



## PRACTICE ABSTRACT No 6

### Keywords

collaboration, cooperation, agri-environment and climate measures, landscape management, biodiversity

## Barriers to collective contracts in agri-environmental management

Based on two workshops with participants from more than 10 European countries, including practitioners and academics, barriers and bottlenecks for starting or expanding collective contracts for agri-environmental management were identified. Commonly cited barriers centre around issues with administration, policies and lack of trust. Existing policies and regulation are not set up to accommodate or encourage collective contracts. This is linked to rigid administrative structures and the perceived additional bureaucracy associated with collective contract. There is a lack of incentives for administrations to share power and control with other actors, coupled with a lack of trust and experience, and a top down mindset. Land tenure pattern may also create barriers, in particular where subsidies go to the owner and not the tenant. Barriers at the farmer level include not knowing the interests of neighbouring farmers, different opinions about the appropriate management, lack of trust between farmers, an unwillingness to give up control to the collective, and many farmers distrusting nature associations. Where farmers join only for financial motives, 'freeriders' may become a problem, eroding the reciprocal basis of collectives.

The increasing use of farming contractors further inhibits collective approaches. Lack of experience, habits and inertia lead to path dependency.

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### Country/Region

UK  
Netherlands  
Belgium  
and others

Additional social barriers emerge where generational conflicts or cultural differences exist, or where 'newcomers' to an area are not integrated. Organisational costs, higher costs for coordination and overheads, coupled with limited funding, are bottlenecks identified for expanding the work of collectives.

This Practice Abstract links to PA 7 on “Overcoming barriers to collective contracts in agri-environmental management”



## ABOUT CONTRACTS2.0

December 2020

Contracts2.0 aims to develop innovative contract-based solutions, which increase the motivation for farmers and land managers to produce more environmental public goods and allow them to reconcile the profitability of their farms with sustainability objectives. To do so, 28 research and practice partners closely cooperate to co-design and evaluate the novel contracts. Lessons learned from successfully tested contracts will also provide support for policy makers on local, national and EU-Level.

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### Research partners



### Action partners



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

All Practice Abstracts prepared by the contracts2.0 project can be found here:

<https://www.project-contracts20.eu/publications/in-brief/> & <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/search/site/contracts2.0>