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**Project sites fact sheet**

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**DE-16 : Oehe-Schleimünde**

SPA: 1423-491; pSCI : 1423-392

Protection status: NSG-Vogelfreistätte "Oehe-Schleimünde" VO: 14.7.1987Habitats:

1150 Lagoon 42%

1330 Atlantic salt meadow 20%

2130 Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation, grey dunes 1%

Animals:

Recurvirostra avosetta 5 pairs

Sterna paradisaea 2 pairs

Sterna albifrons 2 pairs

Site description:

The nature reserve has a total size of 362 ha including water areas, land area of about 122 ha. The site is an example for the dynamic development of a barrier beach system. Material has been eroded from shores and cliffs north of Oehe and deposited in the mouth of the fjord Schlei. Spits (Nehrungen) and islands developed over the centuries since glacial times. Human influences stopped this process by fixing and constantly dredging a shipping channel since 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1970<sup>th</sup> the original mouth was fully silt up and the islands became peninsulas.

The current mouth is strongly fixed and built up.

The peninsula Oehe-Schleimünde has been grazed since long time. Grazing has been stopped 1973 to safeguard the bird population. Only later the contradictory consequences of this decision regarding the avifauna became obvious.

Current situation and actions:

Characteristic birds as *Larus canus*, *Sterna hirundo*, *Sterna paradisaea* and *Sterna albifrons* has seen a strong decline. Reasons may be quite high vegetation, as *Alauda arvensis* and *Anthus pratensis* have benefited in higher numbers.

The overgrowth of the dune and gravel vegetation is not appropriate for the birds envisaged for this site.

Grazing would be a solution of reducing the height and density of grass and litter. At the project beginning there are not facilities for an appropriate grazing scheme. All necessary instalments as proper fence, wind shelter, feeding equipment and water supply have to be installed.

Allowance and permits are reached with the public and private owners of the site. Set up of fence could start and finally 37 animals were complete by late October 2006. They stayed during winter and only 17 remained since March for 2007 summer grazing season. This scheme of higher number of cattle in winter and lower number of cattle in summer season will continue. Number of cattle depends on grass providing enough fodder without additional feeding and the need of grazing for nature conservation. The balance is carefully observed and steered accordingly.

The invasive plant *Rosa rugosa* is in some spots a growing problem, but in most cases still manageable by grazing.

Information about the nature value and project will be done in cooperation with with local reserve manager (Verein Jordsand) for tourists (north end) and for skippers at the Lotsenhaus-harbor (south end).

Now the cattle have to do their job and the success will be proven by bird recovery and the vegetation structure monitoring.

The issue of predation is continued to find a sufficient and comprehensive solution.

Further activities are under preparation and coordinated with the district administration and local reserve manager Mr. Burkhardt (Verein Jordsand).