



Institute^{for}
European
Environmental
Policy

Highlights from the DG ENV study of results-based agri-environment payment schemes (RBAPS)

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Workshop on result-based agri-environment payments for
biodiversity, Brussels

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What are results-based payment schemes?

- pay farmers for clearly defined biodiversity outputs from their land
- allow farmers to choose how to manage their land, livestock and crops to achieve these results
- have existed in Europe for 20+ years
- in 2014 there were >30 in operation or planned in EU and Switzerland
- mostly funded by EAFRD 2007-13, but also state-aid and Article 68 (Pillar 1)



Main focus of biodiversity objectives



Conservation of existing valuable habitats and species:

- species-rich meadows
- semi-natural grazed habitats
- traditional orchards and vineyards
- ground nesting birds
- large carnivores





Per clutch trials, '93 – '96
 Meadow bird agreements, '00 – '03
 Species-rich grassland '00 – '06
 Meadow birds through cooperatives '04 - '14



Peak District farm conservation scheme '93 – '96



Burren farming for conservation programme '10 - '14



Flowering meadows scheme (Herbe_07) '07 - '14
 Pastoral management plan (Herbe_09) '07 - '14



RAPCA fire prevention scheme (Andalucía) '05 - '14



Species rich grassland (Ecological Compensation Areas) '01 – '14
 Species rich orchards (Ecological Compensation Areas) '01 – '14



Large carnivore scheme for Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) and Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) '00 – '14



Golden Eagle scheme (*Aquila chrysaetos*) '98 – '14



Species rich grassland schemes
 Baden-Württemberg (MEKA B4) '00 - '14
 Rheinland-Pfalz '07 – '14
 Niedersachsen & Bremen '07 – '14
 Thüringen '08 - '14
 Bayern, proposed
 Hessen, proposed
 Sachsen, proposed
 Schleswig-Holstein (not publicly financed) '07 – '14

Bird schemes

Harrier nest protection in arable fields - (Nordrhein-Westfalen) '93 – '14
 Harrier nest protection in arable fields - (Bayern) '99 - '14
 Grassland birds in Bremen '05 - '14
 Grassland birds in Schleswig-Holstein '97 - '14

Orchard schemes

Various



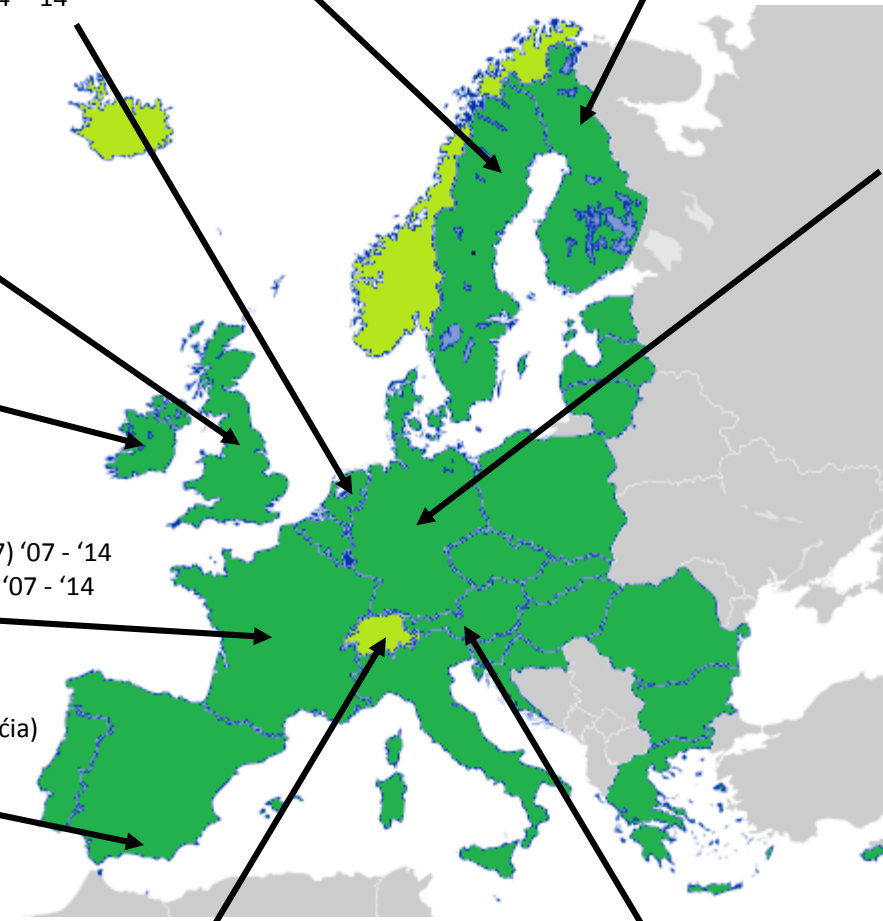
Animal Genetic conservation

Most Member States offer some form of support for animal genetic conservation operating on a results-based approach.

Examples can be seen in Italy, Germany, Ireland and Austria.



Ergebnisorientierter Naturschutzplan (ENP) pilot project proposed



Result indicators of the biodiversity objective

Well-chosen result indicators are:

- representative of the target habitat or species
- present consistently in target farmland habitats in the area
- easily identified by farmers and representatives of the paying agency
- measurable using a simple methodology
- sensitive to changes in agricultural management but otherwise stable over time
- unlikely to be influenced by external factors beyond the control of the land manager
- not easy to replicate by means other than agricultural management.

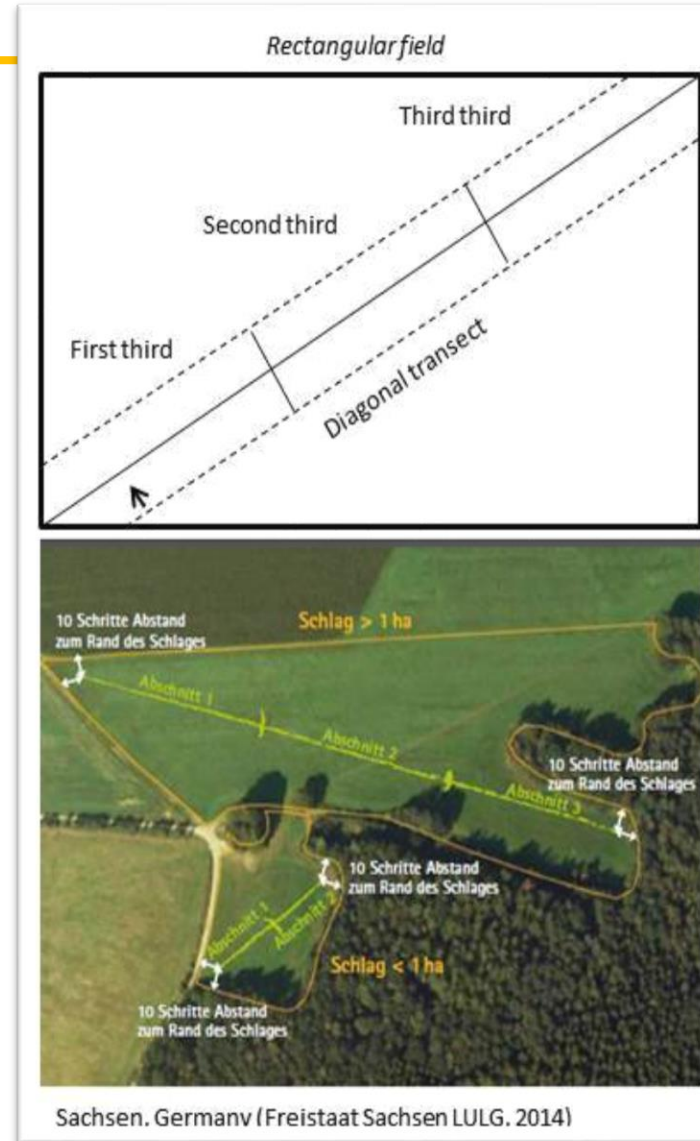
Species rich meadows (Germany, France, Switzerland)

- objective: maintain typical plant communities (Annex 1 and others)
- in 2013 in Germany 88 000 ha and 5500 farmers
- most schemes are EAFRD funded
- list of indicator species or groups of species (typically 24 -36 spp per list) developed using habitat data, then tested in the field
- specific list for meadows in **each** biogeographic region

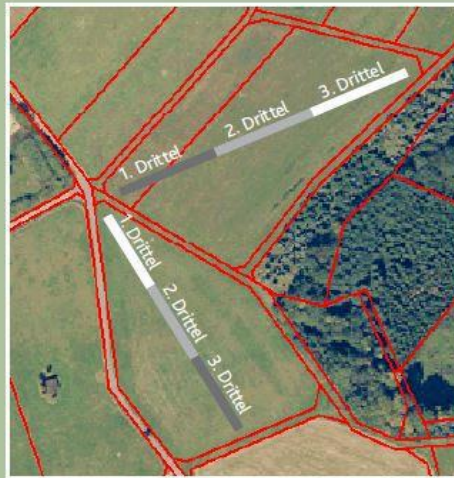


Measuring meadow indicators

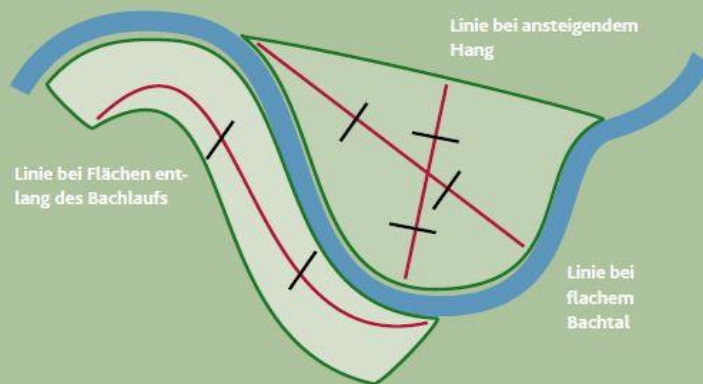
- simplified botanical survey method (transect)
- transect divided into 100m or 50m lengths, check 2m each side
- at least 4 spp from the list in each section of the transect
- for better quality habitats at least 6 or 8 spp
- (also used for identification of spp-rich grassland for RBAPS and management based schemes)
- farmers check and record each year, paying agency uses same method
- illustrated 'tractor cab' guides and training for farmers



Farmer guidance in Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany



Kennartenfassung. Beispiel eines rechteckigen und eines asymmetrischen Schläges



Erfassungslinie bei außergewöhnlichem Flächenzuschnitt am Beispiel eines Bachtals. Arterfassung entlang des vorhandenen Standortsspektrums (trocken, mittel, nass).

MITTLERE STANDORTE

2 Beinwell weiß, violett (V-VII)



3 Blutwurz/Tormentill (V-VII)



5 Flockenblumen (VI-IX)



5 Flockenblumen (VI-IX)



6 Frauenmantel (V-VIII)



Semi-natural grazed habitats in the Burren, Ireland

- objective: conservation status of Natura 2000 area
- karst landscape used for livestock farming (160 farmers, 7 500 ha, 1000 parcels)
- funded until 2013 by Article 68
- indicator is a composite index (one for lowland summer pastures another for upland winter pastures)
 - habitat condition and species indicators
 - structural indicators
 - absence of negative indicators



Indicator measurement the Burren scheme

Payment based on total indicator 'score' for the farm:

- sum of index score for each parcel (1 = poor 9 = excellent, minimum required 3) multiplied by the area (ha)
- payments/ha degressive in 40 ha bands, starting with lowest scoring field

Indicator measurement and verification:

- annual assessment by trained, certified advisor, cross-checked by scheme staff
- once in 5 years MoA check

Best practice guides (BFCP Ireland)

FARMING FOR CONSERVATION ON THE GROUND

Farming for conservation is not rocket science: it is for the most part simple commonsense. A few basic principles underlie farming for conservation on the ground.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT IT IS WE WANT TO PROTECT

The Burren means many different things to many different people. Interests include geology, history, archaeology, flora, fauna, folklore, music, tourism, farming or a combination of these. Whatever our interest, it is important to be aware of the Burren's unique and diverse heritage, to appreciate that all of this heritage is inter-related and worthy of our respect and care. All of us have something to learn in this regard and this learning can be great fun.

For more information, please see [BurrenLIFE Best Practice Guide No. 2 - A Guide to the Agricultural Heritage of the Burren](#).

GETTING THE GRAZING RIGHT

The Burren is a pastoral landscape, one 'where the cowman, not the ploughman, is king'. Grazing has been the primary land use here for almost 6,000 years. Winter grazing is the key to maintaining the Burren's rich biodiversity. Grazing too little will lead to rank vegetation, a loss of species and increased feeding costs for the farmer. In contrast, grazing too much or at the wrong time may result in poaching, pollution and habitat change. Only by grazing at sustainable levels will the farmer minimise feed costs while maintaining the winterage - and its biodiversity - in prime condition.

Getting the grazing right requires skill but it also needs appropriate structures and equipment. For example, well maintained internal stone walls help to simplify herding and improve grazing levels. Water troughs, tanks, pumps and pipes are required for livestock to have access to water during drought times and while being fed concentrates. Providing better access to remote winterages is important for time-pressed farmers and also for the welfare of sick and injured livestock. BurrenLIFE has piloted some useful techniques and technologies to address these infrastructural needs.

For more information, please see [BurrenLIFE Best Practice Guide No. 3 - A Guide to Grazing Burren Winterages](#).

COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING SYSTEMS

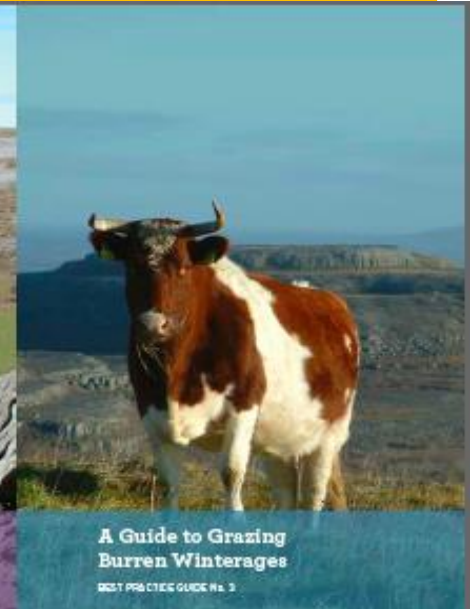
Supplementary feeding with silage can cause major problems such as poaching and point source pollution and can lead to undergrazing. In-calf suckler cows overwintered in the Burren need some additional nutrients and minerals; the BurrenLIFE ration is tailored to meet this need. Feeding at the recommended quantities and times is the most cost-effective way to complement the diet of the grazing animal. This helps to maintain animal condition and health and also helps to improve the water quality, landscape and biodiversity values of the Burren.

For more information, please see [BurrenLIFE Best Practice Guide No. 4 - A Guide to Feeding Cattle on Burren Winterages](#).

SCRUB CONTROL

Farmers have always had to work hard to control scrub in the Burren. Scrub was cut for fuel, fencing, thatching and as a fodder source. Though a lot of these uses are no longer visible, there is still a need to control scrub particularly where it is blocking access and where it is beginning to encroach on to other valuable habitats. The BurrenLIFE project has piloted a range of techniques to control scrub.

For more information, please see [BurrenLIFE Best Practice Guide No. 5 - A Guide to Controlling Scrub on Burren Winterages and Other Areas](#).



Results-based nature-conservation plan (Austria)

- *Ergebnisorientierter Naturschutzplan* (ENP) Austrian pilot scheme uses an individual farm-based approach
- field visit by adviser, who works with farmer to set biodiversity objectives for the farm according to local conservation objectives, habitats and species:
 - biodiversity results that are expected at the end of the scheme e.g. number of breeding Whinchat
 - specific habitat characteristics e.g. vegetation height,
- **control indicators** are defined as limits on negative habitat characteristics that would prevent the required results from being achieved.

**ERGEBNISORIENTIERTER
NATURSCHUTZPLAN**

PILOTPROJEKT

Beim Pilotprojekt „Ergebnisorientierter Naturschutzplan“ (ENP) werden gemeinsam mit dem Bauern auf naturschutzfachlich wertvollen Flächen konkrete Schutzziele vereinbart, die bis zum Ende des Verpflichtungszeitraums erreicht werden sollen. Über die Art der Bewirtschaftungsmaßnahmen kann der Bauer jedoch selber entscheiden.

Im ENP können Bäuerinnen und Bauern ihre praktischen Bewirtschaftungserfahrungen gut einbringen, flexibler auf äußere Einflüsse wie z.B. Wetterereignisse reagieren und die Bewirtschaftung besser auf betriebinterne Abläufe abstimmen.

ENP

MIT UNTERSTÜTZUNG VON BUND UND EUROPÄISCHER UNION

MINISTERIUM FÜR LANDWIRTSCHAFT UND FORSTWIRTSCHAFT

LE 07-13

Large carnivores in Sweden and Finland

- objective: stabilise and increase populations of Wolverine, Lynx and Golden Eagle in northern regions used for reindeer herding
- indicator is number of nests (Golden Eagle) or breeding territories (Wolverine and Lynx) in reindeer grazing areas
- payments are higher in tundra than in forest (where there are fewer calf losses)
- indicators are measured by
 - government ranger service and Sami village representatives (trained) in Sweden
 - State Forest Agency Golden Eagle surveys, also volunteers, in Finland

Characteristics of successful RBAPS schemes

- scientific knowledge and data on habitats, species and farming practices
- focus on biodiversity priorities where agricultural management is key
- environmental objectives that farmers can understand and buy into
- effective result indicators
- simple, objective, repeatable methods of measuring indicators
- 'fine-tune' to maintain/improve conservation status
- involve farmers and other key stakeholders in development
- compatible with EU Regulations and audit requirements
- effective IT systems support scheme operation
- pilot schemes used to test scheme and build experience
- high levels of facilitation, advice and support for farmers
- robust system monitoring > feed back > review

Where next?

- Considerable potential for 2015-20 and beyond
- Overcomes the difficulties of meeting more stringent verification and control issues
- Possibilities for broadening biodiversity objectives
- Empowers farmers to take responsibility for biodiversity achievements
- Earlier issues limiting development seem to have been overcome, allowing a move towards pure results-based schemes
- Pilots will be funded via DG Env 2015-20 in Romania, Spain and Ireland
- Elsewhere pilots could be funded via 2014-20 RDPs



European Commission RBAPS study website

- searchable inventory of schemes
- videos from the field
- expert articles
- conference presentations
- guidance on design and implementation 2014-2020

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/rbaps/index_en.htm

The screenshot displays the RBAPS website interface. On the left is a dark blue navigation menu with categories like 'NATURE & BIODIVERSITY', 'Global biodiversity', and 'Information'. The 'Farming for biodiversity' section is expanded, showing sub-items such as 'Introduction', 'Videos from the field', 'Policy & practice', 'Inventory', 'Scheme handbook', 'Blog', and 'Conference 2014'. The main content area features a title 'Results-based agri-environment schemes: payments for biodiversity achievements in agriculture' and a paragraph explaining the importance of these schemes. Below this is a video player showing a close-up of a butterfly on a yellow flower, with the caption 'butterflies, bees, and flower-rich meadows'. To the right, there are several promotional elements: a search bar, a 'Results-based Payments for Biodiversity Guidance Handbook' download link, a 'Visit our blog' link, and a 'Conference' image showing a group of people in a meeting room.

NATURE & BIODIVERSITY

- EU Biodiversity Policy
- EU Nature Legislation
- Natura 2000 Network
- Species protection
- Green Infrastructure
- Invasive Alien Species
- Farming for biodiversity**
 - Introduction
 - Videos from the field
 - Policy & practice
 - Inventory
 - Scheme handbook
 - Blog
 - Conference 2014
- Global biodiversity
 - Wildlife Trade
 - Animal welfare
 - Forests
 - Climate Change
 - Partnerships
 - Knowledge Base
 - Information

Results-based agri-environment schemes: payments for biodiversity achievements in agriculture

Across Europe agri-environment schemes provide important sources of funding that enable farmers to protect wildlife habitats on agricultural land. Results-based schemes (which are a type of agri-environment payment) focus on paying farmers for biodiversity-positive outcomes.

We are developing a resource in the form of a web-based platform that brings together research, information and practical experiences on results-based agri-environment schemes, i.e. schemes that focus on paying for biodiversity achievements in agriculture. Below you will find a searchable inventory of existing schemes; a downloadable handbook with guidance for designing such approaches; and numerous expert articles and videos to increase understanding about scheme design, implementation and monitoring. Join our blog to discuss the latest findings and share your thoughts and knowledge about payments for biodiversity achievement in farming. Register on our [blog](#) to get the latest policy and practice updates.

Results-based agri-environment schemes - overview

butterflies, bees, and flower-rich meadows

0:18 / 5:15

If you are a public authority designing or managing agri-environment schemes, a farm adviser, farming organisation, a farmer, a private business, an NGO or an academic and you are interested in improving farmland biodiversity, this platform offers an opportunity for you to share and deepen your knowledge. Register on our blog to get the latest policy and practice updates.

Search the inventory

Results-based Payments for Biodiversity Guidance Handbook
Designing and implementing results-based agri-environment schemes 2014-2020

Download the Handbook

Visit our blog

Conference