

Name of the project area:

Misterhult

Surface area (ha): 8,500.200

EU protection status:

SPA X NATURA 2000 Code : SE0330049

pSCI X NATURA 2000 Code : SE0330049

Woodland with forestry 8%, farmland and husbandry 2%, small islets without any specific landuse 10% and water 80%.

Private land 100%.

Main land uses and ownership status of the project area:

Misterhult's archipelago has a widely varied vegetation, from the outer rock outcroppings where only lichens grow, to richly biodiverse meadows and fields mixed with forest on the larger islands. The archipelago is dominated by lichen-pine forests although mixed coniferous-deciduous forests are found as well. In the past, large sections of the archipelago were used for grazing while the more productive lands were used to grow winter fodder for the animals. Fishing was the main economic base for the island residents, while agriculture was necessary for subsistence. Today, however, there are no more active farmers left anywhere in the archipelago. All of the cattle in the archipelago were sold off during the 1960's and since then, most of the lands have been left unused or used occasionally as grazing lands for sheep. In all cases, though, grazing pressure is insufficient and the old agricultural lands are becoming overgrown.

Four islands within the archipelago will be targeted in this project:

Örö island is dominated by oak forests, although aspen, birch, mountain ash and alder are all common. Örö has the highest diversity of vascular plants in the archipelago with some 440 species. There are two maintained meadows in the village, both rich in flowers such as *Primula veris*, *Viscaria vulgaris*, *Helianthemum nummularium*, and *Cynanchum vincetoxicum*.

Örö has been inhabited since the 16th century. Records show agriculture activity on the island as early as 1799. As a result of the loss of cattle on Örö, the island's open character has drastically changed. The rich biodiversity of Örö is certain to be lost as pastures and hay meadows overgrow and secondary succession turns the lands into forest. In order to create favourable conservation status for the natural values of Örö, the area must be cleared again and grazing must be re-introduced onto the island. Strupö is dominated by oak and pine forests, with birch, aspen and alder growing in the lowlands. As early as 1801, farming meadows had been established in the lowlands on Strupö. The island used to have both cattle and sheep grazing the lands, but since the 1960's no farm animals have lived on the island and all grazing activity has stopped.

Älö is a varied island with hilly areas dominated by pine, mixed with valleys where oak dominates. At the beginning of the 1800's, the farming meadows were mainly concentrated in the valleys. These later become fields. Since the end of the 1960's, Älö has been grazed by sheep. The fields have not been used since the 1960's and instead, are used occasionally as grazing lands. However, the grazing pressure on the island has been too low over the past few decades and all the lands are becoming overgrown. As a result, the biodiversity that used to be found on the island is decreasing. Marsö has one permanent resident remaining on the island. Sheep continued grazing the island until the mid-1980's, but since then, all grazing activity on the island has ceased.

This area has been identified as being of national interest for its natural values and recreational opportunities. In addition to the marine value of the archipelago, Misterhult also contains extremely valuable agricultural landscapes with pastures and hay meadows spread out on several islands in the archipelago. The site is pointed out as of National Interest for Nature conservation.

The project will address threats from overgrowing of grassland habitats and grazed forests by measures included in action C1, targeting 120,1 hectares (ha).

Habitats that will be improved by action C1:

1620; 97 ha

Other grassland habitat 23,1 ha