






Transition and skills development in the Baltic Sea Region

Technical Regional Forum

18-19 March 2026, Finland

Housekeeping Rules

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-  • **Your privacy matters:** If you do not want to appear in promotional materials and if you have not yet indicated this during registration, please visit the registration desk

Agenda

10:00 – 10:30	Opening and welcome
10:30 – 11:15	Setting the scene: How transition can unlock systemic change via targeted skills development
11:15 – 12:30	Panel: Financing mechanisms for transition in Baltic Sea Region
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break
13:30 – 14:45	Different peatland transformation pathways – Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Poland
14:45 – 15:15	Coffee break
15:15 – 16:40	Workshop on key aspects of transitions
16:40 – 17:00	Day 1 closing and outlook on Day 2
17:00 – 18:00	Informal dinner and networking





Opening and welcome

10:10 – 10:30

Speakers



Eva Nussmüller

DG REGIO,
European Commission



Johanna Osenius

Ministry of
Economic Affairs
and Employment



Ministry of Economic Affairs
and Employment of Finland



European
Commission



How transition can unlock systemic change via targeted skills development

10:30 – 11:15

Speakers



Prof. Eva Sørensen
Department of
Social Sciences and
Business, Roskilde
University



Padraig Boland
Laois & Offaly ETB

CURBING POLITICAL POLARIZATION THROUGH COLLABORATIVE POLICY MAKING: THE DANISH TRIPARTITE NEGOTIATIONS

Eva Sørensen

Professor in Public Administration and Democracy

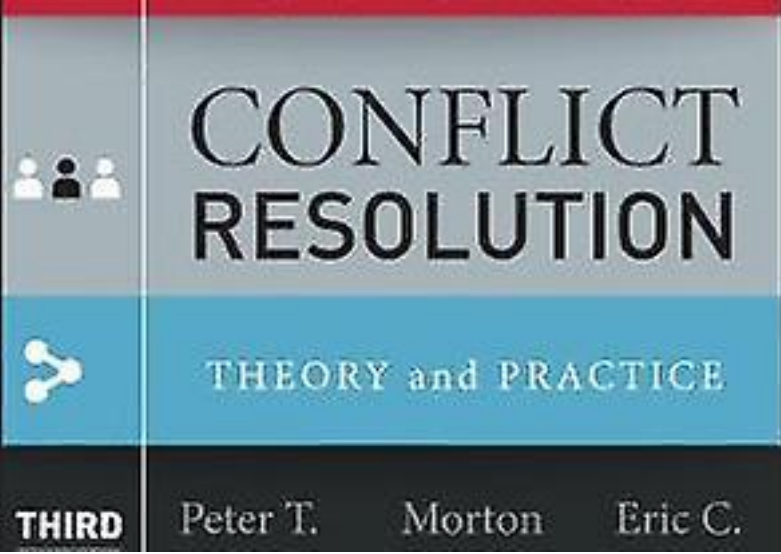
Roskilde University





- The climate and nature crisis cause rising levels of political polarization between environmentalists and farmers
- A case in point is Denmark that is intensively farmed with high numbers of livestock
- Agriculture is responsible for:
 - ✓ 33% of Denmark's green house gas emissions
 - ✓ Excessive nitrogen leaching into coastal waters, fjords and the ground water
 - ✓ Declining biodiversity

THE TROUBLE WE ARE IN



Political Negotiation

A Handbook

EDITED BY
Jane Mansbridge and
Cathie Jo Martin



PATTERNS OF DEMOCRACY

Government Forms and Performance
in Thirty-Six Countries
SECOND EDITION

AREND LIJPHART

- Several theories suggest that collaboration can mediate tensions between actors with different interests, beliefs and goals
- The promise of collaboration finds support in recent events in Denmark

THE PROMISE OF COLLABORATIVE POLICY MAKING



A FOUR-STEP COLLABORATIVE POLICY MAKING AND POLICY PROCESS

- In June 2024, after 6 months of intense negotiations, the Tripartite presented an agreement
- It proposes **the largest land use reform in Danish history** that will curb nitrogen leaching and CO2 emission and enhance biodiversity
 - ✓ A moderate CO₂ tax
 - ✓ Forestation of 20% of farmland
 - ✓ Flooding of low-lying soils areas
 - ✓ Wilding of coastal areas
 - ✓ **Funding to compensate farmers** who take out land and change their production methods and crops



FIRST STEP



- Despite its majority position the government wanted to **build a broad parliamentary coalition** behind the agreement to ensure long-term policy endurance
- Due to bad conditions in Danish coastal waters, parties in parliament wanted **further restriction on nitrogen leaching**
- **The compromise** was to further reduce the nitrogen leaching with 20 %, while granting farmers further financial support
- The reform was passed in November 2024 with **support from four opposition parties**

SECOND STEP



- In December 2025, all 23 local Tripartite fora managed to produce a regional land conversion plan
- All confirmed that they would produce the required reductions on nitrogen leaching, but two fora did not fully succeed in identifying sufficient areas to do so

THIRD STEP



- More than 1000 conversion projects are initiated
- Main challenges are
 - ✓ the 2027 and 2030 deadlines for implementing the projects
 - ✓ Shortage of staff to work on the projects

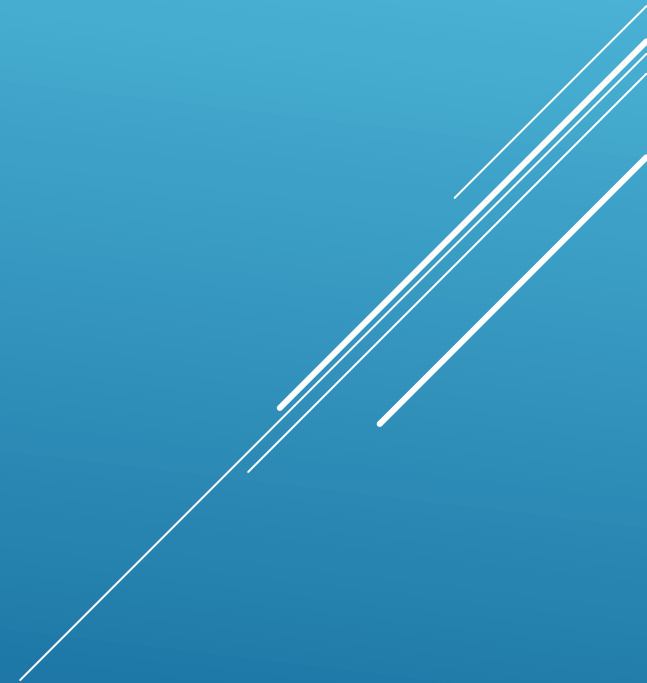
FOURTH STEP



- These events suggest that **advancing the collaborative character of representative democracy** is a promising strategy for curbing political polarization
- Moreover, involving the different sides in a conflict can pave the way **for effective and legitimate political decision making**

TOWARDS A COLLABORATIVE REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

*Thanks for
listening*



Speakers



Prof. Eva Sørensen

Department of
Social Sciences and
Business, Roskilde
University



Padraig Boland

Laois & Offaly ETB



Ministry of Economic Affairs
and Employment of Finland



European
Commission



Financing mechanisms for transition in Baltic Sea regions

11:15 – 12:30

Speakers



**Matti
Maajärvi**

TAPIO Oy,
Finland



**Tilmann
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NABU Climate
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**Michael
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TAPIO 

**Nature credit
trading as a tool for
just transition**

JTP TRF in Helsinki

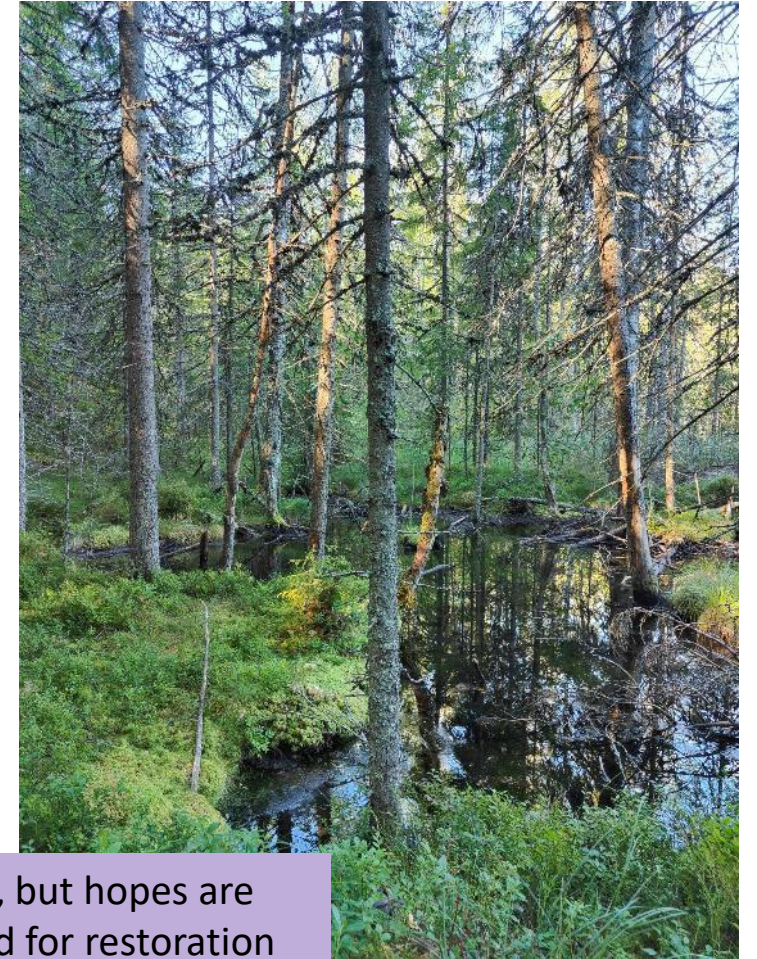
March 18th 2026

Matti Maajärvi, Development Manager, Tapio Palvelut Oy

www.tapio.fi

Nature credit markets

- Voluntary, market-based mechanism that creates economic incentives for nature conservation and restoration.
- The system is built on the idea that biodiversity has an economic value
- Landowners can generate nature credits through biodiversity improving actions, e.g. peatland restoration
- Buyers, such as companies, purchase these units to support their ecological responsibility or to compensate ecological harm
- The state's role is to ensure reliable rules, verification, registration, and long-term permanence of the units



Source: ym.fi

Market has not really started yet in Finland, but hopes are high that private funding could be mobilized for restoration and nature conservation via nature credit markets

Photo © Matti Maajärvi.

How to produce nature credits for trading



Protection

- Establishing nature conservation area
- Nature values improve via natural dynamics over time



Restoration

- Allows an area to change towards its original state
- Nature values start to improve due to restoration operations, for example restoring peatland water balance



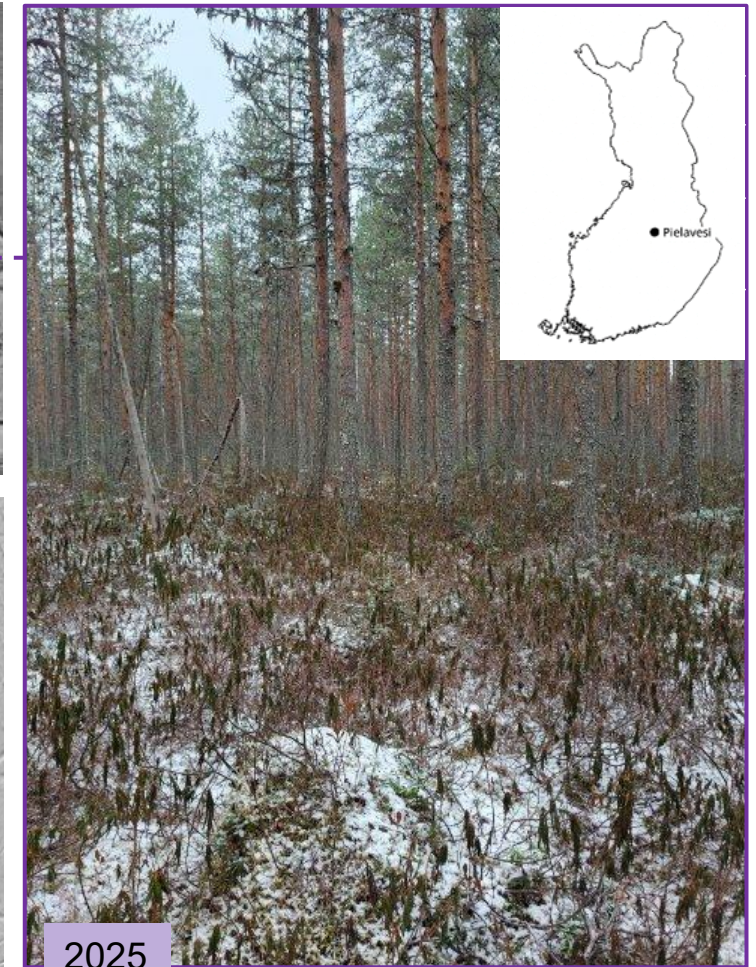
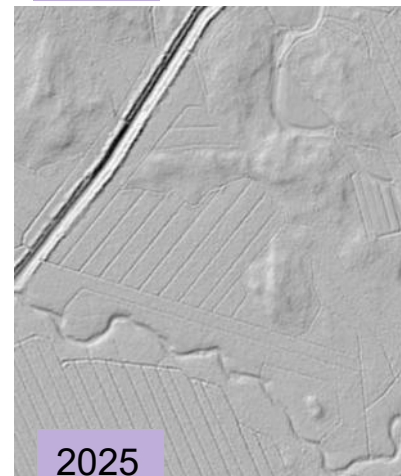
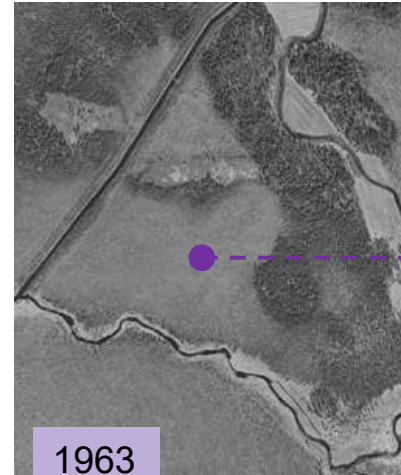
Habitat management

- Active habitat or species management aiming to improve biodiversity values
- Recurring management operations might be needed

Nature values must be additional, measurable, verifiable and permanent

Case example from Pielavesi, Finland

- Pilot project started in the beginning of 2026. It tests the whole operational chain of producing, verifying and trading nature credits.
- An originally open pine mire, drained for forestry use, is restored by blocking drainage and removing majority of trees.
- Involved parties
 - Landowner (Finsilva Oyj) sells
 - Customer (S-ryhmä) buys
 - Consultant (Tapio) plans
 - Local contractors implement
 - Environmental authorities verify
 - Project coordinators (Tapio & LähiTapiola) facilitate



Historical aerial photos and oblique hill-shading image © MML. Photo © Matti Maajärvi.

Nature credit markets - one tool for transition

- **Economic and social transition**
 - Alternative source of income for land-owners
 - Work opportunities for local contractors and consultants
 - Improved environmental conditions benefit local communities and nature-related businesses
- **Skill transition**
 - Restoration work (planning and implementation) requires skill development
 - Existing capabilities and processes of forestry, agriculture and peat production operators can often offer a good base
- **Alignment with EU nature restoration regulation & national nature targets**
 - Vast areas of degraded nature types in Finland needs to be restored
 - Strong regulatory drivers exist – new financing methods, especially private sector ones, are needed



Photo © Matti Maajärvi.

Thank you for your attention!

TAPIO - METSÄNTUNTIJA

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Speakers



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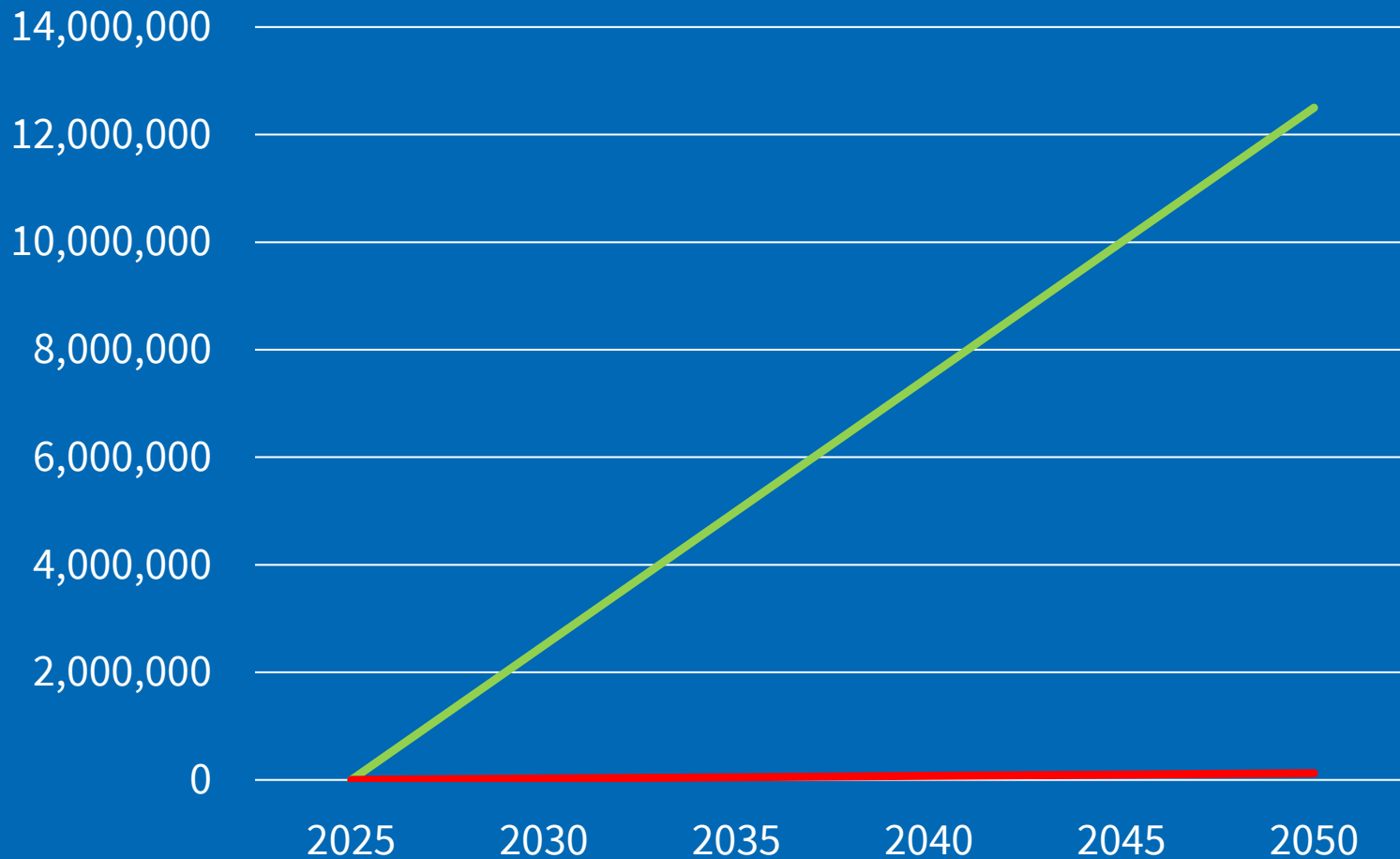


Financing mechanisms for **upscaling peatland restoration** in the Baltic Sea Region

Dr. Tilmann Disselhoff, Helsinki 18th March 2026

What is at stake?

EU rewetting target vs. reality

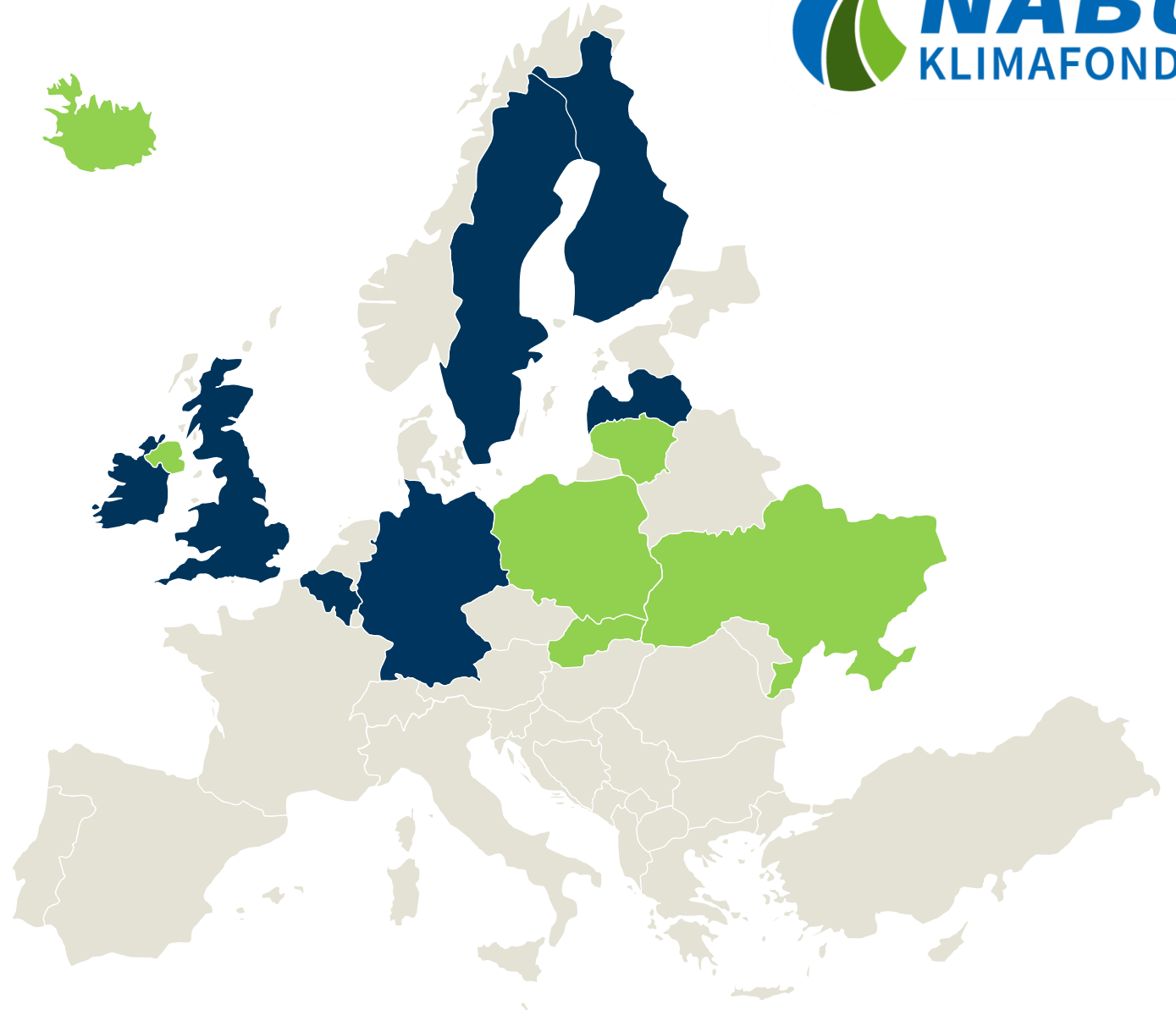


Our impact



NABU Climate Fund partner countries

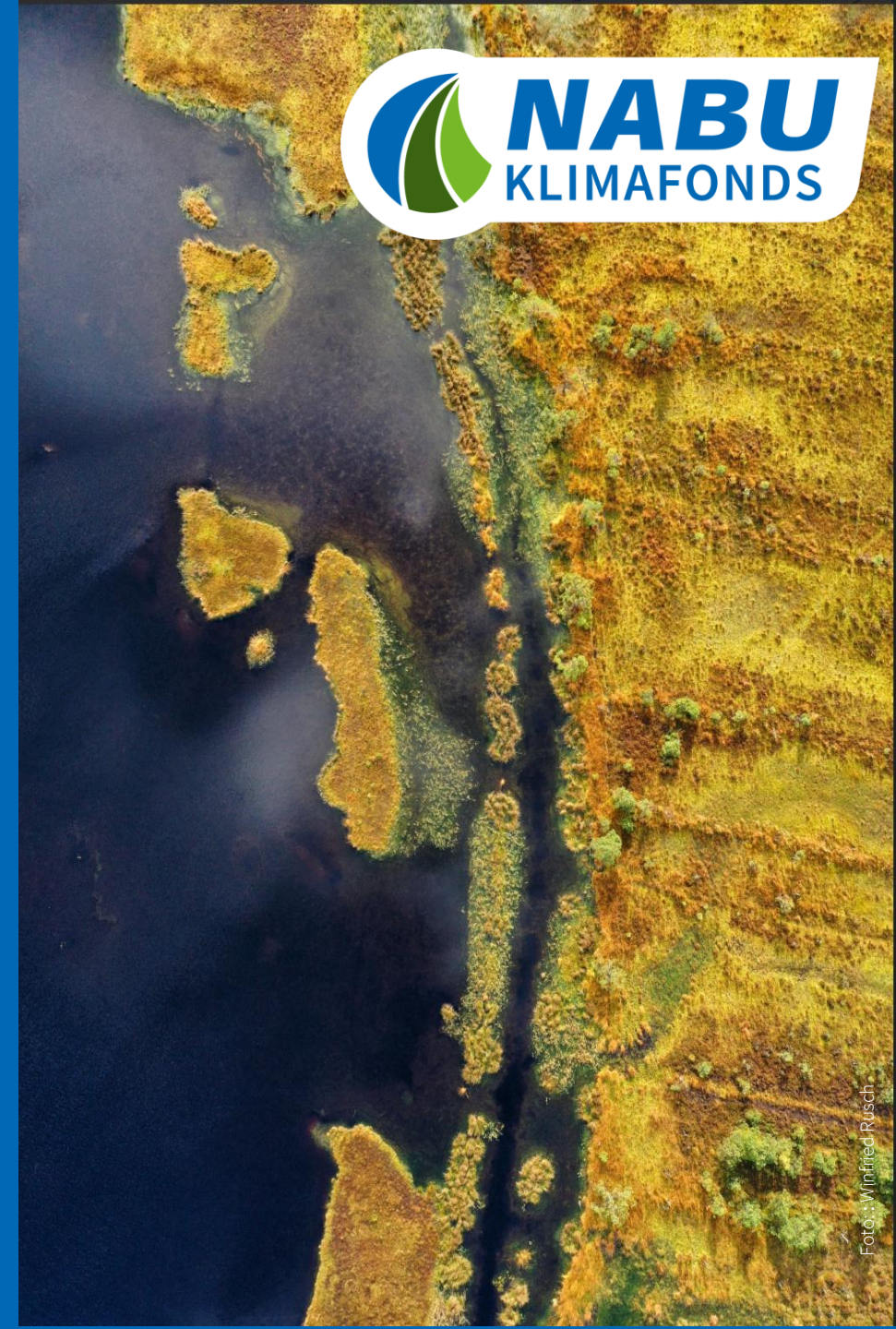
- ✓ Ongoing projects in Ireland, England, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Finland and Latvia.
- ✓ Project preparation in Iceland, Poland, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Ukraine.
- ✓ ~5,000 ha restored so far
- ✓ up to 1 mio t CO₂eq avoided emissions until 2050.



Big picture

How we upscale peatland rewetting

- ⚠- Funding is available. The bottleneck is our inability to turn it into fast, large-scale restoration on the ground.
- ⚠- We need political courage to move from perfect plans to imperfect but impactful action.
- ⚠- We need to simplify rules, accept uncertainty, and prioritise hectares over paper.
- ⚠- Public-private partnerships are good, as they combine agility with mandate.



Speakers



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Financing mechanisms for transition in the Baltic Sea Region:

Barriers, incentives and economical consequences of rewetting Danish carbon soils

Michael Højholdt, Senior Specialist

MSc Agricultural Science

Master of Business Administration

SEGES Innovation

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18 / 03 / 2026

Helsinki



SEGES Innovation – part in the development of Danish agriculture

From co-ops to value-driven R&D and advisory services



What Are the Main Elements of the Agreements?

The agreements outline a fundamental reorganization of land use across Denmark, as well as a number of initiatives to protect the environment and reduce climate impact. Key elements include:

- **250,000 hectares of new forest** – equivalent to the size of Luxembourg
- **Conversion of 140,000 hectares of lowland farmland, which emits large amounts of CO₂ when cultivated, into natural areas such as wetlands and meadows**
- **Increased biodiversity**, including the creation of 21 new national parks, one peri-urban national park, and improvements to the marine environment in Lillebælt and Øresund
- **Enhanced water quality efforts**, with a focus on reducing hypoxia in Danish fjords and coastal waters
- **A CO₂ tax on livestock production** – Denmark will become the first country in the world to introduce such a tax
- **Future-oriented, competitive, and sustainable food production**, with increased investment in biosolutions, climate technologies, and plant-based foods
- **5.76 billion EURO for Denmark's Green Land Fund**, to finance green initiatives
- **23 local tripartite groups**, where municipalities, the state, and representatives from the Danish Agriculture & Food Council and the Danish Society for Nature Conservation work together to convert agricultural land into nature.

5.76 billion

EURO is what Denmark's Green Land Fund receives

250.000

hectares of new forest – equivalent to the size of
Luxembourg

The Agreement of Green Denmark is a historic agreement to ensure more nature, cleaner water, and a sustainable transition of agriculture in Denmark. The Ministry of Green Transition plays a key role in implementing and bringing this agreement to life.

Status on rewetting carbon soils (>6 % SOC) in Denmark

Goal:

- Rewetting 70.000 ha carbon soils by 2030
- 140.000 ha including border areas (mineral soils)
- (total app. 182.000 ha)

Status as of february '26 (started 2021):

- Pre-investigations granted 51.986 ha
- Construction granted 19.891 ha
- Finished projects 1.003 ha
- Total 72.880 ha
- *Pending* 67.120 ha

Arable land : 2.6 mio. ha / 4.3 mio. ha total
carbon soils : 182.000 ha

~ carbon soils constitute 7 % of arable land

Kulstof 2022 (lavbundskort)

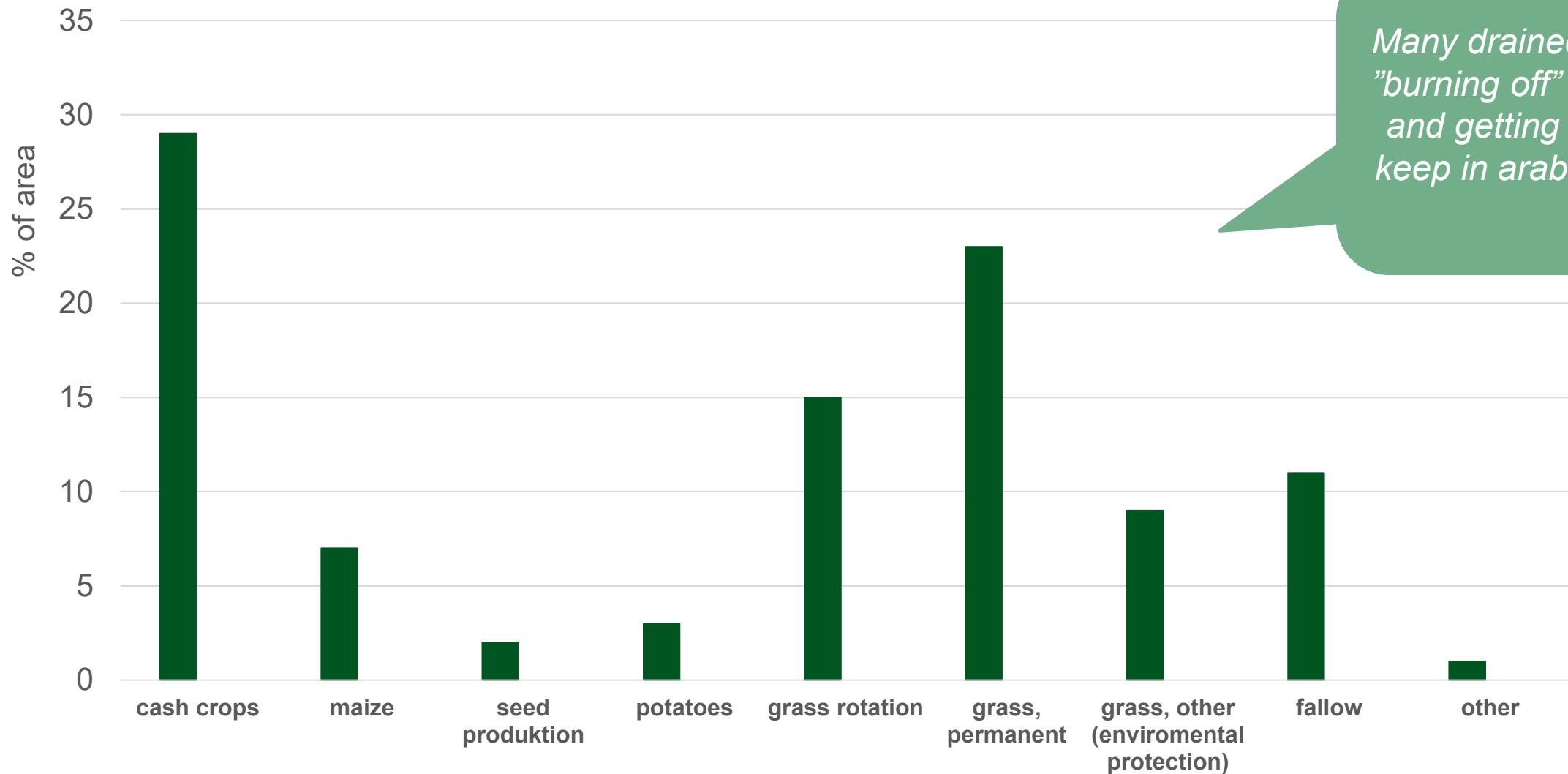
6 - 12 % tørv
Over 12 % tørv

SEGES
INNOVATION

ETRS89 ØST / Nord
935911.8, 6221900.8
WGS84 Brede / Længd
55° 56.6382' N, 15° 59.14

50 km

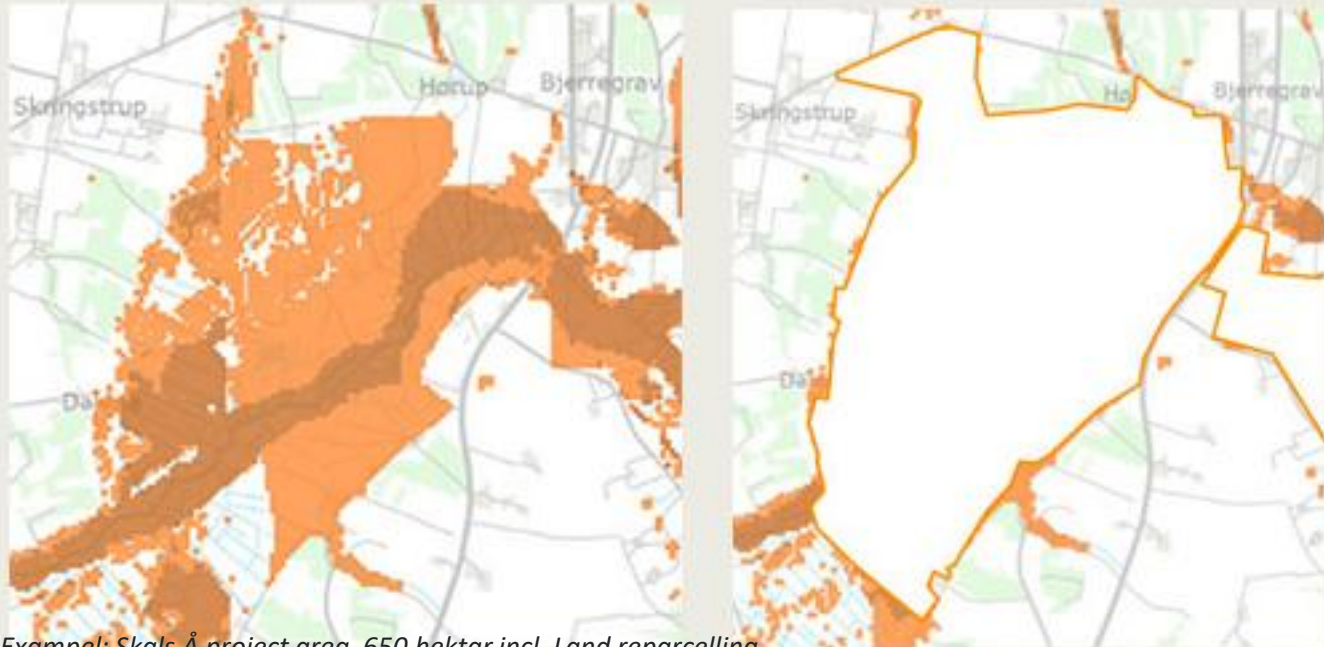
Land use on Danish carbon soils – more than hay!



Many drained soils are "burning off" pretty fast and getting harder to keep in arable rotation

Landowners – management focus on carbon soils

- Cattle farms
- Other livestock farms (pigs, poultry)
- Cash crop farms
- Part time farms & countryside living
- and those managed by the Nature Agency and Foundations

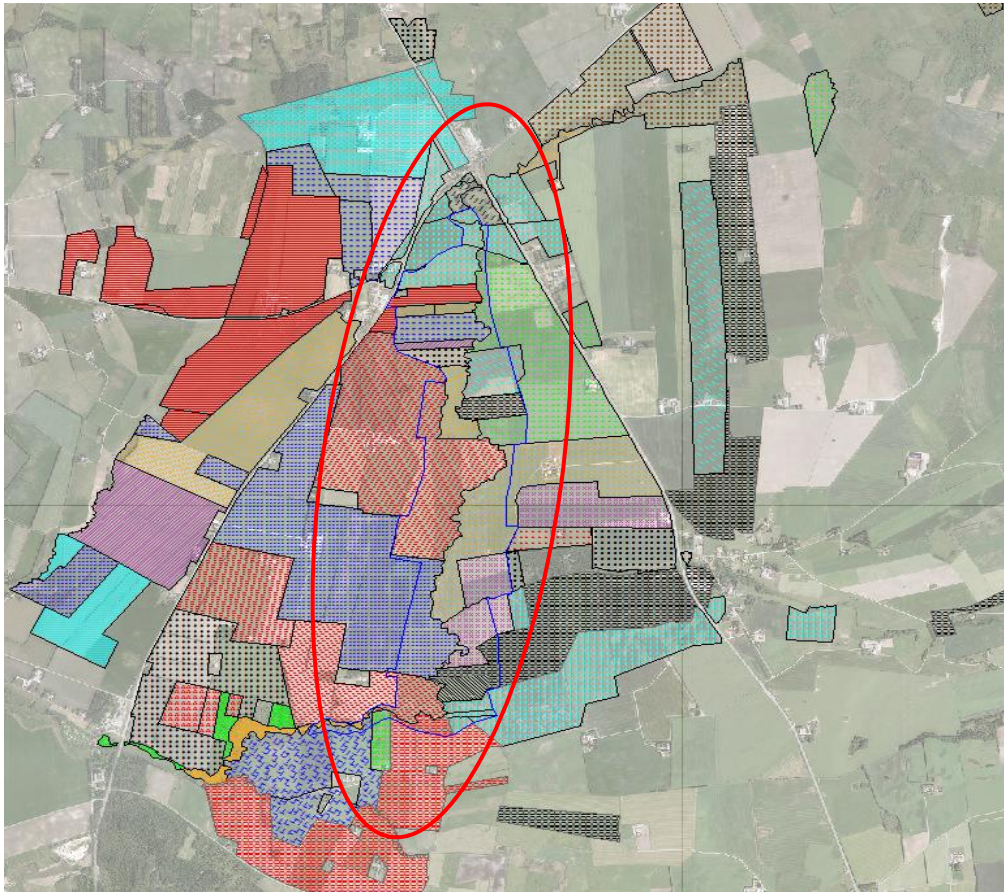


Land consolidation and dedicated advisors – key drivers & democratic proces

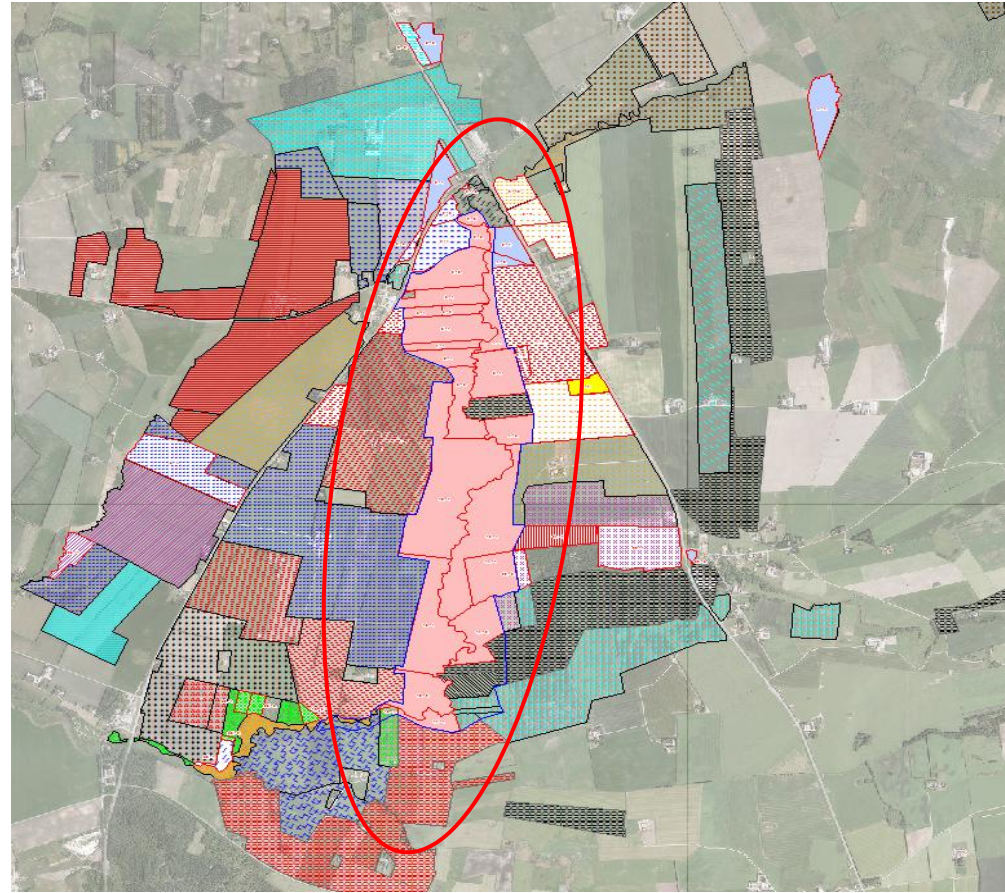


- Financed – no fees paid by landowners, landowners only pay for extra land
- The land is valued by the landowners and an independent commission
- Land consolidation means more efficient production & less transport
- Dedicated advisors - "Catchment officers" - rewetting and nutrient catchments topics- supported by SEGES Innovation

Before land consolidation



After land consolidation



- The state initially acquires the land if there are no buyers.
- Subsequently, the state sells the land to the highest bidder.

Land use after rewetting

- Grazing
- Biomass
- Clearing of passable areas for subsidies
- Rewetting causes loss of earnings and flexibility > land value decreases



Photo: Gunnar Mikkelsen



Landbrugsavisen 26. dec. 2024

Grazing water buffaloes means my tractor will not get stuck mowing the grass | LandbrugsAvisen

Compensation for loss of value

- Market value of land

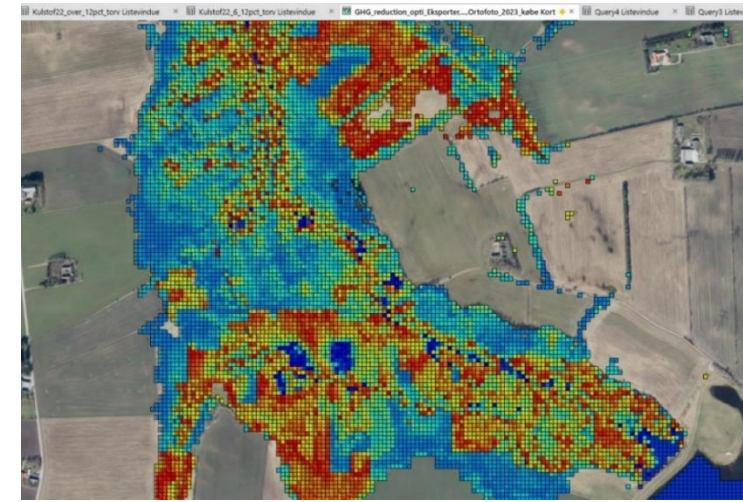
*the market value of the land defined by potential value of crops; value of manure-nutrient balance requirements, subsidies, hunting, alternative use, owning land**

- Derivative effects on production and farm value (e.g., husbandry production, excess buildings, machinery costs)






* Olsen, J. V. (2023). [Opgørelse af dyrknings- og jordværdi for lavbundslande](#). Institut for Fødevarer- og Ressourceøkonomi, Københavns Universitet. IFRO Udredning Nr. 2023/02

Emission and Danish CO₂-e tax, carbon soils

- Tax starting 2028, only to be paid if landowner decline rewetting project proposal
- 5,3 € ton⁻¹ha⁻¹year⁻¹ > 20 € ton⁻¹ha⁻¹year⁻¹



CO ₂ -e ton pr. year	10	20	30	40
€ (DKK) per ton CO ₂ e	€/DKK per ha per year			
5,3 € (40 DKK)	53 € (400 DKK)	107 € (800 DKK)	160 € (1.200 DKK)	213 € (1.600 DKK)
20 € (125 DKK)	213 € (1.600 DKK)	427 € (3.200 DKK)	640 € (4.800 DKK)	853 € (6.400 DKK)

Landowner / farm characteristics	Cattle farms 	Other livestock 	Cash crop farms 	Part time farms & countryside living 	Nature Agency and Foundations 
Primary land use before rewetting	Feed: grass silage, maize silage, grazing, hay, Fallow, Slurry	Feed: Barley, maize, wheat, cash crops Fallow, Slurry	cash crops seed production high value (e.g. potatoes) Fallow	cash crops grazing, hay Fallow Fun & games	all the before mentioned
Land use after rewetting	Maybe partially grazing Biomass? Nature & Biodiversity				
Barriers	 loss of feed loss of grazing (critical for organic farms) manure-nutrient balance, fallow land swap? downscale production? farm value 	 loss of feed manure-nutrient balance fallow land swap? downscale production? farm value 	 Loss of production value (site specific production) fallow land swap? downscale production? farm value 	 loss of grazing and production value fallow farm value? loss of identity? 	-
Incentives	Value loss compensation / Land consolidation ‘doing the right thing’ - not paying tax				goal

Incentives for landowners

Financing mechanisms



- Danish rewetting – voluntary
- Incentives are dependent of landowner type

Most important

- Compensation to landowners (state finances) for land value and other losses
- Land consolidation between landowners
- “A Greener Denmark” – new ways to use agricultural land (climate and water protection driven)
- Taxes on climate gas emissions (state income)

Financing mechanisms for transition in the Baltic Sea Region:

Barriers, incentives and economical consequences of rewetting Danish carbon soils

Michael Højholdt, Senior Specialist

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Experiences with climate projects in peatlands

Presentation by Bernd Hofer

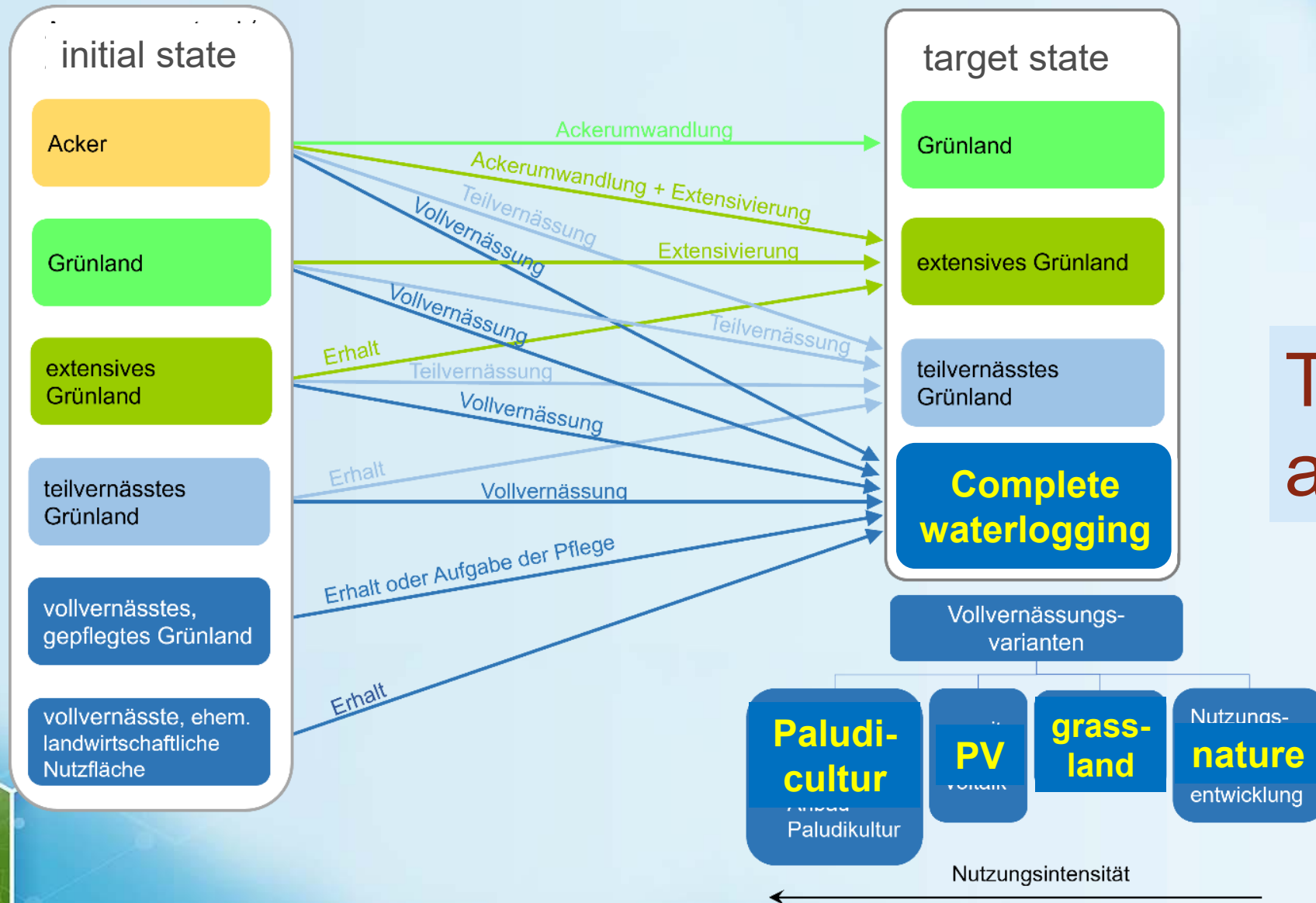
18. March 2026



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**What options are
on the table?**

Potential study of peatlands in Lower Saxony



The options are limited

Photovoltaic on re-wetted peatlands

In Lower Saxony, none of the numerous feasibility studies have been turned into reality. The foundation is too expensive and, for various reasons, PV on rewetted peatlands seems currently not economically viable.



Paludicultur on re-wetted peatlands

In Germany (Europe), various approaches to paludiculture (sphagnum farming, reeds, cattails) are currently in the pilot project phase. With ZukunftMoor, the first company has launched an attempt to operate commercially on 100ha with sphagnum moss.



Voluntary climate protection on waterlogged peatlands

Voluntary climate protection projects have so far been implemented as additional measures that were not assessed as tradable certificates.

MoorFutures® Zertifikat

● Sofort lieferbar / digitaler Versand

Die Ausgleichsagentur Schleswig-Holstein GmbH bescheinigt dem Käufer/ der Käuferin mit diesem Zertifikat, dass er/ sie in Höhe der erworbenen Tonnen einen freiwilligen Beitrag zur Wiedervernässung des Grotmoores (Kreis Segeberg in Schleswig-Holstein) und damit zur Treibhausgas-Emissionsminderung leistet. Die Wiedervernässung dient dem Klimaschutz sowie der Biodiversität und wird für einen Zeitraum von 50 Jahren zugesichert.





2

Examples

Project Flachsmeer – Germany (15ha)



**Financing
via offset
credits**



Project Malpils – Latvia (65ha)



Voluntary
financed by
REWE



Project Jakosuo – Finland (220ha)



**Voluntary
financed by
REWE**



Project Svenskemyr – Sweden (250ha)



**Voluntary
financed by
Volkswagen FS**



First "positive" GHG measurements

PLOT		DAILY FLUXES (mg CO ₂ /m ² /h)								mean flux (mg CO ₂ /m ² /h)	emission factor (t C /ha/year)
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII		
PLOT 1		152,4216	-79,7854	-383,3485	-22,8958	-65,6727	163,6588	44,1385	-87,9410	-34,93	-3,06
PLOT NO RING		120,4006	-172,4761	-	-	-	-	-111,1664	-245,0351	-102,07	-8,95
PLOT 2		-21,1115	150,8147	-91,3765	-38,0553	102,4767	20,8304	120,7855	-20,1252	28,03	2,46
PLOT 3		51,9470	53,6425	-784,0235	-125,3904	1,1320	360,5907	273,9523	-74,3893	-30,32	-2,66
PLOT 4		67,6880	-114,9811	-80,0101	-27,8903	-14,4728	297,1435	161,4538	-185,6300	12,91	1,13
PLOT 5		171,4823	-28,6576	-287,5664	10,4628	-7,0287	84,8605	-6,1142	-75,3143	-17,23	-1,51
PLOT 6		-14,4232	-70,5019	7,9293	-194,4125	-15,9265	63,0633	130,3600	14,7989	-9,89	-0,87





3

Conclusion

What's missing?

- A clear set of rules
- Practice-oriented “feasible” rules
- Guidelines for calculating the climate effect
- A “business model” that is attractive to landowners and
 - encourage them to initiate change
 - leads to upscaling
- Now, not in 5 years - otherwise landowners will establish other solutions



Thank you

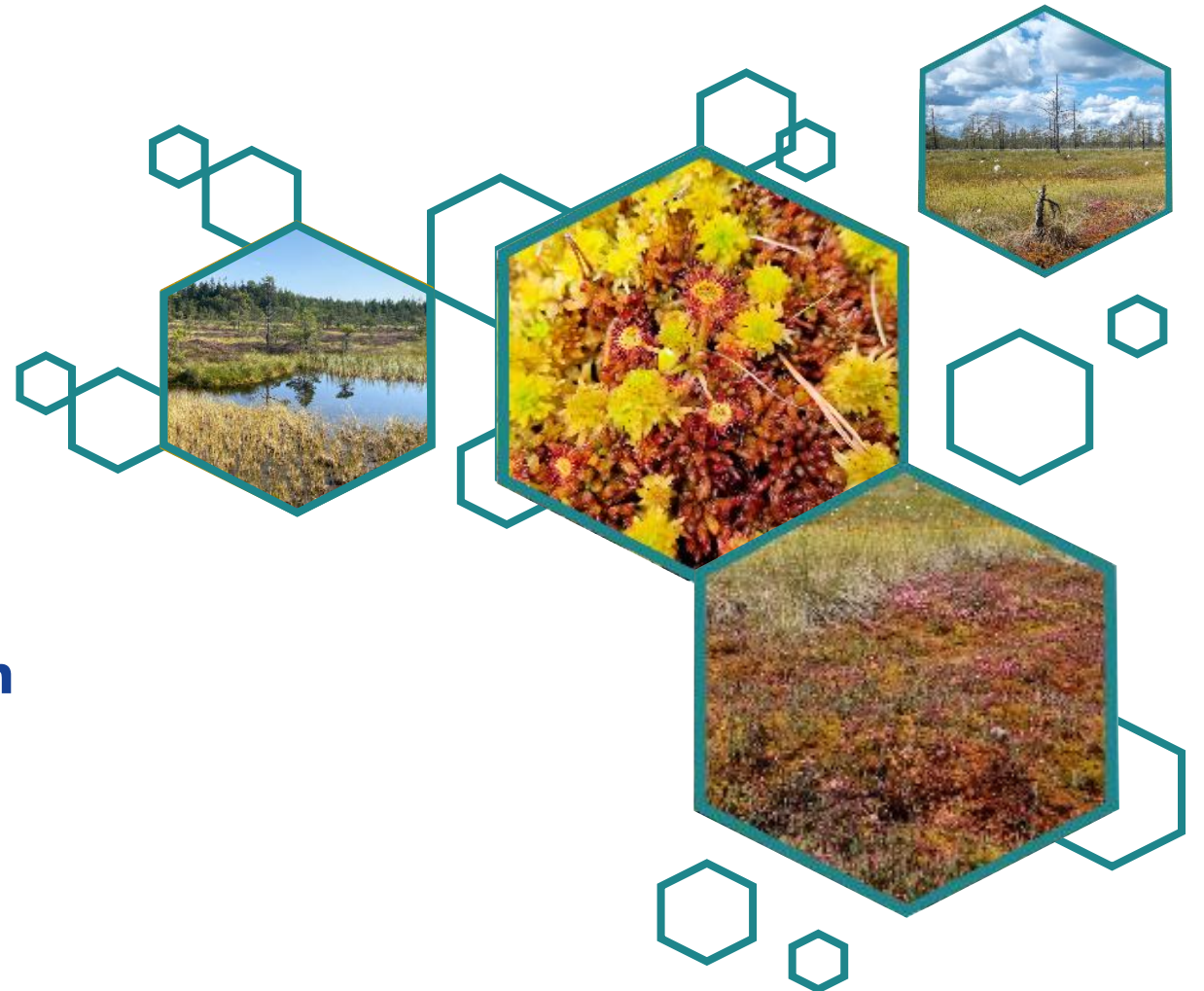
Presenter: Bernd Hofer

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Peatland Climate Foundation

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Financing peatlands/wetlands restoration



VIRGINIJA KALESINSKIENĖ

Ministry of Environment of the Republic of the Lithuania

Content

- ▶ Economic and financial mechanisms and incentives for wetland restoration
- ▶ Funding needs for restoring wetlands
- ▶ Practical examples of specific projects implemented in Lithuania



Key points about wetland restoration:

- ▶ Implementation of the 20th Government Program
- ▶ Implementation of the Nature Restoration Plan
- ▶ Achievement of climate goals
- ▶ Preservation and restoration of biodiversity
- ▶ Ensuring the quality of ecosystem services
- ▶ Related objectives: national security/defense objectives



FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

LIFE Program (10 MLN. EUR) (2009-2027)
RRF (allocated 16 MLN.EUR; 2023-2027)
CAP- 7,4 MLN. EUR (2023-2027)

Lithuanian co-financing
4 MLN. EUR (2009-2027)

PRIVATE FUNDS



Climate
Change
Program
4 MLN.EUR
(2026-2029)

Strategic Plan for Lithuanian Agriculture and Rural Development 2023–2027

- **Common goal:**
 - Promoting sustainable agricultural and rural development with a view to achieving economic, social, and environmental sustainability.
- **Priorities:**
 - The plan's priorities include environmental protection and climate change mitigation measures, which also cover the restoration of wetlands and the promotion of paludiculture activities.
- **Financial instruments:**
 - The plan provides for financial support for projects that contribute to the restoration and conservation of ecosystems.
 - Special measures for the restoration of wetlands and peatlands to increase GHG (greenhouse gas) absorption capacity.
 - Support for paludiculture activities that promote sustainable and environmentally friendly land use.

Targets

Progress measures of the 2022–2030 Development Program

Increasing GHG absorption capacity (by restoring the hydrological regime of wetlands):

Target:

Increase the GHG absorption capacity of wetlands and peatlands by restoring their hydrological regime.

Beneficiaries may be farmers, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, and other entities that own agricultural land or wetlands.

Funding conditions:

Funding is allocated to projects that implement measures to restore the hydrological regime of wetlands, such as water level regulation, sustainable use of drainage systems, and restoration of natural habitats.

The measure includes provision of technical assistance to ensure that beneficiaries can effectively implement restoration activities.

Results and impact:

The implementation of the measure is expected to contribute to climate change mitigation, ecosystem restoration, biodiversity enhancement, and the development of sustainable agricultural practices.

Financial needs

- Restoration of 1 ha costs between €6,000 and €8,000 or more. This includes not only physical restoration work, as cutting down bushes and building dams.
- Pre-project/preparatory work includes not only the preparation of the relevant documents (GP, hydrotechnical, land improvement reconstruction, etc. projects), but also coordination with the landowners, searching for wetlands, and compensation if the land is private.
- No Carbon credits at the government level. The Wetland Restoration Fund (NGO) has done a lot in this area.
- The issue of wetland restoration is now being considered not only from a nature conservation perspective, but also from a national security and defense perspective.

Payments

Payment – EUR 225/ha

declared area in 2025: 3,067.15 ha, number of applications: 589;
declared area in 2024: 2,848.48 ha, number of applications: 550;
declared area in 2023: 1,939.7 ha, number of applications: 402.

The strategic plan for 2023-2027 allocates EUR 7,439,400.00 to this measure

Replacement of arable peatlands with grasslands under this ecological scheme, support is granted for the establishment and maintenance of grasslands on arable peatlands.

Applicants seeking support under this ecological system must:

- declare a total area of at least 0.5 ha of land suitable for this ecological system, consisting of fields of at least 0.1 ha;
- declare areas of arable land, except for meadows up to 5 years.
- commitments for 5 years.



Failure increasing GHG absorption capacity

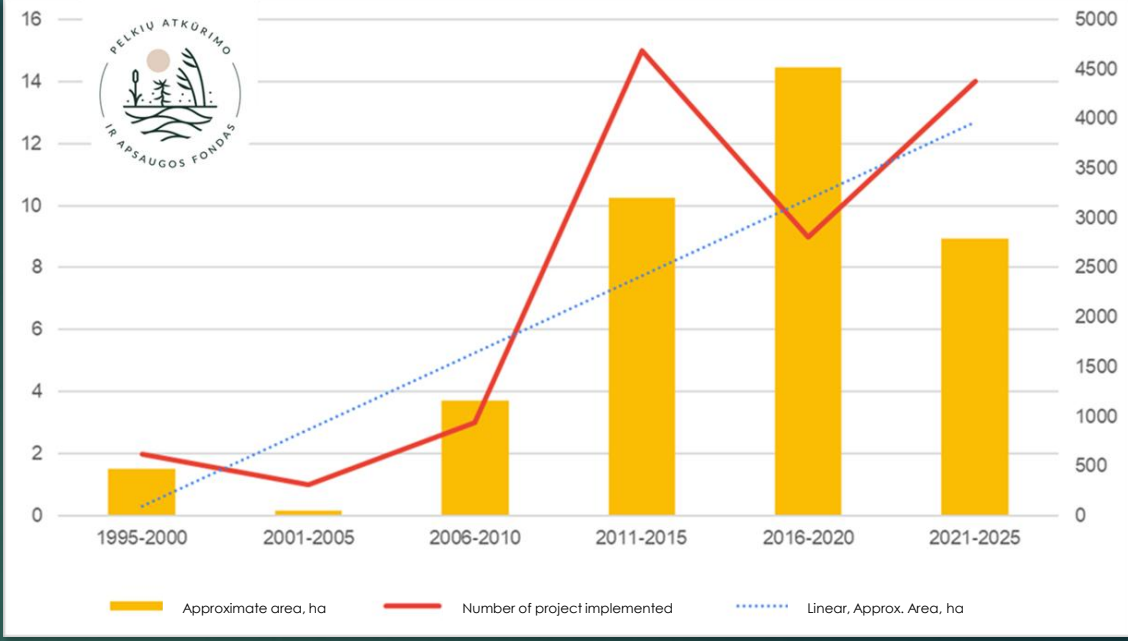
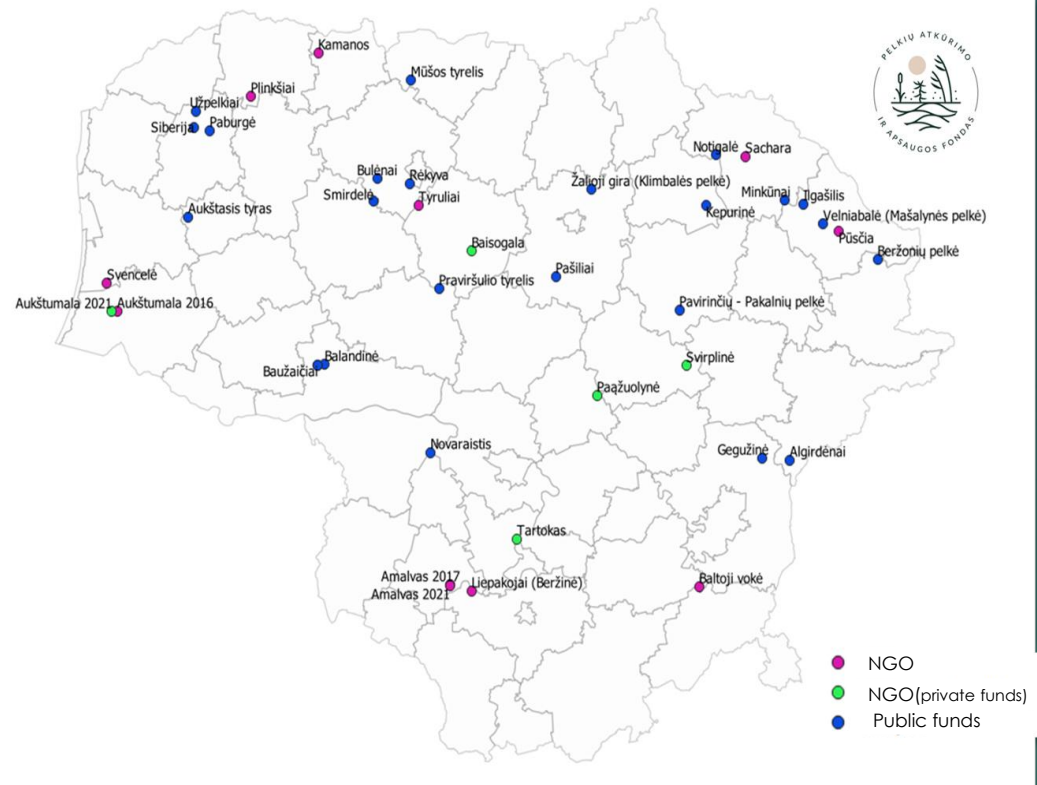
In July 2022, the European Social Fund Agency calculated a fixed amount of €1,926.01 per hectare of costs paid. Prior to the first call for applications, in March 2024, the fixed costs were recalculated and increased to **€2,515.73 per hectare**

Under the ecological system "Extensive wetland management" provided for in the Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Rural Development 2023-2027, receiving compensation payments it was planned to provide support for the restoration of **6,000 ha** of peatlands.

16 million RRF funds allocated. No one was interested in the funding.

€ 2 million transferred to the measure supervised by the Ministry of the Environment for acquisition of private forests rich in biodiversity.



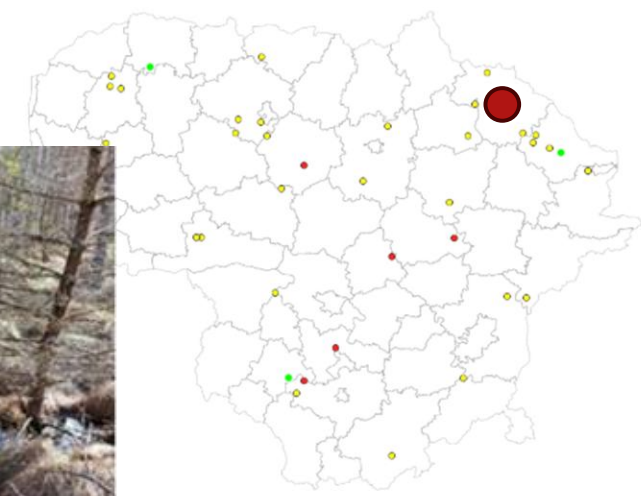


Dynamics of wetland hydrological regime restoration projects implemented in Lithuania in 1995–2025

Photos from the Public Institution "Wetland Restoration and Conservation Fund"



Sachara. Restoration of an abandoned



The **restoration cost up to €150,000**, including further cutting of shoots, over a period of 10 years. hydrological regime has been restored on an **area of 88 hectares**. The "savings" in carbon dioxide alone will be **around 1,000 tons** of carbon dioxide equivalent per year.

Sachara peat bog before (A) and after (B, C, D) the implementation of hydrological regime works

Thank You!

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together with others



Lunch Break

12:30 – 13:30





Different transformation pathways – Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Poland

13:30 – 14:45

Speakers



Anni Hintikka

Jyväskylä
University of
Applied Sciences,
Finland



Priya Polland

Mount Lucas
Bioeconomy
Aquaculture
Initiative, Ireland



**Frank
Bondgaard**

SEGES, Denmark



Mara Pakalne

University of
Latvia, Latvia



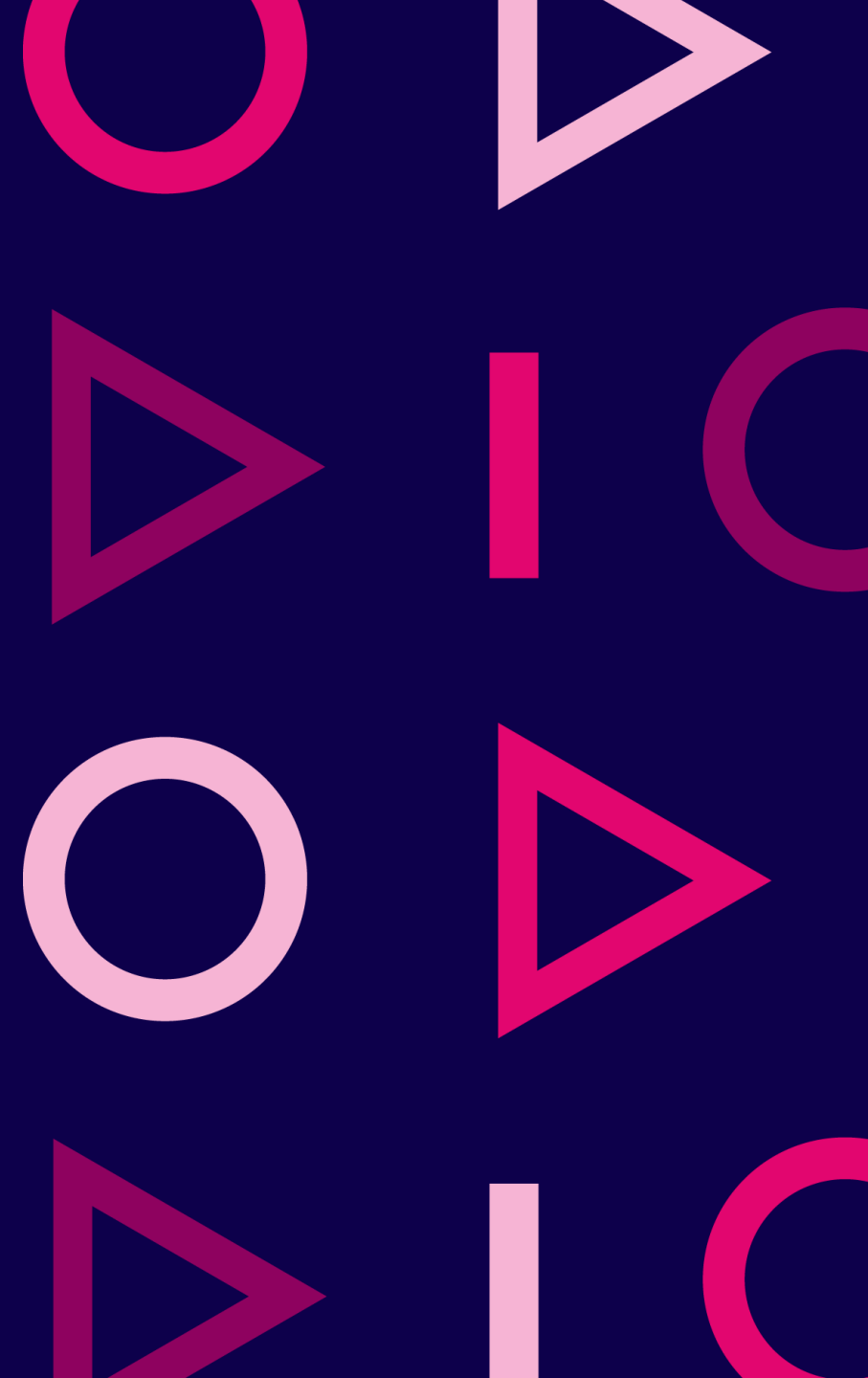
**Magda Leszczyna-
Rzucidło**

Pomorskie Tourist
Board, Poland

Driving innovation and regional change for sustainable peatlands

Transformation Pathway examples from Finland

M.Sc. **Anni Hintikka**
Chief Specialist/ BioBoosters Accelerator Lead
JAMK University of Applied Sciences / Bioeconomy Institute



Finland's Peatland Transition

9,3M

Hectares of Peatlands

1/3 of Finland's land area

14

Regions Supported

Just Transition Fund diversifying economies

1,2M

Protected Hectares

13% of peatlands preserved

Finland is undergoing one of Europe's most profound transitions — phasing out peat energy while developing new uses for drained areas through restoration, rewetting, and bio-based production.

What's Changing on Finnish Peatlands



Restoration & Rewetting

Restoring biodiversity, carbon storage, water regulation

Making Restoration Attractive and Feasible in Central Finland



Bio-Based Production

New crops and biomass valorization

New crops and biomass side streams for peatlands



New Livelihood Models

Land management, wetland farming, restoration services



Training & Upskilling

New education programs for ecological expertise

Building Skills and Business Among Nature Restoration

EU Nature Restoration Regulation: National plan due August 2026. Over 60% of original peatlands drained — scaling restoration essential.

Accelerating Regional Transformation through Co-Innovation

Innovation challenges

Co-creation and piloting

Ecosystem-building



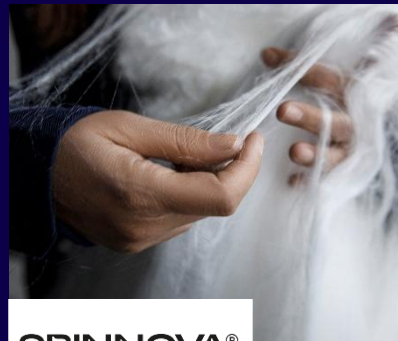
NEOVA GROUP

Wood Forest
Finland's biomass-based substrate value chain enabling post-peatland business.



BERNER
TIKALAN

Valio's manure-based growing media — a scalable circular substrate solution.



SPINNOVA®

Spinnova produces textile fiber made from wood-based and waste-based biomaterials using a mechanical, low-emission process that avoids harmful chemicals.



FLUFF STUFF

Fluff Stuff develops plant-based insulation and filling materials, using cattail (typha) fiber as a natural, renewable alternative to synthetic or animal-based fills.

Source: Home - Spinnovagroup

Source: Fluff Stuff: Overview | LinkedIn

jamk



Accelerating Regional Transformation through Co-Innovation

International smart agriculture co-creation environment and competence cluster

- **Testing & Piloting activities** – Generating the data
 - Physical Smart Farm
 - Testing of Automation
 - Demonstration/ PoC
 - Precision Farming
- **Digital twin** – Processing the data
- **Education & Training** – Better decision making based on real data
- **Ecosystem & Networks**
 - Accelerator program & Hackathons
 - Networking events & Pitching competitions

VALTRA



NESTE



HRV Farm Oy



jamk

Source: Finnish Future Farm | Jamk University of Applied Sciences

Key Takeaways

New Value Chains


Combining restoration, bioeconomy & innovation through restoration, rewetting, biomass production, wetland farming

New Partnerships

Linking landowners, companies, startups & educators through innovation ecosystems like BioBoosters

New Skills

Ecological, digital & entrepreneurial expertise supporting new land use and business opportunities



The transition is not only about phasing out peat — it's about building new opportunities.

Thank you!



M.Sc. Anni Hintikka
Chief Specialist / BioBoosters Accelerator Lead
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Priya Polland

Mount Lucas
Bioeconomy
Aquaculture
Initiative, Ireland



**Frank
Bondgaard**

SEGES, Denmark



Mara Pakalne

University of
Latvia, Latvia



**Magda Leszczyna-
Rzucidło**

Pomorskie Tourist
Board, Poland



Ministry of Economic Affairs
and Employment of Finland



European
Commission



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag
an Aontas Eorpach
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Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly

Mount Lucas Circular Bioeconomy Aquaculture Initiative PROJECT

CIRCULAR-IMTA-DEMO PROJECT



TUS
Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest
Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:
Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir



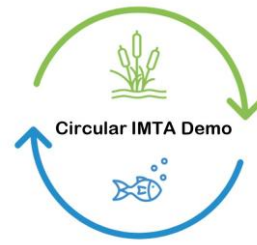
An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



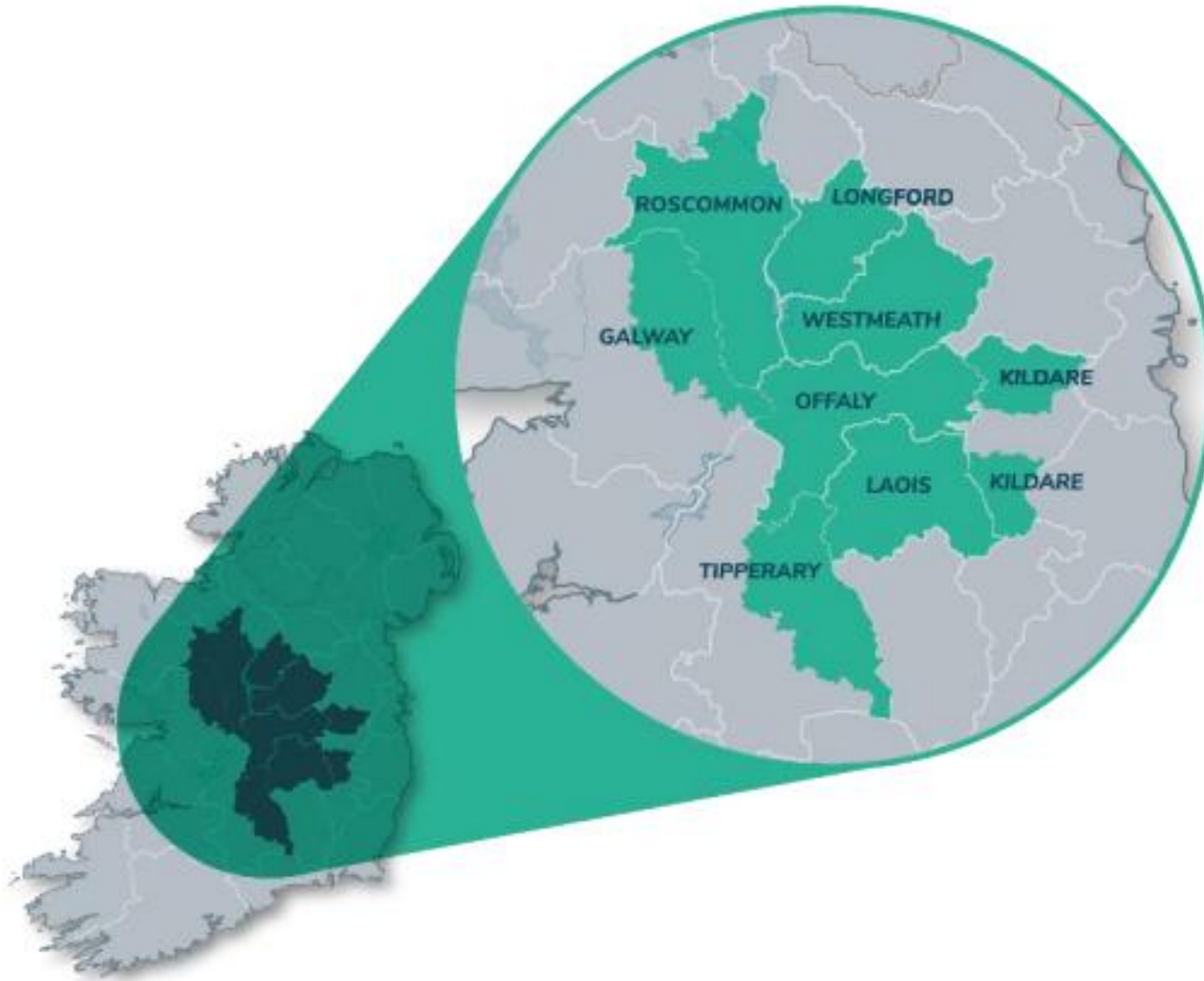


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Co. Offaly

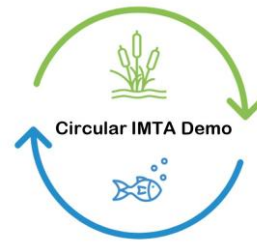
Biowetlands Site

Recirculating, peatland-
based IMTA site at
Mount Lucas Wind Farm



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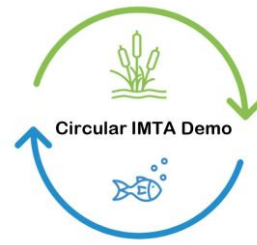
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CIRCULAR-IMTA-DEMO PROJECT

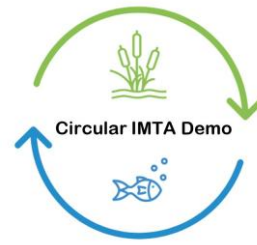
- 5 years
- Commercially focused
- 5.4 Ha
- DEMO Project
- Interdisciplinary bioeconomy demo project
- Sustainable, economic development producing commercial products (TRL 6+)
- Holistic multi-actor approach





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Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
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CIRCULAR-IMTA-DEMO PROJECT

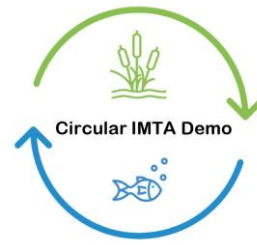


- Exploits cascades from fish waste stream as bio-fertilisers to cultivate algae & duckweed
 - Commercial products biorefined for feeds
 - Enables piloting, scaling and co-operation
 - Unlocks opportunities through co-operative activities
- Circular-IMTA-Demo Project
 - Accelerates development of bio-based products
 - Converts feedstock into economically viable (sustainable) circular solutions
 - Optimizes industry and primary-producer engagement to test-tech, and produce bio-based products at a commercial scale
 - Monitoring environmental and climate performance at IMTA site for value chains



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Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

CIRCULAR_IMTA_DEMO

Task 1: Peatlands Circular Aquaculture System Full IMTA site

Task 8: Management & implementation

- Implementation
- Risk mitigation
- Communication

Task 7: Engaging & Enabling industry



- Action plan for engagement
- Best in class demonstrator
- Industry Advisory Board
- Training and mentoring SMEs
- Animal feeding studies

Task 6: Value Chain

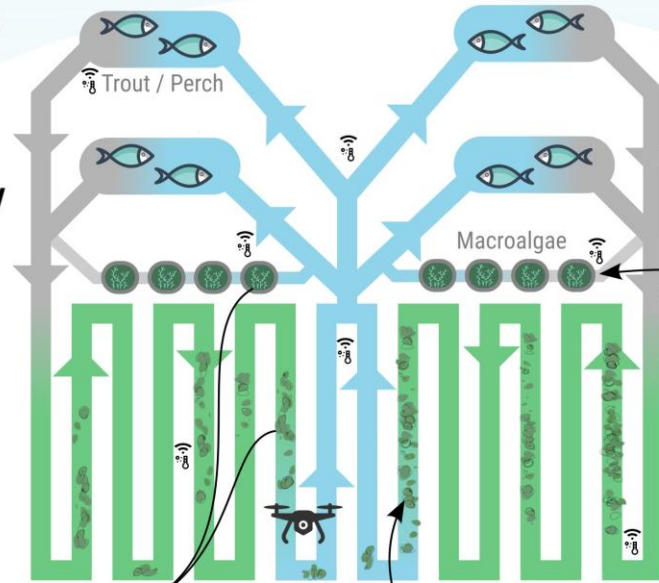


- LCA & LLCA
- Economic evaluation
- Workshop/outreach



Task 5: Conversion systems & Biorefinery

- Macro nutrients
- Mannitol
- Proteins
- High-value compounds



Task 2: Digitalisation

- Water quality monitoring
- UAV biomass monitoring
- Modeling/performance
- Alert system



Outreach
Training
Education

Task 3: Macroalgae IMTA

- Freshwater species selection
- Growth trials
- Wastewater valorisation
- Waste stream recycling
- Outreach

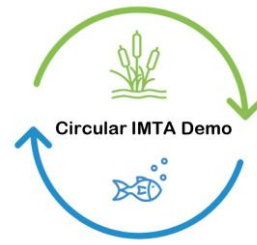
Task 4: Duckweed IMTA

- Growth trials
- Wastewater valorisation
- Waste stream recycling
- Outreach



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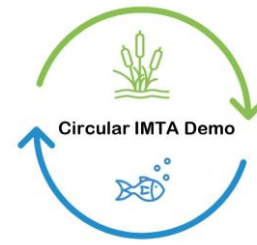




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Challenges

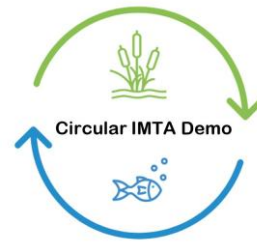




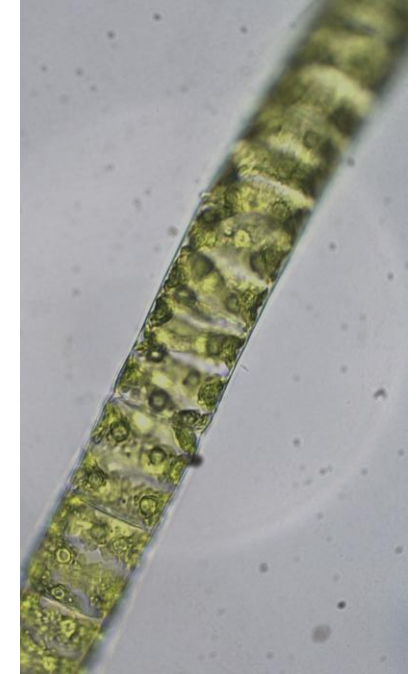
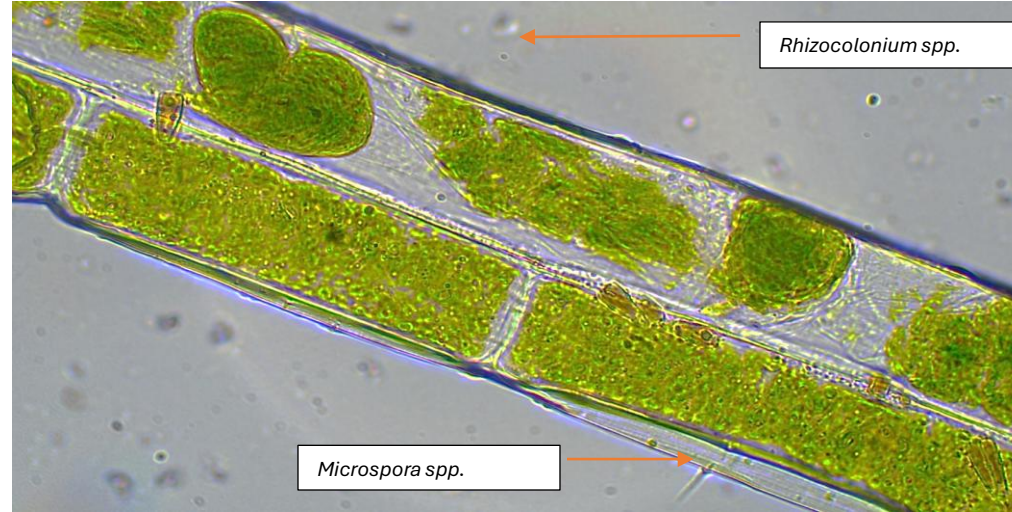
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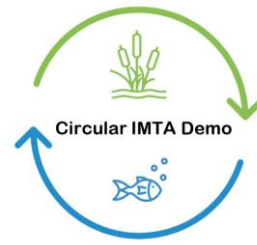


- *Oedogonium* spp. (x 3)
- *Microspora* spp (x2)
- *Rhizoclonium* spp
- *Cladophora* spp.



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Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

PROJECT TEAM

Role	Name
Project Manager	Prof. Neil Rowan (PI)
Task Leaders	Dr. Emer O’Neill (TUS) – Task 1 Prof. Eoghan Clifford (UG) – Task 2 Dr. Julie Maguire (IRMRC) – Task 3 Prof. Marcel Jansen (UCC) – Task 4 Prof. Brijesh Tiwari (Teagasc) – Task 5 Dr. Gillian Barry (TUS) – Task 6 Aine O'Donnell (TUS)– Task 7 Prof. New Rowan (TUS) – Task 8
Technical Steering Group	Project coordinator with all task leaders
Project Advisory Board	Industry Advisory Board – Led by Damien Toner (BIM) Oversight Advisory Committee – Chaired by Damien Toner (BIM) Midlands JT, Offaly Co. Co., Enterprise Ireland, BIM, DAFM, Local Community & Industry Reps, International Expert (Prof. Deborah Power (CCMAR Portugal))
Subject Matter Experts To provide direction to new project coordinator.	Prof. Marcel Jansen (UCC) Prof. Brijesh Tiwari (Teagasc) Prof. Eoghan Clifford (UG) Dr. Niall Murray (TUS) Prof. Neil Rowan (TUS)

PROJECT PARTNERS



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Government of Ireland

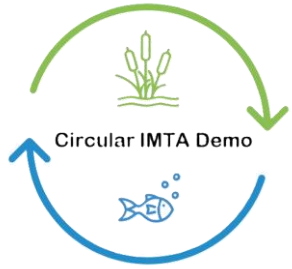


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an Aontas Eorpach

Co-funded by the
European Union



Tionól Reigiúnach Oirthir agus Lár-Tíre
Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly



Questions?

The CIRCULAR_IMTA_Demo project is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the EU Just Transition Fund Programme 2021-2027



Technological University of the Shannon
Midlands Midwest

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta don Sionainn
Lár na Tíre Lár Thiar



OLLSCOIL NA
GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY
OF GALWAY



UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh



INDIGO ROCK
MARINE RESEARCH CENTRE



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



Derilinx

Speakers



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Jyväskylä
University of
Applied Sciences,
Finland



Priya Polland

Mount Lucas
Bioeconomy
Aquaculture
Initiative, Ireland



**Frank
Bondgaard**

SEGES, Denmark



Mara Pakalne

University of
Latvia, Latvia



**Magda Leszczyna-
Rzucidło**

Pomorskie Tourist
Board, Poland



Ministry of Economic Affairs
and Employment of Finland



European
Commission



Ministry of Green Transition
Agency for Green Transition
and Aquatic Environment

Peat soils & economy after rewetting

Frank Bondgaard, Senior specialist, MSc Agriculture Science, SEGES Innovation
Department for Water, Environment & Climate Adaption
TargWET Project

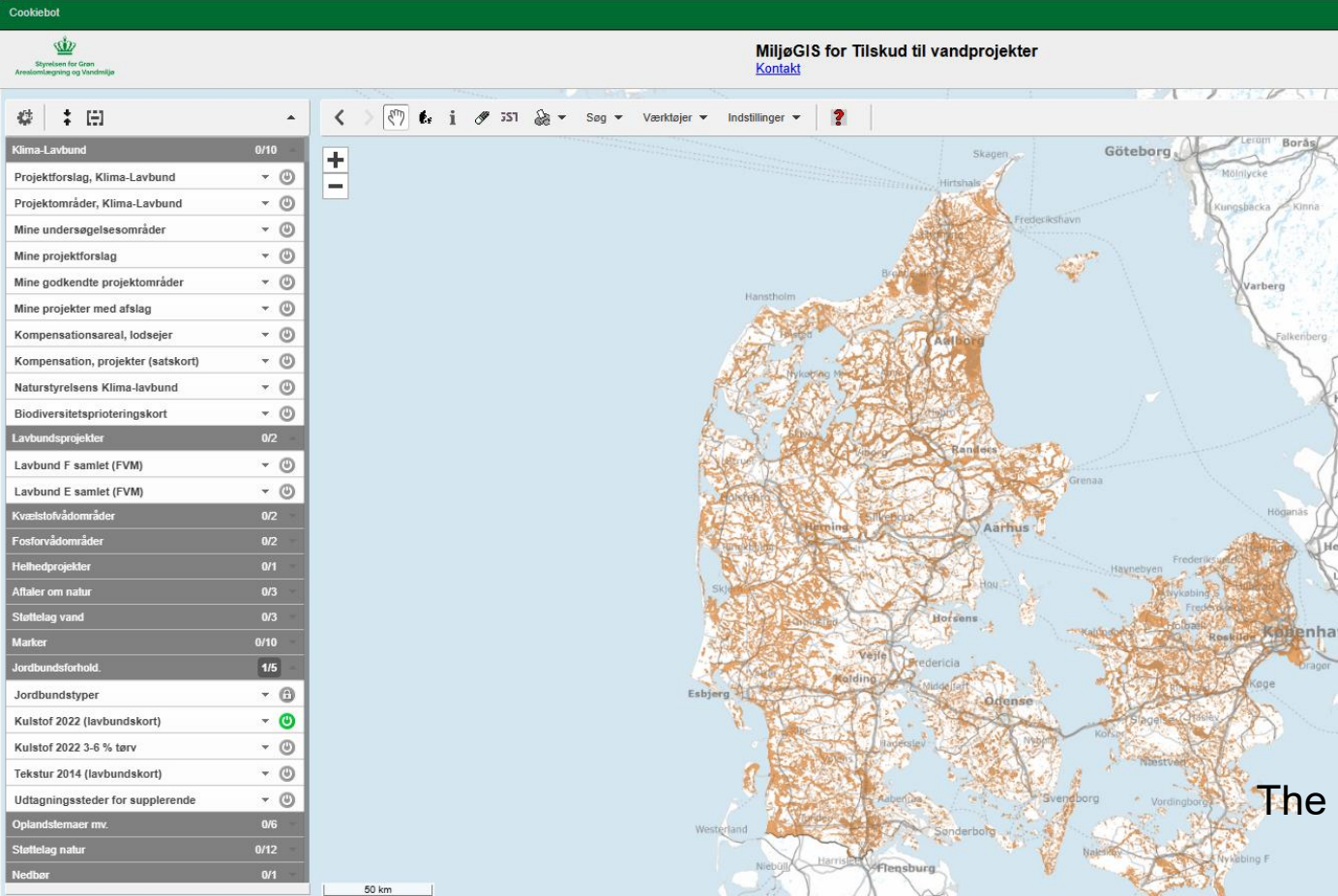
18 March 2026

The Danish Climate Act and The Green Tripartite Agreement

- Restoration of raised bogs & river valleys since 1998. Over time, a system has been developed with free land consolidation, onetime compensation, acquisition of agricultural holdings.
- The Danish Climate Act 2020 – 70 % reduction | 2030. Climate neutrality in 2050. Drivers: Market-based compensations, land consolidation & upcoming climate tax. Good progress in 2026. The Green Tripartite Agreement in 2024.
- Main focus on improving biodiversity on 140,000 hectares peat soils + wetlands
- Ploughing, fertilizing, and pesticide spraying are not permitted in these areas. Fields will be in The Danish Land Registration System and are becoming nature areas.
- There is a shift toward larger nature areas that may require new subsidy schemes, different forms of grazing, and new skills from landowners

Danish peat map 2022 – restoration of 140,000 hectares

A new peat soil map will come in 2027



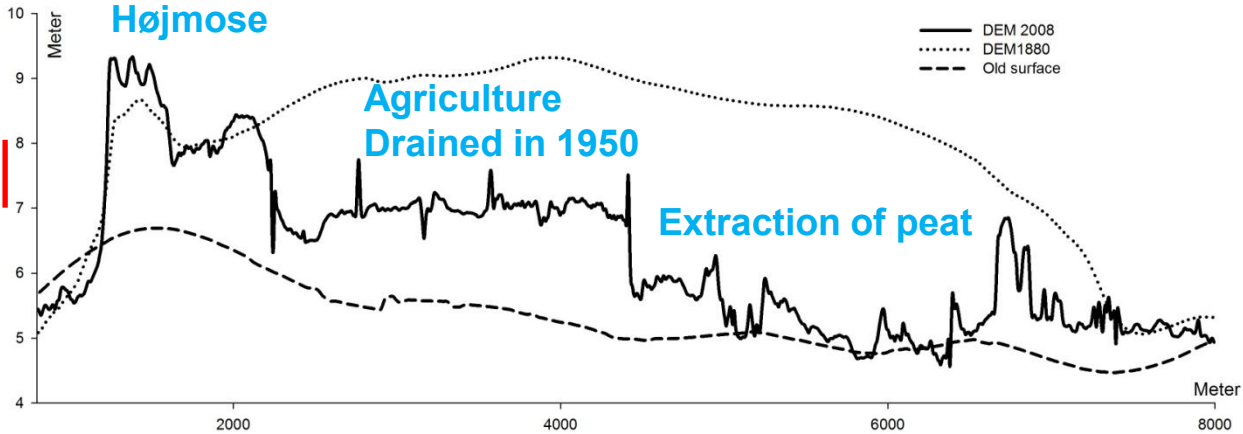
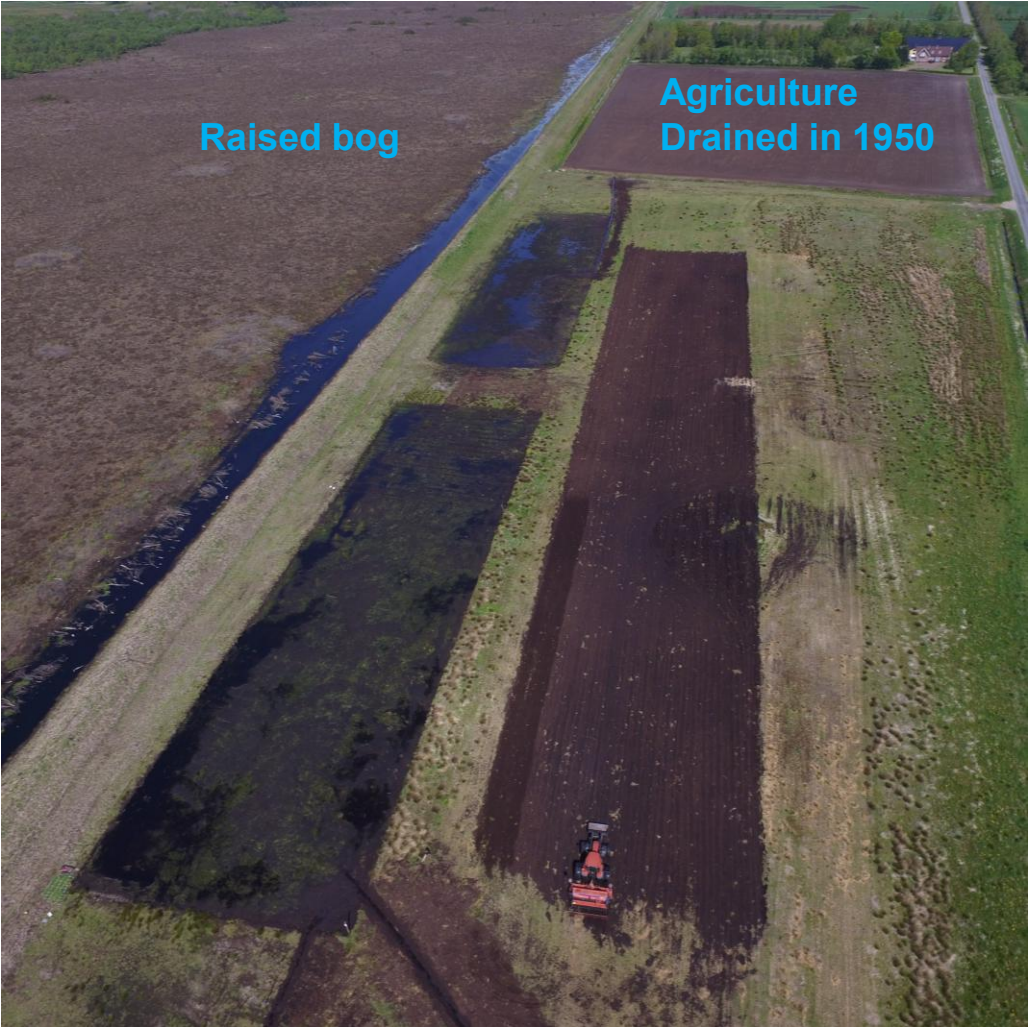
The markings represent project areas designated for rewetting

Peat soil subsides when drained

Profile of Store Vildmose – 7,000 hectare

Vildmose AA-A'A'

Af Mogens Greve AU



Strategies after rewetting

- Traditional grazing and hay production – a challenge in rewetted zones
- Bioenergy
- Year-round grazing
- Natural vegetation growth - natural succession



Photo: Emil Skole Læsøe, SEGES

Which landscapes do we want?

Several rules applying to the areas, here a few important:

- Clearing - Danish legislation requires that areas which were open habitats in 2004 must remain open
- Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS)



Photo: Emil Skole Læsøe, SEGES

100 % sure BISS



Photo: Emil Skole Læsøe, SEGES

No clearing no BISS?

Paludicultures in Store Vildmose – yield trails

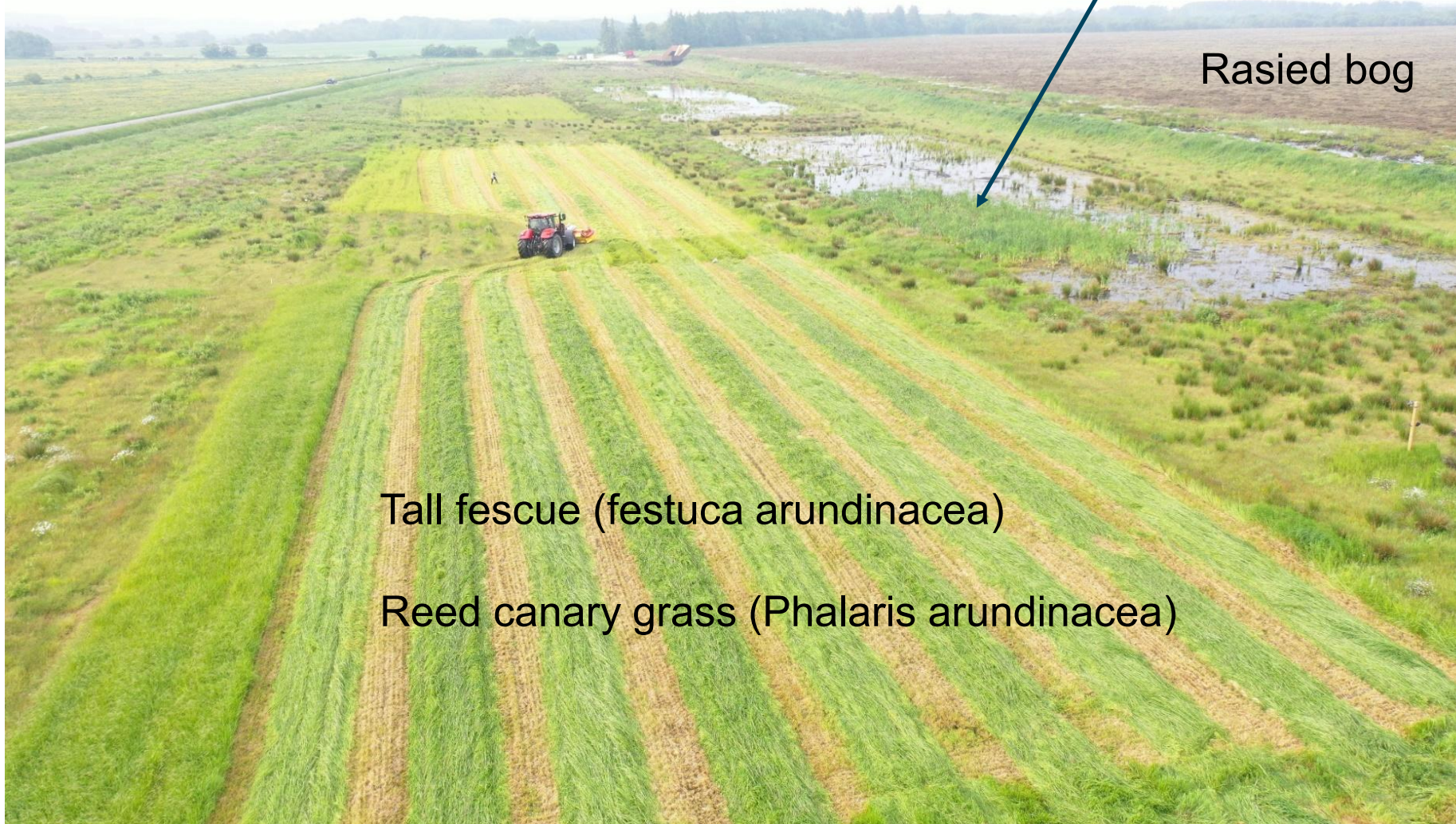
Cultivated peat soils

Cattail (*Typha latifolia*) had a challenge because of spring drought.

Raised bog

Tall fescue (*festuca arundinacea*)

Reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*)



Reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*)

BIOMASSEHØST I FORSØG				
Græs	Gødskning. NPK	Antal slæt	Ton tørstof pr. hektar	Forsøgssted
Røgræs	160 N 26P 124K	2-3	12,7-13,7	Kandel et al., 2017a. Aarhus Universitet
Røgræs	330 N +PK	3	11,5-15,0	Oversigt over Landsforsøgene 2012-2015
Røgræs	374 N ingen PK	3	7,3-8,1	Oversigt over Landsforsøgene 2012-2015
Røgræs	Ingen NPK	3	4,6-4,8	Oversigt over Landsforsøgene 2012-2015

I Store Vildmose blev der i 2021 høstet store udbytter i røgræs. Ses i nedstående tabel.

GRÆS	GØDSKNING	TON TØRSTOF PR. HEKTAR	PROTEIN %	EKSTRAHERET PRO- TEIN KG PR. HEKTAR
Røgræs	Ugødet	0 N	4,3	45
Røgræs	200 Kg N; 43 kg P; 215 kg K	200 N	18,3	393

Dry matter in tons

Bioenergy

Development of new value chains and harvesting technology

Projects: EU Life IP Nature Man and GUDP Høsttek



Photo: Ole Hyttel, The Danish Nature Agency



Photo: Ole Hyttel, The Danish Nature Agency



Ploughing, fertilizing, and pesticide spraying are not permitted in these areas.

This means harvesting of 3-6 tons of dry matter per year and removal of 6-12 kg of phosphorus per year

Value chain



Biogas

Building materials, e.g.

Protein for, e.g., sustainable adhesives

Plant-based wax for cosmetics

Biochar



Steps and setup in biomass harvesting using specialized machinery

Steps and dealing with several unknown factors	Total costs
Preparation of areas for biomass harvesting	Total costs
Biomass harvesting in tender for contractors	Total costs
Issuing tenders for biomass transport to biogas facilities	Total costs
Establishment of infrastructure, access roads, collection points, maintenance of roads . Coverage of ongoing expenses	Total costs
Ongoing local management and coordination of the harvest and related activities	Total costs
BISS + Subsidy	?
Income from the sale of biomass - gas prices fluctuate	?
Income - subsidy	Total income ?

Biodiversity

Biomass harvesting

BIOMASSEHØST

Intensive grazing

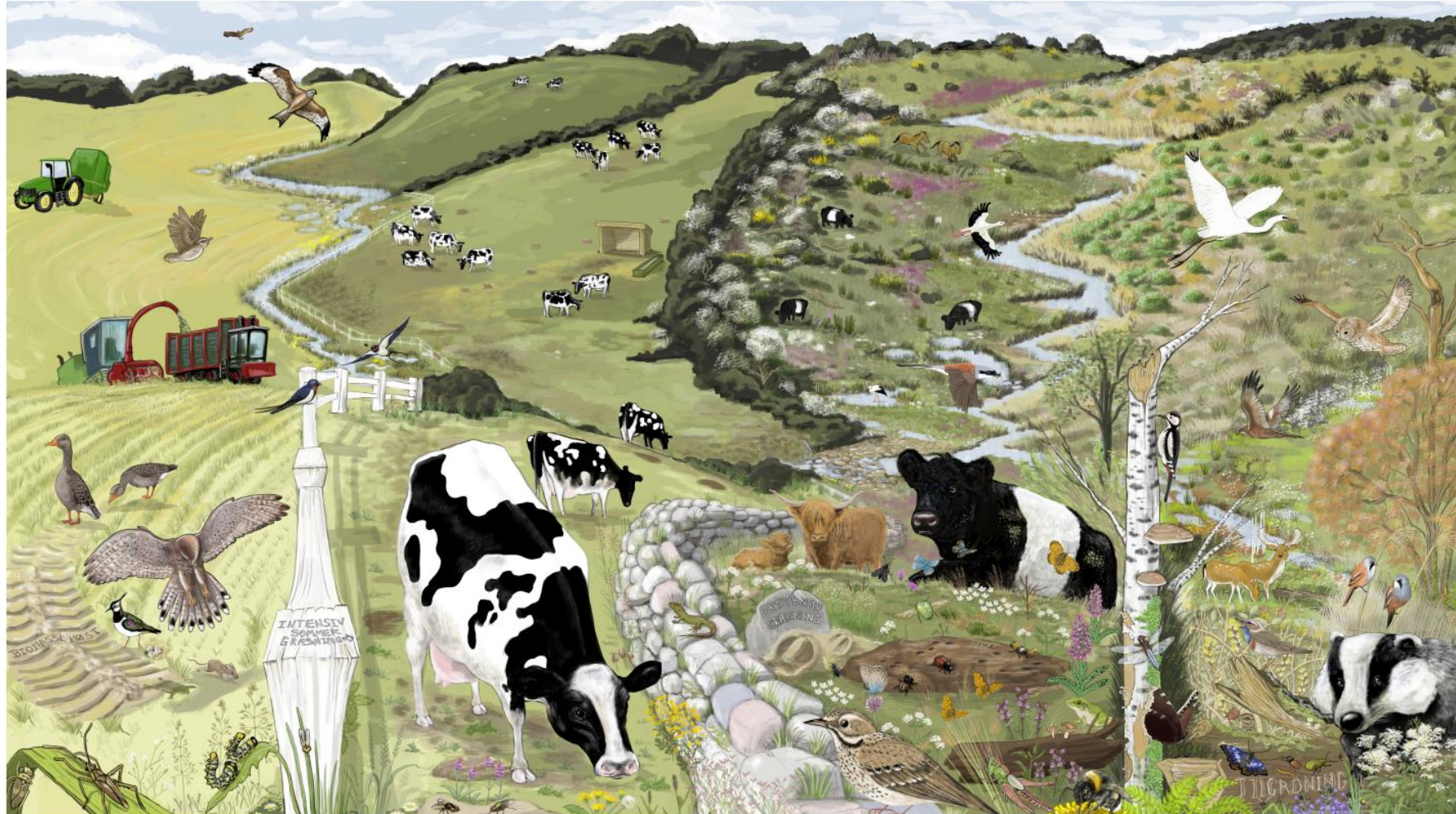
INTENSIV SOMMERGRÆSNING

Extensive grazing

EKSTENSIV GRÆSNING

Natural succession

TILGRONING



Year-round grazing – a change and need for new skills



Challenges

- Lack of economic incentive
- The current grazing subsidy scheme does not ensure effective management
- Barriers in legislation and subsidy schemes
- Lack of facilitation and collaboration to ensure grazing across property boundaries and habitat types
- Harassment of nature managers
- Current land-retirement schemes do not deliver sufficiently on biodiversity
- Lack of knowledge

Recommendations for more
and better nature management

2025

Anbefalinger til mere og bedre naturforvaltning

– en analyse af de vigtigste barrierer og forslag til løsninger



NATUREMAN



SEGES
INNOVATION

INNOVATION

Thank you very much



Ministeriet for Grøn Trepert
Styrelsen for Grøn
Arealomlægning og Vandmiljø



Speakers



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University of
Applied Sciences,
Finland



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Mount Lucas
Bioeconomy
Aquaculture
Initiative, Ireland



**Frank
Bondgaard**

SEGES, Denmark



Mara Pakalne

University of
Latvia, Latvia



**Magda Leszczyna-
Rzucidło**

Pomorskie Tourist
Board, Poland

Peatland rewetting for defense and climate change mitigation

Dr. biol. Māra Pakalne
University of Latvia
18/03/2026

Peatland role in climate change mitigation

- Natural peatlands are fundamentally defined by their permanently or near-permanently waterlogged conditions.
- However, when peatlands are drained, burned, or otherwise disturbed, they transform from carbon sinks into major emission sources.
- Restoring peatlands, significantly reduces GHG emissions. In their natural state, peatlands sequester carbon rather than release it as CO₂, accumulating it as peat over thousands of years.



NATO peatland belt

The **NATO peatland belt** refers to defense strategy being explored by NATO's eastern flank countries that combines environmental restoration with military defense. NATO frontline states like Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are considering restoring peatlands along their borders with Russia and Belarus to create natural barriers against potential military advances while simultaneously addressing climate goals

Dual Benefits and strategy

Defence: Rewetting of degraded peatlands is a critical nature-based solution for enhancing defense functions. When peatlands are wet, no heavy military vehicles can simply drive through it because of waterlogged conditions.

Climate: Preserving peatlands is crucial to counteract the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss. Peatland rewetting can reduce greenhouse gas emissions significantly.

Poland has already incorporated peatland restoration into its €2.3 billion "Eastern Shield" project, which includes wetland restoration and afforestation of border areas. Finland has begun a bog-restoration pilot near its Russian border.





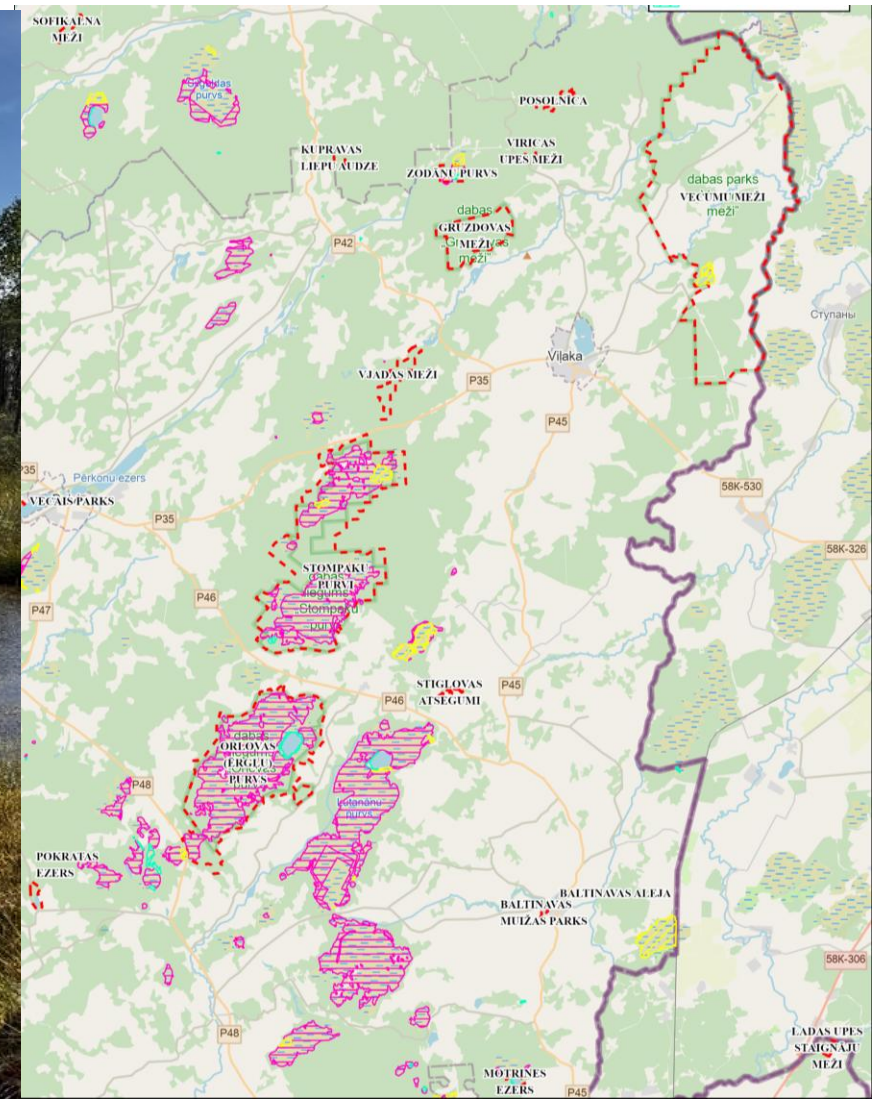
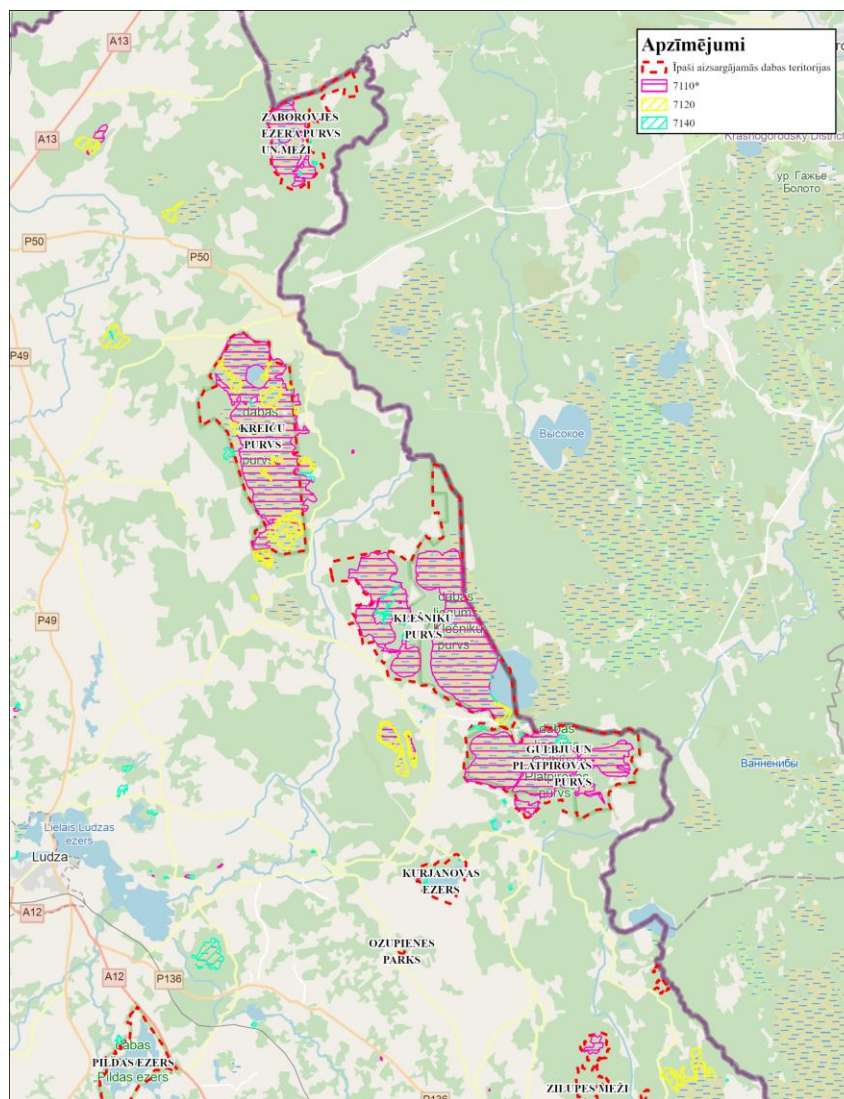
Latvia plans the restoration of historical peat extraction fields to transform degraded areas into natural protective barriers that reduce vulnerable areas along borders.

This initiative is part of Latvia's broader Baltic defense line project and is an innovative approach that combines environmental restoration with national security objectives.

<https://www.dw.com/en/peatlands-as-defense-climate-nato-finland-poland-russia-co2-rewetting/a-74513628>

The border between Latvia and Russia is 217 km and has been part of the EU's external border since 2004. Most of Latvia's peat bogs are located in the east of the country

Peatlands near Latvian border with Russia



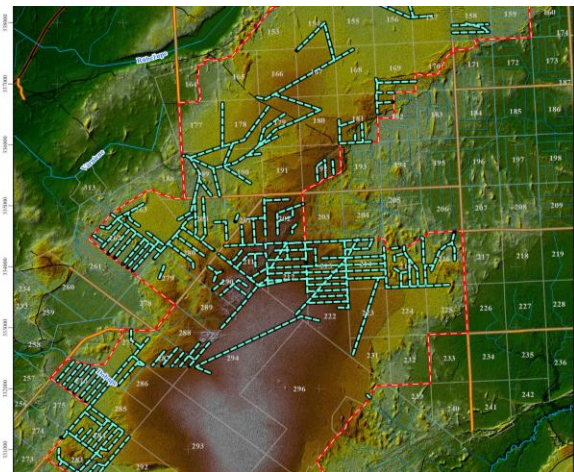
Peatland restoration in Kreiču Mire

- Total area 2273 ha.
- Located about 2 km from Russian border
- In 2023 JSC “Latvijas Valsts Meži ” has completed the construction of 7 dams (restoration area 61 ha with positive effect up to 100 ha).



Restoration area in Stompaku Mires

Total area 3881,03 ha
About 16 km from the
border



Measures required for peatland rewetting

- Identification and prioritization of peatland areas in strategically relevant regions
- Technical measures for rewetting:
 - Restoration of natural regional water balances
 - Cooperation with NATO partners
 - Consideration in national defense plans
 - Involvement of environment and defense ministries in planning





LIFE21-CCM-LV-LIFE PeatCarbon

Peatland restoration for greenhouse gas emission reduction and carbon sequestration in the Baltic Sea region



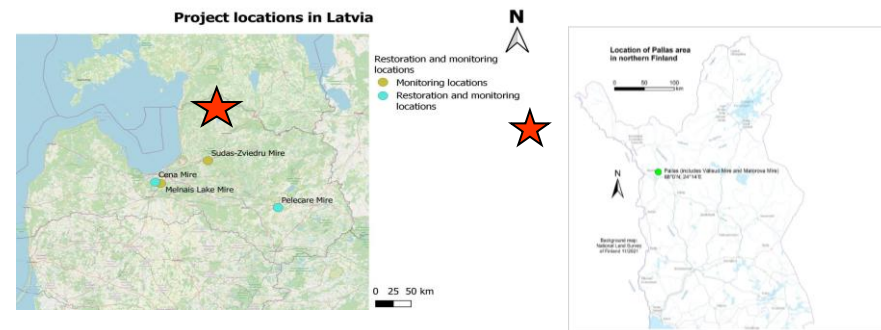
Project location: Latvia, Finland, Germany and Denmark

Duration: 01/07/22 - 30/06/27

Coordinating beneficiary: University of Latvia

Beneficiaries (12):

Amphi International ApS, Ilmatieteen Laitos, Nodibinājums “Vides risinājumu institūts”, Naturschutzbund Deutschland (NABU) EV, Latvijas valsts mežzinātnes institūts “SILAVA”, Sabiedrība ar ierobežotu atbildību “AGS Sistēmas”, Silkeborg Kommune, Biedrība “Baltijas krasti”, Luonnonvarakeskus (LUKE), Sabiedrība ar ierobežotu atbildību “EthnoExpert”, Oulun Yliopisto (UOULU)



Skaists Lake in Cenas Mire in 2006 before raising of water level



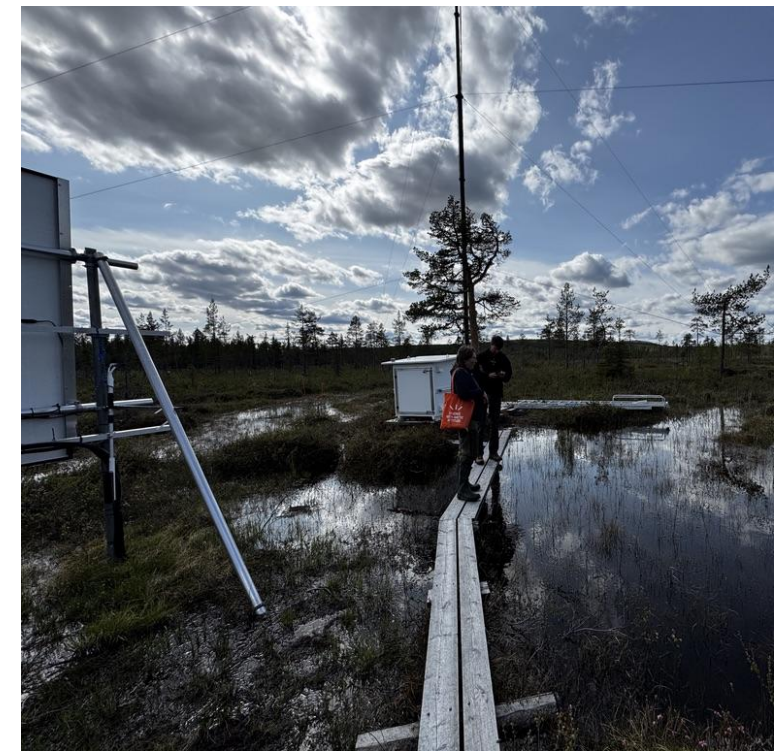
Skaists Lake in 2025



After 8 years die-off of pine trees can be observed after 8 years. The positive impact is far behind the direct influence zone.

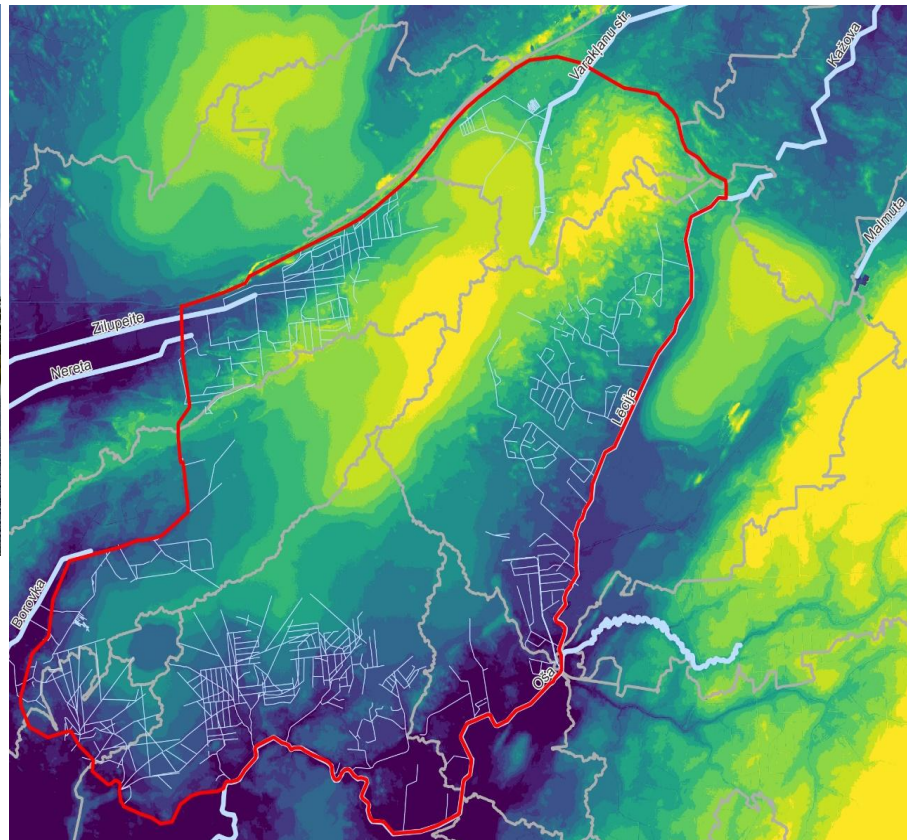
Peatland restoration results in Finland

- Drainage ditches closed in Matorova and Välisuo Mires in 2024
- Trees cut in 2024
- Area rewetted as a result of water table rise; also near the Eddy covariance tower.



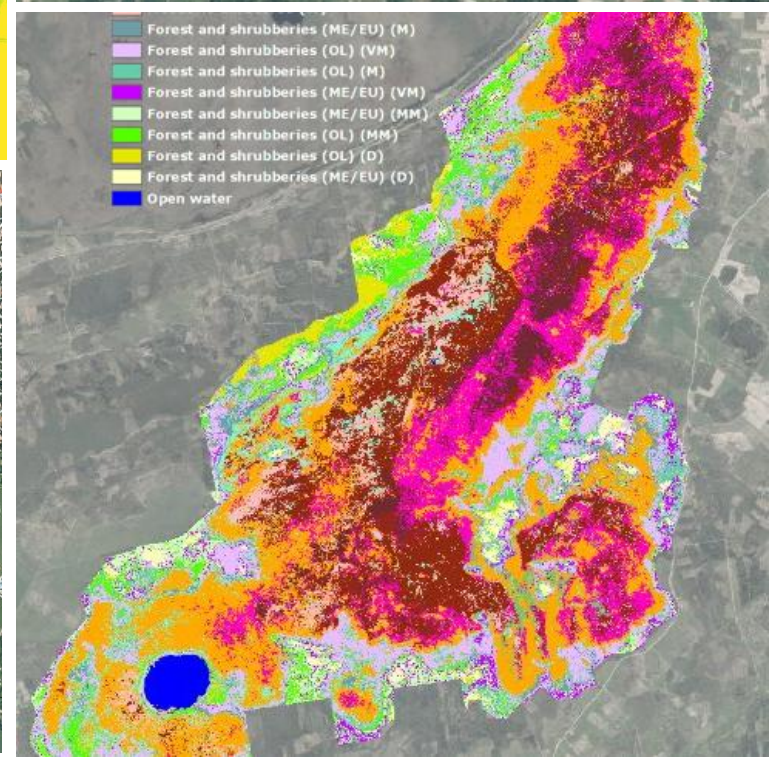
Hydrological,
vegetation and
GHG
monitoring





Hydrogeological modeling and remote sensing

Lielais Pelečāre Mire
Total area 5684 ha



Wetlands for defense and climate change mitigation

- From **July 7-9, 2026** seminar in Latvia
- Organized in cooperation with Ministry of Defense of Latvia, National Armu Forces and NATO Climate change and Security Centre for Excellence
- Presentatations, site visits to restored peatlands, including the ones with the border with Russia in eastern Latvia



Thanks for the attention!



Project web page: www.peatcarbon.lu.lv

Contacts: Dr. Māra Pakalne

E-mail: mara.pakalne@lu.lv



LATVIJAS
UNIVERSITĀTE
ANNO 1919



Speakers



Anni Hintikka

Jyväskylä
University of
Applied Sciences,
Finland



Priya Polland

Mount Lucas
Bioeconomy
Aquaculture
Initiative, Ireland



**Frank
Bondgaard**

SEGES, Denmark



Mara Pakalne

University of
Latvia, Latvia



**Magda Leszczyna-
Rzucidło**

Pomorskie Tourist
Board, Poland

Regenerative Tourism

REGENERATIVE FOUNDATIONS AND REAL-LIFE PROJECTS

Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło,
Director of International Cooperation, Pomorskie Tourist Board
&
EUSBSR Policy Area Tourism Coordinator



Pomorskie
Tourist Board



EUSBSR
EU STRATEGY
FOR THE BALTIC
SEA REGION

Policy Area Tourism

RegenT

The RegenT project platform develops a **regenerative tourism hub**, offering training, and policy recommendations for public authorities, DMOs, NGOs, and business support organisations **to make revitalisation and sustainable tourism a guiding strategy across the region.**

RegenT consolidates outcomes from **seven EU projects**, bringing together a consortium of **six project partners** and 25 associated organisations across 11 countries.

- Novia University of Applied Sciences, Finland
- Pomorskie Tourist Board, Poland
- Visit Skåne, Sweden
- Helmholtz-Zentrum hereon GmbH, Germany
- Kurzeme Planning Region, Latvia
- NGO Estonian Rural Tourism, Estonia

Interreg
Baltic Sea Region



Co-funded by
the European Union

PROJECT PLATFORMS 
RegenT



MOST OF US ARE
HERE



SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS



REGENERATIVE

DEGENERATIVE

Conventional
Staying within law

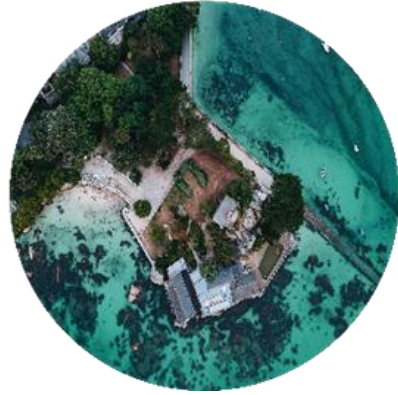
Green
Less bad

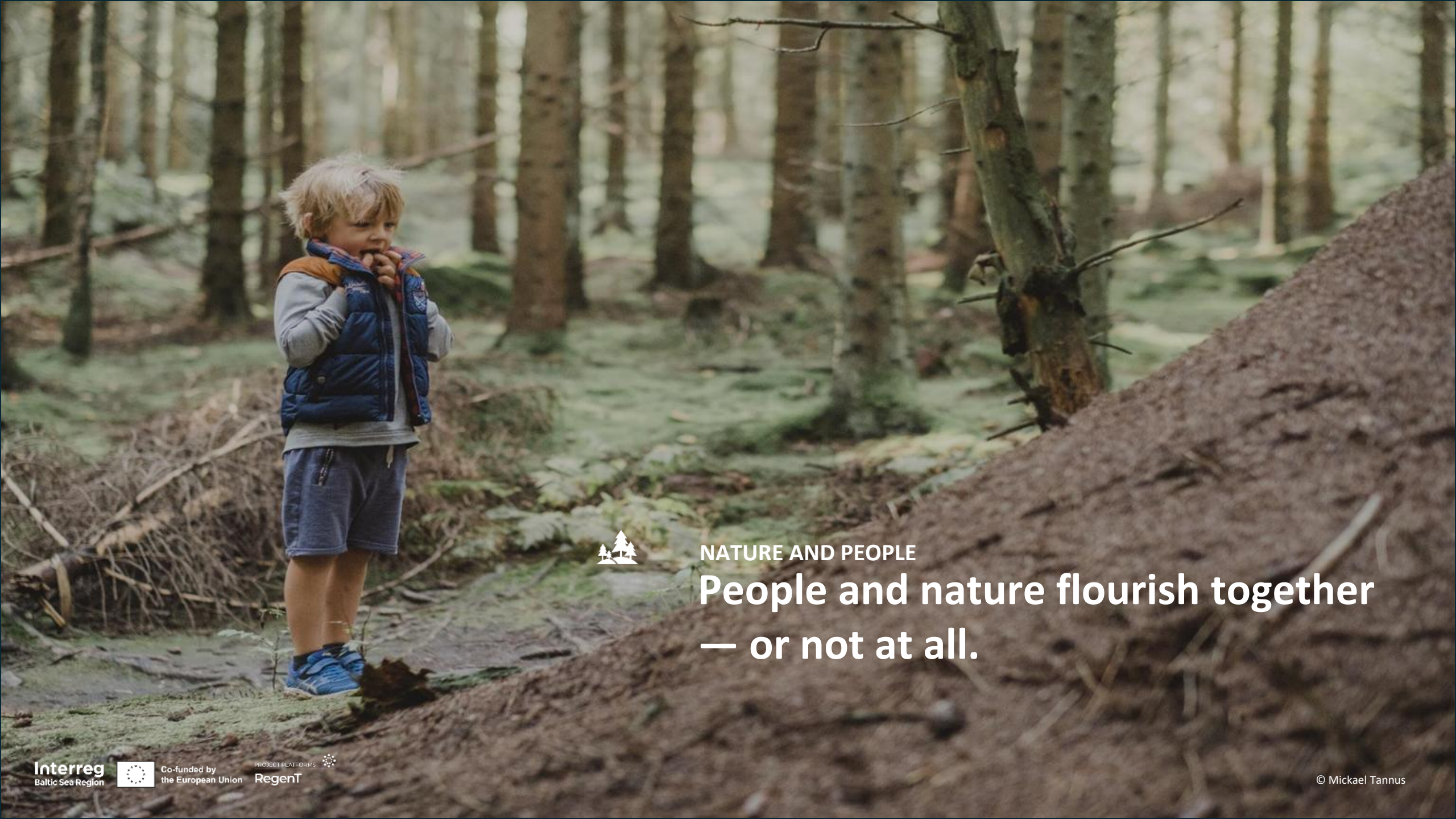
Sustainable
No additional harm

Restorative
Improving nature

Regenerative
Participating as nature

Fundamental shift
in perspective





NATURE AND PEOPLE

People and nature flourish together
— or not at all.



PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND VISITORS



**Places thrive when communities lead
and visitors belong.**

PARTICIPATION, CO-CREATION, OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY

Shared challenges need shared solutions.



FROM GROWTH TO VALUE

Value is what helps people and places thrive.





SUSTAINABILITY AND REGENERATION

**It's not about doing less harm —
it's about doing more good.**



Platform Solutions

Knowledge Hub for Regenerative Tourism during 2026

- Tailored guidelines and recommendations
- Toolkits and guides
- Codesign with target groups
- Region-specific tools, case studies, and methodologies

Regenerative Destination Management Training Programme

- 3-month online training in six modules during 2027
- Seminars back-to-back with the EUSBSR Tourism Forums
- National workshops

Network

DMOs, policy makers and decision makers, public authorities, BSOs, NGOs, SMEs, EU networks, and more



Why tourism matters for regional transition

- **Tourism as a diversification pathway**
- **New revenue streams** for rural and nature-rich regions
- **Supports local jobs and SMEs**
- **Strengthens place-based identity and cultural heritage**
- **Can align nature restoration + economic activity**

Tourism is often one of the few scalable transition options in peripheral regions



What RegenT contributes (practical tools)

RegenT knowledge hub (co-designed with stakeholders)

Provides:

- **Training modules** for destinations and SMEs
- **Policy recommendations** for regional authorities
- **Case studies and pilots** from the Baltic Sea Region

Methods for:

- off-season tourism
- climate-smart destination planning
- local food networks
- community engagement

Our approach is not only theory → practical transformation pathways



Key lessons for transition regions

What works:

- Linking **nature restoration with tourism development**
- Creating **local value chains** (food, culture, crafts)
- Strong **local partnerships** (DMOs + municipalities + NGOs)
- Building **skills for SMEs and communities**

Challenges:

- Scaling pilots into **regional strategies**
- Ensuring **tourism revenue stays locally**
- Aligning **land-use change with community interests**
- Long transition timelines

Regenerative tourism can help regions turn ecological transition into economic opportunity



Want to know more?

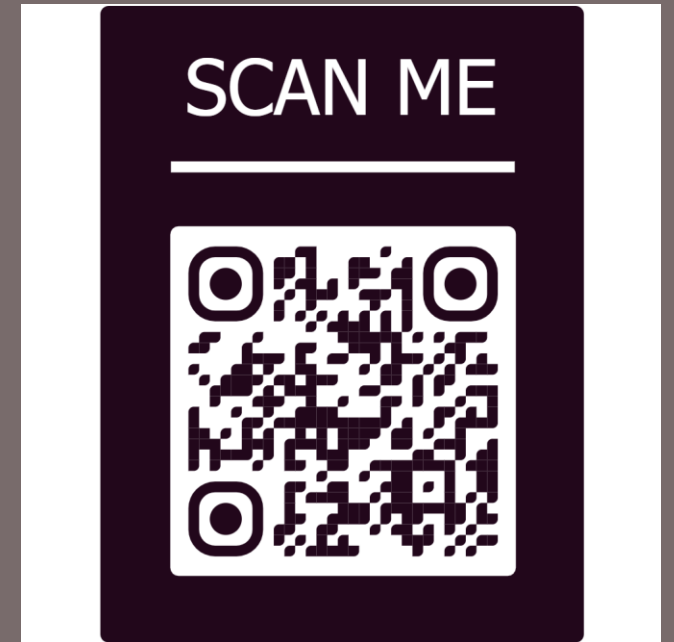
For more information about RegenT and its seven projects, please contact us:

Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło

m.rzucidlo@prot.gda.pl

EUSBSR Policy Area Tourism Coordinator

Director of International Cooperation, Pomorskie Tourism Board



Interreg
Baltic Sea Region



Co-funded by
the European Union

PROJECT PLATFORMS
RegenT



EUSBSR
EU STRATEGY
FOR THE BALTIC
SEA REGION

Policy Area Tourism





Coffee Break

14:45 – 15:15



Workshop on key aspects of transition

15:15 – 16:40

World Café: key aspects of transition



**Bioeconomy and
sustainable
agriculture**



Financing aspects



**Community and land
ownership aspects**

The background features a light blue gradient with white hexagonal outlines and a network diagram of nodes and lines. Green leaf-like patterns are visible in the corners.

Closing of Day 1 and outlook on Day 2

16:40 – 17:00

Speakers



Pekka Jounila

DG REGIO,
European
Commission



Ministry of Economic Affairs
and Employment of Finland



European
Commission

Agenda - Day 2

Time	Agenda item
09:15 – 09:30	Pick up for site visit
09:30 – 10:00	Transfer to site visit
10:00 – 12:00	Site visit: Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences
12:00 – 12:30	Transfer to conference room
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch Break
13:30 – 14:30	Panel: Collaboration across regions and governance levels for successful transition in the Baltic Sea Region
14:30 – 15:30	Shaping common narratives - Collaborative art making for development and new possibilities
15:30 – 16:00	Networking through coffee & snacks



Bus transport from Hotel Arthur to Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences

Meeting at 09.15

Meeting Point:



Please return your badges the registration desk if you are not attending Day 2.



Ministry of Economic Affairs
and Employment of Finland



European
Commission

Enjoy the networking dinner

