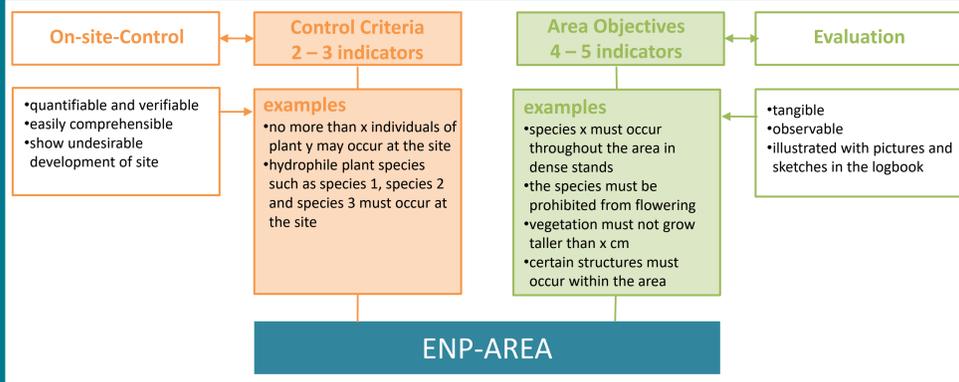




RESULTS-BASED NATURE CONSERVATION PLAN (ENP) IN AUSTRIA

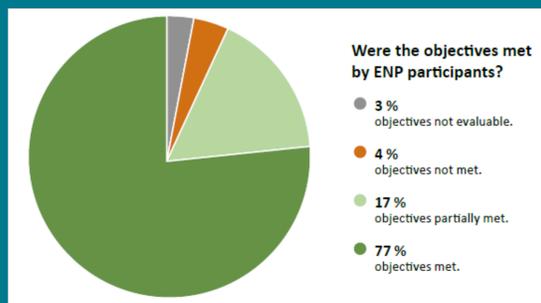
The System

The area objectives and control criteria were defined by ecologists together with the farmers during farm visits. After the visit, each farmer was provided with an individually tailored "ENP Logbook." This logbook included all the objectives and control criteria previously defined, as well as additional information relevant to the ENP areas on the farmer's land. The farmer also uses this document to write down the measures implemented on the areas as well as any relevant observations made.

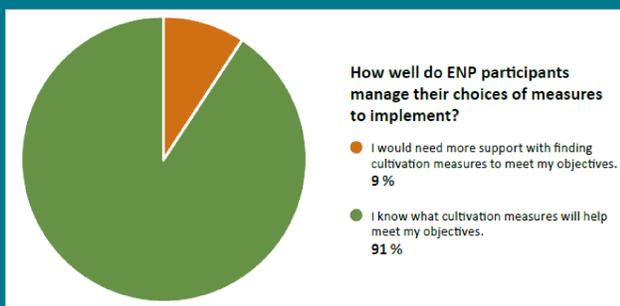


Goal Orientation

By defining tailored and detailed objectives, farmers come to understand what exactly nature-conservation specialists would like to see achieved on their land. During the evaluation visits, it was found that 77% of the objectives had been fulfilled, 17% had been partially fulfilled and 4 % had not yet been met. Some objectives were not met because, for example, not enough time had passed since the beginning of the contract period, the target species did not (or ceased to) occur due to external factors or because an animal species, as of yet, simply failed to occur in the area despite the measures taken.

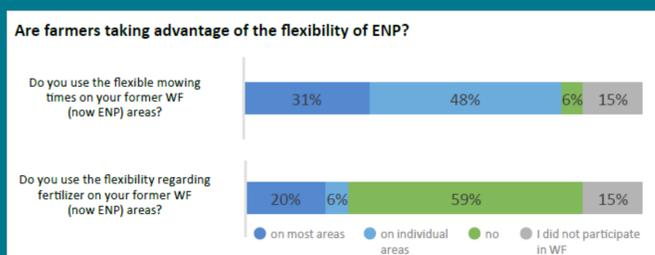


The farmers often followed innovative approaches to land management and experimented with different measures to meet the objectives. This allowed for the collection of valuable information, for example on methods to control problem species. One farmer might dig up a broad-leaved dock by hand and report that the population is already in decline. Another one might distribute green dock beetles from infested plants to those not yet infested.



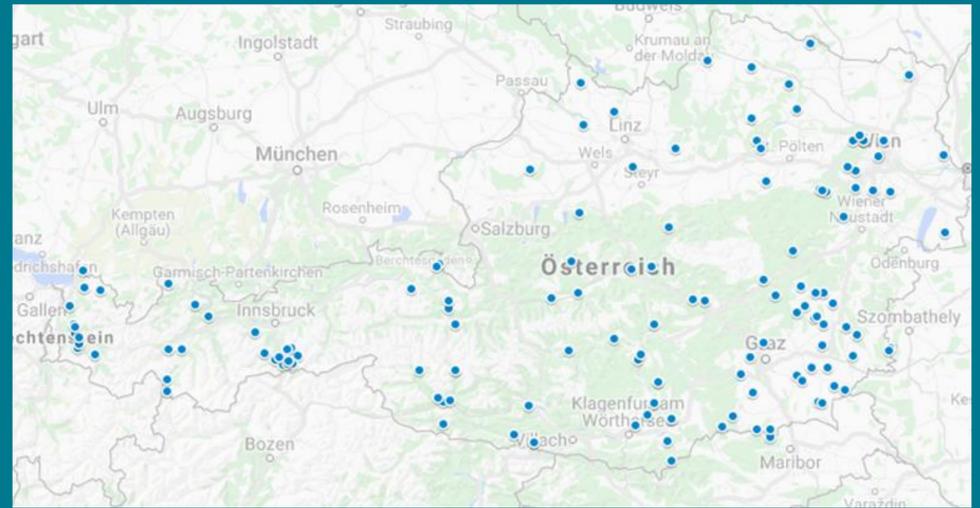
Flexibility

The majority of farmers take advantage of the flexibility offered by ENP regarding their farming practices. Compared to before, farmers have changed their farming practices especially in terms of mowing dates. In the online survey, only 6 % stated that they had not taken advantage of the flexibility granted for mowing dates. On the other hand, only 26 % changed their practices in the use of fertilisers. Also with respect to grazing, farmers find it easier to work with ENP because they can decide for themselves when, where and how many animals they want to graze.

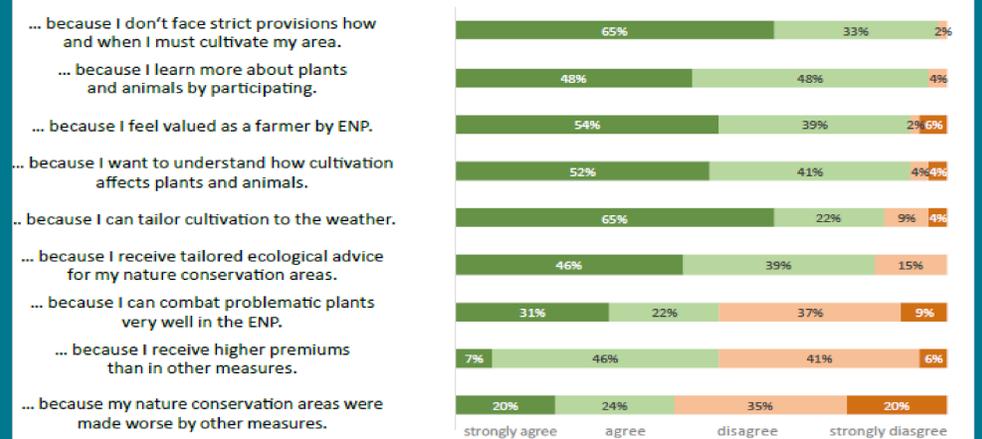


The Farmers

Currently, 143 farmers throughout Austria participate in ENP.



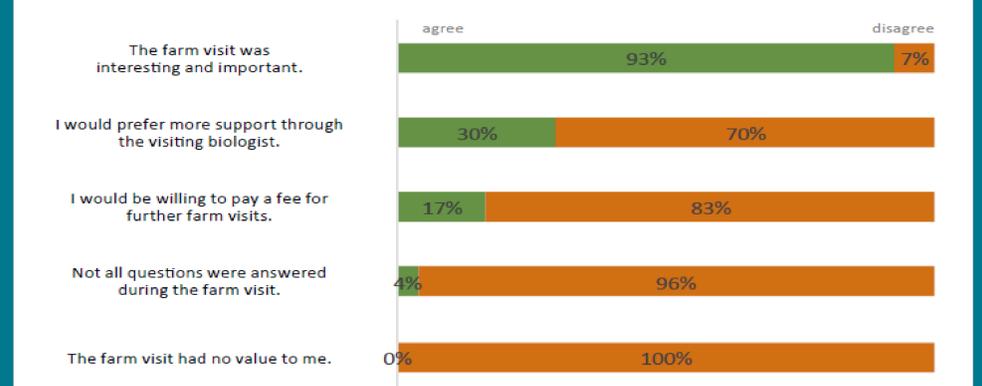
Reasons for participating in ENP



Knowledge Gain

The ENP objectives were tailored to the individual farms and defined in close consultation with the farmers. Although this requires corresponding guidance and training work, it contributes significantly to the farmer's identification with the plant and animal species on his or her nature-conservation areas. By inspecting their land together with an ecologist, a personal connection to the nature conservation objectives is created. The farmer receives ecological training and at the same time is given the responsibility to manage the land in a self-determined manner. The farmer's observations and successfully implemented methods provide valuable feedback for the future development of the subsidy system. The results of the online survey have shown that the farm visits are very important to the farmers.

How important is the farm visit for ENP farmers?



Mit Unterstützung von Bund und Europäischer Union

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