

COASTAL BIRD PROTECTION AREA IN CITY OF TALLINN

1. Challenge/problem addressed

The protecting migratory bird foraging sites and flyways in the edge of the Tallinn city. The making of bird habitats visible through bottom-up initiatives and linking to Natura 2000 network.

2. Main scale of governance involved: local / regional / national / international

Local and international

3. Description of what and where was done

The coastal terrain of Paljassaare peninsula (North Tallinn) is a former enclosed coastal border zone and currently part of Natura 2000 bird protection area. This settings on the peninsula made rare birds (e.g. *Sterna paradisaea*) visible in urban-nature assemblages and provided some agency to speak in the name of non-humans. The nature conservation on this Tallinn's peninsula has some tensions with surfers, dog owners, real estate agencies, nudists and city planners.

Bird-watching enthusiasts (Tallinn Bird Club) can be seen as one community of practice that made the rich ecosystem of migrating birds visible through the activity of mapping, which includes watching and counting birds at particular locations. This passionate activity has indicated distributed flyways, where the peninsula functions as a migration corridor and foraging site for migrating birds. Awareness of these mappings became the main argument for integrating the coastal terrain into the pan-European Natura 2000 protective framework.

The boundaries of nature protection extending to marine and air space became formed through a dynamic process. The establishment of artificial islands has been negotiated to achieve compromises between new casinos and protecting of foraging grounds for migratory water birds.

The municipality plans to establish public promenades along the Tallinn's waterfront bypassing the bird protection area. The nature conservation specialists and the NGO have opposed this plan and possible solutions are still open.

4. What sectors were involved?

Nature conservation, city planning

5. Which target/interest groups / stakeholders were reached?

Bird-watching enthusiasts, NGO Tallinn Bird Club, real-estate developers, city planners

6. What methods were applied?

- Regularly watching and mapping presence of birds
- Using elements of “citizen science” to involve public into gathering and evaluating environmental data
- Making data visible for pan-European Natura 2000 network and city planning
- Publicly exposed posters/maps showing seasonally limited access (it is not strictly controlled) to some terrain of the peninsula
- Rebuilding former military structures (light-towers repurposed to viewing platforms) for nature-related education and bird-watching

7. Lessons learned

- The limited access to coastal area (military disturbance) can generate bases for rich coastal biodiversity
- Citizen science as tool to make coastal nature-based values visible and to translate to pan-European Natura 2000 network and city planning
- To limit the human pressure on the peninsula there were established wooden walk-trails. The re-naturalisation of coastal landscapes (e.g. cutting brushwood, seasonal bovine cattle)
- The “soft” regime of nature conservation does not avoid all harm to bird habitats, and there is a need to work more on public awareness

8. To which Multi-level Governance steps this valuable practice contributes?

- Stakeholder involvement (discussion across levels)
- Solutions and implementation (looking for solutions and implementation)

9. Links to further information about the practice/case

<https://citynature.eu/fi/kohde/paljassaare/?section=history>

https://colandwiki.hfwu.de/index.php?title=Case_Study_G:_Paljassaare-Pikakari

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363159769> Contingent Urban Nature and Interactional Justice The Evolving Coastal Spaces of the City of Tallinn

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Bird protection area on Paljassaare peninsula, Tallinn (photo by Tarmo Pikner)