

## Dream contract factsheet 12: Órség National Park (Hungary)



### Dream farming-landscape

#### Objective

Órség has a nationwide reputation for its nature life and picturesque landscape. Recognisable settlement structure – small groups of houses or little farms in free pattern – are surrounded by maintained meadows, it reaches and ends with the closest stream or micro valley in this various relief. Slopes, moorlands and streams give nature borders between different habitats and land-uses.

Diversity of land structure would remain and increase in different dimensions: Parcels vary widely (arable land, forest, meadow and pasture) according to natural habitats. There is no need to force to graze in wetland and to plough in clay. In cultivated parcels micro habitat appear such as shrub areas, little ponds (specialty in Órség) and fruit trees in meadows.

Most of Órség region is a national park, thus rural development concentrates on nature protection, agricultural and touristic initiatives. Locals search for nature sites and picturesque scenes not only for their own recreation but also to favour their guests to provide still life in family farms (with small numbers of livestock and home-made dairy products). In land uses the rate of forest remains high, and it should be the dominating landscape in the future. Among intensive land-use modes natural orchards and pastures will get stronger emphasis. It stabilises the number of livestock and establishes local processing plants such as slaughterhouse and produce high quality dairy and meat products.

#### Enablers

- Fluctuation in population: new inhabitants are mostly come from urban area, and the minority has experience in agriculture. So, they can also have more experience in management and collaboration. Maybe they are more open to learn best practices and adapt it to climate change.
- Good reputation as a venue (as a land of farm products as well: Órség goods, as a brand of quality food products)
- Increasing demand for local and ecological products
- Land structure: small and medium size farms remain in Órség, farm integration and intensification are still not in high level in grasslands and arable

#### Inhibitors

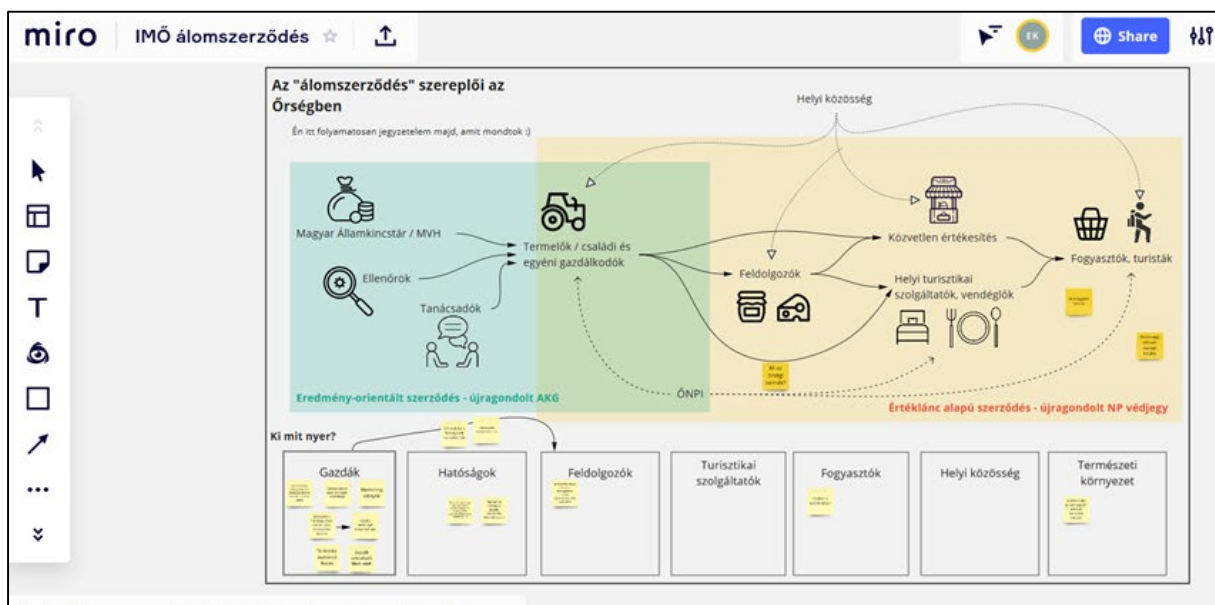
- Fluctuation in population – new inhabitants mostly come from urban area, and the minority has experience in agriculture.
- Lack of cooperation
- Not promising AECS, limited motivation to start or switch to ecological agriculture
- Lack of human resource, it pushed agricultural to intensification
- Strict regulation in individual/family farm production

## Actors involved in defining the dream landscape

- CIL members (locals: farmers, restaurant owner, mayor, owners of guesthouse),
- Participants of online “club event” (higher number of locals)
- Őrség National Park Directorate

## Method used

- Monthly online club events and online meetings (**Figure 1**)
- *Mentimeter* exercises
- Personal interviews.



**Figure 1.** Online workshops for dream contracting in Őrség National Park.

## Dream contract #1: Result-based

### Objective

A result-based agri-environmental payment scheme is envisaged where farmers can select more flexibly the actions in order to achieve the conservation goals. Such a scheme could be firstly implemented as a pilot to the current AES.

By financially rewarding farmers for their environmental performance, the proportion of highly diverse grassland could be increased --> more grazing animals --> good quality pastures and mosaic landscape conserved

Indeed, awareness of farmers and knowledge sharing and collaboration across ŐNPD and farmers will increase. The quality end products will also be increased (value realised through the value chain contract)

## Measures

In RBAPS there are no specific measures to follow. Although biodiversity target (=highly diverse grassland) is defined and clarified, which contains mosaic landscape, protection of highly valued habitat, reduction of invasive species, prohibition of fertilizer in grassland.

## Benefits envisaged

- Societal/environmental benefits:
  - Biodiversity conservation, habitat for rare protected species preserved, risk of land abandonment can be decreased
  - endangering factors better managed
  - ancient landrace fruit varieties preferred revived
  - Consumers (higher value-added for good quality products, trust in local products)
  - Tourists (diverse landscape)
  - ÖNPD (biodiversity habitats improvement, highly valuable areas)
- Benefits for farmers:
  - Financial reward for pro-biodiversity farming, more flexibility in conservation actions compared to mainstream AES, closer link to advisory/broadened knowledge of sustainable environment friendly farming/ predictable market for farmers' products.

## Application domain

- Farm types: small and medium size family farms (dairy production, pasture management)
- Land use: grassland
- Land tenure conditions: Private or leased private land

## Contract duration

- Ideal contract period: 5 years

## Actors

- Paying agency
- ÖNPD (advisor)
- Monitoring agency
- Advisory agency

## Access to land

Land will be public and private, for instance some of the public land is leased to local farmers by ÖNPD. Since this farming area is placed in a national park, the norms are really strict and clear. E.g., no use of fertiliser is grassland, leaving uncut areas, limited timespan for mowing etc.). Additional regulation can be required such as restrictions to protect specific species (duration of mowing, territorial restriction in mowing, etc.) and submitted annual farm management plans.

## Payments

- The payments will come from public funding and it will be based on a combination of actions and results.
- The payment will be scalable, basic payments and then one or two levels of bonus can be paid for higher results.
- The maximum payment can be higher than compensation for income forgone and costs.

## Monitoring

It will be a combination of practices and results, and it will be carried out mainly by farmers (with adviser agency if it is needed) but less frequently monitored.

## Dream contract #2: Value chain

### Objective

A value chain contract is envisaged in order to link together local producers and (local/regional) consumers, and incentivise producers for more sustainable production through quality requirements. The “national park product” label can be revitalised incorporating “green” requirements, and short food supply chains (SFSC) can be established (e.g., local basket) or boosted up (e.g., local market) to create a “market pull”.

This contract will contribute in three different ways to the dream landscape: 1. High-quality dairy products in the SFSC --> Grazing animals (cattle) --> good quality pastures; 2. High-quality fruit products (jams, syrups, juices) in the SFSC --> meadow orchards system revitalised --> ancient landrace fruit varieties. 3. Multi-flower honey --> biodiversity-rich grassland (with different flowering period, different species), increased area of bee pastures

### Measures

- No use of pesticides, GMO free products, no added artificial additives and artificial flavour enhancers, mainly local/regional ingredients, environmentally friendly packaging.
- ÖNP label might have gradual classification (e.g., bronze, silver, gold) according to the ecological approach in production.

### Benefits envisaged

- Societal/environmental benefits:
  - Biodiversity conservation (mainly grassland species)
  - Agro-biodiversity (mainly ancient landrace fruit varieties)
  - revitalising abandoned pastures
  - Stronger producer-consumer relationship
  - Consumers (higher value-added of good quality products, trust in local products)
  - Tourists, tourist service providers (diverse landscape, higher quality in local gastronomy and easy way to find local product and trust in it)
  - ÖNPD (biodiversity-rich habitats, increasing highly valuable areas, enhanced willingness to continue farming or start farming in abandoned fields by farmers)

- Benefits for farmers:
  - Financial reward for pro-biodiversity farming, more flexibility in conservation actions compared to mainstream AES, closer link to advisory/broadened knowledge of sustainable environment friendly farming/ predictable market for farmers' products.
  - Collaboration between farmers/extended tourism supply/improving health condition and gastronomic custom

### Application domain

- Farm types: small scale family farms, cattle breeders and people who manage the pasture
- Land use: grassland and orchards (also consider meadow orchards use)
- Land tenure conditions: Private (and to some extent public land leased to private land managers)

### Contract duration

Ideal contract period: 3 years

### Actors

- Paying agency
- ÖNPD (advisor)
- Monitoring agency
- Advisory agency

### Access to land

- Land will be private (and to some extent public land leased to private land managers).
- Pilot project in Órség takes place in national park, thus some basic regulations in farming are already strict and clear by law. E.g., no usage of fertilizer in grassland, leaving uncut areas, limited timespan for mowing.) Additional regulation can be required such as restrictions for protected species (duration of mowing, territorial restriction in mowing etc.) and submitted annual farm management plans.
- The access to this land will be prioritised by a scoring system, farmers with value-chain approach will get higher points.

### Payments

- The payments will come from public and private funding, in the case of private funding it will come from consumers. Farmers will not receive the payments in a collective way.
- Farmers will get higher prices for their products.

### Monitoring

Practices, process, ingredients and packaging will be monitored.