THE THREATS TO
WOOD PASTURES
IN EUROPE

CONFERENCE:
Management of extensive grasslands in mountain areas - in memory of Dr. Barbara Knowles
WHAT ARE WOOD PASTURES?

EXAMPLES FROM EUROPE

Lowlands and Mountains
WHAT ARE WOOD PASTURES?

EXAMPLES FROM EUROPE

Patches, mosaics and landscapes
With trees, but not only?
WHAT ARE WOOD PASTURES?

EXAMPLES FROM EUROPE

Grazing vs. Browsing
WHAT FACTORS ARE THREATENING THEIR CONSERVATION?

ABANDONMENT

When they are marginal farmed land: first areas to be abandoned.

As semi-natural pastures, they disappear with natural succession over time.

Sometimes afforested.
Active use is crucial

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POOR MANAGEMENT / INTENSIFICATION

Tree aging and lack of regeneration.

Inadequate livestock management.

Reinforced by climate change.
Excellent for biodiversity, if not too many...
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DYSFUNCTIONAL POLICY
From EU framework to national and regional implementation.
EUROPEAN UNION POLICY FRAMEWORK

TWO KEY AREAS OF POLICY:

1) Biodiversity 2020 - Natura 2000, because they are semi-natural ecosystems of high conservation value.

2) Common Agricultural Policy (Pillars 1 + 2), because they are actively farmed permanent pastures.

_They should work together for wood pastures…_

_… on paper AND in practice on the ground_

_…but they don’t!_
BIODIVERSITY 2020 - NATURA 2000

Several wood pastures types not fully recognised as habitats of community interest

Very limited data on the conservation status of wood pastures and lack of targets

More explicit guidance is needed on Natura forest habitats that benefit from grazing
EUROPEAN UNION POLICY FRAMEWORK

COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

**CAP expenditure and CAP Reform path** (2011 constant prices)

EUROPEAN UNION
POLICY FRAMEWORK

COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY
PILLAR 2: Rural Development
Agri-environment-climate + Natura 2000 payments

Very inconsistent use
Payments for establishing agro-forestry systems

Ironic that new systems are grant-aided
but existing systems are penalised
Afforestation of farmland

Highly subsidised AND receives Pillar 1 payments. It is clearly the preferred option for marginal pastoral land
EUROPEAN UNION POLICY FRAMEWORK

COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

**CAP expenditure and CAP Reform path (2011 constant prices)**

COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

PILLAR 1: Direct payments

Before 2005, no problems for wood pastures as CAP support was for livestock irrespective of type of pasture.

Now we have direct payments per hectare for all farmers, with 3 basic conditions:

1. Land must be eligible (permanent grassland, arable land, or permanent crop land)
2. Land must be either in farm production or under suitable maintenance activity
3. Compliance with rules e.g. cross-compliance
Since 2014, Permanent Grasslands (PG) can include any amount of trees and shrubs if these are accessible to grazing – good.

So wood pastures are PG and automatically eligible for direct payments, if there is proven farming or maintenance activity?

NO, THEY FACE BUREAUCRATIC BARRIERS AND DISCRIMINATION.

1. Trees and shrubs must be “accessible for grazing for their full area” – is this rule practical?

2. And DG AGRI says that leaves or fruits not eaten directly from the tree do not count as “accessible for grazing”
COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY REFORM

If trees are not ALL fully accessible to grazing, then there are limits or deductions:

1. A maximum number of 100 trees per hectare. If tree density is 101 trees/ha, the pasture is not eligible.
2. Or a “pro-rata” reduction in the pasture’s eligibility, in proportion with non-eligible elements.

Besides, when woody elements are predominant: special category of pastures *Permanent Grassland with Established Local Practices PG-ELP*

By the way, *Greening* is virtually irrelevant for wood pastures: focus on arable land.
Wood pastures vs. Forest grazing?
If a wood pasture is in active farming use, why apply more restrictions and rules than to grass pastures, or to arable land?
CAP IMPLEMENTATION AT NATIONAL/REGIONAL LEVEL

SPAIN

Increasing restrictions to make wood pastures eligible for CAP direct payments (financial “correction”: reform under pressure)

1) Many areas formerly classified as pastures are now reclassified as forests in the LPIS.
2) Remote sensing approach to identify abandoned areas / further reduce the elegibility of pastures.

- The use of the pastures declared by the farmer is not taken into account
- Neither the pastoral value of woody species nor animal breeds were considered.
SPAIN

Initial reduction to 55-60% of the pre-reform eligible pasture areas.

Figure may have gone up to 70% after revisions.
Comment déterminer l’admissibilité des surfaces de prairies et pâturages ?

Guide national d’aide à la déclaration de la catégorie d’admissibilité des surfaces, pour les prairies et pâturages permanents

2. Définition des éléments « adaptés aux pâturages », que l’on peut intégrer dans la surface admissible

**Définition d’un élément**

Un élément est un buisson ou un massif de buisson dont on peut faire le tour. Le schéma ci-dessous illustre cette notion.

[Diagrams showing elements of suitable pastures]
### RÉGION DELTA, LITTORAL ET PAYSAGES HUMIDES CONTINENTAUX

#### UNITÉ DE PAYSAGE PELOUSES ET LANDES À LIGNEUX BAS

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### RÉGION NATURELLE

**Delta, littoral et paysages humides continentaux**

### UNITÉ DE PAYSAGE

**Landes**

### CATÉGORIE DE LA GRILLE

**0-10% (100% admissible)**

### Éléments admissibles

- Fraîche humide para tourbeuse.

### Éléments non admissibles, pour lesquels le prorata est utilisé

- Tronc d'autres.

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**Date**

11/2014

**Localisation de la prise de vue**

Arleuf / Bourgogne
CAP IMPLEMENTATION AT NATIONAL/REGIONAL LEVEL

OVERALL...

- There are very large exclusions of semi-natural pastures from Pillar 1 support in some countries, such as Bulgaria, and major new exclusions in Spain.

- Even where the system has improved, there are still considerable exclusions as in Estonia and Sweden. These exclusions are sometimes alleviated with agri-environment payments.

- Some countries have found ways to avoid exclusions or losses of eligibility for pastures (e.g. England, France), but their approaches are not seen favourably by DG AGRI.
EU AND NATIONAL/REGIONAL POLICY FOR WOOD PASTURES

EFNCP campaigning
http://www.efncp.org

Mr Jerzy Bogdan Plewa
Director-General Agriculture
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 130
BE – 1049 Brussels

c. Mr Karl Falkenberg
Director-General Environment

Madrid, 2 September 2015

CAP implementation discriminates against farmers using pastures with trees and shrubs in Spain and threatens to degrade biodiversity and increase the wildfire hazard

Dear Director-General,

The organisations and individuals represented by EFNCP1 and the Spanish Plataforma por la Ganadería Extensiva y el Pastoralismo are concerned at the negative consequences of CAP implementation in Spain. The implementation

1. EFNCP stands for European Forum of National/Council for Pastoralism

CAP implementation discriminates against farmers using pastures with trees and shrubs in Spain and threatens to degrade biodiversity and increase the wildfire hazard
EU AND NATIONAL/REGIONAL POLICY FOR WOOD PASTURES

CONCLUSION

Massive bureaucratic effort and cost to “micro-control” numbers of trees/shrubs on each parcel of land, and to reduce eligibility of wood pastures

Totally inadequate resources for monitoring and evaluation of the macro effects of CAP policy instruments on wood pastures

…and of trends in wood pastures and other semi-natural pastures from perspective of habitats and ecosystems.

EU policy design and implementation are more a threat than a support for the good management and conservation of wood pastures.
Thank you!

THE THREATS TO WOOD PASTURES IN EUROPE

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