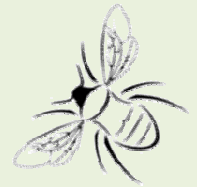


Baltic Sea Regional Conference

QUO VADIS, FARMLAND BIODIVERSITY?

2 days: November 14th -15th, 2012

Estonia, Tartu (Dorpat conference centre, <http://www.dorpat.ee/Conference>)



The EU has introduced several measures to help stabilise and strengthen farmland biodiversity in Europe and to reduce the potentially harmful impacts of agricultural activity. Europe's agricultural policy makers acknowledge the need to design further strategic approaches capable of promoting farm profitability, whilst both avoiding actions that damage natural resources and encouraging those that have more positive impacts. But relationships between farm practices and the diversity of natural resources are not always clear. Moreover, they are often highly complex, differ by region and are long in the making.

Understanding the relations between biodiversity and sustainable agricultural production and translating such knowledge into clearly defined management practices that can be applied and supported at the scale of farms and landscapes is of key importance for more environmentally-friendly agriculture in Europe, including the Baltic Sea Region (BSR).

Purpose of the conference:

The conference will bring together a range of stakeholders with an active interest in the farmland biodiversity of the BSR in order to discuss *a) the current situation with farmland biodiversity in the region* and *b) what can be done together to improve it*.

The conference aims especially to begin the process of developing a common position and practical policy recommendations for all Baltic Sea countries regarding appropriate biodiversity measures to be applied in the framework of CAP 2013+.

The specific objectives of the conference are:

- to improve understanding of the relationship between farming and nature values in the BSR;
- to discuss relevant issues relating to the monitoring and interpretation of farmland biodiversity in the BSR;
- to explore the potential for a common policy framework for the BSR member states to better address the biodiversity protection within the CAP and to optimise the use of RDP measures.

Target groups:

Approximately 75 people in total – including those working with CAP and RDP preparation, implementation, control and evaluation issues, plus experts in farmland biodiversity in the BSR.

Organisers:

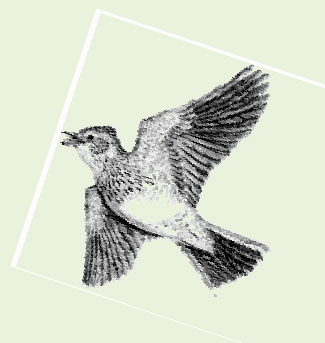
The Estonian Agricultural Research Centre,
Department of Agricultural Research and Monitoring

The Estonian Ministry of Agriculture,
Department of Rural Development



Key dates of the conference:

- Draft programme available and call for registration opens **5 September 2012**
- Submission of posters closes **15 October 2012**
- Call for registration closes **15 October 2012**
- Confirmation of participation by **20 October 2012** the latest



Submission of case study material, posters and any other relevant information:

It is expected that **all participating Baltic Sea Region (BSR) countries** prepare some information in advance regarding practical examples/measures/case studies implemented (e.g. under CAP/RDP) in their country to preserve farmland biodiversity. This information will be used during several sessions of the conference.

In order to better track the information, ARC will collect relevant information from each country beforehand (see also separate form for this information) and prepare posters in the same format.

In addition to case study information participants are free to submit any other relevant posters and information. We especially welcome contributions of general importance to both policy makers and scientists. Information will be collected and distributed during the conference and included into conference proceedings for further dissemination.

Deadline for submission of case study material, posters and any other information is **15 October 2012**. Please find additional information from conference website!

Registration:

Registration of interest opens **5 September, 2012**; due to limited size of the venue your participation will be confirmed individually.

Please fill in the registration form at:
pmk.agri.ee/pkt/BDconference

Contact:

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Conference language is English

Additional information about the conference will be available from the website of Agricultural Research Centre: pmk.agri.ee/pkt/BDconference

The Conference is financed by the Technical Assistance measure of Estonian RDP 2007-2013 and is free of charge (coffee breaks, lunches). Participants are expected to cover their accommodation and travel costs.



PRELIMINARY AGENDA (04.09.2012)

DAY 1 (November 14, Wednesday)
SESSION A: Biodiversity and High Nature Value Farming – a state of play

This session explores approaches for defining and understanding farmland biodiversity (BD) in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR)

Time	Presentation/action	Presenter
08:00 - 09:00	Registration	
09:00 - 09:10	Welcome	<i>Illar Lemetti, Deputy Secretary General, the Estonian Ministry of Agriculture</i> <i>Pille Koorberg, the Agricultural Research Centre (ARC), Estonia</i> Video speech by the minister of the Estonian Ministry of Agriculture
09:10 - 09:30 (15+5 min)	What is a farmland biodiversity? An academic point of view	<i>Speaker to be confirmed, Sweden</i> Scientific definition and interpretation of farmland biodiversity to set the framework for the conference
09:30 - 09:45 (10+5 min)	What is a farmland biodiversity? A farmer's point of view	<i>Aarne Ots</i> <i>Farmer, Sürgavere Agricultural Co-operative, Estonia</i> Nature-friendly farmer and agronomist introduces his views on biodiversity and what kind of steps he has taken in his farm to increase biodiversity potential and why biodiversity is useful for him
09:45 - 10:10 (20+5 min)	Farmland biodiversity in BSR and intervening factors	<i>Pille Koorberg</i> <i>ARC, Estonia</i> The general situation with farmland biodiversity in the Baltic Sea Region, main trends and signs of threats
10:10 - 10:35 (20+5 min)	On-going and future Rural Development Programmes under the CAP: a challenge or an opportunity for high nature value farming and biodiversity protection	<i>Trees Robijns</i> <i>BirdLife Europe</i> Which aspects from the CAP are the most important driving forces for BD protection? How different measures in RD should interact and what opportunities there are for improvement in the new policy? The state of play of the CAP reform, opportunities and challenges of CAP 2013+

10:35 - 10:55	Coffee break	
10:55 –11:20 (20+5 min)	View on the relationship between farming and biodiversity A case study of Sweden	<i>Martin Sjö Dahl, tbc,</i> <i>Swedish Board of Agriculture, Sweden</i> What are the biodiversity functions in farming and what has been done in Sweden to support them?
11:20 - 11:45 (20+5 min)	Farming and biodiversity - where are borders for the high nature values? A case study of Estonia	<i>Iiri Raa</i> <i>ARC, Estonia</i> “High nature values” versus “nature values”? What and who is defining thresholds? What are the values to be preserved, how to identify and measure them? Does the secret for future farmland biodiversity lie in the large scale landscape heterogeneity or in small-scale specialized protection actions? Challenges for the identification of HNV farmland and its values a practical example from Estonia
11:45 - 12:15 30 min	Reflection of presentations and discussion on questions raised by the presentations. Brief introduction to the afternoon session.	
12:15 - 13:15	Lunch	

DAY 1 (November 14, Wednesday)

SESSION B: How to monitor, calculate and interpret farmland biodiversity (BD) - is five better than six?

This session explores the functions of monitoring of farmland BD and its role in assessment of policies.

Main questions which this session is trying to find answers:

- **Why do we need and how can we use BD monitoring in policy making?** How much we can rely on and use assumptions and “common sense” without measuring the actual situation? Use and usefulness of “universal” farmland BD indicators
- **How to set targets for farmland BD in the policies and measure achievements?** Targets at EU, regional and national level? Where goes the line between the “species richness” and “species poverty”? How to find best composition of species for high BD? How to quantify which level of farmland BD is high enough to preserve biodiversity and ensure ecosystem services in the region?
- **Influence of diverse farmland landscapes in the region** - different species have different needs – how to decide which landscape features/species should be preferred and measures selected to meet these controversial requirements of the species/habitats? (e.g. what is better – open landscape or mosaic landscape?) How to find the balance in setting the preservation targets?
- **Interpretation of the monitoring results in the light of agricultural management – can we find causes for changes in the monitored taxa?** How to differentiate landscape and agriculture derived impacts? How to explain changes if one indicator shows positive and the other negative trend? Which and how many intervening factors (e.g. landscape indices, land use data, weather conditions, and predators) should be considered while analysing farmland BD indicators? The trade-off of including too many factors in (model) analysis
- **What is the specific role of farmland biodiversity in providing ecosystem services and public goods in Baltic Sea Region?**

Time	Presentation/action	Presenter
13:15 - 13:35 (15+5 min)	Are birds the best indicators for farmland?	<i>Juha Tiainen</i> <i>Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute, Finland</i> How to monitor farmland birds for the policy impact purposes? How to set targets? What needs to be considered to find causes for changes in the monitored taxa? How results depend on the monitoring objects and the quality of the monitoring? What is expected from the AE monitoring and what do AE monitoring results actually represent and demonstrate? How can trends in farmland birds be related to changes in other taxa?
13:35 - 13:55 (15+5 min)	Bumblebees as farmland biodiversity indicators in Estonia	<i>Eneli Viik</i> <i>ARC, Estonia</i> Bumblebee monitoring in the frame of AE evaluation and challenges of interpreting results in policy and multiple intervening factors context. Why bumblebees as the farmland biodiversity indicators? How to set targets? What kind of farming actions may influence this taxa – leguminous crops in the crop-rotation, use of pesticides, etc.
13:55 - 14:15 (15+5 min)	Plant communities of high nature value grasslands	<i>Anders Jacobsson</i> <i>Swedish Species Information Centre, Sweden</i> Value of the grassland plant communities. Reflecting the values - how to use plants as indicators? How to make decision – is it valuable at all? How to set targets? Should identification of high nature value grassland plant communities be calibrated between Member States? Should approach to restoration and management be calibrated between Member States? Do we need best practice guidelines or should rely on knowledge of the farmer and local level officials?
14:15 - 14:30 (15 min)	Coffee break	
14:30-15:50 (~1,5h)	A participatory discussion technique will be used to address 3 key questions: 14:30 – 15:30 Discussion rounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question 1: Why do we need and how can we use BD monitoring in policy making? • Question 2: How to set targets for (evaluation of) the policies and measure achievements? • Question 3: How to improve the quality of BD monitoring and data accessibility in the BSR? Do we need a common database and which data should be included? 15:30 – 15:50 Brief presentation of discussed issues at plenary	

<p>15:50 - 16:10 (15+5 min)</p>	<p>Landscape indices and farmland biodiversity</p>	<p><i>Speaker to be confirmed</i></p> <p>Which landscape characteristics should be considered in (agricultural) policy assessments? Which landscape indices to choose and how, what do they present, pros- and cons. How to set targets?</p>
<p>16:10 - 16:30 (15+5 min)</p>	<p>Role of functional agro-biodiversity (FAB) in preserving nature values</p>	<p><i>Speaker to be confirmed</i></p> <p>Introduction of FAB concept as an example of an action which is beneficial both for a farmer and for biodiversity and is not a supported policy measure</p> <p>Experiences on fine-tuned multifunctional vegetation strips (insects and vegetation interactions, blooming conveyor according to the insects spreading)</p>
<p>16:30 - 18:15 (~1,5 h)</p>	<p>A participatory discussion technique will be used to address 4 key questions:</p> <p>16:30 – 17:50 Discussion rounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question 4: What is the specific role of farmland biodiversity in providing ecosystem services and public goods in the BSR? • Question 5: Is it possible to define high nature value farming systems in the BSR, if yes, then how? • Question 6: Impacts of landscape heterogeneity - how to decide which landscapes/species should be preferred and measures selected to meet controversial requirements of the species/habitats? • Question 7: Could functional agro-biodiversity (FAB) concept 'BD working for a farmer' be advised in the BSR as one solution to promote sustainable agricultural production? How to make it applicable? <p>17:50 – 18:10 Brief presentation of discussed issues at plenary</p> <p>18:10 – 18:15 Conclusion of the day</p>	
<p>20:00 - 22:00</p>	<p>Dinner</p>	

DAY 2 (November 15, Thursday)

SESSION C: Common Objectives and Measures to Solve Common Problems?

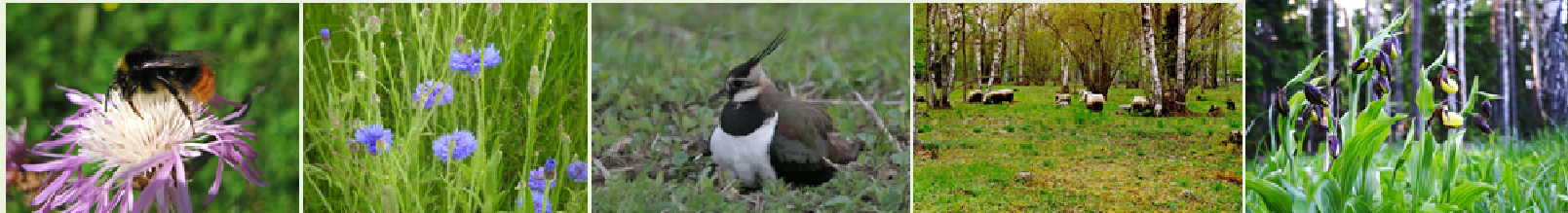
This session will begin exploration of the potential for a common approach amongst the EU Member States in the BSR for optimising the use of future RDP measures (2014-2020) to protect farmland biodiversity in the region. A participatory approach will be used to encourage the sharing of experiences between practitioners and policy-makers from around the BSR

Time	Presentation/action
09:00 - 09:10	Introduction of the day
09:10 - 11:15 (~2 h)	<p>POSTER SESSION Practical measures implemented (e.g. under CAP/RDP) to preserve farmland biodiversity All BSR countries present their case studies in poster format – participants can walk around and ask additional questions from representatives of country posters <i>NB! ARC will collect relevant information from each country beforehand (see also separate format for this) and prepare posters in the same format for better tracking the information</i></p> <p>A participatory discussion technique will be used to address 3 key opening questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the common farmland biodiversity issues in the BSR?• Is it desirable and / or feasible to co-ordinate future policy measures in the BSR Member States to more effectively protect farmland biodiversity in the region? How to improve this cooperation?• What common measures could be important for including in all RDPs of the BSR? <p>Presentation of results of 3 group sessions, discussion</p>
11:15 - 11:30 (15 min)	Coffee Break

DAY 2 (November 15, Thursday)

SESSION D: Moving towards future – applicable solutions for common farmland biodiversity issues?

Time	Presentation/action
11:30 - 13:00 (1,5 h)	Open Discussion Session Participants will be invited to set their own agenda for the next 3 hours of the programme (excluding lunch) until 15:15 by selecting key issues ('hot topics') of specific interest / concern to them. Space and time will be provided for participants to engage deeply, creatively and flexibly in discussion of these issues. The facilitator will begin the session by providing an overview of the process
13:00 - 13:45 (45 min)	Lunch
13:45 - 15:15 (1,5 h)	Open Discussion Session (continues)
15:15 - 15:35 (20 min)	Preservation of farmland biodiversity in the Baltic Sea Region - how to better meet the needs of a farmer, farmland and society? <i>Mark Redman, tbc</i> There are different expectations and needs from different point of view of farmers, farmland and society – but what should and could be changed in the light of CAP? How public goods concept or ecosystem services can provide it?
15:35 - 16:15	Results of Open Discussion Sessions and general reflections of the conference Feedback from the conveners of the open discussion groups
16:15 - 16:30	Closing the conference Pille Koorberg , ARC, Estonia



Photos: E. Viik, P. Koorberg, U. Paal, T. Kukk, A. Aasapõllu