

# Designing a results-based agri-environment payment scheme for Southern Transylvania

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# Results-based agri-environment scheme (RBAPS)

**Until now:** management-based AES → e.g. mowing dates (15 June / 1<sup>st</sup> July)

**RBAPS** : Payments for PROVED result's

How come?

2 filters:

1 – the farmer really HAS the ecological HNV grasslands (eligibility for selection)

2 – the farmer really KEPT the ecological HNV grasslands (eligibility for payment)

What this brings?

→ Less administrative burden for administration (control limited to a limited number of species)

→ Less strict unnecessary rules for farmers

→ More adaptability of farming practices to local conditions (wet year/dry year, slope, altitude etc.)

→ Awareness raising between farmers & field-inspectors

# Pros and cons of RBAPS

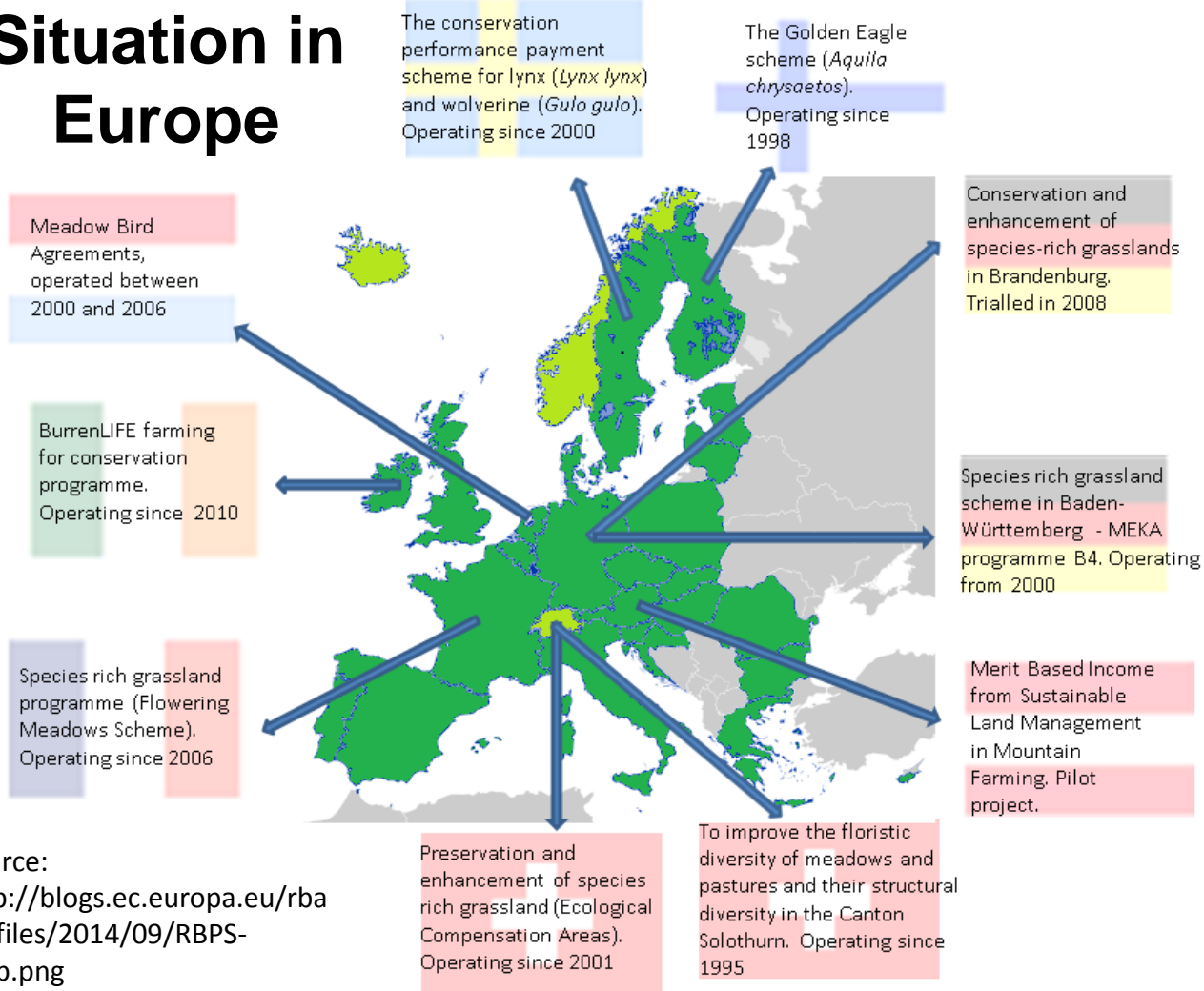


- **Clear link** between payment and biodiversity objective
- **“Production” of biodiversity** becomes part of farming system
- Farmers are rewarded for their **entrepreneurial effort**
- Greater **public recognition** of farmer’s role in maintaining biodiversity



- In some cases it is **not possible to design indicators** of biodiversity results
- **Managing authorities** does not always have **access** to expertise to set up a RBAPS
- **Farmers must be willing** to accept a results-based approach

# Situation in Europe



Source:  
<http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/rbaps/files/2014/09/RBPS-map.png>

# The Romania pilot scheme 2015-2018

## Târnava Mare:

approx. 85,000 ha, 350-

700 m altitude:

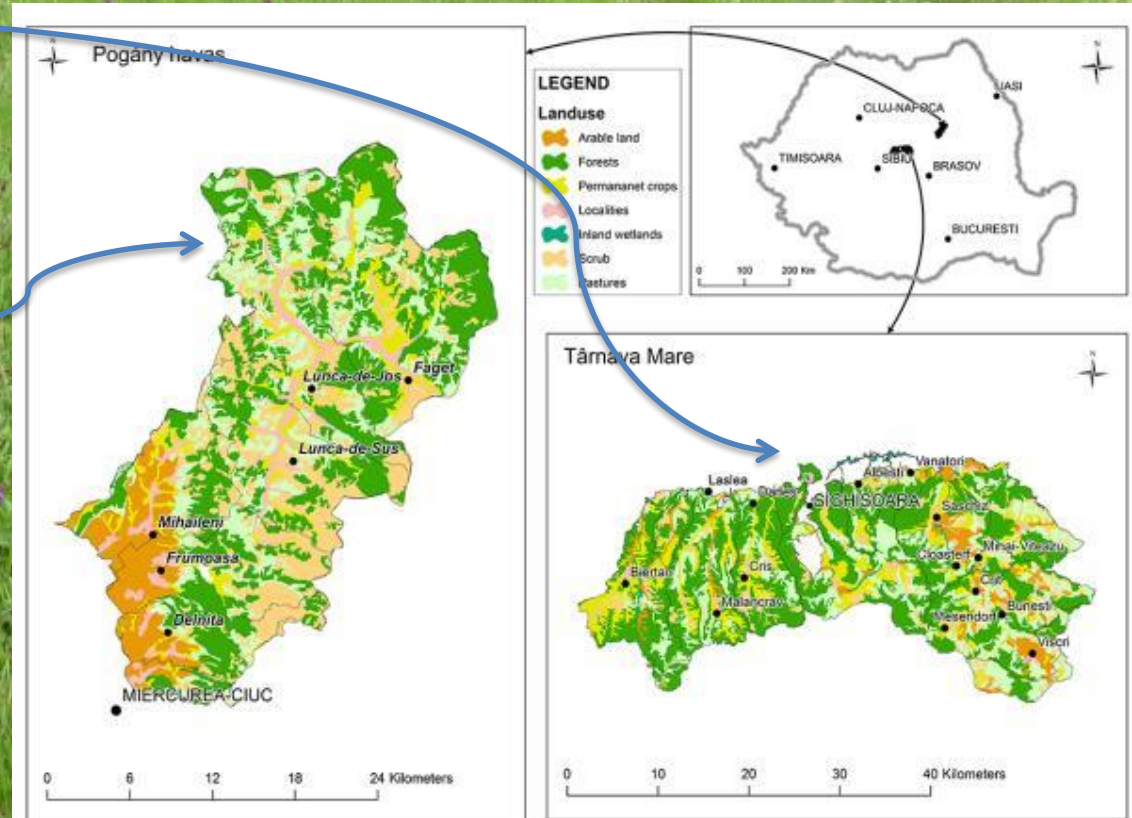
Continental b-g region

## Pogány-havas (Muntii Ciucului):

approx. 60,000 ha, 650-

1500 m altitude: alpine b-g region

→ HNV, Natura 2000,  
good relations between  
project partners and  
farmers



# Târnava Mare and Pogány-havas

Target: Hay meadows of High Nature Value

Characteristics

*pollinators*

*fodder*

*Local cultural heritage  
and traditional  
ecological knowledge*

*exceptional flora*

*medicinal plants*

? How can we

*Meet nature conservation  
targets set by EU*

+

*support local incomes and  
existing management*

# Târnava Mare and Pogány-havas pilot scheme

**Aim: 90 ha in each region under contract**

**Target: Hay meadows of High Nature Value**

RBAPS rewards management that produces **good quality hay**  
& protects **wild species**

**Rewarded result = indicator species**

# Assessment of indicator species

**Monitoring in 2015** to determine suitable species, which:

- ✓ Only grow at **low intensity hay meadows**
- ✓ Are associated with **high plant & animal species richness**
- ✓ Are associated with **good quality hay**
- ✓ Are **not rare**
- ✓ Are **sensitive to changes in management**



# 30 indicator species for TM & PH



*Primula spec.*



*Trollius europaeus*

- Same list for two regions
- Easily to recognize
- Species groups to avoid confusion
- Flowering in spring-summer
- Indicators for wet, mesic & dry meadows



*Orchidaceae spec.*



*Fragaria spec.*

# 30 indicator species for TM & PH



*Dianthus spec.*



*Scorzonera purpurea*



*Trifolium montanum*



*Filipendula vulgaris*



*Leucanthemum vulgare*



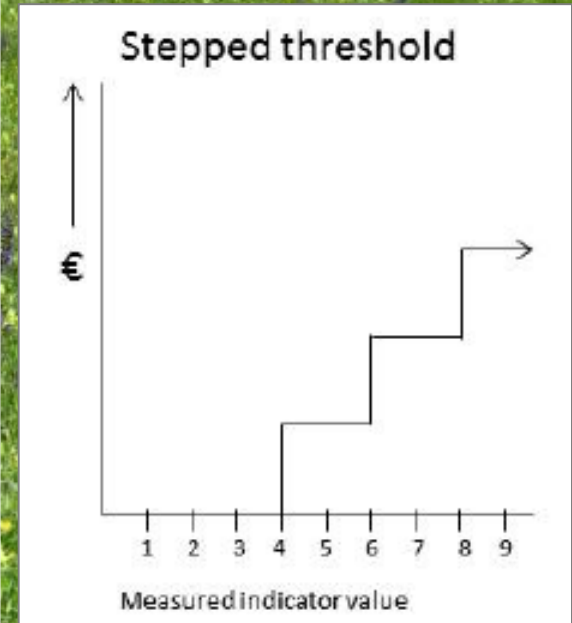
*Thymus spec.*

# Payment levels

- 3 payment levels calculated based on a methodology (income foregone and additional costs) agreed by the Managing Authority:
  - **5 species: €213 / ha / year**
  - **8 species: €229 / ha / year**
  - **10 species: €259 / ha / year**

Contract holders...

- cannot step down during contract period
- are incentivised to manage in a way to step up to get higher payment rates



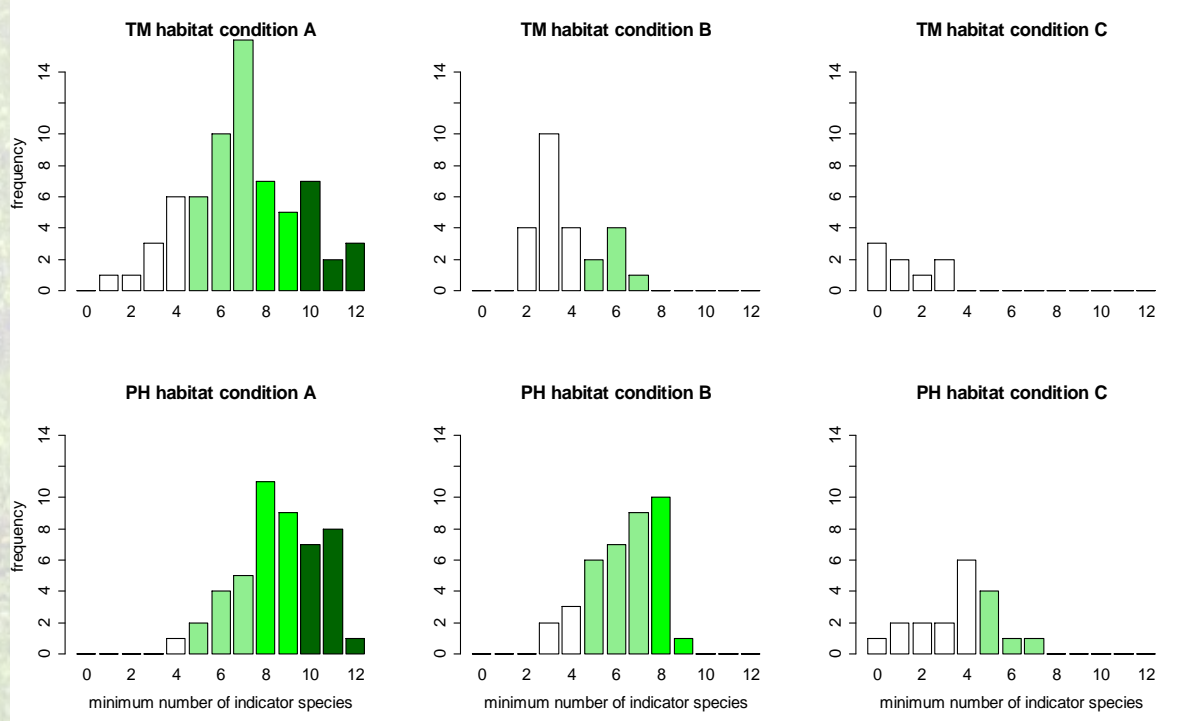
# Why these levels?

Number of transects achieving the different indicator species levels according to habitat conditions status.

A = favourable

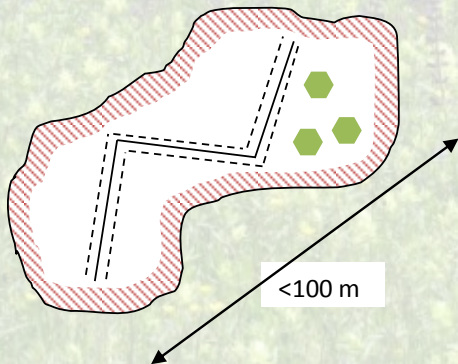
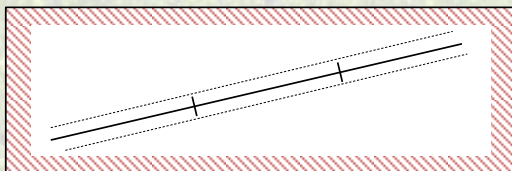
B = unfavourable – insufficient

C = unfavourable – bad



# Indicator recording method

- Used by farmers AND payment agencies



Number of species per transect section

|    |   |    |   |
|----|---|----|---|
| 5  | 7 | 5  | ✓ |
| 6  | 4 | 5  | ✗ |
| 11 | 8 | 10 | ✓ |

# First impressions

- Farmers are appreciating the flexibility of the scheme, allowing them to manage their lands according to their local conditions
    - area in pilot limited by budget (much more farmers were willing to join the scheme)
  - Farmers already recognise many of the species
- Further information needed to assist self-assessment: training, guidance booklets



# Contracted parcels 2016

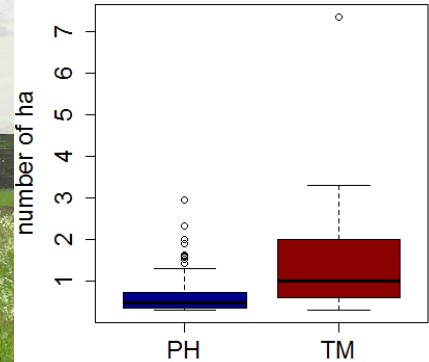
- 16 farmers, 45 parcels in TM = 63 ha
  - 60 farmers, 162 parcels in PH = 110 ha
- (Many smaller parcels in PH than TM)

Most contracts were for the basic level 5 ind sp.

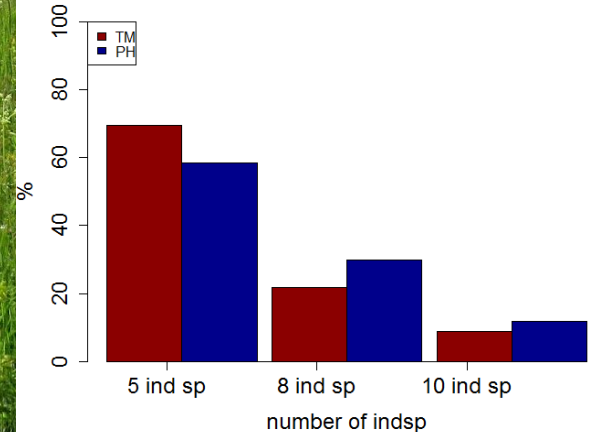
## Meadow types

- 6210 (*Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates*)
- 6510 (*Lowland hay meadows*)
- 6520 (*Mountain hay meadows*)
- Other High Nature Value grasslands (not N2k)

range of parcel sizes



percentage of meadows in each indicator sp. category



# Schedule of RBAPS pilot project

2015

- Monitoring in TM & PH to identify suitable indicator species

2016

- Contacting farmers
- Gathering parcels & making contracts
- Scientific monitoring of parcels & indicator species

2017

- Training for farmers, control by farmers themselves
- Specialists carry out repeat monitoring, with payment agency staff

2018

- 2nd scientific monitoring of parcels
- Evaluation



# Outlook

- Evaluation of implementation after 2018
- Working closely with Managing Authority and Paying Agency makes integration into national policy post 2020 more possible?
- Possible use as an option for Natura 2000 areas?

# For further information



[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/rbaps/handbook/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/rbaps/handbook/index_en.htm)

# Thank you for your attention!

Acknowledgments:

**Rainer Oppermann, Laura Sutcliffe, IFAB**

**Clunie Keenleyside, Graham Tucker, IEEP**

**László Demeter, Asociația Pogány-havas**

**Mihai Constantinescu, Andrei Balan, MADR**

