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Book of Abstracts

Editors:

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Preparing for the EU-Nature restoration regulation to restore ecosystems

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The EU-Nature Restoration Regulation (adopted in June 2024) requires action to restore at least 20% of degraded ecosystems by 2030, and to improve the conservation status of species and habitats of the Directives. It demands improvement of the spatial cohesion of the nature network, and increasing biodiversity, whether in protected sites, farmland or urban environments. The regulation is legally binding and has large implications for the restoration efforts of EU-Member States, land owners and conservation organisations. There is a huge task for all Member States to develop and submit their national nature restoration plans within the coming year!

We have developed three scenario's for nature restoration, for two transboundary landscapes, straddling the Dutch-German border and Dutch-Flanders border. The scenarios combine restoration measures that are deemed feasible and acceptable to land owners and other stakeholders in the area. The focus is on restoring forests and grassland ecosystem and raising biodiversity in farmland. Restoration measures considered were adaptation of forest composition, creating forest corridors, planting of hedgerows or agroforestry. For grassland restoration opportunities are in diversification of grasslands, extensification of management or grazing and the reintroduction of landscape elements for green-blue veining. The possible restoration measures have been used for discussion with stakeholders, to assess their preferences and adjust them where necessary.

With models like LARCH and QuickSCAN we assess the impact of measures to restore habitats and species and to improve the TEN-N, impact on biodiversity, connectivity, productive functions for farming and forestry.

More important than two regional restoration plans is the resulting methodology, tested in preparation for the implementation of the EU-Nature Restoration law. Countries preparing for the Nature Restoration Law can learn from this project how to develop nature restoration plans, lessons which extend to all countries.

Oral presentation