



HNV grasslands – securing the ecosystem services of EU farming post 2013

Conference introduction

Sibiu 7th-9th September 2010

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EUROPEAN FORUM ON
NATURE CONSERVATION
AND PASTORALISM



Welcome to

- *The 12th EFNCP European conference on farming and biodiversity*
- *Since 1988, we have held conferences every two years.*
- *In Spain, Ireland, Italy, Czech Republic, France, Sweden, Bulgaria, ...*



From the archives - Montpellier 2003



Europe, not just EU

- *Our conferences are pan-European events with a wide representation.*
- *We have participants here from Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Macedonia, Norway and Switzerland.*
- *In terms of policies, we focus on the EU.*



EFNCP began as just a forum

- *Organising conferences and a newsletter.*
- *Bringing together people interested in nature conservation on farmland from different perspectives.*
- *Especially from the farming perspective.*



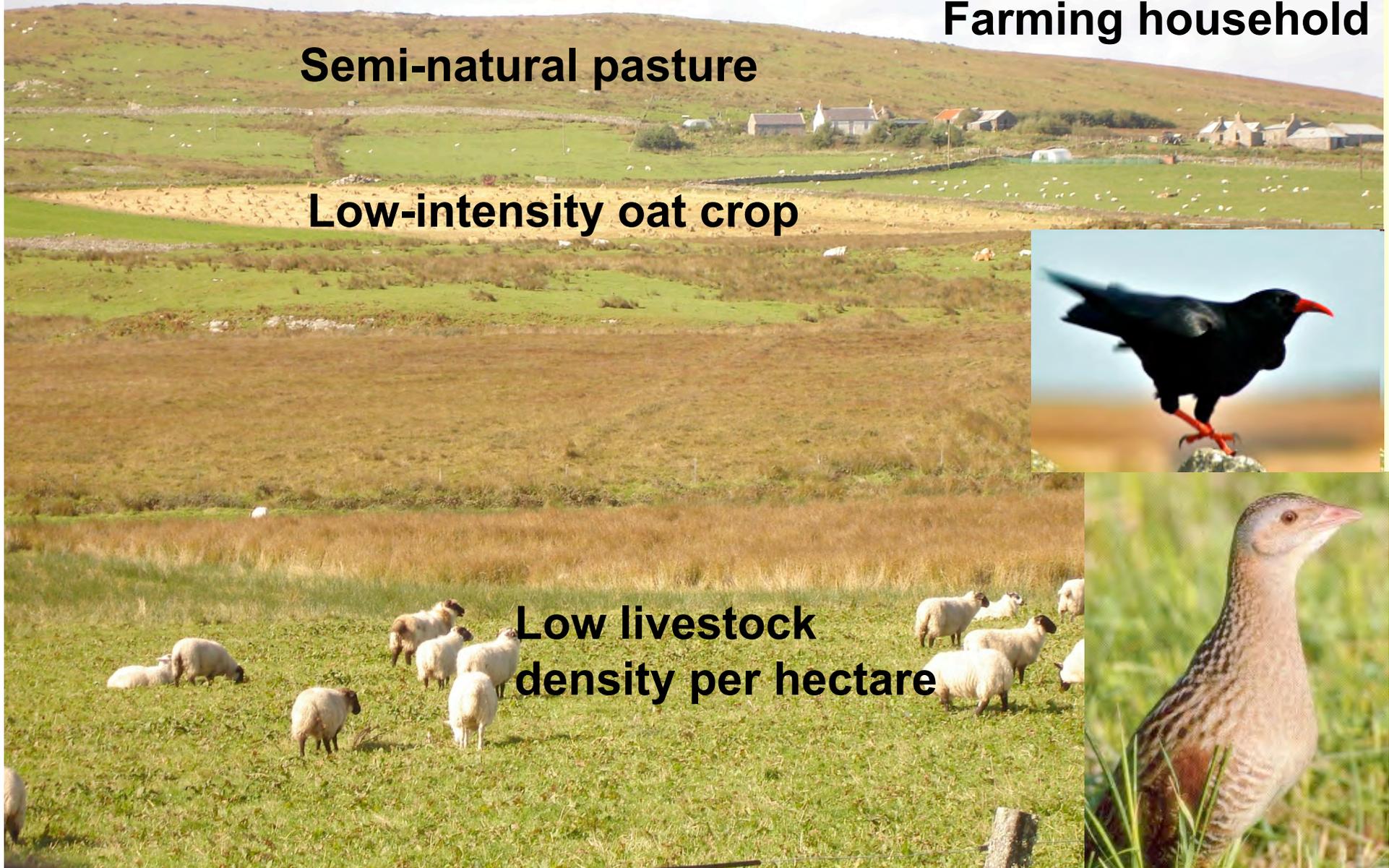
Several original members involved in farming e.g. on Islay (north-west Scotland)

Farming household

Semi-natural pasture

Low-intensity oat crop

Low livestock
density per hectare



High Nature Value (HNV) farming

- *Early work of EFNCP contributed to establishment of the HNV farming idea (1993).*
- *Now incorporated into EU policies for biodiversity (1998) and rural development (2005).*
- *HNV farming is EFNCP “core business” – so how is this conference different?*



Focus of this conference

- **HNV grasslands** *are central to HNV farming.*
- *And also central to the ecosystem services and public goods of European farming.*
- *HNV grasslands and the farming systems that maintain them are under severe socio-economic pressure.*
- *EU needs a strategy to maintain HNV grasslands, and we are here to discuss what it should contain.*



So briefly...

- *Why HNV grasslands specifically?*
- *What are main issues we want to focus on?*
- *What are the opportunities for action at EU level?*



Most HNV farmland is dominated by semi-natural grassland used for livestock production – permanent pastures and meadows



Legend

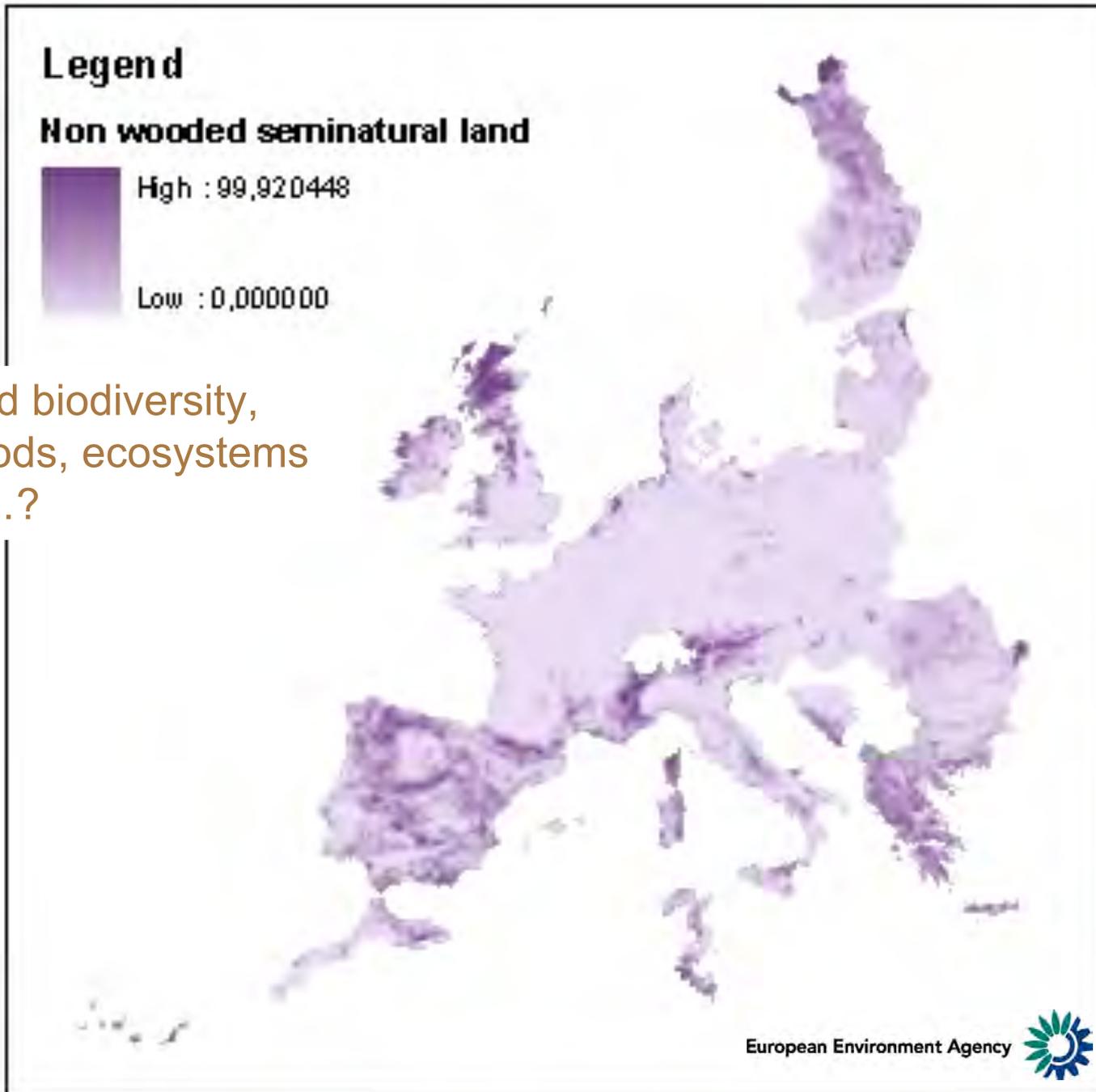
Non wooded seminatural land



High : 99,920448

Low : 0,000000

= farmland biodiversity,
public goods, ecosystems
services...?



We count scrubby and wooded pastures as HNV grassland - but CAP rules exclude these pastures from support payments in some countries

Scrubby grazing - Bulgaria

Wooded meadow-pasture - Estonia



Semi-natural grassland is dropping out of farming systems all over Europe

– are Natura 2000 and agri-environment working?



Upland hay meadow in Navarra, Spain

Lowland rough grazing in Devon, UK



Semi-natural grassland is the key element for biodiversity in HNV olive groves and fruit orchards



Abandonment is very difficult to reverse

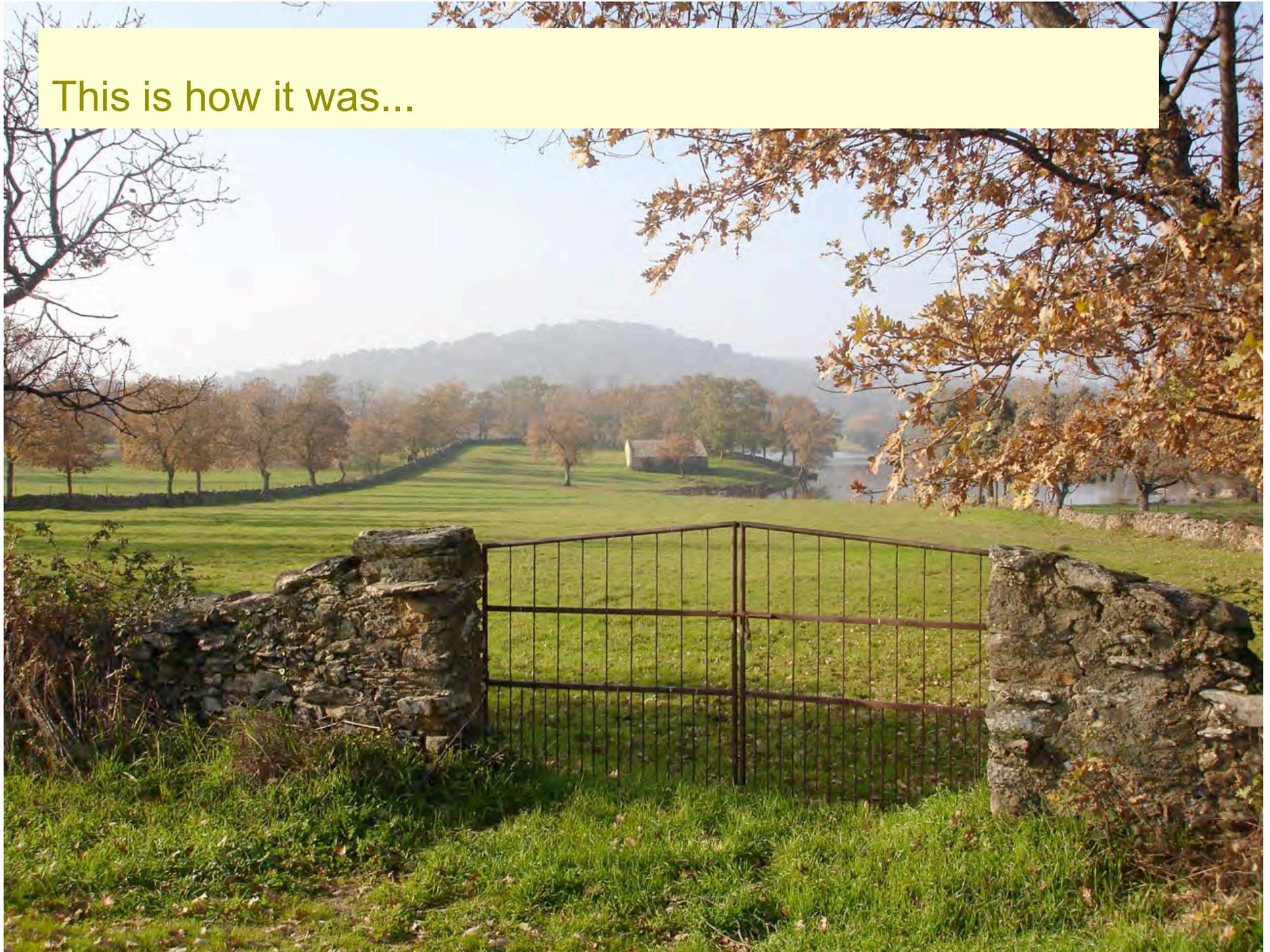


Change of land use is very difficult to reverse
- e.g. intensive fruit plantations are an expanding landuse

**New fruit plantation -
Spain**



This is how it was...



In arable landscapes, patches of semi-natural grassland are essential for HNV, but also declining



When reduced to field boundaries, semi-natural grassland is still critical for HNV, but not part of the production system – how to protect, or reward?



Last vestiges of semi-natural farmland...



Issues for this conference

- *Why is semi-natural HNV grassland in decline?*
- *Is the main problem a lack of legal protection?*
- *Or poor economic returns of the farming systems that use it?*
- *If much HNV grassland is on small, part-time farms, what is the future for these farms?*



Issues for this conference

- *Is semi-natural-HNV grassland sufficiently recognised and understood by policy makers?*
- *Do EU data systems that record and monitor land use recognise this grassland?*
 - CORINE land cover
 - Farm Structures Survey
 - CAP Land Parcel Identification System
- *If not, can protection and support measures be effective?*



What instruments are needed, and how?

- *Economic support on pan-EU scale for farming based on HNV grasslands - how?*
- *Local projects working pro-actively with HNV farmers – how to fund them?*
- *Consistent data collection and monitoring of HNV grassland across EU - how?*
- *See NGO discussion document on how to target support to HNV farming, for Day 3*



Opportunities – CAP reform 2013

- *Public spending pressure on CAP - current income support measures are highly inefficient*
- *Commissioner Ciolos consultation process - may be receptive to new measures for HNV farming*
- *Commissioner Ciolos' message to this conference on Day 3*
- *NGO discussion document*



Opportunities – biodiversity strategy

- *New strategy to halt biodiversity decline by 2020 – what needs to be done?*
- *What role specifically for HNV farming and grasslands?*
- *How to monitor progress in relation to HNV farming and grasslands?*
- *Commissioner message and DG Env presentation on Day 3*



Local focus is a key part of Forum conferences

- *Opportunity to link EU policy issues with local realities*
- *The local focus is only possible thanks to the work of local partners*
- *Thanks to Fundatia ADEPT and Lucian Blaga University for making this happen in southern Transylvania*



Field excursion

- *EU hotspot for HNV grasslands and a new Natura 2000 site*
- *Challenges of small-scale farming systems*
- *Range of responses to these challenges*
- *Positive effect of simple support payments?*
- *And of local project approach?*
- *Very relevant experiences not just for EU12, also for many parts of EU15 ...*



EU12 or EU15?



Parts of EU15 also have minifundia (here Spain)



Finally

- *Thanks to funders of this conference – DG Environment and Orange Romania.*
- *Especial thanks to DG Environment whose support has enabled EFNCP to move up a gear this year.*
- *More local projects, staff in more countries, closer involvement in policy processes.*
- *And a more ambitious conference.*

