



**Stakeholder workshop  
on ecosystem service mapping and  
assessment in EU member states  
at national level  
- Identified gaps and possible solutions-**

**WELCOME to LATVIA**

**RIGA 14-16.10.2015**

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# Where are we?



North East Europe

on the coast of  
the Baltic Sea

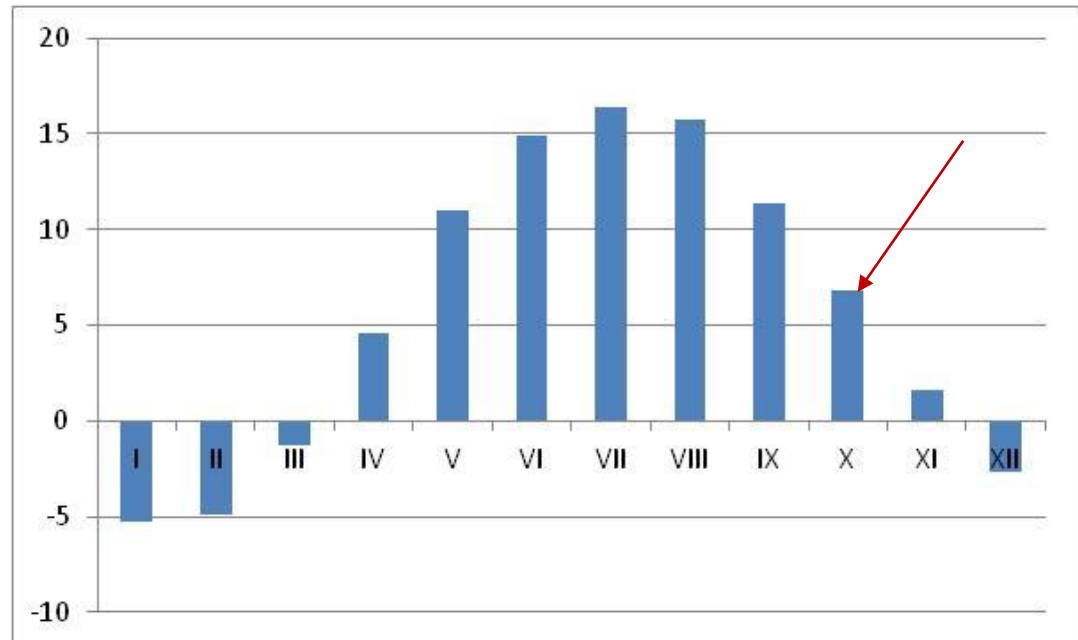
# Key facts about Latvia

- Terrestrial territory of Latvia - 64 589 km<sup>2</sup>
- Marine areas of Latvia – 28 000 km<sup>2</sup>
- Population is decreasing
  - 2015 – 1.986 million; 2005 – 2.250 million
- 68% - in cities/town
- Density - 31 person/km<sup>2</sup>
- 119 municipalities (9 cities)



# Key facts about Latvia

- Highest point: 311.6 m above sea level
- Largest river: Daugava (shared with RU, BY; LT)
- Longest river: Gauja/Koiva (452 km)
- Air temperature:
  - Max: +36,4°C
  - Min: -43,2°C



# Key facts about Riga

- Riga - officially founded in 1201
- Inhabitants – 641 007 in 2015
- Riga port – a significant part of global and regional cargo supply chains and passenger traffic network in the Baltic Sea region
- Water covers – 15.6%; Green area – 28%

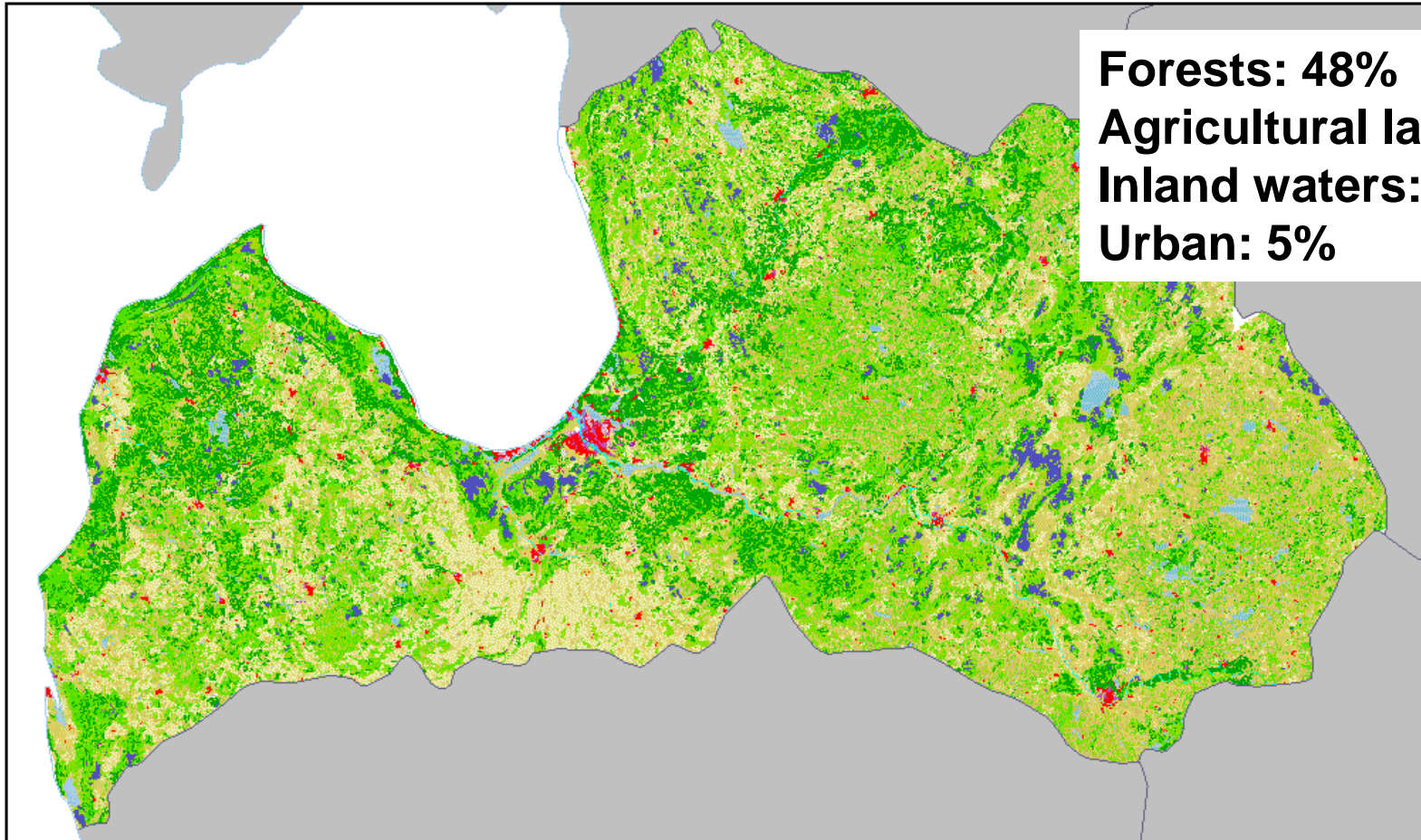


# Key facts about Riga

- Riga examples of all architectural styles characteristic for the Northern Europe, from Gothic to Modernism
- Old town – UNESCO cultural heritage

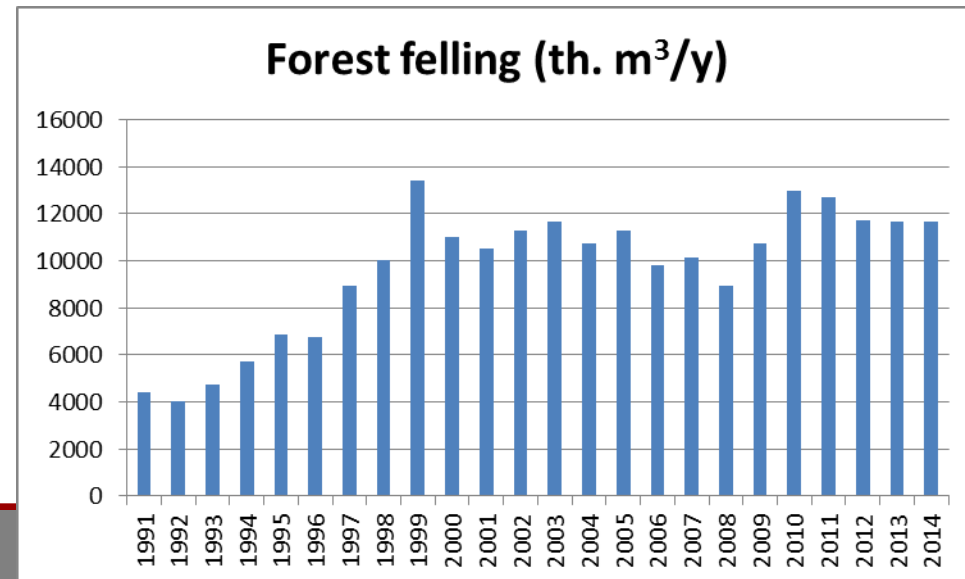


# Landscapes and ecosystems



# Forest ecosystems

- Hemi-boreal region:
  - Coniferous – 45%
  - Deciduous – 55%
- Provisioning services
  - Timber cutting



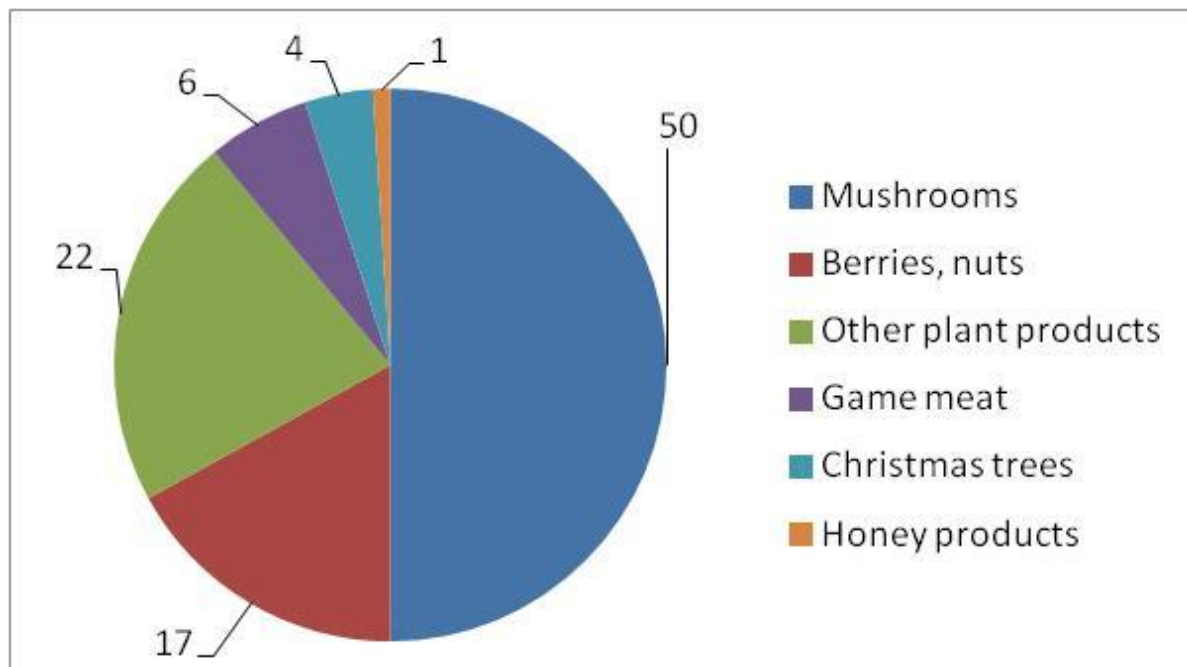


# Forest ecosystems

- Provisioning and recreational services
  - Wild products – 102 million EUR (2010)
  - Recreation – 37 million EU (73% related to hunting)



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# Grassland services

- Most threatened ecosystem services
- Agriculture land – 37% (18 % not managed)
  - Arable land – 70%
  - Grasslands – 30%
  - High nature value grasslands -2% (40% not managed)



# Wetlands, bogs, mires

- Mires - 4.9% of the country area
- Peat lands - 10.4% of the country area
- Provisioning services
  - Peat cutting – 0.4% of the country area
  - Picking cranberries



# Wetlands, bogs, mires

- Regulating services (carbon storage, sequestration, flood prevention, water purifications)
- Recreational services
  - bird watching, trails, hiking



# Coastal ecosystems

- Almost 500 km of the coastline (3.9 person/m)
- 50% of them are sandy beaches, cliffs
- Blue flag movement (16 bathing areas, 3 yacht ports)



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# Marine ecosystem services

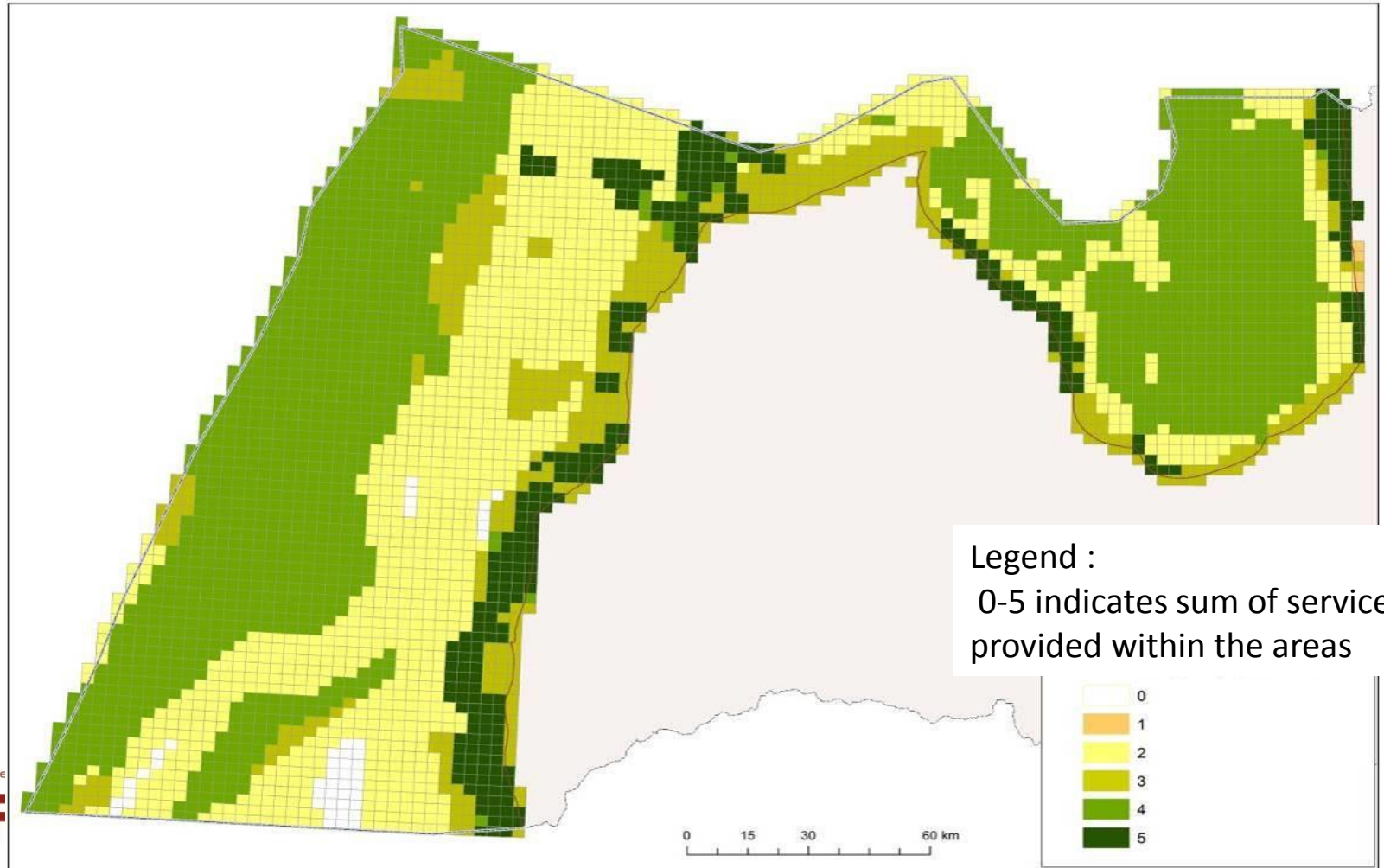
- Three dimensional character of marine ecosystem
- Limitations in knowledge and data on marine ecosystems
- Adapting of available approaches and methodology to Maritime Spatial Planning



# Marine ecosystem services

- Starting point - identification of the marine ES based on benthic habitat distribution
- Habitat classification using HELCOM HUB, 2013 – level 3-5
- Spatial and biophysical data applied :
  - Sea bottom sediment map
  - Secchi depth/bathymetry data
  - Benthic biology data (field observations)

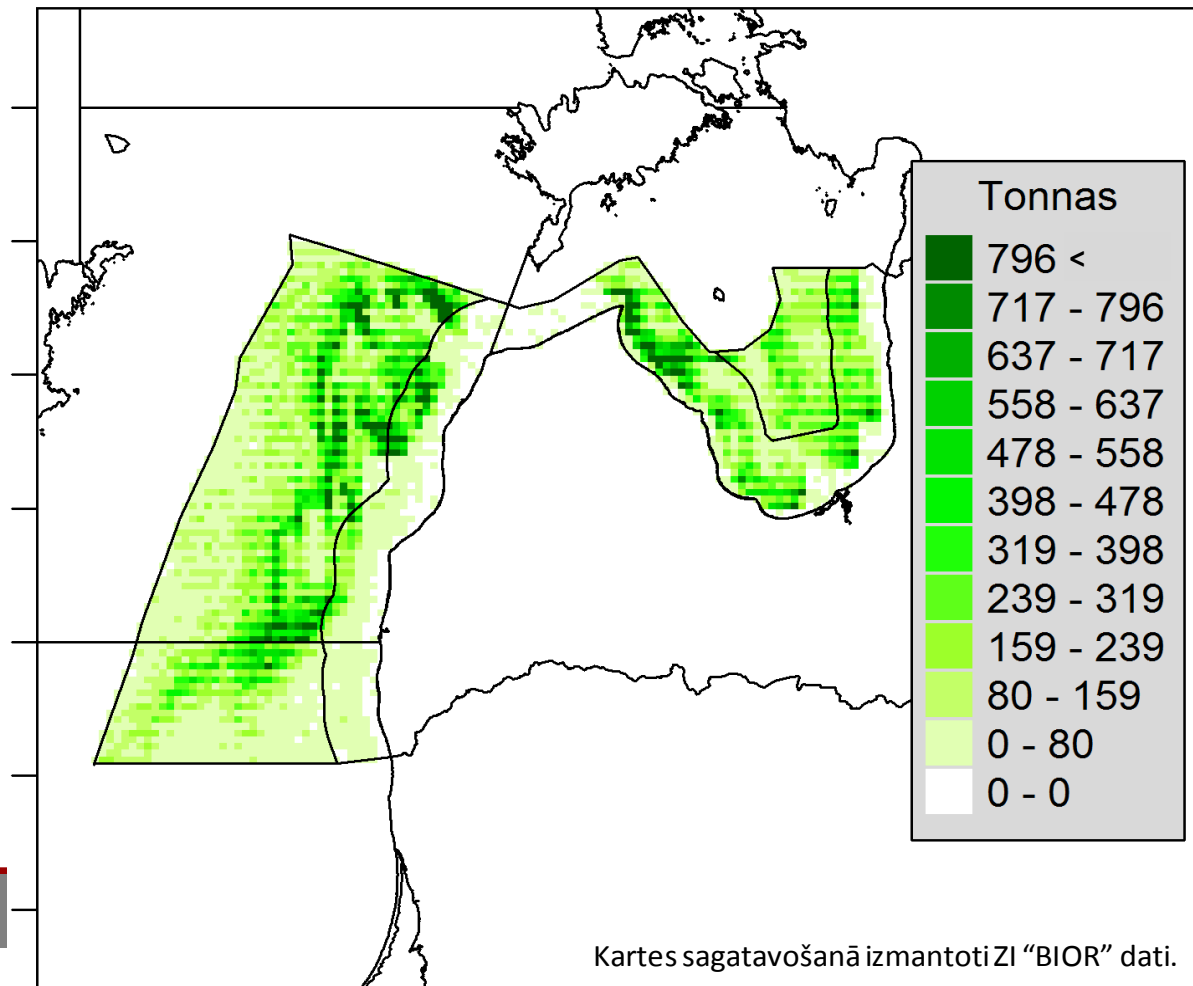
# Diversity of benthic habitat related ecosystem services in Latvian marine



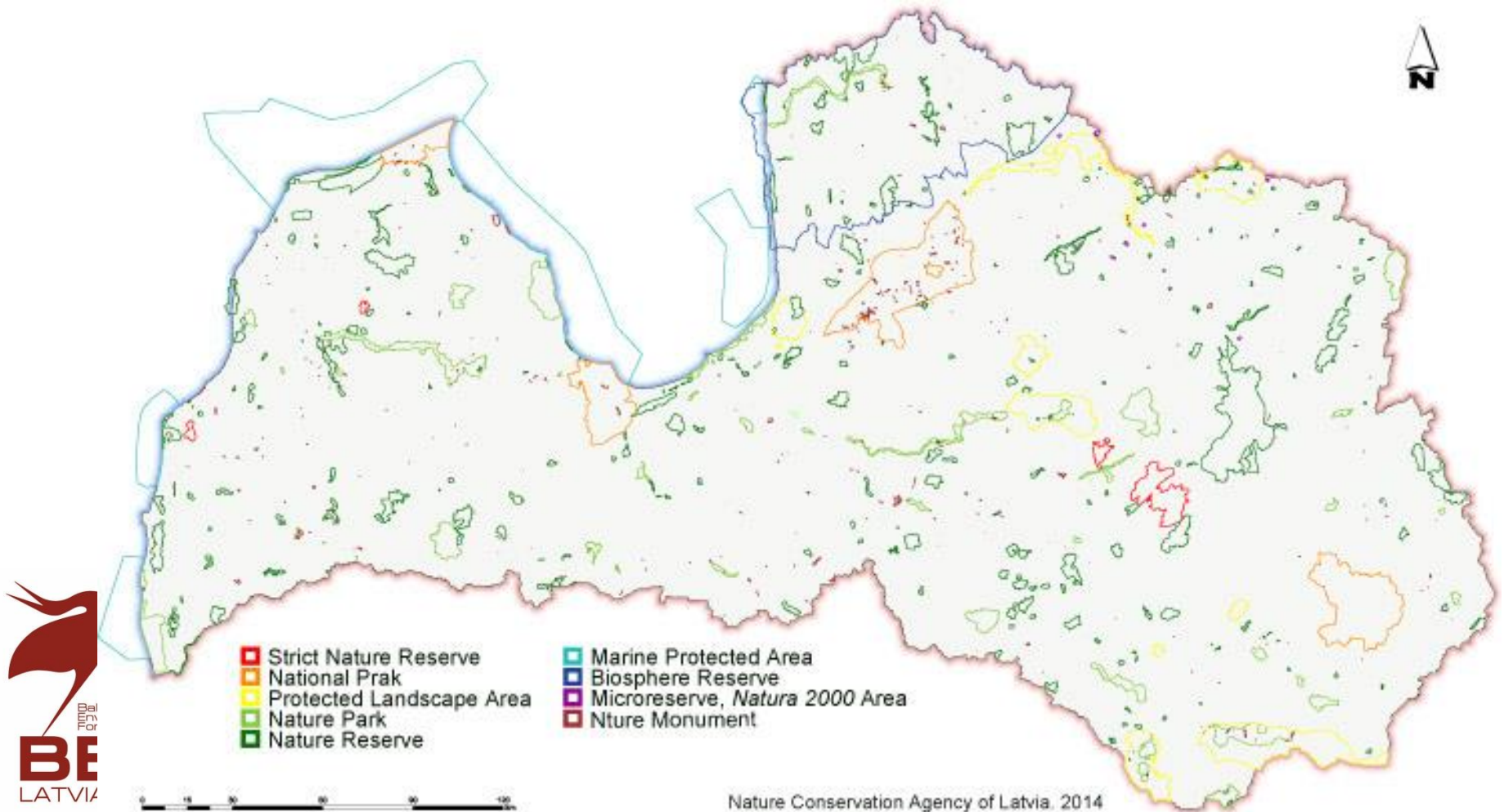


# Mapping of provisioning services

- Fish catch in Latvian waters (sprat, herring, cod, flounder)



# Protection of nature



# BEF - Who are we?

- Network of non-governmental organisations in Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Germany, Russia
- Established in 2003, based on expert teams working for joint projects of the Baltic ministries of the Environment
- Goal – to promote the importance of environmental protection through dialogue and stakeholder involvement



# Awareness raising and education

- Nature Concert hall – combining educational activities with open air musical performances since 2006
  - 2015 theme – meadows and dedicated flower - the **meadow vetchling** (*Lathyrus Pratensis*).

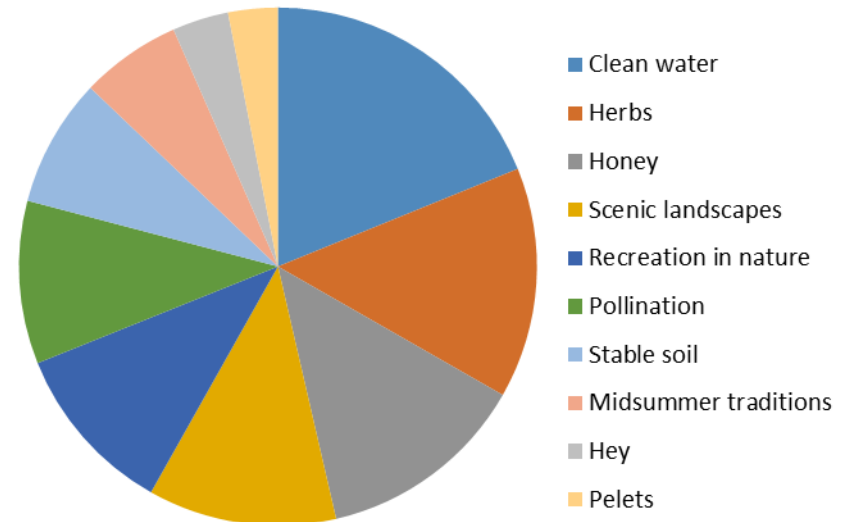


# Telling about grassland ecosystem services

- Explanation of definitions in an interactive way
- Identification of the types of the ecosystem services
- Valuation of the grassland ecosystem services



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# BEF & Ecosystem services

- Capacity building activities in cooperation with other institutes
- Adaptation of the methodology due to limited data availability in the region
- Testing through different case studies
  - Maritime spatial planning
  - Grassland management strategies



# Have a fruitful workshop!



- <http://www.latvia.eu/videos#modal-video-3582>