

# **Agro-Environmental and Climatic Methods (AECM) : specific elements of the scheme in Wallonia (Belgium)**



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## ▪Two levels of commitment:

Historically no targeting, extensive farming in meadows and fields, introduced by the farmer and automatically accepted.

Disadvantages of the system : low environmental impact, commitments for late mowing on ray-grass pastures, lack of protection for endangered arable plants...

Since 2005 : two levels of commitment

- Standard methods, accepted without preliminary expertise
- Targeting methods, eligibility after expertise to define the area and the specifications

## ▪ Targeting methods

Main targeting methods

- Meadows of high biological interest
  - Field Strips (several types of crops strips according to specific objectives)
  - Action Plans
- ☐ Report of an expert (administrative/technical document), drafted by an adviser and binding the farmer to the public authorities

## ■ Main players for targeting: the technical advisers

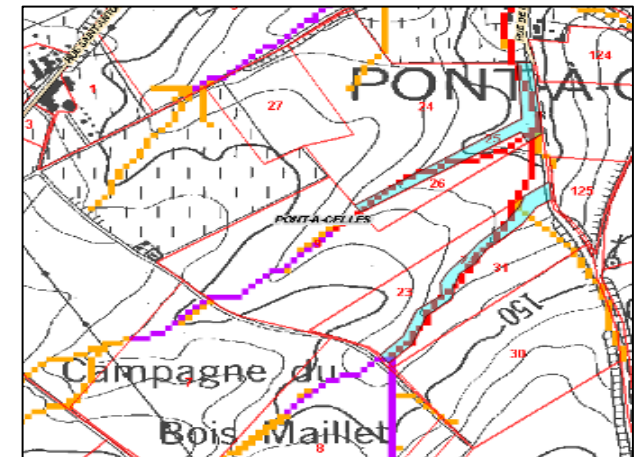
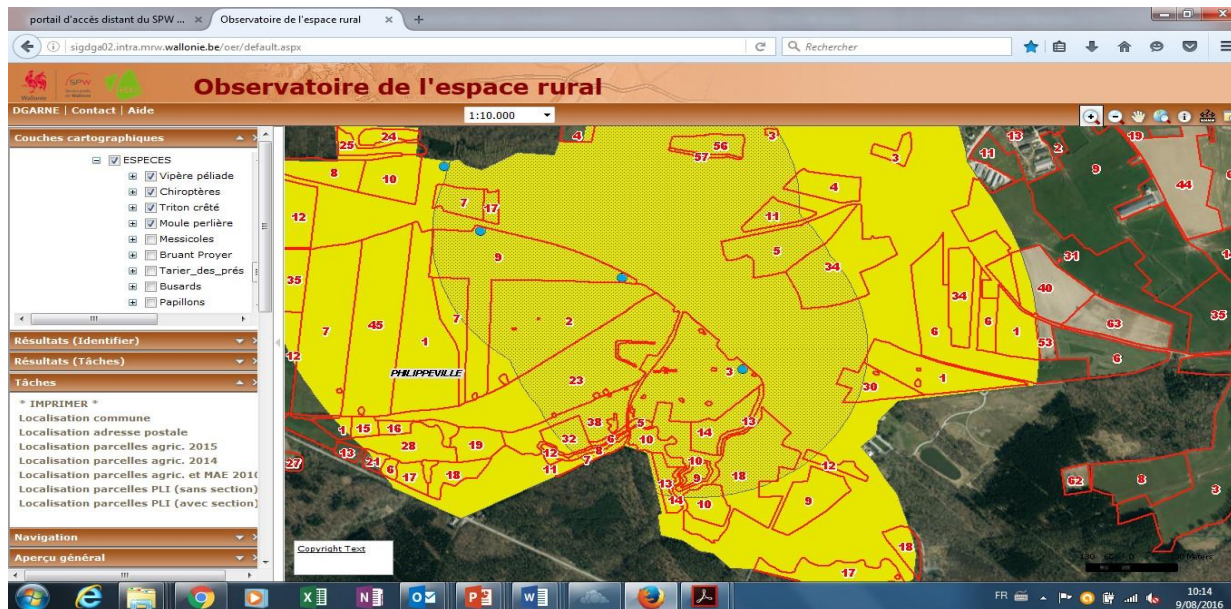


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## ■ Complementary tools used for targeting

- Environmental database used in conjunction with map of farm plots => priority issues (Observatoire de l'Espace Rural)



- Field analysis





## ▪ **Essential tools: sound technical references**

- Specifications to be tailored to local objectives and taking into consideration technical constraints of farmers
- Flexibility: further adjustments allowed during the course of the contract with follow-up and regular technical assistance







## ▪ Examples of different aims in both methods

- Meadow of high biological interest

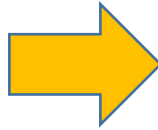
			
Hay meadow ( <i>Crepis biennis</i> ) mowed in summer	Grazed orchard, limited use of worming treatments	Extensive wet orchid pasture	Hay meadow for vipers ( <i>Vipera berus</i> ) with unmown strips

- Field strips

			
Grass field strips (erosion reduction)	Beetle Banks (field fauna)	Unharvested (mixed) crops (field fauna)	Cereals + field flowers (landscape)

## ■ Questions and outlook

- An adviser for 200 farmers
- Highly qualified advisers
- Very (too) flexible?



- Simplify the procedures
- On-going training
- Technical manuals, optimise  
Relations with public authorities



## ■ Advantages

- Method adjusted depending on the results
- Advice independent from control department
- Synergies with local actors : other associations, natural parks, universities, NGO's...
- Ownership by farmers
- Implementation of targeting measures delivers results:
  - ✓ 50% of farmers following the AECM of which 1/3 apply targeting methods
  - ✓ 6.500 ha of meadows of high biological interest
  - ✓ 1.200 km of field strips

- Thank you for your attention!



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