

THE ROLE OF EC RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR CONSERVATION OF IMPORTANT PLANT AREAS IN THE MEMBER STATES

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Caricion nigrae vegetation Bulgaria



Molinion hay fields Bulgaria



Magnocaricion vegetation in Biebzra floodplain Poland





**Arrhenatherion grasslands
along Daugava Latvia**

Mesobromion Slovenia



Schorzonerion grassland Slovenia



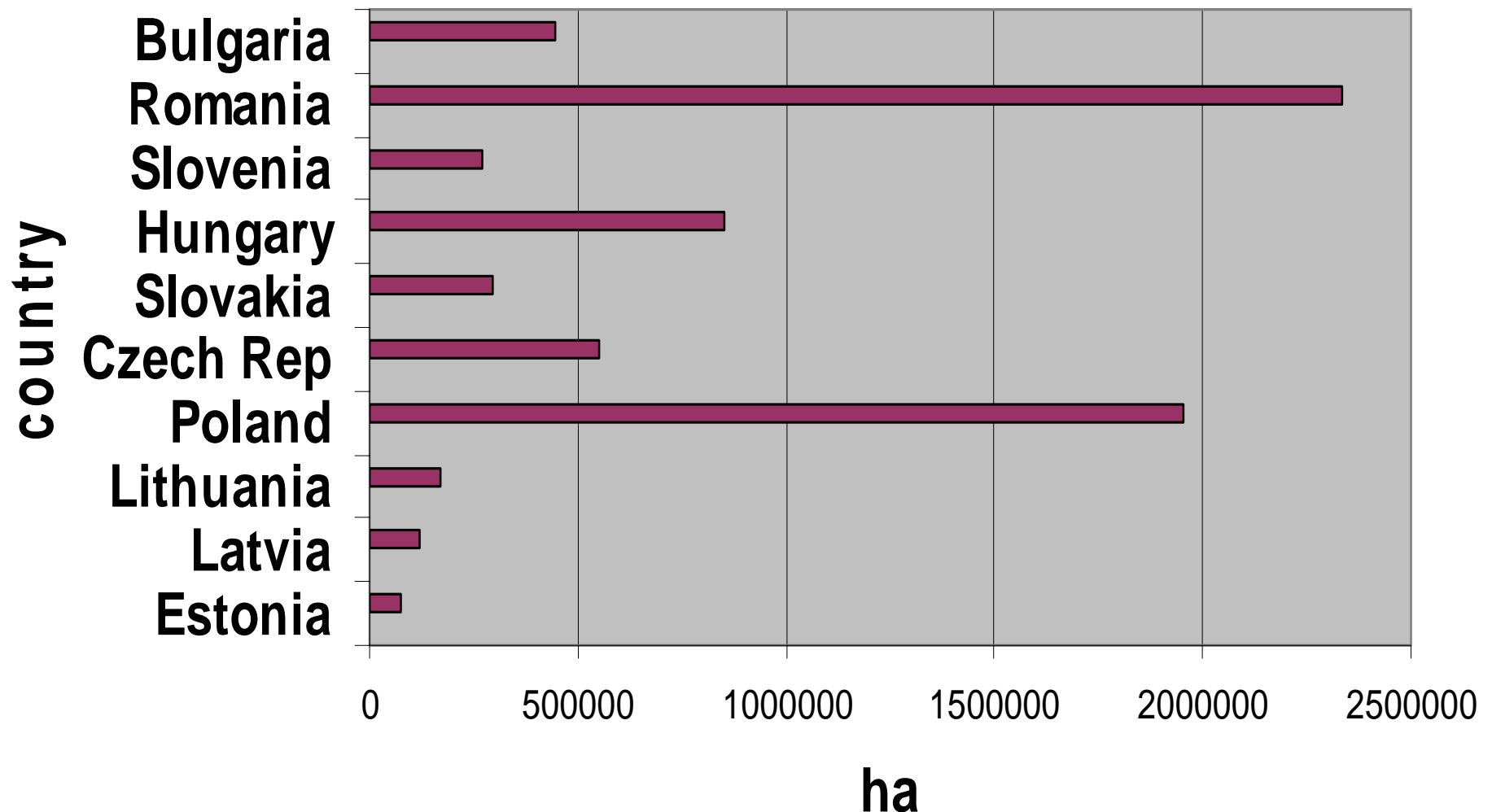
**Grazed pastures with
Chrysopogon gryllus Apuseni Mnts
Romania**



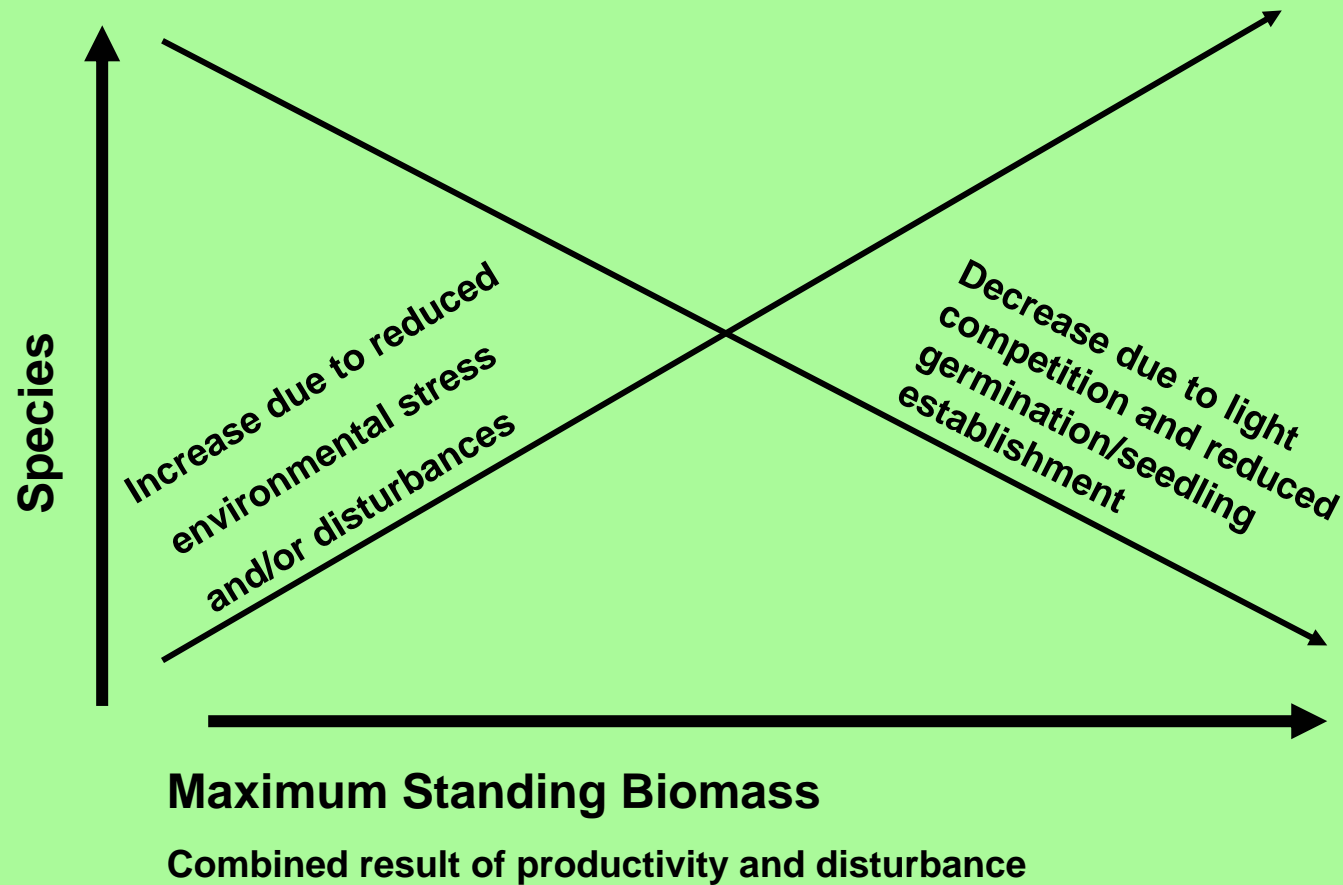
Steppic grasslands with *Onosma tornensis* Hungary



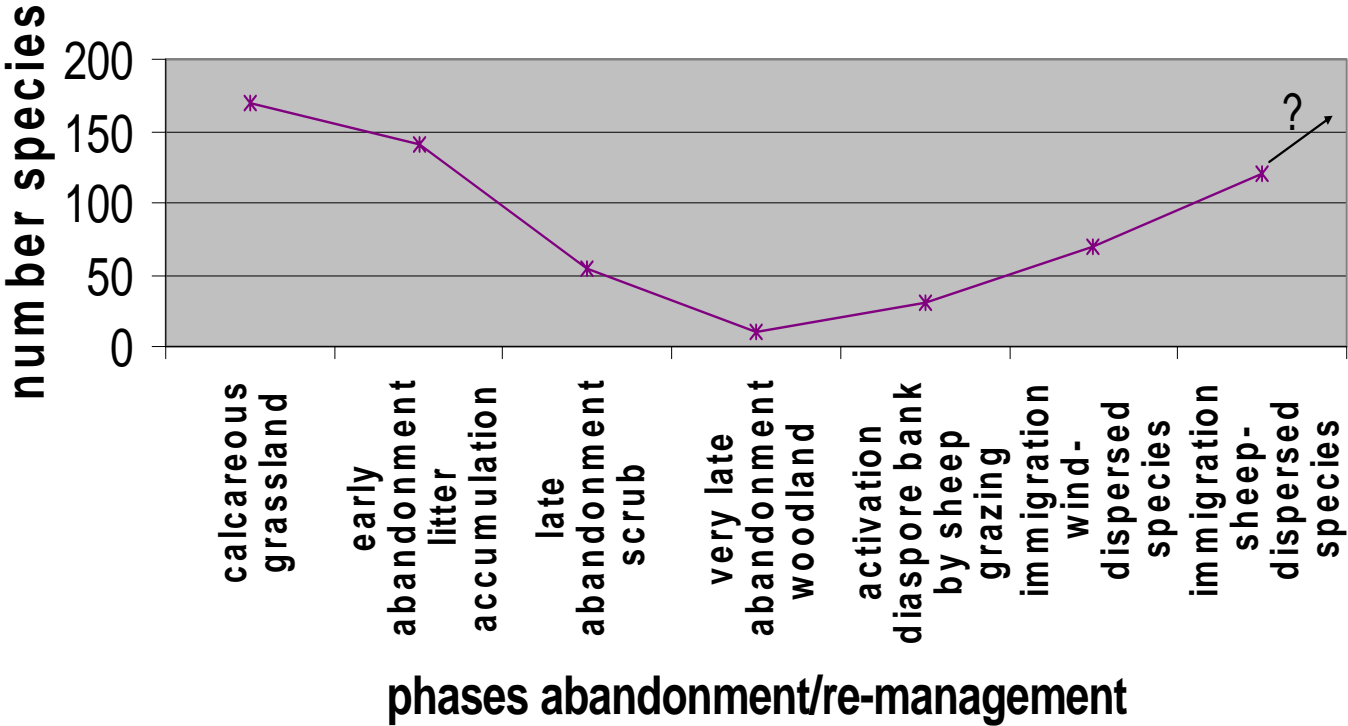
Total semi-natural and natural grasslands in CEECs (excl.alpine)

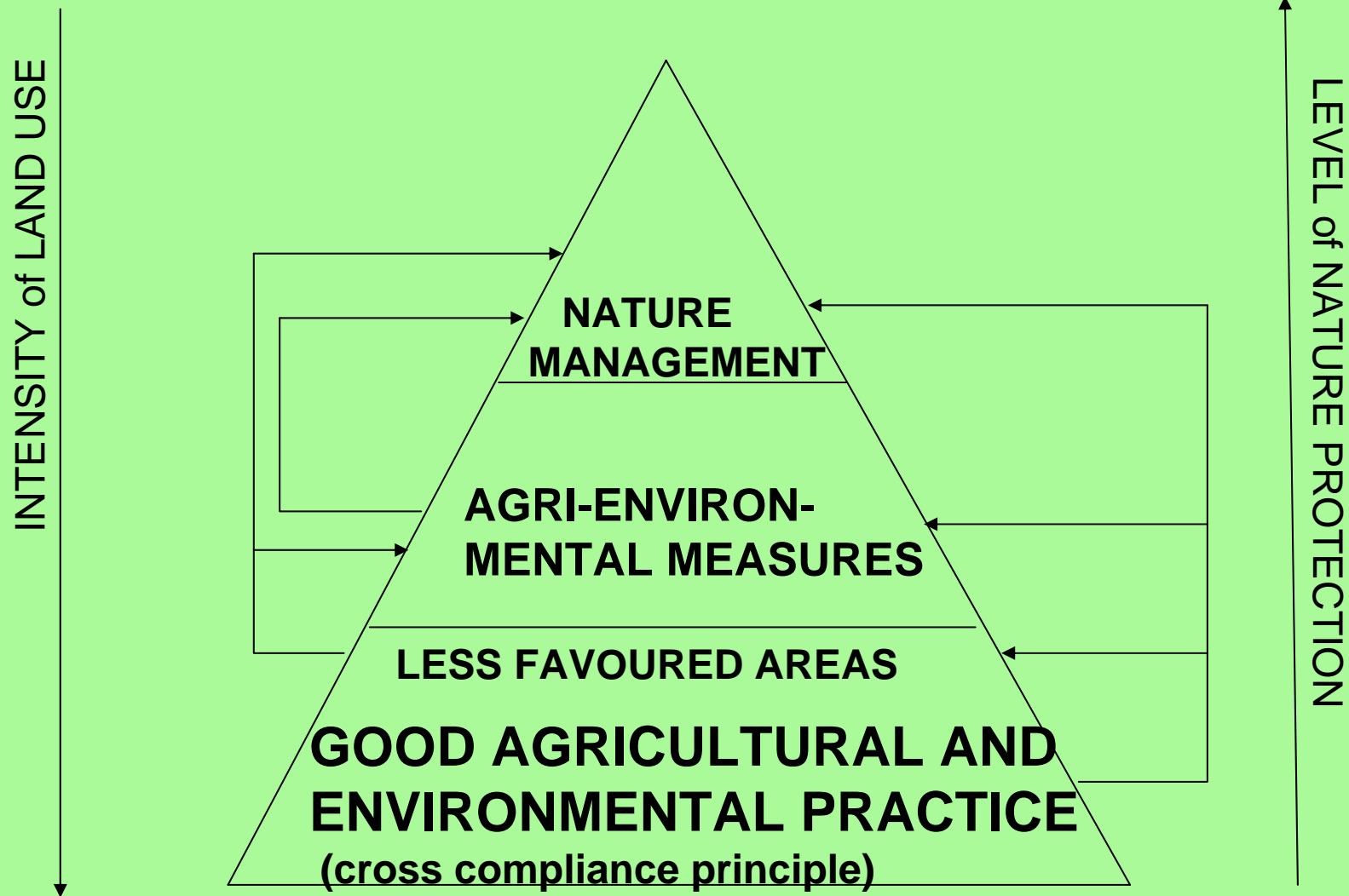


Conceptual model for understanding relationship species richness and biomass characteristics



Species turnover limestone grassland Central Schwabischen Alp, Germany





THREE STEP APPROACH IN EC POLICY FOR RURAL AREAS IN MEMBER STATES

GOOD AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS (COM(2003)23 FINAL)

- **Art.5: MS have to define good agricultural conditions and ensure that permanent pastures on 31 December 2002 have to be maintained under permanent pasture**
- **Annex IV: GAC refers to:**
 - **soil erosion protection measures**
 - **Soil organic matter**
 - **Soil structure**
 - **Soil salinisation**
 - **Level of maintenance of habitats through minimum live stocking rates, restricted use changes, retention of field boundaries, avoiding shrubs encroachment**

LESS-FAVOURED AREAS and AREAS WITH ENVIRONMENTAL RESTRICTIONS (EC Regulation 1257/1999)

- **Compensation for naturally less-favoured areas:**
 - to ensure continued agricultural land use
 - maintain countryside
 - maintain sustainable farming systems
- **Three types of applications:**
 - art.16: restrictions in protected areas
 - art.18: management of mountainous areas
 - art.19: areas with a danger of land abandonment

AGR-ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES 1 (EC REGULATION 1257/1999 and 445/2002)

- **Aim of the measure:**
 - **Ecological management**
 - **Extensification of farming (low-intensity pasture systems)**
 - **Conservation of HNV areas**
 - **Upkeep of landscape**
- **Payment based on income forgone, additional costs, an incentive**

AGR-ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES 2 (EC REGULATION 1257/1999 and 445/2002)

- **Management schemes: horizontal or vertical**
- **A great variety of management schemes in the MS mainly focussed on:**
 - **organic farming**
 - **preservation of biodiversity rich grasslands**
 - **management of land for birds (breeding/wintering)**
 - **preservation of local breeds (cows, horses, bees)**
 - **buffer zones around water bodies**
 - **bio-corridors through agricultural lands**
 - **management of landscape features: stonewalls, hedges, ponds, historical objects**

AGR-ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES 3 (EC REGULATION 1257/1999 and 445/2002)

- **Example management for semi-natural grasslands:**
 - **no use of fertilizers and pesticides**
 - **no changes in water level and geomorphology**
 - **no ploughing of the grassland permitted**
 - **no re-seeding of the grassland permitted**
 - **mowing date after 10th of July**
 - **after-grazing possible with a maximum density of 0,7 LU/ha**

Agri-environmental measures in Rural Development Plan Latvia

- **Supported activities (farmer has to choose one activity for 5 years):**
 - **Extensive pasturing (max 0.7 LU/ha)**
 - **Late mowing (after 10th of July)**
- **Financial support 138 EUR/ha**

NATURE MANAGEMENT (NATURA 2000 SITES)

- **No special financial system at this moment (except Life-Nature)**
- **Under less-favoured areas included areas with environmental restrictions**
- **Agri-environment measures used for management of natural areas**
- **AE Measures are always voluntary (!!!!!!!)**
- **There can be a conflict with the national nature protection legislation (prescription of obligated management)**

NEW EC PROPOSALS ON SUPPORT FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (COM(2004)490)

- **Under AXIS 2 ‘environment and land management’:**
 - **natural handicaps payments for mountain areas**
 - **payments for other handicaps outside mountain areas**
 - **NATURA 2000 payments**
 - **agri-environmental and animal welfare payments**
 - **support for non-productive investments**
 - **afforestation of agricultural land**
 - **agroforestry systems on agricultural land**
 - **forest-environment payments**

WHAT IS NEW IN THE NEW REGULATION?

- **Special payment for Natura 2000 sites**
- **Agri-environmental payments can be paid also to non-farmers**
- **Management commitments for AE payments can be 5 years and longer if justified**
- **Less-favoured area redefined and based on soil productivity and climatic conditions (socio-economic conditions not longer leading)**