



# High Nature Value farming indicators: what are they really for?

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EUROPEAN FORUM ON  
NATURE CONSERVATION  
AND PASTORALISM



EFNCP has been closely involved from the start, with major technical input to:

- EEA study that lead to the CORINE-based maps of HNV farmland 2003
- DG Agri study that lead to the Guidance Document on HNV indicators 2007
- Guidance Document on HNV indicators 2009
- Thematic Working Group document on CMEF indicators – the HNV chapter 2010





European Evaluation Network  
for Rural Development



European Commission  
Agriculture and Rural Development

Approaches for assessing the impacts  
of the rural development programmes  
in the context of multiple intervening  
factors

March 2010

Findings of a Thematic Working Group  
established and coordinated by The  
European Evaluation Network for Rural  
Development

<http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>



# Developing HNV farming indicators is a long-term project

- We should distinguish short-term needs to include basic figures in RDPs for approval by EU on the one hand...
- ...from longer term development of indicators that feed back usefully into policy design and improvement
- Possible targeting of CAP support to HNV farming is yet another thing, not (yet) part of EU policy and requiring different tools.



# What are HNV indicators for?

EU Strategic Guidelines for rural development policy identify HNV as a priority for Axis 2:

*“the preservation and development of **high nature value farming and forestry systems** and traditional agricultural landscapes”*

- The HNV indicators therefore should indicate whether an RDP has done enough to maintain HNV farming systems in the programme area
- Should they also help programme designers to understand changes taking place in HNV farming, and how policy could respond better to these?



Is it about HNV farming systems, HNV farmland, HNV areas, HNV zones....?

- ❑ EAFRD priority is to maintain HNV “farming **systems**”
- ❑ But CMEF Indicator refers to monitoring the “area” (i.e. extent) of HNV **farmland**,
- ❑ and in some languages this has been translated as “HNV farmland **zones**”



# Farming system = land cover + how it is farmed

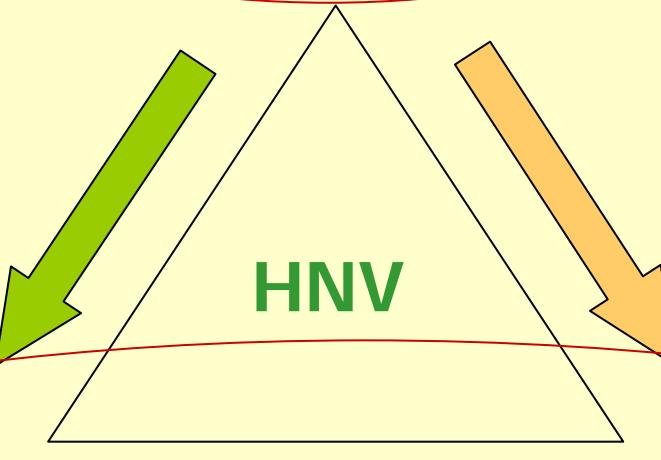
## Low-intensity practices:

- Livestock / ha
- Nitrogen / ha
- Biocides / ha

Farming  
practices



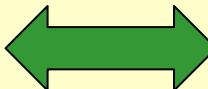
Type 1



Type 2

## High % land under **semi-natural vegetation**:

- Grass, scrub
- Trees
- Field margins



HNV farmland -  
landcover types  
and patterns

## High **diversity** of land cover:

- Crops
- Fallows
- Grass, scrub
- Trees
- Water bodies



Latest Thematic Working Group paper on CMEF indicators - up-dates thinking on HNV indicators since Guidance Document, based on workshops and experience.

- Emphasises no policy intention to designate zones
- Recognises that the HNV baseline **extent** can only be approximate, probably based on land-cover data.
- This baseline may be indicative of the HNV extent, but it is not a sufficient basis for monitoring.
- Other baseline indicators are needed to complement land-cover data, especially data on farming practices.
- Usefulness of sample surveys is given renewed emphasis.

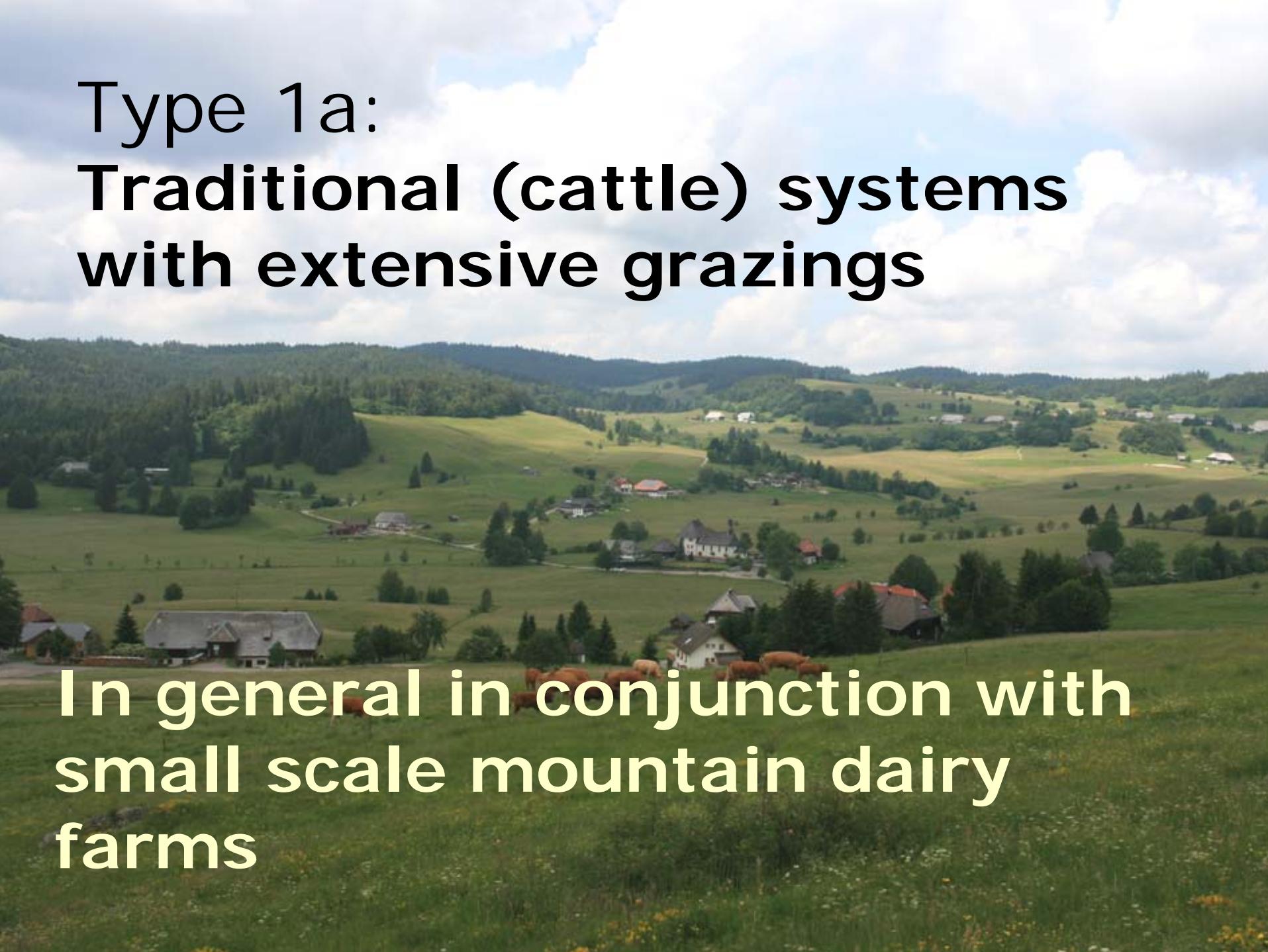


First step - at the level of an RDP programming area, is to clarify **what** to monitor

- Which are the key types of farming and of farm for conserving biodiversity?
- What is happening to them – changing practices, socio-economic pressures and trends?
- What future scenarios would be good / bad for biodiversity?



# Type 1a: **Traditional (cattle) systems with extensive grazings**



In general in conjunction with  
small scale mountain dairy  
farms

# Changes in practices and landscapes

Still HNV grasslands ?

At field level	HNV	LNV : trends ...
Permanent Grasslands	<b>EXTENSIVE MANAGEMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No chemical inputs</li> <li>• Late mowing (july)</li> <li>• Low livestock density</li> </ul>	<b>INTENSIFICATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fertilisation</li> <li>• Early mowing (may)</li> <li>• Conversion into arable land</li> </ul> <b>ABANDONMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wood plantation / Scrub</li> </ul>
Grazed orchards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replacement by intensive orchards</li> </ul>
Arable land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No chemical inputs</li> </ul>	
At landscape level	HNV	LNV : trends ...
Ponds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filling</li> </ul>
Hedges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance</li> <li>• Winter wood cut</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal</li> </ul>
Landscape pattern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combination of diverse land use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease in the semi natural vegetation</li> </ul>

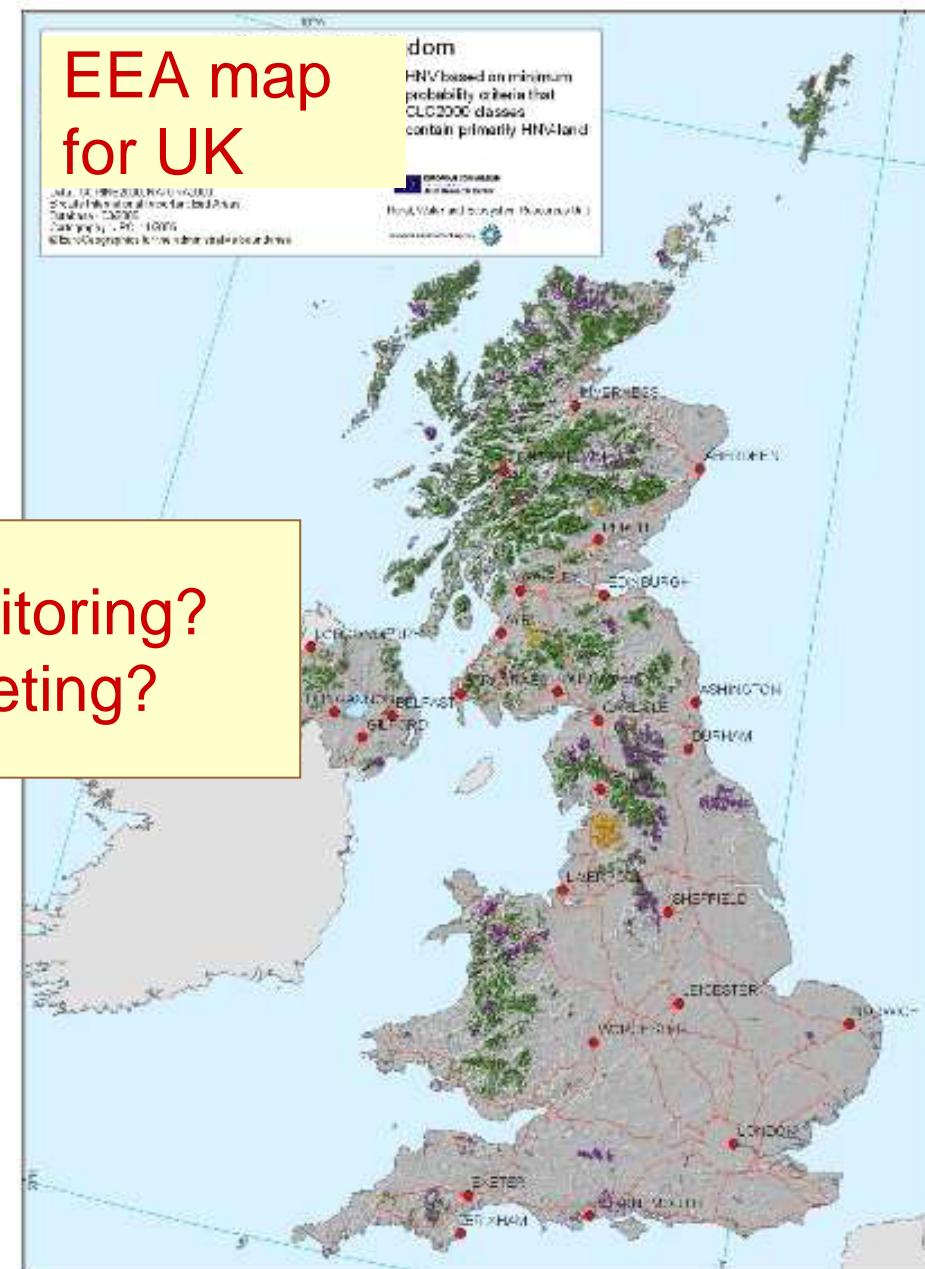


# Maps are only the beginning...

Natural England draft map of HNV farmland - based on inventories of priority semi-natural habitats + suites of farmland species.



For monitoring?  
For targeting?



Identify HNV farmland, farm types, key practices



Understand socio-economic Pressures and trends

Ind (2)	Prod (EUR)	Expenditure (EUR)	Profit (EUR)	Land holding	Land ha UAA	Work Unit (AWU)
25	-	642	572	1 739	183	3 622
72	923	727	2 484	5 305	136	3 467
58		20 286	3 566	25 711	476	19 045
88	1 917	968		15 773	225	7 583
51		4 398		7 549	184	4 934



Ecological expertise to explain nature value of these systems

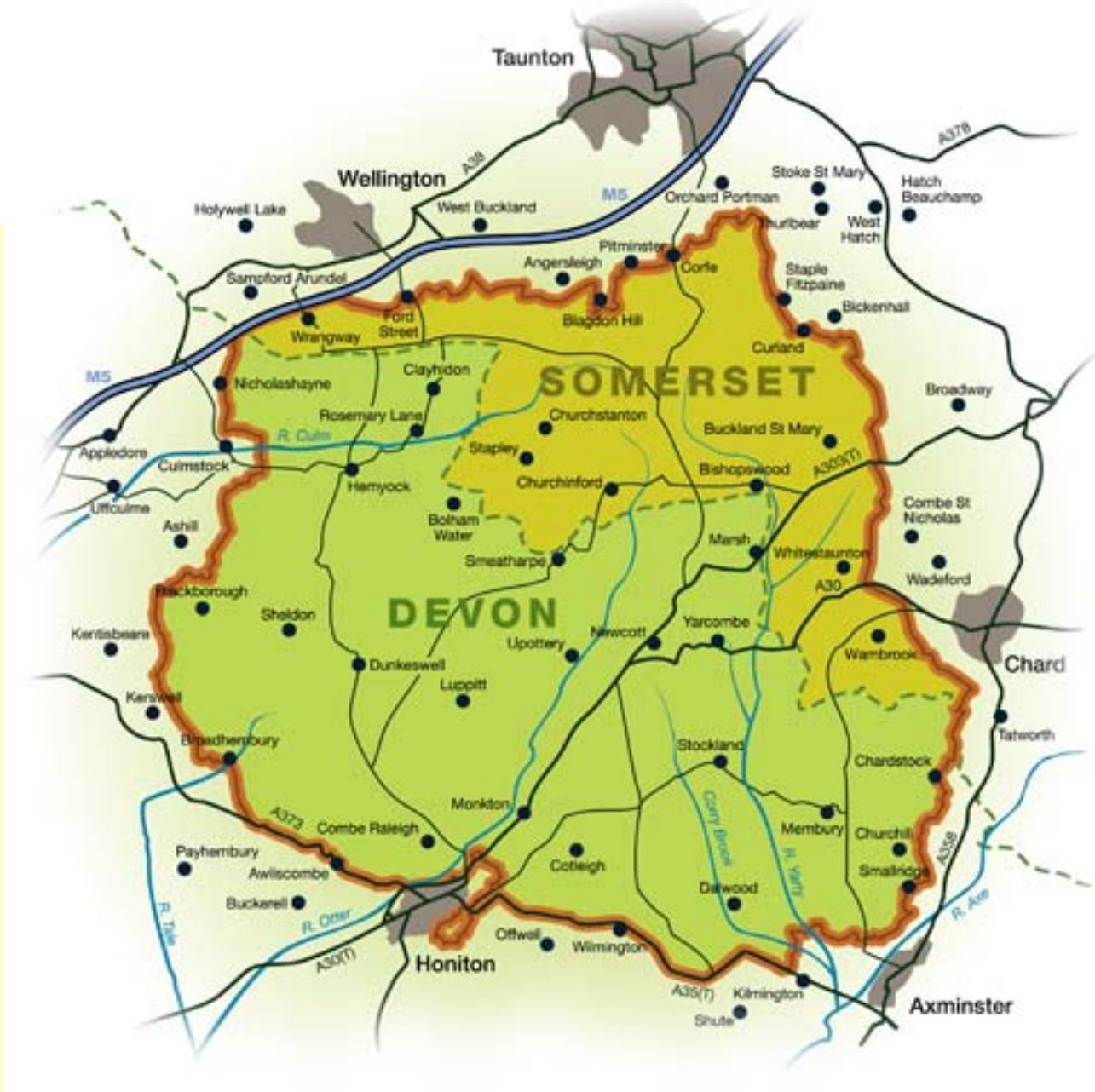


Test tools for monitoring change and policy effectiveness



# Case study 1

## Blackdown Hills AONB



HNV farmland identified from aerial photos – mainly semi-natural grazing land

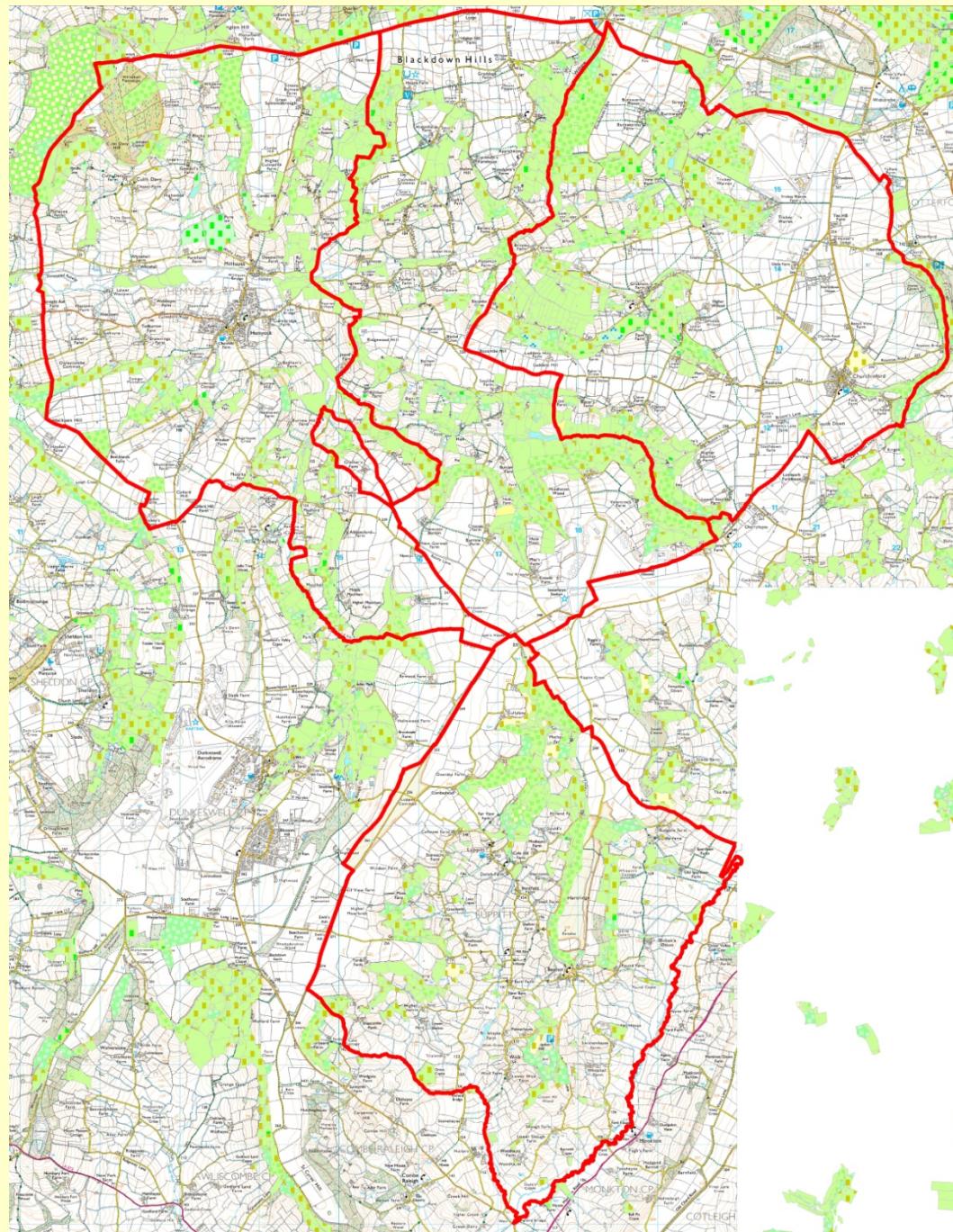


Other criteria: small field size, thick hedges...



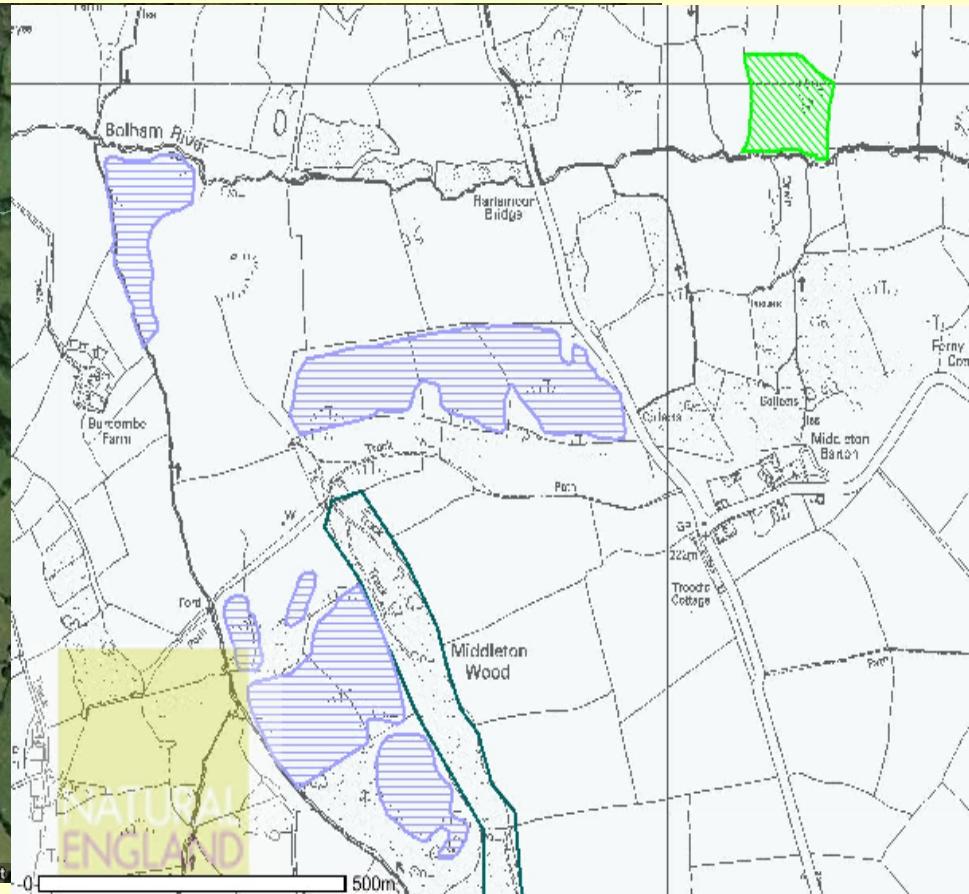
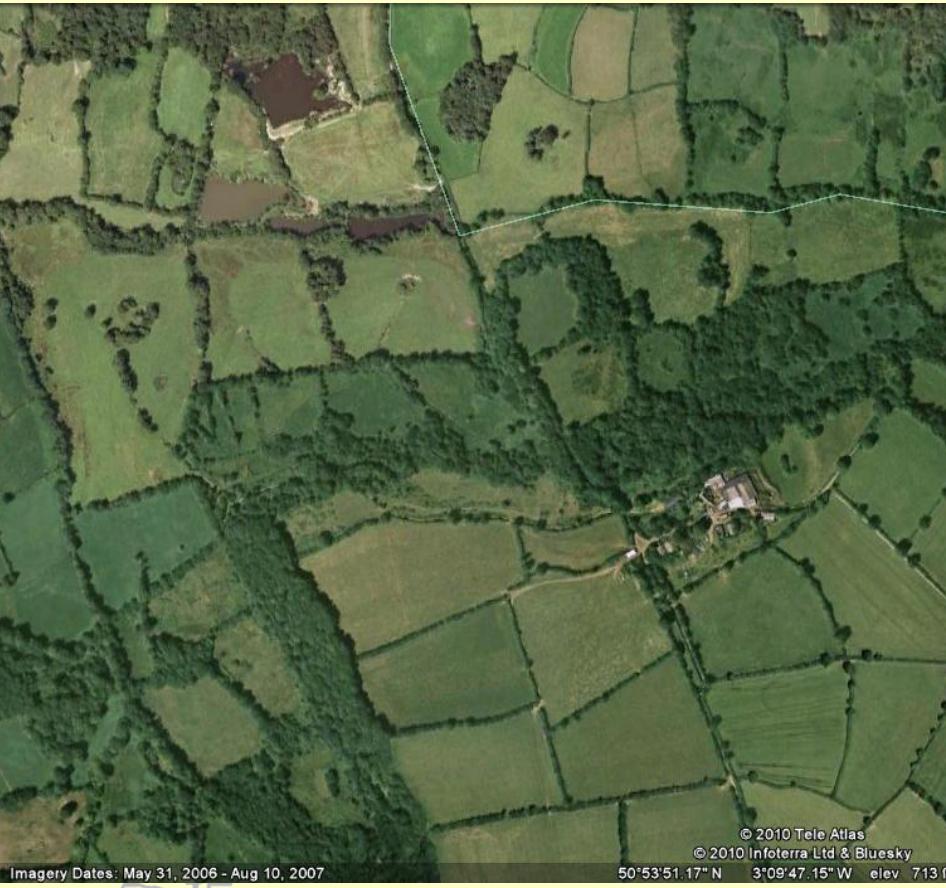
HNV map produced for 4 test parishes, as basis for analysis in HNV areas of:

- farming types
- trends
- policy coverage
- etc.



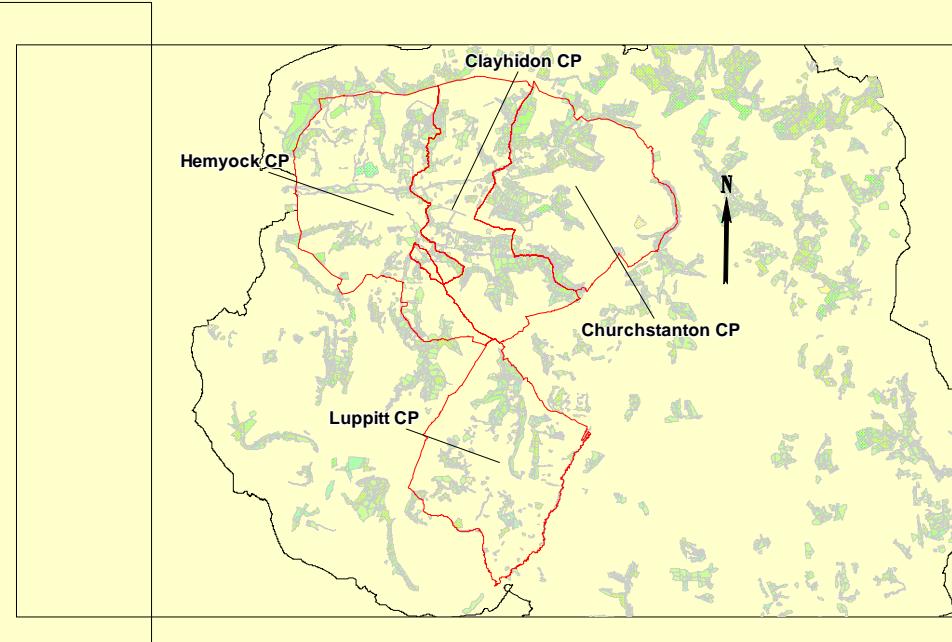
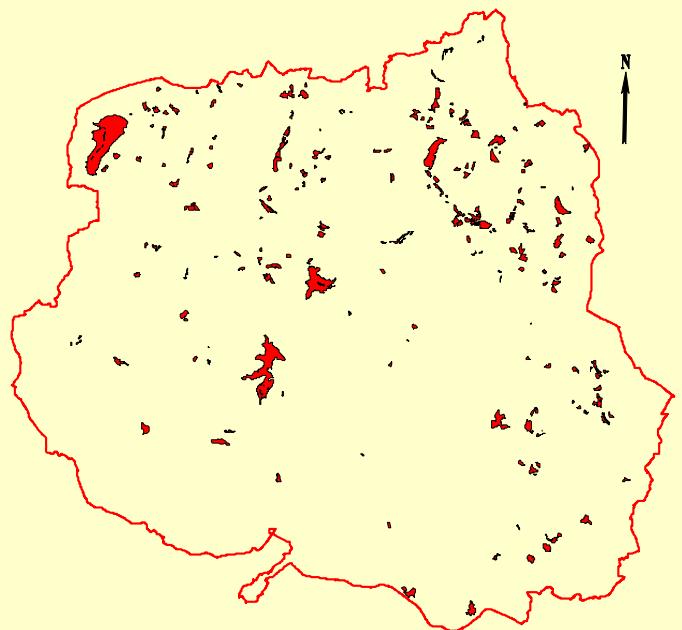
Local HNV mapping aims to capture the « landscape matrix », not only the prime habitats

BAP priority habitats inventory

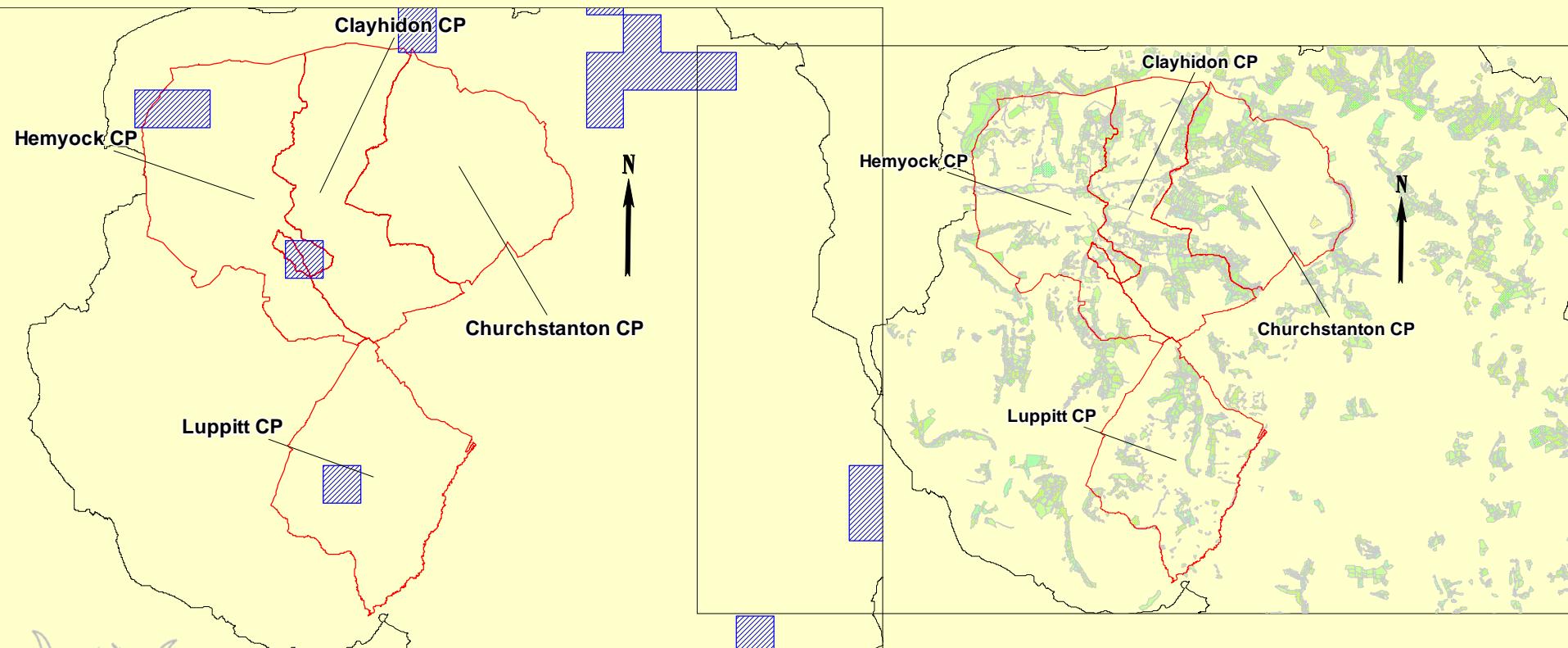


# Blackdown Hills

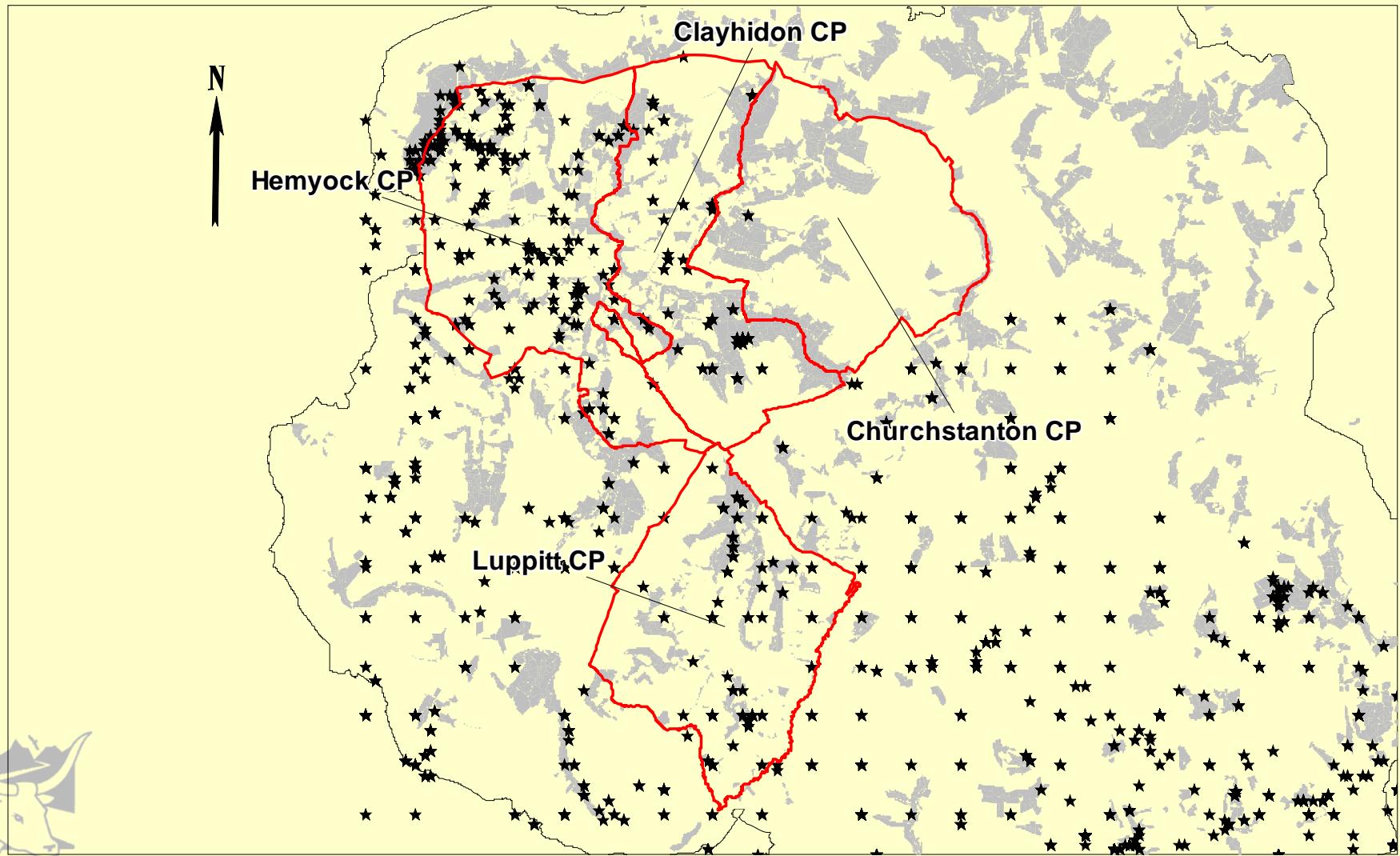
NE Type 1 map – BAP priority habitats   HNV map using aerial photos



## NE draft HNV map – species data (“Type 2”)



# Blackdowns HNV map and butterfly species data



# HNV policy process at regional level?

What are the broad HNV farming systems?  
What are their tendencies?  
What needs to be done?

Determine objectives:  
Regional and HNV systems levels

Indicators and monitoring

Support measures to achieve objectives



# What is the purpose of monitoring HNV farmland and farming systems?

- Provide **meaningful** information on changes in :
  - HNV land-cover
  - HNV farming practices / systems
  - Viability of the HNV farming systems
- Assess to what extent, and how, these changes have been **influenced** by the RDP
- Evaluate **effectiveness** of RDP in achieving policy **objectives** for HNV farming at RDP scale, and for individual HNV farming systems or areas



# Thoughts on indicators and monitoring

- Complex systems of indicators may hide dangerous weaknesses in data and assumptions.
- Need to adapt data systems to today's policy priorities – LPIS, FSS, CORINE.
- Complete baseline surveys of semi-natural farmland are not **so** expensive, and can be integrated with LPIS
- These allow more efficient and effective use of public funds for farming and nature conservation
- Sample surveys essential

