



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD

Restoration of grassland habitats

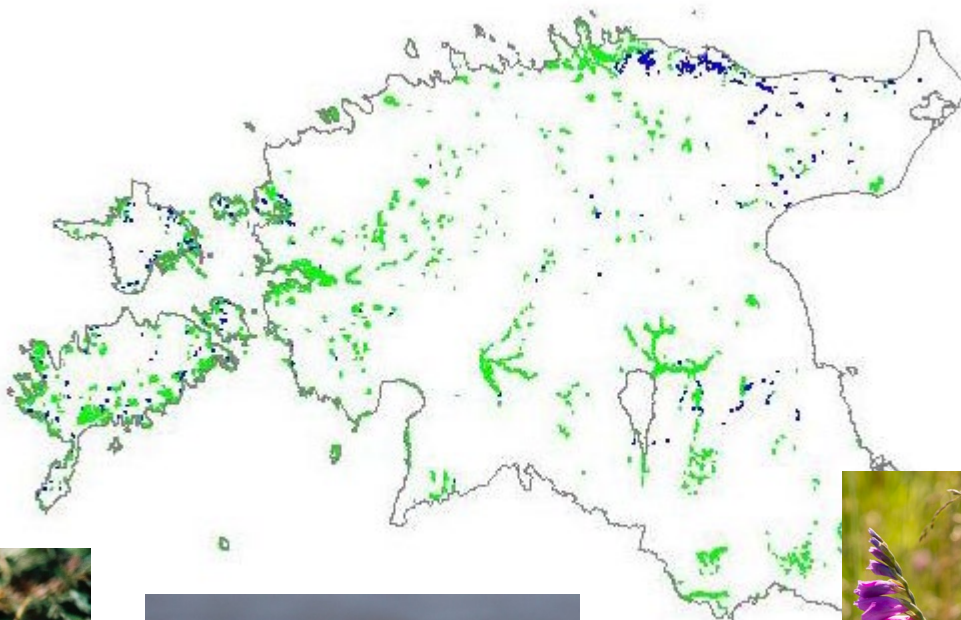
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advisor



Loss of meadows in Estonia, Kukk and Kull 1997



Seminatural grasslands



Case study – restoration of grasslands

Matsalu nature reserve 1990ies, the indicators of needs to do something:

- Decline of the population of coastal waders
- disappearance of natterjack *Bufo calamita*
- Degradation of specific vegetation and overgrowth with reeds and bushes,
- Changes in landscapes (fragmentation)
- Urbanisation – people are important for grassland ecosystems



Photos: K.Lotman

Case study – management and restoration of grasslands

Management plan for Matsalu nature reserve 1994 (first in Estonia)

Funding: PHARE, Ramsar small grant, SIDA Väinameri Project, later in EU - LIFE00

NAT/EE/007083, ERDF, etc

Local involvement – farmers, municipalities, schools,

Voluntary camps with interested NGOs (ELF, PKÜ)

Photos: O. Mijkelmaa



Case study – restoration of grasslands

International cooperation – experts –
WWF Sweden, WWF Finland,
Europarc Federation,
Amphiconsult (Denmark)

Political decision on parliamentary
level – first allocation from national
budget for Matsalu grassland
management 1996,

National scheme for protected areas
in 2000, EU CAP agri-environment
support for grassland management
after accession and continued
national budget for restoration



Case study – restoration of grasslands

Awareness rising about grasslands importance

Machinery - tractors and mowers, animal transportation truck etc

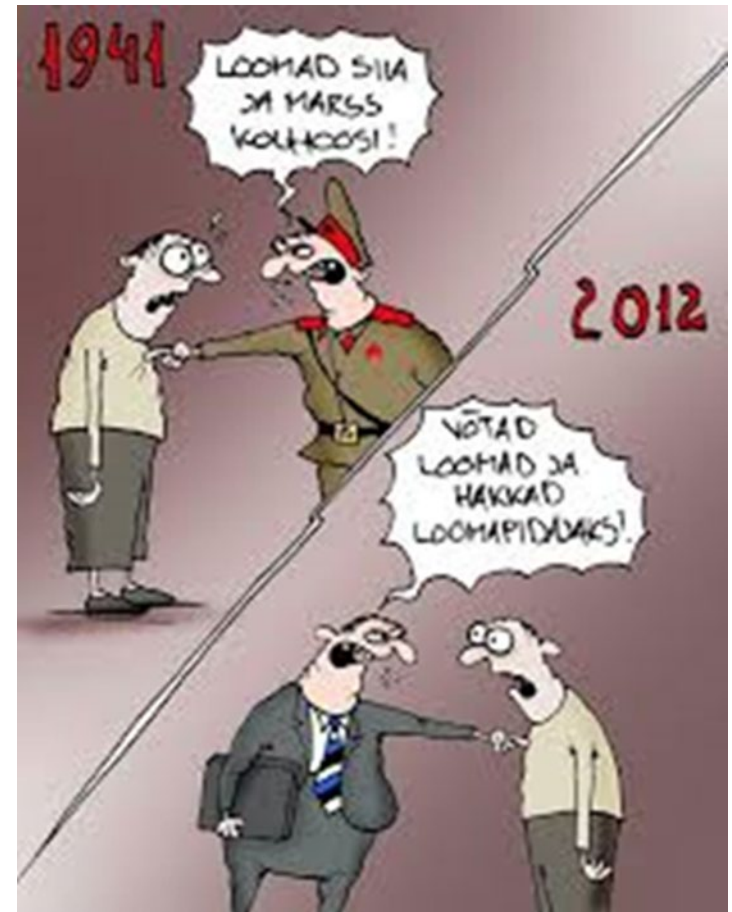
Restoration activities: bush and reed cutting, burning...

Animals: **cattle, sheep**, horses

Fences

Maintain old trails

Postimees 2012, Nemvalts



Needs in Future

38 000 ha grasslands in use, but for future we need in Estonia 60 000 ha (Matsalu 9000 ha)

- to restore more in Estonia
- sustainable subsidies for meadow management from CAP
- to find additional areas for meadow species – electricity powerlines, road borders, used quarries,
- seed collection and sowing

Future concerns

- Influence of Climate Change
- New technical solutions
- Hydrological regime to keep water longer on wet meadows
- Predator control
- Floods protection by meadow management

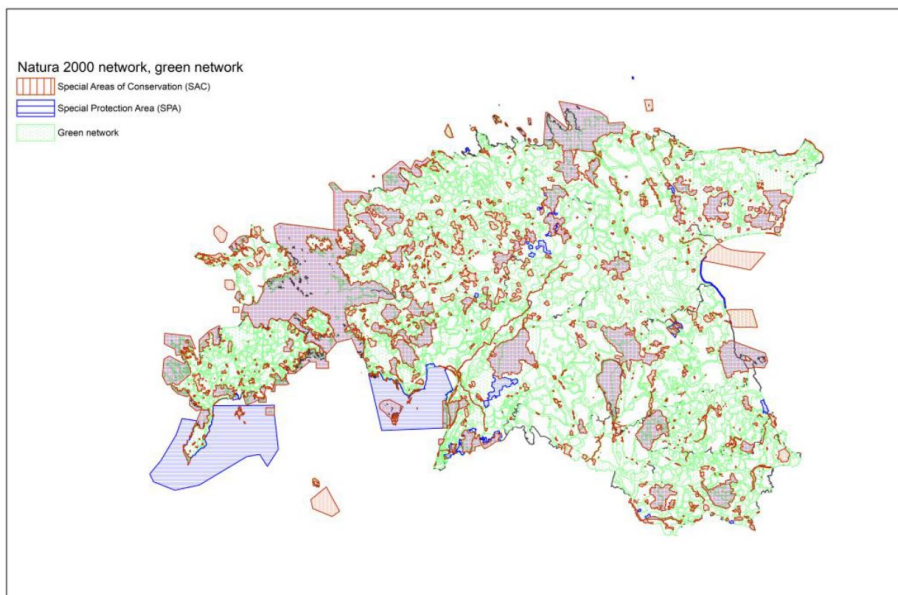
Lessons learned:

Restoration activities depend on degradation level

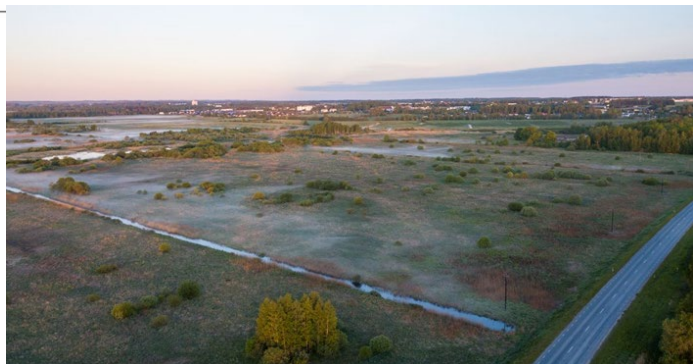
Restoration last often longer than expected



Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for Estonia 2021-2027



- Marine and coastal habitats 6500 ha
- Heathlands and shrub 900 ha
- Bogs, mires and fens 10 000 ha
- **Grassland restoration 10 000 ha (till 50 000 ha)**
- Agroecosystems (renaturalisation of polder)
- Woodlands and Forests 8000 ha
- Lakes and carst lakes 8 objects
- Dunes 350 ha





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Thank you!

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