What is HNV farming?

HNV farmland are "areas where agriculture is a major land use and where that agriculture supports, or is associated with, either a high species and habitat diversity or the presence of species of European conservation concern, or both".

Fig. 1: The three dimensions of HNV farming

HNV farming in Europe

- High nature value farmland makes up about 15-25% of the utilised agricultural area in Europe. It is unevenly distributed, with concentrations in peripheral parts of Europe.
- It is an important component of the European agricultural mix, notably in terms of biodiversity, cultural landscape, territorial cohesion, quality products and employment.
- The main threats are intensification and abandonment. The decline in HNV farming systems is mainly due to competition with other farming systems using industrially produced inputs (e.g., pesticides, bioengineered water) at European and global scale.
- Even if there is a growing recognition of HNV farming in Europe, HNV farmland are still in danger.
- CAP-insitutions are not always well targeted (e.g., agri-environment schemes, less favoured area support, etc.), norms and rules are not always applicable.
- Better consideration of HNV farming systems and territories is urgently needed especially in the perspective of the new CAP.

HNV-Link: Developing & Sharing Innovations to address the challenges of environmental sustainability & socio-economic viability of HNV farming areas across Europe

- HNV territories are identified and supported by collective action
- High biodiversity levels associated to HNV farming practices are conserved and enhanced
- Rural employment is maintain and farm-level economic viability is secured

Learning Areas (LA)

Territorialized approach of innovation for HNV areas

Working on innovations targeting the socio-economic viability of HNV farming while mainstreaming their environmental characteristics, is a double challenge.

We recognize that such innovation processes must be embedded in a specific macro-agro-ecosystem AND a specific territorial institutional setting.

Therefore, our network builds 10 “Learning Areas” - where HNV farming systems are present - where appropriate innovations have been made - and where there is need for further innovation.

LA is a multi-actor cluster involving a range of stakeholders, for example farmers, professional associations, NGOs, local authorities and institutes of applied research, etc.

The 10 Learning Areas represent a whole range of regions across Europe:

- Dartmoor (United Kingdom)
- Sitio de Monfurado (Portugal)
- Dalmatian Islands (Croatia)
- Eastern Hills of Cluj (Romania)
- Western Stara Planina (Bulgaria)
- Västra Götaland (Sweden)
- The Burren (Ireland)
- Thessalia-Pindus (Greece)
- Causes et Cévennes (France)
- La Vera, Extremadura (Spain)

HNV – Link: Objectives – Actions – Outcomes

HNV-Link network will give a decisive new impetus, complementing existing local and European organisations and networks which support these types of agricultural and agro-environmental strategies.

Baseline Assessment ➢ Output driven changes

Creating a common reference for HNV farming territories across Europe

Understanding complex socio-ecological systems evolution

Identifying direct and indirect factors of changes

Building a HNV vision with farmers and local stakeholders

ATLAS of the 10 European Learning Areas ➢ HNV farming territories

Knowledge Brokering ➢ Engaging social process

HNV farming catalysers engaging key actors at different scales: locally, regionally, nationally, European wide.

Peer Learning Exchanges: Cross visits as a method for innovation transfer and adaptation

Dissemination strategy: regional/national meetings and dissemination events, demonstration farms, reaching National Agricultural Knowledge-Information Systems (AKIS)

Partnership creation and HNV innovation implementation

HNV farming project formulation - paving the way to Operational Groups

Communication material on HNV farming for professionals, education books and scientific institutions

Grassroot Innovation Collection ➢ Bridging the gap between research and innovation

Bibliographic census and analysis about agro-ecological innovations: Literature at European scale

Identification of existing HNV innovations within each Learning Area: market, technical, regulatory, organisational

Identification of existing gaps and needs of innovation

Understanding the socio-institutional context of innovation process failure or success

COMPENDIUM of innovations and common challenges

Fig. 2: Estimated HNV farmland presence in Europe (2012)