



Implementation of the Agri- Environment-Climate Measures (AECM) and Natura 2000 network in the rural areas: specific elements of the schemes in Wallonia (Belgium)

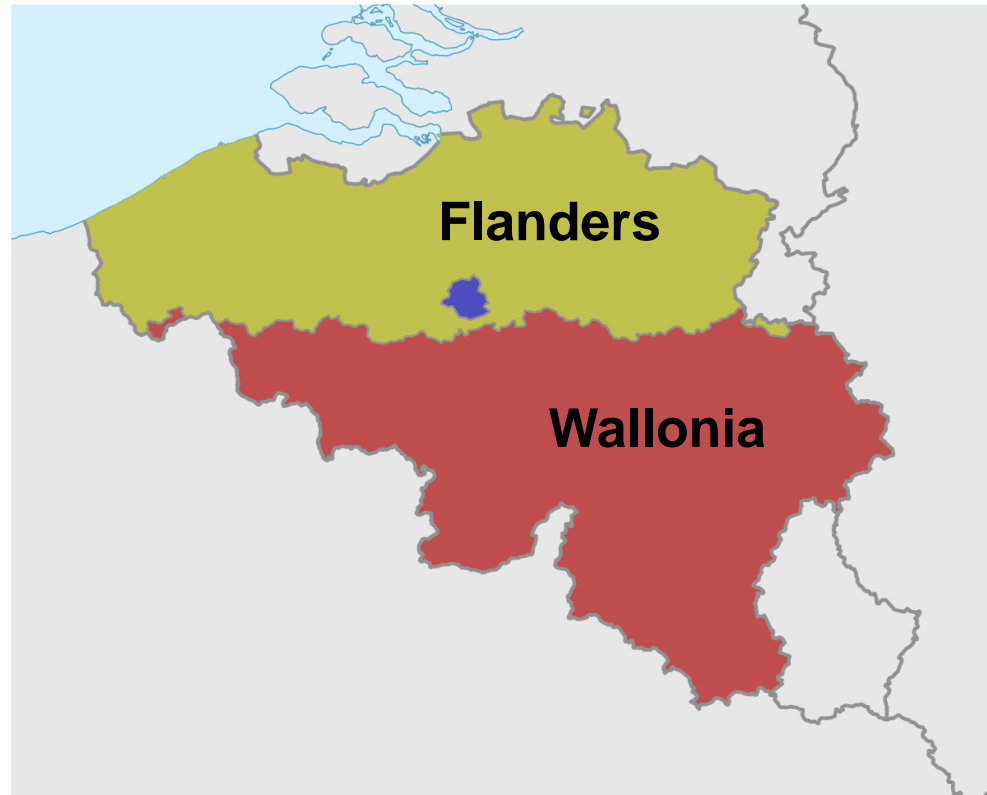
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Natagriwal asbl

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Gembloux
Seminar B4B

DECENTRALIZATION

In Belgium, decentralization near the three regions :

Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels (blue)



Natura 2000



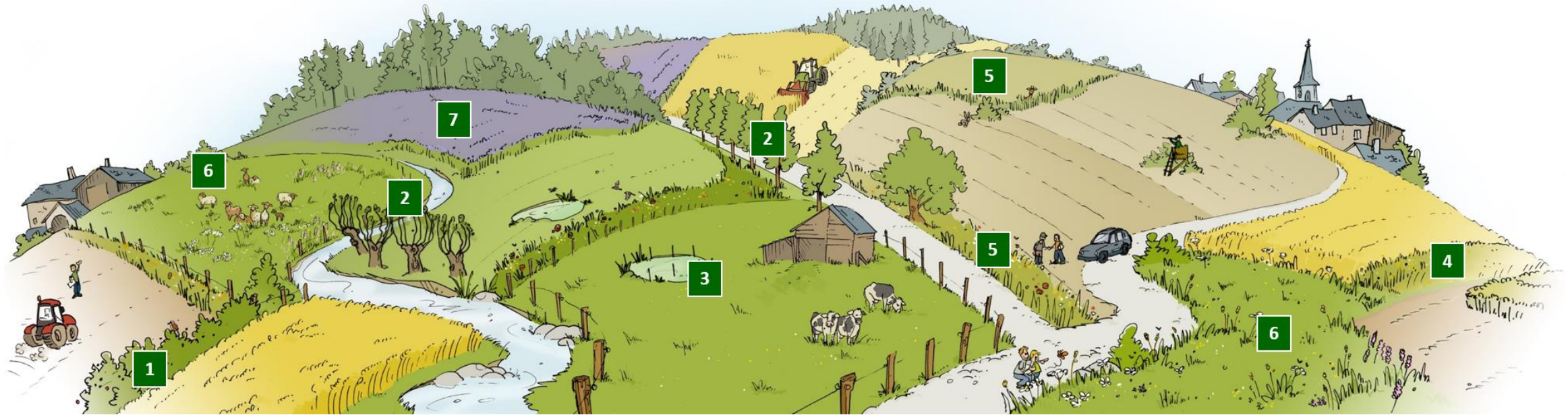
- Mandatory system
- Legal designations of the zones
- Legal obligations to be respected
- No limit in time
- All rural landowners (not only farmers)
- 5-7 millions €/year (CAP Strategic Plan)

Agri-environment-climate measures (AECM)



- Voluntary system
- Voluntary choice of the zones
- Specifications of the AECM to be respected
- 5 year contract
- Farmers
- 15-20 millions €/year (CAP Strategic Plan) (2500-3500 €/ farm.year)

MAIN AGRI-ENVIRONMENT-CLIMATE MEASURES (AECM)



- 4. Grass margins (MB5) 1100€/Ha
- 5. Targeted plots (MC7) 1600€/Ha
- 6. High nature value grasslands (MC4) 470€/Ha
+ Unharvested crops (MB12) 2400€/Ha

2 LEVELS OF COMMITMENT FOR THE AECM

2 levels of commitment for the AECM:

=> Entry-level schemes

- Simple management (e.g. grass strips, late-mowing grasslands, limited cattle: surface ratio at the farm level,...)
- Commitment without preliminary expertise and technical support

=> Targeted schemes

- Complex management
 - Location and management prescription defined with a farm advisor (from our organization), depending on the objectives
- => contract between the farmer and the farm advisor
- => sent to the administration for validation and payment demand

**The less
in the
law...**

Targeted plots (AECM 7)

- Margin of an arable field
- Total surface area min. 0,20 ha, plot surface area between 0,02 and 1,5 ha
- Pesticides and stockpiling prohibited
- 1600 €/Ha

=> the specific objectives of the developed strip and the choice of location, width, composition of the cover, dates and methods of management, are indicated in the expert specifications, taking into account the local issues and constraints in agricultural and environmental matters

SPECIFICATIONS 1



Plots for erosion control

- Grasses + legumes
- Parallel to contour lines or in thalwegs

**... the most in
the
specifications**



Plots for landscape aesthetic improvement

- Cereals + Poppy + corn flower
- Along roads, paths, villages, ...

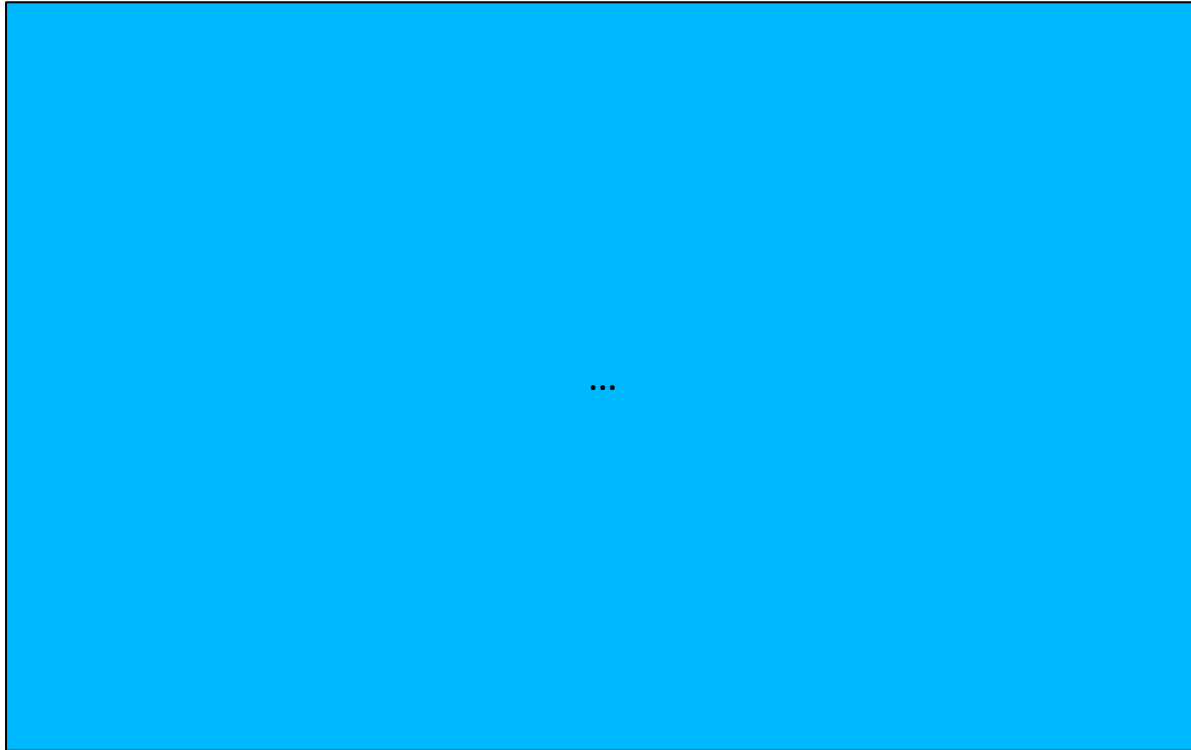
... the most in the specifications



Unharvested crops strips (winter bird feeding)

- Mix of seed-producing plants
- Left unharvested the whole winter
- In quiet zones

... the most in the specifications



New situation or new concept

possibility of creating new specifications
without changing the legislation



SOME NUMBERS...

**45% of Walloon farmers are engaged in the program
(nearly 5500 farms)**

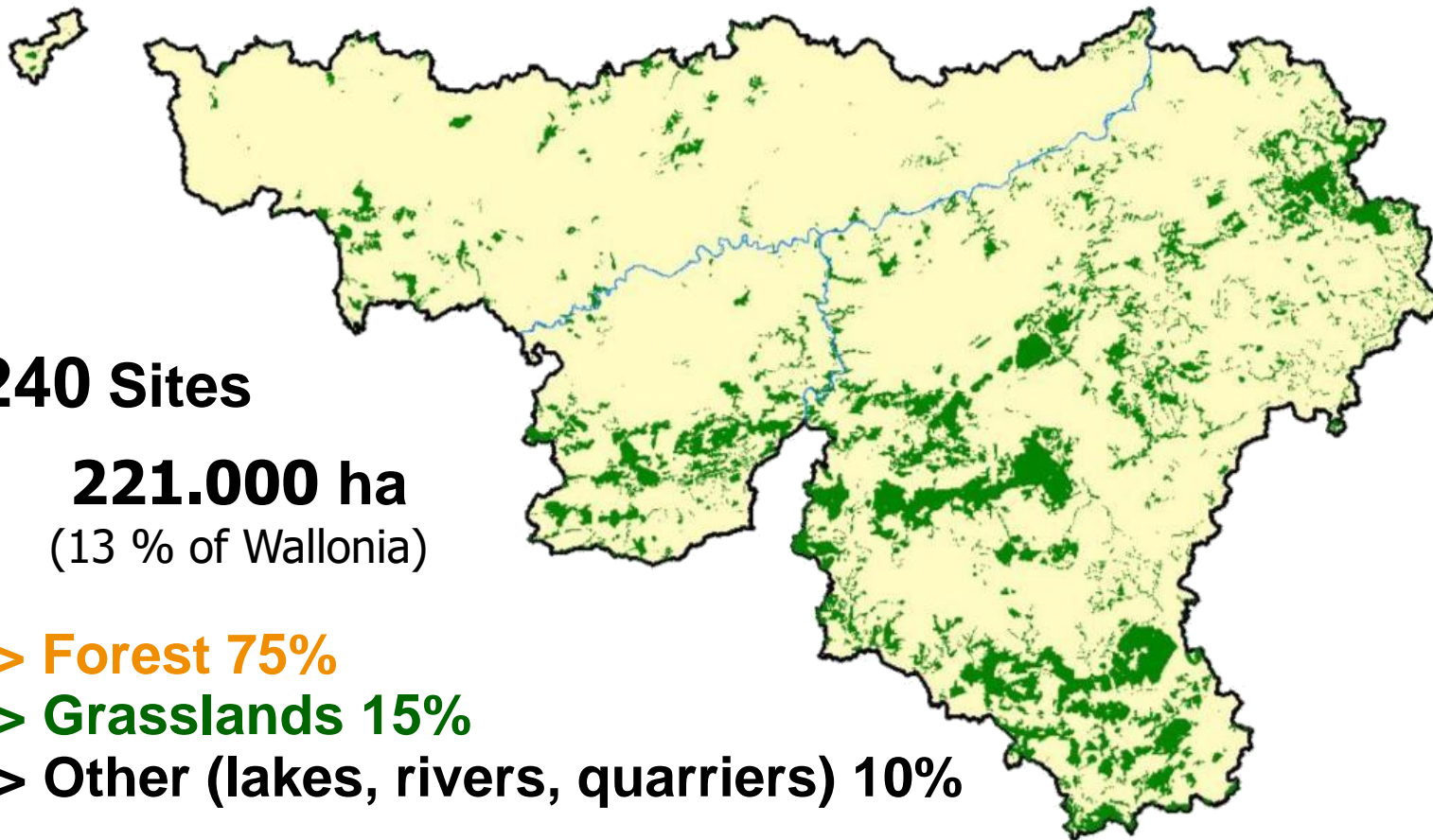
For the main following commitments:	
2.200 kilometers	Grass margins
3.394 hectares	Targeted plots
12.586 hectares	High biological value grasslands

SOME RESULTS...

- >50% Walloon butterflies species and >50% threatened arable plants species are present at least in one AECM strip
- 12.000 hectares High biological value grasslands represent about 5% of the Walloon permanent grasslands
- 50% Natura 2000 core-grasslands are managed with the AECM



NATURA 2000 IN WALLONIA



240 Sites

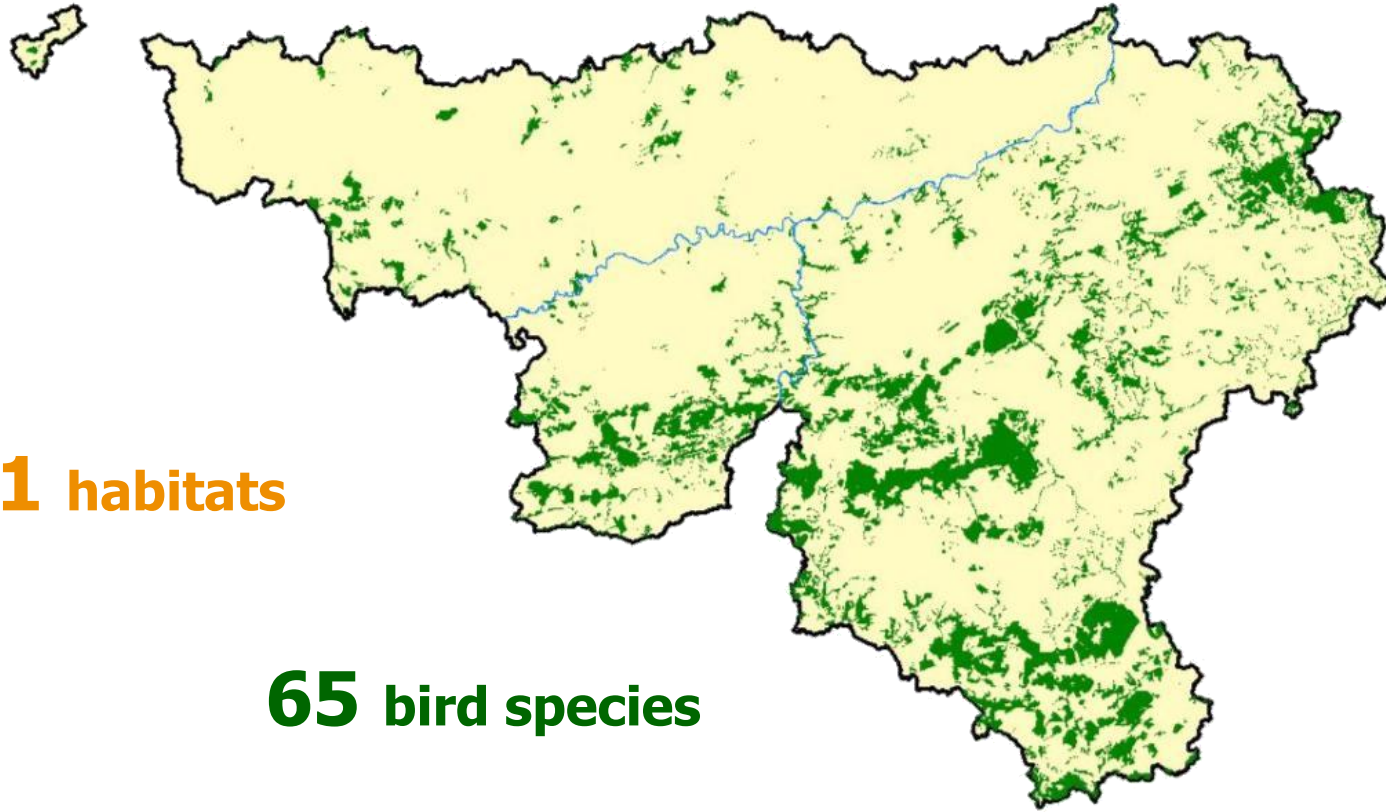
221.000 ha
(13 % of Wallonia)

- => **Forest 75%**
- => **Grasslands 15%**
- => **Other (lakes, rivers, quarriers) 10%**

64.000 landowners or managers
(4.400 farmers)



NATURA 2000 IN WALLONIA



41 habitats

65 bird species

69 other animal and plant species (mammals, insects, plants...)



Examples of Natura 2000 species and habitats



IMPLEMENTATION: PARTNERSHIP

Public authorities (Service Public de Wallonie)

legislation, funding, control...

-Regional Administration for Agriculture (AECM)

-Regional Administration for Nature and Forest (Natura 2000)



The beneficiaries

private owners, land managers, farmers, Nature NGOs...
(specific regime for public bodies)

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Public authorities (Service Public de Wallonie)

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- Regional Administration for Agriculture (AECM)
- Regional Administration for Nature and Forest (Natura 2000)

Natagriwal - A non profit organization

(funded and commissioned by the Regional Government)

communication, promotion, framing, technical advices, mediation and supervision of the farmers

Natura 2000 and AECM

The beneficiaries

private owners, land managers, farmers, Nature NGOs...
(specific regime for public bodies)



NATAGRIWAL'S MISSIONS

➤ **Implement the agri-environment-climate scheme (AECS) with the farmers**
(5500 farmers involved in the program : 3000 in the « Entry-level scheme » and 2500 in the « Targeted scheme »)
On going support during the contract (at least two visits over 5 years or on demand)

➤ **Inform and present to stakeholders the Natura 2000 Network**

➤ **Allocate subsidies to restore degraded habitats in Natura 2000 sites**

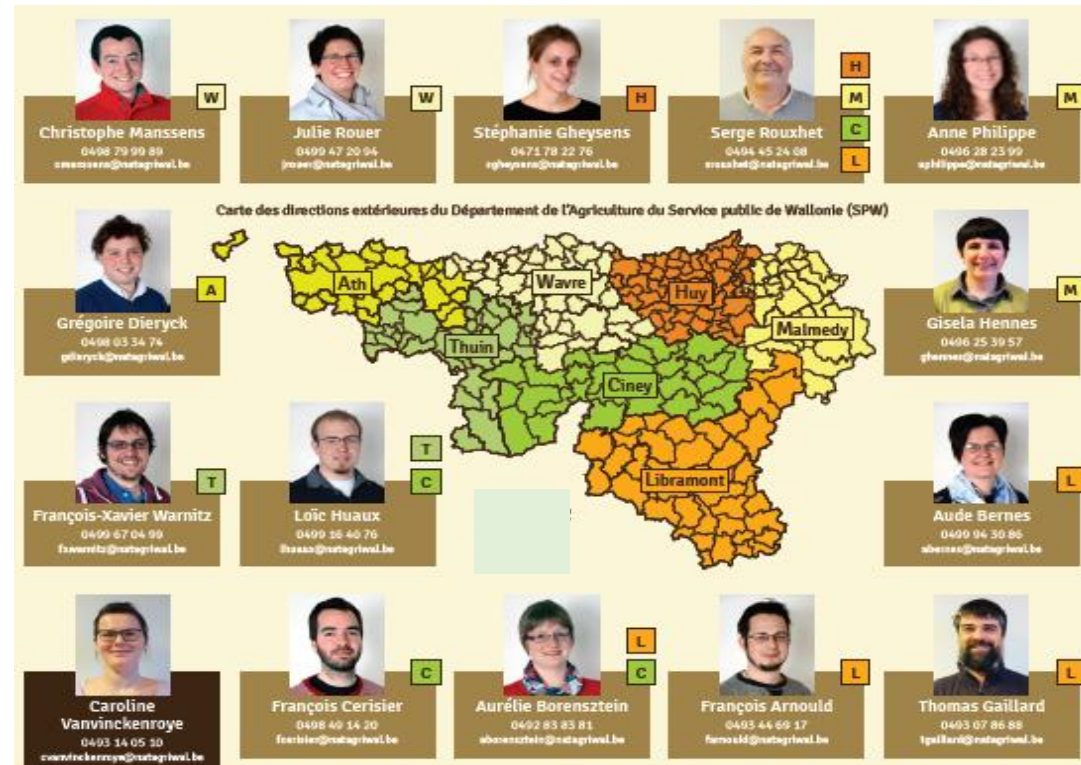
➤ **Do some field research** on management's impact

Team of around 30 people for AECM and Natura 2000



THE FARM ADVISORS

- **Responsible for contract establishment and support to farmers**
- Located in their zone of activity (neighbourhood service).



- Ca. 1 advisor / 200 farmers
- Trained to biodiversity, environment and farm functioning (on-going training)
- Some individual thematic training (erosion, grassland management,...)



Example for a Natura 2000 high biodiversity value grassland



Example for a Natura 2000 high biodiversity value grassland

Three possible cumulative options for the management:

1. Natura 2000

-Compulsory management constraints

E.g. No intervention before the 15th of June and no fertilization

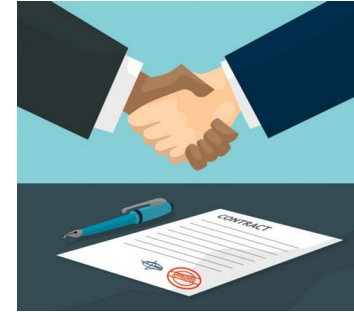
-Regulated by the administration

-Subsidized 440 €/ha.year

-Opportunity for restoration



2. AECM



- Voluntary management constraints

E.g. No intervention before the 15th of July and livestock loads restrictions

- Management defined in a 5 year agreement

- Subsidized 470 €/ha.year

=> Possible combination with Natura 2000 up to 710 €/ha.year

3. Habitat restoration opportunity through another measure of the CAP Strategic Plan

- For lands in the Natura 2000 network
- Accessible to every landowner or land manager
- Free service to organize the demand of subsidies and planning of the restoration
- Restoration cost 100% subsidized
(60% by the Walloon Region and 40% CAP)
- Scientific follow up



Example for a Natura 2000 high biodiversity value grassland

Example of restoration works



Thank you for your attention!

www.natagriwal.be

