

28: Sõmeri

28.1 Change of the site by project activities:

During the project planning period the management of Sõmeri coastal lagoon habitat complex had just started and the first hectares of coastal meadows had been taken out from the extensive reed bed. Local farmer was contracted as a manager, who started breeding beef cattle. During the project duration the cattle has increased from no animals to a herd of 50 cattle, whereas the LIFE BaltCoast contribution to the site was the purchase of 11 cattle. In addition the site has been cleared from the reed and junipers. Altogether 15,5 ha of coastal meadow have been opened by restoration and in the present about 41,2 ha of coastal meadow are under management.

In 2010 a coastal lagoon overgrown with reed was purified, grazing the lagoon continued the intervention to give better results.

Trampling caused by grazing in combination with removal of reed and junipers have restored natural depressions in the meadow.

The bird fauna of the site has improved significantly. Even if no rare birds have re-colonised the site yet, the typical coastal waders have colonised the site well and are breeding successfully on the site.

28.2 Remaining challenges and actions:

- Information board and bird observation platform will be set up
- Reed beds and juniper bushes will be cut
- Management plan will be approved
- Improvement in management

28.3 Public perception:

Local people are involved to the management of the site and know the management demands. Still some landowners are not in favour of the protected area and need to be convinced to expand the management to a larger area.

In addition to the involvement of local community the project has also raised wider awareness on coastal meadow management with organizing work camps in cooperation with Estonian Fund for Nature. The participants of the camps come all over Estonia, during a weekend they work for the site and hear why the area has to be protected and what kind of management is



Figure 1: Sõmeri meadows in 2008



Figure 2: Sõmeri meadow in 2010



Figure 3: 11 cattle have been bought by LIFE BaltCoast project



Figure 4 Work camp in Sõmeri in 2010

needed for the protection values. In Sõmeri project site there has been 1 such work camp where junipers were removed from the coastal meadow.