

GERMANY

Biodiversity's restoration, preservation & enhancement

Location

Baden-Württemberg

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P4 – Ecosystems
management

Measure

M10 – Agri-environment-
climate

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 5 050 000
EAFRD 2 780 000
National/Regional 2 270 000

Project duration

2014 – 2020

Project promoter

Ministerium für Ländlichen
Raum und
Verbraucherschutz,
Abteilung Landwirtschaft

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A results-based agri-environment scheme (AES) for permanent grasslands in Baden-Württemberg.

Summary

The state of the agricultural landscapes and biodiversity in Europe continues to be poor. High Nature Value (HNV) and bird indicators show that the quality of natural habitats and biodiversity is continuously deteriorating. Therefore, effective, easier to implement and more flexible agri-environment schemes (AES) are needed.



This was the remit for the support scheme for agri-environment, climate protection and animal welfare (Förderprogramm für Agrarumwelt, Klimaschutz und Tierwohl – FAKT) established under the Baden-Württemberg Rural Development Programme. It is a results-based AES for the management of species-rich permanent grasslands with at least four to six indicator species. Farmers under the scheme are compensated for their success in restoring nature, which is measured according to a predefined method for determining the occurrence of a select number of characteristic indicator plant species.

Results

Since 2014, over 20 000 ha of extensive grasslands have been supported under this AES in Baden-Württemberg.

Over 5 000 farmers have participated in the scheme.

The scheme is now being offered or introduced in six other German federal states (Länder).

Context

Extensive grasslands in late spring are characterised by a sea of colourful flowers and tall grasses that differ from quite uniformly green meadows and pastures. They are species-rich areas, i.e. areas which farmers minimally cultivate to maintain a plethora of different plant species. These areas are grazed by fewer animals compared to intensively used pastures and therefore fewer plants are consumed by the cattle, resulting in less disturbance of the soil. These grasslands are cut for the first time late in the year and are rarely mown so that plants and flowers can come into full bloom and spread their seeds. Fertiliser is used sparingly or not at all. However, extensive grasslands produce small economic returns and as a consequence their number is decreasing. What remains is also threatened by intensification or lack of management.

Objectives

As the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is linked to lower yields for farmers compared to intensive grassland farming, it is necessary to offer farmers an AES that rewards them for their environmental services, but which is effective, easy to implement and flexible.

Activities

According to the traditional action-oriented AES approach, farmers commit themselves to implementing specific pre-agreed farming practices. For example, avoid the use of pesticides and only mow meadows for the first time after a certain cutting date.

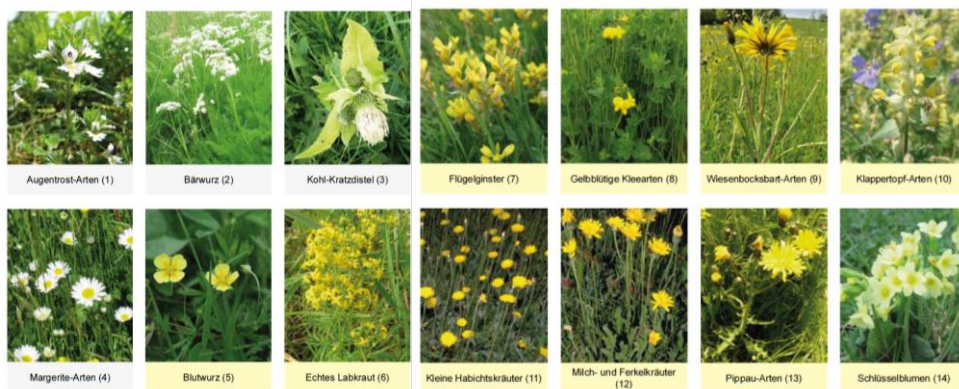
This scheme's results-oriented approach rewards farmers whose land includes a minimum number of species – they are the indicators for species-rich grasslands managed extensively. For a minimum of four indicator species, farmers receive 230 euros per hectare of compensation, and they receive 260 euros per hectare for a minimum of six indicator species. How farmers achieve these results is entirely up to them. They do not need to implement certain cultivation measures and there are no strict deadlines to meet. Farmers are free to operate as they see fit.

Main results

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Sample of plant species indicators

Additional sources of information

[Link to instructions document regarding the recording of results \(DE\)](#)

[Link to overview document of indicator species \(DE\)](#)