



European Forum on
Nature Conservation
and Pastoralism

ANNUAL REPORT January 2015-December 2015



What is EFNCP?

The European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism (EFNCP) is a pan-European non-profit organisation, bringing together non-governmental and governmental participants from several interest areas. It is a network to exchange information, identify issues and solutions, and inform policy development. EFNCP is a company limited by guarantee, established in 1996.

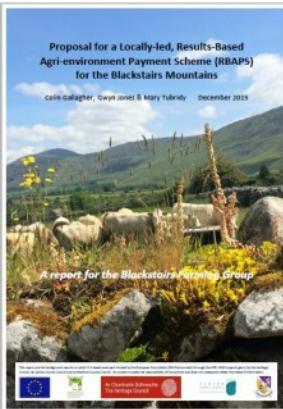
Our vision is **to ensure a viable future for the farming types that most benefit biodiversity across Europe, by making them valued by policy and the general public, and economically and socially sustainable at the farm and landscape scales.** Our work involves:

- Raising awareness that certain European farming systems are central to achieving the EU's biodiversity targets and are also of high cultural importance, summarised in the term High Nature Value (HNV) farming.
- Raising awareness of socio-economic and cultural factors as critical in ensuring a sustainable future for HNV farming
- Ensuring the availability, dissemination and exchange of supporting information combining research and practical expertise.
- Encouraging networking and dialogue to foster this awareness, especially between actors who traditionally have found it difficult to find common ground.
- Bringing together ecologists, nature conservation managers, farmers and policy makers to consider problems faced by HNV farming systems and potential solutions.
- Developing and promoting policy options which ensure the ecological maintenance and development of these farming systems and cultural landscapes.

Directors' Report

After two hard years in which limited funding put a heavy strain on core staff, 2015 has been a very busy and productive year – in many ways, one of the most successful to date.

2015 was a year of networking. We organised the first network day as part of our very successful conference – a partnership event with our member Burrenbeo. We held the first ever meeting of common land stakeholders in Brussels, where the participants resolved to work together and to meet regularly. We collaborated once more with our member the Pogány-havas Association and with BirdLife Europe on a very well-received seminar on wood pastures in the European Parliament. We appointed a networking/communications officer and became active on social media for the first time.



It was also a year of partnership. Our DG Environment-supported work programme and other Commission-funded grants meant that we

had substantial collaborative activity in Ireland, the UK, Bulgaria, France, Spain and SE Europe. The Spanish work in particular contributed to a blossoming of civil society activity on low-intensity pastoral systems, pastures, common land and artisan cheese, where we both contributed funding through our Life+ work programme and brought expertise of the European policy perspective.



In past years we have felt the impact of extreme cashflow variations; part of the solution is to secure multi-annual project funding. We now have three such projects which alleviate these at least to a degree – an innovation network (HNV-LINK) under the Horizon 2020 research framework was in the process of final approval at the year-end; we have Essedra in SE Europe and a 3½ year project funded by DG Environment to develop pilot results-based agri-environment payments schemes (RBAPS). Our RBAPS project is one of only three in the EU and involves a



broad partnership in Ireland and Spain. The third project, approved in late 2014, is also a direct result of previous EFNCP work in England's Northern Uplands. Having failed to secure DG Environment Life+ NGO support funding in the two previous years and suffered as a result, being awarded this grant allowed us to step up our activity considerably in 2015. The year ended in the disappointing knowledge that we will not be awarded this grant in either 2016 or 2017. However, in contrast to 2013, we have a substantial

programme of ongoing multi-annual work, which can also support at least our basic overhead costs. This is a substantial step forward. The challenge facing the new board is how to build on this, widening further our funding base so that we can develop as an organisation, both internally and in terms of our wider work.



Finally, as the new board takes its place, we wish to extend our warm thanks and appreciation to outgoing directors Brendan Dunford and Xavier Poux for their years of service.



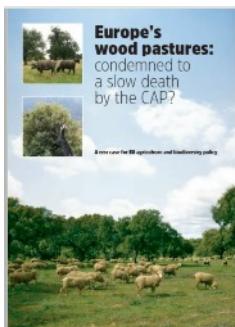
Informing and Improving Policy

2015 was the first opportunity to examine the full range of CAP implementation decisions on semi-natural pastures. The full implications of the Implementing Regulations and Commission Delegated Acts, many of which seemed to us to water down the improvements in the basic Regulations, were of particular interest, as was the approach of the individual Member States and regions, as reflected in their choices and priorities.

To do this, we examined in detail the implementation decisions in 6 contrasting Member States. Building on that basic information, we produced an overall report and, in collaboration with other partners, a manifesto concentrating on woody pastures in particular.

This was also the theme of a well-attended seminar in the European Parliament, organised with our member Pogány-havas and supported by MEPs from 3 of the major political groups.

The situation in Spain is particularly serious; we worked with our member Fundación Entretantos to support a wide range of work by the civil society Platform on Extensive Grazing to set out the issues and work politically on addressing them.



Ireland also had serious teething troubles, with extensively used pastures, often on designated Natura sites, in danger of falling foul of the initial implementation decisions - we supported partners with arguments and information and contributed to an improvement in the rules.

We also supported work by QueRed to change the dairy hygiene rules in the Spanish regions and to input into the EU level policy debate.



Projects on the Ground



EFNCP and a range of partners are one of 3 projects being funded by DG Environment to test results-based agri-environment payment schemes (RBAPS).

The 3½ year project involves 3 pilot areas - the floodplain grasslands of the Shannon Callows and the undesignated lowland grasslands of County Leitrim, both in Ireland, and the small-scale permanent crop mosaic of the Mediterranean hills of Navarra, Spain. By the end of the year, the project was in a position to offer management contracts to the local farmers, with the two years of management commencing in 2016.

Having worked with our partner, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, to take the first steps in developing an RBAPS for the Northern Uplands of England, including exchanges between England and Ireland, we were very pleased when they, in partnership with Natural England, secured the third of DG ENV's RBAPS grants.

In Ireland, we worked intensively with the Blackstairs Farming Group to develop a locally-led RBAPS proposal, in preparation for the Irish Government call for such schemes, expected in 2016. Funding from the Heritage Council was once more invaluable. Our experience illustrated yet again the importance of both capacity building and a coherent policy message if farmers are to be sufficiently empowered to respond to such opportunities.



In Bulgaria, we supported our partner STEP in their project in Godech municipality in the Western Stara Planina. The work was focussed on improving the quality of the local communal pastures, while getting to grips with the implications of Bulgarian CAP implementation decisions.

Improving Understanding

Applied research and knowledge transfer has always been an important element of our work, and has remained so in 2015. We gathered information and reported on CAP implementation following a common structure in 6 Member States, leading to the widest assessment performed on how the new CAP is impacting permanent pastures across Europe. We will build on this in 2016 to highlight best and worst practice, inform policy and look at integration on the ground.



In Spain, we collaborated with our member Fundación Entretantos to produce an extensive [report](#) on the eligibility of woody pastures for CAP direct payments. This report, which included was funded by the Spanish Paying Agency (FEGA) and was distributed among all regional authorities in Spain, who are responsible for the final application of policies on the ground.

Entretantos and EFNCP also organised [Territorios Pastoreados](#), a policy-oriented gathering of farmers and pastoralism-supporting organisations in Madrid. An array of presentations and fruitful debates detailed some of the best examples of support for extensive farm management in Spain and other European countries, and was a source of inspiration for all participants. Spanish pastoral farms that have integrated tourism as an additional source of income were also showcased in Brussels, during the [Green Week](#) 2015 Conference.



In Wales, we undertook a programme of farmer meetings and telephone questionnaires of grazing associations as part of our overview of the State of Commoning in Wales - the first such overview on

pastoral common land in that country. The report was very well-received, not only by graziers, but by the relevant Minister in the Welsh Government.

In Ireland, we worked intensively with the Blackstairs Farming Group on a locally-led agri-environment measure, facilitating meetings and organising a visit to the Burren. A visit by farmers to the Burren and to our RBAPS project on the Shannon Callows also formed part of the knowledge transfer element of our collaboration with the Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership from England.

Social media:

- www.facebook.com/efnfp
- www.facebook.com/groups/HNV.Farming.UK.Ireland/
- twitter.com/efnfp
- <http://www.dailymotion.com/EFNCP>



Strengthening the Network

The DG Environment NGO Support grant enabled us to appoint Jabier Ruíz as a network and communications officer, with the result that both aspects of our work expanded tremendously during the year. Our membership expanded by 9 new organisation - the largest increase for many years:



- Asociación De Ganaderos Alto Agueda
- Baltic Environmental Forum
- Chambre Régionale d'Agriculture - Languedoc Roussillon
- FAO-CIHEAM Subnetwork on Mediterranean Forage Resources
- Skärgårdarnas Riksförbund
- South West Uplands Federation
- Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership
- Asociación Trashumancia y Naturaleza
- Fundación Entretantos

We now have a Facebook page, a Facebook group on High Nature Value farming in the UK and Ireland and a Twitter feed.

We worked to make the web page more useful for our members, improving the pages on the network and livening it up through the use of videos.

An important element in strengthening our networking was the conference in Ireland, held in collaboration with our member Burrenbeo. It was a roaring success, attended by over 100 people from Ireland and further afield, with everyone leaving



Asociación de Ganaderos Alto Agueda

entretantos

SKÄRGÅRDARNAS RIKSFÖRBUND

full of enthusiasm and a determination to 'do something like that' when they got home!

Instead of having a formal AGM linked to the conference, as has happened in the past, we had a network day for member organisations - something we will definitely repeat when resources allow.

We also engaged in networking on more specific themes and in particular countries. Common land is an important element in HNV farmland and an important resource for HNV and it has long been an ambition of EFNCP's to facilitate dialogue between graziers and between graziers and Government. Working with the Foundation for Common Land in the UK and with the Asociación Trashumancia y Naturaleza, we organised the first ever Europe-wide meeting of commoners in Brussels, attended by over 40 people. We hope to maintain this momentum in 2016.

Spain was yet again a hive of networking activity, with EFNCP supporting and engaging in the Plataforma por la Ganadería Extensiva (on extensive grazing), the Iniciativa Comunales (on communal land) and QueRed (on hygiene rules for small-scale cheese producers).

In Ireland, we continued to act as a contact point for local groups of farmers from HNV areas, helping them deal with CAP decisions and working to take forward initiatives for locally-led schemes.



Publications

Policy submissions

- Beaufoy, G; Blom, S.; Hartel, T.; Jones, G.; Popa, R.; Poux, X.; Ruiz, J. (2015) Europe's wood pastures: condemned to a slow death by the CAP? A test case for EU agriculture and biodiversity policy
- Beaufoy, G; Blom, S.; Hartel, T.; Jones, G.; Popa, R.; Poux, X.; Ruiz, J. (2015) Los pastos leñosos de España y Europa: ¿condenados a una muerte lenta por la PAC?
- Wood Pastures Manifesto for Urgent Change to the CAP (2015):
 - English
 - Spanish
 - French
 - German

Books and reports

- Beaufoy, G (2015) Country report on the implementation of the new CAP and its possible effects on permanent pastures: Spain
- Brackenbury, S & Jones, G (2015) State of Commoning in Wales
- Gallagher, C; Jones, G & Tubridy, M (2015) Proposal for a Locally-led, Results-Based Agri-environment Payment Scheme (RBAPS) for the Blackstairs Mountains
- Gallagher, C; Maher, C & Jones, G (2015) Country report on the implementation of the new CAP and its possible effects on permanent pastures: Ireland
- Herrera Calvo, P M (2015) El uso pastoral como alternativa de gestión de los hábitats vinculados a los rebollares ibéricos del Sistema Central
- Jones, G (2015) Country report on the implementation of the new CAP and its possible effects on permanent pastures: United Kingdom
- Keep, H (2015) Results Based Agri-Environment Project within the Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership

- Lepmets, E (2015) Country report on the implementation of the new CAP and its possible effects on permanent pastures: Estonia
- Mustonen, T & Jones, G (2015) Reindeer herding in Finland
- Poux, X (2015) Country report on the implementation of the new CAP and its possible effects on permanent pastures: France
- Stefanova, V & Kazakova, Y (2015) Country report on the implementation of the new CAP and its possible effects on permanent pastures: Bulgaria
- Tubridy, M & Gallagher, C (2015) Developing a case for a Locally Led Agri-Environment Scheme for the Blackstairs
- Tubridy, M; Iremonger, S; Hickey, B & O'Hanrahan, B (2015) Blackstairs Habitat Mapping and Biodiversity Audit 2015

