PHAE II in France

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Why speaking of PHAE?

PHAE = prime herbagère agri-environnementale
= agri-environmental grass premium

Is PHAE a tangible starting point for an HNV scheme?
From Grassland premium to PHAE II

« Grassland premium » in 1993 (Premium for the maintenance of extensive livestock)
- 75% grassland and less than 1.4 LU/ha
- Mainly a compensation to livestock breeders in the 1992 CAP reform
- 45 €/ha

PHAE I in 2003
- Idem + conditions on fertilisation (max 120 uN and 50 u mineral N)
- 76 €/ha

PHAE II in 2009
- Budgetary issues
Eligibility criteria of PHAE

1. **Minimum 50-75% of grassland on UAA** (level of grass specialisation, 50/75% adapted at nuts 3 level)
   - "grassland" = all types of grassland, inclusive of intensive temporary grassland

2. **0.35 < Stocking rate < 1.4 LU/ha**
   - LU are those declared or getting payments through CAP (sheep, goat)
   - Common lands are not counted, except in Atlantic marshes

3. **Be aged between 18 and 60 years**

4. **Having paid tax to water agency**
Payments

- 76 €/ha
- Max 7600 €/farm and min 300 €/ha
- A pre-requisite for other grass-related AEM (e.g. extensive management)
Commitments

- **Hold the surfaces for 5 years**
  - Cultivate no more than 20% of temporary grassland every year

- **Register fertilisation with a maximum of 125 uN/90 P/160 K (max 60 uN mineral for each element)**

- **No use of herbicides**
  - Clearance of wooded elements and/or « refus » (what is left un-grazed by animals) with machines (no herbicides)

- **Have on the surface of the farm at least 20% of « biodiversity features » and maintain them**
The biodiversity features

- Moor lands, rangelands, altitude pastures, wetlands,... as defined at département (Nuts3) level
- Permanent grassland (s.l.) under N2000
- Set-aside, environmental cover under GAEC,...
- Traditional orchards
- Peat bogs
- Hedges, trees in line and isolated, coppice
- Ditches, streams, ponds
- Stonewalls, terraces

=> SNV + HNV landscape features
A complex system of scores

The « equivalent biodiversity surface » index (how to reach the 20%?)

- 1 ha of permanent grassland = 1 ha of BS
- 1 ha of permanent grassland in N2000 = 2 ha of BS
- 1 ha of traditionnal orchards = 5 ha of BS
- 100 m of hedge = 1 ha of BS
- Etc.
The control system

Documents provided by the farmer
- Livestock book
- Fertilisation book
- Calculation table of BS by the farmer

Visual control in the field by the controller
- Maintenance of permanent grassland
- Maintenance of biodiversity element (« obvious statement of destruction »)
What has it achieved so far?

- PMSEE, PHAE 1 and PHAE 2 are quite the same at the end
- They filled a large part of the payment gap of the main beef systems in grassland regions
  - But public money has been for private investments (animal housing, inputs)
- Very limited impact on biodiversity
  - Farms tend to converge to the 1.4 LU/ha limit in order to optimize the payments and the gross product
Discussion

In its present form, PHAE II is (intentionally) too weak...

- Criteria are not demanding enough: stocking rate, fertilisation
- The equivalence system is recognised as being too permissive
- Control system allows flexibility (why not BE on the LPIS?)

... but

- Introduction of SNV and HNV landscape features! Combined with stocking rate
- Shows concrete ways to strengthen the scheme