

How to improve communication between policy makers and stakeholders about the different types of permanent grassland in Europe and their capacity to deliver a range of ecosystem services for society?

Objective: This policy brief outlines the development of a new permanent grassland (PG) typology that aims to enhance the understanding of European PG and considers management intensity, frequency of renewal and productivity potential across Europe. The primary goal is to improve communication between policymakers and stakeholders, providing detailed insights into ecosystem service delivery and management considerations.

Methodology: A two-level grassland typology has been developed, focusing on eight primary indicators of permanent grassland management, including defoliation, fertilisation, and renewal. 19 secondary indicators were identified based on factors such as management intensity, productivity potential, the presence of woody plants, and grassland renewal intervals. These indicators were established through multi-national stakeholder surveys, ensuring a comprehensive and inclusive approach.

Key Features of the Typology:

- The typology offers a unique input-based management intensity classification, distinguishing between productive and marginal regions.
- It encompasses diverse habitats, including grasslands with shrubs or trees, those not under agricultural management, and frequently renewed grasslands.
- It is applicable at both field and regional scales, facilitating a versatile and comprehensive assessment.
- It is cross-referenced with existing classification schemes like European Nature Information System and Natura 2000 habitats, ensuring compatibility and integration with established frameworks.
- It is complemented by additional attributes needed for management and ecosystem service delivery, providing a holistic understanding.
- It Encompasses the full spectrum of grassland uses within European farming systems.
- It offers a valuable knowledge base for understanding conditions, challenges, and opportunities related to permanent grassland management across Europe.
- It provides a tool for facilitating communication between policymakers and stakeholders in discussions about the sustainable management of permanent grasslands for public benefit.

Key Results and Policy Implications:

There is a need for improved permanent grassland typologies that account for complexity in different systems and management practices. The typology outlined here could help facilitate dialogue between policy makers and stakeholders that address the complex challenges associated with PG management and lead to improved delivery of ecosystem services through a common language and informed decision-making. EU policy makers could support the adoption of this typology by encouraging EU member states to use it during policy planning, monitoring and development.

Key References: Tonn, B., Bausson, C., Ten Berge, H., Buchmann, N., Bufe, C., Eggers, S., ... & Newell, P. P. (2020). A management-based typology for European permanent grasslands. In *Grassland Science in Europe* (Vol. 25, pp. 412-414). P. Virkajärvi K. Hakala M. Hakojärvi J. Helin I. Herzon V. Jokela S. Peltonen M. Rinne M. Seppänen J. Uusi-Kämpä.