



European LIFE Programme

Presentation of "LIFE Connexions"

Priority actions for grasslands, meadows, humid forests and associated species
in Wallonia (BE) and Great East region (FR)

Presentation of "LIFE Connexions"



1/ What is the LIFE Connexions project?

2/ What are the main pressures that affect biodiversity of grassland habitats?



3/ What are the main principles of grassland habitats management and what scientific methods are used for their correct determination?

4/ How is this management implemented in order to ensure a long-term non-deterioration of grassland habitats?

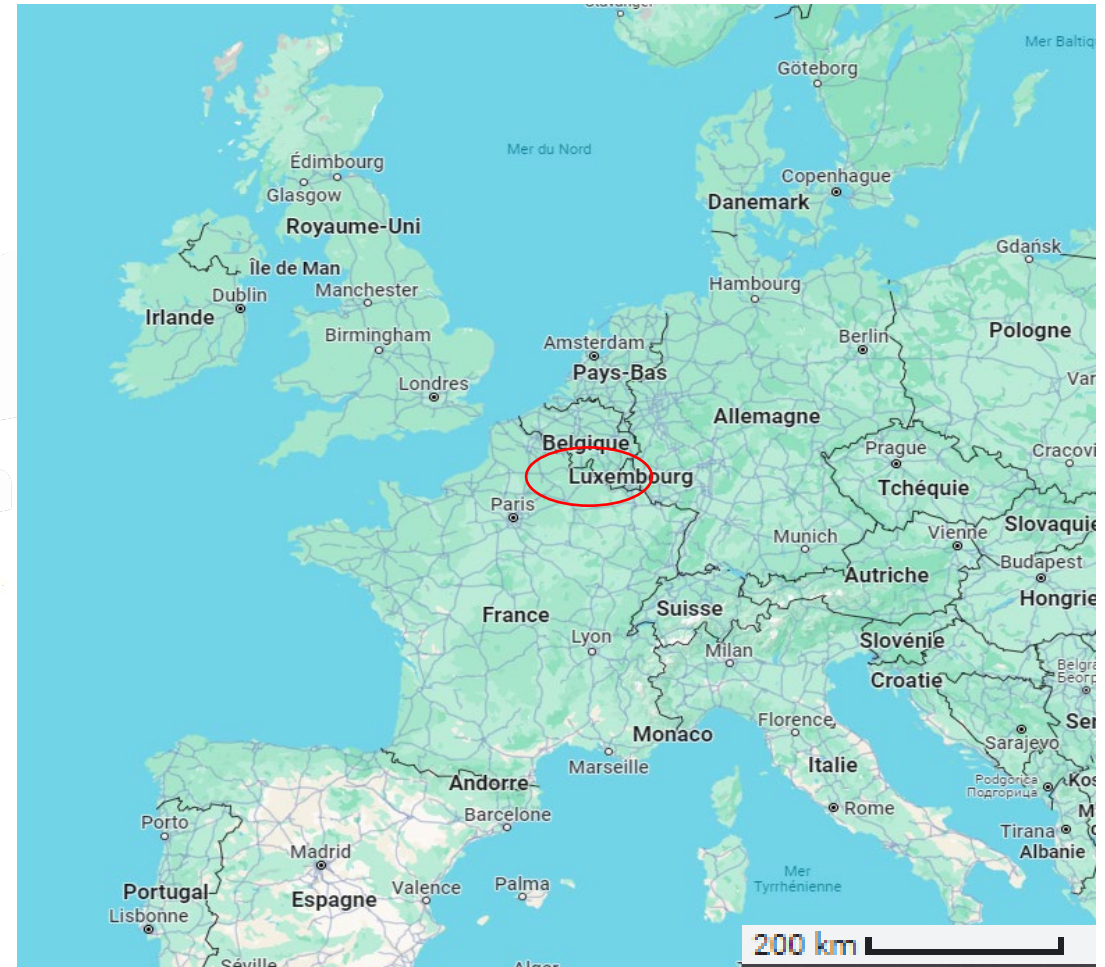
1/ LIFE Connexions



- 2021 - 2027
- Qualitative and quantitative restoration of 500 ha of habitats
- 40 Natura 2000 sites
- 2 countries
- 6 beneficiaries



natura
La nature



1/ Objectives

- **5 Annex I priority habitats :**

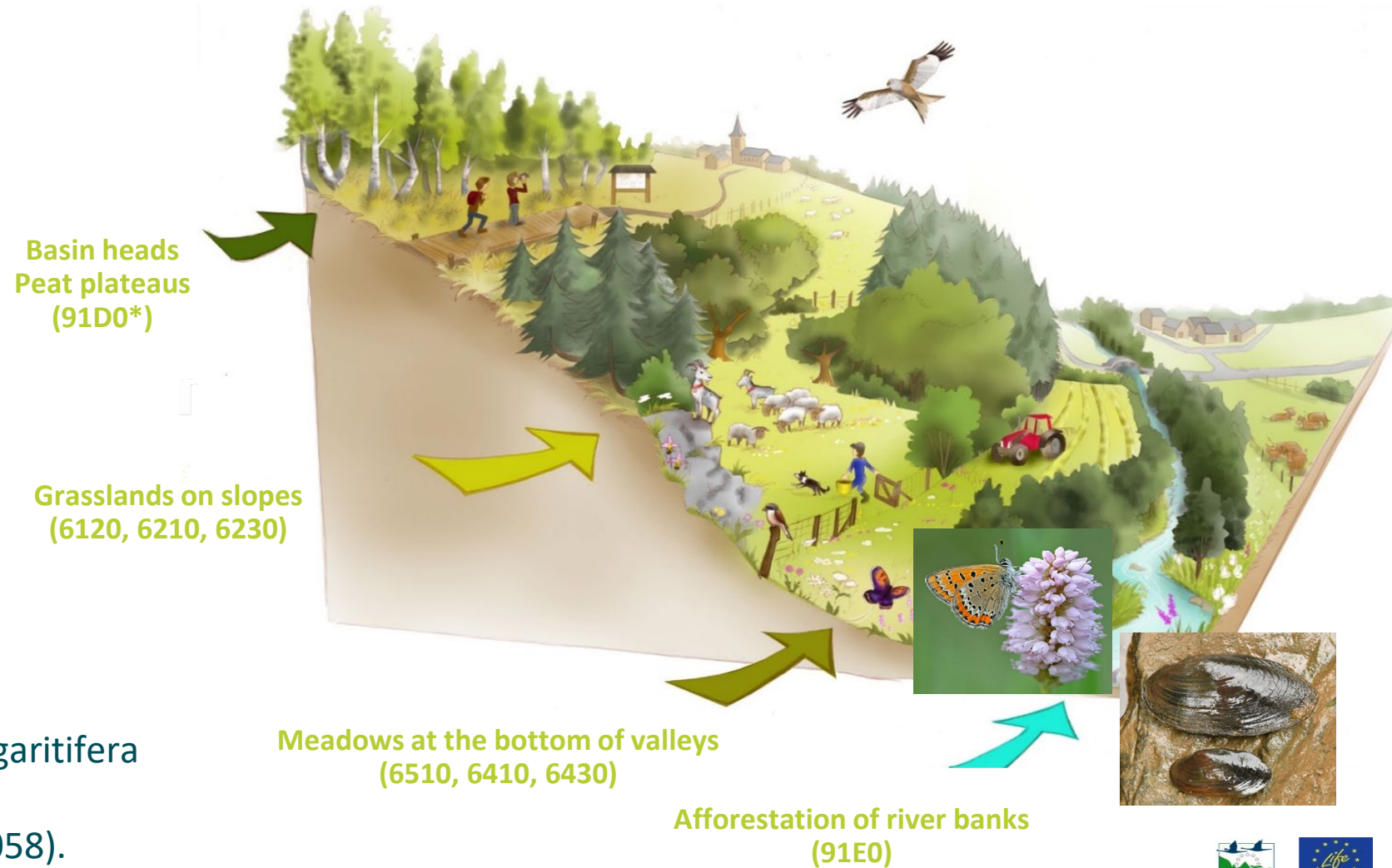
- Calcareous grasslands 6210*,
- Nardus grasslands 6230*,
- Sandy grasslands 6120*,
- Bog woodlands 91D0*,
- Alluvial forests 91E0*.

- **3 meadow habitats :**

- Molinia meadows 6410,
- Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities 6430,
- Lowland hay meadows 6510.

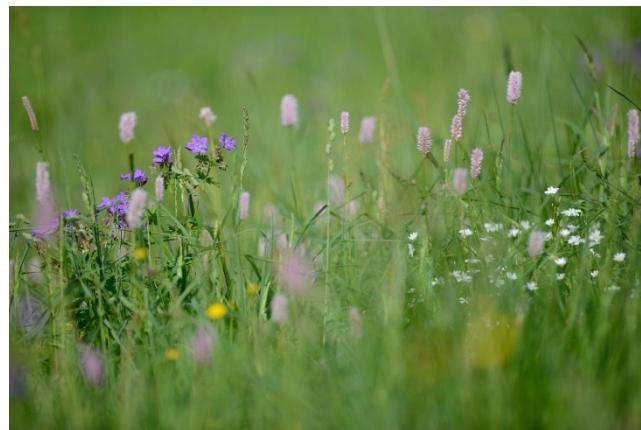
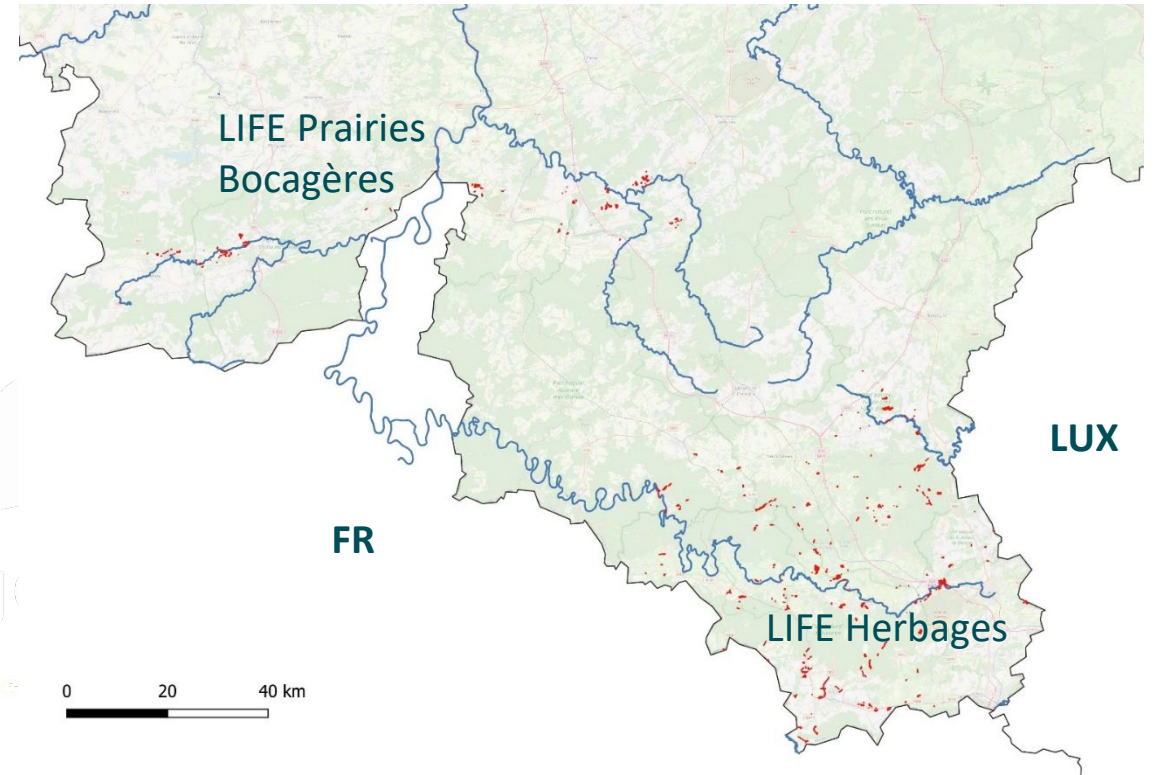
- **2 Annex II species :**

- Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera* 1029),
- Violet copper (*Lycaena helle* 4058).



1/ Objectives

- To complete the work begun by the projects "Papillons", "Herbages" and "Prairies bocagères"
 - In 8 years, restoration of more than 1200 ha of these habitats
- To make a significant contribution to their restoration towards a favorable conservation status by increasing their surface and their connectivity



2/ Pressures and threats

99% of grasslands disappeared during the last century because of :

- Abandonment of grazing or manual mowing,
- Artificial tree planting (*Picea abies*),
- Scrub encroachment.

1961



1991



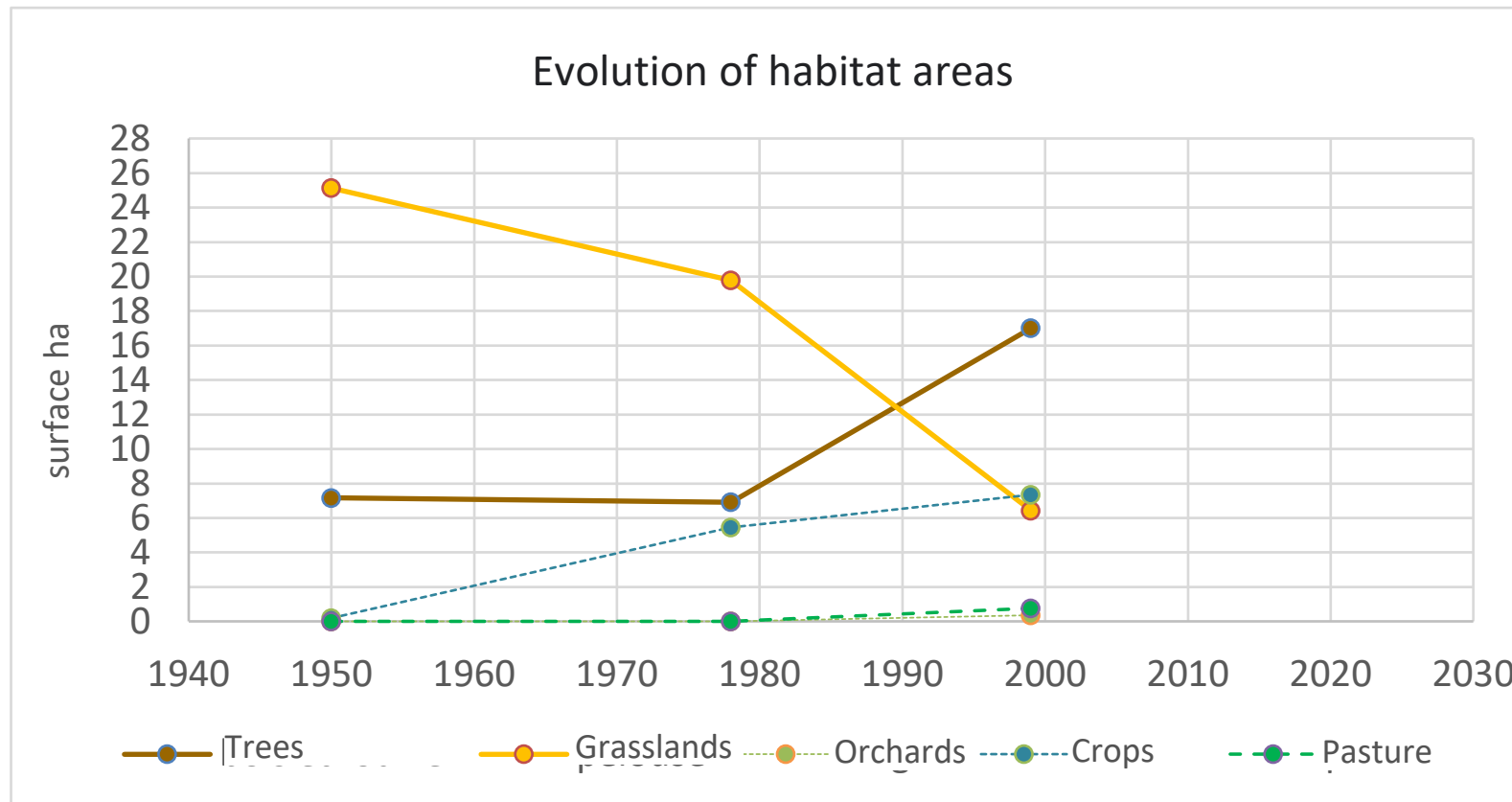
2018



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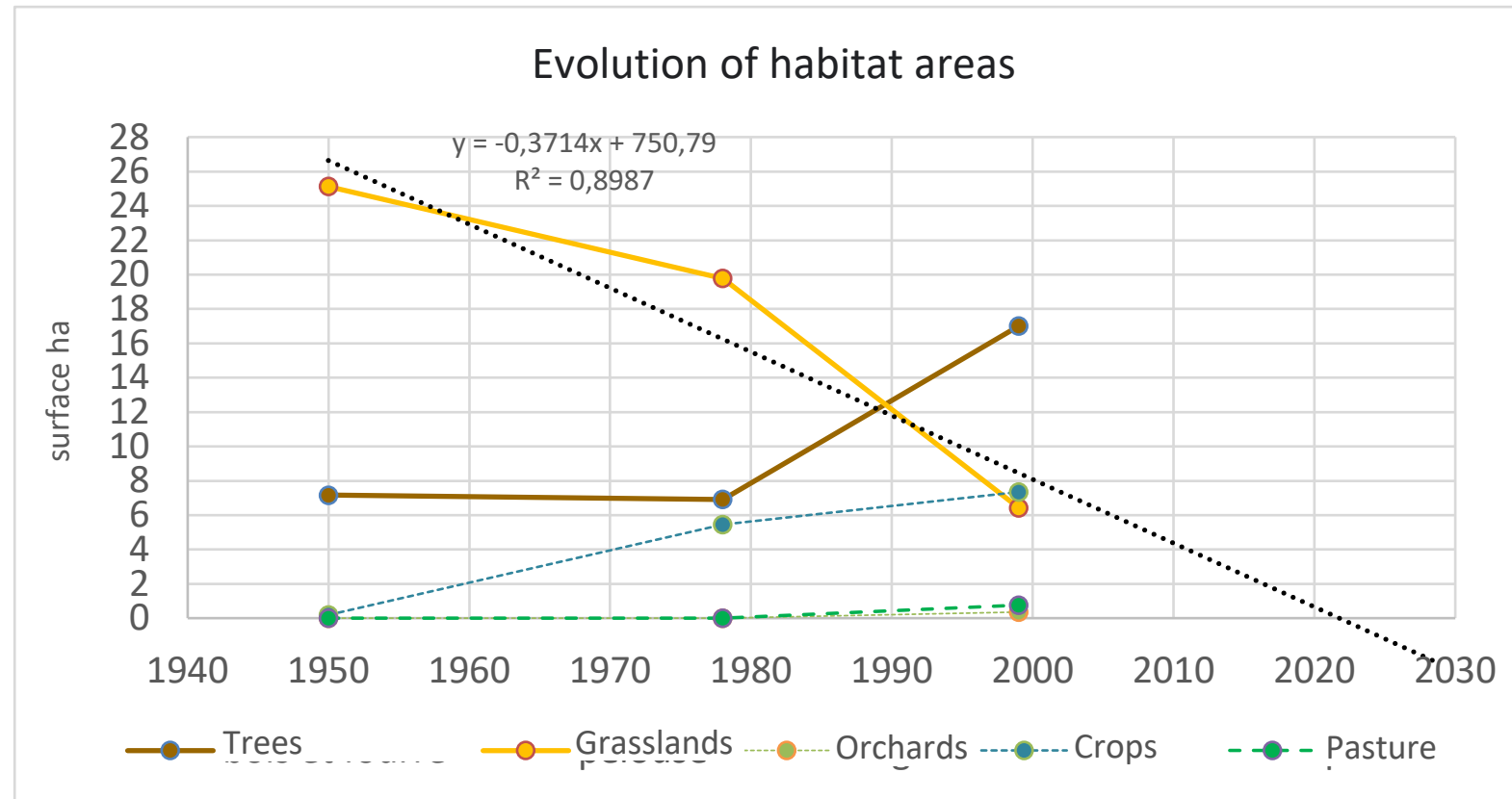
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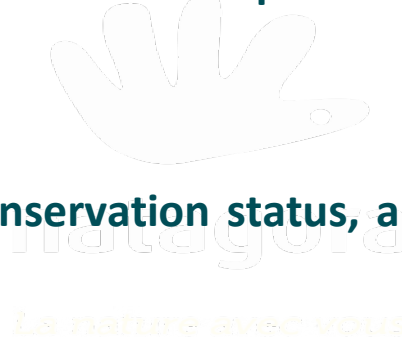


3/ Management and scientific methods



Improving the conservation status of the 8 targeted habitats and 2 sp. will be achieved through:

- Updating data and identifying priority restoration sites
- Purchase, or minimum 30 year-lease agreement, of 250 ha of private land
- Restoration actions
- Scientific monitoring of the evolution of the conservation status, and fragmentation level, of restored targeted species and habitats
- Awareness-raising activities
- International transfer and replication actions



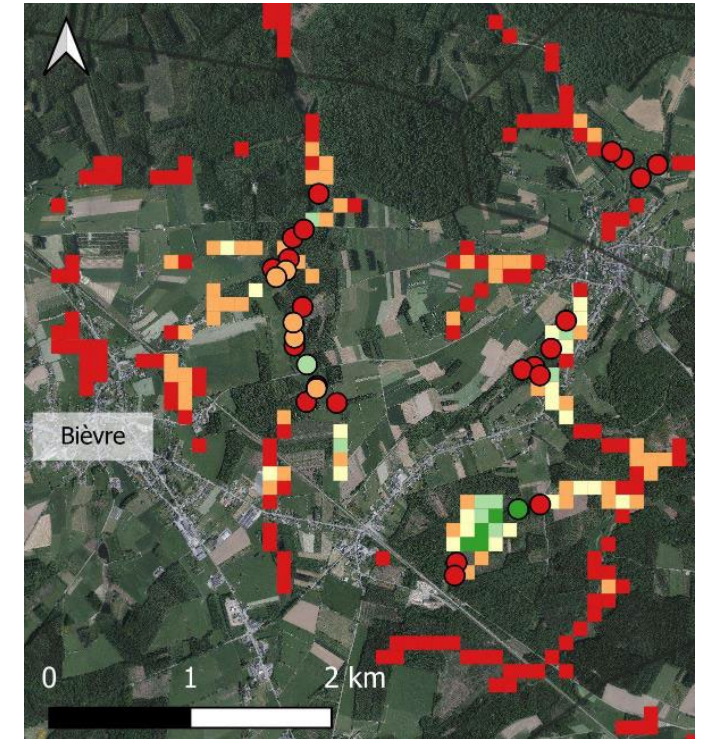
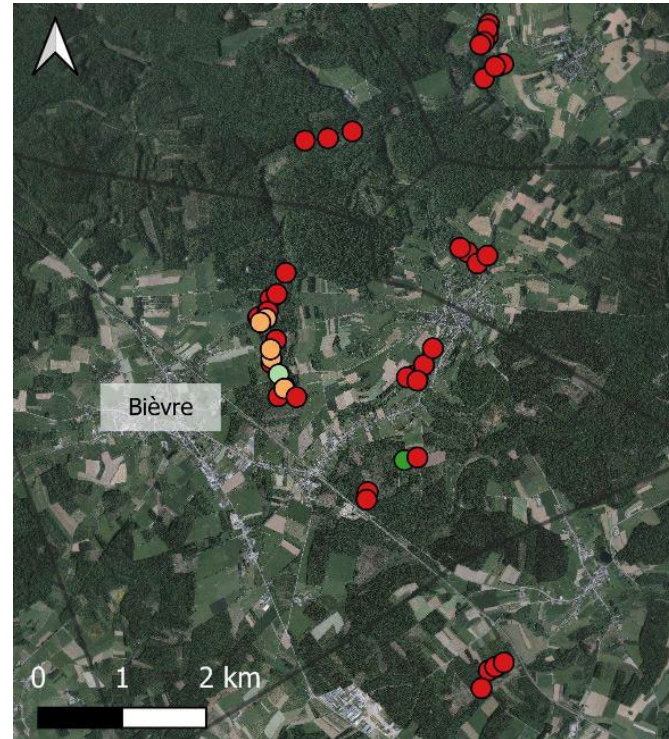
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Connectivity analyses (Graphab software) at the sub-regional level:

- Connections between occupied patches (and ecological fragmentation)
- Importance of each patch for maintaining existing connectivity



3/ Management and scientific methods



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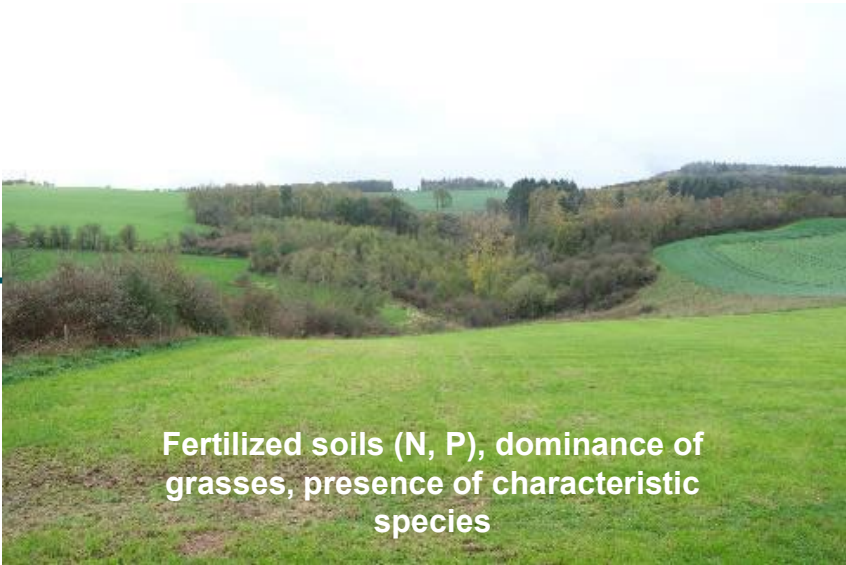


3/ Strategies for restoring open habitats

Option 1

Poor conservation status

1.000 – 2.000 €/ha



Surface strip mulching

La nature avec vous



Sowing/Hay spreading/Planting

3/ Strategies for restoring open habitats



Option 2

Poor conservation status

2.000 – 10.000 €/ha



Shrub encroachment, presence of characteristic species



Brush clearing/Deforestation by cutting/uprooting/mulching.

Le matériel approprié



Material export/Soil preparation by mulching/harrowing/rolling



Sowing/Hay spreading/Planting



3/ Strategies for restoring open habitats

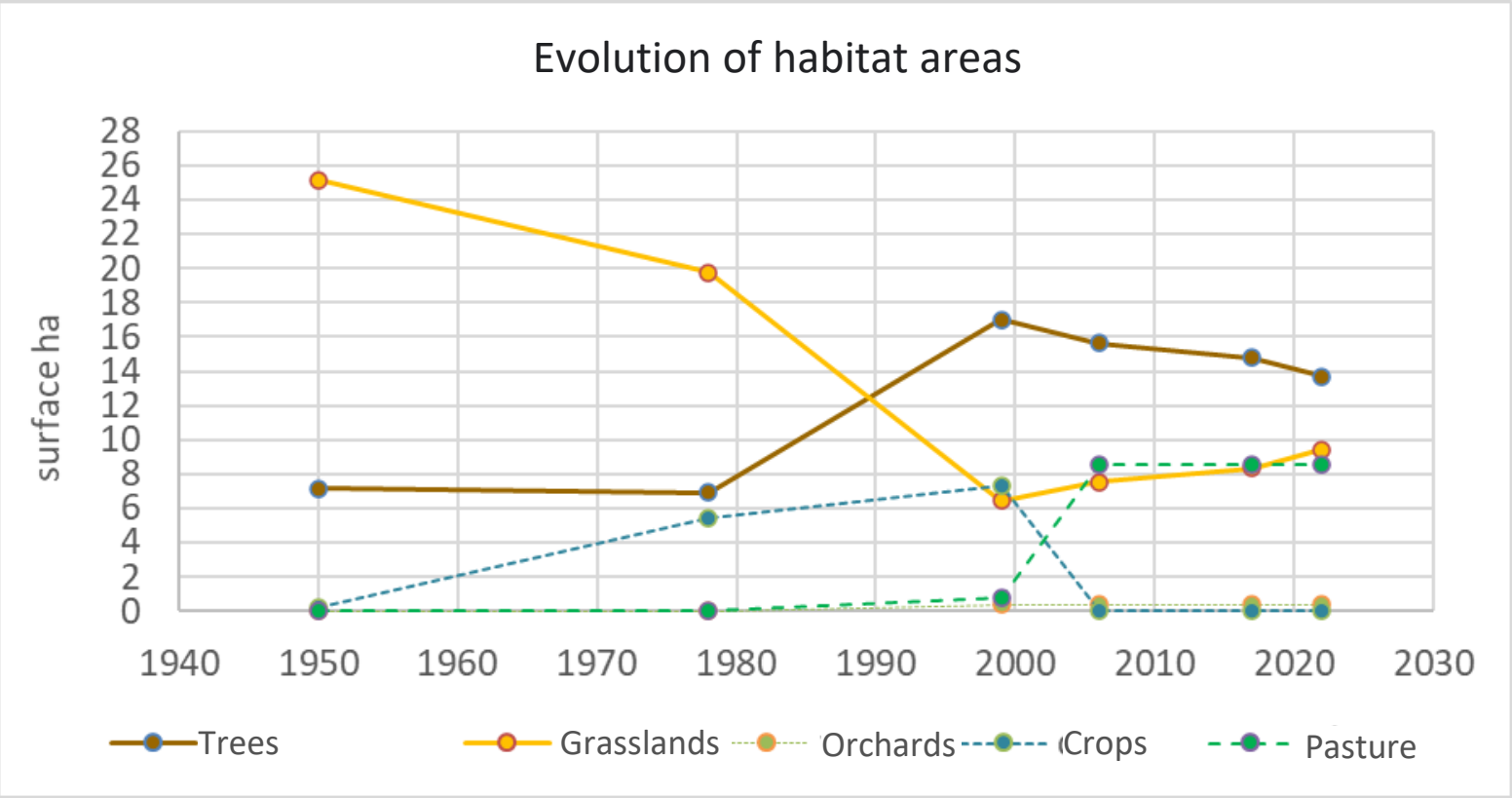
Option 3

Wooded areas

3.000 – 10.000 €/ha

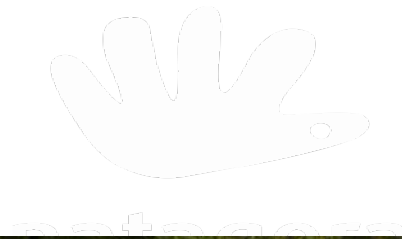


3/ Strategies for restoring open habitats



4/ Management of restored habitats

- What frequency? What dates? What livestock? What intensity?



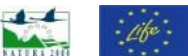
4/ Management of restored habitats



How can we minimize our impact during restauration?

- How can we maximize biodiversity on the site?
- What is the most respectful management approach?
- How can we adapt to climate change?

→ <https://www.life-connexions.eu/nos-publications>





Résultats in 2027 !



Any questions?

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