

Water~Farmers:
Advanced training for sustainable water and soil management on farms

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Co-funded by the European Union

Water~Farmers

- **Project duration:** 12/2025 – 06/2028
- **Programme**: Erasmus KA220-VET Cooperation partnership, vocational training
- **Goal:** develop a learner-centred, innovative, flexible training program to train farmers and agroecology consultants in sustainable water and soil management
- **Partners:**



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BOEREN NATUUR VLAANDEREN

Conservatoires d'espaces naturels

LEGAMBIENTE LOMBARDIA

DVL Deutscher Verband für Landschaftspflege

LANDCARE EUROPE

Objectives

1) ~ To develop, test and transfer a learner-centred, flexible and innovative training program on sustainable water and soil management for EU farmers, to become actors of the green transition.

2) ~ To enhance the knowledge and skills and the quality of the work of agroecology consultants and their organisations on guiding and supporting farmers.

3) ~ To strengthen a European learning network of organisations and farmers working for nature restoration and climate resilience in agricultural landscapes.

Project "Water~Farmers"

- "The project team will develop a **learner-centred, innovative, flexible training program** to train **farmers** and **agroecology consultants** in **sustainable water and soil management**…"

  - 20 good practices (model farms & projects)
  - 20 fact sheets on measures to improve water & soil (NBS & technical solutions)
  - 1 manual for agroecology consultants and farmers
  - 4 webinars on good practice and measures, hosted by Landcare Europe
  - 3 video tutorials of examples in the fields
  - International test trainings in Belgium (content collection) and France (testing)
  - National test trainings with farmers in DE, BE, FR, IT

Principles of the training program



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1. **Learner-Centred Approach**
- training is tailored to individual learning needs
- accommodating various levels of expertise
- prioritizes practical knowledge
2. **EU cross-border collaboration**
- connecting farmers and (landcare-) organisations across regions
- sharing knowledge, experiences, and good practices
3. **Farmer Empowerment**
- fosters long-term, systemic change by empowering farmers as key
- developing their ability to become leaders in sustainable farming

Principles of the training program

4. Advising on eye-level

- Landcare (-like) organisations work on eye level with actors from farming and nature conservation.

5. Traditional and modern systems

- including technical and Nature Based Solutions (NBS)

6. Collective approach

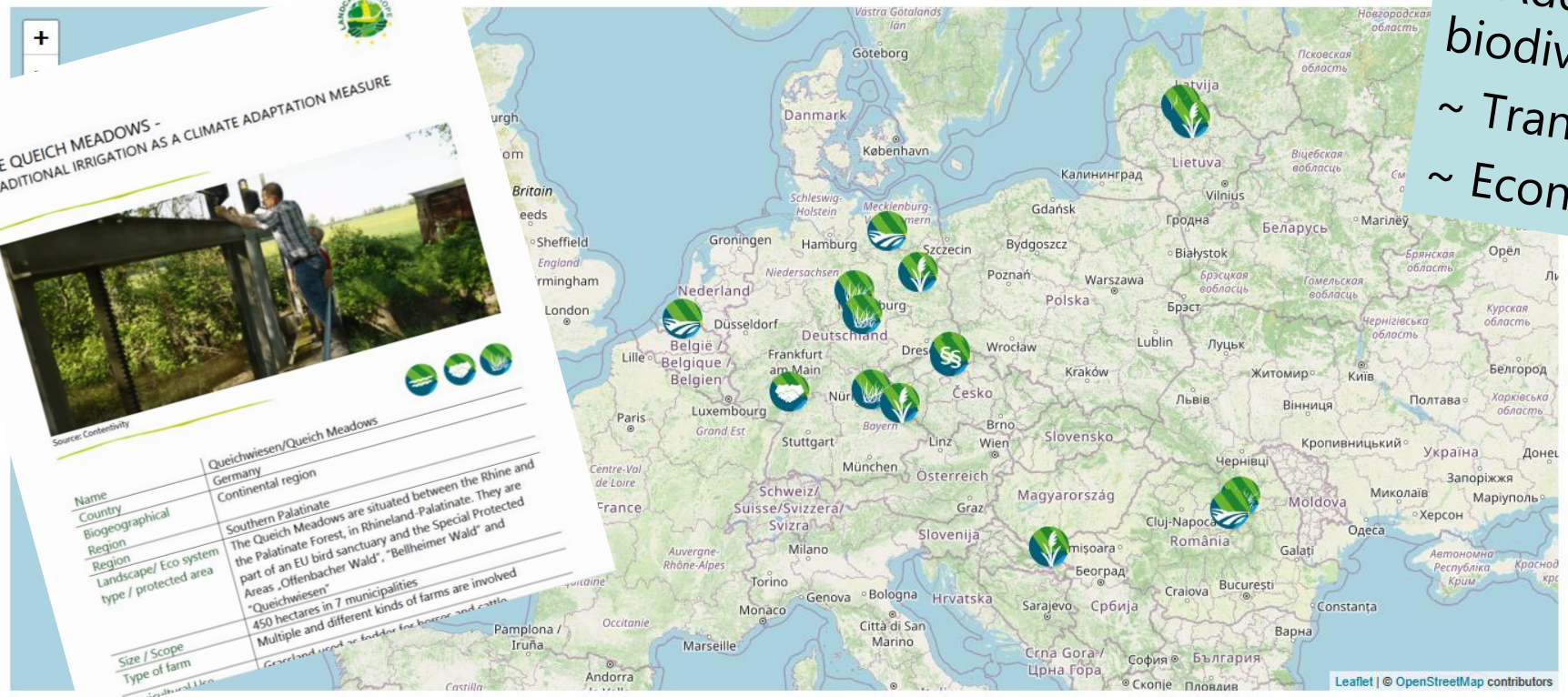
- higher impact through measures at regional scale in a collective approach



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Good practice examples

CAP | Projects & Initiatives | Farms | Biodiversity | Water & Soil | Grassland | Arable land | Peatlands & Wetlands



© Landcare Europe [Link to map]

Criteria for good practices:

~ Engagement of farmers

~ Effectiveness of improved water and soil management

~ Additional benefits for biodiversity, climate, landscape

~ Transferability

~ Economic profitability

Contents of the training programme

Factsheets: technical and NBS like:

~ Irrigation systems & drainages

~ Agroforestry systems and keyline design

~ Hedgerows and landscape features

~ Humus building measures

~ Holistic farm concepts

…

Manual for agroecology consultants, includes:

~ Additional information to the short fact sheets

~ consulting farmers on an eye-level

~ collective approaches

~ consult on holistic farming concepts for improved water management

~ examples and tips for balancing farming & nature restoration

…

Who has access to the training?

- Available in English, French, Italian, German, Flemish
- Available on the website of Landcare Europe + Partners
- EU platform: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects
- published under the Creative Commons Open License CC BY SA, can be:
  - Shared
  - Adopted
  - Translated



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Working groups

- A) Experience exchange: ‘Restoring water retention in a collective approach’
- B) Vision creation: ‘My ideal way of training and working with farmers towards more water resilience’
- C) Idea collection: ‘A manual for advisors on water and soil management in agricultural landscapes – what should it include?’



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