



Supporting Natural Climate Protection in Agricultural Landscapes with... ...grasslands

Supported by:



on the basis of a decision
by the German Bundestag

What are extensively managed grasslands?

Extensively managed grasslands show a diversified horizontal and vertical structure of the grassland and higher numbers of plant species compared to intensively managed grasslands. This is the result of their management, characterized by:

- no use of mineral fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides;
- sustainable grazing, including a minimum and maximum grazing livestock unit (GLU) per ha and timely rotation between plots;
- sustainable mowing, involving a mosaic mowing regime with adapted cutting dates and frequency, depending on the type of vegetation and the environmental and climatic conditions of the region and farm.



© Beneš, BED

Why are they relevant for climate mitigation?

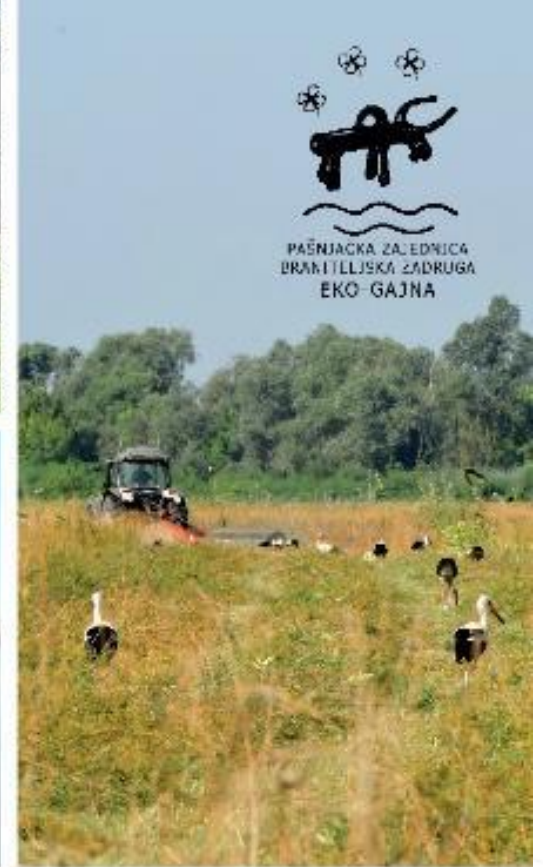
- More stable CO₂ storage capacity of the soil through better **humus building function** compared to cropland and intensively managed grasslands due to the plant roots and biomass input, as well as less soil disturbance, soil compaction, and fertilizers.
- **Reduced CO₂ emissions** by preventing soil erosion and the loss of organic material.
- **Lower N₂O emissions** from agricultural soils due to the non-use of mineral fertilizer.
- **Lower CH₄ emissions from digestion:** the commitment of livestock to grasslands and grassland-based nutrition will result in a reduction of the overall number of ruminants.

*The mean SOC content
of peatlands is: 318 g kg⁻¹
of grasslands is: 40 g kg⁻¹
of shrubland is: 55 g kg⁻¹
of croplands is: 18.3 g kg⁻¹*



Other benefits for public goods

- Preserve **biodiversity** on grasslands (EU Biodiversity strategy 2030 & Nature Restoration Law).
- Reverse the decline of **insects** (EU pollinator initiative).
- Higher **water retention** compared to arable land (EU Water Framework Directive).
- Reduced effects of extreme weather events, including heavy rains and droughts (**climate change adaptation**).
- Preserve **cultural heritage landscapes** (rural economies and quality of life).



WORKSHOP CROATIA



Held in mid-June 2024 in Slavonski Brod, Gajna, and Lonjsko Polje Nature Park



@BED

"Extensively managed grasslands as natural carbon storage – Practical implementation and requirements for Common Agricultural Policy measures



WORKSHOP CROATIA



Experts from 13 countries and representatives of the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition.

- expert presentations,
- work on recommendations for decision-makers
- demonstration of good practice

Meeting the farmers on Croatian flooded grassland region.





TIPS FOR FARMERS

Aim for quality instead of quantity in meat production by feeding a grass-based diet, which also reduces GHG emissions



@Corinna Friedrich, DVL

Include deep-rooting grass/herb species

Compost manure

Avoid reseeding and soil disturbance

Increase plant diversity,

Include legumes

Include agroforestry systems in the grassland.



@Beneš, BED

Choose old and adapted breeds



BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES



Brockenbauer – from farm to fork

Country: Germany



Result-based eco-scheme for extensive grassland management

Country: Germany



Pasturing Collective Eko-Gajna

Country: Croatia



Fazakas Imre - Model farm for healthy soils

Country: Romania



Result-based AECM “Burren Programme”

Country: Ireland



SUPPORT BY LANDCARE(-LIKE) ASSOCIATIONS

- **Consulting** farmers on management practices and supporting **AECM and other programmes**
- **Building regional value chains** “from pasture to plate”
- **Creating regional brands** for meat and dairy products.
- Organize communal used **infrastructure** such as milking parlours, cheesemaking, or slaughterhouses.
- **Communicating** the health benefits of free-range animal products and their benefits for public goods.
- **Implement grassland restoration** of species-rich grasslands with local seeds.
- Developing and executing **Natura 2000 management plans including grassland** priority habitat types such as semi-natural dry calcareous grasslands (6210) which are dependent on extensive grazing.



@Beneš, BED



CAP RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Step 1:** Recognition of extensively managed grasslands through administration, e.g. introduction of specific use codes /map layer in Integrated Administration and Control System + training for farmers + administration
- **Step 2:** Implementation of coupled payments for free-ranged livestock
- **Step 3:** Eco-schemes for extensively managed grasslands, e.g. result-based schemes for species-rich grasslands
- **Step 4:** Agri-Environmental and Climate Measures for extensively managed grasslands



CAP RECOMMENDATIONS

Agri-Environmental and Climate Measures AECM need to be rewarded higher than eco-schemes as they are multiannual and have a higher benefit for public goods.

They need to:

- be financially attractive by including the extra workload and the value for public services in the premium calculation
- be workable and mutually reinforcing
- provide the possibility for multi-annual agreements of 12 years or more to provide security for farmers and landowners
- support the necessary structural adjustments to farms e.g. by creating an additional bonus for farmers who use more than 15-20% of their farm for agri-environmental schemes and/or apply a variety of different AECM



FURTHER INFO

- Landcare Europe **workshop** “Extensively managed grasslands as natural carbon sinks ” materials :
<https://www.landcare-europe.org/events>
- **FOCUS PAPER** [Focus paper on extensively managed grasslands](#)
- **Best Practice** examples :
 - [Best practice CAP ecoscheme grassland species 241024.pdf](#)
 - [Best practice grassland Gajna Croatia 241024.pdf](#)
 - [Best practice grassland farm Brockenbauer 241024.pdf](#)
 - [Best practice CAP grassland Burren Ireland 230425.pdf](#)
 - [Best practice Fazakas RO 260625 FINAL.pdf](#)
- **Short film** “GAJNA collective approach in agriculture mitigates climate change”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fTzqSAKDKc&t=79s>



Thank you for your attention!

Contact:

Iris Beneš

Brodsko ekološko društvo-BED, president

Brodsko ekološko društvo-BED

Trg hrvatskog proljeća 1, 35 000 Slavonski Brod

Tel. +385 35 445 421, <https://bed.hr/>
bed@bed.hr



@BED

