Situation of grasslands in Lithuania

Expert meeting on grassland conservation at the Boreal biogeographic region

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Baltic Environmental Forum

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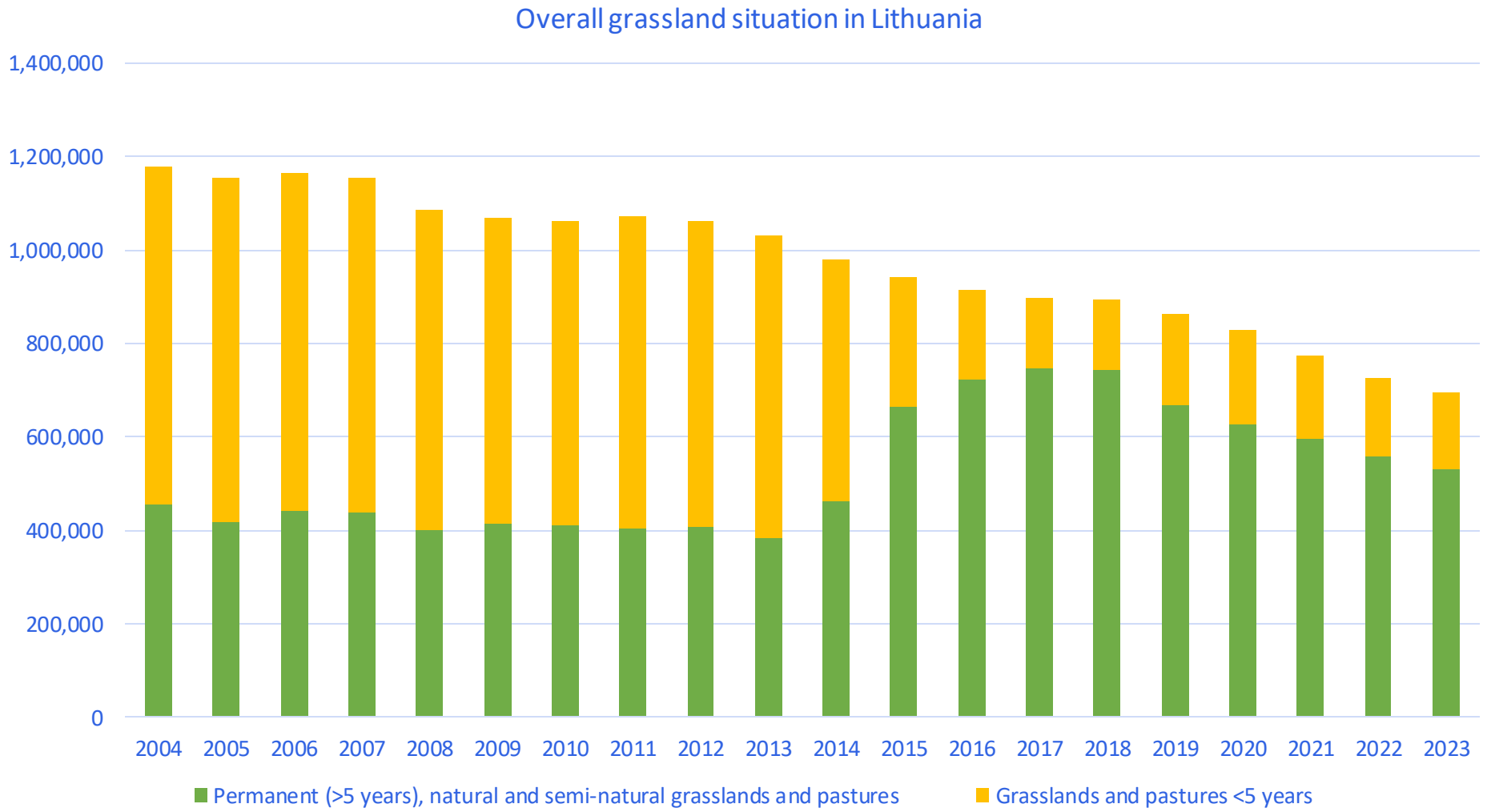
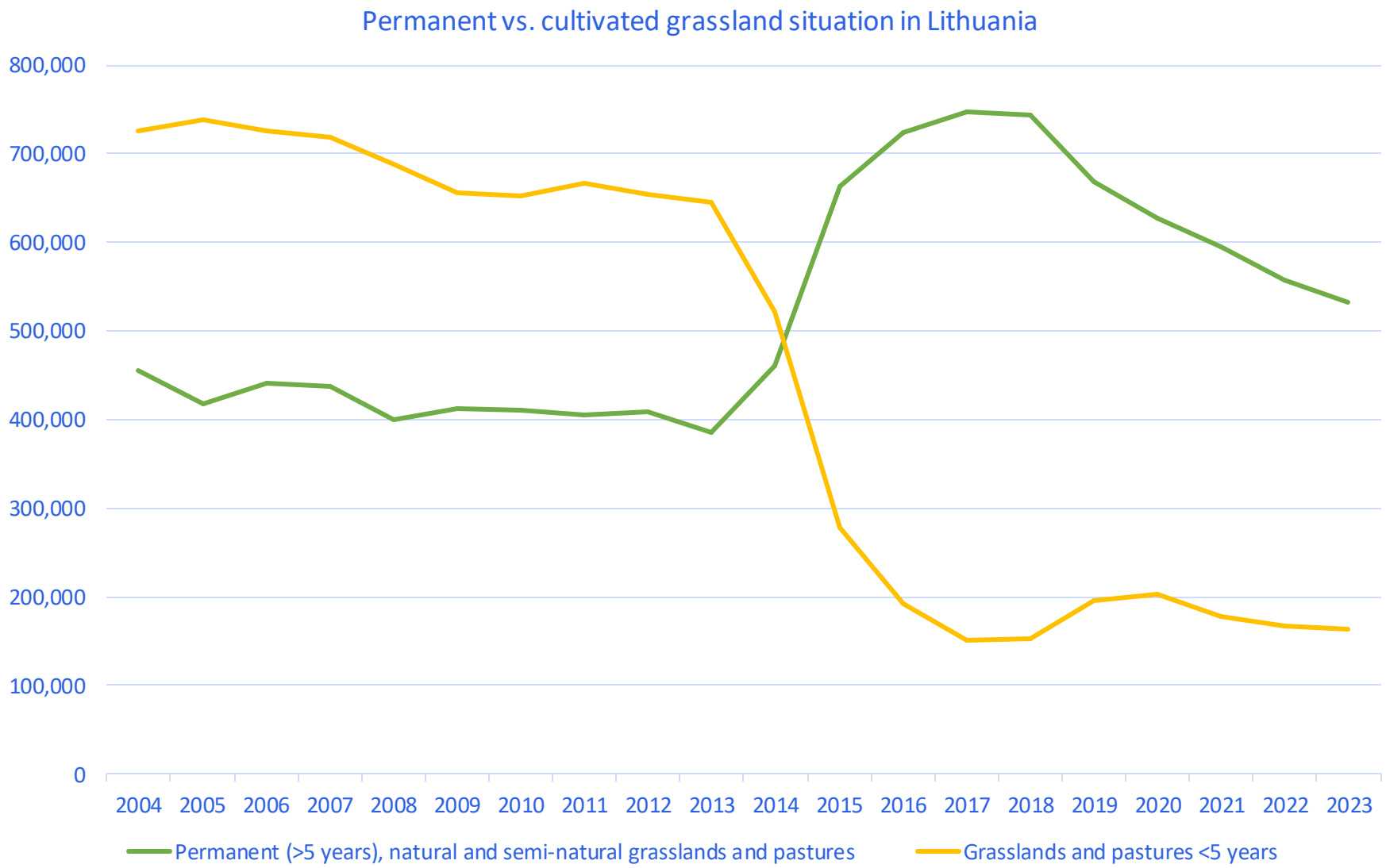
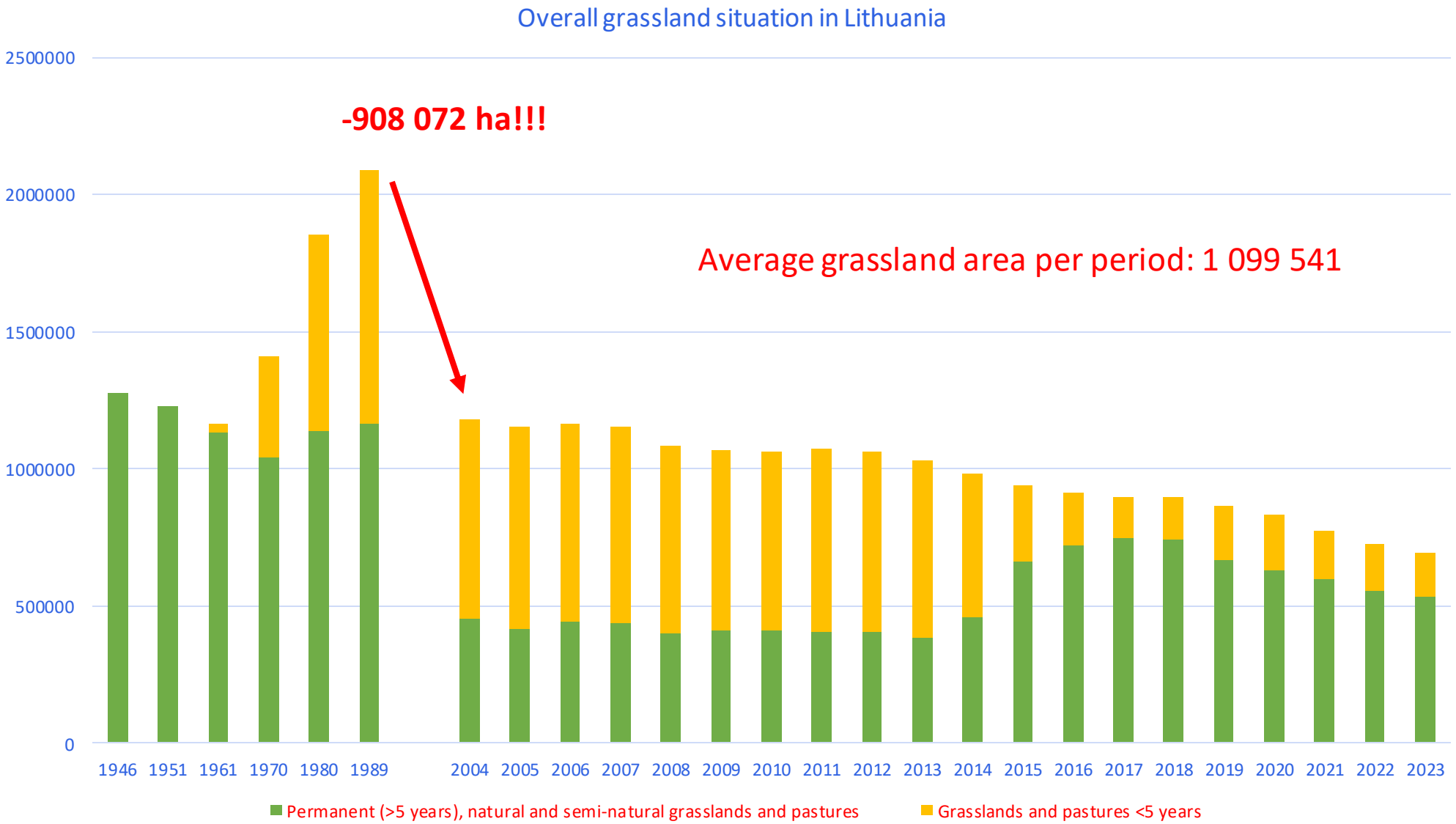
Area of permanent grasslands in the country, trends and possible reasons of grasslands area dynamics




Permanent vs. cultivated grassland situation in Lithuania
800,000
700,000
600,000
500,000
400,000
300,000
200,000
100,000
0
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
Permanent (>5 years), natural and semi-natural grasslands and pastures
Grasslands and pastures <5 years

No.	Land use	1946 thousand, ha	1951 thousand, ha	1961 thousand, ha	1970 thousand, ha	1980 thousand, ha	1989 thousand, ha
1.	Arable land	2966,3	2994,1	2770,4	2500,1	2491,6	2306,4
2.	Orchards	35,6	28,3	36,8	51,4	53,8	49,1
3.	Meadows	789,6	758,1	648,2	432,6	352,8	282,5
	of them cultural	-	-	-	127,0	199,1	217,1
4.	Pastures	486,5	469,6	482,2	610,6	783,2	884,6
	of them cultural	-	-	36,6	242,5	520,7	704,2
	Total agriculture land use	4278,0	4250,1	3937,6	3594,7	3681,4	3522,6
5.	Forests	1202,4	1335,4	1685,5	1833,9	1955,0	1963,6
6.	Tree and bushes greenery	149,3	194,6	164,1	221,1	84,7	64,6
7.	Swamps	202,7	191,9	203,2	248,4	167,3	157,3
8.	Waters	173,1	191,3	213,5	227,2	246,5	263,2
9.	Roads, streets, squares	190,8	136,2	108,7	121,2	114,1	133,5
10.	Built-up area	101,2	76,6	95,0	113,9	143,4	168,1
11.	Other land	125,7	126,5	122,5	169,7	137,7	257,2
	All land area	**6423,2**	**6502,6**	**6530,1**	**6530,1**	**6530,1**	**6530,1**


Overall grassland situation in Lithuania
2500000
2000000
1500000
1000000
500000
0
-908 072 ha!!!
Average grassland area per period: 1 099 541
1946 1951 1961 1970 1980 1989 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023
Permanent (>5 years), natural and semi-natural grasslands and pastures
Grasslands and pastures <5 years

Possible reasons of grasslands area dynamics

- Change of economic and social situation;
- Huge decline in animal numbers;
- Change in farming practises;
- Support system not in favour for animal husbandry;
- Technical error in declaration system rules and setting the reference data???

Situation analysis of (EU) protected grassland habitats in the country (trends, conservation status, overview on the reasons determining existing state of grassland habitats)

Habitat code	Habitat	Status 2013	Status 2019
2330	Nesusivėrusios žemyninės smiltpievės	U2	U2
4030	Viržynai	XX	U2
5130	Kadagynai	U1	U1
6120	*Xeric sand calcareous grasslands	U2	U2
6210	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)	U2	U2
6230	*Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe)	U2	U2
6270	*Fennoscandian lowland species-rich dry to mesic grasslands	U1	U1
6410	Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae)	U2	U2
6430	Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels	U1	U2
6450	Northern boreal alluvial meadows	U1	U2
6510	Lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis)	U1	U1
6530	*Fennoscandian wooded meadows	U2	U2
9070	Fennoscandian wooded pastures	U2	U2

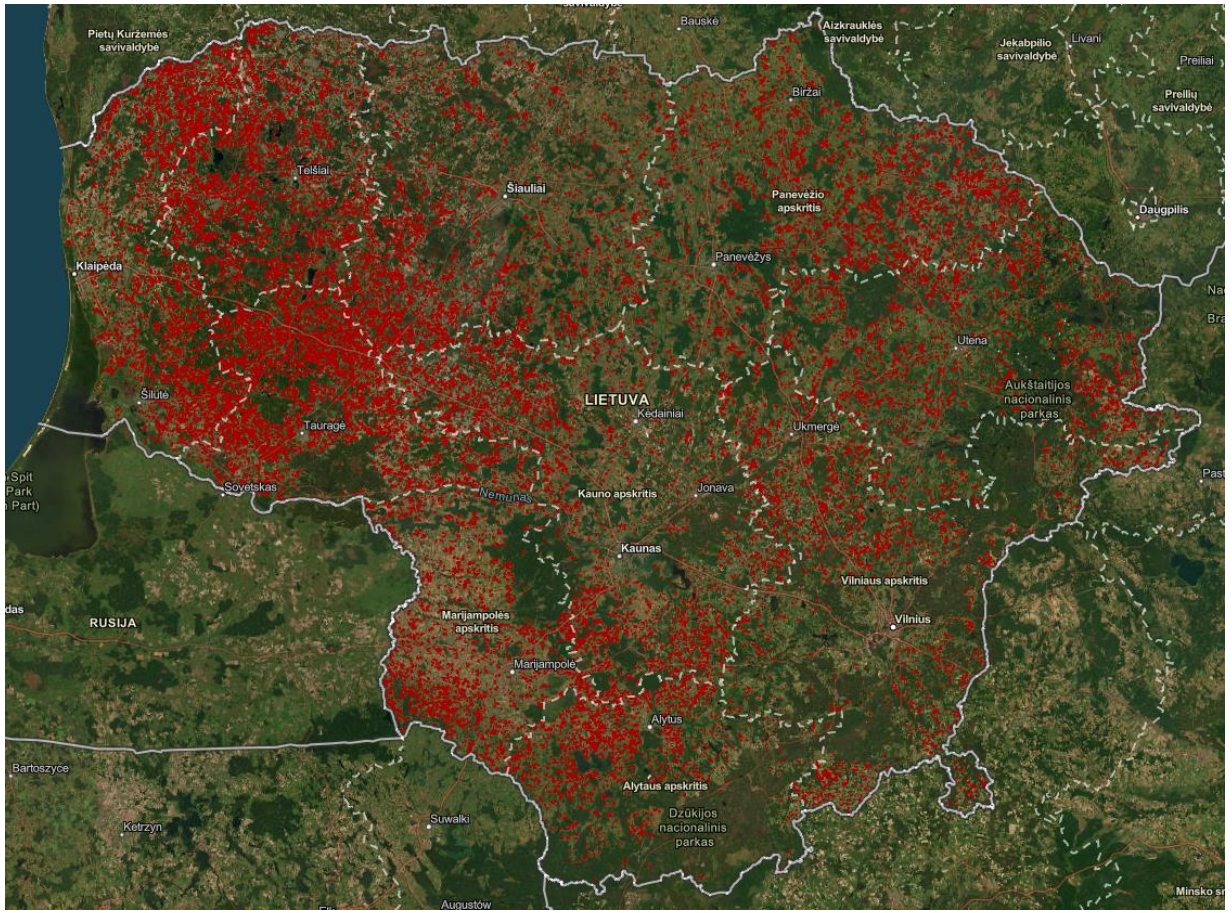
Reasons:

- Abandonment (establishment of invasive and nitrophilic species;
- Transformation to cultural grasslands, arable land or forest;
- Shredding;
- Intensive grazing;
- Loss of small farms;
- Decline of livestock farming;

Update of ongoing developments/initiatives, challenges and successes regarding grassland conservation in the country (from perspective of the competent authority)

Most of the farmers treat permanent grasslands as a big burden

- In 2021 and 2022 LT farmers ploughed up more than 5 % of permanent grasslands area compared to the reference year, however MoA provided corrected statistical data (for example, areas which became organic farms, forest or wetlands were excluded etc.) and farmers didn't need to restore any grasslands.
- In 2023 the area of ploughed permanent grasslands got even bigger and reached 18,64 %! This time MoA managed to convince EC to reduce LT reference area from 746 thousand to 694 thousand ha and that resulted in much smaller area of grasslands which needs to be restored (still it is around 110 thousand ha!).
- Yet LT farmers do not want to restore grasslands and think that government should solve this problem.



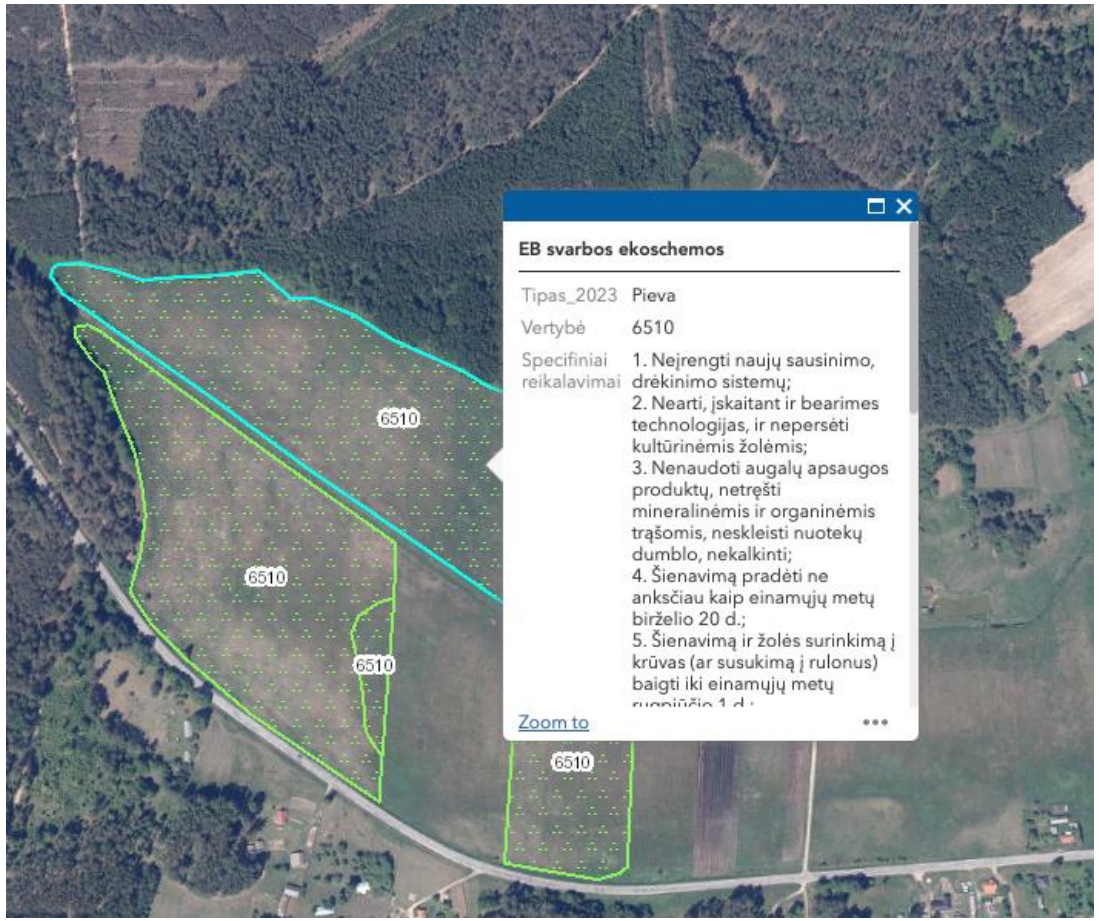
Other challenges related to grassland conservation in the country

- Less and less farmers keep cattle – lack of support for the animal husbandry sector;
- Most of the cattle are kept inside and have small impact on the maintaining of grasslands;
- Excess biomass (lack of alternatives, such as composting sites, production of pellets etc.);
- Too small payment rates;
- Participation in eco-shemes and Natura 2000 measures is not compatible anymore;
- To narrow definition of grasslands (some areas are treated as not eligible for payments, for example wooded meadows);
- CAP Strategic Plan is the main instrument to save permanent grasslands in our country, but big amount of money is spent for other eco-schemes which have much smaller environmental value (for example, certified seed).
- Ban of shredding (in 2021) made management of grasslands more challenging/expensive?


139501-4940
139502-920
142502-6188
139502-8108
139501-7081
139501-4940
139502-6200
139501-5764
139502-401
139501-6393
139501-4183
139501-2986
139501-3589
139502-3804

Initiatives and successes

- In 2021 investment measure for restoration of habitats of the endangered bird – aquatic warbler was extended and now includes long list of habitats, plant, insect, reptile and bird species;
- Agricultural sector slowly stars to accept not “perfectly” managed grasslands – with some trees, shrubs etc.
- LIFE IP Naturalit team prepared two policy briefs which provided useful insights related to grass shredding and grazing of wooded meadows;
- Pilot testing of result-based agri-environmental scheme;
- Good farmer championship.



Good old days for grasslands ☺ Thank you!

Challenges/successes of setting FRVs

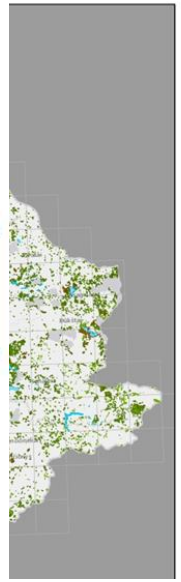
National habitats inventory 2010-2015:

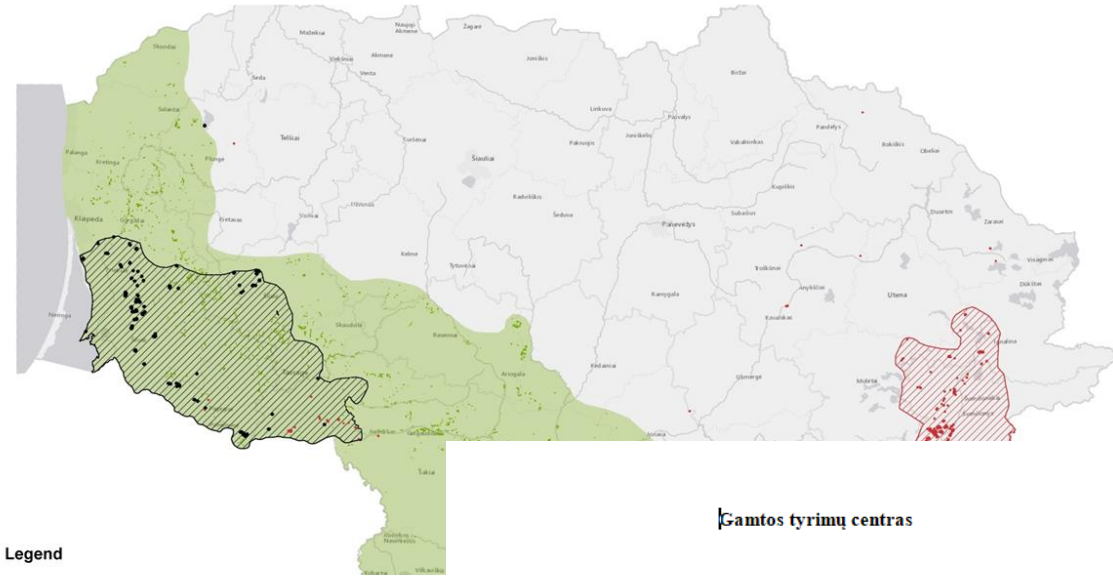
- evidence on habitat ranges and on habitat area collected;
- national level conservation objectives for habitat area to be maintained at national and at Natura 2000 network level legally approved;
- habitat monitoring methodology developed;
- definitions of good conservation status (structure and functions) for habitats at national level developed.

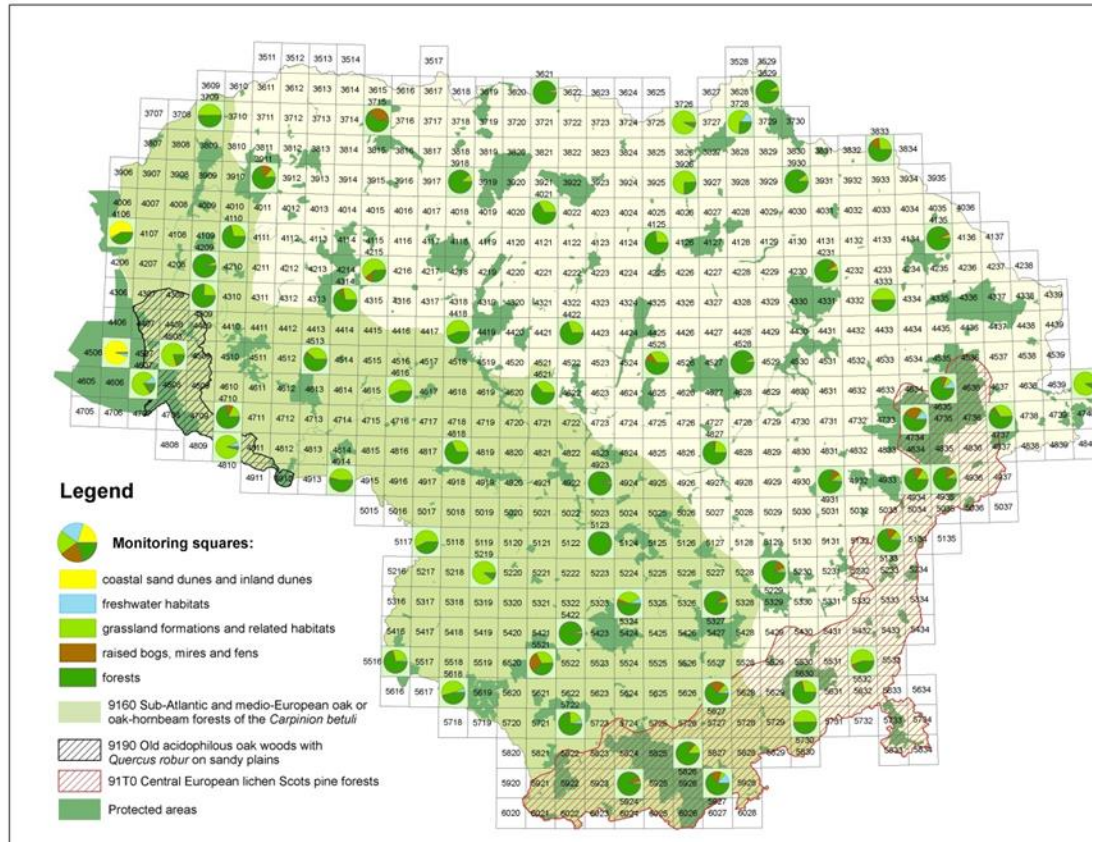
Kraštovaizdžio ir biologinės įvairovės išsaugojimo 2015–2020 metų veiksmų plano 4 priedas

EUROPOS BENDRIJOS SVARBOS NATŪRALIŲ BUVEINIŲ NACIONALINIAI APSAUGOS TIKSLAI

Eil. Nr.	Buveinės pavadinimas	Siekiamas išsaugoti buveinės plotas, ha	
		iš viso šalyje	iš jo BAST tinkle
1	1130 Upių žiotys	7611	7449
2	1150 Lagūnos	31963	30893
3	1170 Rifai	46104	18819
4	2110 Užuomazginės pustomos kopos	205	138
5	2120 Baltosios kopos	824	509
6	2130 Pilkosios kopos	846	659
7	2140 Kopų varnauogynai	56	56
8	2170 Kopų gluosnynai		
9	2180 Medžiais apaugusios pajūrio kopos		
10	2190 Drėgnos tarpkopės		
11	2320 Pajūrio smėlynų tyruliai		
12	2330 Nesusivėrusios žemyninės smiltpievės		
13	3130 Mažai mineralizuoti ežerai su būdmainių augalų bendrijomis		
14	3140 Ežerai su menturdumblių bendrijomis		
15	3150 Natūralūs eutrofiniai ežerai su plūdžių arba aštrių bendrijomis		
16	3160 Natūralūs distrofiniai ežerai		
17	3190 Gipso karsto ežerai		
18	3260 Upių sraunumos su kurklių bendrijomis		
19	3270 Dumblingos upių pakrantės		
20	4030 Viržynai		
21	5130 Kadagynai		
22	6120 Karbonatinių smėlynų pievos		
23	6210 Stepinės pievos		
24	6230 Rūšių turtingi briedgaurynai		
25	6270 Rūšių turtingi smilgynai		
26	6410 Melvenynai		
27	6430 Eutrofiniai aukštieji žolynai		
28	6450 Aliuvinės pievos		
29	6510 Šienaujamos mezofitų pievos		
30	6530 Miškapievės		
31	7110 Aktyvūs aukštapelkės		







Gamtos tyrimų centras

EB SVARBOS NATŪRALIŲ BUVEINIŲ PALANKIOS APSAUGOS BŪKLĖS KRITERIJŲ NUSTATYMAS IR MONITORINGO SISTEMOS METODINIŲ PAGRINDŲ SUKŪRIMAS

I dalis

EB svarbos buveinių inventorizavimo duomenų analizė ir palankios apsaugos būklės kriterijų nustatymas

Ataskaita pagal 2014 m. lapkričio 28 d. sutartį su Lietuvos Respublikos Aplinkos ministerija Nr. VPS-2014-188-ES

2015, Vilnius

Current state on implementation and update of prioritized action framework (PAF) for Natura 2000

LT PAF was submitted to European Commission on 18th of March 2022.

Till now we didn't monitor the implementation of PAF very actively, but MoE is planning to revise it this year. The goal is to evaluate which measures foreseen in the PAF are being implemented already, which will be implemented later, and which will possibly not.

To facilitate communication with key stakeholders MoE (implementing one of LIFE IP Naturalit activities) formed the Monitoring group for the Lithuanian PAF implementation (PAF monitoring group).

This group of experts from different institutions and organisations will help to ensure successful implementation of PAF and thus implement the Natura 2000 network to its full potential through guidance, and, where necessary, through enforcement action.