

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

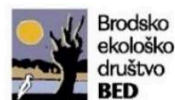
11 – 13 June 2024 Slavonski Brod, Croatia

Management & values of common ~~grassland~~ pastures

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Landcare Europe

Spain.



in cooperation with



What do we mean by “commons”?

- Land and other resources managed by local communities through their own governance systems, to provide essential services (food, water, roads, etc...).
- The commons were the most common system to manage the territory in the past. With the emergence and growth of the capitalist production system and mass emigration from rural areas to the cities, commons went into decline. Land goes from being a “resource” to a “commodity”.
- Despite these adverse trends, some commons have managed to survive in Europe and are more widespread than is often believed. So, regarding land tenancy, today land can be private, public or common.
- Today commons face new challenges such as renewable energy installations (windmills, solar plants...)

The commons in Europe

- Common land in Europe is diverse in functioning/structure. 3 cases: UK, owned by large landowners or NGOs. Romania, subsistence or semi-subsistence units for small scale farmers. Spain in some cases “private commons” (communal land was bought by the village inhabitants in a public auction, to prevent privatization).
- Type: also different, but common grazings the most common...
- Data: on commons is scarce, widespread and not compiled. At EU level many aspects of land are not properly assessed (such as use, fertility, tenancy regimes).
- At the EU level, the concept of ‘common land’ is defined by the European Commission as “land not belonging directly to any agricultural holding but on which common rights apply; the area used by each holding is not individualised” and it is “owned by a public authority (state, parish, etc.) over which another person is entitled to exercise rights of common, Although common land can consist of arable, pastoral, forestry or other land, in the case of agriculture, the majority of common land is related to livestock grazing and is often called “common grazings”.
- Today commons face new challenges such as renewable energy plants (windmills, solar plants...)

Common agricultural area in the EU

Table 2: Common land (recorded using Method B), 2000-2013
(hectares)

Country	2000	2003	2005	2007	2010	2013	% UAA 2010	% UAA 2013
Bulgaria		-	-	-	858 563	856 026	19	18
Germany	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Ireland	-	-	-	421 041 e	422 415	423 020	8	9
Greece	-	-	-	-	1 699 580	1 475 268	33	30
Spain	2 554 595	2 367 515	2 353 229	2 246 267	1 727 617	1 605 369	7	7
France	-	-	-	-	749 492	675 128	3	2
Croatia				-	160 000	438 891	12	28
Italy	653 113 e	655 791 e	635 393 e	637 210 e	610 165	285 266	5	2
Cyprus		1 007 e	386 e	334 e	805	292	1	0,5
Hungary	-	-	-	-	73 975	67 228	2	1
Austria	413 659 e	:	370 663 e	240 468	252 872	202 133	9	7
Portugal	70 690 e	124 489 e	147 900 e	161 748 e	127 660	102 239	3	3
Romania ⁽¹⁾		2 484 922 e	1 939 755 e	1 734 535 e	1 497 764	1 514 634	11	12
Slovenia	22 786 e	22 786 e	22 786 e	9 062 e	8 221	8 733	2	2
United Kingdom	1 199 474 e	1 207 450 e	1 207 142 e	1 209 205 e	1 195 246	1 195 246	7	7
Iceland					-	-	-	-
Norway	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Switzerland			-	-	-	-	-	-
Montenegro					:		:	
Serbia					200 156		6	

Note: The table presents the part of the common land data which can be identified in the dataset or is reported in the NMRs

Special values:



European farmland is increasingly concentrated



Land
distribution
in Europe
is extremely
inequitable

80%

of farms in the EU
are less than 10 ha.
They represent

10%

of EU farmland

3%

of farms in the EU
are larger than 100 ha.
Yet they represent

50%

of EU farmland



European farms are becoming bigger... and fewer

Between 2003 and 2013,
the EU lost

4.2 million
farms.

96% of them
are small farms
(< 10 ha)

Studies show
that small farms
are often more
productive than
large farms

small farms



2003

The average
farm size
has increased by

40%

in ten years



2013

large farms

LAND CONCENTRATION IN EUROPE AT A GLANCE



3% OF FARMS
>100 ha

**OWN 52%
OF FARM LAND**

336,000 farms control
almost 91 million ha



WHILE 75 %

OF FARMS < 10 ha

**OWN 11%
OF FARM LAND**

8 million farms control
19 million hectares

20% of farms, between 10 and 100 ha,
control 37%



Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA)

Source: Eurostat. TNI's complete data set of fully referenced statistics for all EU members can be found here: <https://www.tni.org/en/files/documents/land-for-the-few-the-state-of-land-concentration-in-europe-database-for-all-eu>



Land concentration goes hand in hand with job losses

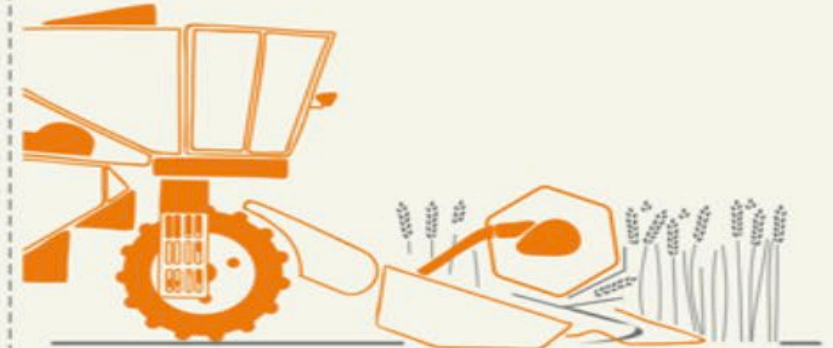
325,000

*full time equivalent
agricultural jobs
disappear every year
in the EU*

Europe has lost
a quarter of its
farmers, 3.8 million
people, in less
than 10 years



Farm closures and land concentration mean a loss of jobs, of food security, of economic fabric and of social connections in many rural communities.





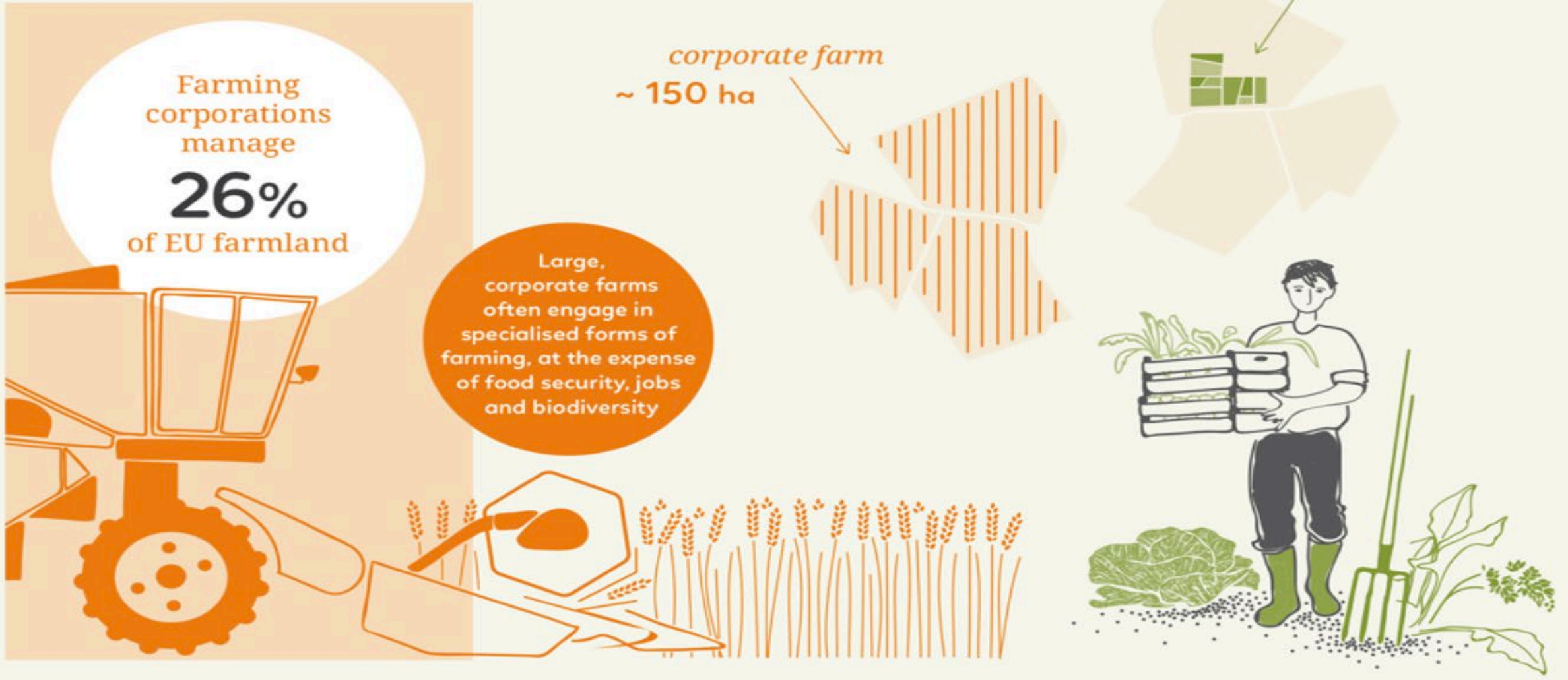
European agriculture is increasingly corporate controlled

Farming corporations manage
26%
of EU farmland

Large, corporate farms often engage in specialised forms of farming, at the expense of food security, jobs and biodiversity

corporate farm
~ 150 ha

family farm
~ 10 ha



The CAP and the commons

- The CAP, as other public policies managing significant budgets, generally reflect mainly the "market value visión" and commons that not fit in it ...
- The CAP is an example: it is an "individual-Farmer oriented" policy, but, as a public policy, it 'belongs' to everyone and should be working for the benefit of the common good so the commons can play a key role.
- Accordingly, to regain the concept of food as a "common" and not as a "commodity" is a challenge to which communities and traditional commons systems have a lot to contribute to.

What the commons can do for the CAP?

➤ **Agriculture sustainability:**

Some European communal farming systems are also living showcases of good practices. An example are the so-called **High Nature Value farming systems**, where **Traditional Agricultural Knowledge ('TAK')** is embedded. This is crucial as TAK systems encompass information about how to recognize and efficiently manage agricultural landscapes and agroecosystem elements

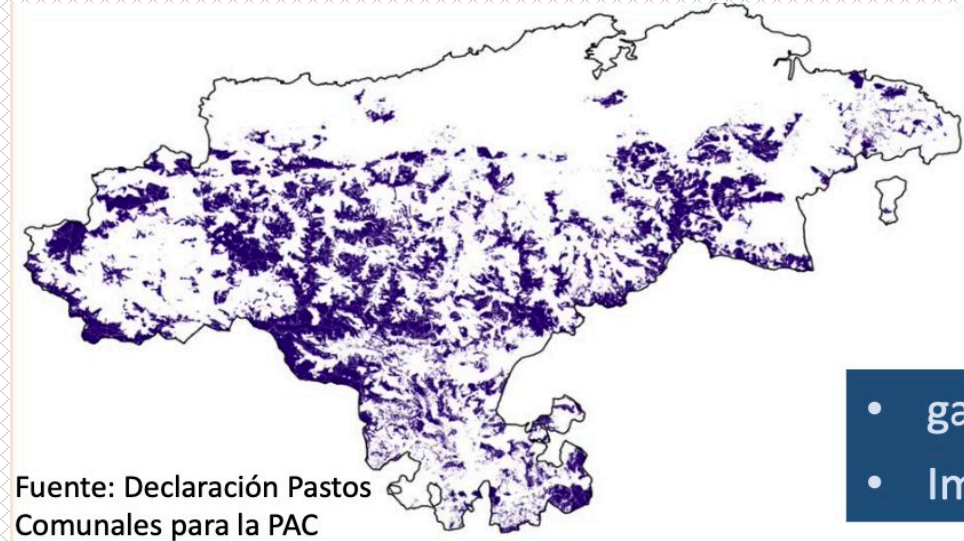
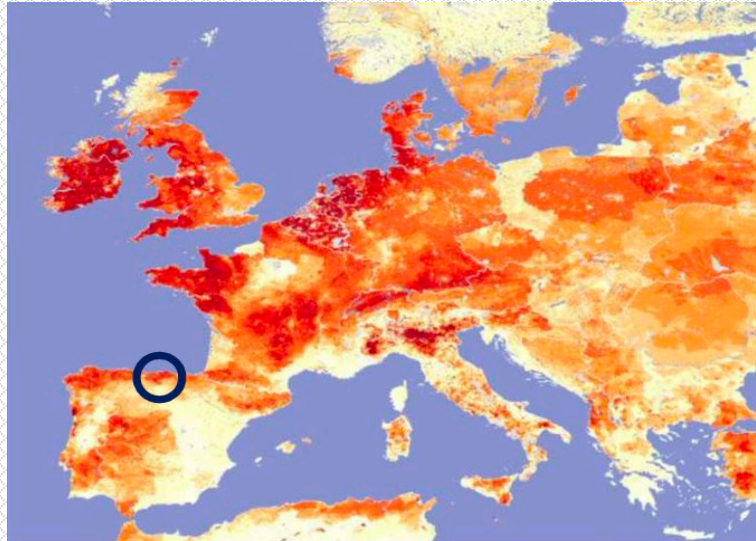
“one way to ensure that a sufficiently large group of farmers delivers the necessary environmental benefits is through collective approaches” (The European Court of Auditors, 2011)

- **Biodiversity:** they often harbour some of the most biodiversity-rich areas in Europe, as shown by the fact that a high percentage of common land occurs within protected areas of one kind or another
- **Governance:** - they offer a new (or renewed) socio-economic rationale, based on principles of co-decisión and participation
 - ✓ They are built on the concept of collective ownership and/or use, which entails greater legal complexity (and so resistance) if privatization or land grabbing processes were attempted.
 - ✓ They can be the most cost-effective solution for specific ecosystem services; ground-tested through time, are adapted to local contexts, resilient to changes and harsh conditions, and have their own conflict resolution mechanisms. And most important: they are inherent to local culture and legitimized by the community, so the usual difficulty of community rejection to alien top-down management plans is avoided.
 - ✓ They have a huge potential for building up a critical mass since an extensive community network can be built and alliances could be established with other civil actors.

3 examples
in Spain:



Example 1: Cantabrian case



Problems:

- changes in grazing management:
+ cows, - sheep / goat
- encroachment,
- forest fires,
- predators (wolf)
- loss of communal grazing management and governance

Proposed solution:

- Integration of mixed sheep-goat grazing in open woodland to maximise the provision of Ecosystem Services
- CAP support through and agri-environment payment (*maintenance or improvement of habitats and traditional agricultural activities preserving biodiversity*)

Integrated sheep/goat grazing in mountain pastures:

- No fencing
- Strategic grazing routes (grazing “menu”)
- Barriers to fire
- Pasture corridors
- Agreed with neighbours of the common



As a result, commoners are starting to implement prescribed burning collectively.

Example 2: Fantastic Woodland of Valdavido project

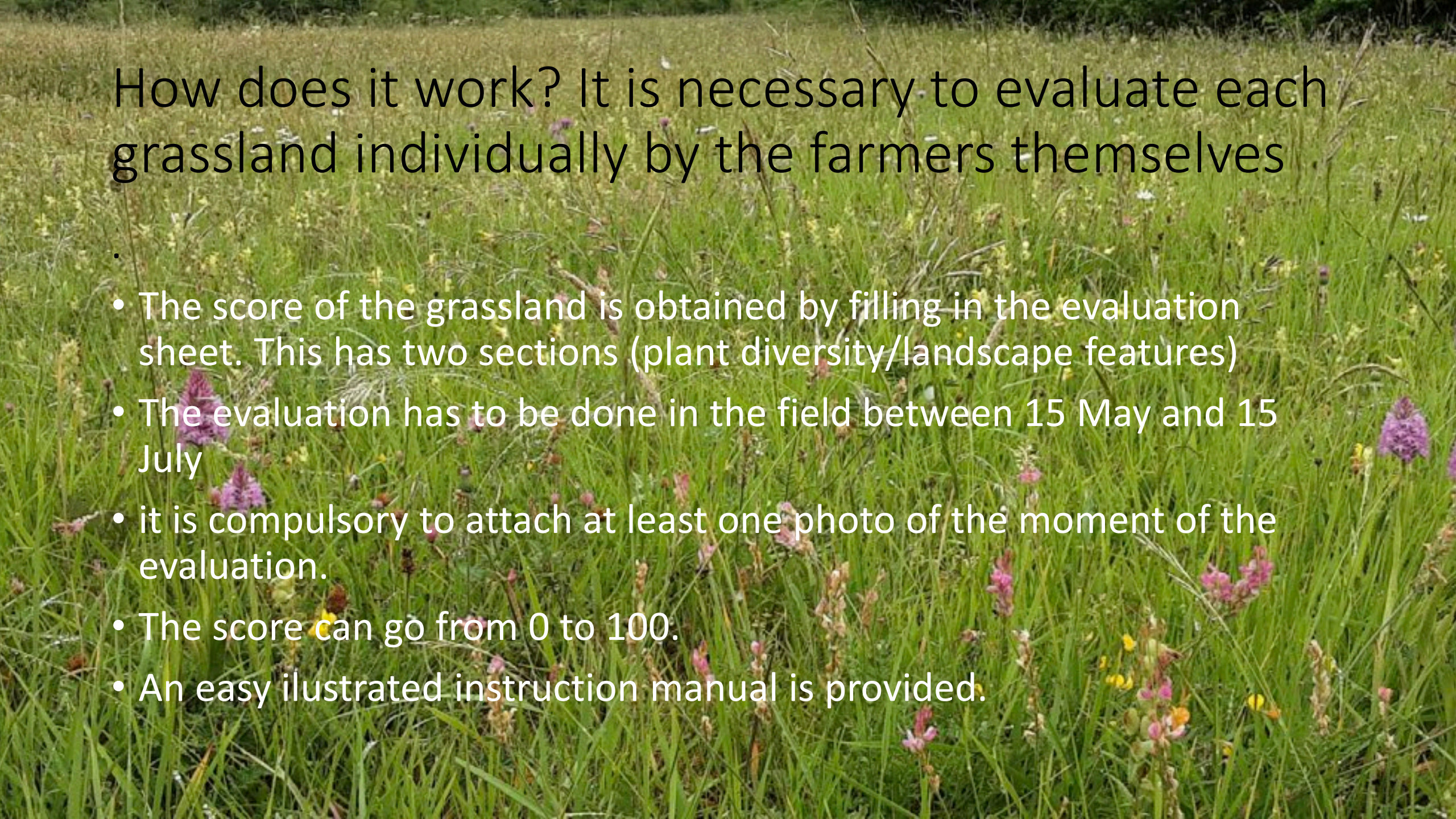
- The Project aims to establish a model of forest management focused on biodiversity, fire risk reduction, promotion of new forest products and ecotourism, with the ultimate goal of creating possibilities for the current and future inhabitants of the region.
- Promoted by Commoners of Valdavido in coalition with SEO/Birdlife and University of León.
- Among main actions:
 - recovery of communal grazing áreas, autoctonous woodland and traditional practices.
 - Promotion of new uses such as carbon credits.
 - to provide the Neighbourhood Council with a management and planning instrument.

Recently awarded “the best civil society Project in favor of the environment”



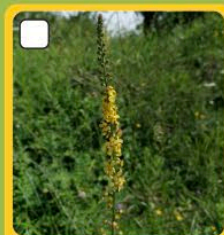
Example 3: High Nature Value Hay Meadows result based payment in Navarra

- It can be a way to reward E. S. in common grazings.
- It can be a very suitable CAP measure for communal pastures
- It depends:
 - - on the diversity of plants
 - - on the presence of natural (wetlands, isolated trees...) or humanmade landscape features (stone walls,
 - of great ecological and landscape value, whether of natural origin (hedgerows, wetlands, isolated trees),
 - (hedges, wetlands, isolated trees) as well as those created by humans
 - (huts, walls...).

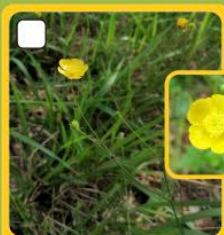


How does it work? It is necessary to evaluate each grassland individually by the farmers themselves

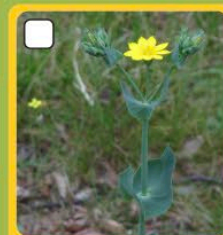
- The score of the grassland is obtained by filling in the evaluation sheet. This has two sections (plant diversity/landscape features)
- The evaluation has to be done in the field between 15 May and 15 July
- it is compulsory to attach at least one photo of the moment of the evaluation.
- The score can go from 0 to 100.
- An easy illustrated instruction manual is provided.



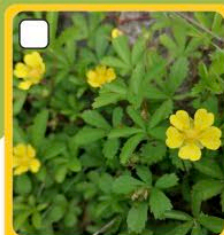
Agrimonia
Pasmobelarra



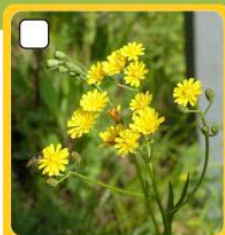
Botón de oro
Urrebotoia



Centaurea amarilla
Tentsio-belarra



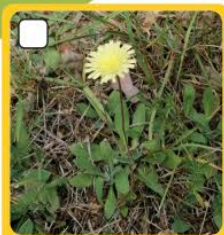
Cincoenrama
Bostorria



Crepis
Krepisa



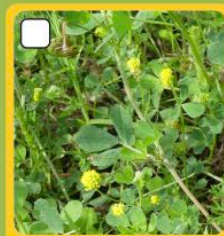
Leontodon
Leontodona



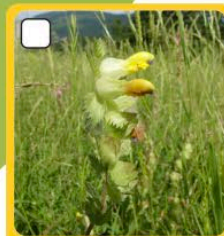
Velloso
Sagu-belarra



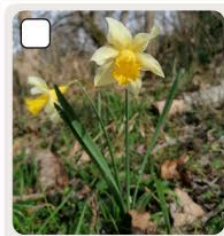
Cuernecillo
Usobelarra



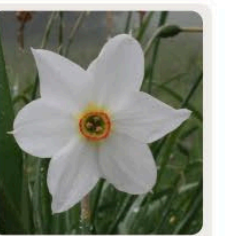
Trébol amarillo
Hirusta horia



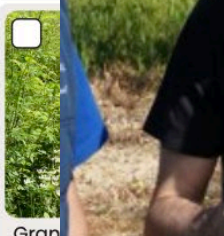
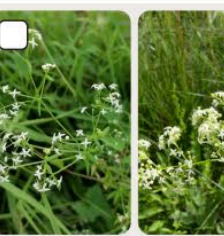
Cresta de gallo
Kurkubia



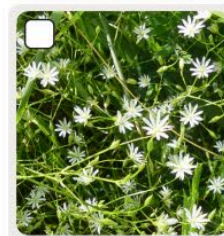
Narciso
Lilipa/Pipirripi



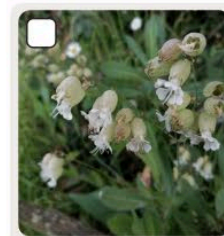
Galio
Ziabelarra



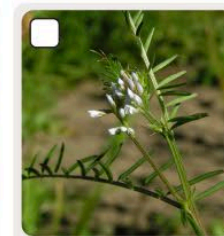
Gran
Tan



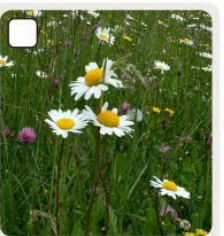
Estelaria
Izar-belarra



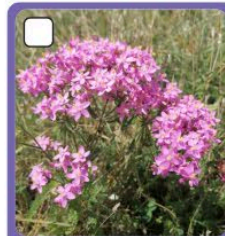
Colleja
Kaxkabola



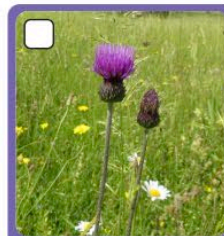
Veza blanca
Zalke txuria



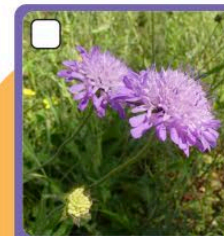
Margaritón
Bitxilore handia



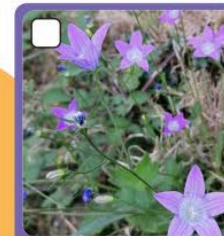
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Belarmina



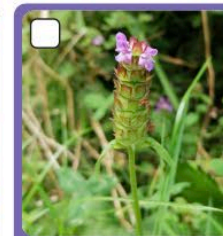
Centaurea
Astuzkerrak



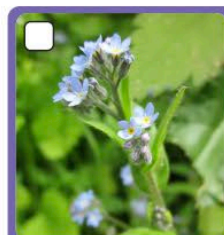
Escabiosa
Hatz-belarra



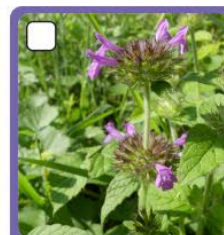
Campanilla silvestre
Kanpaitxoia



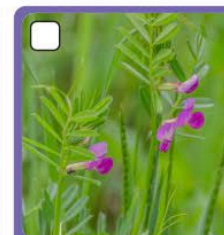
Consuelda
Zolda-belarra



Nomeolvides
Oroibelarra



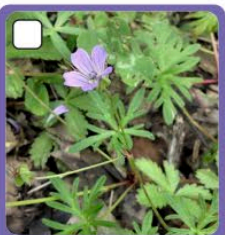
Clinopodio
Klinopodioa



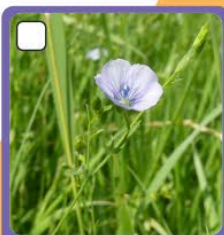
Veza
Zalkea



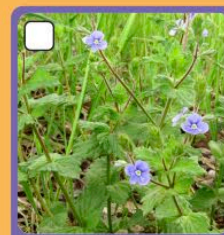
Arveja silvestre
Txingila



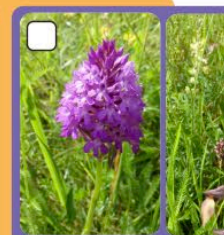
Geranio silvestre
Geranioa



Lino
Linua



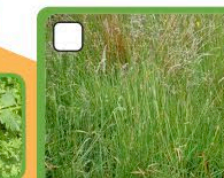
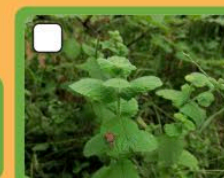
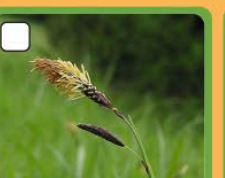
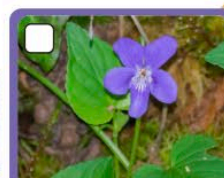
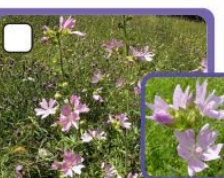
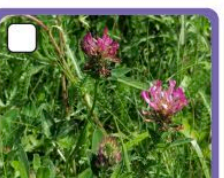
Verónica
Beronika



Orquídeas
Orkideak



Poligala
Poligala



Thanks for your interest!

