

LITHUANIA

Case area action plan Žuvintas Reserve and agriculture case area, Lithuania

Recommendations:

1. In order to ensure the protection of the ecosystems in the protected areas, the activities of Simnas fishery ponds must be balanced with the protection needs of the protected areas, the aim must be to reduce the impact on Žuvintas biosphere reserve. There is a need for close cooperation between stakeholders on the impact minimisation of fishery ponds on the catchment and protected areas. A concrete action plan is needed for the Dovine River catchment, reconciling economic and environmental objectives and comprehensively considering the impacts of the decisions at the catchment level.
2. Work closely with local farmers, educate and help them address unsustainable farming practices resulting in nutrient and chemical toxin run-off from fields into water bodies.
3. Progress with mainstreaming the use of soil testing and fertilisation plans and encouraging intensive farmers to use precision farming technologies to optimise fertiliser use.
4. Address the data gaps. While closely working with farmers one could collect data into a case area database on fertilization, pesticide and other hazardous chemical use in farms. Improve water quality data collection, also, ensure proper analysis and interpretation is done in order to identify pollution sources, other issues and necessary measures.
5. Terminate (or minimise) practices leaving open soil such as fallow land and minimise arable land areas in the sensitive zones. There should be a targeted promotion of agri-environmental schemes, especially catch crop and stubble fields over winter and extensive management of meadows and wetlands.
6. Effective local water management in the case area could be achieved through establishing a specific expert position within the protected territory, catchment or municipality such as Catchment Officers in Denmark.
7. Empower and engage local communities and local action groups in water management and protection but for their successful participation it is important that they have a certain level of environmental and local knowledge on condition of and threats to local water bodies. Carry out environmental education of locals.
8. In collaboration with universities carry out a study on impacts of climate change and hydrological system transformations for the runoff of the Žuvintas basin and the impact on the water balance on lake Žuvintas. Research and discussions with experts and stakeholders are needed on possibilities for further restoration and renaturalisation of the hydrological cycle.

We are working on improving recommendations over this summer to submit them for river basin management plans. Also, our final results from the monitoring activities should be finished in Autumn. We will improve our recommendations by then and will have more interactions with stakeholders then.



Dovine river catchment

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