



RESULTS-BASED PAYMENTS SCHEMES DEVELOPMENT FOR GRASSLANDS*

prepared for the workshop:

Extensively managed grasslands as natural carbon sinks – Practical implementation and requirements for CAP measures

11 – 13 June 2024 Slavonski Brod, Croatia

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*PROJECT: Landcare Europe Captures Carbon – Supporting Natural Climate Protection in Agricultural Landscapes” (European Climate Initiative EUKI)

Common agricultural policy 2023-2027

€387 billion in funding*

**Most important tool for
agricultural environment and
biodiversity in the EU**



The diagram consists of two light blue rounded rectangular boxes with thin blue borders, each with a darker blue shadow behind it. The first box on the left contains the text 'EAGF €291.1 billion'. The second box on the right contains the text 'EAFRD €95.5 billion'. These two boxes are positioned side-by-side, representing the components of the total funding mentioned in the text above.

**EAGF €291.1
billion**

**EAFRD €95.5
billion**

Interventions may be ‘narrow
and deep’ or ‘broad and
shallow’

* https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/cap-2023-27_en

CAP biodiversity & permanent grasslands

EU regulation 2021/2115*

- (7) Mainstreaming biodiversity action in policies: 7.5-10% of annual spending on BD objectives.
- (13, 17, Article 4) 'permanent grassland' features & definitions
- (Annex III) GAEC 1, GAEC 9
Rules on conditionality: maintenance of permanent grassland, protecting Natura 2000 grasslands



* <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/2115/Oj>

Criticisms of the actions-based approach

- Required & proscribed actions (top-down)
- Assumption that action = results
- Equal payment regardless of quality / outcome
- Unclear objectives, lack of assessment criteria



(CAP legislation now “lays down a common set of indicators as part of a new performance, monitoring and evaluation framework”)

➤ Does not build *cultural capital**

‘De-skilling’ of farmers

- Farmers unable to display their management competencies
- Does not instil pride for conservation achievements
- Puts emphasis on external control (of what you **do** or **don’t**)
- No space for experimentation, learning and self-regulated adjustment

*Burton et al. 2008 J Rural Sociology

CAP & result-based payments (RBP)

“Member States may promote and support collective schemes and result-based payment schemes to encourage farmers or other beneficiaries to deliver a significant enhancement of the quality of the environment at a larger scale or in a measurable way.” Article 70(5)*

“Support under payments for management commitments may also be granted in the form of locally-led, integrated or cooperative approaches and result-based interventions.” (71)*

Payment may only be for **“additional costs and income forgone”** for going beyond mandatory baseline & conditionality. (72)*

“...appropriate that [CAP Strategic Plans] contain a result-oriented intervention strategy structured around the specific objectives of the CAP, including quantified targets in relation to those objectives. In order to allow their monitoring on an annual basis, it is appropriate that those targets are based on result indicators.” (101)*

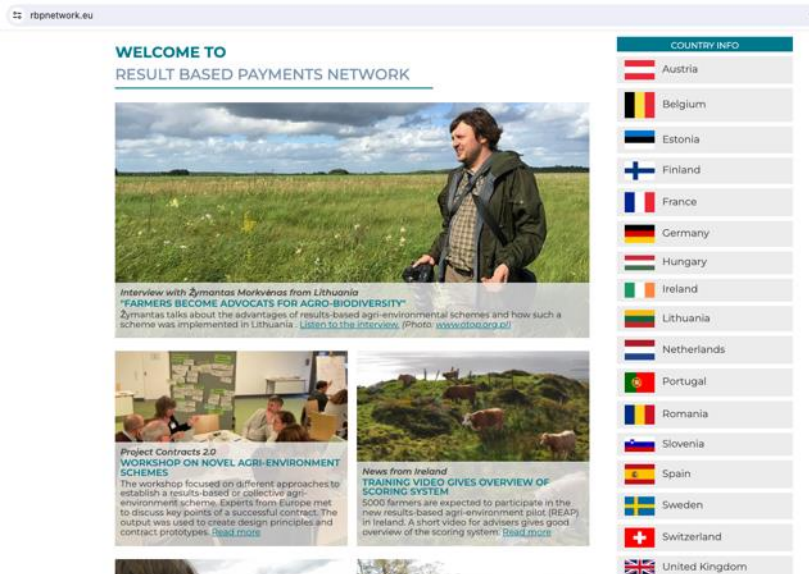
* Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/2115/oj>

Types of result-based payments (RBP)

Pure results-based	No management actions specified or required
Hybrid: Results-based with baseline management requirements	Some obligatory management (or banned activities) to be eligible for a results-based contract
Hybrid: Management - based with optional results-based “bonus payment”	Similar to above but contract is management-based and results element is optional

Results-based payments

Multiple pilots and successful measures for biodiversity



Can be delivered using

- Simple measures of results
 - e.g. Presence of certain vascular plant species
- Complex composite scores
 - Indicators, structural factors
- Single or tiered payments

Funding: EIP operational groups, national & regional funds, CAP AES/eco-schemes/ENVCLIM, other measures of RDP, LIFE...

FACTSHEET | 14 March 2024 | Directorate-General for Environment | 2 min read

Ground-breaking agri-environment payment scheme for farmers in Natura 2000 areas in Ireland – 2024 winner!

The Wild Atlantic Nature project has delivered an extremely convincing demonstration of how farmers can be paid fairly and effectively to protect Natura 2000 sites and habitats.

Main focus on habitats and species

RESULTS-BASED MEASURES FOR HABITATS

- ❑ **Conservation of species-rich grasslands and other semi-natural grazed habitats**
- ❑ Maintaining and improving the floristic diversity of vineyards
- ❑ Conservation of traditional orchards, olive groves etc.
- ❑ Maintenance of biodiverse woodland
- ❑ Introduction of sown wildlife crops in arable for benefit of birds and/or pollinating insects.

SOIL HEALTH

- Payment for Outcomes (PfO, National Trust UK) trial:
 - 5-year soil health option.
 - Annual visual assessment + structural assessments in Years 1 & 5.

POLLINATORS

- UK's RBAPS trial (2016-2018) & Yorkshire Dales PfO trial (2017-2022)
 - 'whole farm pollinator health bonus' for connective habitat
- Ireland's 'Protecting farmland pollinators, pure results-based with a composite score (2019-2023)



RPB relating to access to the countryside, archeology, landscape features

- **Landscape and landscape features are implicitly part of many habitat measures;**
 - **e.g. Grasslands as landscapes or landscape elements**
- Cultural structures explicitly addressed in only a minority of measures;
- Public access mainly missing from measures.

Examples with landscape, archaeology, or access:



**Result- and Value-Based
Agri-Environmental
Payments**
– a Swedish Pilot Study



<https://webbutiken.jordbruksverket.se/sv/artiklar/ra202k.html>

Farming Rathcroghan Project

2019 – 2023: Pilot year with 8 farmers
2021-2023: 33 project farmers/12 Trainee
2024-2029 Extend to 60 farmer
Incremental development of project

<https://farmingrathcroghan.ie/>
<https://farmingrathcroghan.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/RF-Farming-Rathcroghan.pdf>



<https://www.rbpnetwork.eu/european-policy/rbaps-ireland-and-spain/>



9

<http://burrenprogramme.com/>

Keys to successful results-based payment schemes

Beinwell weiß, violett (V-VII)



Flockenblumen (VI-IX)



Flockenblumen (VI-IX)



- Defining clear objectives that everyone can understand and aim for
- Choosing the result indicators carefully, rewarding high quality
- Using a simple, objective, repeatable method of measuring results
- Involving the farmers from the early stages of scheme design
- Building on experience – use pilot schemes, feedback and review

Recommendations (from the social side)

- **Make farmland nature visible to farmers (& the public)**
“Make nature personal”. “People don’t protect what the don’t know and don’t value” (Amel et al. 2017).
- **Recognize and work with farmer diversity**, incl. part-time farmers
- **Recognize and reward results-** Pilot results-based approaches for achieving biodiversity results!
- **Focus on the problem solving & benefits:** Better data about biodiversity and habitat status, better engagement with farmers for long-term conservation action, more efficient use of public funds for public goods.

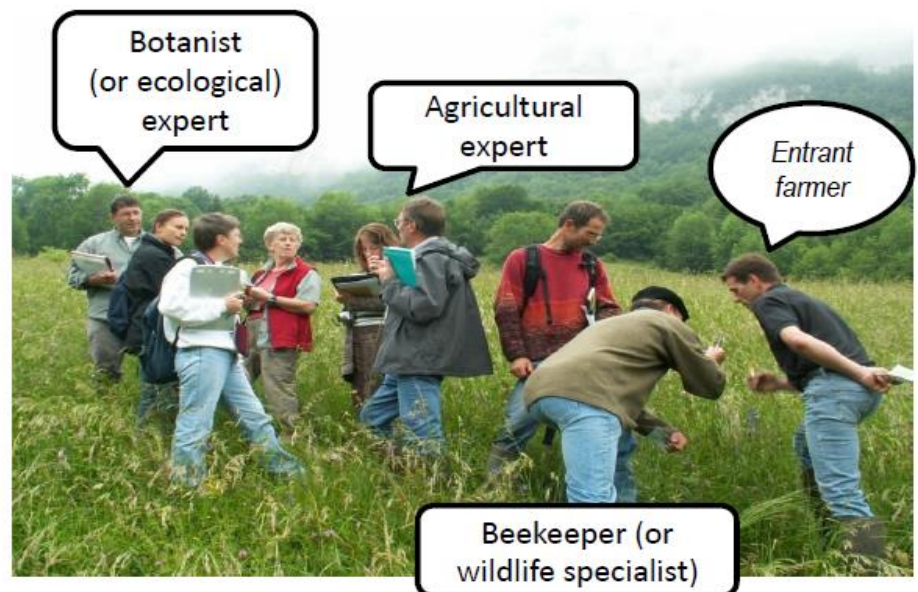
For a holistic approach,

combine indicator species inventories,
agroecological elements, agronomic
qualities...



French flowering meadows
competition

Professional excellence' assessed
by an unconventional jury



Fleury et al. 2015; Magda et al. 2015

...and use composite scores.

Field Scores

The field score, which ranges from 0 to 10, is calculated using nine distinct, weighted criteria which, taken together, give a very accurate picture of the 'health' of the grazed habitats in that management unit. These criteria are:

1. Grazing level;
2. Amount of litter (dead vegetation);
3. Extent of feed site damage;
4. Extent of damage at natural water sources;
5. Level of bare soil and erosion;
6. Level of encroaching scrub;
7. Amount of bracken and purple moor grass;
8. Extent of weeds and agriculturally-favoured species; and
9. Ecological integrity.



The Burren Programme, Ireland
Limestone-rich grasslands

burrenprogramme.com/impact/outputs

Notation system 2014

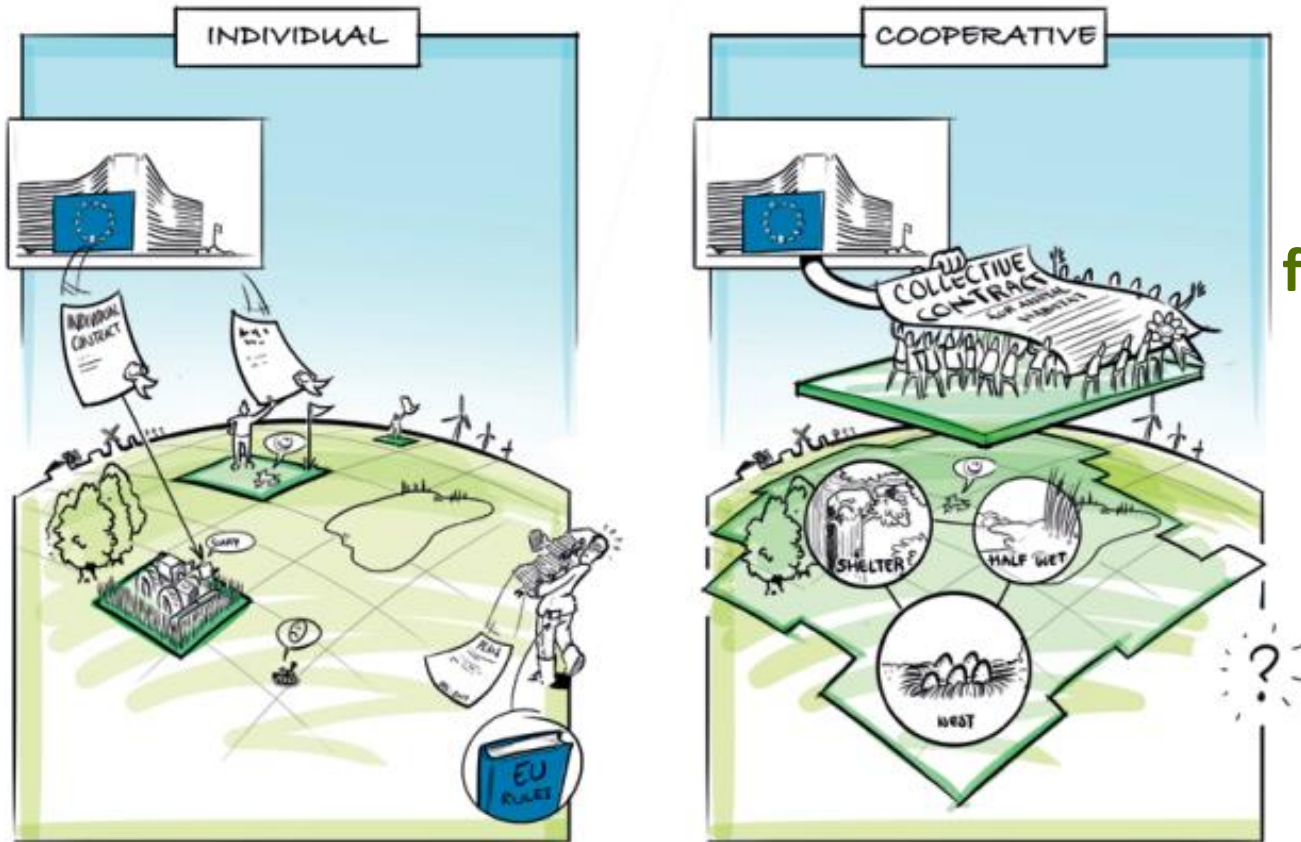
Examples of criteria

Agroecological properties	Underlying criteria
Grassland productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sward density and height- Abundance of large steam grasses- Mixture of legumes and grasses
Forage nutritive value	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Palatability and nutrient value (ie presence of few grasses or shrubs which stimulate ingestion of forage)- Dietetic value (optimum mixture of leaves and stems)- Animal health (ie abundance of antihelmintic plants)
Ecological fonctionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Species diversity (total species richness, number of indicator species)- Habitat quality for wild fauna (ie conservation of isolated trees, mowing date, ...)- Other environmental features (ie ecological corridors, soil protection, ...)
Grassland value for honey production	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Meliferous potential of the plot (abundance of meliferous plant species)- Meliferous potential plot margins- Other factors (water supply, climate conditions, ...)

Flowering meadows competition, France

https://www.europeangrassland.org/fileadmin/documents/Working_Groups/Se-mi-natural_Grasslands/EGF2014_SNG_Workshop_Presentation_Plantureux.pdf

Consider the Dutch cooperative approach



for landscape-level impacts.

Joint applications ensure greater connectivity of conservation measures for cross-farm species and habitats

Ministry of Economic Affairs 2016. The cooperative approach under the new Dutch agri-environment climate scheme

https://ec.europa.eu/enrd/sites/default/files/w12_collective-approach_nl.pdf

<https://www.rbpnetwork.eu/country-infos/netherlands/aecm-scheme-2016-2020-anlb-collective-approach-delivering-habitats-36/>



Novel technologies for verifying results?



Soil sampling package
eDNA barcoding



Optical: Camera



Traditional methods



Remote sensing
Periodic sensing with optical, radar and quadcopter-based tools



Acoustic: Audiomoth



Other methods, ideas?

- Innovative biodiversity monitoring methods

Design questions to consider

- **Pure results-based or hybrid?**
- **Simple or stepwise payment?**
- **Payment level: costs incurred or just “a carrot”?**

Indicators and verification:

- Are there existing classifications that can be used, e.g. indicators, inventories, baselines?
- Plant species diversity, structural factors, historic & cultural value
- Are composite field scores feasible?
- Can novel technologies be employed for verification?

Advisory services, cooperation & capacity building:

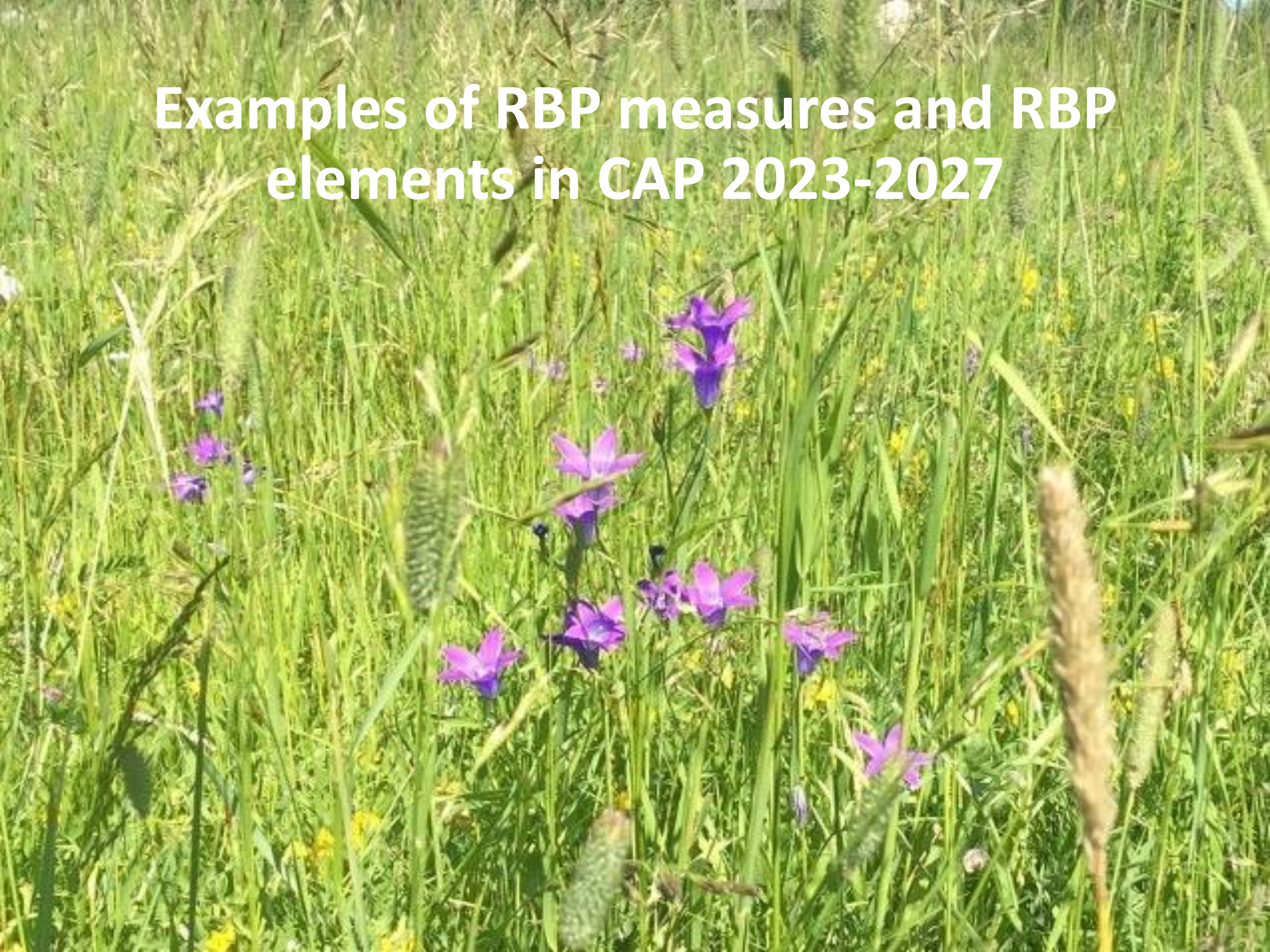
- Farmer interest
- Piloting, feedback, ongoing development
- Farmers and advisors must learn new skills and new modes of interacting
- Training materials needed

Management or results-based?

A well designed management-based scheme is more appropriate when:

- It is impossible to develop reliable indicator measurement within reasonable cost
- Achieving & measuring result takes unreasonable amount of time, causing problems for farmers (e.g. delayed payment)
- The managing authority has no access to expertise to set up & operate a result-based scheme
- Farming community opposes the results-based approach.

Examples of RBP measures and RBP elements in CAP 2023-2027



RBP in AUSTRIA*

ENVCLIM INTERVENTION 70-17: MANAGEMENT BASED ON RESULTS

- Design: Stepwise increasing RBP
- Eligible: arable and grassland
- “farm visit will establish and document the actual state of the participating area(s)”.
- “... objectives, indicators and additional indicators will be defined... [and] **are chosen in such a way as to establish a causal link with management**”.
- Funding rate:? Based on additional costs & income forgone.
- Total EU expenditure 2023-2029: 6 121 583€
- Public expenditure 2023-2029: 12 045 192€

* CAP 2023-2027 https://agridata.ec.europa.eu/extensions/DashboardCapPlan/catalogue_interventions.html

<https://www.rbpnetwork.eu/country-infos/austria/results-oriented-management-ebw-72/>

RBP in GERMANY*

ECO-SCHEME: DZ-0405 “RESULT-ORIENTED EXTENSIVE MANAGEMENT OF PERMANENT GRASSLAND WITH EVIDENCE OF AT LEAST FOUR REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Design: Hybrid result based payment with complementary management based payments
- Funding rate: Initially 240€ / ha and will be reduced to EUR 210 / ha by 2026.**
- Similar funding schemes federal states ***
- Total EU expenditure 2023-2029: 720 680 356€
- Public expenditure 2023-2029: 720 680 356 €

*CAP 2023-2027 https://agridata.ec.europa.eu/extensions/DashboardCapPlan/catalogue_interventions.html

**project's "Background paper on extensively managed grasslands"

*** <https://www.rbpnetwork.eu/country-infos/germany/harrier-nest-protection-in-arable-fields-weihenschutz-nordrhein-westfalen-49/>

Further payments for corncrake (crex crex) in Slovenia

SLOVENIA: IRP23 HABITAT TYPES AND SPECIES IN NATURA 2000 SITES

Actions-based + further payments for confirmed presence of corncrake:

- Level 1 Food habitat: **Payment to achieve foraging habitat** for corncrake: 151€/ha
- Stage 2 Nesting habitat: **Payment for achieving nesting habitat** as indicated by presence of corncrake 359€/ha
- Level 3 Population concentration: **Payment for achieving foraging and nesting habitats** of several corncrake in the same area.
 - 2 foraging habitats: 302€/ha
 - 3 or more foraging habitats: 456€/ha
 - Food and nesting habitat: 510€/ha
 - 3 or more foraging and nesting habitats: 661€/ha
- Total EU expenditure 2023-2029: 3 316 247€
- Public expenditure 2023-2029: 4 723 998€

“Almost RBP” in Finland*

FINLAND: ENVCLIM INTERVENTION: YMPÄRISTÖ 10: AGRICULTURAL NATURE AND LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

Traditional rural biotope, semi-natural grassland, or periphery or multi-nature value agricultural areas.

- 5 year contract, mandatory management plan & diary.
- Grazing or mowing for maintenance required.
- **Funding rate: 2-tiered payment system since 2015**
 - Sites classified as nationally or regionally valuable: 610€ ha/yr. Other approved sites, 450€ ha/yr.
 - 1 year payment of 1500€ ha/year to establish fencing or 2400€ ha/yr for large carnivore protection fencing.
- Total EU expenditure 2023-2029: 56 635 300€
- Public expenditure 2023-2029: 131 710 000€



*CAP 2023-2027

A photograph of a vibrant green meadow filled with numerous small white and pink wildflowers. In the background, a dense forest of tall evergreen and deciduous trees stretches across the horizon under a dramatic, cloudy sky. A wooden fence is visible on the right side of the field.

Research from Finland

Could RBP improve grassland biodiversity outcomes?



Nature management grassland (Finland)



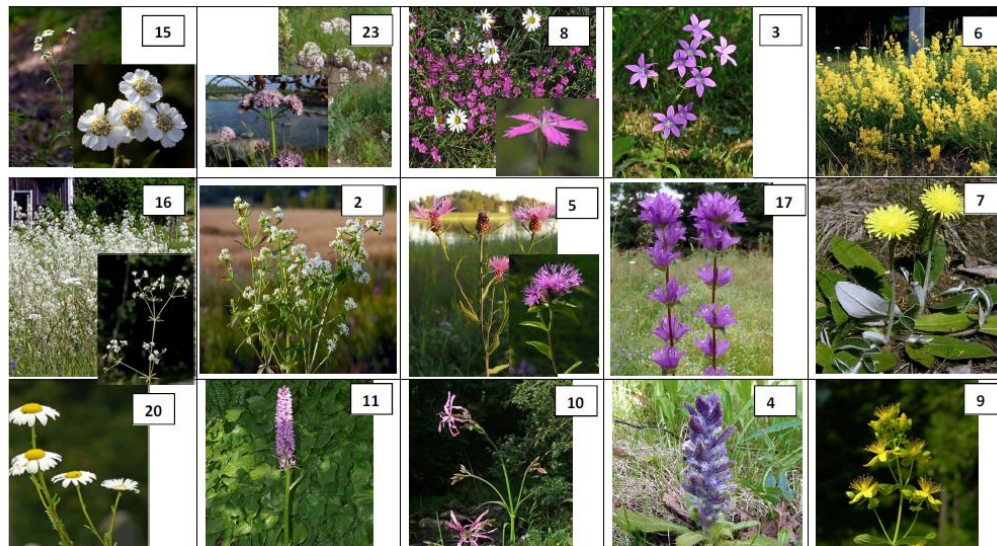
Same agreement, same payment

Hypothetical results-based payment measure

Finland does not have RBP

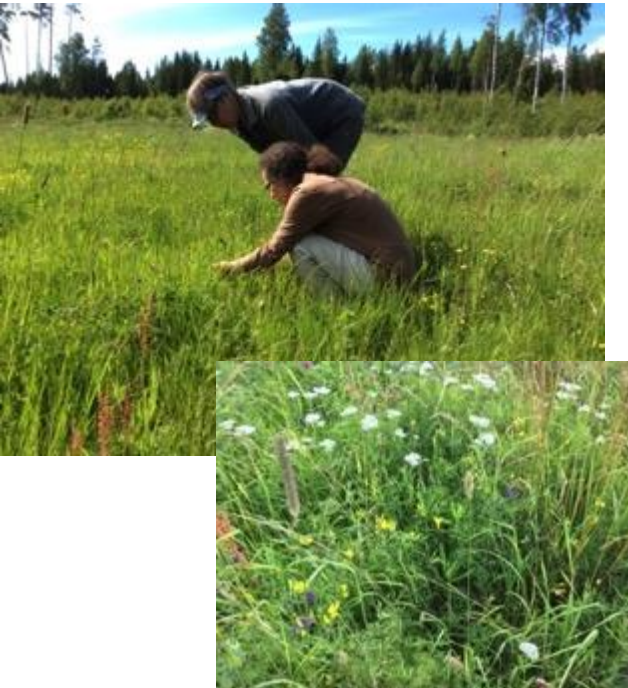
We designed a simple hypothetical RBP for a simple grassland measure

- Bonus payment if x number of species found,
- No management requirements,
- Agri-chemicals prohibited,
- Farmer self-reporting,
- Normal spot inspections.



Results

n=20



**Joint field visit
very important!**

- Farmers **mainly supported results-based** approach
- **Pride & enthusiasm** when indicator species found
- **Tidy farm** is important to farmers
- **‘Producing biodiversity’** builds on farmers’ dispositions towards productive farmland
- **Implementation challenges:** institutional reluctance, knowledge of best practices, verification (indicators)
- **2 views on payment level:** carrot vs. costs

Birge et al. 2017. Probing the grounds: Developing a payment-by-results agri-environment scheme in Finland. Land Use Policy 61: 302-315

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2016.11.028>

Birge & Herzog 2019. Exploring cultural acceptability of a hypothetical results-based agri-environment payment for grassland biodiversity. J. Rural Studies 67: 1-11.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2019.02.006>

Other RBP studies from Finland

- Niskanen et al. 2021: Hypothetical “willingness to accept” based on 591 responses to internet survey (2017):
 - 49% willing to adopt “if compensation is high enough” – mostly young farmers with large farms.
 - 24% had a strong preference to “maintain status quo”.
 - **Least production-oriented most likely to participate in launch of RBP.**
- Vainio et al. 2021: Farmers’ vs. citizen’s views
 - 1744 farmers, 1215 other citizens
 - Citizens viewed RBP as more legitimate
 - Farmers viewed action-based as more legitimate
 - **Change must be perceived as necessary in order to be viewed as legitimate**

Niskanen et al. 2021. Farmers’ heterogeneous preferences towards results-based environmental policies. Land Use Policy 102: 105227.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2020.105227>

Vainio et al. 2021 The legitimacy of result-oriented and action-oriented agri-environmental schemes: A comparison of farmers' and citizens' perceptions. Land Use Policy 107: 104358 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2019.104358>

Thank you!



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Resources

- **RBPS Network:** <https://www.rbpnetwork.eu>
- **Database of CAP interventions:**
https://agridata.ec.europa.eu/extensions/DashboardCapPlan/catalogue_interventions.html
- **Natura 2000 award:**
https://environment.ec.europa.eu/news/ground-breaking-agri-environment-payment-scheme-farmers-natura-2000-areas-ireland-2024-03-14_en#:~:text=Results%2Dbased%20agri%2Denvironment%20payment,payments%20for%20delivering%20environmental%20results
- **Farming for Nature book: of Irish examples**
<https://www.npws.ie/farmers-and-landowners/farming-for-nature/book-results-based-payments>



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