



Management of traditional rural biotopes in Finland

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Traditional rural biotopes are among the most biodiverse habitats in northern Europe. They encompass wood pastures, wooded meadows, old slash-and-burn cultivation areas, herb-rich meadows, riparian and flooded meadows, fen meadows and moorlands. For planning management of traditional rural biotopes, it is important to take into account their biological and cultural history values as there is no single management method that fits all of them.

Grazing at intermediate pressure has in general a positive impact on biodiversity. Different combinations of grazers have a different impact on biodiversity, because the animals eat different species. For the same reason, also grazing and mowing have different impacts on biodiversity.

In addition to their natural and cultural value, there are opportunities to generate additional farm income from traditional rural biotopes such as ecotourism, therapy and well-being services (Greencare), wild berry and mushroom cultivation, honey production, bioenergy production and direct sales of pasture meat.

If a wooded area has not been grazed for a long time, clearance of dense vegetation is needed before grazers can be introduced, and the harvested shrubs and trees can be sold as timber, firewood or wood chips. Farmers can apply for compensation for managing traditional rural landscapes, including the initial clearance and fencing, for up to 450-600 €/year for 5 years.

The Grazing Bank online service www.laidunpankki.fi offers help in finding animals and grazing areas.

More info:

AFINET Technical Article:

http://eurafagroforestry.eu/afinet/technical-articles/Management_of_traditional_rural_biotopes_in_Finland



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