

MultiSward

Multi-species swards and multi scale strategies for multifunctional grassland-base ruminant production systems

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Deliverable D1.4

Note on near-future policies (2012-2020) regarding grasslands that will be required to fill gaps between today and future multifunctionalities of grasslands as seen by national stakeholders

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Concerned workpackage leader: DLO-LR (Dr. Agnes van den Pol-van Dasselaar)

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The original title of this deliverable D1.4 was “Note on near-future policies (2012-2020) regarding grasslands that will be required to fill these gaps”. However, “these gaps” referred to both deliverables D1.2 “Report on appreciation of the current and future functions of grasslands in Europe and identification of implementation gaps between today and future multifunctionalities, as seen by international stakeholders” and D1.3 “Report on appreciation of the future functions of grassland and identification of research and implementation gaps between today and future multifunctionalities by national stakeholders”.

For this deliverable to be read as a standalone document and a better understanding of the title, the D1.4 has been renamed “Note on near-future policies (2012-2020) regarding grasslands that will be required to fill gaps between today and future multifunctionalities of grasslands as seen by national stakeholders”.

The objective and content of this deliverable have not been changed.

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Summary

Objective of the deliverable:

To discuss near-future policies (2012-2020) regarding grasslands that will be required to fill gaps between today and future multi-functionalities by national stakeholders

Activities:

- Reflection on results of Deliverables 1.2 and 1.3 (appreciation of the current and future functions of grasslands in Europe and identification of implementation gaps between today and future multi-functionalities, as seen by international and national stakeholders, respectively)
- Analysis of further results of the questionnaire obtained in 2012 following delivery of D1.3

Teams involved in stakeholder consultation:

Wageningen UR Livestock Research (DLO-LR), The Netherlands
Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA), France
Teagasc, Ireland
Poznan University of Life Sciences (PULS), Poland
Università degli studi di Udine (UNIUD), Italy

Geographical areas covered:

Atlantic regions, mountainous regions, Mediterranean regions, continental regions

Summary:

A questionnaire and national meetings among different stakeholders and different regions in Europe provided insight into the appreciation of the current and future functions of grasslands in Europe (D1.2 and D1.3). Results of the questionnaire obtained after delivering D1.3 were analysed in coherence with D1.2 and D1.3. The results clearly showed that the different functions of grasslands are highly recognized and appreciated. The large European grassland area is essential for economy, environment and people. There were, however, hardly any differences in stakeholders' appreciation of today and future functions of grasslands. This deliverable (D1.4) aims to discuss near-future policies (2012-2020) regarding grasslands that will be required to fill gaps between today and future multi-functionalities by national stakeholders. However, as these gaps were not present, no such policies could be suggested. The data of D1.2 and D1.3 confirm that the different services provided by grasslands are well recognized. It is therefore important that future policies continue to support conservation of grasslands.

1. Introduction

MultiSward aims to secure optimal acreage and utilization of grasslands in Europe and to highlight the benefits of grasslands. In order to contribute to this overall objective, stakeholder requirements and expectations with respect to multi-functionality of grasslands within Europe are identified. Deliverable 1.1 of MultiSward (de Vliegher and van Gils, 2010) reported on the roles and utility of grassland in Europe. Deliverable 1.2 (Pinxterhuis, 2011) reported on the appreciation of the current and future functions of grasslands in Europe and identification of implementation gaps between today and future multi-functionalities, as seen by *international* stakeholders. Deliverable 1.3 (Van den Pol-van Dasselaar et al., 2012) reported on the appreciation of the future functions of grassland and identification of research and implementation gaps between today and future multi-functionalities by *national* stakeholders. This deliverable was based on results from a questionnaire, national meetings and a workshop during the Annual Meeting of MultiSward in 2012.

Deliverables 1.2 and 1.3 were prepared by an international team of representatives of countries throughout Europe, representing the different regions in Europe. The countries are Ireland, the Netherlands, France, Italy and Poland representing Atlantic, Mountainous, Mediterranean and Continental regions. The international team facilitates and stimulates the stakeholder consultations and discussions by securing the different steps of a multi-stakeholder process: setting up the process, strategically planning the process, implementing and managing the process, learning through monitoring and adapting. The team is in charge of organising national and international meetings and questionnaires throughout Europe. Furthermore, the team collects and synthesizes the output of these meetings and questionnaires.

The current Deliverable (D1.4) aims to discuss near-future policies (2012-2020) regarding grasslands that will be required to fill gaps between today and future multi-functionalities by stakeholders.

2. Materials and methods

For D1.2 and D1.3 several national/international meetings were held. Furthermore, a questionnaire on multifunctionality of grasslands was developed in six languages (Polish, Dutch, Italian, French, English, German). The questionnaire was available on paper in a few countries and on-line (www.multisward.eu).

As a first step for D1.4 reflection on results of Deliverables D1.2 and D1.3 was carried out. Furthermore, results of the questionnaire obtained in 2012 following delivery of D1.3 were analysed. These activities should lead to i) identification of the gaps between today and future multi-functionalities by stakeholders and ii) discussion on near-future policies (2012-2020) regarding grasslands that will be required to fill these gaps.

3. Results

Appreciation of the functions of grassland

The questionnaire and the national meetings provided insight in the appreciation of different functions of grasslands in Europe. They clearly showed that the different functions of grasslands are highly recognized and appreciated. The large European grassland area is essential for economy, environment and people. Pinxterhuis (2011) and Van den Pol-van Dasselaar *et al.* (2012) concluded that grasslands are a valuable resource in Europe and that maintaining or increasing the importance of the different functions and services of grassland in Europe is a challenge for the coming years.

Identification of research and implementation gaps between today and future multi-functionalities

The stakeholders were asked how they would rate the relevance of the different functions of grasslands for tomorrow compared to today. Stakeholders expect that the grassland area will remain fairly constant. There were hardly any differences in stakeholders' appreciation of today and future functions of grasslands. The only remark of the stakeholders was that they expect increasing importance of both feed protein supply at farm level and environmentally friendly systems. Maintaining relation with neighbours was experienced as even less important in the future than today. All the other items were considered to be of equal importance today and in the future (Van den Pol-van Dasselaar *et al.*, 2012). There were no research and implementation gaps between today and future multi-functionalities.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The appreciation of future functions by stakeholders does not lead to identification of research and implementation gaps between today and future multi-functionalities. Reason for the lack of large differences between appreciation of today and future functions can either be that there is no difference or that stakeholders cannot imagine yet differences in appreciation between today and the future.

This deliverable (D1.4) aims to suggest near-future policies (2012-2020) regarding grasslands that will be required to fill gaps between today and future multi-functionalities as seen by stakeholders. However, as these gaps were not present, no such policies can be suggested.

The data of Deliverables 1.2 and 1.3 confirm that the different services provided by grasslands are well recognized. It is therefore important that future policies continue to support conservation of grasslands.

References

De Vlieghe A. and van Gils B. (2010) *Report on roles and utility of grassland in Europe*. Report MultiSward, ILVO, Belgium.

Pinxterhuis J.B. (2011) *Report on appreciation of the current and future functions of grasslands in Europe and identification of implementation gaps between today and future multi-functionalities, as seen by international stakeholders*. Report MultiSward, Wageningen UR Livestock Research, Lelystad, the Netherlands.

Van den Pol-van Dasselaar A., P. Goliński, D. Hennessy, C. Huyghe, G. Parente, J.L. Peyraud and J.B. Pinxterhuis (2012) *Report on appreciation of the future functions of grassland and identification of research and implementation gaps between today and future multi-functionalities by national stakeholders*. Report MultiSward, Wageningen UR Livestock Research, Lelystad, the Netherlands.