

## HUNGARY

### 1. Information about National Biodiversity Action Plan for Agriculture and its Implementation Plans/Programmes, measures for the treatment of biodiversity in agriculture within National Biodiversity Strategy.

Hungary does not have a Biodiversity Action Plan, however in its *National Rural Development Plan (NRDP) for EAGGF Guarantee Section measures* (which implementation is in progress) there are measures directly aiming the treatment of biodiversity in agriculture and also meeting the 2010 target of halting biodiversity loss in the EU.

The basis for NRDP is the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Agricultural and Rural Development Operational Programme (ARDOP). These documents offer a strategic basis for the implementation of rural development measures to be financed by the EAGGF Guarantee Section and they have a strong coherence, a joint basis.

The measures of NRDP focus on the environmental challenges (agro-environmental management, support of less favoured areas under environmental restriction, facilitating compliance with the EU environmental protection, animal welfare and hygienic standards, afforestation of agricultural land).

The National Agro-environment Programme of Hungary gave a good basis for the agro-environmental measures of NRDP.

The Department of Rural Development Programmes of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Hungary coordinates the elaboration process of measures and the body responsible for implementation, the Agriculture and Rural Development Office (ARDO) take part in the work.

#### Measures already implemented in connection with the treatment of biodiversity and their success

In October 1999, the Government of Hungary approved the *National Agro-environment Programme* in Government Resolution 2253/1999 (X.7.). This programme identifies various horizontal (extensive farming, organic farming, agro-environmental farming) and zonal target programmes (network of high nature value areas) supporting environmentally friendly farming. Besides these operational programmes additional support for investments is given (e.g. purchasing indigenous animals).

Its main achievement is the launch of agro-environment programmes, a good basis for further developments as farmers learned the supporting system of such programme in the field of nature conservation related activities in agriculture. (In 2002 a total of 153 thousands hectares was supported enabling the application of various environment-friendly technologies). Its objectives are in line with NRDP objectives, its target programmes are integrated into the agro-environmental management measure of NRDP.

The delineation of Natura2000 areas and the approval of the EU are currently in progress, therefore the integration of this category into the NRDP was not possible, but within the measure "Agro-environmental management", the High Nature Value target programme areas almost completely overlap the areas listed in Natura2000 proposal of Hungary. The keeping the Good Agriculture Practice as minimal requirement in the target programmes of the agro-

environmental management measure and in less favoured areas contribute to the protection of Natura2000 sites, thus play a role in encouraging the compliance with the provisions of the *directive on the conservation of wild birds and of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (79/409 EC and 92/43 EE)*.

Within the framework of *SAPARD* Plan for Hungary the measure of “Protection of agro-environment” have not been launched.

### Opportunities, threats, lessons learned for the future

With the basis of the National Agro-Environmental Programme the NRDP can serve the enhancement of biodiversity, especially by its agro-environment operational programme, support of Less Favoured areas under environmental restrictions, facilitating compliance with the EU environmental protection and the afforestation of agricultural land.

However the framework of the programme does not obviously leads to the indicated results without the real commitment of the government. Only by political commitment can be avoided the restructuring of the financial resources from the measures, which are in favour of biodiversity.

The adequate information given to farmers, effective consultation practices can play a crucial role in Hungary. The farm advisory system is in force, however it could be restructured.

## **2. Political status, legal basis**

The legal basis for the drafting of the NRDP is established by the part of Council regulation 1257/1999/EC on accompanying measures supported by the EAGGF Guarantee section, by Commission Regulation 445/2002/EC on implementing the said Regulation, by Common Position CONF-H 49/02 (2002/11/20) of the European Union and by the Accession Treaty.

## **3. Key objectives and actions of the Programme**

The general objective of the NRDP is to facilitate the sustainable development of rural areas, promoting multipurpose environmentally aware farming and improvement of employment and income-earning conditions in order to extend the population-retention power of rural regions.

Among the specific objectives of the NRDP the most relevant to the Biodiversity Action Plan are the following:

- Setting up of appropriate production structure, environmentally aware farming and sustainable land management
- Improvement the quality of environment, reduction of environmental contamination of agricultural origin
- Increasing forest cover

By achieving these objectives the NRDP serves the priority of environmentally friendly development of agriculture, rational land-use, landscape management.

The following specific objectives serve this priority:

1. Establishment of a production structure in line with habitat features, environmentally aware farming and sustainable landscape use;
2. Increasing forest cover;

3. Improvement of environmental conditions, reduction of environmental contamination of agricultural origin.

The key actions/targets set in the programme are the following measures:

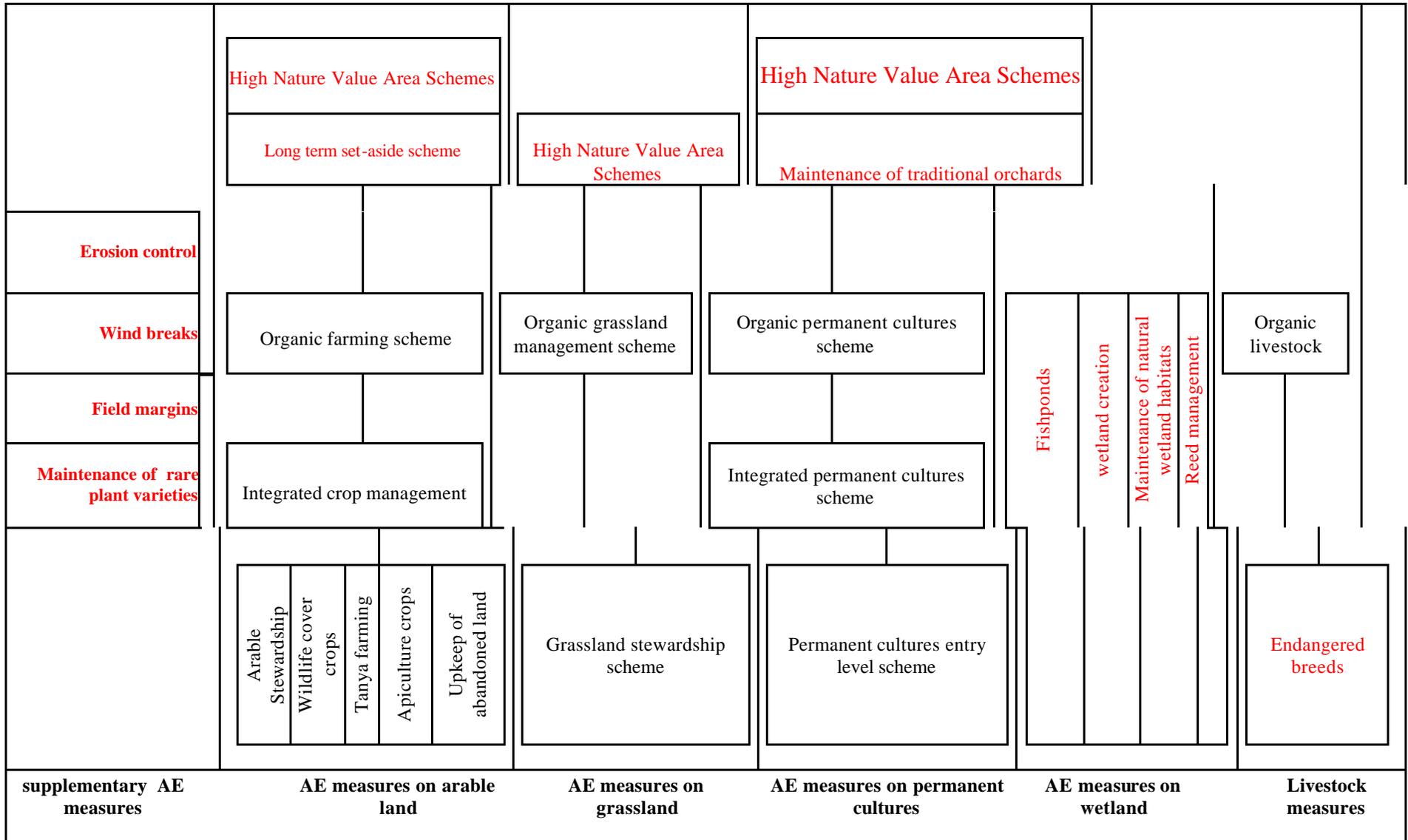
1. Agro-environment management (Rural Stewardship scheme, Integrated production scheme, Organic production scheme, High Nature Value areas scheme)
2. Support of Less Favoured Areas or areas under environmental restrictions
3. Facilitating compliance with the EU environmental protection, animal welfare and hygienic standards
4. Afforestation of agricultural land (9.6% of the budget)
5. Support of semi-subsistence farms undergoing restructuring
6. Support for setting up of producer groups
7. Technical assistance

The 1-3 measures consumes 76% of all available resources, they have the highest priority (Agro-environment management takes out 40% alone).

The first four measures ensure the fulfilment of the highlighted key objectives, which have direct positive effects on biodiversity. In case of other measures, impacts on biodiversity are indirect.

The following table shows the Agro-environmental schemes. These will be applied horizontally throughout the country, except the schemes for High Nature Value Areas.

This measure will be implemented through several schemes through different levels of commitments, which is shown in the following table, where the most important actions for the enhancement of biodiversity are marked with red colour.



#### **4. Development of indicators**

Several different types of indicators of targets have been developed for the examination of the usage of resources and their effects. (Physical, performance, financial and other indicators). Other indicators are for example the indicators measuring animal density (LU/ha) or established hedgerow (m) in the case of Agro-environmental measures.

The data source of Agro-environmental measures is provided either by the AIR (Agro-environmental Information and Monitoring System, the NPD (National Park Directorates) or the PPSCS (Plant Protection and Soil Conservation Service).

Further enhancement of database describing the initial status and the physical and performance indicators can happen after review of the programme in practice.

(Details about the indicators can be obtained from Ferenc Tar, see the information source under number 8).

#### **5, 6. Monitoring and evaluation, co-ordination Body**

The Paying agency (Agricultural and Rural Development Office-ARDO) responsible for the implementation will work by fulfilling the accreditation requirements of Commission Regulations 1663/1995/EC. (Thus it can be ensured that the administrative process, internal audit process and organisations doing delegated tasks will work due to the requirements by the EU, in particular the documentation connected to the approval of claims or correct implementation of administrative and on-the-spot checks.

The identification of agricultural parcels and animals will be carried out due to Articles 4-5 of 3508/1992/EC Regulation. Where these parcels and animals form the base of the support, the data of applicants will be compared to the IACS (Integrated Administration and Control System) database, so as to avoid double financing and to justify that the data indicated in the proposal are identical to the ones appearing in the database of the ARDO.

If all the necessary checks (cross-checking in the case of land-based supports with the data derived from the Agricultural Parcel Identification System –Part of the IACS) had been made and the proposal complies with the legal requirements of the measure the ARDO creates the ranking among proposals, decides the approval of applications and signs the contract with the approved applicant.

The claims for payments are submitted from those having a valid contract once a year to the ARDO. All the claims have to be cross-checked in the IACS. Besides administrative checks, the ARDO implements on-the-spot checks at 5% of all contracted applicants, in the line with Article 61 of Commission Regulation 445/2002/EC. Beyond these checks, the ARDO can conduct further checks; finally the assessment of on-the-spot checks is done at the ARDO Centre. Irregularities lead to sanctions in line with Commission Regulation 1663/1995/EC and the relevant Commission Guidelines (Doc. VI/5331/98).

Information and Monitoring System has been set up. After the third (mid-term evaluation) and the fifth year there will be an evaluation process carried out with the help of indicators and can contribute to the possible further improvement/change of the programme.

#### **6. Co-ordination Body**

The Department of Rural Development Programmes of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) of Hungary coordinates the elaboration process of measures and the body responsible for implementation, the Agriculture and Rural Development Office (ARDO) take part in the work.

Nature Conservation Counselling Service (As part of MME, Birdlife Hungary) acting as advisory body.

## **7. Role of stakeholders**

### 7.1. Development of the NRDP

Wide range of society was involved in this phase. The Leader Meeting of MARD has debated the third version of NRDP to EAGGF Guarantee Measures and approved after technical completing. Public consultations (social reconciliation) were implemented (Approximately 80 forums were held on the level of Micro regional managers, the County Agrarian Chambers and the Rural Parliament). NGOs, local governments and farmers participated.

7.2. However in the implementation and monitoring phases it is predicted that the role will be given solely to the governmental bodies. (Responsibilities mentioned above).

## **8. Further sources of information**

Further information can be obtained from:

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A website is currently under construction of the AIR (Agro-environmental Information and Monitoring System), which will have all the documents translated into several European languages besides Hungarian.

Printed forms and documents will be available after the adaptation of the Programme. Information leaflets distributed already to potential applicants and stakeholders, which contains the objectives, application process and the legal framework among others.

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(With the contribution of Ferenc Tar, MARD of Hungary, contact details see above)