

Where next for HN VF indicators and monitoring in



Vyara Stefanova, Brussels, 15th May 2008

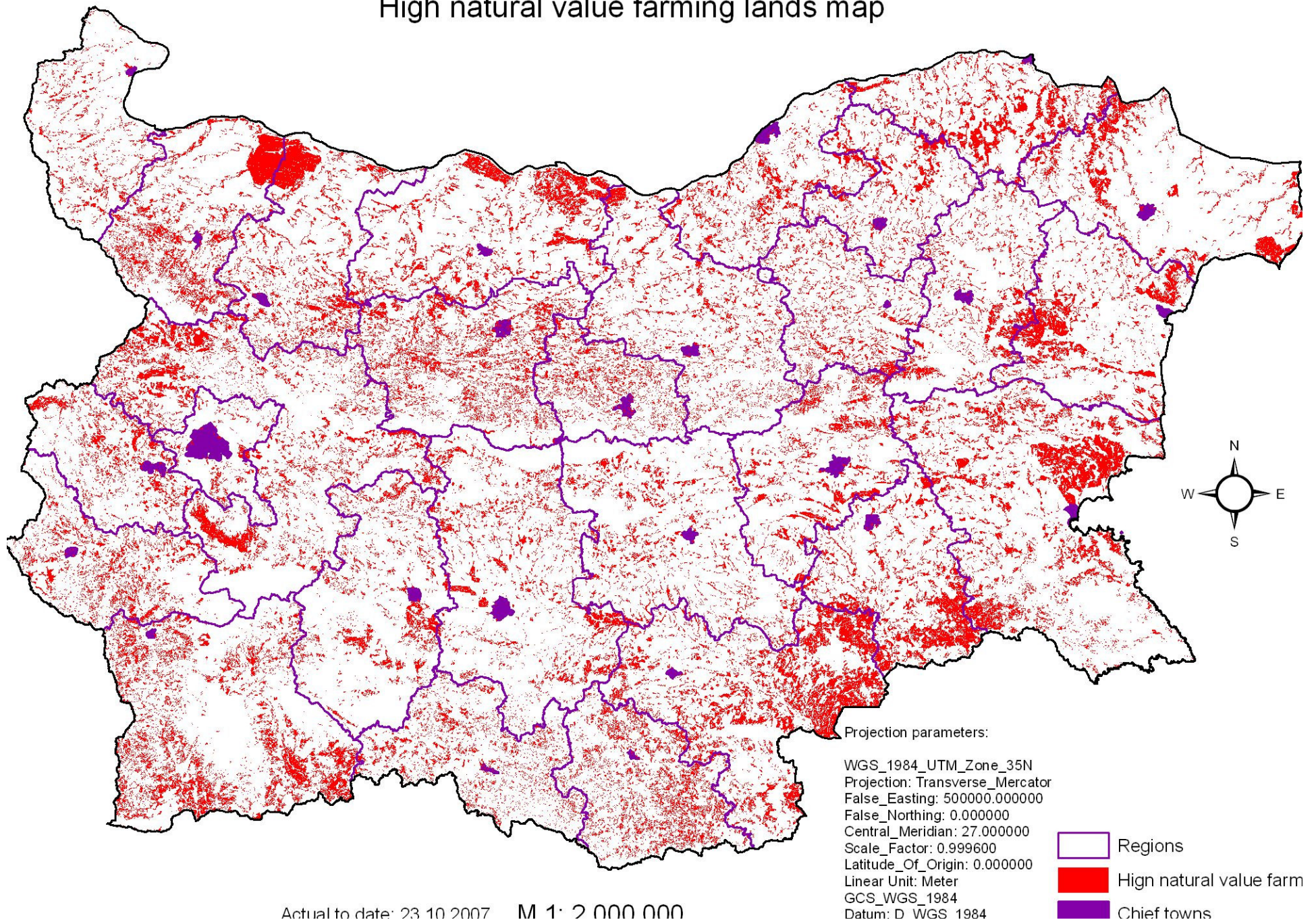
HNVF – present situation

- ▣ Bulgaria adapted the approach used by the EEA by using several databases for biodiversity situation:
 - CORINE land cover 2000;
 - Natura 2000
 - IBAs
 - Grassland inventory
 - Habitats of triton, souslik, marbled polecat, Romanian hamster, tortoise and butterflies

HNVF – present situation

- The layers were then overlapped with the database for the physical blocks in the LPIS as per September 2007.
- The following codes for land utilization were used for the map
 - Arable land – 359 116 ha
 - Permanent crops – 40 155 ha
 - Permanent grassland- 951 256 ha
 - Mixed utilization – 279 013 ha
- As a result 1 630 035 ha – defined as HNVF

High natural value farming lands map



Problems related to the process of identification of HN VF

- ❑ For arable land more than 50% should be of HNV for the physical block to be identified as such, for the grassland if there is HNV grassland the whole physical block is identified
- ❑ Data sets with different level of accuracy
- ❑ Annual changes in the physical blocks in the LPIS
- ❑ Not all of the categories in the LPIS were included in HN VF identification (other agricultural land, unclear utilization)

Problems related to the process of informing the farmers for HNVF

- ❑ Two lists of physical blocks were prepared for the needs of the AE measure in Bulgaria – for the grasslands and for the arable land
- ❑ Lists are more than 1500 pages – cannot be published in official State gazette
- ❑ Information (lists) were spread in the 264 municipal offices of MAF

Future steps related to identification of HN VF

□ Verification of the map:

- Biodiversity data changing of the HN VF layer
- Land utilization data – introducing changes in the permanent land use (HN VF arable land converted to HN VF grassland and vice versa)
- Including the physical blocks with mixed utilization (permanent grasslands +arable) – where to include them or possible merging of the 2 lists)

Axis 2: Agri-environment Payments

Traditional Livestock Breeding Scheme (LB)

Three packages (sub-measures):

LB 1: Preservation of Traditional Local Breeds

LB 2: Mountain Pastoralism

Soil and Water Protection Scheme (SW)

Two packages (sub-measures):

SW 1: Crop Rotations for Soil and Water Protection

SW 2: Control of Soil Erosion in Catchments

Landscape Features Scheme (LF)

Three packages (sub-measures):

LF 1: Lowland Mosaic Landscapes

LF 2: Creation, restoration and maintenance of Field Boundaries

LF 3: Maintenance of Traditional Orchards

Applicant
Farmer

High Nature Value Farmland Scheme (HNV)

Five packages (sub-measures):

HNV 1: Restoration and maintenance of undergrazed HNV Grassland

HNV 2: Restoration and Maintenance of Overgrazed HNV Grasslands

HNV 3: Maintenance of Waterfowl Habitats

HNV 4: Maintenance of Protected Species Habitats

HNV 5: Restoration of Riparian Habitats

Organic Farming Scheme (OF)

OF 1: Organic Farming Support

OF 1C – organic apiculture

Agri-environment Training
*{Axis 1 – Vocational Training
and Information Actions}*

HNV1 – Restoration and maintenance of undergrazed HNV grasslands

- ❑ Clearance of all unwanted vegetation
- ❑ Use of mineral fertilizers and application of pesticides is prohibited except those defined in Regulation (EEC) 2092/91
- ❑ No new drainage and ploughing
- ❑ Free grazing on meadows after the last mowing (except for meadows in the forests, because they are a habitat for plant species of European conservation importance where the grazing might not be of benefit, moreover the forest meadows are used for grazing by wild fauna and human presence might disturb them).
- ❑ Maintenance of minimal and maximum density of livestock depending on natural climatic and soil conditions in order to assure a good ecological state of the meadows and pastures and keep permanent grass cover. The minimum and maximum levels should be as follows:
 - 0.3-1.5 LSU/ha outside Protected areas
 - for Protected territory min and max animal density have to be according to the territory's management plan (if such a plan is not existing then the density should be between 0.3-1.5 LSU/ha).
- ❑ Farmer should keep the minimum and maximum stocking density in the whole grazing area within the farmers block
- ❑ Mowing should be later than 15th of June for lowlands and hilly areas and between 30th of June and 15th of July for mountainous (the exact dates depend on the altitude, geographical situation and species requirements).
- ❑ The mowing may be done manually or if it is with a slow grass cutting machine to be from the centre towards the periphery of the meadow and with low speed. (This will allow the ground nesting birds and other animals to escape).

HN2 – Restoration and maintenance of overgrazed HN meadows and pastures

- ❑ Same as HN1 +
- ❑ Re-seeding with approved native species* – preferably with seed of local provenance - specify approved techniques to avoid risk of ploughing or excessive cultivation
- ❑ Restriction for grazing on sandy dunes

HNV4 -Maintenance of habitats of protected species in arable lands of Important Bird Areas

- ❑ Leave small (4 x 4m) pieces of land with bare soil , ploughed but not sowed, amongst the autumn cropped areas (4 such square pieces per hectare) – applicable for areas with intensive agriculture where wintering geese feed or to support other target species such as Larks (Alaudidae);
- ❑ Retain winter stubbles on fields selected for spring-grown crops;
- ❑ Leave uncultivated and un-ploughed areas ("wildlife-friendly set-a-side") for a period for 2 years on a rotational basis in intensive agricultural land with monocultures (10 to 20% of the area, but not less than 1 ha, as a single, non-fragmented block of land; with a 1m sterile strip around the perimeter that should be ploughed 2-3 times a year [but not between March and July] to prevent spread of weeds into adjacent crops);
- ❑ No cereal harvesting before 31st July in areas with nests of Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*);
- ❑ No use of pesticides (including second generation rodenticides) and mineral fertilizers - other than 'localised-treatment' of invasive weeds, i.e. selective use of some herbicides such as fluazifop-P-butyl or similar in March to suppress rank grass swards on grass margins or wildlife set-aside areas.

Problems related to the support of HNVF in Bulgaria

- ❑ Big interest – farmers do not know the requirements of the measure but consider it like an additional source of income
- ❑ What should be considered live over declaration of the area for AE support (if the land is not in the list of HNVF)
- ❑ 5 years land contracts or ownership
- ❑ Grasslands for common use (who and how will get the support)

Problems related to HNV 1 and HNV 2

- ❑ How the farmer has to define whether his farmland is overgrazed or undergrazed
- ❑ The requirements are the same for the pastures and for the meadows – problems arising how to control the farmers
- ❑ Grazing requirements in protected areas, especially in protected areas with private ownership

Problems related to HNV 4

- ❑ Shorter period for submission of application forms and no changes allowed after 30 March – a few applications
- ❑ Problems with the minimum area of some of the activities

Indicators

- Two sets of indicators to be monitored:
 - 1) To measure the extent of HNV areas (farming and forests).
 - 2) To measure the condition or quality of HNV areas.

Indicators for Bulgaria

- Result indicator - Area under successful land management contributing to biodiversity and high nature value farming/forestry -286 000 ha
- Output indicator – maintenance of high nature farming and forestry areas – changes in high nature value farmland – HNV areas should be preserved

Thank you for your attention!

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