

**Collaboration on nature
conservation:
BirdLife's collaboration
projects**

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The BirdLife Europe and Central Asia Partnership



BirdLife Partners contributing to BESTGRID pilot projects



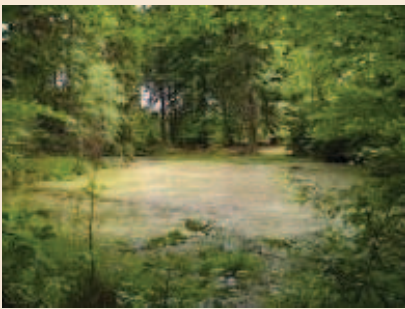
BESTGRID pilot projects: BirdLife collaborations



BirdLife partners are involved in all four BESTGRID pilot projects.

- 50Hertz: NABU – Eric Neuling (see previous presentation).
- Tennet: NABU Lower Saxony – Elke Meier.
- ELIA: Natagora – Julien Taymans.
- National Grid: The RSPB – Helen Crow.

NABU Lower Saxony's collaboration with TenneT



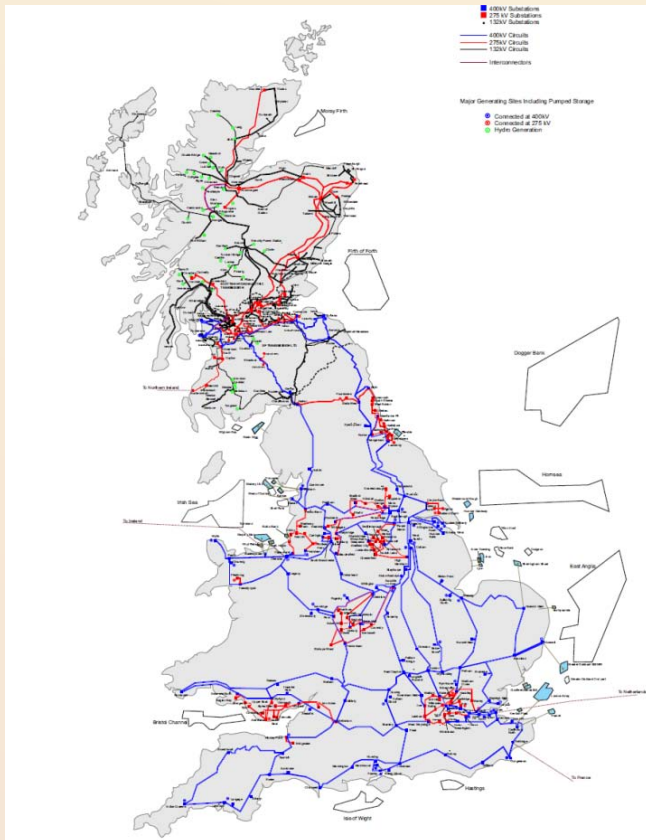
- Risks and opportunities for habitats and species in mountainous regions.
- More connectivity and habitat diversity, to benefit rare plants, reptiles, bats and insects.
- July 2014 visit to ELIA/RTE Life+ project.
- Roundtables Sep and Oct. Report late Nov in German and English.
- Land ownership issues – public v. private.
- Challenge for NGOs – scale and complexity of TSO operations and staff roles.
- Challenge for TSOs – time pressure and technical focus – nature not ‘built in’?

Natagora's collaboration with ELIA



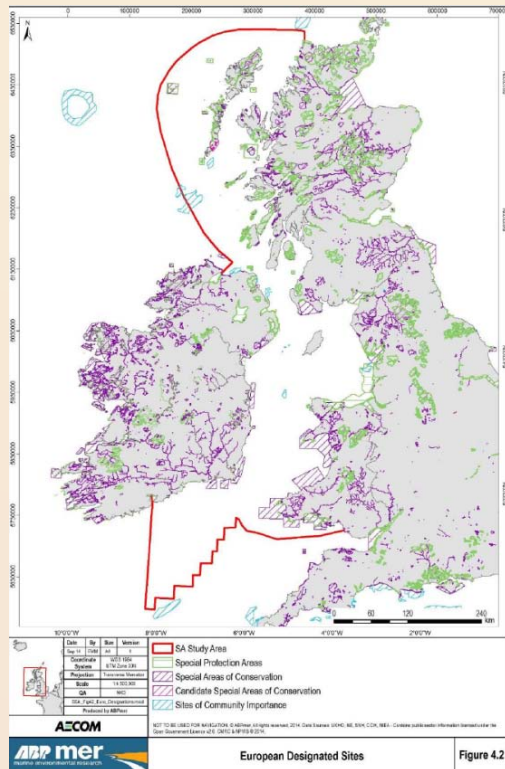
- Evaluation of ecological sensitivities in the Braine-l'Alleud – Waterloo route.
- Mapping of designated areas and habitats.
- Identification and description of flora, fauna and habitats, bird survey.
- Presented to stakeholders May 2014,
- Report delivered July 2014.
- Pilot project dropped June 2014.
- Route mostly urban or agricultural. Mostly underground or replacement overhead.
- Little real collaboration.

The RSPB's collaboration with National Grid [1]



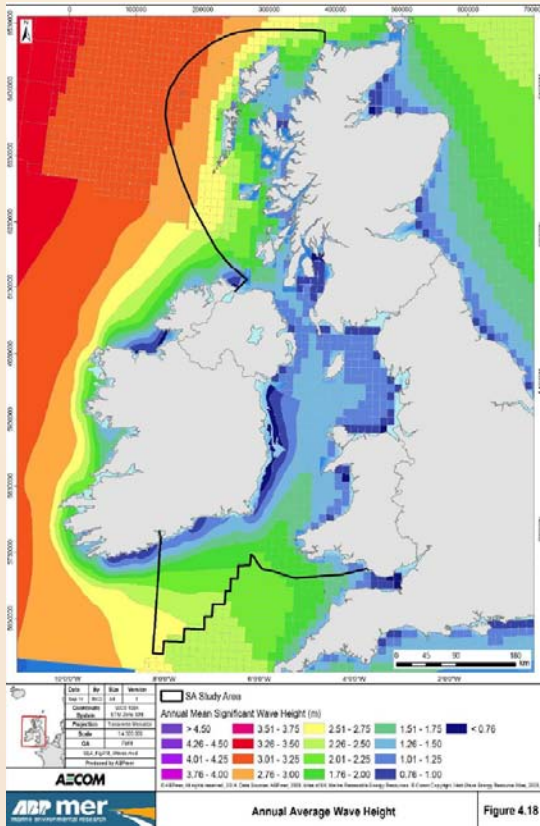
- RSPB Casework Team
- Reviewing experience engaging with 6 UK grid projects.
- Archive research and interviews with 'Casework Officers':
 - Moray Firth – NE Scotland
 - Hinkley – Somerset in W. England
 - Beaulieu-Denny – N to S Scotland
 - NSN Link – UK to Norway
 - Bramford to Twinstead – E. England
 - Richborough – SE England (NEMO)

The RSPB's collaboration with National Grid [2]



- Value of strategic grid planning.
- Coordination vs competition among developers e.g. offshore wind.
- Collaboration with env. authorities matters.
- Engagement at site search stage
- Realistic alternatives

The RSPB's collaboration with National Grid [3]



- Quality of consultants, survey methods and data quality varies.
- Timescale and capacity issues for RSPB.
- Continuity of engagement varies
- Big public stakeholder meetings increasingly popular, but have drawbacks: minutes?

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- Bulgaria – Svetoslav Spasov (BSPB)
- Cyprus – Claire Papazoglu (BL Cyprus)
- Portugal – Julieta Costa (SPEA)
- Slovenia – Tomas Mihelic (DOPPS)
- Estonia – Veljo Volke (BL Estonia)
- Belgium – Jean-Yves Paquet (Natagora)

Mapping collision and/or electrocution risk for birds and advising on mitigation.

Emerging themes [1] opportunities and successes



- Project work often highly successful.
- Builds constructive working relationships.
- Saving birds is good business and good PR.
- Collaborative, open learning approach and sharing expertise.
- Risk mapping enables strategic retrofit mitigation for greater (cost) effectiveness.
- New power lines and risk mapping = opportunity for strategic grid planning and mitigation in new projects.
- Opportunity to share lessons and good practice.

Emerging themes [2]

Challenges



- Closed approach, distrust and non-cooperation persist in some parts of EU.
- ‘Casework’ too resource intensive, and retrofitting mitigation too expensive.
- Big companies, time pressure and desire for technical fixes – challenging context for conservation NGOs.
- Need for strong environmental authorities and strong environmental expertise in industry.
- How to ensure continuity in engagement and learn from experiences?

Draft recommendations for grid companies



- Map risks and target mitigation: conservation NGOs can help.
- Build nature into plans: much more can be achieved, and at lower cost.
- Make full use of SEA and EIA, with meaningful alternatives.
- Ensure continuity of engagement: ‘stakeholder management’ when projects are put on hold.
- Empower internal environmental teams.
- Quality control EIA processes.
- Stakeholder events need to be documented.

Key lessons for NGOs



- Grid companies respond well to proposals for practical, evidence based collaboration.
- Project work opens doors to better communication and trust.
- ‘Casework’ is (or will be) overwhelming: engage early and ‘upstream’.
- Need to share experiences and replicate good practice.
- Think global, act local! Where else is action needed? Is this line important for clean energy and climate risk reduction?

BirdLife partners delivering BESTGRID workshops



Next steps for BirdLife

- Handbook on grids and nature.
- Workshop for environmental NGOs (Brussels)
- Workshop for BirdLife partners (UK)
- Capacity building workshops in:
 - Slovenia
 - Lithuania
 - Romania

Thank you. Questions?



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Partnership for nature and people