

## Project information

Protection of the wetland system in Polesia and adjacent areas, in the transboundary region of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine



The Polesia region comprises one of the largest river flood plain areas in Europe

Source: APB-BirdLife Belarus



Updated: 03/2015

## Background

Polesia, the largest cohesive wetland system in Europe (65,000 km<sup>2</sup>), is located in the border region of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. Due to its tremendous biodiversity, Polesia constitutes a crucial element of a European network of ecologically important areas. In Polesia, there can be found all large mammal species which are typical for extensive, relatively untouched ecosystems. The wetlands of this region include raised bogs, transitional bogs and fens as well as river flood plains and forests. Many bird species visit the region for a rest during their seasonal migration. In collaboration with governmental and non-governmental institutions in the three bordering countries, Frankfurt Zoological Society aims at an improved protection of those parts of Polesia which are particularly valuable in terms of nature conservation. Furthermore, the transboundary cooperation in the region is intended to be enhanced and strengthened.

## Project

Within the framework of this project, several important parts of Polesia were described from a nature conservation perspective, and the conservation status of some selected areas was improved.

The results in detail:

- Designations of national conservation areas were initiated for the two Belorussian sites Iput (10,000 hectares) and Lebediny Mokh (25,000 hectares), and for a site of 4,000 hectares size in the Russian Oblast Tver.

### Target country/region:

Belarus, Russia and Ukraine

### Duration:

03/2012 – 03/2015

### Beneficiaries:

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus

Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Russian Federation  
Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine

### Implementing organisation:

Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS)

### Project number:

22025

- ▶ Documents for conservation area nominations according to international criteria were prepared for seven sites and passed to the responsible authorities: three “Ramsar“ nominations (criteria by Ramsar Convention), three “Important Bird Area“ nominations (criteria by BirdLife International), and one “Emerald“ nomination (European network of conservation areas, criteria by Berne Convention).
- ▶ Action and management plans were prepared for three sites in order to improve their conservation status.
- ▶ The function as carbon sink could be proven for three sites by means of a professionally approved rapid assessment method. This method also facilitated the development of scenarios for the permanent protection of this function.
- ▶ On numerous events in the three project countries, different target groups (children and adolescents, adults, experts) were informed about the conservation value of Polesia.
- ▶ Groups of local volunteers working for nature conservation developed in some regions (mainly in Belarus).

The transboundary cooperation started promisingly, but – because of the tensions between Ukraine and Russia – could not reach its full potential.

---

**Federal Environment Ministry’s Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP)** for Environmental Protection in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia as well as other neighboring countries to the European Union

**AAP Project Service Unit:**

[AAP-info@uba.de](mailto:AAP-info@uba.de)

[www.uba.de/en/advisory-assistance-programme](http://www.uba.de/en/advisory-assistance-programme)

[www.uba.de/en/project-database-advisory-assistance-programme](http://www.uba.de/en/project-database-advisory-assistance-programme)

**Thematic management:**

Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)

Heinrich Schmauder

Tel.: +49-228-849-11765

[heinrich.schmauder@bfm.de](mailto:heinrich.schmauder@bfm.de)

**Project coordination:**

AAP Project Service Unit

Dr. Rita Willing

Tel.: +49-340-2103-2698

[rita.willing@uba.de](mailto:rita.willing@uba.de)