

# Birds @ Farmland

## Report on the National Workshop

### “Národní workshop projektu Birds@Farmland”

Czech Republic

Date 27.4.2021

Organiser: *Czech University of Life Sciences Prague*

Birds @ Farmland

**DEVELOPING TOOLS TO SUPPORT FARMLAND  
BIRD CONSERVATION IN THE EU**

Contract: 07.0202/2020/834463/SER/ENV.D.3

## AGENDA

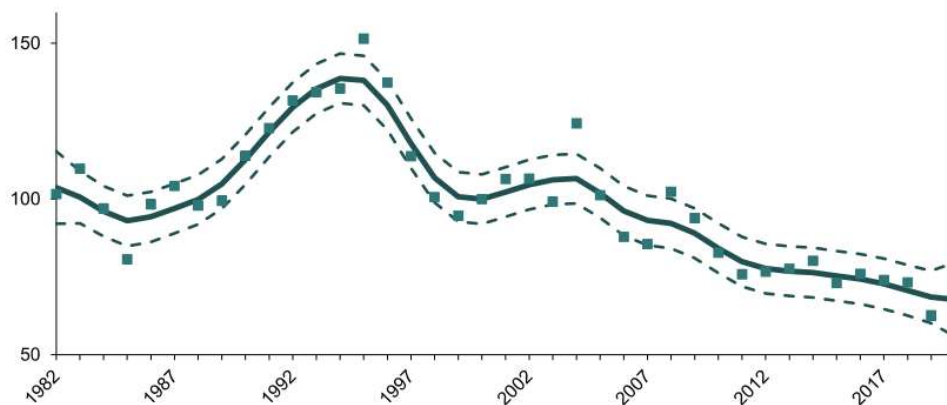
Time (CET)	Presentation	Speaker
	Start of the day and welcome, project presentation	
09:30 – 09:50	Project introduction and its aims	Vladimir Bejcek/Emilie Trakalova, CZU
09:50 – 10:15	Preliminary project results – flagship species, agricultural systems and agro - environmental schemes	Vaclav Zamecnik CZU/Czech birdlife
	Overview of current status of farmland birds in the Czech Republic	Vaclav Zamecnik CZU/Czech birdlife
	Coffee break	
11:10 – 13:00	Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key factors in declining farmland birds occurrences</li> <li>- Possible measures for selected agricultural systems and bird species</li> <li>- Experiences of participants – e.g. key burdens in scheme’s implementation</li> </ul>	<i>All participants</i>  Moderate by Vaclav Zamecnik
	Round-up of the day and end of workshop	

### Topics of discussion:

- What good practices in Czech Republic are available that could be of interest to other Member States? Any demonstration sites available?
- What should our farmland bird conservation schemes focus on? Which agricultural system(s)? Which bird species? What types of measures? Any existing agri-environment-climate schemes that should be improved? Are novel approaches of interest (e.g. result-based schemes, collaborative approaches, eco-schemes)? What good practices from other Member States would be useful (if they exist)?
- What experiences exist regarding important factors on the side of farmers, landowners, hunters, etc. and regarding attractiveness to take up schemes? What are important factors for the authorities managing the schemes?
- Policy landscape for bird conservation: Funding (CAP), interest, opportunities

## 1) STATUS OF FARMLAND BIRD CONSERVATION IN THE MEMBER STATE

- During the presentation the overview of the status of farmland birds and conservation was given by Mr. Vaclav Zamecnik – this included detailed information about long – term trends of selected flagship species: *Perdix - perdix*, *Vanellus vanellus*, *Limosa Limosa*, *Numenius arquata*, *Tringa tetanus*, *Philomachus pugnax*, *Streptopelia turtur*, *Alauda arvensis*, *Hirundo rustica*, *Sturnus vulgaris*, *Saxicola rubetra*, *Galerida cristata*, *Tetrax tetrax*, *Lanius senator*, *Falco vespertinus*).
- Long – term declining trend of farmland birds occurrences has been confirmed by the unique and traditional CZ Bird Count Programme.



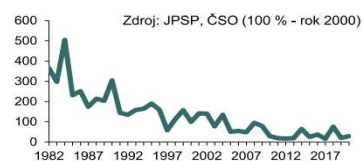
Zdroj: JPSP, ČSO

- Out of pre-selected list of EU farmland bird species *Perdix Perdix*, *Vanellus Vanellus*, *Streptopelia turtur*, *Alauda arvensis*, has been identified as the most relevant in the Czech Republic and with following basic characteristics:

*Perdix perdix* – app. 11 0000 – 22 000 couples



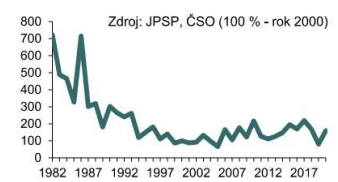
Foto: Tomáš Bělka/birdphoto.cz



*Vanellus Vanellus* 5000 – 7000 couples



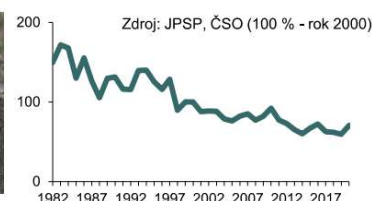
Foto: Petr Šaj/birdphoto.cz



*Streptotelia turtur* – app. 40 000 – 70 000 couples



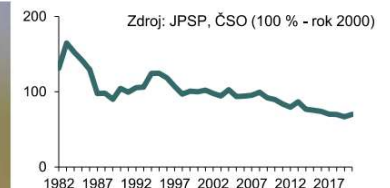
Foto: Petr Šaj/birdphoto.cz



*Alauda arvensis* – app. 800k – 1.4 mil. couples



Foto: Petr Šaj/birdphoto.cz



- After the presentation and meeting the quick questionnaire was circulated between respondents and participants aims to identify the most relevant farmland bird species, importance of bird conservation in next generation CAP and factors influencing the implementation of conservation schemes.
- Based on the questionnaire 91% respondents identified *Vanellus vanellus* as flagship species, 83% voted for *Perdix perdix*, 66% for *Alauda arvensis*. Out of the pre – selected species 86% voted for *Athene noctua* and 63% for *Tyto alba*.
- **4 groups of conservation measures** are currently present and supported in the Czech Republic
  - Agro – environmental climatic measures ( grass and nectar – flower strips)
  - Direct conservation of habitats and nests - specific measures for *Vanellus vanellus* (currently around 430 locations/sites ) and *Crex crex*
  - Active support of birds
  - Creation and environment restoration
- Base on the questionnaire 83% of respondents identified farmland bird conservation for the next generation CAP as **high importance. 17% as medium.**
- In the next generation CAP following measures are foreseen in following programmes:
  - I. Pillar
  - Programme for rural development
- What innovative approaches are foreseen – collaborative approaches – management, combined buffer strips, result-based schemes)

## 2) AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS and FLAGSHIP SPECIES

### 2.1) Agricultural system(s) of specific importance for farmland bird conservation in the Member State

In the Czech Republic 3 main AS are dominant, mainly because of its area coverage.

1. Low – intensity Continental non – irrigated annual crops
2. Low – intensity Pannonian non – irrigated annual crops
3. Continental non – irrigated grassland

Existing measures are listed above, suggested future measures would be:

1. CAP Pillar- Whole farm schemes - Eco- payments

There is no agreement within the workshop participants about appropriate and benefits of such approach.

- AEKO measures on grassland, non – production investments

### 2.2) Farmland bird species of specific importance for farmland bird conservation in the Member State

For each bird species, please provide the following information:

The identified relevant species are listed above. Specific measures in place are:

- Programme for rural development – AEKO continue, no agreement whether any changes are beneficiary
- Adding combined buffer strips on arable land – creating new nesting opportunities
- Non – productive investments – wetland restoration, new landscape features
- Shared management
- Result – based approach/schemes

### 3) GOOD PRACTICES

#### 3.1) Good practices available in the Member State

Motivation tools – e.g. programme/competition Pestra Krajina

- Eco- farm Ekofarma Petr Marada ([ria 2020\\_gp\\_cz\\_ecofarma\\_6.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#))



- Farm of Jiří Marek ([Vítězové soutěže Pestrá krajina 2019 – Farma Jiřího Marka - Naše voda \(nase-voda.cz\)](#))
- Other possible competition of good practices e.g. Hunter award
- Happy farm Velké Hostěrádky (<https://veselabiofarma.cz/html/fotogalerie.html>)
- Josefov Meadows Bird Reserve (<https://www.birdlife.cz/rezervace/josefovske-louky/josefov-meadows-bird-reserve/>)

#### 3.2) Good practices needed that might be available in other Member State

Model farms – e.g. Hope farm (UK) - [Hope Farm | How it's Grown - The RSPB](#)

Project H2020 Framework – Farmer clusters – good opportunity for share management ([Biodiversity | Framework \(framework-biodiversity.eu\)](#))

#### 4) EXPERIENCES REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHEMES

- What are important factors to ensure a high uptake of scheme on the side of farmers, landowners and hunters?
  - Results of the questionnaire focuses on following factors as key drivers in implementation:
    - 78% for result based schemes – showing effectivity of the measures
    - 68% sharing best practices
    - 45% difficult byrocratic and administrative process
    - 45% for scientifically based measures
- Participants gave different opinions on Advisory services, financial support as well as public acceptance.
- The general and public list of possible measures, main financial providers (e.g. MoA, MoE) as well as other individual measures as an example of best practices will be valuable source of information. Current situation about measures in place are too complicated, complex and fragmented, which demotivate farmers. This also means continuously increasing requirements.
  - Involvement of wide spectre of stakeholders is urgently needed in whole process
  - Appropriate control mechanism (e.g. EU unique count program) to see effectivity of the proposed measures
  - Bird protection is closely connected to EU strategy for use of pesticides and other chemical substances.
  - Question, how far the size of fields play role in bird decline
  - There is no appropriate support for “small scale measures” on the edge of the fields – there is no tolerance from THE STATE AGRICULTURAL INTERVENTION FUND (following strict rules on the total area of arable land vs. ecotones) – this lead to demotivation of the farmers (this rules comes from EC legislation)
  - Confusing definition of ecotones
  - Main opportunity of the Initiative for public awareness
  - **Highlight the issues of contradictory EU requirements – strict financial schemes vs. measures to increase bird population (especially concerning ecotones excluded from agriculture subsidies )**
  - There is special measures and schemes for *Vannellus vanellus* – public awareness of this „ umbrella measure“ is however needed to show the effectivity of the measure also for other species.
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#### 5) POLICY LANDSCAPE

- There was discussion on the topic of Certificate models to be included to next CAP, however the introduction and inclusion seems to be timely impossible
- National environmental authority would support Precision farming tools as only mechanism widely accepted by farmers
- The cooperation and acceptance by farmers is essential – during last decades there are permanently increasing requirements as well as more and stricter rules – also the agriculture has been publicly persecuted as a threat to the environmental.
- Cooperation and elimination of Stigma between farmers and legal authorities (especially environmental ones) would be the step forward.

- Better involvement and provision of Advisory services
- New and continuation of motivation tools – Awards etc. would bring valuable results and acceptance
- Key tool = Demonstration farms through sharing good practices, trainings, credibility for other farmers
- Next CAP in 2028 seems to be far, however all issues discussed as well as possible measures takes a time, need to start ASAP.
- Combination with other biodiversity species – e.g. pollinators etc.