

Contribution of agri-environmental measures under Rural Development Programmes for the Aquatic warbler conservation in Lithuania and Poland: **comparative overview and local experiences**

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Lithuania (2014-2020)

Landscape stewardship program

- Activity (1): AW conservation in natural & semi-natural meadows (291 eur/ha)
- Activity (2): AW conservation in wetlands (160 eur/ha)

Support to non-productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-env. and climate objectives

(one-time investment for habitat restoration (up to 80000 eur)

Poland (2007-2013)

Protection of birds breeding habitats (321 eur/ha)

Targeted bird habitat protection package for 10 ground nesting, threatened meadow birds

Poland (2014-2020)

Protection of birds breeding habitats (320 eur/ha)

Three well targeted subpackages:

- Lapwing habitats (VV,LL,GG,TT)
- Curlew habitats (NA, GM)
- Aquatic Warbler habitats (AP)

Lithuania: core Requirements

AW Protection of birds breeding habitats (291 eur/ha)

- 2 mowing dates:
 - “Early mowing” (Jul.1-31) in case of absence of AW;
 - “Late mowing” (after Aug. 15) in AW breeding areas;

AW conservation in wetlands (160 eur/ha)

- Mowing after Aug. 1st
- Mowing 50% of the field each year;

Support to non-productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-env. and climate objectives

- Habitat restoration activities (bush, reed removal and mowing of old grass);
- After one year implementation – obligatory switch to the respective AW conservation AEM;

Poland: core Requirements

(Developed by OTOP – Gąsiorowo meeting, approved by MoA)

Protection of Aquatic Warbler breeding habitats (320 eur/ha)

- 1 mowing date:
 - Late mowing (since Aug. 15 till Feb. 15) in AW breeding areas;
 - Mowing 15 do 85% of the field each year



Other requirements

Feature	Lithuania	Poland
Biomass removal deadlines	October 1 st (exceptional cases – March 1 st next year)	2 weeks after mowing biomass should be baled and removed
Grazing	1 SLU (end 15 th Oct.)	0,5 SLU (since 15th May. till 31 th July.) 1 SLU (since 1st Aug. till 31 th Oct.) Based on expert recommendations
Fertilization & Drainage	Forbidden	Forbidden

Special administration features - Lithuania

Measure is eligible on all confirmed breeding sites of Aquatic Warbler;

Package: Protection of Aquatic Warbler breeding habitats meadows

Two part documentation scheme developed and supervised by Central Farmer Advisory Office:

- AES plan prepared by licenced AES advisor
- Bird habitat records based on field survey prepared by licenced bird expert

Special administration features - Poland

All measures are eligible in limited area pre-defined on basis of expert research;

Activity (1): AW conservation in natural & semi-natural meadows

- Involved protected areas administration, which defines which areas needs “early mowing”

Support to non-productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-env. and climate objectives

- Financed according individual budget agreed with municipality officer;
- Maximum investment is up to 80 000 eur (3.5 mln. eur allocated for the measure)

Possible combination with other measures

Lithuania

- Relevant AW agri-env. Measure (291 eur or 160 eur);
- Direct payment (~143 eur/ha);
- LFA (61 eur/ha);
- Natura 2000 payment (70 eur/ha)

Poland

- Direct payment (~150 eur/ha);
- LFA payment (~100 eur/ha);

Practical implementation: major achievements and challenges

Lithuania:

- Starting only at 2015;
- Involvement of Protected areas administration – first experience on such trans-institutional coordination;
- Very short timing between AW monitoring date (~June 10th) and information to farmers deadline (June 15th);

Poland:

- Starting since 2015;
- Based on previous experiences of advisors, experts and farmers;
- Very short timing between AW monitoring date (~June 10th) and information to farmers deadline (June 15th);

Overall conclusions

- Well targeted Aquatic Warbler scheme are essential to recurrent management of AW habitats;
- Allow sustainability of conservation projects (LIFE);

Lithuania

- Introduction of the AEM is a major achievement;
- Effects should be monitored and new schemes fine tuned;
- More careful look at the payment level;

Poland

- AES in Poland allow large scale, long term habitat management;