

## AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMMES

## AGRI 10

The agri-environmental programmes consist of agri-environmental measures (AEM) which are part of the second pillar of the CAP "Rural Development". They aim to encourage the voluntary implementation of conservation and environmental improvement actions (surface water and groundwater, soil, landscape, biodiversity, climate, etc.) in agricultural areas.

### AEMs extremely successful

Incorporation of the AEM has been growing steadily since the launch of this programme, with the exception of two events: in 2005, contractualisations were temporarily suspended<sup>1</sup> and, in 2013, access to the programme for basic methods and renewal of maturing commitments were suspended by a moratorium<sup>2</sup>. In 2013, 53.7% of Walloon farmers were engaged in at least 1 AEM and 10.0% in 1 targeted AEM<sup>3</sup> involving specialised supervision. In terms of farmer participation rates, the 3 most successful AEMs were the following: "hedgerows and forested strips" (30.6%), "winter soil cover" (21.5%) and "trees, bushes and isolated copses" (14.3%). The percentage of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under AEM (AEM 11 "organic farming" not included)<sup>4</sup> was 18.5%. The objectives set in the Walloon Rural Development Programme (*Programme wallon de développement rural - PwDR*) 2007-2013 (50% committed farmers and 18% of the UAA under the AEM) were therefore achieved. Moreover, the objectives of the PwDR by AEM were achieved for 3 of them: "winter soil cover" (49,800 ha), "grasslands of high biological value" (6,690 ha, 900 breeders) and "managed field strips" (1,275 km). They were almost achieved for 6 AEM<sup>5</sup>: "hedgerows and forested strips" (12,000 km), "trees, bushes and isolated copses" (124,000 elements), "natural grasslands" (13,000 ha), "extensive cereal crops" (2,865 ha), "Keeping animals belonging to threatened

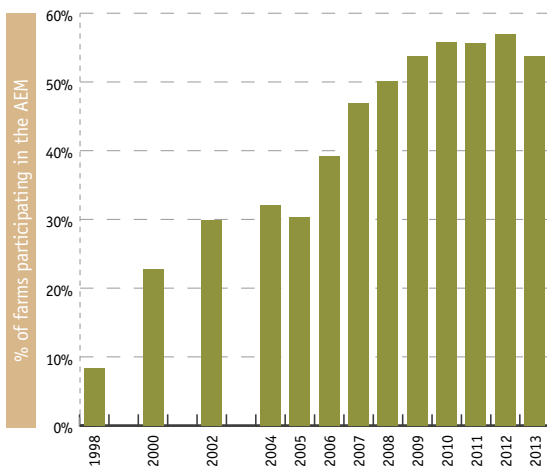
local breeds" (7,900 animals) and "keeping low levels of livestock" (34,100 ha). More mixed results were observed for the following AEM: "ponds" (4,040, 67% of target achieved), "grassy strips" (2,555 km, 64% of target achieved) and "strips of extensive grasslands" (737 km, 37% of target achieved). Participation in an agri-environmental action plan<sup>6</sup> concerned 140 farms (1% of farms, 100% target achieved). The impact of these AEMs on water, soil and biodiversity is assessed by the reflection group on agri-environment in Wallonia. Supervision in the field is entrusted to the Natagriwal structure.

### Implementation of a new PwDR

The new 2014-2020 PwDR ensures continuity of access to the AEMs that are now agri-environmental and climate measures (AECM). It encourages greater use of targeted AECM. Access conditions and specifications have been revised in order to simplify administration and improve efficiency on the ground, and certain amounts of aids have been reduced or increased.

<sup>[1]</sup> Due to the transition from the old to the new agri-environmental programme | <sup>[2]</sup> Linked to a difficult budgetary climate | <sup>[3]</sup> AEM submitted for expert opinion defining the eligibility of the plot and the specific specifications, including regular monitoring by the expert | <sup>[4]</sup> AEM managed separately; → AGRI 4 | <sup>[5]</sup> Map 51 | <sup>[6]</sup> This plan includes the specific targets for the farm following the diagnosis.

Fig. AGRI 10-1 Participation\* in agri-environmental measures (AEM) in Wallonia



\* Lack of data for 1999, 2001 and 2003

Tab. AGRI 10-1 Participation in agri-environmental measures (AEM) in Wallonia, by measure (2013)

MEASURES	PARTICIPATION RATE OF FARMERS (%)
<b>Basic methods (accessible to all farmers)</b>	
1A - Hedgerows and forested strips	30.6%
1B - Trees, bushes and isolated copses	14.3%
1C - Ponds	9.1%
2 - Natural grasslands	12.7%
3A - Grassy strips (alongside cropland)	12.7%
3B - Strips of extensive grasslands	6.8%
4 - Winter soil cover between crops	21.5%
5 - Extensive cereal crops	2.9%
6 - Keeping animals belonging to threatened local breeds	3.5%
7 - Keeping low levels of livestock	4.6%
<b>Targeted methods (only available on expert opinion)</b>	
8 - Grasslands of high biological value	5.9%
9 - Managed field strips	4.6%
10 - Agri-environmental action plan	0.9%
Participation in targeted AEMs (AEMs 8,9,10)	10.0%
All AEM combined (1 to 10)	53.7%

SOERW 2017 – Source: SPW - DG03 - DEE