Reconciling agriculture and biodiversity in the French Regional Nature Parks: The « Flowering meadows contest »

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Reconciling agriculture and biodiversity in the French Regional Nature Parks, The « Flowering Meadows contest »

1 – What do the french Regional Nature Parks do in terms of agriculture and biodiversity ?

2 – The « Flowering meadows contest » : the Massif des Bauges experience ; the national contest

3 – Conditions of success, conclusions
50 Regional nature Parks

8.5 M Ha
15% of France

3.9 M inhabitants
A regional nature Park:
- a fragile rural area, a remarkable heritage,
- organised around a project designed to ensure the protection of its heritage with respect to its management, and its economic and social development.

What for?
1) Protect its heritage
2) Implement economic and social development
3) Participate in the spatial planning of its area
4) Welcome and inform the public
5) Carry out experiences
Ecological diversity
Agricultural diversity
What the RNP do in terms of agriculture / biodiversity

- Protect agricultural land
- Conduct agri-environmental programs
- Support quality productions
- Promote short supply chains
- Support agri-tourism projects
- Transverse: pedagogy, research programs...
Connecting conservation and agricultural activities for a sustainable development: The “flowering meadows” experience
Or the Flower’s Power
RNP Bauges Massif: location

- 850 km²
- 300 m to 2200 m high
- 70,000 inhabitants
- 450,000 inhabitants in the 6 gateway towns
Bauges Massif Agriculture

- 750 professional farms
- Farm domain: 30% of area
- 450 livestocks farms
- 25,000 domestic animals
Grasslands: a natural and cultural heritage

Abandon
Implementation of Habitat Directive

2500 ha grassland
5 years
9 farmers
5 ha

Dead end!
Reconciling conservation and agricultural knowledge

Shared approach
Research

A new agri-ecological norm
The Flowering Meadows contest
European Agriculture and Rural Development Policy
Flowering Meadows measure areas

3 years

3000 ha
under contracts
Promotion of local products

High quality products
Trademarks
Tastes

Flowering meadows products from the Bauges Massif
Local and national contests
Flowering meadows 2010 / 2014
The conditions of success 1/2

- Recognition of the ecological and agricultural values of land
- Definition of objectives having an ecological and agricultural meaning
- A new agri-environnemental contract, based on the ability to achieve the desired outcome
- The use of an excellency contest
The conditions of success 2/2

- PA’s teams: nature managers?
  - Pluridisciplinarity
  - Agriculture project manager

- Governance
  - How farmers are involved in PA’s projects? Confidence?

- Knowledge and know how
  - Agriculture economy and techniques
  - CAP good knowing and lobbying
Viewpoints : on the Bauges farmers’ side

Before :
« The Park’s ecofreaks piss us off with their lovely flowers »
« Our meadows are not a museum ! »

After :
« We only had professionnal farmers in this contest, no part time ones »
« We were not calling them « Flowering meadows » but we were doing just that »
« Our work is really recognized for once. It’s very important for us to show we aren’t « big polluters ! »
« The good farmer will be rewarded and the bad one won’t be. Until now, you could do a terrible job and still be OK as long as you were doing your paper work »
Final conclusions

- Ecological issues: think « obligation of results » rather than « obligation of means »
- Work on the agricultural economy and his links with territorial development
- Test methods and actions that highlight the benefits and ecosystem services provided by agriculture
Let hundred of flowers bloom!
Welcome in our natural Parks to
taste our products, enjoy our
landscapes and biodiversity and
meet the farmers!
Thanks for your attention

http://prairiesfleuries.espaces-naturels.fr