



MINISTÈRE
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PRÉFET DU BAS-RHIN



Hamster's (Cricetus cricetus) protection in Alsace :



Use of Agri-environmental measures in a collective approach

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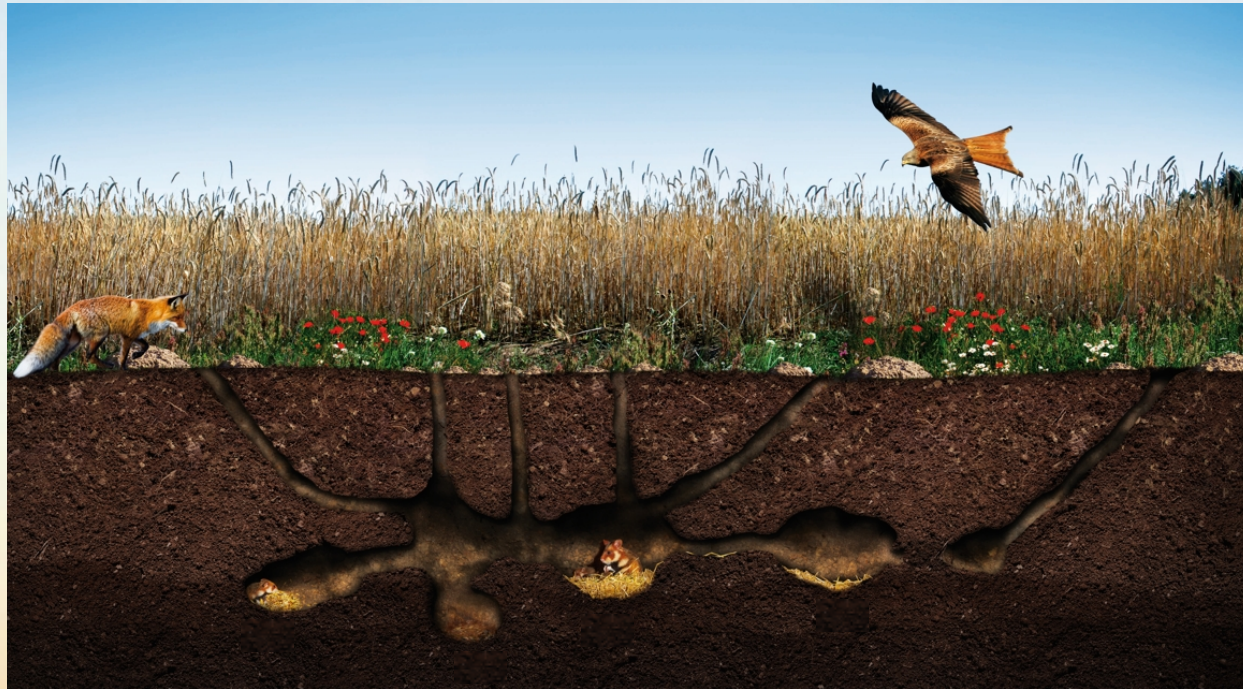
28 september 2017, Brussels – Workshop « Making an effective use
of the support possibilities under the Rural Development Policy »

Presentation plan



- A) *Cricetus cricetus* : a threatened specie in an agricultural habitat
- B) Adapting agri-environmental tool to local needs (2013-2018)
- C) Key issues for succes
- D) Perspectives

***A) Cricetus cricetus : a threatened
specie in an agricultural habitat***



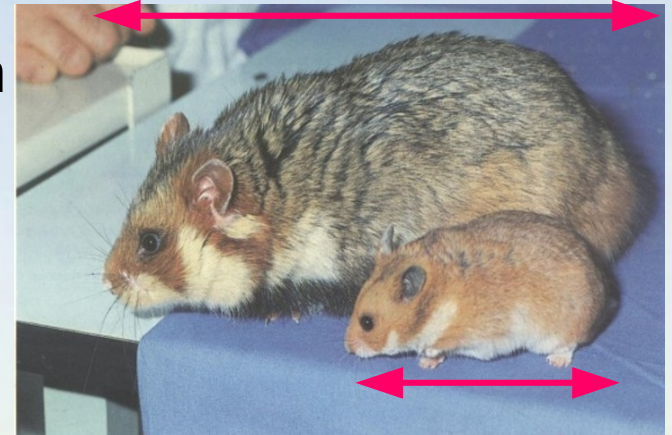
A) *Cricetus cricetus* : a wild hamster

- Habitat = open field, steppe, 150m around burrow
- Hibernates – only 6 month for reproduction cycle and food stores
- Predation pressure (foxes, raptors...)
- « Umbrella specie » for small plain fauna

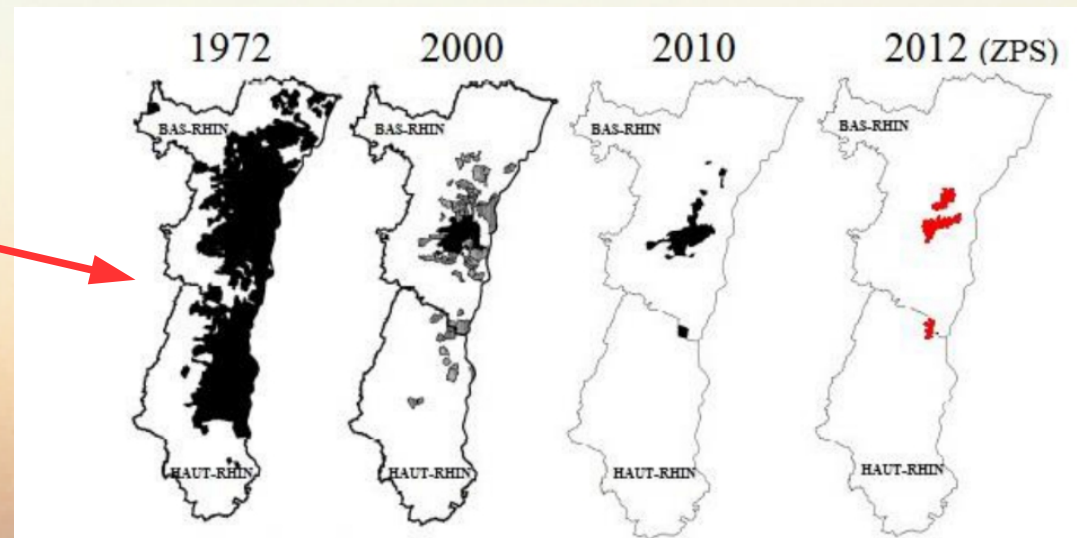
=> Habitat quality = Diversified vegetation, from april to september

Wild hamster

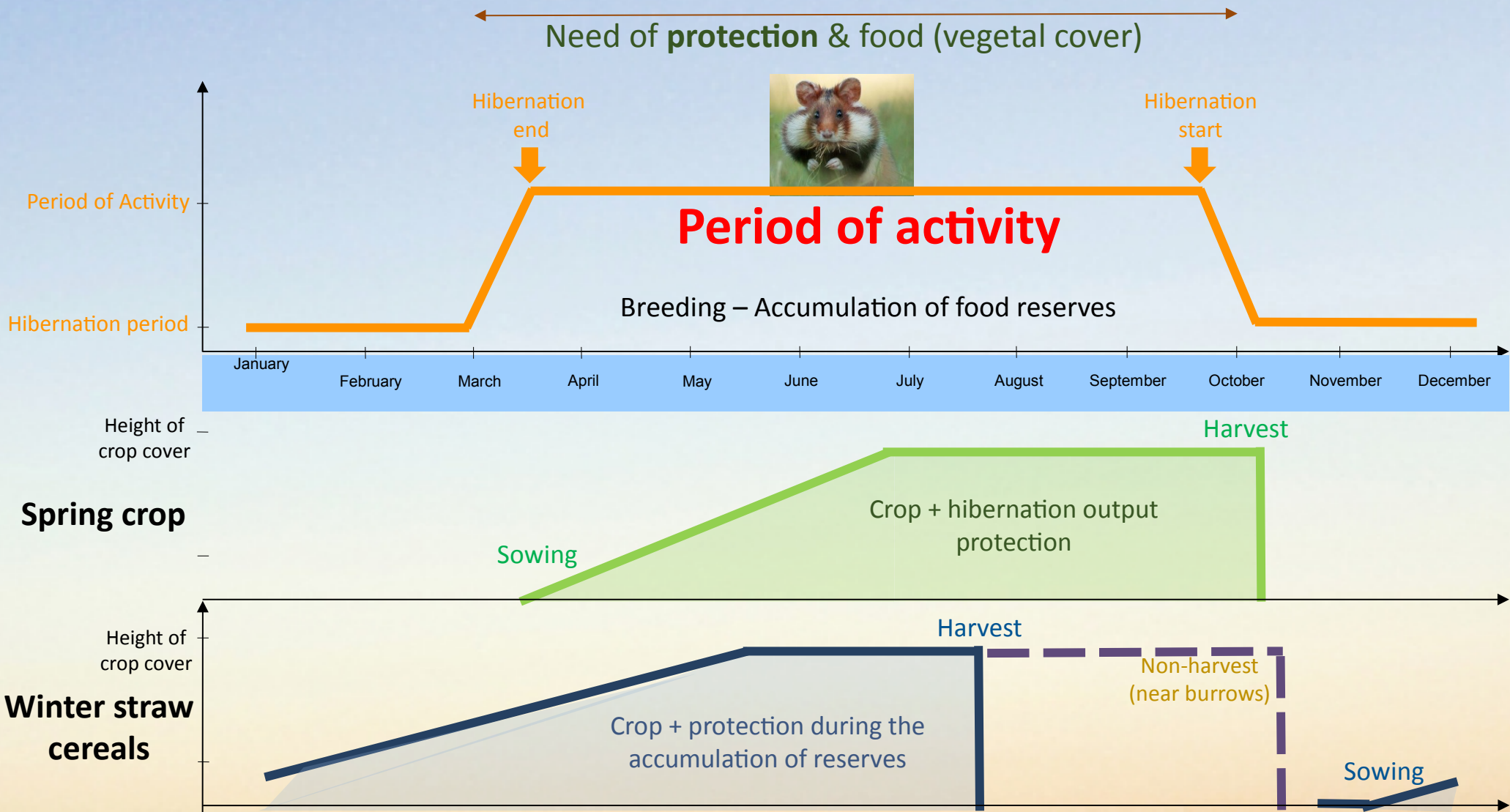
20 to 27 cm ; 200 g to 1kg



Domesticated hamster: 13 à 18 cm

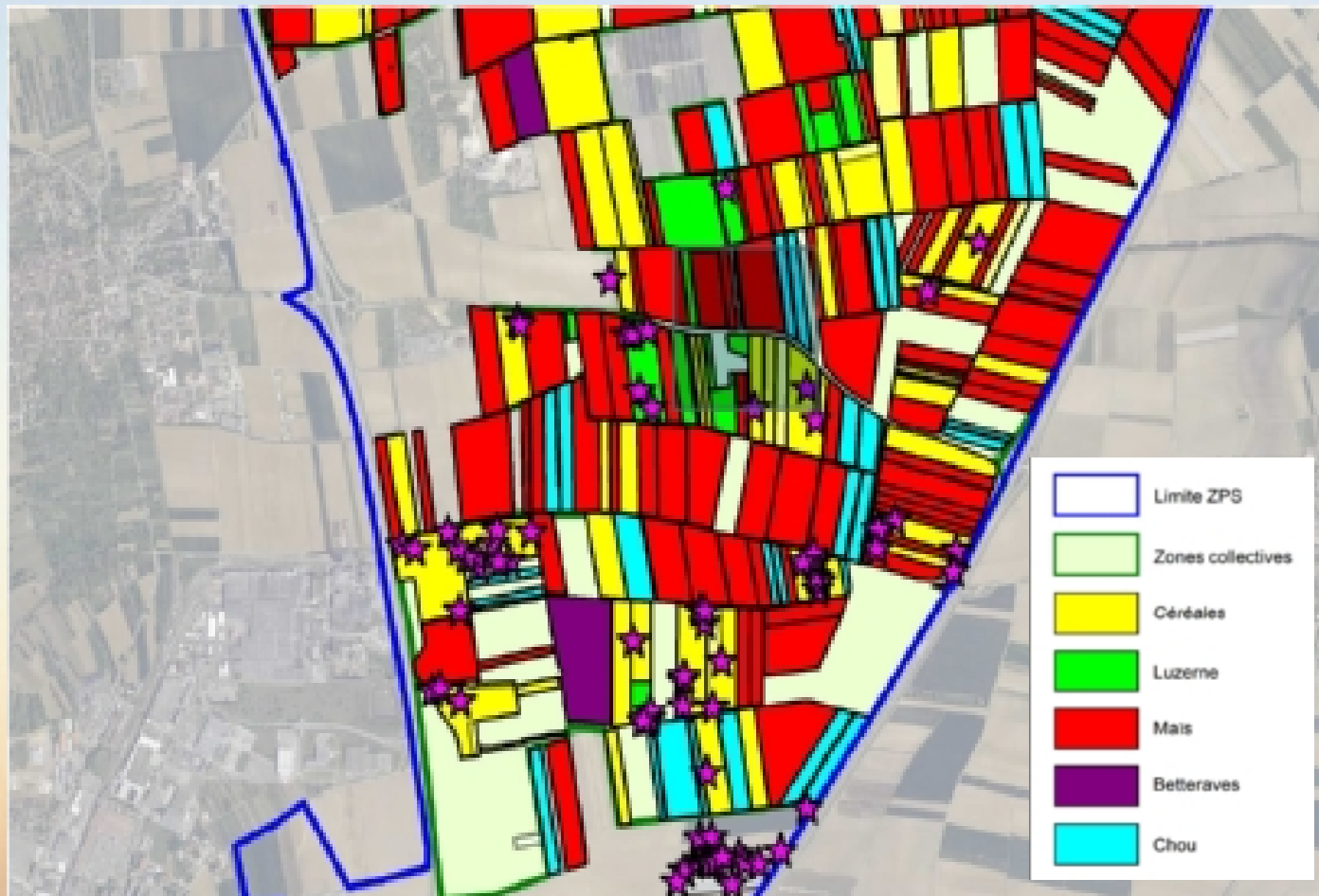


A) *Cricetus cricetus* : habitat issues



- **French strategy : conciliate biodiversity & economical activity (National Action Plans).**
 - **Sensitive topic for farmers : Voluntary approach.**
- => Collective Agri-Environmental Measure, in order to improve local quality of habitat and to take into account changes in hamsters' location each year**

B) Adapting agri-environmental tool to local needs (2013-2018)



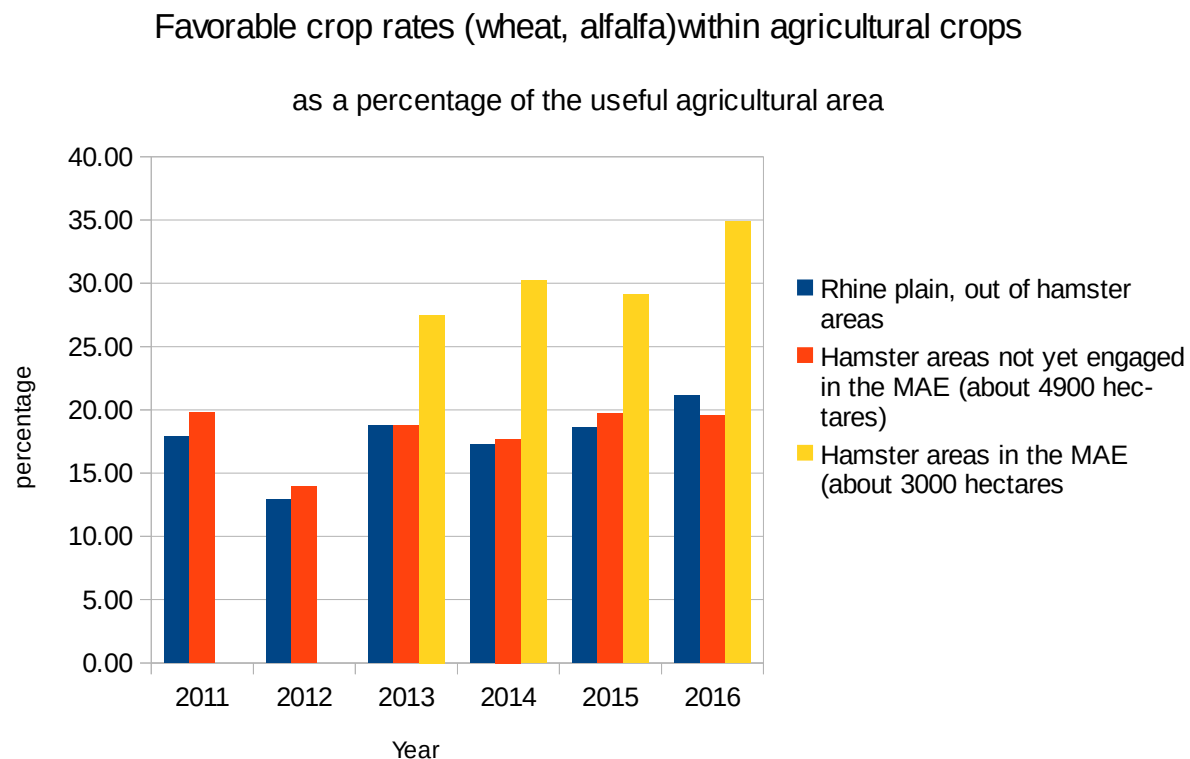
B) Adapting agri-environmental tool to local needs (2013-2018)



- **Objective : improve local quality of hamster's habitat, at a territory level.**
 - at least 24 % of « favorable crops » (winter wheat, alfalfa)
 - sowing wheat near the identified burrows (autumn meetings)
- **Creation of a regional farmer's association : AFSAL**
 - strong cooperation with agriculture chamber & public partners (State, Region, Hunting & Wild Life Agency..)
 - 30 meetings / year.
- **Mecanism : € / ha of fav. Crops (depending on collective%)**

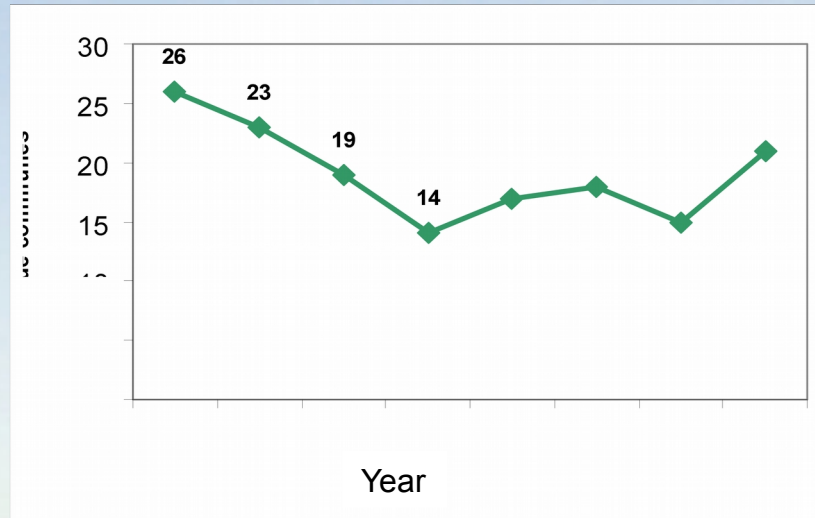
B) Adapting agri-environmental tool to local needs : a relative success

- **Increasing commitment of farmers since 2013 :**
 - **From 5 to 11 collective areas**
 - Commitment of 65 to 158 farmers
 - Concerted crop rotation from 1297 ha to **2920 ha** = 37 % of protected area (ZPS)
 - 35 % of favorable crops in 2016 in areas under AE commitment, compared to 20 % in the rest of Alsace plaine

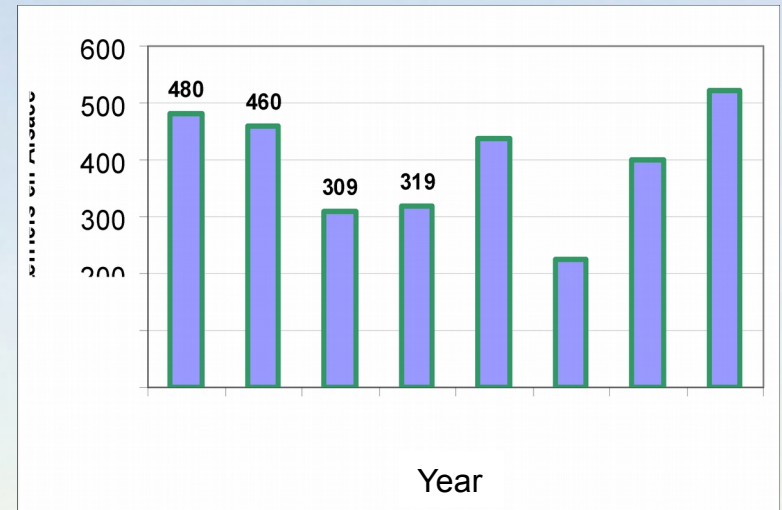


B) Adapting agri-environmental tool to local needs : benefits for hamster ?

Number of municipalities with burrows surveyed



Number of spring burrows surveyed

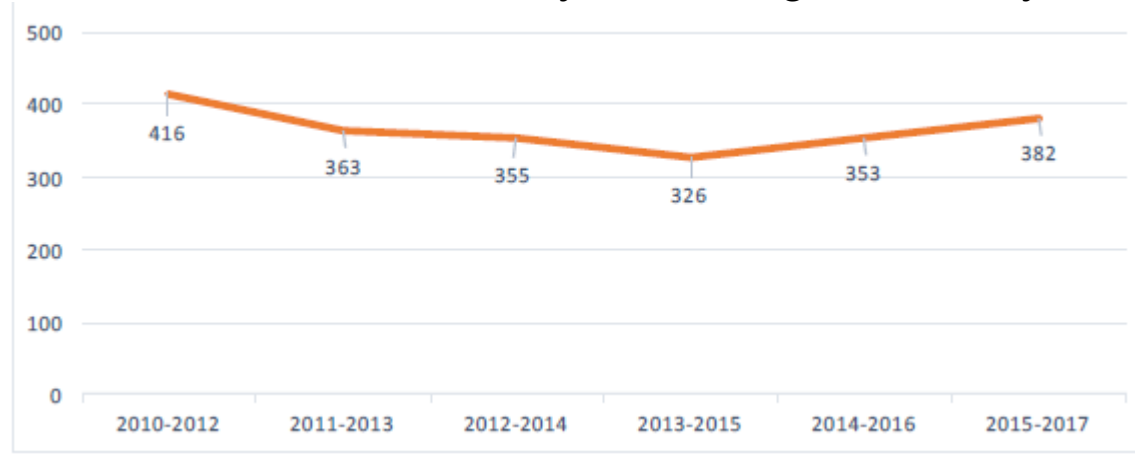


Number of burrows fluctuates (cf. protocol limits).

Beginning of a stabilization trend ?

Vulnerability of populations ?

number of burrows surveyed, averaged over 3 years





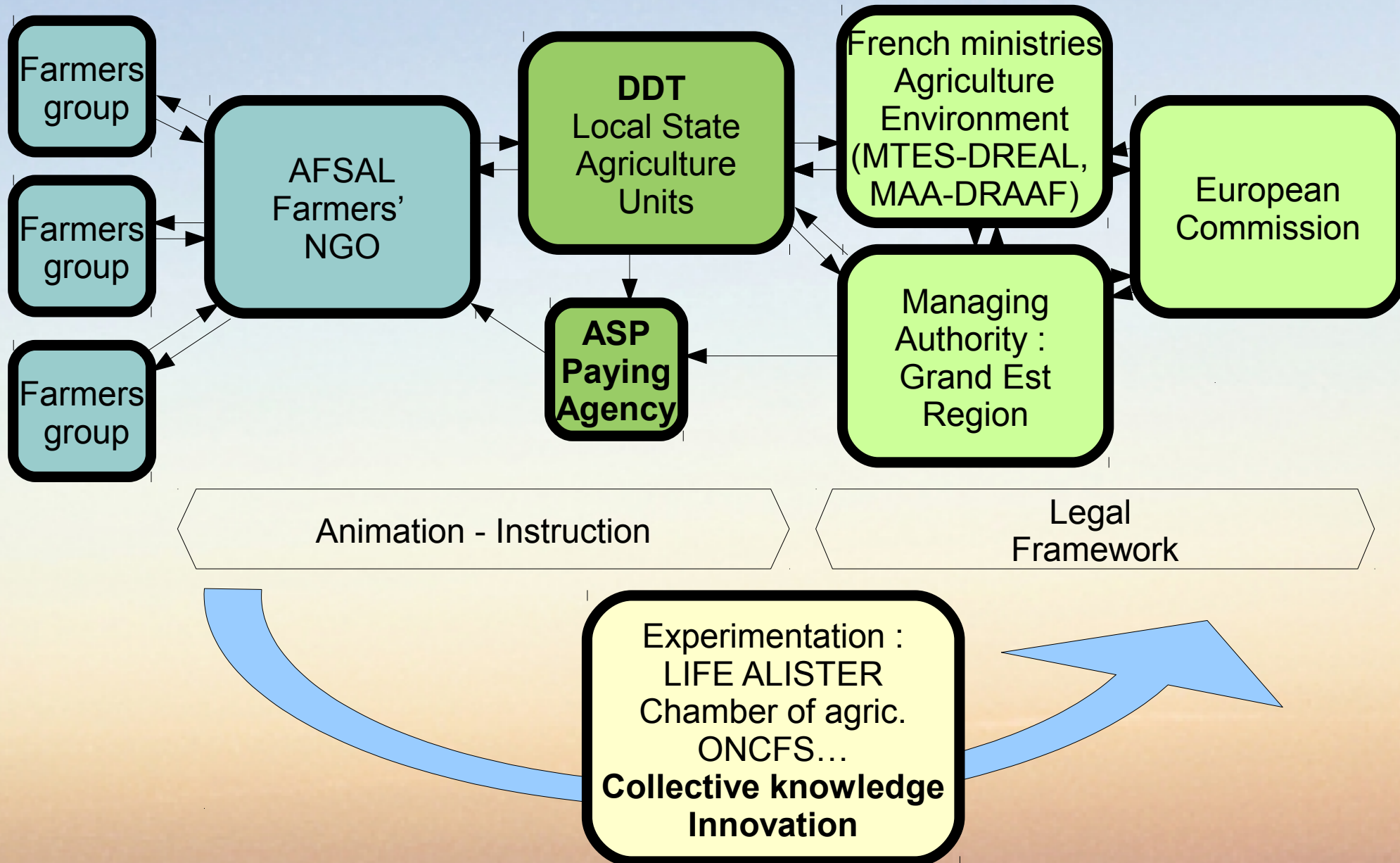
C) Key issues

C) *Key issues for succes*

- **Innovative AEC requires specific ressources** : complexity of legal frame and need for specific tools. Specific budget.
- **Strong coordination** between numerus stakeholders Wide stakeholder engagement : National and local public services, researchers, communities, project leaders, farmers ... Meetings, working groups : **time**.
- **Farmers motivation** for voluntary engagement :
 - Collective discussions with neighbours, agronomical reflexion
 - Economical benefits (CAP delay)
 - Contribute to biodiversity protection

 - Negative points : 5 years contract, dependance on the group for subsidy level, agronomic complexity

C) Key issues : gouvernance



D) Prospect



D) Prospect

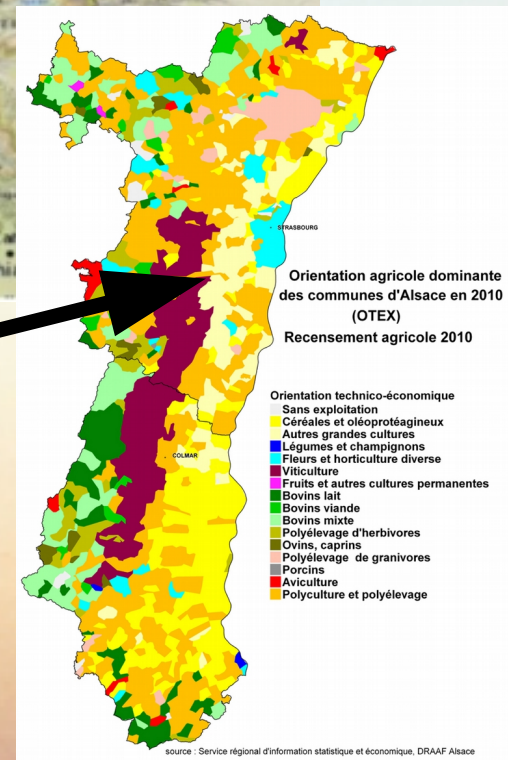
- **2018-2022 : discussing improved collective measure**
 - result bonus for parcels with at least one burrow
 - favorable crops : winter mix, summer interculture, alfalfa harvest
- **Preparing next National Action Plan** : global approach (habitat, predation, urbanisation, climate change, communication...)
- **Deepen links with field experiment** (innovations through Life Alister european programm, farmers initiatives, international exchanges, etc)
- Adress interaction with **sensitive political context** : Strasbourg highway project GCO-ACOS, CAP paying delays, agricultural crisis...

=> Emblematic biodiversity issue, for French authorities & farmers

Thank you for attention

Annexes

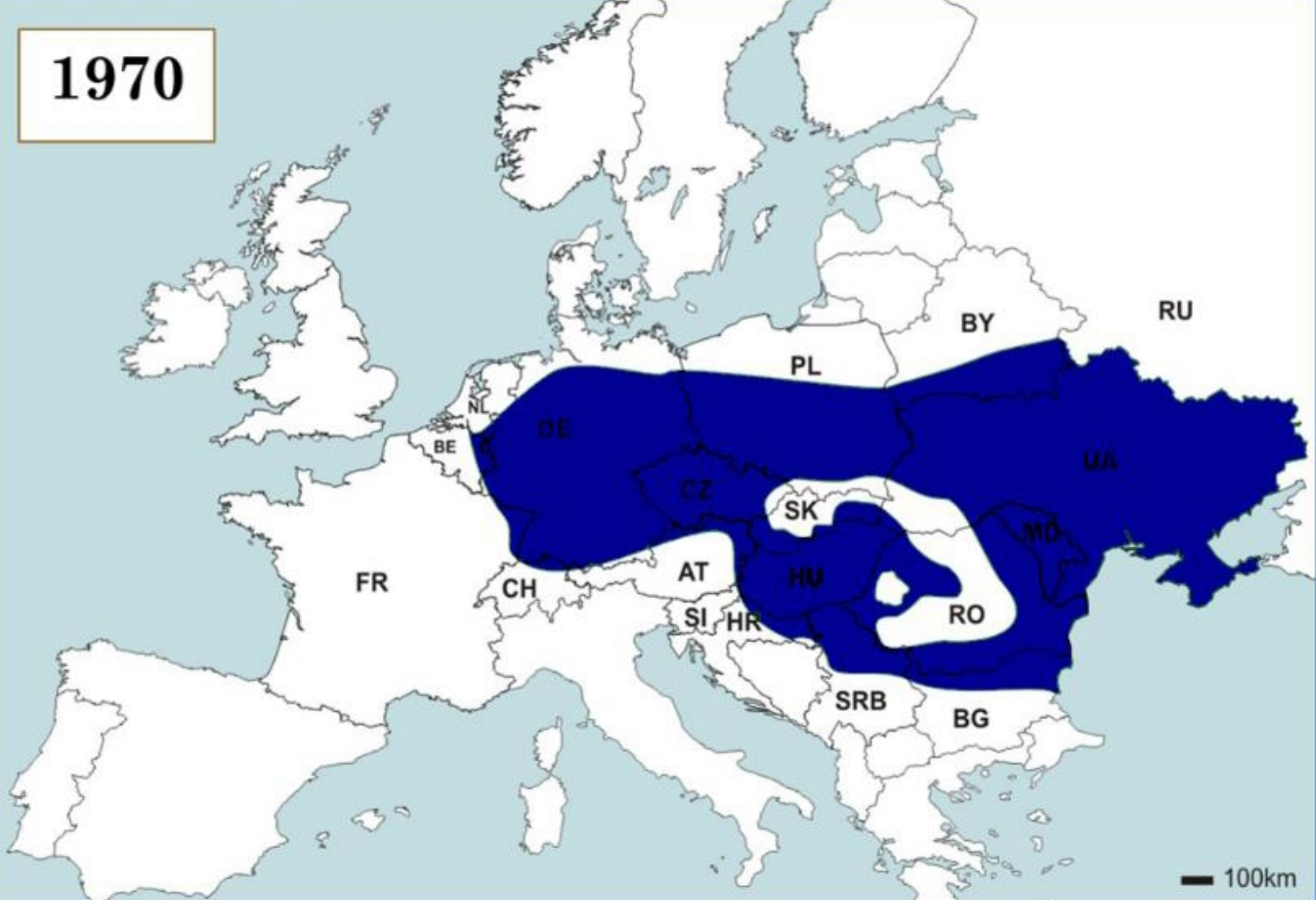
A) *Cricetus cricetus* in France : western area of a « steppe specie »



**Alsace territoire's plain,
Grand Est region**

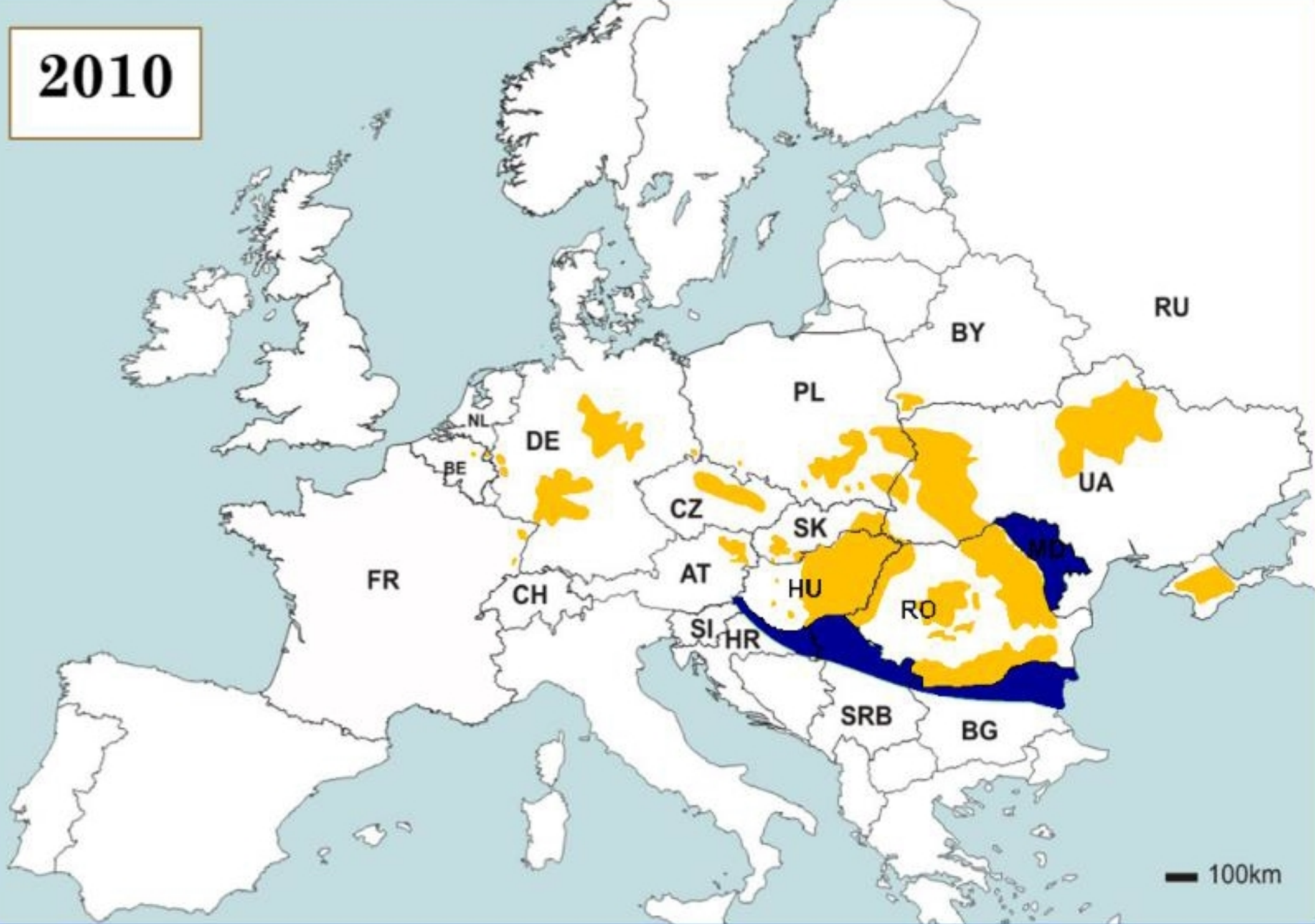
Deep soils, open field,
continental climate

1970



M. Tissier (2017) Overview of the European area of distribution of *Cricetus cricetus* in 1970 (top), 2000 (middle) and 2010 (bottom). Light orange represents updated data and highlights a fragmentation of the European area of distribution of the species. Dark blue represents the 'initial' area of distribution (in 1970) or a lack of updated data (2000 and 2010). (adapted from (Banaszek, 2015)).

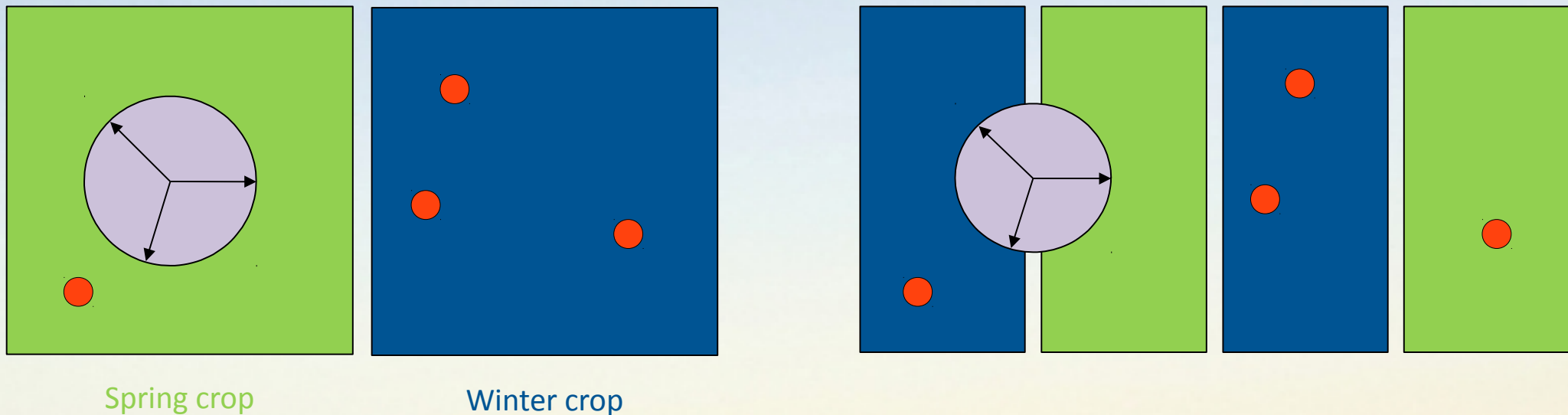
2010



M. Tissier (2017) Overview of the European area of distribution of *Cricetus cricetus* in 1970 (top), 2000 (middle) and 2010 (bottom). Light orange represents updated data and highlights a fragmentation of the European area of distribution of the species. Dark blue represents the 'initial' area of distribution (in 1970) or a lack of updated data (2000 and 2010). (adapted from (Banaszek, 2015)).

« Burrow bonus » : in next MAEC ?

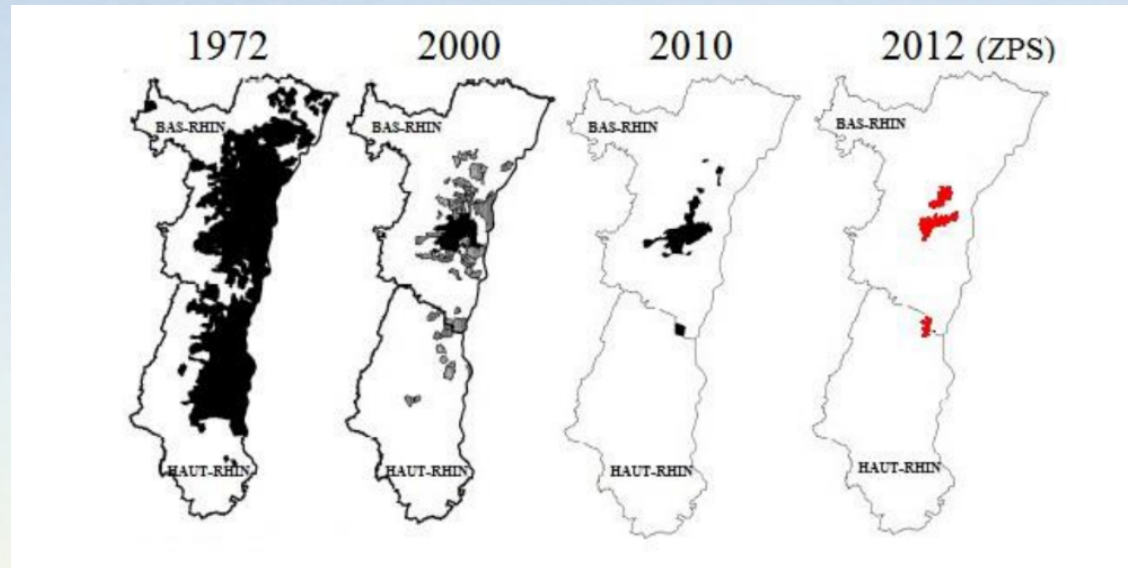
- Average distance around burrow : ♂ 172m ♀
132m



- Objective : stimulate dispersion of hamster population
- Bonus for every parcel containing at least one burrow surveyed in april (official survey in winter crops, by

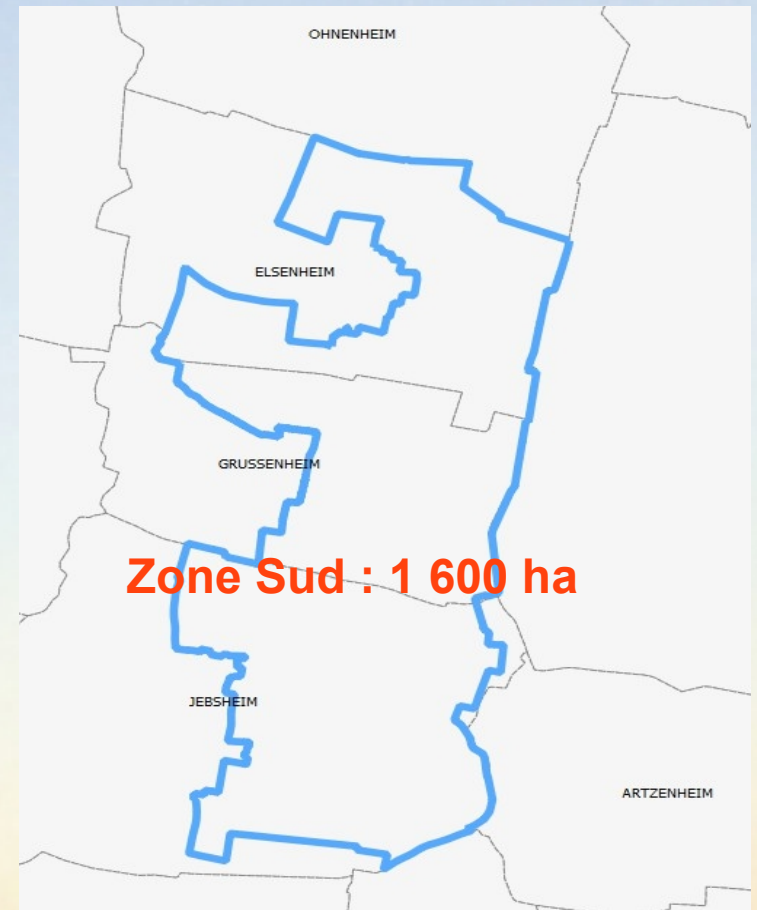
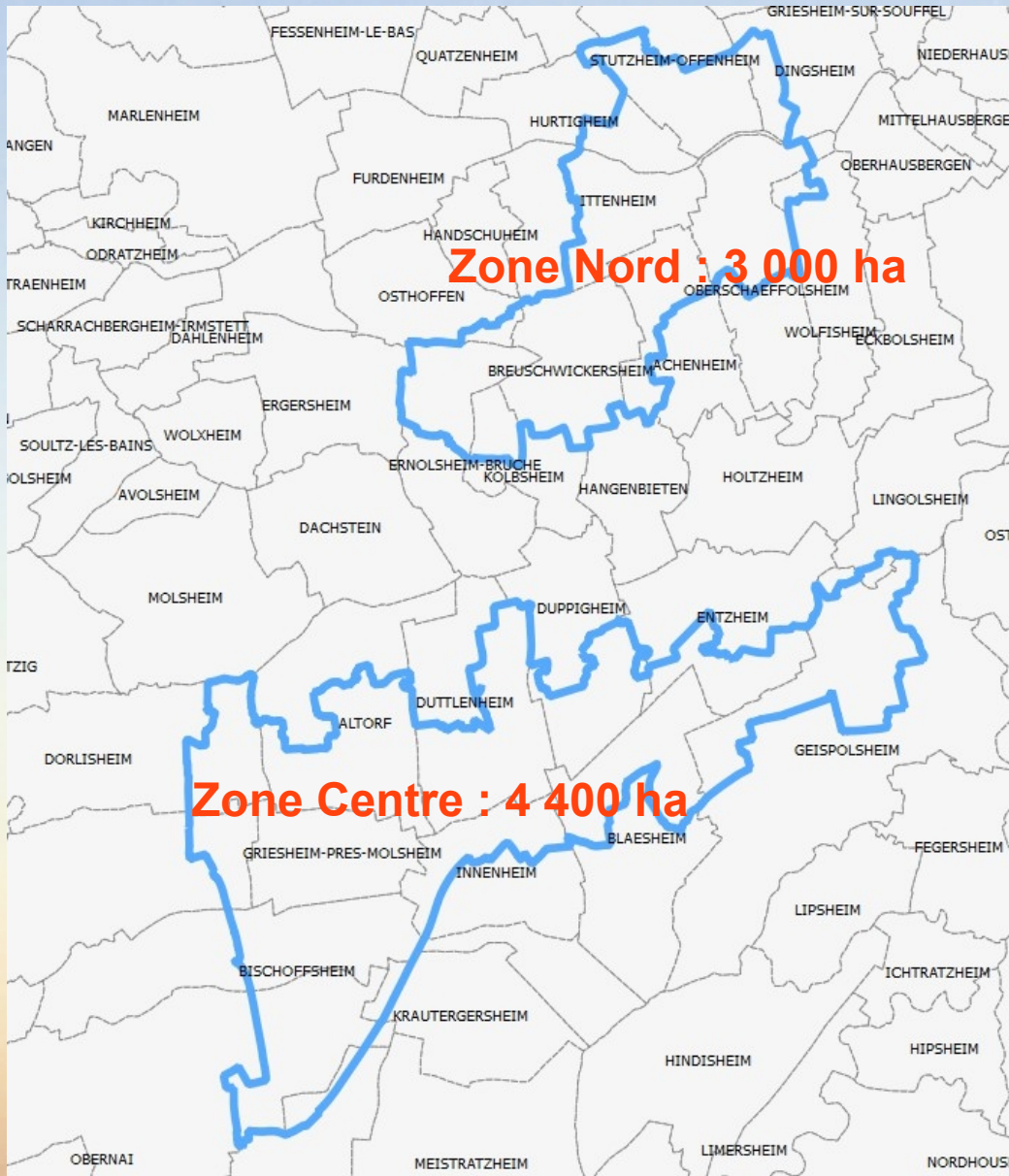
A) From threatened crops to threatened specie

- « Old enemy of farmers » : subsidies for destruction until 80s.

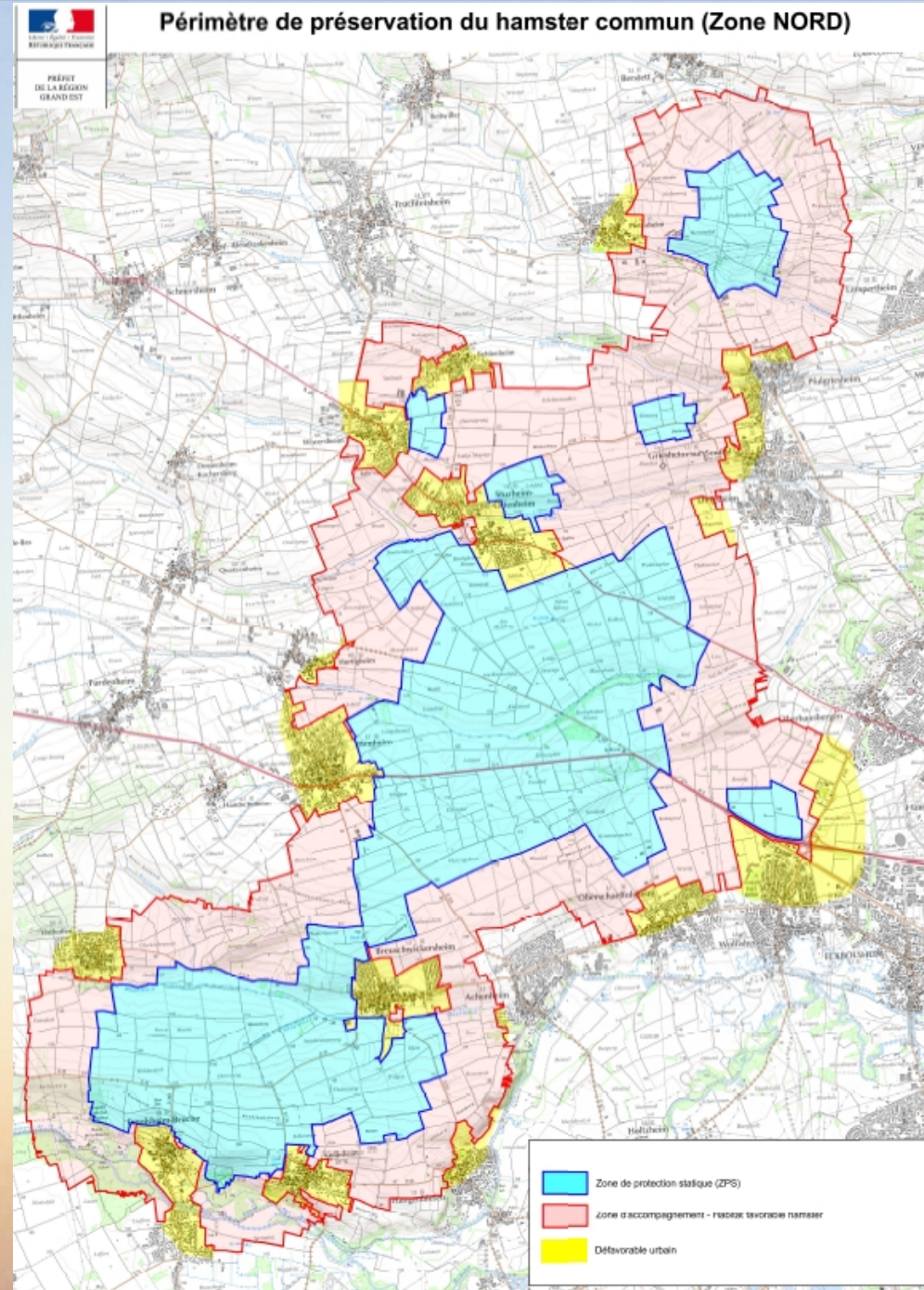


- Protection : Bern convention 1990, French National Plans since 2000, European litigation since 2000
- France strategy : combine economical and environmental issues
- Sensitive issue : Voluntary approach for farmers.

Annexe : ZPS



Annexe : les zones collectives au sein des ZPS

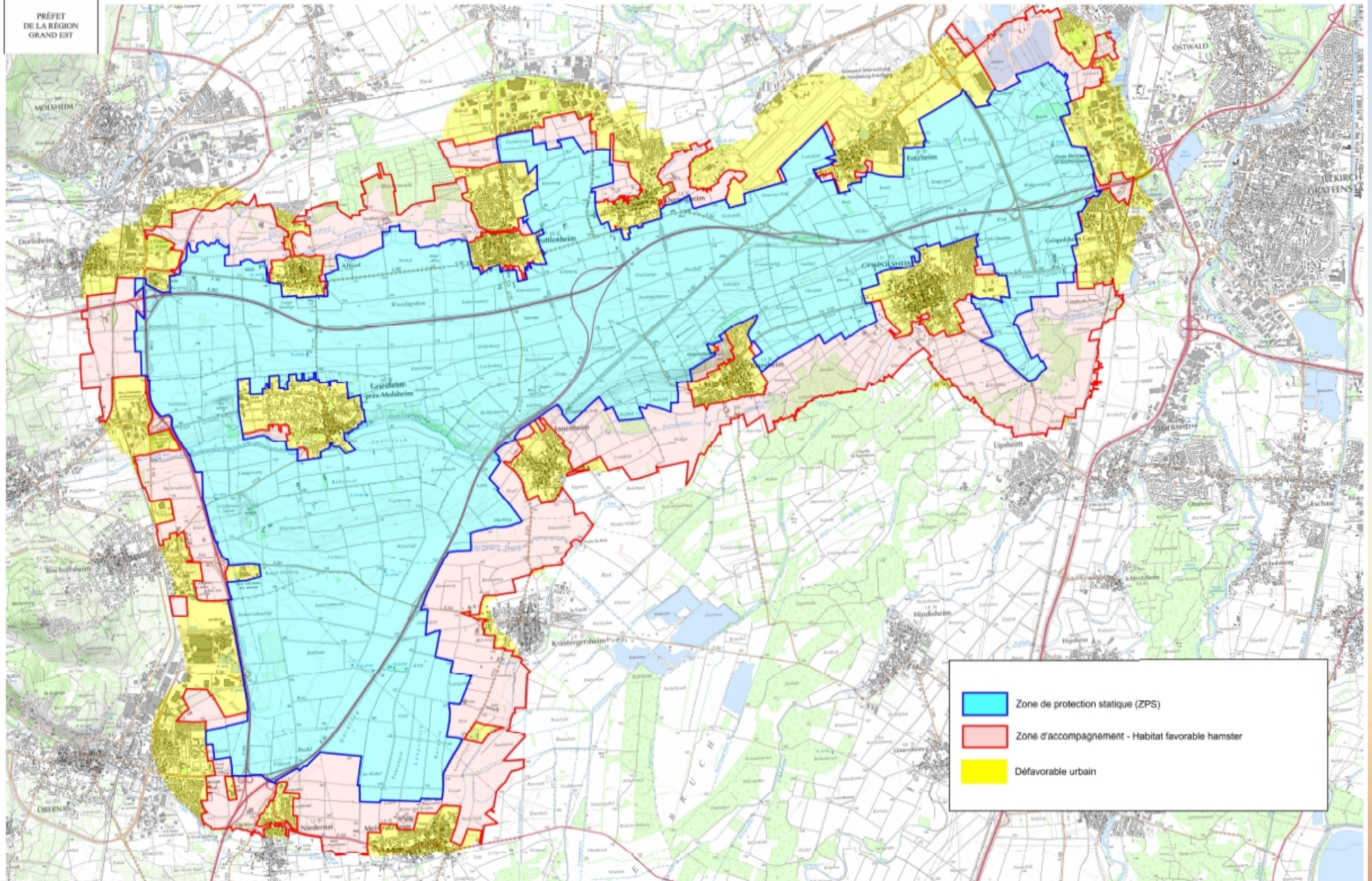


Annexe : les zones collectives au sein des ZPS



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Périmètre de préservation du hamster commun (Zone CENTRE)



Annexe : les zones collectives au sein des ZPS

