



KLIIMAMINISTEERIUM



KESKKONNAAMET



MAASTIKE
ELURIKKUSE
TÖÖRÜHM



Testing results-based payment scheme in Estonian semi-natural grasslands

Annaliisa Kaaremaa - Environmental Board

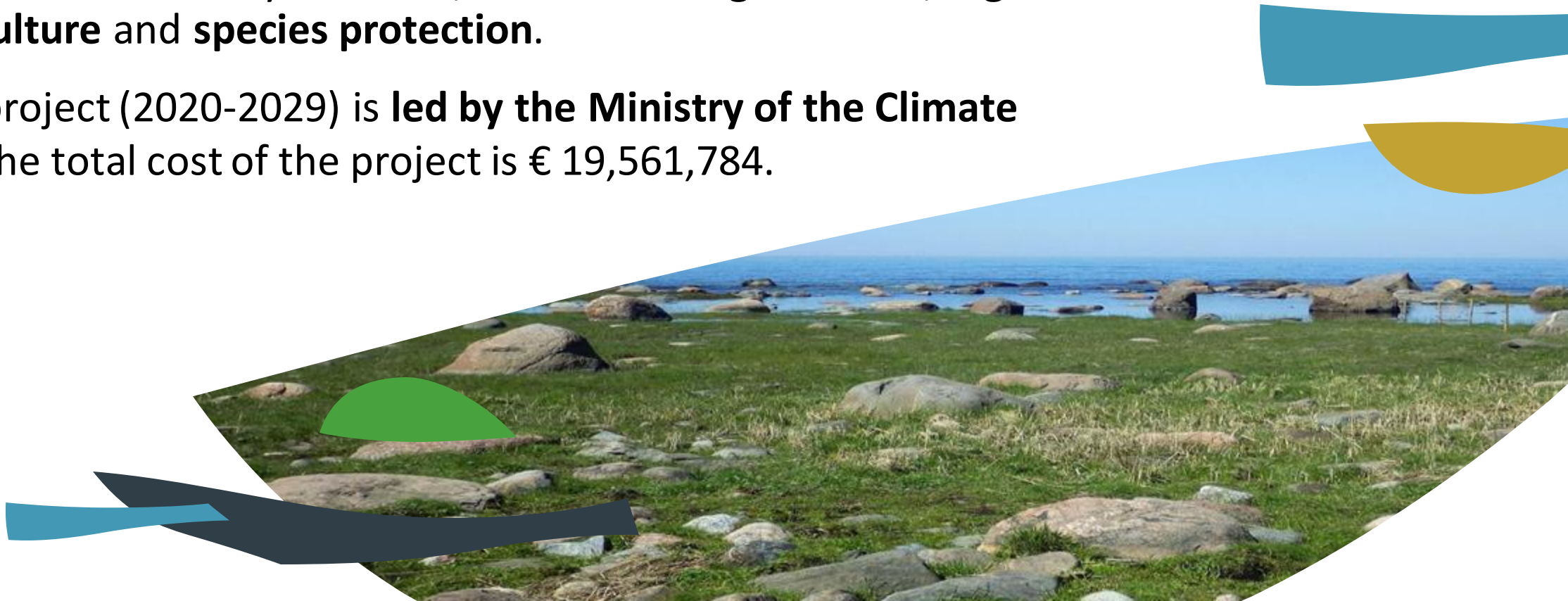
Liis Kasari-Toussaint - University of Tartu



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LIFE IP ForEst&FarmLand

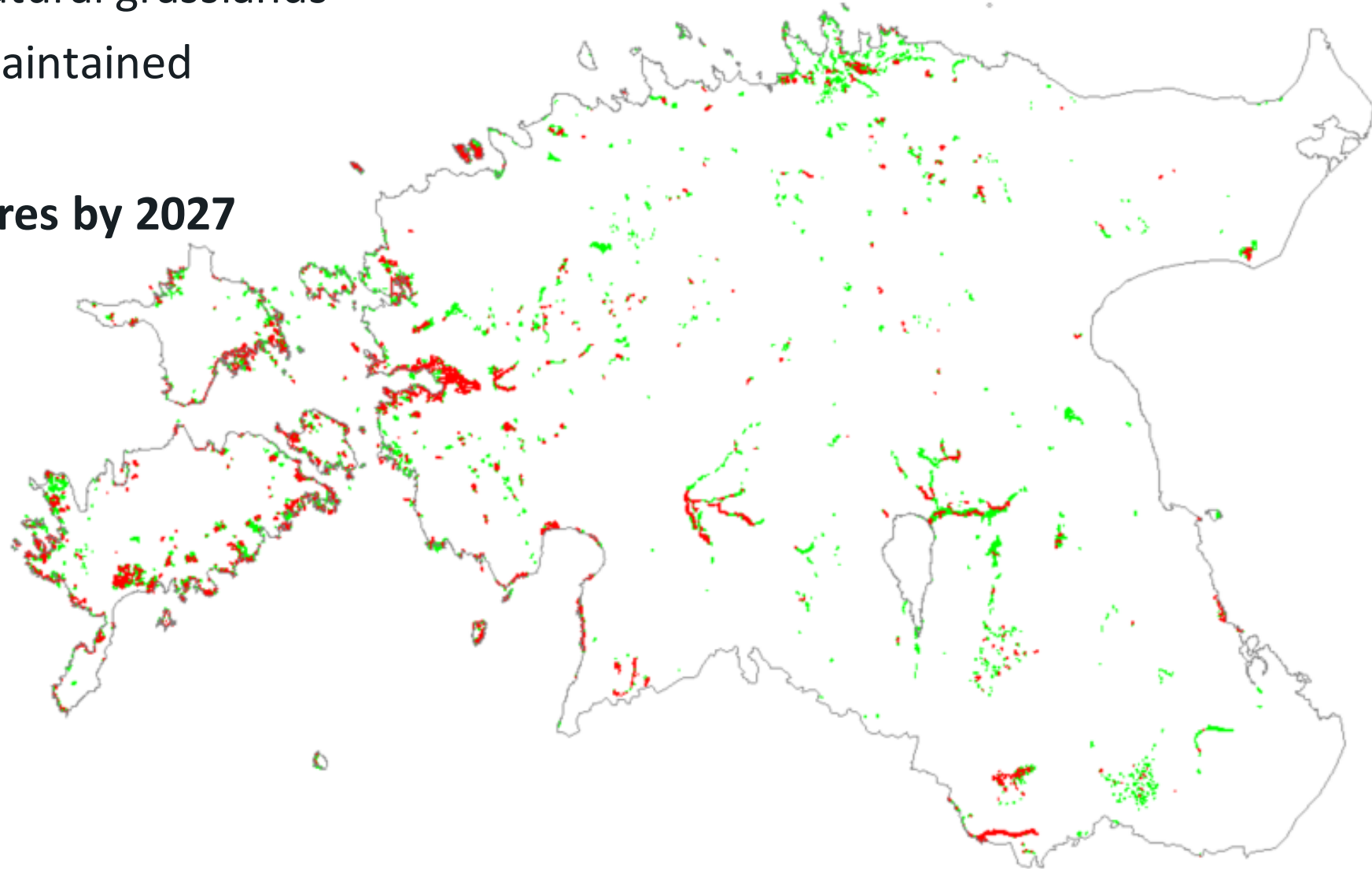
- Aim is to **protect** and **restore Estonian landscapes and ecosystems**. And to **improve the condition** of the **species** and **habitats** in Estonian forests and agricultural lands.
- Four areas of activity – **forests, semi-natural-grasslands, regenerative agriculture** and **species protection**.
- The project (2020-2029) is **led by the Ministry of the Climate** and the total cost of the project is € 19,561,784.



Area of Estonian semi-natural habitats

- 78 000 ha of semi-natural grasslands
- 42 000 ha is being maintained

❖ **Goal is 50 000 hectares by 2027**



Why to pilot results-based payment scheme?

Expectation -> results-based payments scheme improves the condition and biodiversity of managed semi-natural grasslands

Action-based payments

- Support for defined management activities, fixed payments
- Many rules (for example specific times for mowing, permitted and prohibited management practices)
- Does not take into account the specifics of each area, less diverse management
- Someone else is doing the monitoring
- The manager has no need to know the biodiversity and other values of its land

Results-based payments

- Support for good results, payments linked to the quality of the biodiversity
- No prescriptions, but good counseling system and good information materials are available on what activities to do
- Takes into account the specifics of the site, allows for more diverse management
- Manager need to assess the quality of the meadow personally
- Manager has more freedom, but also more responsibility

Pilot project on 500 ha coastal and flooded meadows



Lead by **Estonian Environmental Board**, partner is **University of Tartu**

Work-process:

1. Methodology development
2. Selecting pilot sites and preparing an individual action plan for each land manager
3. Trainings
4. Biodiversity monitoring
5. Evaluation of the success and applicability of results-based payment scheme



1. Methodology development

Results-based payment scheme is based on **SCORECARDS**

- Scorecard consists **4 parts**:

A – background information

B – condition of the grassland
(gives points)

C – species composition
(gives points)

D – feedback

Scorecards can be filled online
(Google forms)

D. Tagasiside

D1. Kas täiendasid hindamisankeeti hooldusperioodi jooksul mitmel korral?

Jooni alla.	Jah	Ei
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D2. Kui palju kulus Sul hindamisankeedi täitmiseks ja täiendamiseks aega?

Märgi ligikaudne ajakulu minutites. Kui täiendad ankeeti hooldusperioodi jooksul mitmel korral, siis lisa vastavalt ka iga täiendamise ajakulu.

Esmakordse täitmise ajakulu:	Täiendamiste ajakulu:
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Soovi korral täpsusta, kas see ajakulu oli Sulle liiga suur või jõukohane:

D3. Kui lihtne või keeruline oli hindamisankeedi küsimustele vastata?

Jooni alla.	Väga keeruline	Pigem keeruline	Nii ja naa	Üsna lihtne	Väga lihtne
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Kui ankeedi küsimustele oli keeruline vastata, siis lisa selgitus:

Alljärgnevad ankeedi küsimused ja/või juhendi punktid vajaksid lihtsustamist või ümbersõnastamist:

D4. Kas Sulle on oluline tunda enda hooldatava pärandniidu väärtusi, mis on seotud elurikkuse ja elupaiga seisundiga?

Jooni alla.	Väga oluline	Pigem oluline	Pigem ebaoluline	Ei ole üldse oluline	Ei oska vastata
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Soovi korral lisa kommentaar:

D5. Kas Sinu arvates sobib niitude hooldamise puhul paremini tulemuspõhise või tegevuspõhise toetuse süsteem?

Tulemuspõhine toetus - hooldajale pole ette antud tegevusi ega reegleid pärandniidu hooldamiseks; toetus oleneb hooldustulemusest: mida parem on niidu seisund ja suurem elurikkus, seda suurem on toetus.

Tegevuspõhine toetus - hooldaja saab toetust ettekirjutatud tegevuste täitmise eest; toetuse suurus on enne kindlaks määratud ning see ei olene niidu eripäradest ega elupaiga ja elurikkuse seisundist.

Jooni alla.	Pigem tulemuspõhine toetus	Mõlemad sobivad	Neid tuleb omavahel kombineerida	Pigem etteantud tegevuste/reeglite põhine toetus
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Soovi korral lisa kommentaar:

1. Methodology development

Scorecards differ slightly for different semi-natural grassland types:

- 1** – coastal meadows
- 2** – flooded meadows
- 3** – wooded meadows
- 4** – other grasslands:

dry grasslands (6210, 6210, 6270*, 6280*, 4030, 5130, 6510)

wet grasslands (6410, 6430, 7230, 7210)

***valuable permanent grasslands**

Additional activity of the pilot project

(financed by Ministry of Regional Affairs and Agriculture)

- ❖ **Inventory of species rich permanent grasslands/old fields** across Estonia
- ❖ Testing results-based payment scheme to preserve **valuable permanent grasslands**



1. Methodology development

Guidelines for filling out the scorecard

- An overview of the purpose of the results-based payment scheme
- How and when to fill out the scorecard
- Short explanation of each question asked in the scorecard, illustrated with photos if needed

B. Ala seisund

B1. Milline on kulukihi paksus ja ulatus?

Hästi hooldatud niidul on kulu olematu või vähene: puudub paks, mitmeaastane kulukiht. Regulaarne niitmine ja niite äraviimine või karjatamine mängivad olulist rolli toitainete tasakaalu säilitamises ning on põhitegurid liigirikkuse hoidmisel.

Ebapiisava hoolduse korral või **hoolduse lõppemisel** muutub niit tootlikumaks, seal hakkavad vohama ekspansiivsed liigid (eriti niiskemal ja viljakamal mullal) ning kogunev kulukiht pärsib niidutaimede idanemist.



Vasakul: rannaniidul ei ole kulukihti (pilt: Marianne Kaldra). Paremal: mitmeaastane kulukiht viitab puudulikule majandamisele (pilt: Riinu Rannap)

1. Methodology development

Plant species guide of Estonian semi-natural grasslands

Contains selection of:

- protected species
- characteristic grassland species
- expansive species
- invasive species



1. Methodology development

Scorecards testing 2022 – in Lahemaa, Matsalu and Karula National parks

- Helped to improve the scorecards



Testing in Lahemaa



2. Selecting pilot sites and preparing action plans

- **500 ha of coastal and flooded meadows** were selected
- **10 managers**
- Selected grasslands have **problems** which require flexible management plan
- An **action plan** considering site specificity and manager capabilities was made
- **Cooperation** with managers, Environmental Board and University of Tartu



2. Selecting pilot sites and preparing action plans

Example of action plan (1): Matsalu flooded meadow – problem with ***Anthriscus sylvestris*** and ***Angelica archangelica*** dominance despite regular mowing

- We test earlier mowing, twice a year, to weaken the expansive sp population and reduce their seeds production

Beginning of June – *Anthriscus sylvestris*



End of June – *Angelica archangelica*



2. Selecting pilot sites and preparing action plans

Example of action plan (2): Abruca coastal meadow – year-round grazing

- Grazing result is achieved by April (not by October as usual)



3. Trainings

- 10 managers had **individual trainings** to fill out the scorecard

Additional activity of the pilot project

Assessment of grassland values:

- Since 2023
- Includes **all managers and grassland types**
- **Payment 10 eur/ha** for filling out the scorecard, C part is voluntary
- To **advertise and train managers** for results-based system

212 managers chosed this activity in 2023

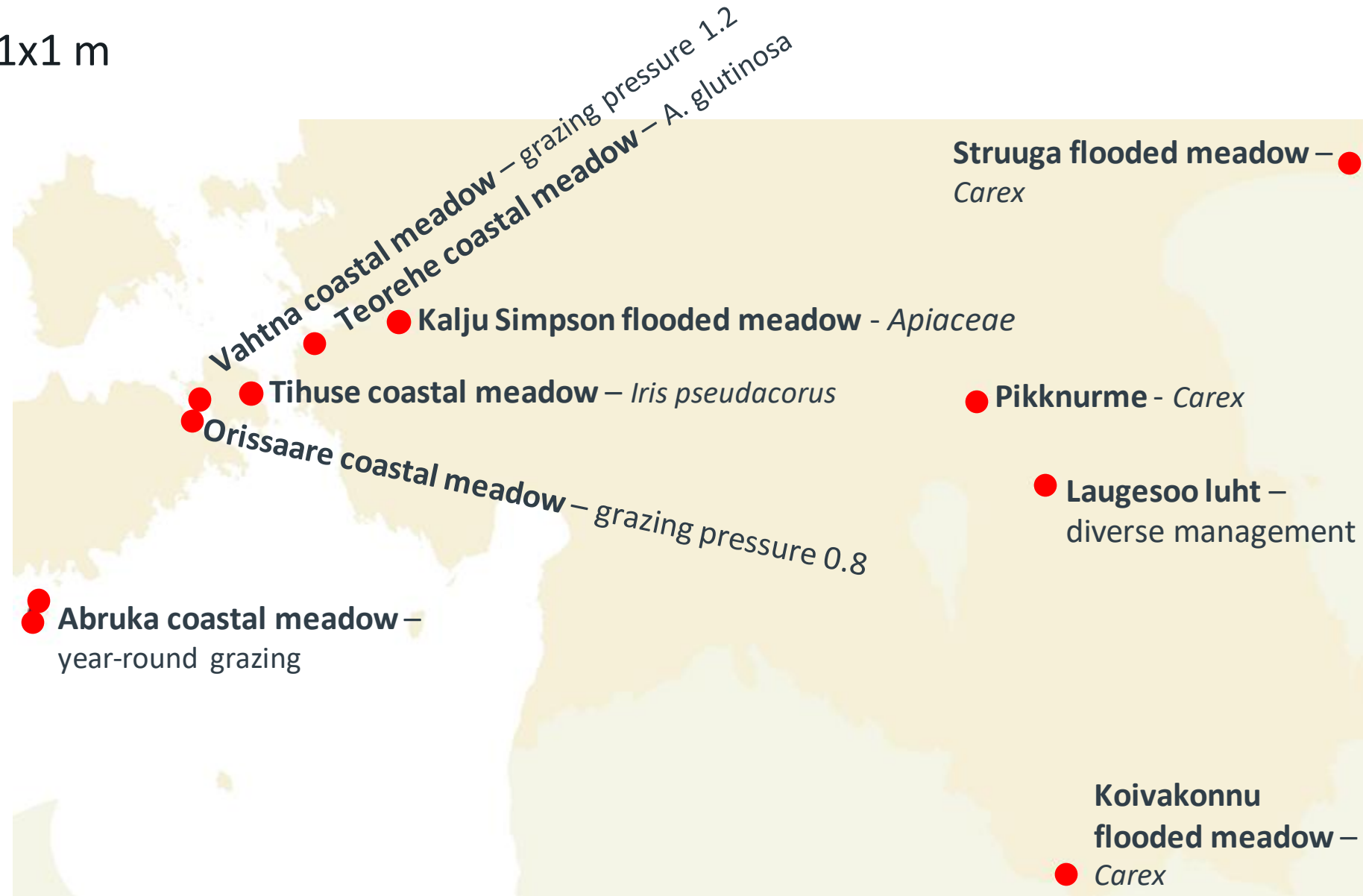
There were **5 training days** for filling out the scorecards

Saaremaa training day 27.05.2023



4. Biodiversity monitoring in pilot sites 2023 and 2027

- Vascular plants – 1x1 m squares, full list
- Birds
- Soil DNA
- Soil bulk density
- Soil geochemistry



4. Biodiversity monitoring in pilot sites 2023

Example 1: Abruka coastal meadow, Rein Lember – **year-round grazing**



5. Evaluation of the methodology and applicability of results-based payment scheme in Estonia

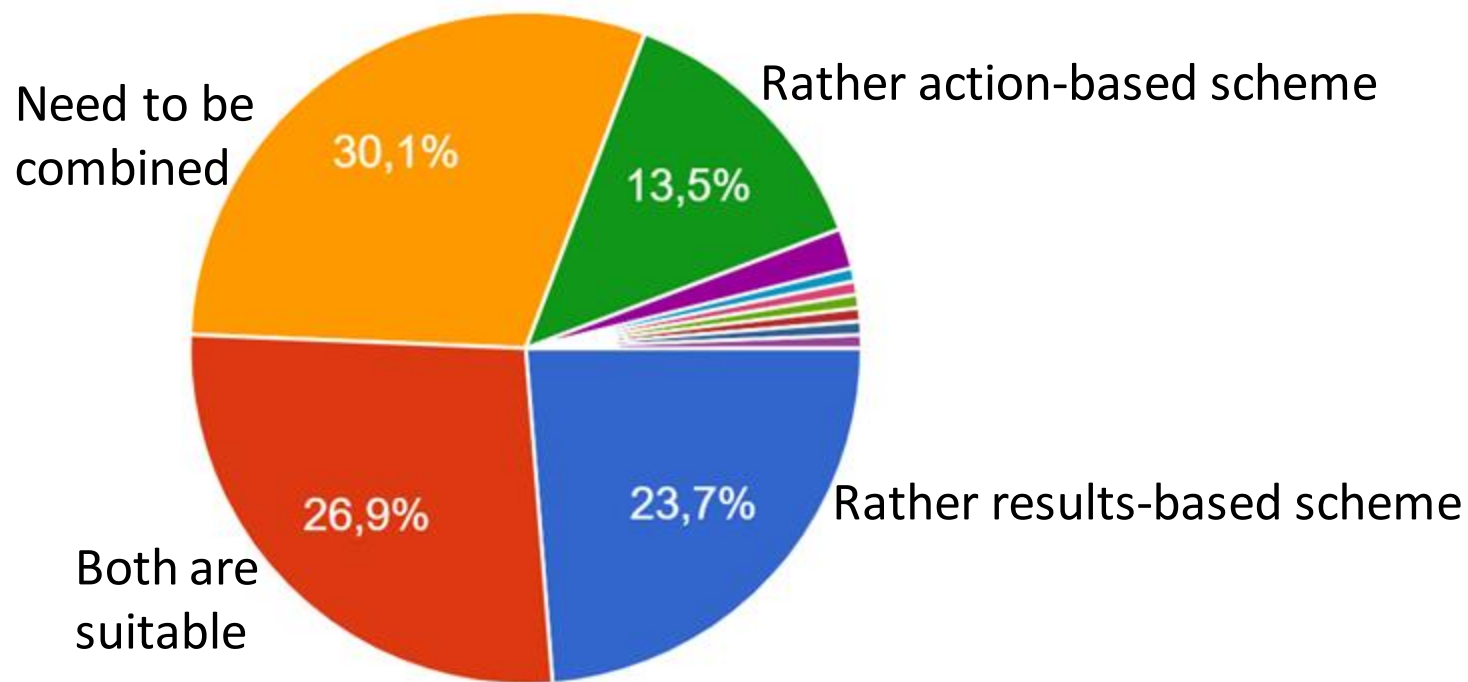
- Comparison of scorecards – managers vs experts
- Whether the scorecard point system is appropriate and in accordance with the site status and biodiversity
- Calculation of payment levels
- Have different management techniques helped to increase biodiversity in pilot areas?
- Which support system managers prefer?

❖ Evaluation will be done in 2027

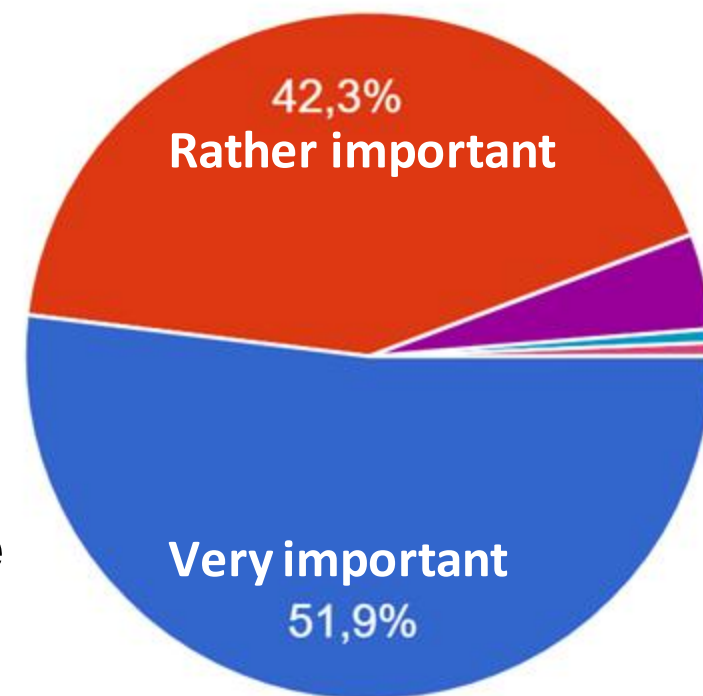


First feedback from managers

- **Most of the participating managers are not against results-based scheme (N=156)**



- **It's important for managers to know the values of their land (N=156)**



First feedback from managers

- **Aspects which could be improved:**
 - counseling system and communication
 - accessability of necessary information
 - online scorecards system
 - scorecards questions and guidelines

