

Summary “Moose in Lusatia”

Military training grounds represent valuable open landscape biotopes characterised by great biodiversity and cover large areas of land. They provide a habitat for both specially adapted and for endangered flora and fauna. The research group OFFENLAND (‘Habitat Management on Military Training Bases in the Pleistocene Lowland Areas of Northeast Germany: Fundamentals of Nature Conservation and Practical Implementation’) was established with the aim of formulating scientific principles and concepts for the creation, development and maintenance of valuable open landscapes in the cultural landscape of Central Europe.

Facts most commonly associated with military training areas that resounded throughout the country in recent years, especially amongst conservationists, are the open landscapes – unbisected, nutrient poor, of great size - and the high numbers of specially adapted plants and animals, many of them endangered or already regarded extinct.

In the Biosphere Reserve “Oberlausitzer Heide- und Teichlandschaft” the members of the research network “Moose in Lusatia” have developed a grazing concept with both domestic and wild animals. The animals aims to preserve the open habitats of a former tank firing range in order to maintain the habitats of endangered species. On different scales the vegetation development and the impact of sheep, goats and moose on the woody vegetation and on the micro relief was investigated.

The results show that the long-term conservation of endangered species via combined pasturing with domestic and wild animals can only succeed if the impacts of the animals are very high, at least in sub areas. A monitoring of several years is necessary to find out if the dynamics created by these animals provide sufficient niches for a long-term conservation of “open habitat-species” (*Gladiolus imbricatus*, *Erica tetralix*, *Drosera intermedia* and *D. rotundifolia*, *Lycopodiella inundata*, *Gallinago gallinago*, *Caprimulgus europaeus*, *Lullula arborea*, *Saxicola rubetra* ...).

Members of research network:

Institut für Landespflege, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg

Biosphärenreservat “Oberlausitzer Heide- und Teichlandschaft“

Förderverein für die Natur der Oberlausitzer Heide- und Teichlandschaft e.V:

Naturschutz-Tierpark Görlitz e.V.