

# Rewilding Oder Delta



## EVENT - REPORT

### 2nd German-Polish exchange between stakeholders from nature conservation, agriculture, forestry, tourism, and science in Rothenklempenow in the Ueckermünde Heath, 23. 09. 2021.

*On 23 September 2021, the second part of the German-Polish exchange between stakeholders from nature conservation, agriculture, forestry and science took place in Rothenklempenow in the Ueckermünde Heath. The meeting was organised by us within the framework of the Interreg Va project "Wildes (er)leben am Haff" (English: Wild life at the Lagoon) in order to showcase the long-standing experiences of the actors in our cross-border region and also to discuss wishes, concerns and ideas for the future of the area.*

#### **Biodiversity in agriculture**

At the beginning of the meeting, **Uwe Greff** and **Stefan Decke** (managers of BioBoden) summarised the work, long-term goals and challenges of the **BioBoden** cooperative and the organic farming community **Höfegemeinschaft Pommern**. Both projects are excellent examples of the strong will to promote environmental protection and sustainable development in the region and of openness for dialogue on issues, which can be controversial for farmers, such as nature and climate protection in agriculture. Much is possible if everyone is involved from the get-go, and no one feels excluded or left out - this was the consensus of the participants. However, the goals and demands of nature conservation are sometimes received in a contradictory manner by farmers and, together with short-term project durations, are not always considered feasible. On the other hand, there is agreement that some rules and requirements of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) make it difficult for farmers to manage their land in a way that is compatible with nature conservation, albeit offering economic incentives.

**Tobias Keye** from the **RCE Stettiner Haff**, the first recognised Regional Centre of Excellence for Education for Sustainable Development of the United Nations University in eastern Germany, then explained the educational project "Weltacker - Zukunft 2000 m<sup>2</sup>" (Worldfield - Future 2000 m<sup>2</sup>), which has been set up on the premises of the Höfegemeinschaft. Education, awareness, and acceptance of the local population are fundamentally important if sustainable change is to be achieved, Keye emphasised. For further cooperation, the topics of water balance, organic soils and climate impacts of agriculture were highlighted as particularly relevant.

#### **Compromise between land use and nature conservation**

After lunch including freshly harvested produce from the fields and the garden of the farm community, we set out to visit the Höfegemeinschaft's moorland areas, which are particularly valuable from a nature conservation point of view, and then to Lake Latzig, where we discussed the challenges of restoring flowing waters to their natural state. Led by **Dr Uwe Fuellhaas** from the **DBU** and the federal foresters **Wolf Menzel**, **Christian Petri** and **Maximilian Marr**, the second part of the field trip took us first to the DBU Natural Heritage areas of the Martensches Bruch near the village of Hintersee. Here, the foresters presented the impressive

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efforts behind achieving concrete nature conservation results and improvements in the water balance of formerly drained moors. The planning for the project had begun already in 2009, with the water gradually dammed in small steps since 2011, which triggered an ongoing revival of the landscape. Since then, the Martensche Bruch has become a habitat for a variety of wildlife. Numerous amphibians, butterflies and birds such as white-tailed eagles and great egrets have colonised the area; and according to monitoring results, 28 different mammal species as well. As one of the foresters reported, wolves are also regularly observed here and in the surrounding natural heritage areas.

The excursion continued to the Zopienwiese meadow and the forest areas at the Großer Müttelburger lake, which is crossed by the German-Polish border. Here, the DBU Naturerbe GmbH plans to use flexible water management to continue to preserve the meadows, which are drained via a system of ditches, for pasture use, while at the same time promoting biodiversity and climate protection. This approach is intended to show how compromises between land use and nature conservation can be implemented.

## Opportunities and challenges

Finally, we visited the river Beeke, which flows out of Lake Müttelburg and flows into Lake Neuwarf near Rieth, a bay of the Szczecin Lagoon. The reed beds and riparian forests on its banks provide a home to many species, such as beavers. Due to artificial deepening, presumably to secure the border, there are many areas where the natural course of the river and thus its ecological functions, for example as a spawning area for various fish species, are restricted. We are aiming at the renaturation of the Beeke river in a transboundary project to be carried out together with partners from Germany and Poland.

## Project background

The exchange took place within the framework of our project "**Wildes (er)leben am Haff**" (English: Wild life at the Lagoon) financed by the Small Projects Fund of the Euroregion Pomerania, Interreg Va. The first exchange took place online on 27 May and brought together representatives of 18 regionally active nature conservation organisations from Germany and Poland to discuss opportunities, threats and cooperation possibilities for habitat protection and sustainable regional development at the Szczecin Lagoon under the motto "Rewilding Oder Delta - New Ideas for Transboundary Nature Conservation".

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