

PROJECT INFORMATION

Technical exchange on cross-border protection in the Bialowieza primeval forests in Belarus and Poland

Updated: September 2019



The Bialowieza Forest is Europe's last lowland forest and at the same time a UNESCO World Heritage Site

Source: Daniel Rosengren/FZS

Background

The Bialowieza Forest in the border region between Poland and Belarus is considered to be the best preserved forest ecosystem of the European lowland. It is recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Here, natural processes should be able to run undisturbed and forestry interventions should be avoided as much as possible in order to protect biological diversity. But bark beetle infestation and feared damage in adjacent commercial forests have rekindled the discussions about the use of natural forests and the extent of logging, especially in Poland.

Project details

The aim of the project was to increase the necessary acceptance of natural forest development among the actors in the partner countries in one of the most important pristine forest areas of Europe. Therefore, possibilities were shown to counteract and to deal with natural disturbance processes, such as pest infestation, even without logging. In the area of the Bialowieza Forest, the priority was to promote cross-border cooperation between Belarus and Poland. In addition, representatives of Belarusian and Polish national parks and ministries learned about examples of successful protection of natural processes and wilderness development after bark beetle infestation in workshops and on a study trip to Germany using established examples. In the Bavarian Forest and Hainich, the participants experienced the successful implementation of environmental education and the positive effects of a national park on regional development. Together they discussed options and solutions for forestry measures compatible with the conservation objectives (such as rewetting), as well as the important topics like monitoring, education and communication.

Beneficiary countries: Belarus, Poland

Duration: 02/2019 – 09/2019

Beneficiaries: Rangers, employees of the National Parks Belo-vezhskaya Pushcha and Białowieża, Ministries of Environment and Forestry as well as scientific institutions of both countries

Implementing organisations: Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) APB-BirdLife Belarus

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