The importance of High Nature Value Farming – Views from Romania

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HNV farming systems

**Key characteristics**

- Moderate use of agrochemicals
- Low degree of industrialization and technology use
- Breeds adapted to the local environment
- Highly labor intensive
- Often very small scale farms, even micro scale
- Often subsistence and semi-subsistence in orientation, seldom commercial
Romanian Rural Area

General statistics

- 87% from total area is delimited as rural area

- 45% of the total population (9.7 million inhabitants) are living in rural areas

- 64% of the rural population occupied in the primary sector

4.256.152 farms – average size of 3 hectares

- 91% of them are subsistence or semi-subsistence farms
Although the concept of High Natural Value (HNV) farming is not yet fully developed it can be considered that many HNV farming systems are present in Romania.

A minimum of 3.32 million hectares of Romania’s agricultural land can be classified as area were is most likely that HNV systems are present.

There is significant overlapping with:

- less favored areas
- national protected areas and Natura 2000 sites
- other specific environmental conditions

Romania has taken the needs of HNV farmland into account in its Rural Development Plan for 2007-2013 in the form of a 5 sub measure agri-environment package
HNV farming and rural development measures
Mapping the Romanian HNV systems

- HNV farmland is found in almost all areas of the country.

- **Mostly ‘Type 1’ areas**, those dominated by semi-natural grassland.

- ‘**Type 2**’ areas are frequent as well: Small-scale low-intensity mosaics of small scale arable plots, orchards, combined with semi-natural vegetation in the plains and lowlands.

- ‘**Important ‘Type 3’ area** in the delta region for habitats of species of European importance.
HNV farming and less favored areas

• Strong link between HNV farming and marginal areas - the same combination of factors can lead to marginal farming and HNV farming

• Romania has included 2 measures in its rural development program aimed at LFA:
  » Measure 211 (ZMD) – mountain regions
  » Measure 212 – A (ZSD) – other LFA
     – B (ZDS) – areas with specific natural handicaps

• On the long term, LFA support alone will not have the capacity to ensure HNV farming survival, but it has an important contribution
Territorial Administrative Units (TAU):

- **ZMD**: 657 TAU
- **ZSD**: 24 TAU
- **ZDS**: 293 TAU

Payments:

- **ZMD** – 107 €/ha
- **ZSD** – 94 €/ha
- **ZDS** – 80 €/ha
HNV farming and semi subsistence farming

• the areas **managed by subsistence and semi-subsistence farms** are also the areas with the highest farming-related nature values

• in Romania there are 3,4 million subsistence farms with an average size of 1,17 ha and almost a million (947 484) semi-subsistence farms

• In general, the majority of the HNV farms are small scale, normally classified as subsistence and semi-subsistence

• at national level, estimations of the semi-subsistence farmers eligible for support from the 2007-2013 Rural Development Program is : 85 000

• the support equals 1500 euro/year for 5 years, and farmers are also eligible for free advisory services to prepare application documents.
Agri-environment payments

5 sub-measure package for agri-environment projects payments:

- Management of HNV grasslands [124 euro/ha]
- HNV 2: Support for traditional farming practices [58 euro/ha]
- HNV 3: Support for grasslands for important birds [101-201 euro/ha]
- HNV 4: Green cover [130 euro/ha]
- HNV 5: Ecological agriculture (5 types of cultures)

Operational objectives:

Maintain grasslands of high nature value, assure adequate management of habitats for important species, ensure water and soil protection, conserve natural resources
Agri-environment payments – HNV grasslands

Scope and objectives

- Insure sustainable rural development by addressing environmental issues
- Offers incentives for using green methods in agricultural exploitations
- More efficient use of natural resources
- Maintain the integrity of high natural value farmlands

Eligibility requirements

- Holds legal ownership of agricultural land (pastures) with a minimum dimension of 0.3 ha (0.1 in case of fruit bearing trees and brushes)
- Engages in a 5 year commitment to sustain the investment
- Restrains from using chemical based fertilizers and pesticides
- Conducts a log of all agricultural activities related to environmental requirements
HNV farming in Romania

Current issues and future challenges:

• The understanding of the environmental, social, cultural and economic values of the HNV farming systems is low

• HNV farmers are often socially marginalized

• Their contribution to nature values is not well understood by policy makers

• The added value they create for local economies is not recognized

• Lack of cooperation with each other, impossibility to expand

• HNV farmers are underrepresented on a national level

• Inability to negotiate prices
Thank you for your kind attention!

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