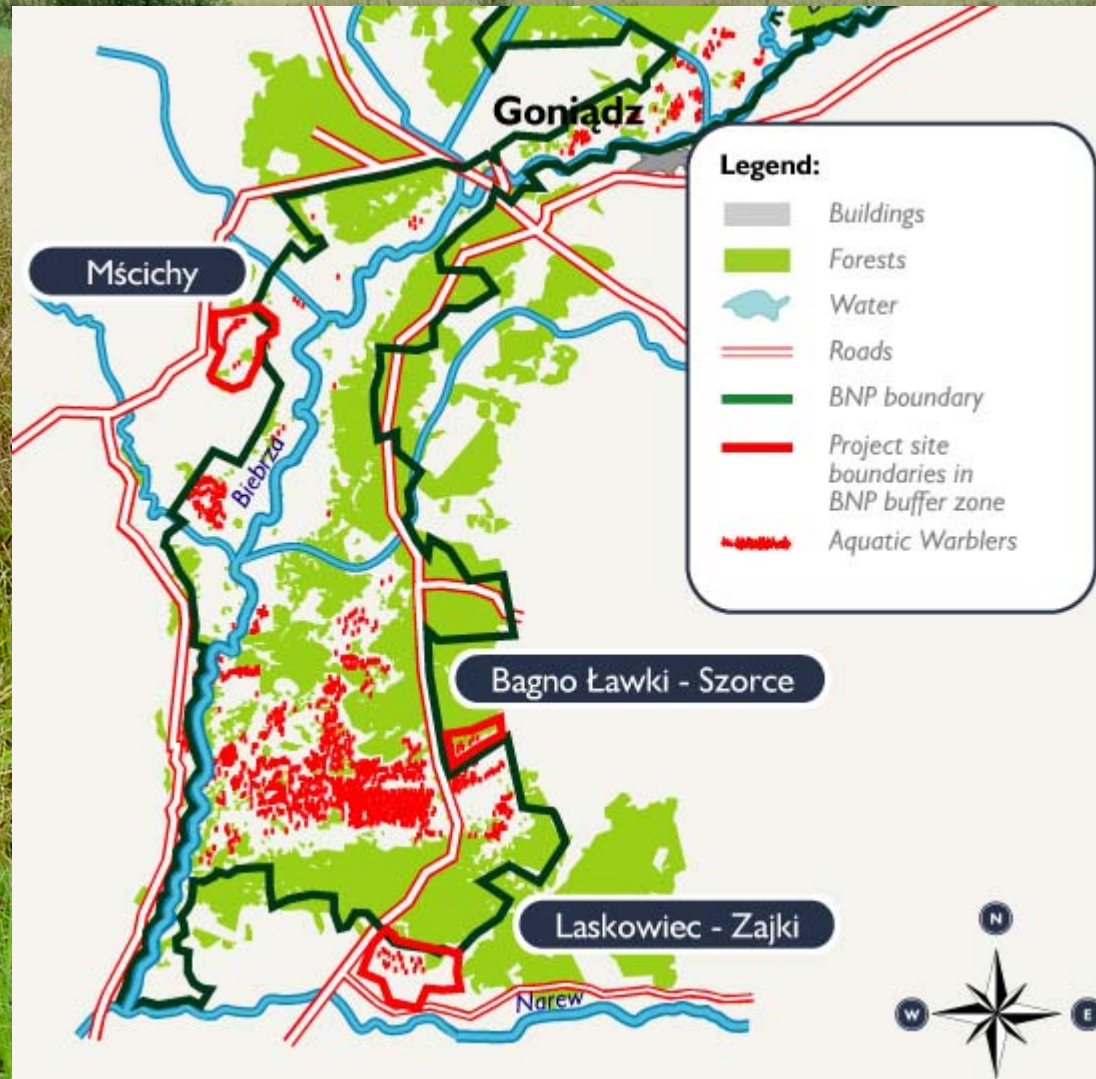
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Biebrza NP Buffer Zone

Laskowiec-Zajki



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Biebrza NP Buffer Zone

Mścichy



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Biebrza NP Buffer Zone

Lawki-Szorce



Jak pomagamy wodniczce przetrwać
“Conserving Aquatic Warbler” an EU LIFE Nature project
in Poland and Germany. Coordinator project Utop BirdLife Poland





Key project actions:

- **Management Planning and Action Plans**
- **Active management**
- **Education and networking**
- **Monitoring**
- **Development of sustainable long-term management solutions**



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Preparation of management plans for all project sites (42.000 ha)

National Species Action Plan for Poland



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Measures to improve hydrological conditions



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Measures to improve hydrological conditions



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Bush and tree removal (620 ha)



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Hand mowing where necessary as first-time measure (up to 40 ha)



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Mechanical mowing (2.100 ha)



“Conserving Aquatic Warbler” and “Conserving Great Crested Newt” are EU LIFE Nature projects in Poland and Germany, cofinanced by the Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Forestry of Poland.





**Thanks to new machinery > 1,000 ha
mown in the Biebrza NP in 2007/08**



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Extensive grazing (360 ha)



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Building of tourist infrastructure



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Education events for local people and tourists



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Promotion of AW conservation through media and networking



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A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small, grey, cylindrical container over a water sampling station. The station is a grey plastic bucket with a circular opening in the center, partially submerged in water. The surrounding area is a wetland with tall, green grasses and some brown, dried grasses. A bamboo pole is visible on the right side of the frame. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the hand and the container.

**Concise monitoring of the
results of management
actions:**

Hydrology



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Vegetation



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Food base / invertebrates



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Additional studies:

- **best habitat models**
- **Observation of colour-ringed birds in Pomerania**



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wsł Klimaszewnica

Setting up new reserves by purchasing land where needed (up to 900 ha, 500 ha purchased to date)



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**Development of alternative sustainable long-term
management solutions :**

Alternative use of biomass



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Alternative use of biomass



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Lobbying for the legalisation of controlled burning for management purposes



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New agri-environmental programmes
(starting from 2009)

Amongst them a targeted packages for Aquatic Warblers and fen mire habitats

POSZUKIWANY

mieszkaniec łąk i pastwisk



Fot. Grzegorz Leśniewski

RYCYK (LIMOSA LIMOSA)
1200 – 1370 PLN/HA
NAGRODY



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The LIFE Project ends in 2011. What comes after?

- LIFE+ Project „AW + biomass“ with Cemex in Eastern Poland
- Sustained management with the support of AES
- Implement Management Plans
- Run and improve new reserves
- Restore potential sites in Pomerania



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Planning for follow up projects



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**See you all again
in May 2010
for our final
project conference
in the Biebrza Marshes!**



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