

Natuurrijk Limburg - Dutch farmers collective



SUMMARY Natuurrijk Limburg is one of the 40 Dutch farming collectives. They act as an intermediary between the provincial government and landowners, mostly farmers, for the subsidy programme Agrarisch Natuur- en Landschapsbeheer (ANLb = Agricultural Nature and Landscape Protection). Natuurrijk Limburg is the only collective in the province of Limburg and therefore has the largest area of land under its care of any Dutch collective. Natuurrijk Limburg enters into a collective agreement with the Province, which gives it the responsibility to take measures to protect nature on agricultural land in order to achieve the government's

objectives in the field of species protection. This in turn is done by concluding individual contracts with the farmers. Because the area that Natuurrijk Limburg is responsible for is so large, they have to deal with a lot of different landscapes, arable as well as dairy farming, and different types of soil.

Contract Type



PES contracts including AECM

Public Goods

CLIMATE REGULATION

SOIL

WATER

BIODIVERSITY

Field of action



Basis of Payment



Action-based

Involved contract takers



Collective

OBJECTIVES

- Optimize habitats for species in farmland protected by European and Dutch law

CONTRACT DETAILS

Participation, involved parties & conditions of participation This collective contract is part of the Dutch way of carrying out the subsidyscheme ANLb for species protection. In the Netherlands, it is only possible to participate in this scheme if you become a member of a collective. All the collectives are certified for the work they do and are associated in the national organization called BoerenNatuur. In this case it involves the government of the Province of Limburg, Natuurrijk Limburg and their member-farmers. Natuurrijk Limburg has 1,300 members who work on carrying out the scheme. In the Netherlands as a whole there are 10,000 farmers working on this. The collective can only make contracts with farmers within regions that the government has specified as "high potential areas".

The collective coordinates these contracts so that the measures on farmland are taken in optimal spatial and temporal relation to each other. In this way, the measures are not isolated but form a mosaic across the landscape which creates improved habitats for species.

Management requirements Natuurlijk Limburg and the farmers implement the measures which will help to achieve the province's biodiversity objectives. Natuurlijk Limburg can retain 15% of the transaction costs for hiring ecologically trained staff or for paying people to assist with the administrative burden. Each farmer can choose which different measures he wants to implement on his land. Natuurlijk Limburg advises the farmer on which measures suit his land and are related to what his neighbouring colleagues are doing. The agreed measures are recorded in a nationwide GIS-based IT system. This IT system serves as a live link to the Dutch Enterprise Agency, so that only areas actually farmed by the farmer can be registered. This IT system is maintained by BoerenNatuur. The measures are specified by concrete requirements.

Advice & support The farmer receives support in managing the land according to the mentioned requirements. This happens in the form of advice from an employee of the collective, or for example in knowledge exchange workshops that the collective organizes. BoerenNatuur also facilitates knowledge exchange between collectives.

Control & payment mechanisms The collective carries out controls to see if the requirements are met. If not, they can decide to give a fine or even end the contract with the farmer. When requirements are met, the farmer is paid. 50% of the funds in this scheme are made up of European Union subsidies under pillar II of the Common Agricultural Policy. The other 50% is paid by the Dutch provinces. The payment is based on the costs incurred, it is therefore a compensation, not a reward.

SUCCESS FACTORS

Organisation at local level

- Increased sense of responsibility for the measures and awareness of their impact on nature
- Pride and motivation to participate
- Accessibility to knowledge for farmers, but also for people outside the region

Collective approach

- Measures on a landscape scale which are more beneficial to the species than isolated individual measures
- High level of trust from national and provincial governments

Other success factors

- Amount of money offered is sufficient to make it financially attractive to farmers
- Long duration of the contract offers farmers a certain degree of security (6 years at the beginning of the CAP period)
- IT system and the link to national government data

www.natuurrijkl limburg.nl



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 818190.