

SOCIAL RISKS EVALUATION AND LEGAL ASESSEMENT OF THE TWO PILOT PEATLANDS VITIGIRRENSKOYE AND VISHNEVOYE

REWETTING PROJECTS
IN THE NEMAN CATCHMENT
OF THE KALININGRAD REGION



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Information



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Cover photo: Embankment of the Neman River



Executive summary of the Report



Even after two years of project activities in the Kaliningrad region, there is:

No regulatory framework for peatlands rehabilitation practices as environmental rehabilitation projects directed to biodiversity restoration and GHG emissions reduction;

No experience and legal framework for sustainable peatland management for paludiculture;

No state funds allocated for implementation of the regional peatland projects as peatlands were exploited lately by private natural resources users getting profit from raw materials selling.

The international project "DESIRE: Development of Sustainable Peatland Management by Restoration and Paludiculture for Nutrient Retention and Other Ecosystem Services in the Neman River catchment within the INTERREG Baltic Sea Region Programme (hereinafter – the Project) in the Russian Federation is being implemented by the State Budgetary Institution of the Kaliningrad region „Nature Park „Vishtynetsky” which is a subordinate organization of the Ministry of the Natural Resources and Ecology of the Kaliningrad region.

The main tasks of the DESIRE Project were the restoration of drained peat bogs, prevention of fire hazardous situations and improvement of the ecological and climatic situation in the Kaliningrad region. The actual rewetting of the peatlands is planned within the framework of the Project, on the territory of the Kaliningrad region, in order to restore ecosystems and natural functions of wetlands, cultivation of biomass on the secondary rewetted peatlands (paludiculture) with an aim of usage as a source of energy (for production of pellets), in construction, animal husbandry and other areas where the biomass could be used nowadays. It is also planned to demonstrate the outcomes of the project activities to the general public.

It is extremely important to mention some crucial background facts that could be considered as obstacles for the DESIRE project implementation, whose negative influence was minimised by project partners expert support and other project experts involvement.

Even after two years of project activities in the Kaliningrad region, there is

- No regulatory framework for peatlands rehabilitation practices as environmental rehabilitation projects directed to biodiversity restoration and GHG emissions reduction;
- No experience and legal framework for sustainable peatland management for paludiculture;

- No state funds allocated for implementation of the regional peatland projects as peatlands were exploited lately by private natural resources users getting profit from raw materials selling.

The technical rewetting can not be achieved without proper cohesion and communication with multiple stakeholders among which federal and regional authorities (environment, agriculture, emergency situations, economics, land melioration (reclamations)), farmers, scientists and simply the local public.

In order to evaluate the social risks the legal documentation was assessed in advance. The legal evaluation was done by Svetlana Golubeva who participated in many projects in Russia where rewetting was implemented on different depleted peatlands. The outcomes and findings of Svetlana Golubeva's report preliminary discussed with Nature Park Vishtynetskiy (Legal Assessment of Peatland Flooding Sites in Kaliningrad Oblast, S.G. Golubeva, Report under contract 21- B dated 07.04.2021) were used in order to carry out meetings and interviews with stakeholders.

According to the requirements of the international standards for ecosystem restoration projects, it is necessary to carry out a series of surveys related to the assessment of potential social risks and possible restrictions from the side of potential project stakeholders

According to the requirements of the international standards for ecosystem restoration projects, it is necessary to carry out a series of surveys related to the assessment of potential social risks and possible restrictions from the side of potential project stakeholders, especially those who can influence the technical decision making when rewetting the pilot plots.

Especially for this purpose the international company EthnoExpert (represented by Darya Ryazantseva) having experience in the evaluation of social risks was contracted in order to investigate the social issues around the pilot plots chosen within the framework of the DESIRE project.

In the present report considered to be a public one, the names and personal data of the stakeholders is not open because of the restrictions of the Federal law of the Russian Federation 152-FZ "On Personal Data" (hereinafter - the Law on Personal Data) according to which the operators and other persons who have access to personal data must not disclose to third parties and not disseminate personal data without the consent of the subject of personal data unless otherwise provided by federal law. The lists of representatives of different organizations, landowners and individual entrepreneurs, the cadastral excerpts containing official ownership information are accumulated in full in both social and legal reports which were used as a base for the present document and are applied for internal project use only.

01. Overview of the Project Objectives and Activities



DESIRE project brings the new approach to combine restoration of degraded peatlands by rewetting and paludiculture promotion, provides new solutions to natural ecosystem restoration.

The project creates best practices tools to support drained peatlands. The aim of the Kaliningrad region partners and stakeholders is the restoration of the peatlands and improve their functionality taking into account improving water quality of adjacent rivers and Neman catchment finally.

Peatlands degraded within the process of melioration for agriculture and forestry purposes should be rewetted and used for paludiculture activities – it is when some plants are cultivated on the rewetted areas and help nutrient retention and produce biomass for further purposes including cattle breeding, energy crops pelleting and construction (roofing and wall insulation).

The DESIRE project pilot sites will demonstrate the approach to the target group and give new scientific insights. The measures envisaged within the DESIRE project will contribute to the reduction of nutrients loads in the Neman river catchment by elimination of nitrogen by denitrification, by sedimentation of phosphorus and by uptake and exporting nutrients with the biomass harvested on the pilot sites.

Pilot rewetted peatlands will work as demonstration sites of the efficiency of nutrients management in the landscape. Replication of the peatlands rewetting can bring ecological and economical benefits (especially if combined with paludiculture). Such wise peatland use can be adopted by farmers for their common practice. It can be a good incentive and innovative approach for farmers to use there peatlands. The sites will be used by universities and research institutions as educational landfields where further investigation can be conducted. New ideas for harvesting machinery, utilisation of paludiculture crops and other aspects of rewetting and paludiculture can be discussed and checked by entrepreneurs and environmentalists.

Pilot rewetted peatlands will work as demonstration sites of the efficiency of nutrients management in the landscape

Replication of the peatlands rewetting can bring ecological and economical benefits (especially if combined with paludiculture)

DESIRE project brings the new approach to combine restoration of degraded peatlands by rewetting and paludiculture promotion, provides new solutions to natural ecosystem restoration

2. Analysis of the legal framework



Two sites were proposed for rewetting in the Kaliningrad region:
Vittgirrenskoye peatland
Vishnevoye peatland

THE ASSESSMENT WAS BASED ON THE INFORMATION PROVIDED FROM

- Report "Legal Evaluation of Peatland Rewetting Projects in Kaliningrad Oblast: Vishnevoye and Vittgirrenskoye Peat Deposits"
Project: 1246 Restoration of Peatlands in Russia for Fire Prevention and Climate Change Mitigation, by S.G. Golubeva, ACP LLC
- Cadastral extracts
dated April 2021
- Public cadastral map
pkk5.ru
- Other Internet resources of the Kaliningrad Region Government

General issues of land use regulation

According to the provisions of the Land Code of the Russian Federation (Article 13) of 25.10.2001 No. 136-FZ (version of 30.04.2021) land conservation is the activity of public authorities, local authorities, legal entities and individuals aimed at protecting the land as an essential component of the environment and a natural resource.

In order to protect lands, owners of land plots, land users, land owners and lessees (tenants) of land plots shall be **obliged to carry out activities on:** ...

Protection of lands from water and wind erosion, mudflows, **waterlogging**, **swamping**, secondary salinization, **desiccation**, compaction, pollution with chemicals, including radioactive substances, other substances and micro-organisms, pollution by production and consumption waste and other negative impacts.

State Report
"On the Environmental Situation in the Kaliningrad Oblast in 2019",
Kaliningrad, 2020

Agricultural land is land beyond the boundaries of a settlement and is allocated for the needs of agriculture, and is designated for these purposes

In accordance with Article 77 of the Land Code of the Russian Federation of 25.10.2001 №136-FZ (as amended on 30.04.2021)

Measures for the protection of agricultural land shall be taken in accordance with the Land Code of the Russian Federation, the Federal Law "On State Regulation of Agricultural Land Fertility" of July 16, 1998 N 101-FZ, and the Federal Law "On Environmental Protection" of January 10, 2002 N 7- FZ.

In accordance with **Article 77** of the Land Code of the Russian Federation of 25.10.2001 №136-FZ (as amended on 30.04.2021), **agricultural land** is land beyond the boundaries of a settlement and is allocated for the needs of agriculture, and is designated for these purposes.

Agricultural land includes **agricultural land**, roads, communications, ameliorative protective forest plantations, water bodies (including ponds formed by water retaining structures on watercourses and used for the purposes of pond aquaculture), as well as buildings and structures used for production, storage and primary processing of agricultural products.

Agricultural lands can **be used** for agricultural production, creation of melioration, protective forest plantations, scientific-research, educational and other **purposes related to agricultural production**, as well as for aquaculture (fish farming).

Land for industry industrial use

The lands of the industry are the lands which are beyond borders of settlements and used or intended for maintenance of activity of the organizations and (or) operation of objects of the industry, power, transport, communication, broadcasting, television and radio broadcasting

According to Article 87 of the Land code of the Russian Federation from 25.10.2001 № 136-FZ (revision from 30.04.2021)

According to **Article 87** of the Land code of the Russian Federation from 25.10.2001 № 136-FZ (revision from 30.04.2021) **the lands of the industry**, power, transport, communication, broadcasting, television, information technology, land for space activity, the land for defence, safety and other special purposes **are the lands** which are beyond borders of settlements and used or intended for maintenance of activity of the organizations and (or) operation of objects of the industry, power, transport, communication, broadcasting, television and radio broadcasting.

Lands of industrial and other special purpose depending on the nature of special tasks for the solution of which they are used or intended. Land plots that are included in such zones are not withdrawn from owners of land plots, land users, land owners and tenants of land plots, but within their boundaries a special regime of their use may be introduced, which limits or prohibits those types of activities that are incompatible with the purposes of establishing zones.

The procedure for using certain types of industrial and other special purpose lands, as well as for establishing zones of special conditions for using lands of a given category, unless otherwise established by the Land Code, shall be determined:

- by the Government of the Russian Federation with regard to the mentioned federally owned lands;
- by executive authorities of constituent entities of the Russian Federation with regard to the said lands owned by constituent entities of the Russian Federation;

- by local self-government bodies with regard to the said lands owned by a municipality.

A mandatory annex to the resolution on establishment of a zone with special conditions for use of an area shall be information on the boundaries of such a zone, which must contain a textual and graphic description of the location of the boundaries of such a zone, a list of coordinates of characteristic points of such boundaries in the coordinate system established for maintaining the state cadastre of real estate objects. **The requirements** to the coordinate system, the accuracy of determining the coordinates of the characteristic points of the borders of a zone with special conditions of use of the territory, the format of an electronic document containing the above information **shall be established by the federal executive body** authorized to exercise functions of legal regulation in the sphere of maintaining the state real estate cadastre, cadastral registration and cadastral activities.

Preparation of textual and graphic descriptions of the location of the borders of a zone with special conditions for use of the territory established for the purpose of ensuring public safety and creating necessary conditions for operation of the said facilities, the list of coordinates of characteristic points of the borders of such a zone shall be provided by the rightholders of the said facilities or other persons on the basis of a contract with such rightholders.

In accordance with **Article 24** of the Land Code, lands of industrial and other special purpose **may be provide for gratuitous use, for agricultural production** and other uses types of use.

The procedure for using certain types of industrial and other special purpose lands, shall be determined:

- by the Government of the Russian Federation
- by executive authorities of constituent entities;
- by local self-government bodies

A significant part of the proposed watering plots are agricultural lands. RF Government Decree No.450 dd. 12.06.2008 (revised on 28.12.2020) 'About the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation' assigns the following responsibilities to the ministry:

- the procedure for state accounting of indicators of the state of fertility of agricultural lands;
- the procedure for state monitoring of agricultural lands;
- the procedure for exercising state land control with regard to agricultural lands;

- the procedure for the provision by a person using a land plot which is part of agricultural land of information on the organization of industrial land control;
- description of the content of the application for the transfer of agricultural land owned by the Russian Federation or land plots within such land from agricultural land to another category and the composition of the documents to be attached thereto.

Inappropriate use of land

The criteria for significant decrease in the fertility of agricultural lands are defined by Resolution No. 612 of the Government of the Russian Federation dated July 22, 2011.

Thus, a significant decrease in the fertility of agricultural land is a change in the numerical values of at least 3 of the following criteria caused by the use of land in violation of the requirements for rational land use established by the land legislation of the Russian Federation:

- reduction of organic matter content in the arable horizon by 15 percent or more;
- reduction in the acidity of acidic soils (pH_{KCl}) by 10 percent or more;
- increase in alkalinity of alkaline soils (pH_{H_2O}) of 10 percent or more;
- reduction of mobile phosphorus content (mg/kg soil) by 25 percent or more;
- reduction of exchangeable potassium (mg/kg soil) by 25 percent or more.

Government Decree No. 1482 of 18.09.2020 "On signs of non-use of agricultural land plots for its target purpose or use in violation of the laws of the Russian Federation" (to replace the Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 369 of April 23, 2012 "On signs of non-use of land plots considering particularities of agricultural production or other related to agricultural production activities in constituent entities of the Russian Federation") (hereinafter - Ruling No. 1482).

Presence of overgrowth by weeds according to the list (Annex 1 to PP No. 1482) and (or) shrubbery (except for field and forest protection plantations, fruit and berry plantations) on 50 and more percent of the land plot area, and (or) presence of turf, characterized by intertwining of

roots, shoots, rhizomes of perennial weeds, depth of which reaches 15 centimeters or more (except for the presence of turf on land plots designed and used for grazing agricultural animals), and (or) the spread of land degradation (unless it is identified within 2 years from the registration of the right to the plot or the entry into force of the RF Government Decree of 21.09.2020 № 15092);

Presence of the features specified in the second paragraph of this paragraph on 20 or more percent of the area of the land plot, which has been duly attributed to particularly valuable productive agricultural land.

At that, the specified signs shall be deemed **signs of non-use of agricultural land** for its target purpose, **if at the same time** there is no agricultural activity on the remaining area of the land plot or such activity is conducted **on less than 25%** of the area of the land plot:

- Cultivation of crops and soil treatment - on a land plot designated for crop production (except for horticulture);
- Works on planting, cultivation, care and harvesting of perennial fruit and berry crops, grapes and other perennial crops - on a land plot designated for horticulture or cultivation of perennial plants;
- Works on cultivation and harvesting of annual and perennial grasses (haymaking, preparation of green, succulent and rough fodder), breeding

Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 1509 dated 21.09.2020 "On Peculiarities of Use, Protection, Conservation and Reproduction of Forests Located on Agricultural Land" (together with "Decree on Peculiarities of Use, Protection, Conservation and Reproduction of Forests Located on Agricultural Land")

The criteria for significant decrease in the fertility of agricultural lands

Defined by Resolution No. 612 of the Government of the Russian Federation dated July 22, 2011

- reduction of organic matter content in the arable horizon by 15 percent or more;
- reduction in the acidity of acidic soils (pH_{KCl}) by 10 percent or more;
- increase in alkalinity of alkaline soils (pH_{H_2O}) of 10 percent or more;
- reduction of mobile phosphorus content (mg/kg soil) by 25 percent or more;
- reduction of exchangeable potassium (mg/kg soil) by 25 percent or more

General recommendations

When developing rewetting projects, an environmental impact assessment should be conducted in order to identify potential constraints and/or encumbrances on the areas to be rewetted, as well as possible adverse effects of rewetting on adjacent areas.

Materials of the environmental impact assessment would serve as a the basis for development of substantiating documentation on the planned economic and technical activities, including objects of the state environmental assessment in accordance with articles 11, 12 of the Federal Law dated November 23, 1995 No. 174-FZ "On Environmental Expertise".

This norm is confirmed by the Order of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation dated December 1, 2020 ¹ 999 "On approval of requirements for environmental impact assessment materials" (registered with the Ministry of Justice on April 20, 2021, registration number 63186).

All interested parties should be informed about development of the rewetting projects on the selected sites within the framework of public discussions of the rewetting projects under development.

- and (or) grazing of farm animals — on the land plot designated for livestock breeding;
 - works on breeding, keeping and use of bees, placement of beehives, a hive; an apiary for processing beekeeping products, storage of honeycomb frames, beekeeping equipment, other facilities and equipment necessary for beekeeping and breeding of other beneficial insects, as well as works on cultivation of honey (entomophilous) crops, shrubs and trees, the list of which is determined by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation — on the land plot designated for beekeeping;
 - works on cultivation of undergrowth of trees and shrubs, seedlings, seedlings used in agriculture, as well as other agricultural crops to produce seedlings and seeds, soil treatment - on the land plot designated for nurseries;
 - work stipulated by subparagraphs "a" - "e" of this paragraph - on a land plot designed for agricultural production or for scientific support of agriculture.
- where buildings and structures, protective forest plantations, water bodies and watercourses are located;
 - which are included within the boundaries of specially protected territories and zones with special conditions of use of territories, the use of which for agricultural purposes is restricted in accordance with the legal regime of such territories and zones;
 - that are subject to degradation caused by an emergency or extraordinary event;
 - for which land reclamation or conservation works are carried out in accordance with the established procedure;
 - **which are under fallows**, i.e. free from cultivated crops to improve fertility and accumulate moisture in the soil for a period not exceeding 2 years;
 - **which are unsuitable for agricultural production** or other activities related to agricultural production, if their presence is not related to the actions (inaction) of the right holder of the land plot (fodder), breeding

The signs of the use of land plots from agricultural lands with violation of the legislation of the Russian Federation are:

- presence on the land plot of a construction having signs of unauthorized construction;
- pollution of the land plot with chemical substances, including radioactive, industrial wastes attributed to hazard classes I and II in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation;
- littering the land plot with other items not related to farming for 20 and more percent of the land plot area;
- the presence of high weed infestation on the land plot on which agricultural crops have been planted as per the list provided for in the annex hereto: for perennial weeds over 250 pieces per m²; for perennial, quarantine weeds over 8 pieces per m², except as provided for in item 1 hereof.

At that, the above-mentioned attributes shall **not be taken into account if they are identified** in the area of parts of land plots:

Legal regulation of "single land use" is carried out on the basis of the Land Code of the Russian Federation and federal legislation concerning state cadastral registration (procedures for issuing cadastral plot numbers, orders on division of allotments according to the cadastre). The main law in this area is Federal Law No. 221, as amended on 13.07.2015. According to this law, today the status of a single land use is not assigned, as the concept of a multi- contour plot has been introduced instead.

The division of a single land use owned by a single owner is also observed in agricultural enterprises, whose plots may occupy significant areas. However, these plots may be subdivided by common use areas which are not owned by the enterprise in question. How to subdivide a land plot. Each land plot within a single land use has a unique cadastre number.

The above aspects should be taken into account in discussions with owners and tenants (leasees) of proposed agricultural lands for rewetting activities.

3. Socio-economic development of the Project Pilots territory



The peatland mapping helped the project team to choose only two pilot plots that were investigated before the rewetting in order to evaluate social risks and to assess and understand legal requirements

An important stage of the project was the inventory and detailed mapping of wetland and peatland ecosystems in the Russian sector of the Neman River basin. Remote sensing materials were analysed and on-site research was conducted to determine the exact location, type and main characteristics of peatland in the study area. A database and GIS were created for peatland on the Russian side of the Neman basin, using the collected materials. Cartographic data and an array of attributive information concerning the peat type, drainage degree, environmental status, current use, etc. were obtained. The DESIRE project team led by specialists of the Vishtynetsky nature park examined 15 areas and identified six of them as potential sites for testing of paludiculture techniques. The results achieved by German, Polish, and Belarusian partners were taken into account. Melioration systems in the Neman delta have been deteriorating for 30 years; many plots have been flooded. Afterwards, only two pilot plots were determined for further pre-project investigations and actual rewetting with possible paludiculture development



The Vittgirrenskoye peatland is located in the vicinity of the villages Bolshakovo (8.5 km), Krasnoye (3.5 km) and Vysokoye (5.0 km) in Slavsk Urban District.

The peat deposit is located on agricultural land and could be used for agricultural production.

Previously, the deposit was developed by the peat enterprise "Slavsktorf", later it was abandoned in the 1990s.

In 2021, the „Vittgirrenskoe” peatland became a pilot site for the federal project "Carbon polygon". On July 14, 2021 at the meeting of the Expert Council under the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation on the development of carbon control technologies it was highly appreciated as a pilot plot and a scientific program of creation and operation of the Kaliningrad Polygone "Rosyanka" on the basis of the peat bog "Vittgirrenskoye" was approved. On the territory of "Vittgirrenskoye" peatland it is planned to create both a carbon polygon and a carbon farm.

The Cadastral extracts for the plot and all the adjacent plots were obtained within the interdepartmental communications and were assessed for the project needs by a lawyer Svetlana Golubeva.

The plot with cadastral number 39:12:0000 00:71 has the status of "common shared property".

The plots with the following cadastral numbers 39:12:000000:71, 39:12:040031:17, 39:12:040031:31, 39:12:040031:35, 39:12:040031:18 are envisaged for other types of agricultural use.

The plots with cadastral numbers: 39:12:040 031:10, 39:12:040031:33, 39:12:040031:4, 39:12:040031:32, 39:12:040031:7 –are prescribed for agricultural use. The plot 39:12:040031:30 - for farming.

The plot with cadastral number 39:12:010 035:1 is classified as residential land. There are restrictions for certain plots which are to be taken into account when implementing the DESIRE project activities on rewetting:

- at plot 39:12:000000:71 the existing uncertainty due to the lack of re-registration of co-ownership by the new owners should be taken into account;

There is a restriction for the plot 39:12:040 031:32 – there is a ban on registration – enforcement proceedings are since November 20, 2020;

The areas of significant environmental importance (specially protected natural areas) were not revealed.

On the plots with cadastral numbers 39:12:0 40031:4, 39:12:040031:10, 39:12:040031:18 the lease expires in 2023. The Tenant is ready to lease the land plot for more than 5 years after the lease term expires in order to preserve the results of the present project and the rewetting activities. The Tenant actively participates in the Carbon Polygon project. Also, the Property Agency of the Kaliningrad region within the lease term informed the tenant that the Property Agency has no objections to the creation and development of the carbon test site „Rosyanka” of the Kaliningrad region and research activities on the territory of the site within the order of the Ministry of the RF from February 5th, 2021 N°74 "On the polygons for development and testing of carbon balance control technologies"

Representatives of Slavsky urban district administration (on the territory of which the pilot site is located) agree with conducting activities on rewetting and are interested in the development of the site as a demonstration site with the development of appropriate infrastructure, including touristic infrastructure. (Reporting materials under the project "DESIRE" by the contract N° 21-B dated April 07, 2021)

Previously, the deposit was developed by the peat enterprise «Slavsktorf», later it was abandoned in the 1990s.

In 2021, the „Vittgirrenskoye” peatland became a pilot site for the federal project "Carbon polygon"

It is planned to improve the site and access to it, to organize a field base for 2 mobile houses and a mobile conference area, to install a tower for peatland observation, to ensure power and internet supply

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned facts it is necessary to:

1) to carry out the rewetting of the site in proportion 50% of the plot territory is for rewetting in 2021 and 50% during 2022 in order to allow scientists to conduct chamber studies of the carbon balance and obtain verified technologies for integrated emission and sequestration monitoring to enable comparative monitoring of the "pristine" and "modified" systems already in 2022.

2) to exclude from scientific activities an area (2 - 4 hectares) for experimental cultivation of cranberry in an organic way by a tenant.

3) to develop a graphic material on the basis of the project concept and project design document to be used in interaction with stakeholders and to be demonstrated in order to reduce the misinformation of stakeholders and reduce the social burden.

It is planned in partnership with the federal and regional bodies to improve the site and access to it, to organize a field base for 2 mobile houses and a mobile conference area, to install a tower for peatland observation, to ensure power and internet supply.

The nearest settlement in the vicinity of the site is the village of Vishnevoye (Chernyakhovsky district of Kaliningrad Oblast). At a small distance (3.5 - 5.5 km) are the settlements Bobry and Zhilino (Neman district, Kaliningrad Oblast). According to the cadastral information, the lands where Vishnevoye is located belong to the category of "lands for industry, energy, transport, communication, broadcasting, television, informatics, lands for space activity, defence, security and other special purpose lands".

A plot on the territory of the Vishnevoye peat deposit is located (cadastral number of the plot: 39:07:000000:46) has the status of a „single land use”.

The plot with cadastral number 39:07:020 023:45, which completely surrounds the research plot 39:07:020023:43 has no category of the permitted use. The adjoining land has the category of agricultural land and forest land (cadastral number 39:07:020023:128, for accommodation and operation of pipeline transport facilities).

The cadastral extract for the land plot 39:07:020 023:45 was not requested. Presence of the areas of significant environmental protection significance was not detected.

Representatives of the administration of Neman urban district (where the pilot plot is located) agree with the activities on rewetting but are not interested in the development of the site for touristic purposes because of railways and gas pipes distribution system in the access area of the peatland which could be unsafe for local public.



The plot on the territory of the Vishnevoye peat deposit (cadastral number of the plot: 39:07:020023:43) is located in the Neman district.

According to the cadastral information, the lands where Vishnevoye is located belong to the category of "lands for industry, energy, transport, communication, broadcasting, television, informatics, lands for space activity, defence, security and other special purpose lands".

4. Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis



According to the requirements of the international standards for ecosystem restoration projects and in order to achieve the successful implementation of such projects, it is necessary to carry out a series of studies related to the assessment of potential social risks and possible restrictions.

Especially for this purpose the international company EthnoExpert having experience in the evaluation of social risk was contracted in order to investigate the risks. In this regard, the specialist of the company Darya Ryazantseva had two field trips to the territory of the Kaliningrad region that were carried out: from 08.04.2021 to 09.04 and from 28.04 to 30.04 2021. The purpose of the visits was to study and update the initial data on the actual land users and beneficiaries of the

peat bog plots of Vishnevoe and Vittgirrenskoye. The territory of the field trips included the city of Kaliningrad, the Slavsky urban district and the Neman urban district.

In the course of the work, the list of project stakeholders was updated with a description of their positions and expectations regarding its implementation. Forms of stakeholder engagement included workshops and individual consultations. The purpose of these events was to inform potential stakeholders about the Project and receive feedback on its implementation.

On the base of the data obtained during field trips and data provided by the representatives of the State Budgetary Institution „Nature Park „Vishtynetsky”, the stakeholder analysis was carried out applying the procedures of the international organization Business for Social Responsibility. This methodology meets the requirements of the best global practice and international standards in the field of stakeholder management, including standards developed by IFC (International Finance Corporation) and SER (Society for Environmental Restoration).



April 9, 2021. Arrival of a specialist in the field of sustainable development from LLC "Ethnoexpert" (St. Petersburg) Ryazantseva Darya to collect information, as well as hold meetings with the local population and heads of administrative districts (Meeting with Andrey Neyman, head of Neman urban district administration)

Based on stakeholder identification and analysis, a Social and Legal and Regulatory Work Plan was developed for the peatland rewetting project. This Plan is presented in the final section of the present Report. The analysis of the stakeholders potentially affected by the DESIRE project was carried out regarding the key factors: the potential impact on the implementation of the project and the attitude of the stakeholder towards the Project. The parameter called "influence" defines the extent to which a stakeholder's opinion, expectation, or position can potentially influence the implementation of the project. The "attitude towards the project" parameter sums up the general attitude of the stakeholder towards the idea of the Project, satisfaction with the degree of elaboration of all components of the Project, as well as its current stage and implementation plan.

Meeting of Darya Rysantseva with Slavsk administration representatives



The representatives of the following organizations were negotiated during the stakeholder mapping phase:

01. Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Kaliningrad Region

Department of Forestry and Wildlife Use
 Department of Federal State Forest Supervision (Forest Guard) and Federal State Fire Supervision in Forests
 Department for the organization of protection, protection, reforestation and forest management
 Department of regulation of handling production and consumption waste

02. Ministry of Agriculture of the Kaliningrad Oblast

Department of Land Reclamation, Monitoring of Agricultural Land and social development of territories
 Department of accounting, financing and coordination of state support for the agro-industrial complex
 Crop Development Department

03. Ministry of Economic Development, Industry and Trade

04. Property Agency of the Kaliningrad Region

05. Department of Water Resources for the Kaliningrad Region of the Neva-Ladoga Basin Water Administration

the federal body, carries out control over the use of water bodies on the territory of the Kaliningrad region, provides measures for the protection and monitoring of water bodies

06. Kaliningrad State Technical University (KSTU)

conduct scientific research on aquatic and coastal aquatic ecosystems

07. Atlantic Branch of the Federal State Budgetary Institution of Science of the Institute of Oceanology. P.P. Shirshov of the Russian Academy of Sciences

(AO IO RAS)

08. Department of Agricultural Development of the Center for Entrepreneurship Development of the Kaliningrad Region

09. Federal State Budgetary Institution

"Department of Kaliningrad melioration" owner of pumping stations and other objects of the drainage system, carries out operational management of them

10. The Main Directorate of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Russia for the Kaliningrad Region

11. Closed Joint Stock Company "Balt Aero-Geodetical Enterprise" (BALT AGP)

12. Kaliningrad Institute of Retraining of Agribusiness Personnel (FGBOU KIPKA)

13. Dolgov Group

14. Administration of "Slavsky urban district" municipality

15. CJSC "Trud"

16. Owners of plots bordering the territory of a peat deposit

17. Individual experts in peat and cane farming

18. Sodruzhestvo group of companies

19. Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs

Table provides an analysis of stakeholders according to the criteria of their influence on the project and attitudes towards it.

Determination of the stakeholders positions according to the influence and attitude towards the project

Stakeholder (Nº)	Influence on the Project	Attitude towards the Project
1	High	Positive
2	High	Positive
3	Medium	Positive
4	Medium	Positive
5	High	Positive
6	High	Positive
7	High	Positive
8	High	Positive
9	High	Negative
10	High	Positive
11	High	Negative
12	Medium	Neutral
13	Medium	Neutral
14	High	Positive
15	High	Positive
16	Medium	Positive
17	Low	Positive
18	Low	Positive
19	Low	Positive
20	Low	Positive
21	High	Positive
22	High	Positive
23	High	Positive
24	Low	Positive
25	High	n/a
26	Medium	Positive
27	Low	Neutral
28	Low	Positive
29	High	Neutral
30	High	Positive
31	Medium	Neutral
32	Medium	Positive
33	Low	Positive
34	Low	n/a
35	Low	Positive
36	Low	Neutral
37	High	Positive
38	High	n/a
39	Low	n/a
40	Low	n/a
41	Low	n/a
42	High	n/a
43	High	n/a
44	High	Positive
45	Medium	Positive
46	Medium	n/a
47	Medium	Neutral
48	Medium	Positive
49	Medium	Neutral
50	Medium	Neutral
51	Low	Neutral
52	Medium	Positive
53	Medium	Positive
54	High	Positive

The analysis of 55 stakeholders related to the project has demonstrated that

- 23 stakeholders have a high influence on the project,
- 17 have a medium one
- 15 have a low influence

The „high” influence was admitted primarily among representatives of the regional government, organizations developing „Carbon Polygon” project (carbon polygon (a program of the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia of 2021: a university-sponsored territory allocated for the monitoring and research of climatically active gases, "carbon polygons" have become a scientific term), heads of municipalities, as well as business representatives potentially interested in the development of flooded areas of peat bogs.

The average impact was determined for employees of regional ministries, heads of relevant departments in the administrations of municipalities, as well as some owners of land plots directly or indirectly affected by the project. Low impact was identified for employees of organizations indirectly related to the project or its components, and representatives of scientific organizations.

Based on the interaction with stakeholders conducted since 2018 and updated in 2021, each stakeholder was assigned a value that characterizes their attitude towards the project: "positive", "negative" and

"neutral". A positive attitude to the project was expressed by 35 stakeholders, neutral - 9, negative - 2, it is planned to identify the attitude to the project among 9 stakeholders. A positive attitude was expressed by the majority of stakeholders at the regional and municipal levels of government, specialized organizations and scientific institutions. A negative attitude was observed among representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Kaliningrad region, which was caused by concerns about the flooding of nearby agricultural land. A neutral attitude was found among individual representatives of regional and municipal authorities, as well as among local residents living in the vicinity of the Vishnevoye peatland. The positions of representatives of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kaliningrad region, as well as the heads of agricultural enterprises operating in the vicinity of the Vittgirrenskoye peatland, have not been determined.

23
High
influence

17
Medium
influence

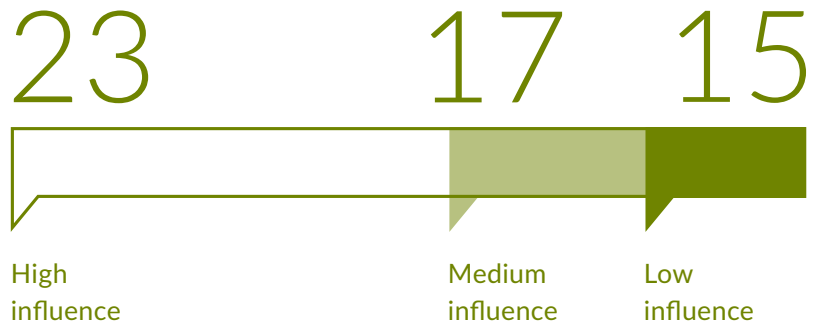
15
Low
influence

Based on the interaction with stakeholders conducted since 2018 and updated in 2021, each stakeholder was assigned a value that characterizes their attitude towards the project: "positive", "negative" and "neutral".

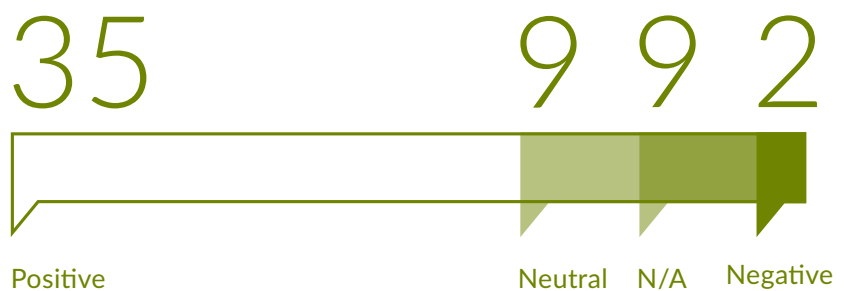
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Stakeholders influence on the project



Attitude towards the project



Project stakeholder mapping

Illustrates the carried out analysis of stakeholder attitudes. The vertical axis shows stakeholder attitudes to the project: the bottom-most position is a negative attitude to the Project; the top-most position is a positive attitude and support for the Project. The horizontal axis shows the ability of stakeholders to influence project activities: the leftmost position - low influence; the rightmost position - high influence.

The Diagram 1 presents the stakeholders which occupy positions on the coordinate plane and form four groups (corresponding to quarters of the coordinate plane, marked with numbers 1-4) with the characteristics of the stakeholders presented on the Diagram 2.

Thus, based on the diagrams above, we can conclude that there is a preponderance of stakeholders who have influence and are interested in the project. However, two stakeholders with high and medium influence and a negative attitude to the project should be noted.

Diagram 1. Map of stakeholder positions

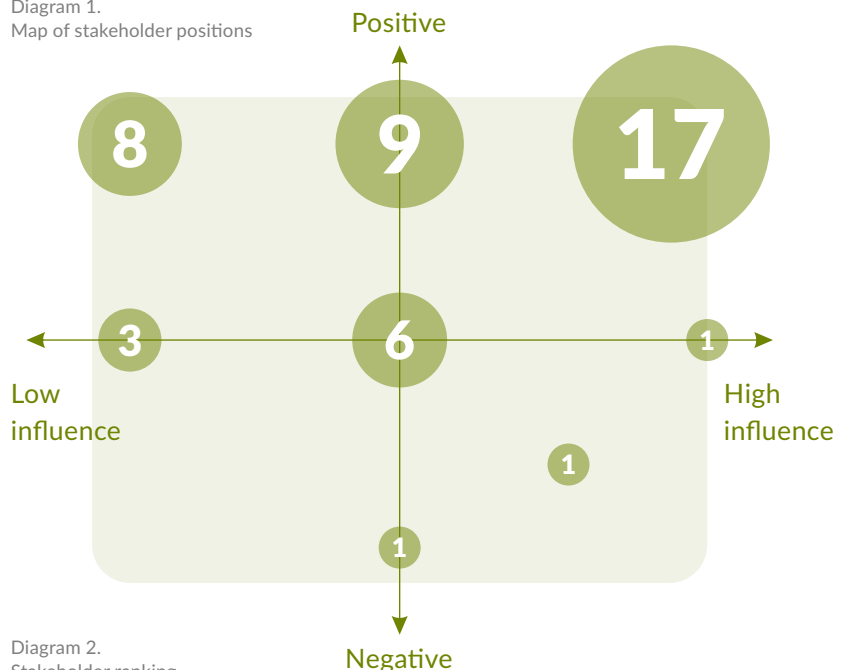
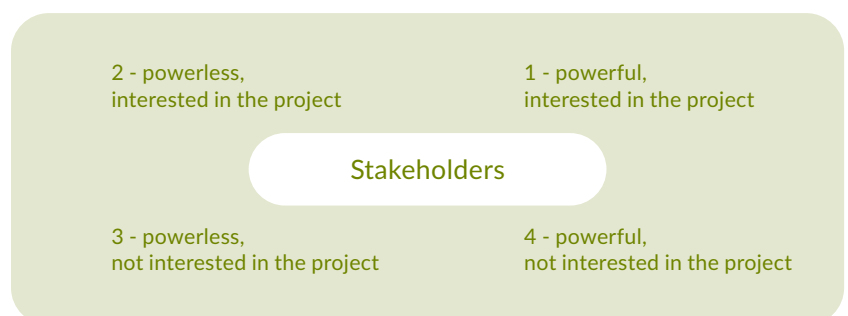


Diagram 2. Stakeholder ranking



Forms of interaction with Project stakeholders

Basic forms of stakeholder engagement

Cooperation	Initiating or engaging in a two-way dialogue that aims to develop joint solutions and mutual learning. May include co-creation of new project development ideas
Consultation	Requesting feedback on the project or its components, reviewing the information received for inclusion in project documentation
Information sharing	Communicating to stakeholders the specifics of ongoing or planned project activities or its components. The implication is that a feedback system is in place
Monitoring	Tracking stakeholder attitudes through sociological research or discussion with other stakeholders

Stakeholder engagement can be defined through four basic forms: cooperation, consultation, information sharing and monitoring. A more detailed description of each form of engagement is provided in Table.

Each form of interaction can be correlated with the cells in Diagram

According to the above Diagram, the most effective form of interaction with stakeholders with potentially high influence on the Project is to hold consultations and achieve cooperation in issues of the project implementation.

For stakeholders with medium and low influence the optimal format is consultations at the first stage of the project and informing at the subsequent stages, by publishing materials on the project on special Internet web-sites, holding face-to-face information seminars with the possibility of getting feedback, etc. The monitoring format can be used to track the positions of stakeholders with low influence on the project and not interested in the project activities.

In the framework of this project, cooperation with business representatives who have expressed interest in the project can be promising. Conclusion of agreements on further development of rewetted peatland areas in the sphere of paludiculture and development of carbon polygons may attract additional attention to the project and allow to replicate the idea of restoration of wetlands/peatlands ecosystems to other sites.

Diagram 3
Stakeholder engagement



5. Conclusion

The surveys carried out for identification of the DESIRE project stakeholders and analysis of their positions and expectations regarding the Project, allow to conclude that further stakeholder engagement is required taking into account that not all positions have been identified at the time of contracted activities and negotiation with Kaliningrad partners.



Some negative attitudes to the project activities were identified, which is considered as a serious risk to the rewetting and the whole project successful implementation.

The plan for further interaction with project stakeholders should include a number of consultations with stakeholders with high influence on the project, whose attitude to the project was not defined.

In addition, the positions of some of the the owners and lessees of the land around the "Vittgirrenskoye" pilot plot which were not identified at the time of writing the report should be identified. At the same time, it is important to continue to inform the already known stakeholders about the current and planned stages of project implementation. Stakeholders who have expressed their negative opinion should be further consulted in order to explain the technical details of the rewetting and to record their comments and recommendations for further coordination with the project design and implementation team.

Identification of actual land users and beneficiaries of the both "Vishnevoye" and "Vittgirrenskoye" peatland have highlighted the need for further work on legislative (regulator) issues in interaction with the owners and lessees of the peatlands. Given the potential for the lease of the "Vittgirrenskoye" peatland to be transferred to another lessee, all potential risks and constraints that might arise in this process

should be analysed. The most promising option is to execute a lease agreement with a representative of the business interested in further development of the rewetted peatland.

It should be noted that during the stakeholder identification stage, individuals and organisations potentially interested in the development of carbon polygons on rewetted peatlands were identified. In order to achieve overall coordination and alignment of the positions of these stakeholders with each other, it is recommended that a separate workshop should be held on the topic of carbon polygons.

The Road Map "Social and Regulatory Work Plan for the Peatland Rewetting Project was created by Ethoexpert which presented in the Report and was a basis for further tasks under shown in Appendix 1

During the stakeholder identification stage, Individuals and organisations potentially interested in the development of carbon polygons on rewetted peatlands were identified. In order to achieve overall coordination and alignment of the positions of these stakeholders with each other, it is recommended that a separate workshop should be held on the topic of carbon polygons

Annex 1.
Work Plan on social and legal issues within the project
of rewetting peat Vishnevoe and Vittgirrenskoe peatlands

Types of work	Expected results	Potential term job performance
Interaction with project stakeholders in a format of individual consultations, necessary consents and agreements with regard to project implementation	Obtaining necessary consents for project implementation (verbal/written)	24.05-30.06
Formation of a single document describing potential social and regulatory risks and constraints related to project implementation	Aggregation and analysis of data obtained about project stakeholders	24.05-15.06
Refinement of the communication strategies for engaging peatland stakeholders "Vishnevoe" and "Vittgirrenskoye", including feedback templates and consultation minutes	Updated communication strategies for engaging with different groups of identified stakeholders	24.05-15.06
Presentation of the Peatland Rewetting Concept to the regional and national stakeholders and stakeholders at the municipal level during the special workshops	Stakeholder awareness of peatland restoration plans, obtaining feedback on the Concept	15.06-30.06
Individual interaction with stakeholders who have commented on the Concept on their resolution and inclusion in the documentation	List of recommendations and comments to the Peatland Rewetting Concept	15.06-30.06
Preparation of an Awareness Campaign Plan, developing two annual events, dedicated to peatlands	Information and awareness plan of the awareness campaign for the Kaliningrad region; Concept of two annual events, dedicated to peatlands	15.06-30.06
Stakeholder engagement in the development process project documents	Timely transmission of incoming comments and suggestions to the team designers	30.06-31.07
Legal support Impact assessment of peatland rewetting projects	Recommendations on the design of project impact assessment documents	30.06-31.07

SOCIAL RISKS EVALUATION AND LEGAL ASSESSMENT

**OF THE TWO PILOT PEATLANDS
VITGIRRENSKOYE
AND VISHNEVOYE**

**REWETTING PROJECTS
IN THE NEMAN CATCHMENT
OF THE KALININGRAD REGION**

**PALUDI
CULTURE**



DESIRE