

# Traditional grassland use and it's threats in Harghita County (Eastern Carpathians)

## Actual practices and challenges after EU accession

11-13 October, 2007 Sigulda, TRINET meeting

Pal PETER

AGORA – Working Group for Sustainable Development



# Structure of the presentation

- **1<sup>st</sup> part:** Agora experience and research on extensive use grasslands in Harghita county (Eastern Carpathians)
- **2<sup>nd</sup> part:** Romanian NRDP 2007-2013, the main problems and challenges



# Where?



Model research area



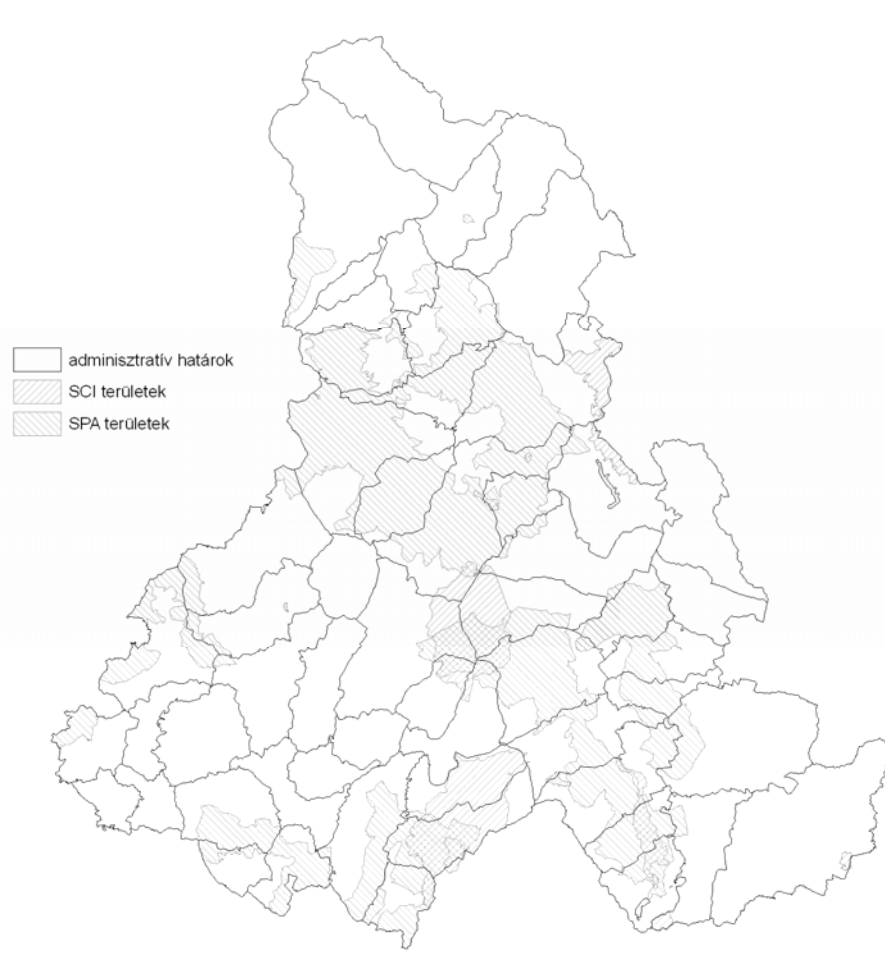


# Introduction

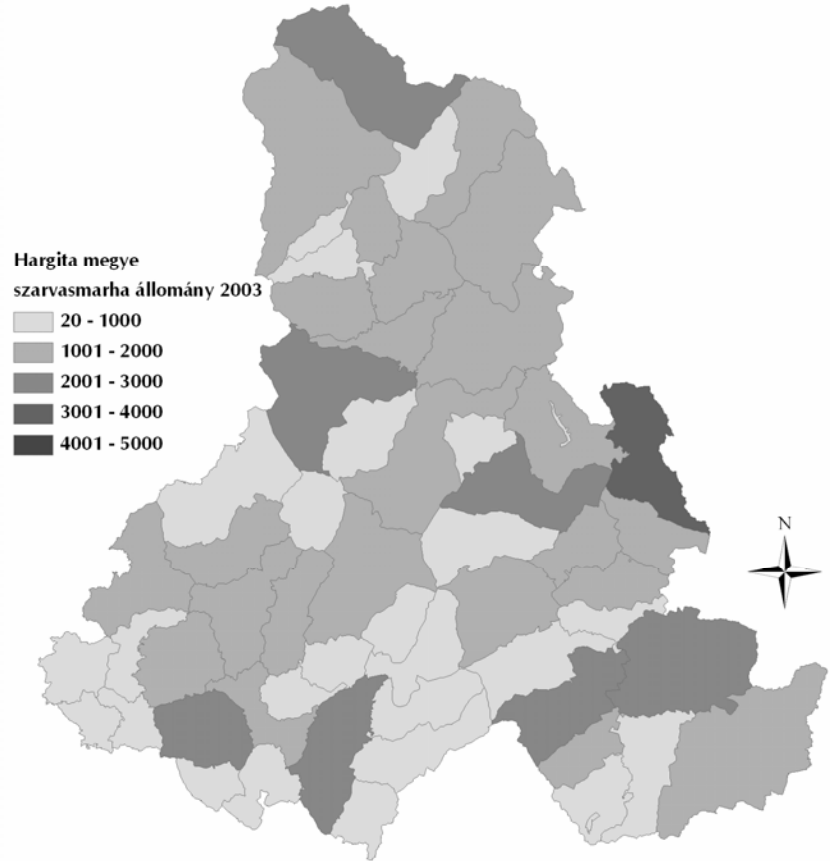
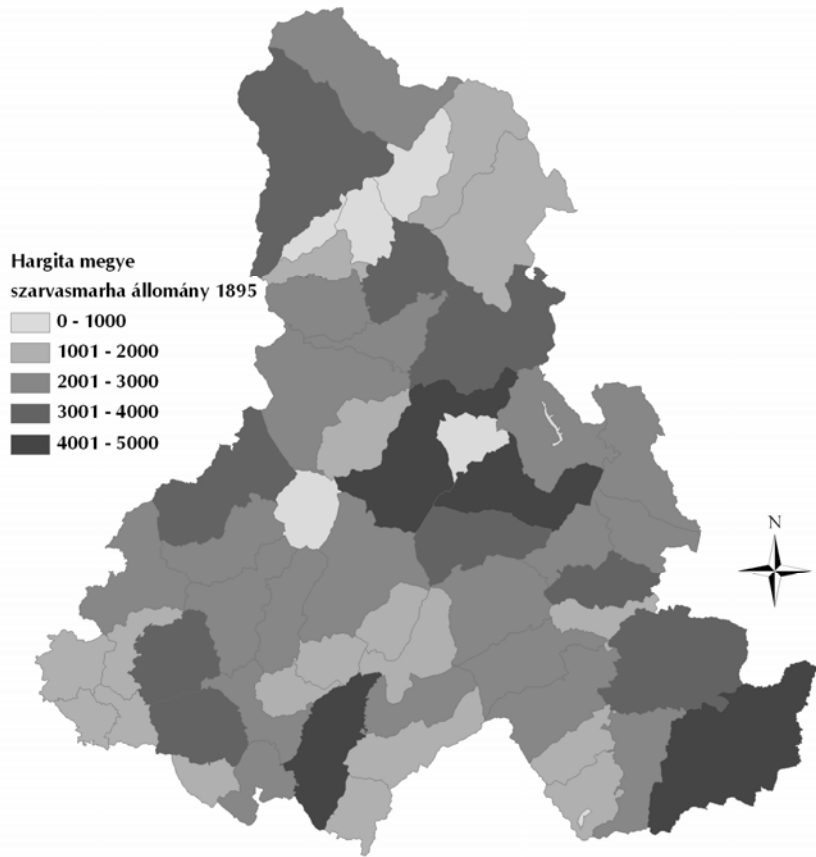
- Agora is working in Homoroad valley since 2004
- Typical rural area with extensive (low input) agriculture
- The main income of families is animal husbandry (milk)
- The main problems:
  - population getting old → depopulation of villages
  - grasslands in remote areas are abandoned, intensive use in the closer areas
  - diminuation of cattle livestock
  - young people leave agriculture → traditional practices are “forgot”



# Grasslands and Natura 2000 areas in Harghita County



# Changes in cattle livestock

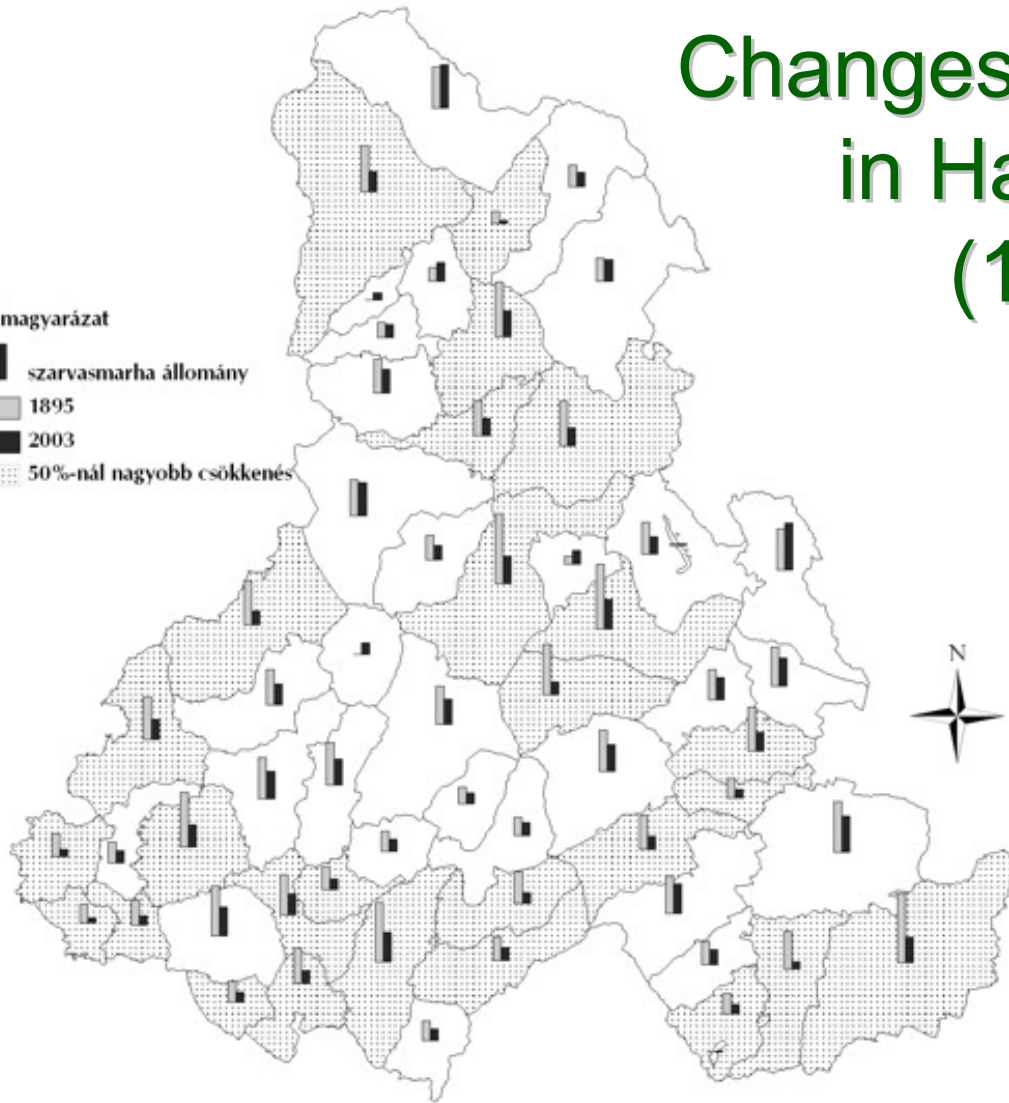




# Changes in cattle livestock in Harghita county (1895-2003)

Jelmagyarázat

- szarvasmarha állomány
- 1895
- 2003
- 50%-nál nagyobb csökkenés



# Traditional practices





# Research

- research on two grassland fields to see the effects of grazing on the arthropod fauna (carabids), using 10+10 pitfall traps
- 1<sup>st</sup> field: grazed/overgrazed for several years (sheep and cattle)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> control field: part of the nature reserve, not grazed since 1982
- trapping period: June-October 2006
- traps were emptied monthly



# Results

- a total of 30 carabid species were recorded (700 indiv.)
- higher no of species in the control field/trap (2,8 vs. 3,4)
- higher no of individuals in the control field/trap (8,1 vs. 15,2)
- more euritop species in the grazed field (ex. *Harpalus rufipes*, *Poecilus versicolor*, *Pterostichus vernalis*)
- The ecological diversity is higher in the control field (Shannon diversity index): 1,912 vs. 1,760

Species	Grazed	Control field
Abax carinatus	0	7
Abax parallelus	0	7
Amara aenea	0	1
Amara equestris	4	6
Amara nitida	1	0
Bembidion lampros	16	0
Calathus erratus	1	0
Calathus fuscipes	112	10
Calathus melanocephalus	3	0
Carabus cancellatus	1	4
Carabus coriaceus	0	1
Carabus glabratus	0	5
Carabus marginalis	0	39
Carabus ullrichi	0	6
Carabus violaceus	20	49
Cychrus caraboides	0	3
Harpalus progrediens	3	11
Harpalus roubali	3	0
Harpalus rufipes	2	0
Licinus depressus	0	1
Ophonus azureus	1	0
Ophonus stictus	0	1
Platynus dorsalis	1	0
Poecilus lepidus	52	212
Poecilus versicolor	4	0
Pterostichus melas	19	36
Pterostichus niger	1	49
Pterostichus ovoideus	0	6
Pterostichus vernalis	1	0
Synuchus vivalis	0	1
<b>No of individuals</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>455</b>
<b>No of species</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>

# Our recommendations to farmers:

We started work with the president of farmer's association and some influence farmers → example will taken by others in next year!

- to mow the remote grasslands every year
- to reduce the livestock in certain areas (environmentally sensitive areas)
- apply for land based subsidies (direct payments)
- enter the agri-environmental schemes of the NRDP (not functional, yet)
- participate at trainings on nature conservation
- find alternative incomes also (Agora SD program in Meresti)
  - ecotourism
  - biogas
  - fruit drying







# The Agora Experience

Transylvanian cultural immersion through service

Join us this summer for two unforgettable weeks in rural Transylvania. Discover the beautiful birthplace of Unitarianism and become part of a global community for positive change. Through service projects in the villages, you will gain experience and insight in the dynamic field of sustainable rural development. With homestay families and Agora's experiential staff, your group will explore the region's history, culture and landscape, make new friends and discovering new ways of thinking, living and having fun



## Sample schedule

- 9:00 Breakfast with host family.
- 9:30 Build solar drier with local Unitarian youth. Traditional fruit-drying practices died out during communism but these high-schoolers want to bring it back. Project presents opportunities to learn about business, make a delicious natural product for local markets and increase the vitamin intake for everyone in village during the winter...
- 1:00 Picnic lunch with group
- 2:00 Travel to Vargyas Gorge near village to hike with local naturalist and talk about relationships between environment, culture and Development while gathering local edible mushrooms.
- 6:30 Traditional shepherds dinner
- 7:30 Visit caves to look for bats with local specialist.
- 9:00 Camp out in gorge.

Our philosophy is we all learn while providing positive examples and needed aid through cultural immersion and volunteerism. We believe you have a lot to offer and can provide perspectives and solutions to real-world problems. By participating in the Agora Summer Experience you will make a positive difference through sharing a bit of yourself with your new found friends. Your skills and ability to seek solutions will inspire your Romanian peers and though thinking about community, planning a project and exploring a new culture, we know you will learn how to do something amazing.

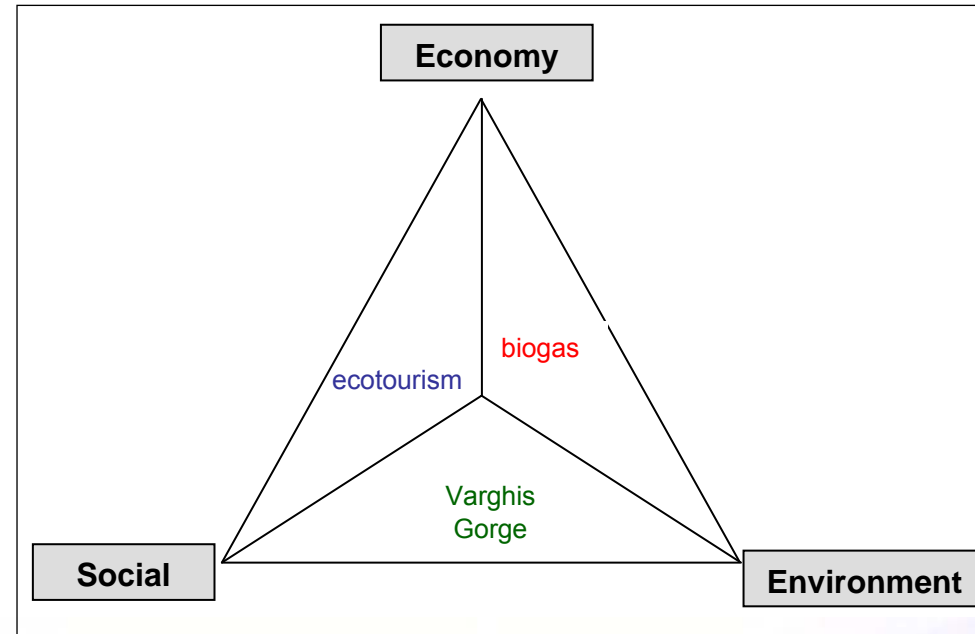


For more information, or to register today, please visit [www.experience.green-agora.ro](http://www.experience.green-agora.ro).

The Agora Experience is hosted by Agora, a Working Group for Sustainable Development

## Ecotourism

### The proposed SD model:



# Romanian NRDP 2007-2013

- officially sent to the EC on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2007 by MARD
- 608 p. document (with annexes)
- has the elements from EC documents
- composition:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> axis: 45% €4,0 bn
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> axis: 25% €2,3 bn ☹️
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> axis: 27,5% €2,4 bn
  - Leader: 2,5% €235 mln ☹️ (the smallest in EU)
- the ministry, the farmers and the conservationists were/are not prepared! **so who is?**



# Axis 2 measures

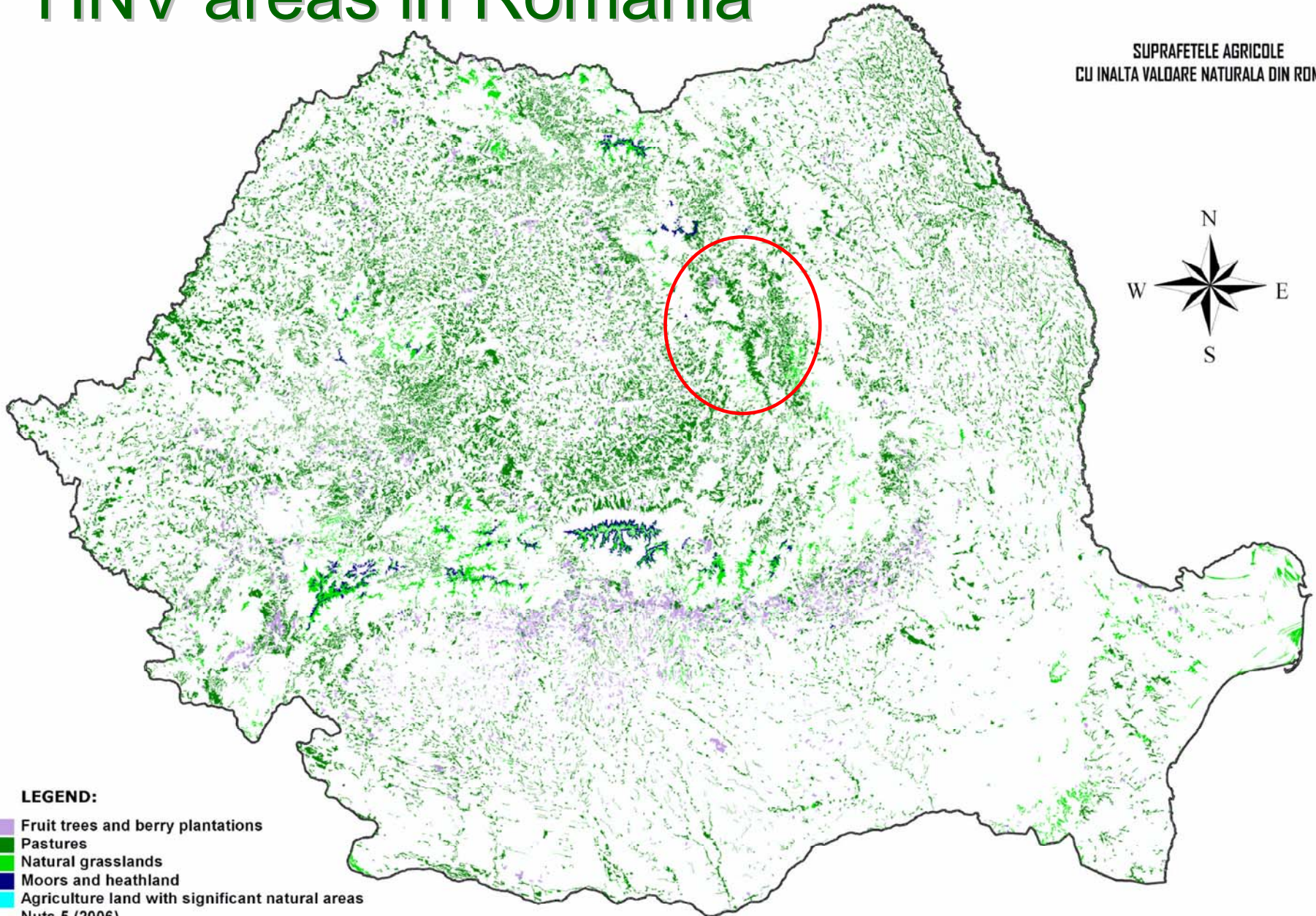
• LFA mountain areas	€798 mln	34,8%
• LFA other	€578 mln	25,2%
• N2000 payments (agr. areas)	implementation from 2010	
• Agri-environmental payments	€688 mln	30%
• First afforestation of agr. land	€229 mln	10%
• First afforestation of non-agr. land	implementation from 2010	
• N2000 forestry payments	implementation from 2010	





# HNV areas in Romania

SUPRAFETELE AGRICOLE  
CU INALTA VALOARE NATURALA DIN ROMANIA



## LEGEND:

- Fruit trees and berry plantations
- Pastures
- Natural grasslands
- Moors and heathland
- Agriculture land with significant natural areas
- Nuts 5 (2006)
- Nuts 1 (2006)

# Agri-environmental payments

Sub-measure 1	Organic farming
Sub-measure 2	Grassland conservation
Sub-measure 3	Soil and water protection

- Geographical coverage: whole national territory, excepting 3 grassland measures (2.2, 2.4, 2.5)
- total area planned under AE support: 732.000 ha (63.700 contracts)
- **lessons not learned: SAPARD 3.3 measure**
- Soil and water protection:
  - Green cover crops
  - Conversion of arable land into grassland





# Grassland management

<b>Sub-measure 2: Grassland Conservation</b>		<b>€/ha/year</b>
Basic Package 2.1	Basic grassland conservation	<b>112</b>
Basic Package 2.2	Conservation of HNV grassland	<b>187</b>
Optional Package 2.3	Traditional working practices	<b>61</b>
Optional Package 2.4	Restoration of scrub invaded grassland	<b>186</b>
Optional Package 2.5	Conservation of wet grassland habitats	<b>150</b>

- HNV areas will be delimited on county level (42 counties)
- grazing: April – November
- mowing after 1<sup>st</sup> of July, first mowing till 15<sup>th</sup> of August
- no chemical fertilizers and pesticides on meadows
- max. 2 mechanized cuts, no limitation for manual mowing





# Restoration (scrubs)

- separate package
- can be added to one of the basic packages
- assessment before cleaning the scrubs (no loss of red list species – usually ornithologists)
- farmer eligible if has a parcel with more than 25% covered by scrub
- cutting in the first year of application between 1<sup>st</sup> of August – 31 November
- removed from the field in 6 months

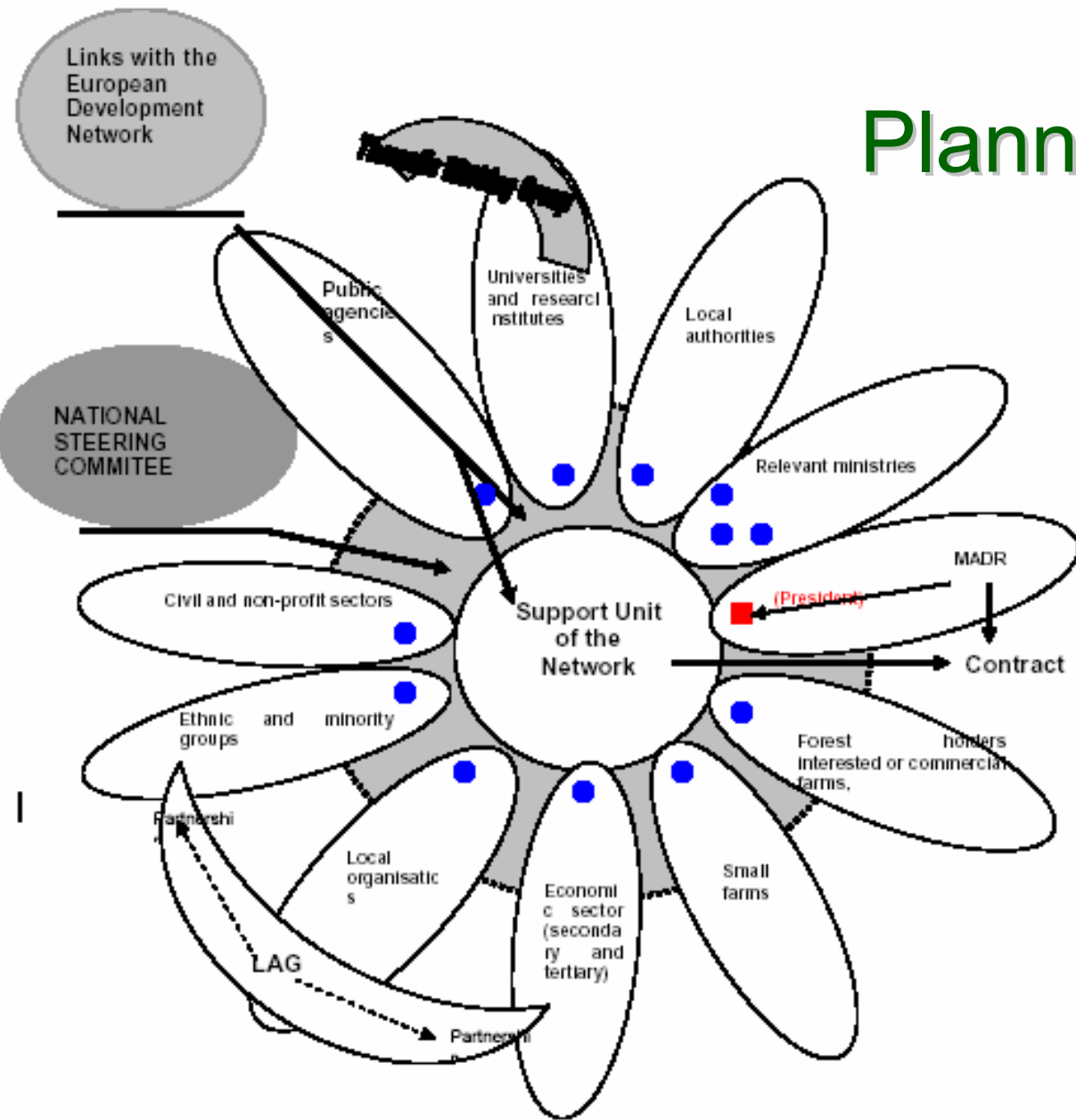


# National Rural Development Network

Phases	Deadline
1. Preliminary study of the rural network and identifying the potential members of the network	31.10.2007
2. Setting up the National Steering Committee for the National Network for Rural Development	31.04.2008
3. Elaboration of the Terms of Reference and of the action plan for network functioning of NNRD	31.05.2008
4. Launching the tender procedure in order to select the entity in charge with the network	31.07.2008
5. Selection of the entity in charge with the NNRD	15.11.2008
6. Launching the entity activity responsible with the NNRD management	31.12.2008



# Planned structure



## LEGEND

- Member
- President

## Financing:

aprox. €11 mln from EARDF and national funds







Thank you for your attention!

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[www.experience.green-agera.ro](http://www.experience.green-agera.ro)

[www.agromediu.ro](http://www.agromediu.ro)

**NRDP:**

[www.mapam.ro/pages/dezvoltare\\_rurala/NRDP\\_english\\_version.pdf](http://www.mapam.ro/pages/dezvoltare_rurala/NRDP_english_version.pdf)

