

Biodiversity in cross-border corridors (BioGrenzKorr):

AN INTERNATIONAL PROJECT ON MANAGEMENT OF CORRIDORS FOR ANNEX IV SPECIES

BACKGROUND

Sustainable development of cross-border corridors for biodiversity, people and climate is a new EU-INTERREG 4A project across the Danish-German border. Corridors play a vital role for the spread of species in a strongly fragmented landscape. The main objective is to create awareness on corridors in the matrix between woodlands and small habitats in the open landscape. By connecting habitats the functionality of the total eco-system increases for all species in the area. In addition new nature and habitats are created. Thus, the foundation for more resilient populations of vulnerable species and a sustainable basis for managing nature are generated.

PURPOSE

The objective is to develop and test methods to manage and expand corridors in the landscape taking the requirements of specific species and landowners into account.

WHERE?

Region south, Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein, Germany

The project focuses on corridors in southeastern Jutland and southern Funen in Denmark and northeastern Schleswig-Holstein in Germany. These areas are known for their historic old hedgerows.

- The foundation for a network of corridors will be created across the border from the forests near Gråsten to the forests around Flensburg.
- A network of corridors on southern Funen will be developed.



WHAT?

Hazel dormice, birch mice and bats

The project focuses especially on the annex IV species hazel dormouse, birch mouse and bats, which are dependent on corridors in the landscape. They are protected according to EU-legislation and may not be disturbed in their habitats. The species are characterized as indicator species for high biodiversity, as their requirements for habitats meet the requirements of many other plant and animal species. Forest and landscape management is more restricted in areas where these protected species are found. Thus the project focuses on how nature conservation management may be organized in these specific areas.

- Hazel dormice and bat species are monitored in the project areas.



HOW?

Corridors and nature conservation: Biomass as incentive for landowners?

It is the hypothesis of the project that hedgerows should be 'cared for' in the right way in order to sustain a quality that supports biodiversity broadly. Hedgerows also need to be managed in order to coexist with roads and agriculture. Just as open meadows need to be grazed to ensure the highest possible biodiversity, likewise hedgerows need to be coppiced in order to safeguard vitality, dense bush and many different species of herbs and woody plants.

Previously, hedgerows were coppiced for firewood; the same may be done today with felling machines and wood-chippers. Harvesting biomass in the hedgerows may create an economic incentive for the landowner to manage his hedgerows. This incentive will probably increase with an increasing demand for biomass. It is crucial that management of hedgerows is carried out in accordance with guidelines supporting biodiversity. To achieve these diverse objectives it is crucial that landowners, contractors and others with interests in nature cooperate. The hypothesis is: If hedgerows are managed intelligently, they may be optimized to support biodiversity, the climate agenda and the individual landowner's use of land.

- Testing of methods in the field, including methods of coppicing and establishment of new corridors/hedgerows.



FOR WHOM?

Knowledge sharing and dissemination

Exchange of experience about methods and management of species and landscapes take place across the border through the project group, workshops and meetings. Results are disseminated through campaigns and articles and through meetings with landowners, natural resources managers, conservationist and contractors about the establishment and management of hedgerows. The objective is to increase focus on the underestimated importance of corridors for biodiversity and climate.

- Professional workshops, meetings and excursions in Denmark and Germany.
- Public arrangements.
- Articles in journals and other media.
- Webpage and leaflets.

Facts about the project

The project partners are: The Nature Agency on Funen and southern Jutland, Stiftung Naturschutz and Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landesforsten. The project has a budget of 850,000 Euro and is financed with 65% through INTERREG 4A, an EU development fund administered by Region Southdenmark.

For further information, see www.biogrenzkorr.dk

