



Learning Area

WESTERN STARA PLANINA (WSP), Bulgaria

Innovative Approaches for WSP High Nature Values

Coordinator: Society for Territorial and Environmental Prosperity



Values



WSP is a mountainous HNV farming and forestry area with many cultural traditions linked to extensive livestock husbandry.



Its biodiversity richness is recognized by seven Natura 2000 sites (5 SPAs and 2 pSCI).

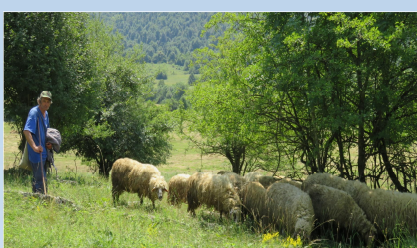


Permanent pastures cover most of the agriculture land. Low intensity grazing and mowing create habitats for valuable plant and animal species.

Challenges



Common (municipal) land is 82% of all grasslands. It needs fair, transparent and locally-relevant allocation rules.



Depopulation is ongoing since 1960's and speeded post 1990. Livestock breeding suffers most – fewer people are interested in shepherding.

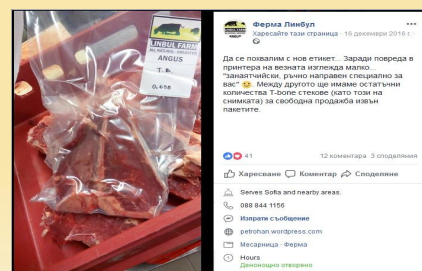


Long-term land abandonment and scrub encroachment leads to loss of valuable habitats and increases pressure on 'clean' grasslands.

Innovations



Sharing knowledge and experience on
- HNV grazing practices
- Natura 2000 compensatory payments for grasslands.



Product and marketing innovations contribute significantly to the viability of HNV farms and farmer's pride and satisfaction.



Local food traditions (preserves, cooked meals, bread) form a basis for promoting the region and attracting tourists.

Partners:



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