STEP

SOCIETY FOR TERRITORIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROSPERITY (STEP)



HIGH NATURE VALUE FARMLANDS

Which farmlands are of High Nature Value?

How many are they in Bulgaria?

2007 > 2020

TYPE 1: PERMANENT GRASSLANDS

Farmlands with a high share of semi-natural vegetation such as species-rich pastures



951 300 > 467 600

TYPE 2: MOSAIC LANDSCAPES

Low-intensity landuse with a high share of landscape features such as field strips, hedges, stone walls, shrubs



279 000 > 175 500

TYPE 3: ARABLE LAND IMPORTANT FOR THE SPECIES

Even intensively used, serve as a food base for rare species of European and / or global importance



359 600 > 330 300

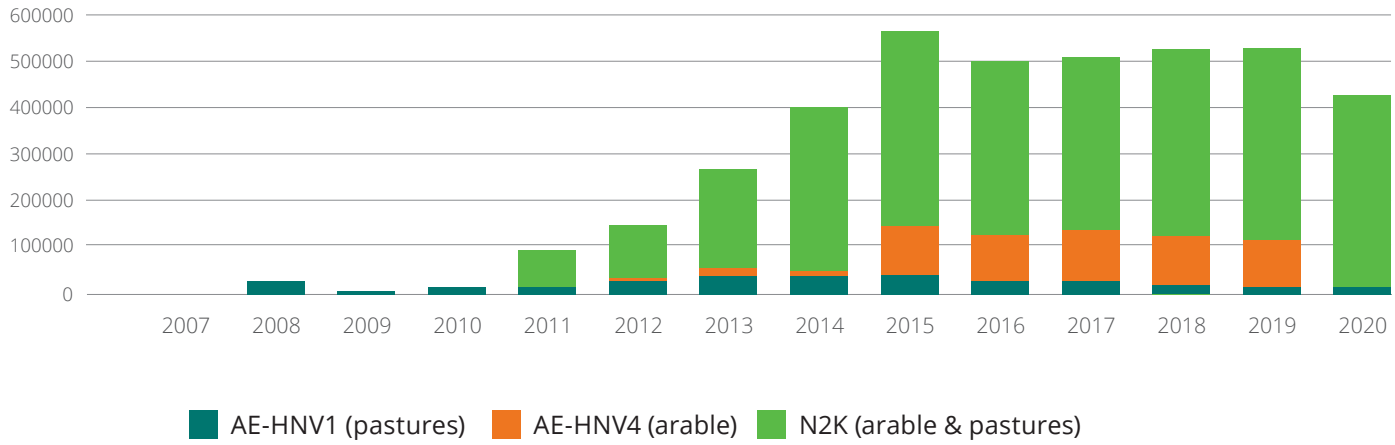
MAVA FONDATION POUR LA NATURE

Project «14 years of support for the High Nature Value Farming Systems in Bulgaria: Lessons learned about the policy and socio-economic challenges underpinning the loss of cultural landscapes in the Mediterranean region» The project is funded by MAVA Foundation .

Disclaimer: This publication reflects the views of its authors and MAVA foundation cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

THE CAP SUPPORT OF HNV FARMING SYSTEMS IN BULGARIA

Areas declared under the HNV support schemes

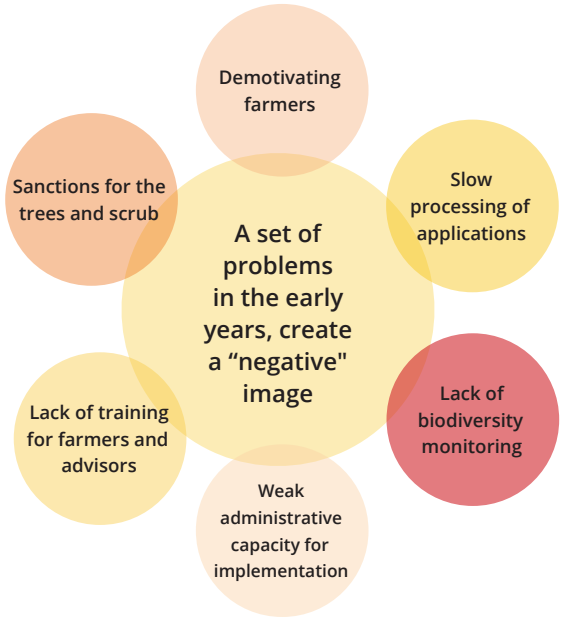


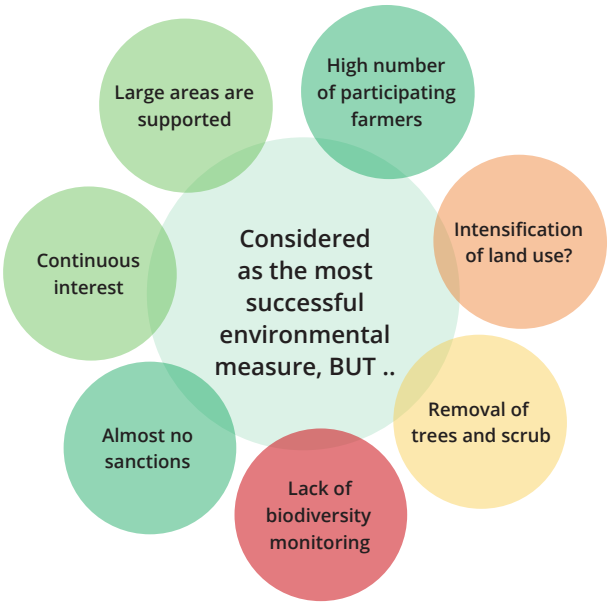
AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURE (AE)

1) Targeted schemes for the High Nature Value areas
   - For pastures and meadows – HNV1
   - For arable land habitats of important species – HNV4
2) Five-year commitments

NATURA 2000 MEASURE (N2K)

1) Compensations for restrictions set in the Natura 2000 designation orders for arable land, permanent crops and pastures and meadows
2) Lower payment levels per hectare in comparison to the AE measures
3) Annual commitments





LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE 14 YEARS OF SUPPORT FOR THE HIGH NATURE VALUE FARMING SYSTEMS IN BULGARIA

Our findings

Our recommendations

A. The farmland eligibility for support under the Single Area Payment Scheme is key to the status of High Nature Value areas

In 2019, the eligible farmlands of High Nature Value decreased by 39% compared to 2007. The following were lost:

- More than 500,000 ha of grassland
- About 100,000 ha with mixed land use (mosaic systems)

A1. Adaptation of the eligibility conditions to support High Nature Value farmlands
A2. New assessment of all agricultural land of its potential High Nature Value in Bulgaria



B. The establishment of an adequate system for biodiversity monitoring in agricultural land is key to assessing the impact of CAP support

Two programming periods lacked systematic monitoring of leading indicators such as

- “Farmland Birds",
- “High Nature Value farmland"

All external evaluations of the RDP recommended the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation system, but one is still lacking

B1. Collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment and Water to establish an adequately coordinated and integrated biodiversity monitoring system
B2. Consider the EU tendencies for supporting of result-based agri-environmental measures, test them at pilot level

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE 14 YEARS OF COLLABORATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Our findings

Our recommendations

C. Targeted cooperation between environmental NGOs and government institutions creates some of the most successful and innovative measures to support nature-friendly farming

In the 2007-2020 period, donor projects were the main financial instrument for testing innovative agri-environmental and nature-friendly measures to support High Nature Value farming in Bulgaria such as:

- Targeted AE schemes
- Mobile advisory teams
- Training of farmers to add value to products, etc..

C1. Public authorities should encourage the involvement of environmental NGOs in the process of formulating and implementing policies and measures for the protection of HNV farming systems.
C2. Institutions should support NGOs in the development and implementation of their projects related to the management of HNV farmlands and get actively involved in them!



D. The conditions for the successful development and implementation of schemes and measures to support High Nature Value farming systems include:

- taking into account local conditions and differences, as well as
- creating the necessary knowledge and capacity within a wide range of stakeholders

Experience reveals that biodiversity conservation is most successful when

- It complies with the specific socio-economic and natural characteristics of an area;
- It is accompanied by a combination of on-site advisory services and a clear explanation of the biodiversity conservation objectives and their relevance to the farming activity.

D1. Measures, including eligibility conditions, should be developed at regional or local level and reflect the specificities of High Nature Value farming
D2. When implementing them at national level, the flexible approach used in the various projects should be introduced, which allows for the adaptation of the measures even after their initial implementation.