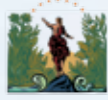


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# Greening in Best Practice



more food



better environment



# Greening in Best Practice

Today, safeguarding biodiversity is a subject of interest from an ecological, economic and social perspective. Each human activity is linked to biodiversity and ecosystem services, and farmers should assess this interaction, so that they are prepared to face the environmental, regulatory and market risks. Acting in order to protect biodiversity should not be considered only a cost or a burden, but also as an opportunity and a challenge to improve production.

Every farm is different from the others, therefore, when defining a biodiversity action plan, each manager needs to consider the general framework but also the specific characteristics of the local environment.

**Greening in Best Practice** aims to provide the setting to present and develop simple and pragmatic solutions for the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) greening measures through an open platform for stakeholder dialog. Under this umbrella we plan to bring together different stakeholders, including policy makers, academics, farmers or industries, to develop a new approach which will provide the opportunity to shift the discussion:

- From set-aside to proactive management of land's natural resources;
- From scientific principles to management practice applicable at farm level;
- From policy to targeted implementation.

Therefore, the focus will be on practical examples of greening measures currently implemented by farmers and will be complemented by a dialogue between policy makers and scientists. "Greening in Best Practice" will stimulate the dialogue on the subject and help develop new practical solutions as well as the policy framework required to promote their up-take, which is critical for a successful implementation in practice.



# The Greening Partnerships

## The Pollinator Network initiative (PNi)



PNi is a joint initiative that promotes a model of economically viable, highly productive and resource-efficient agriculture in terms of land use demonstrating that modern farming and environmental management can coexist on the same field. The initiative is supported by a network of farmers and land managers acting for biodiversity who are willing to use a "bed" of plants as their field border – particularly indicated for pollinating species. These strips are also considered as excellent habitat and a source of food for birds, small game and roe deer. The Pollinator Network initiative's ambition is to provide training support for farmers, land managers and agronomists. It is designed to create a forum for knowledge-sharing on sustainable agriculture practices for biodiversity all around Europe and enhance the harmonization of our current agricultural system within the European landscapes.

The benefits of the project include best management practices and advisory tools as part of an integrated solution. Among the main objectives is the inclusion of hedges (consisting of woody species), and grass and flower strips, specifically targeted for pollinators and referred to as "pollinators strips" with dedicated crops for biodiversity such as game crops. All these forms of field margins, which can be implemented in combination, can improve the habitat for biodiversity as they offer shelter, food, nesting ground, breeding grounds and natural corridors. Establishing field strips between arable land and bodies has proven to reduce the negative effect of soil erosion and water pollution. In addition, they also reduce the unwanted drift-off effect when applying plant protection products.

There are many ways which a farmer can implement field margins in practice. ELO and Syngenta have cooperated to train farmers and provide useful information on how to implement these measures.

The PNi is built upon the current policy developments. The initiative is based on the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy and Pillar I and II of the CAP, which have had an important effect on agricultural landscapes. Currently, several agro-environmental measures in Pillar II have a positive effect on pollinators, in particular payments for buffer strips and traditional landscape features such as hedges, although farmer participation is patchy across EU member states. Current talks on greening the CAP have suggested that these measures will continue to be supported in Pillar II, but they will be extended to Pillar I, together with the maintenance of permanent grassland that can be beneficial for pollinators.

To date, the PNI is present in over 16 countries of the European Union (Spain, UK, Italy, Portugal, Czech Republic, Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Austria, Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Slovakia and Greece). In 2012, the network will reach about 10,000 hectares of pollinators strips implemented in Europe.

The Pollinator Network initiative seeks to promote greening practices in a simple but concrete and understandable way for farmers and land managers and its principal aim is to show that sustainability and modern farming can coexist, which is critical for doubling global food production by 2050.

## WE – Wildlife Estates



The Wildlife Estates initiative was born in 2005 when influential actors in the nature conservation and land management field took the opportunity to build a philosophy around the concepts of wildlife management and sustainable land use. The decision was taken to create a WE-Charter and a WE-Label. The project was built progressively according to political, economical and social considerations emerging both at the EU and local level. The WE project has been built in accordance to the main environmental goals of the EU legislations. The 2020 Biodiversity Strategy of the European Commission is a support-tool for the development of this philosophy. Furthermore, WE responds in part to the Natura 2000 network ambitions and aims to translate the Birds and Habitats Directives requirements into practical guidelines.

The Wildlife Estates is a Public-Private initiative of the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) in partnership with key stakeholders acting in the field of biodiversity and nature conservation. (ONCFS, Walloon region, FACE, CIC, IUCN etc...).

Wildlife Estates contributes to biodiversity conservation by establishing a network of estates which implements the principles of sustainable wildlife management. It also promotes and justifies the necessity of broader biodiversity conservation. This initiative of private land managers can be a guiding tool which allows others to manage biodiversity in a sustainable and responsible manner. Wildlife Estates is awarding a label which identifies and rewards those estates which offer the best examples of land management, wildlife management, and biodiversity conservation.

The Wildlife Estates network is represented in 22 European countries and has about 400 000 hectares with the aim of reaching the number of 2 million hectares of labeled properties before 2015.

## Sustainable Intensive Agriculture Network



The SIA Network is an initiative of the OPERA Research Centre and is opened to all stakeholders and policy makers in the agricultural sector. It is an inclusive platform meant to bring together for constructive dialogue academics, policy makers and business representatives.

During the consultations with OPERA, it emerged that there was a need to improve the networking and exchange of knowledge among academics, policy makers and business representatives, beyond the information on agricultural policies and sustainable agriculture that is already available.

The network believes that it can go further in building sustainability in agriculture and adopts a pro-active approach to bring this knowledge to the debate so as to help the decision making process and to develop concrete solutions to the challenges faced by agriculture and the society.

The membership to the network is organized on two levels:

**Individual members** - becoming a member of the SIA Network will generate benefits through the possibility to network with various categories of stakeholders and policy makers to create an open communication channel to link science, policy and the realities of economic activities.

**Organisational partners** - will benefit from the participation in the activity of the network, propose subjects of interests for the activities of the task forces, participate to the decision process in the organization and enter into an open dialog with scientists and policy makers.



## Operation Pollinator Ten years of practical experience



Operation Pollinator demonstrates that environmental management and intensive agriculture can co-exist in the same field. Instigated by Syngenta and supported by universities, governmental bodies, food producers and NGOs, Operation Pollinator helped growers across Europe successfully establish and manage essential habitat for pollinating insects on commercial farms.

Successful implementation:

- On-farm in 13 countries
- More than 2500 participating farmers
- Supported by multiple stakeholders
- Recognized by EU institutions

With the concept of Multifunctional Landscapes Syngenta is moving the discussion on biodiversity and protection of natural resources from the single measure per field to an assessment of the landscape, and from single-function to multifunctional benefits. Syngenta aims to identify and solve multifunctional landscape issues in a practical manner. Building on the success of Operation Pollinator to enhance biodiversity, the concept of multifunctional field margins integrates the protection of natural resources and the enhancement of ecosystem services. Together with academic partners, Syngenta is developing practical tools for farmers based on sound science and thorough research. To insure successful implementation, the protocols of multifunctional field margins are adapted for local conditions and cropping systems.

Based on scientific research and practice, farmers are provided with:

- Targeted seed mixtures
- Agronomic protocol
- Training

Roll-out is often supported by partners along the value chain. Today Syngenta already has on-going pilot projects across Europe in oilseed rape, sunflower, apples, pears, melons, vines and olives. The proactive management of less productive and marginal areas on commercial farms is one of the most important environmental assets agriculture can provide to take care of our unique natural capital and the ecosystem services it provides. Creating multifunctional field margins within the rural landscape will make a significant contribution towards a more sustainable farming system of the future.



## About Us

**OPERA** is a young, growing think tank and a research center of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, a major European private university. It is an independent, non-profit scientific organization, committed to support sustainable agriculture in EU through successful implementation of the agro-environmental policies within the European legislation. The fundamental contribution of OPERA is to use the potential of existing scientific research as well as the existing expertise and knowledge to support the stakeholders in their political and technical decisions concerning agriculture. One objective is to provide a series of pragmatic recommendations to policy makers to bridge the interest and objectives of agriculture and environment as well as to ensure efficient implementation of the agriculture related policies in the EU.

**ELO** is a European organization representing more than 54 national organizations across 27 European countries. It is a non-profit organization committed to promoting a sustainable and prosperous countryside and to increase awareness relating to environmental and agricultural issues. By engaging various stakeholders, ELO develops policy recommendations and programmes of action targeted to European policy makers. ELO organizes interdisciplinary meetings gathering together key actors from the rural sector and policy makers at local, regional, national and European level. Its ability to carry out a variety of activities while maintaining high visibility assures ELO a unique position among the think tanks engaged on agricultural, environmental and rural issues. Having understood the ecological and economic benefits related to the synergy between pollinators and agriculture, the ELO is working to bridge various stakeholders in order to find practical and effective solutions for the preservation and enhancement of pollinating species and their habitats.

**Syngenta** is one of the world's leading companies with more than 26,000 employees in over 90 countries dedicated to our purpose: bringing plant potential to life. Through world-class science, global reach and commitment to our customers we help to increase crop productivity, protect the environment and improve health and quality of life. Syngenta believes that farmers can produce enough to meet the world's needs for food, fuel and fiber and safeguard the only planet we have for future generations – if we take a system-wide approach that links technology, land and people. These three elements build the foundation for a sustainable production system in which technology enables better solutions for farmers to increase productivity and profitability, to improve resource efficiency, and contribute to food security. Agriculture depends on biodiversity, which is necessary for productive farming basics such as pollination, healthy soil structures, and a broad range of crop varieties.