

Project areas

The Life Coast Benefit Project works with restoration of coastal areas along the three Swedish counties Södermanland, Östergötland and Kalmar. A total of 45 Natura 2000 areas are included.

You are welcome to visit our website at www.lifecoastbenefit.se. There you will find more information about the project, including maps of the project areas.



PROJECT PARTNERS

Östergötland
www.lansstyrelsen.se/ostergotland
 010-223 50 00



Södermanland
www.lansstyrelsen.se/sodermanland
 010-223 40 00



Kalmar
www.lansstyrelsen.se/kalmar
 010-223 80 00



Swedish Environmental
 Protection Agency
www.naturvardsverket.se
 010-698 10 00



CO-FINANCERS



Life+ and Natura 2000

The project is co-financed by Life+ (the European Union's programme in support of its nature conservation policy). Life+ may be used within Natura 2000 sites. Natura 2000 is a network of the EU's species and habitats that are important to protect. The network has been created to halt the extinction of species.

Every member state selects and takes responsibility for the protection and management of its Natura 2000 sites. The work is based on the Union's Species and Habitats Directive and its Birds Directive.

www.lifecoastbenefit.se

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Life Coast Benefit

RECREATING A BRIGHTER COAST AND ARCHIPELAGO

Life Coast Benefit works for:

Diverse agricultural landscapes, living wetlands and sunlit forests



Clearing

Clearing re-establishes sunlit forest grazing areas, meadows and pastures. Scrubs and young trees are removed around valuable trees and shrubs on grazing lands, in order to increase their exposure to sunlight.



Pollard trees

In former times, foliage was taken from some trees as winter fodder for animals (pollarding). Old pollard trees will be restored and managed and new ones established. They are important habitats for other species, including lichens and insects.



Grazing in forests and pastures

Grazing animals create environments that are needed by plants and animals in agricultural landscapes. Both in open grasslands and wooded pastures grazing will be reintroduced. Four barns will be built or improved.



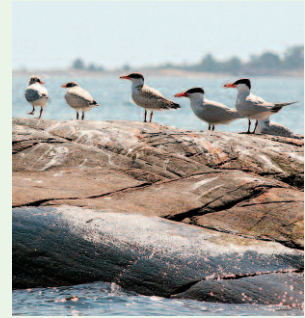
Prescribed burning

Nowadays, most forest fires are extinguished. This results in the risk of extinction for many species that need fire to survive. Most trees survive a prescribed burning, but some are damaged or die.



Creating lighter forests

Many sparse pine and broad-leaved forests become more dense with time. Spruce and other tree species that do not belong there are removed to create better conditions for light-loving plants and animals.



Clearing bird islets

Vegetation is cleared from overgrown islands in the archipelago for the benefit of nesting birds. Minks predate on eggs and chicks, and are therefore hunted for the protection of important nesting sites.

Restoration of coastlines and archipelago islands

Life Coast Benefit restores Natura 2000 areas in Södermanland, Östergötland and Kalmar counties. The project started in the autumn of 2013 and will continue until the summer of 2019. It is expected to cost up to 9.6 million euros and is financed jointly by the EU, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and the three counties.

The objective is to re-establish biologically diverse agricultural landscapes, living wetlands and sunlit forests. Through the measures taken with the Life Coast Benefit, areas will be restored and prepared for long-term future use.

- Improving 1100 hectares of agricultural landscape.
- Clearing 200 hectares on bird-nesting islands.
- Making 150 hectares of forest more varied and open to light.
- Restoring 700 old pollard trees.
- Improving seven forests with prescribed burning.
- Improving six wetlands.

After the project is completed, landowners or the County Administrative Boards will be responsible for continued management. The long term aim is that future management of agriculture landscapes can be financed by the Swedish Rural Development Programme (RDP).

Why do landscapes become overgrown?

Farming is being rationalised. In response to declining profits and increased foreign competition, food production has become increasingly large-scale. One-third of Sweden's total food supply is now imported and, as a result, some of the country's grazing land is no longer used. When grazing animals disappear there is no need for winter fodder, which means that hay meadows are gradually being abandoned. In some places, not even cropland is needed.

Electricity and oil are replacing wood. Formerly, firewood for heating and cooking was collected – not only from trees, but also from shrubs and brushwood. When households gained access to electricity and heating oil, they stopped collecting firewood and many affected areas began to fill in with vegetation.

Hard to farm. Many small farms in the archipelago have been abandoned during the past hundred years. They are often small and poorly accessible, which makes them hard to farm. The cost of boat transport reduces the profitability of both animal farming and forestry.

Modern nature conservation

Plant and animal life along the mainland coast and in the archipelago is the result of farming and forestry during hundreds of years.

Before industrialisation, most Swedes lived in rural areas. In 1870, roughly 70 per cent of the Swedish labour force worked in agriculture. The land was farmed intensively until the mid-1900s. Today, less than two per cent of the working population makes a living from farming, fishing and/or forestry.

An active agriculture is necessary to preserve the species that benefit from grazing or haymaking. Other environments are dependent on natural disturbances such as fire.

Traditionally, people who live in archipelagos work at more than one occupation. In order to survive, fishing and farming have been combined with handcrafts and other work.

The Life Coast Benefit project provides opportunities for people to continue taking care of land in the archipelago. A living and inviting archipelago also benefits the tourism and recreation sector.