

<b>Example of good practice</b>	<b>Mowers for corncrakes - working together towards conservation</b>
<b>Category</b>	<b>Management, wildlife, local products</b>
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Public institution (PI) Zeleni prsten</b>
<b>Partners</b>	<b>Local associations of Posavian Horse Breeders</b> <b>Federation of Posavian Horse Breeders Association</b> <b>Cultural Artistic Society Veleševac</b> <b>Hunting Society Patka</b> <b>Local Self-Government Units - Municipalities of Orle and Velika Gorica</b> <b>Hrvatske šume</b> <b>Hrvatske vode</b> <b>The Noble Municipality of Turopolje</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Turopolje and Odransko polje</b>
<b>Country</b>	<b>Croatia</b>
<b>Protection category</b>	<b>IUCN V / Significant landscape</b>
<b>Scope of implementation (local, national)</b>	<b>Local</b>
<b>Implementation time</b>	<b>4 years</b>
<b>Number of employees</b>	<b>1 (expert associate, 4 months a year)</b>
<b>Budget</b>	<b>€ 55,000</b>
<b>Funding source</b>	<b>State budget; Interreg</b>
<b>Project info</b>	<a href="http://zeleni-prsten.hr/web/kosci-za-kosce-3/">http://zeleni-prsten.hr/web/kosci-za-kosce-3/</a>
<b>Contact</b>	<b>Martina Glasnović <a href="mailto:martina@zeleni-prsten.hr">martina@zeleni-prsten.hr</a></b>
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The number of corncrakes (<i>Crex crex</i>), an endangered bird species, has tripled since the first event - 43 corncrakes</b></li> <li>• <b>10 ha of grassland designated for mowing is mown at the right time and in the right way for corncrakes to nest</b></li> <li>• <b>A cooperative council with some 20 representatives has been established - an advisory body for the management of the protected area.</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the fact that all sectors are represented in the council, there are no possibilities of avoiding responsibilities or manipulating information.</li> <li>• The Kosci za kosce ("Mowers for corncrakes") event has celebrated its 10th anniversary. It is always organized on the first Saturday of August.</li> <li>• Between 200 and 300 people participated per event</li> <li>• 20 male and 8 female hand mowers compete - preserving old skills</li> <li>• 10 families mow to meet their own needs (40 people)</li> <li>• 4 pilot measures withdrawn to preserve corncrakes (€ 244 per hectare)</li> <li>• 5 ha of <i>Amorpha fruticosa</i> removed with the help of the hunting society</li> <li>• Corncrakes returning to some meadows thanks to the co-operation with the hunters</li> </ul>
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<b>Problem/opportunity</b>	
<b>Problem</b>	<p>Abandonment of agriculture and emigration from rural areas;          Corncrakes (<i>Crex crex</i>) disappear with the disappearance of their habitat;          The isolation of the area;          Poor infrastructure;          Documents written without consulting the people that carry out the fieldwork.</p>
<b>Opportunity</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rich traditional, cultural and historical heritage</li> <li>2. The existence of the Agri-environmental measure 10: Agriculture, the Environment and Climate Change - Corncrake</li> <li>3. Tourism potential</li> <li>4. Preservation of indigenous breeds (the Croatian Posavac and the Turopolje pig) and Posavina goose</li> </ol>
<b>Planning</b>	

Prerequisites for success	Existence of the incentives system Institutional understanding of the importance of co-operation with locals.
Initial idea	Reaching the solution by detecting the basic problems (succession, abandonment of agriculture) within the protected area.
Strategies	Draft of the Odransko polje Management Plan (from 2013). The annual Program of the PI Zeleni Prsten. County development strategy related to the preservation and protection of heritage. Part of the decree on the ecological measure of the Nature Protection Act. National conservation program for preserving autochthonous breeds.
Partner roles	<b>All partners are part of the cooperative council.</b> <b>Local associations of breeders of the Croatian Posavac - an agreement on cooperation to improve the status of breeding.</b> <b>The institution co-finances research. In situ breeding is still widely used in Croatia.</b> <b>Cultural Artistic Society Veleševac - the organizer of the Kosci za kosce event and the main supporters of work.</b> <b>Hunting Society Patka - maintenance of a part of the habitat, removal of <i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>. Game wardens are an important source of information.</b> <b>Hrvatske šume - managing parts of the area under their legal jurisdiction.</b> <b>Hrvatske vode - managing parts of the area under their legal jurisdiction.</b> <b>Local Self-Government Units - Orle and Velika Gorica Municipalities - cooperation on project preparation.</b> <b>The Noble Municipality of Turopolje - preservation of the Turopolje pigs.</b>
<b>Implementation</b>	
<b>Key Stages of the Process</b>	<b>1. Field presence in the protected area (the PI finds itself on the local population's territory and not vice versa).</b>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Understanding the issues of the area (cooperation with local self-government units and key stakeholders in the area).</li> <li>3. Adjusting the PI work plan to the real needs of the population for efficient space management.</li> <li>4. Educating and raising awareness of the population in order for them to know their rights and learn about the importance of nature protection and development potential.</li> <li>5. Inter-sectoral meetings in the field where the local community participated represents the forerunner of cooperative councils.</li> <li>6. Formation of a cooperative council.</li> <li>7. Organizing the Kosci za kosce event highlights the connection between traditional, biological, genetic, and cultural values.</li> <li>8. Ensuring that people have access to information about the measures available for achieving the goals of nature protection.</li> <li>9. Helping locals to use common pastures. Proclamation of the Police pasture as a common pasture.</li> <li>10. Product branding and placement assistance.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p><b>Formation of a cooperative council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of rules and procedures, election of the president and two vice-presidents, submission of materials and drafting work regulations, clearly defined agenda and topics. During each meeting, the council agrees on the topics to be discussed on the next meeting. Meeting at least once a year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Organization of the Kosci za kosce event:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presenting the results of the research on corncrakes, information on current projects and measures of rural development, production and distribution of materials (t-shirts, bags), traditional hand mowing presentation</li> </ul>

	<p>(competition), and removal of <i>Amorpha fruticosa</i> with the hunting society.</p> <p>Ensuring that people have access to information (incentives, leases):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizing 5 workshops on agri-environmental measures in the Zagreb County on 5 locations, steering the locals towards the competent services that can assist them with incentives, leases and more.</li> </ul>
Selection of stakeholders	We invited all stakeholders (horizontally and vertically) to the venue where the event is held. We also invited them at the time of establishing cooperative councils.
Stakeholder involvement	We send out the invitations in writing and by e-mail. Sending out written invitations guarantees a better response among the stakeholders. After that, we send a reminder by e-mail 3 days prior. Request confirmation of attendance by promising them t-shirts (at the event).
Inclusion of vulnerable groups	<p>The PI's program and work plan needs to be adapted to the seasonal jobs in agriculture. If we organize a workshop throughout the day, no locals will come, but we can count on the representatives from the institutions to show up. However, if we organize events in the evening, local people will come, but there will be nobody from the institutions.</p> <p>The result of the functioning of local governments, companies, volunteer fire fighting units is that men have most of the managerial positions.</p>
Right to information	<p>We answer questions in direct contact with the locals. 50 unofficial queries about the use of space per year.</p> <p>The cooperative council as a place where opinions can be articulated without fear of institutions. Due to the fact that all sectors are represented in the council, there are no possibilities of avoiding responsibilities or manipulating information.</p> <p>We talk about the work of the institution at local radio stations.</p>

	<b>We participate in public discussions for the use of space.</b>
Communication	We announce events and promote our work through Facebook, portal sites, local radio and TV stations. We make posters 2 weeks before the event. Recording a radio clip that is then repeatedly played on radio and TV stations.
Challenges	Administrative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By-laws are not flexible when it comes to the users of space.</li> <li>• The ever-growing administrative tasks reduce the time spent in the field.</li> </ul> Institutional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better connection with the Agricultural Advisory Service is needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Changes</b>	
<b>Positive environmental changes</b>	<p><b>2.5 increase in the number of singing corncrake males that are indicators of population.</b></p> <p><b>Removal of 5 ha of <i>Amorpha fruticosa</i> in cooperation with the Patka Hunting Society.</b></p> <p><b>10 ha of grassland designated for mowing is mown in the right way and at the right time.</b></p> <p><b>The area consists of 700 hectares of wet meadows under a different regime of use or in different degrees of succession.</b></p> <p><b>In the area of monitoring, 120 ha of meadows are regularly mown (1 time a year), and the mowing process starts at the beginning of July. About 160 ha of meadows haven't been mown in the last ten years, and they are overgrown with 50% of bushy vegetation. Their revitalization is possible in a simpler manner in contrast to the almost 300 hectares, which are more than 50% covered with high bushes.</b></p>
<b>Positive Economic (E) and Social (S) Changes</b>	Public sector: E: PI Zeleni prsten requested an agri-environmental measure of grassland maintenance for corncrakes.

	<p>S: Active participation of various stakeholders in the cooperative council. Maintaining traditions. Hrvatske vode adapted the embankment to suit the corncrake habitat.</p>
	<p>Local population:  E: 4 people applied for the agri-environmental measure for corncrake.  S: Better relationships among the population. They were included in the decision-making process for the first time and it gave them a sense of importance. The cooperative council as a place where opinions can be articulated without fear of institutions.</p>
<p><b>Key benefits</b></p>	<p><b>All important stakeholders are in one place thus ensuring that the locals have accurate information.</b></p> <p><b>Saving time via the cooperative council.</b></p> <p><b>Starting discussions on topics that were previously kept secret or considered irrelevant.</b></p> <p><b>The managers from other sectors have realized that if they want to work on Natura 2000, then they will have to be consulted by nature protection representatives at a certain point in time.</b></p>
<p><b>Replication and recommendations</b></p>	
<p><b>Key issues to replicate</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Make an active list of stakeholders in the area.</b></li> <li>• <b>Do not invent a parallel system. Increase potentials and give them institutional support. If someone works well, support them rather than create a parallel process.</b></li> <li>• <b>Discreetly support the work of associations (do not impose yourself) because they mostly consist of volunteers, thus showing them respect.</b></li> <li>• <b>Establishing a partnership relationship with local leaders.</b></li> <li>• <b>Highlight the potential of protected areas and the importance of the area (birds as an indicator of environmental health).</b></li> <li>• <b>Using one example to encourage another, it is the best way to show how things can be done.</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Good and relaxed atmosphere is a key factor for the success of cooperative councils (the official part of cooperative councils usually lasts 45 minutes, but the informal part afterwards is important for problem solving).</b></li> <li>• <b>At the event, mention the organizations that confirmed their attendance. Local community's feeling of importance.</b></li> <li>• <b>Creating materials (T-shirts, bags) at the cooperative council. The local population wears this material on special occasions. Very effective and highly recommended!</b></li> <li>• <b>Sending out written invitations has received a better response and has been given higher priority among the stakeholders. After that, we send a reminder by e-mail 3 days prior. Request confirmation of attendance by promising them t-shirts (at the event).</b></li> <li>• <b>Dedicate more time for the conversation with locals at the event.</b></li> <li>• <b>Attuning employees of public institutions to working after office hours - redistributing employee time.</b></li> <li>• <b>Using a less scientific vocabulary in conversation with the locals.</b></li> <li>• <b>Propose employing a person to be in charge of communicating with the stakeholders.</b></li> </ul>
Sustainability	<p>Continuation of the corncrake measure as well as other measures for rural development.</p> <p>Join the Croatian Rural Development Network and similar organizations in which policies are directed at the national level.</p> <p>Apply for projects with the help of your partners.</p>
Implementation of the idea	<p>Local government, Natura 2000 managers and protected areas managers</p>
Recommendations for policy improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Assure that the competent bodies ensure greater flexibility in drafting legal regulations and by-laws related to the subsistence of rural areas and the subsistence of the</b></li> </ul>



	<p>population. For example, equalization of the lease of state land for common pastures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the ordinance of measures on the health of domestic animals. Example for horses - a leptospirosis test is charged (in Croatia, there is no leptospirosis), from the state budget. In this way, the owner does not have the feeling that he pays for that service, and in reality, the taxpayer's money is spent in vain.</li> <li>• Better connection with the Agricultural Advisory Service.</li> </ul>
Your interests	Successful implementation of projects