

Practice Abstract 6

Green Infrastructure in the agricultural landscape – habitat rich cultivation

The decreasing biodiversity is a general conflict in our cultural landscapes. Beside extensive cultivation methods rich, not fragmented green infrastructure is the precondition for preserving, developing biodiversity in the cultural landscape. A very important reason for the lack of habitats of agricultural land is the lack of landscape elements providing links, hiding and nesting places for animals associated with the agricultural landscape. In our abstract we collected possible spaces for maintaining, developing green infrastructure in the farmland. For green infrastructure development priority target areas include

- strips 50 m wide adjacent to watercourses,
- land margins (10 m)
- arable land steeper than 17 %,
- arable land at risk of erosion,
- arable land affected by inland water,
- land of low soil quality,
- roadside strips arable land (2x20m wide),
- Natura 2000 protected arable land,
- arable land at risk of deflation,
- existing and potential field borders eligible for greening (20 m wide),
- treeless arable land around landfills, material extraction sites,
- underground water quality protection areas and
- treeless arable land next to settlements (100 m wide),
- gaps of ecological corridors (Figure 1).

Non-linear, woody elements can also be useful, as groups of trees, bushes, and solitary trees can serve as hiding places for songbirds and nest opportunities for species feeding on fields.

In case of establishment of new rows of trees or forest strips, native species corresponding to natural conditions are preferred. Wind resistance is also a consideration. Considering the spread of birds can be supported by using bird-friendly mixture species, these can be fruit-bearing trees or shrubs, or species that attract insects. The presence of berry shrubs is therefore essential for the winter nutrition of songbirds. Establishing grass fields also serves the interests of wildlife – especially in field borders a patch of lawn or hiding strips.

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Figure 1. Priority area for green infrastructure development for improving connectivity in agricultural landscape. Planting shrubs, forest belt marked by purple in the maps connects fragmented ecological corridors



Figure 2. Low lying meadows along the river Drau (Photo: Zsolt Szilvácsku)



Figure 3. Wooden strip along the channel in Hanság in the agricultural landscape improving the ecological corridor function of the watercourse (Photo: Zsolt Szilvácsku)



Figure 4. Small forest patch between arable fields serving as stepping stone habitat (Photo: Zsolt Szilvácsku)



Figure 5. Meadow with trees (Photo: Edina Dancsokné Föris)



Figure 6. Mosaic structured landscape with varied cultivation providing habitat, migration roots for wildlife.