



*„Protection of European pond turtle
and amphibians in th North European
lowlands“ LIFE05NAT/LT/000094*

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Project director

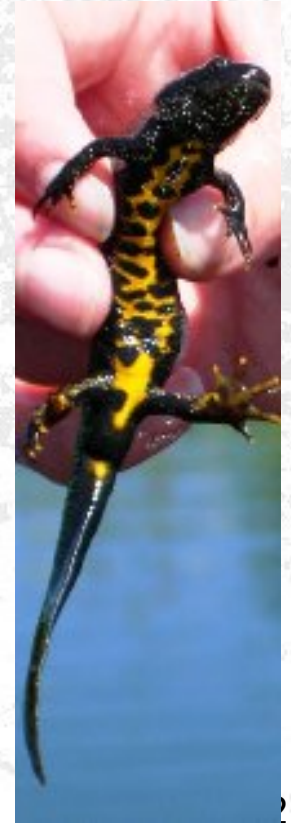
- European pond turtle *Emys orbicularis*



- Fire-bellied toad *Bombina bombina*



- Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*



Problem

- An ongoing decline of the European Pond turtle, *Emys orbicularis* and the Fire-bellied toad, *Bombina orientalis*, is now documented throughout the North European lowlands.
- The decline of the Great crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is recognised in Estonia, Finland, Germany and Denmark and is suspected in Poland and Lithuania.
- During past decades these species became rare and threatened as suitable habitats and sites have been destroyed through intensive agriculture activities and lack of appropriate site management.

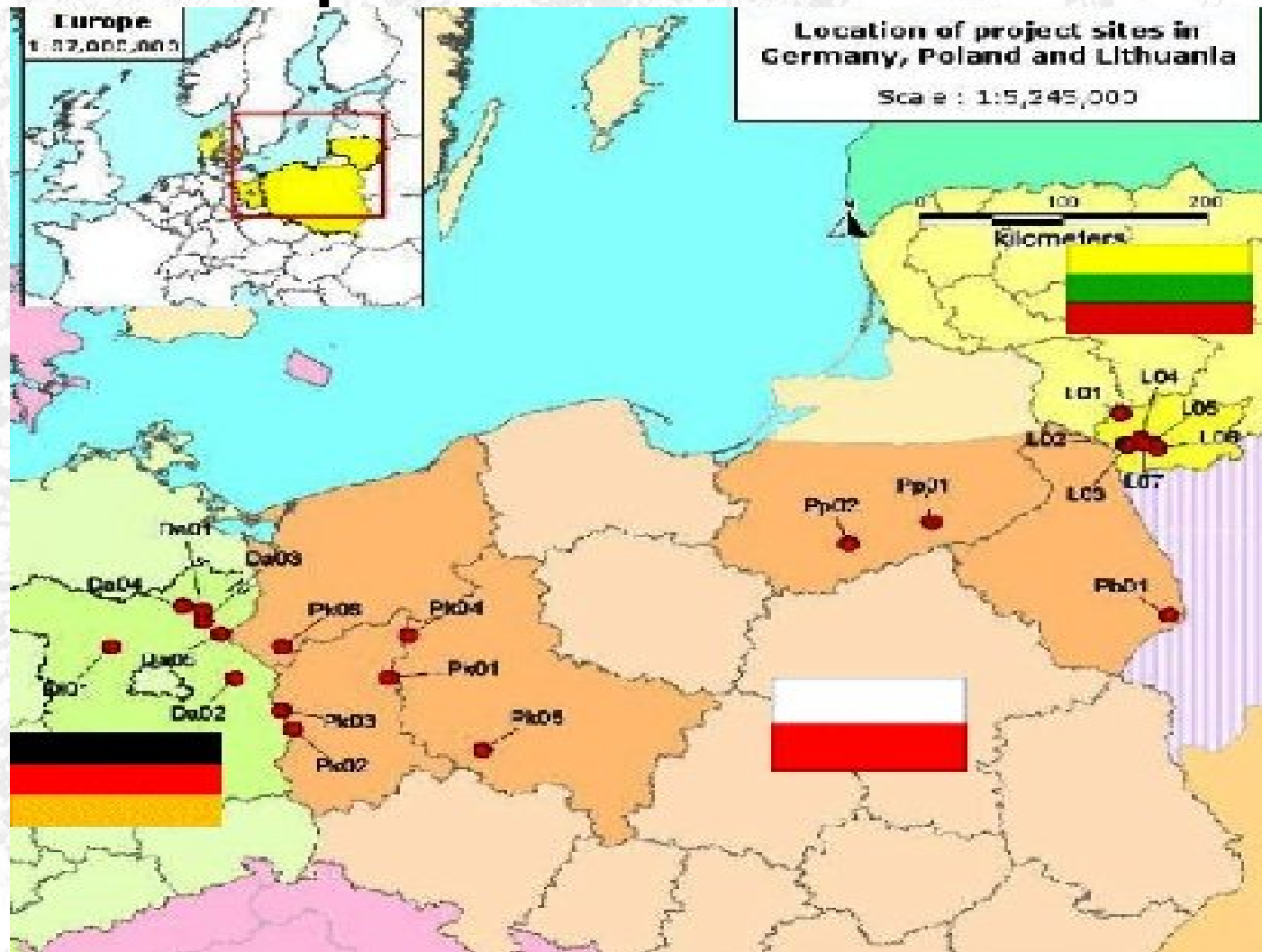


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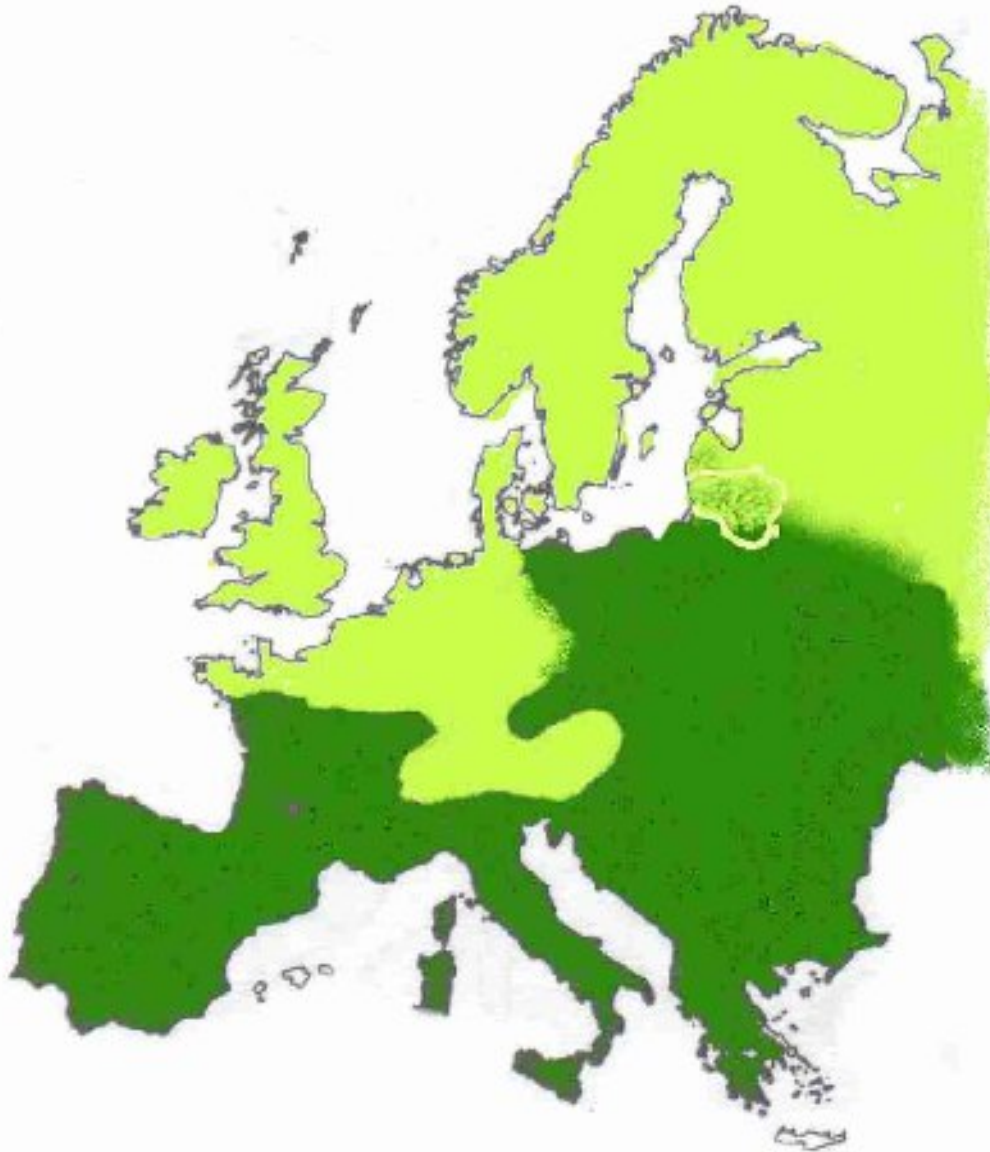
Objectives

- To ensure a favourable conservation status of the European pond turtle in Germany , Poland and Lithuania.
- To ensure a favourable conservation status for the European fire-bellied toad and the Great crested newt in the areas where they occur together with *Emys orbicularis*

Project sites in North European lowlands



Distribution of *emys orbicularis*



Project leaders

- Project Beneficiary



Lithuanian Fund for Nature

- 11 partners and 1 Consultancy company



Funding

The European Commission (EC) has agreed to contribute 49.5% of the total project cost of €2,346,185 and the remaining 50.5% is matched partner and co-financier funding from Lithuania, Poland and Germany.

Cofinanciers:

- EkoFundusz



- Klara Samariter St.

- Heinz Sielmann St.

- NSF Brandenburg



 Deutsche Umwelthilfe



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Actions

- Evaluation of sites and habitats, definition of the favourable conservation status
- Preparation of regional action plans and local management plans
- Improvement of habitats for the key species
- Support of small populations by releasing young turtles
- Management of foraging areas: grassland and wet meadow mowing
- Education and awareness raising among local society and general public

Project duration – 2005 – 2009

Results (1)

- Monitoring methods for turtles and amphibians methods created
- More than 400 ponds evaluated for the presence of key species
- Favourable conservation status for turtles and amphibians defined
- 8 action plans on protection of key species for all countries drafted
- Characteristics and structures of hibernation and nesting sites evaluated and defined
- 18 local management plans drafted
- Genetic samples (haplotypes) from 9 populations taken to investigate metapopulations
- Buffer zones established, more than 100 ha of land purchased
- 80 ponds restored or dug new

Results (2)

- More than 5000 m of dams created
- 40 nesting areas created
- 40 hibernation sites for turtles and amphibians created
- sustainable grazing regime installed in Lithuania
- unwanted vegetation removed in 60 ponds
- 200 juveniles of turtles released in German and Polish sites
- Management of foraging habitats ~ 200 ha
- International workshops and study tours organised
- Other education events: turtle days, cattle exhibitions organised
- On site education e.g. nature trails, information boards installed in project sites





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Thank You