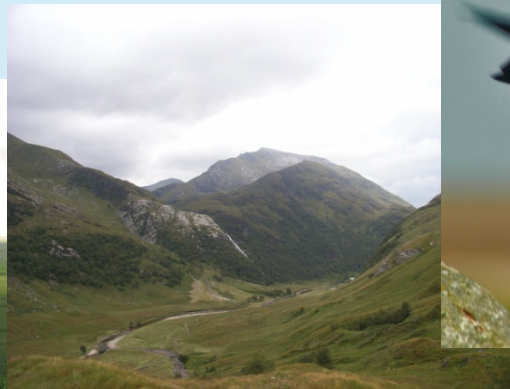
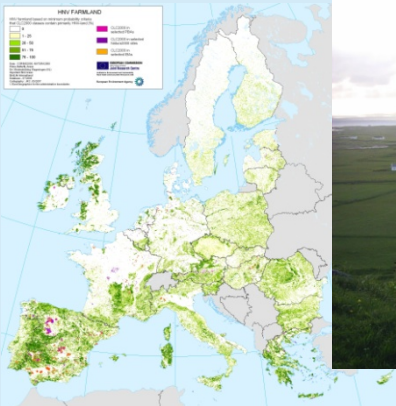


Farmland biodiversity: where do we go from here?

Davy McCracken

Reader in Agricultural Ecology



*Scotland's changing rural biodiversity:
policy and action needs*

ECRR conference, Battleby, 13 May 2009

Farmland Biodiversity

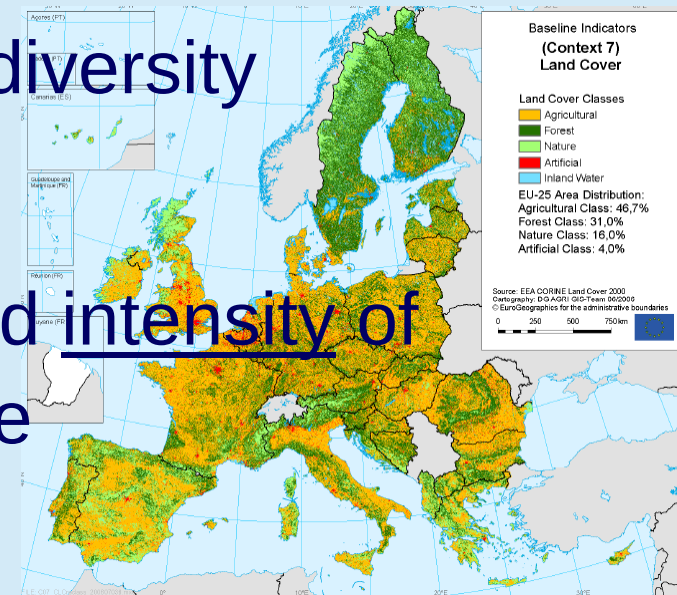


Why are we interested in farmland biodiversity?

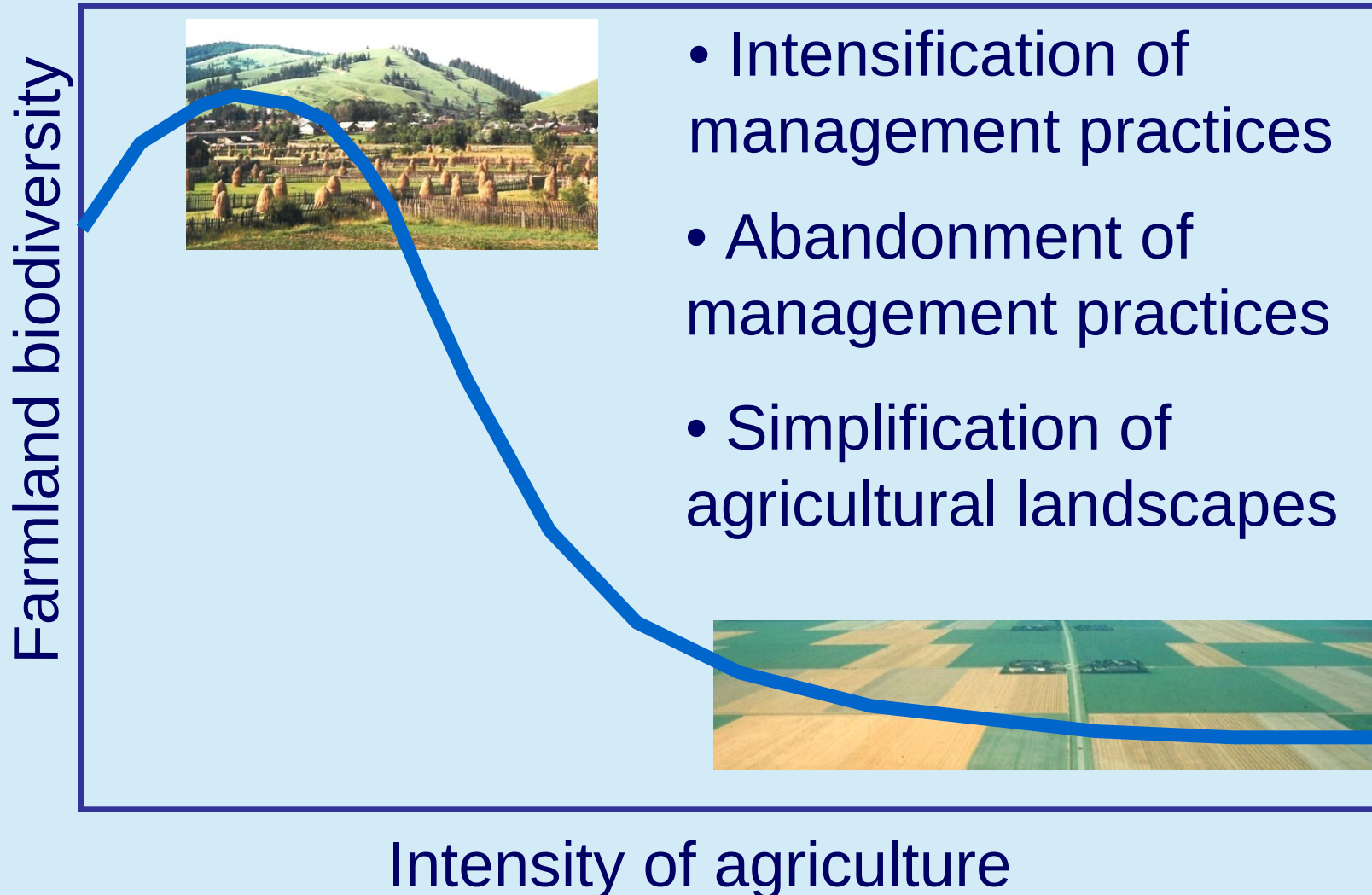
- Over 45% (173 million ha) of EU27
- Recognised that habitats and landscapes of High Nature Value ARE intimately associated with farming practices
- Taking land out of agricultural production is not the answer for farmland biodiversity

RATHER

- it is essential to ensure type and intensity of farm management is appropriate



Pressures on farmland biodiversity



Where are we now?

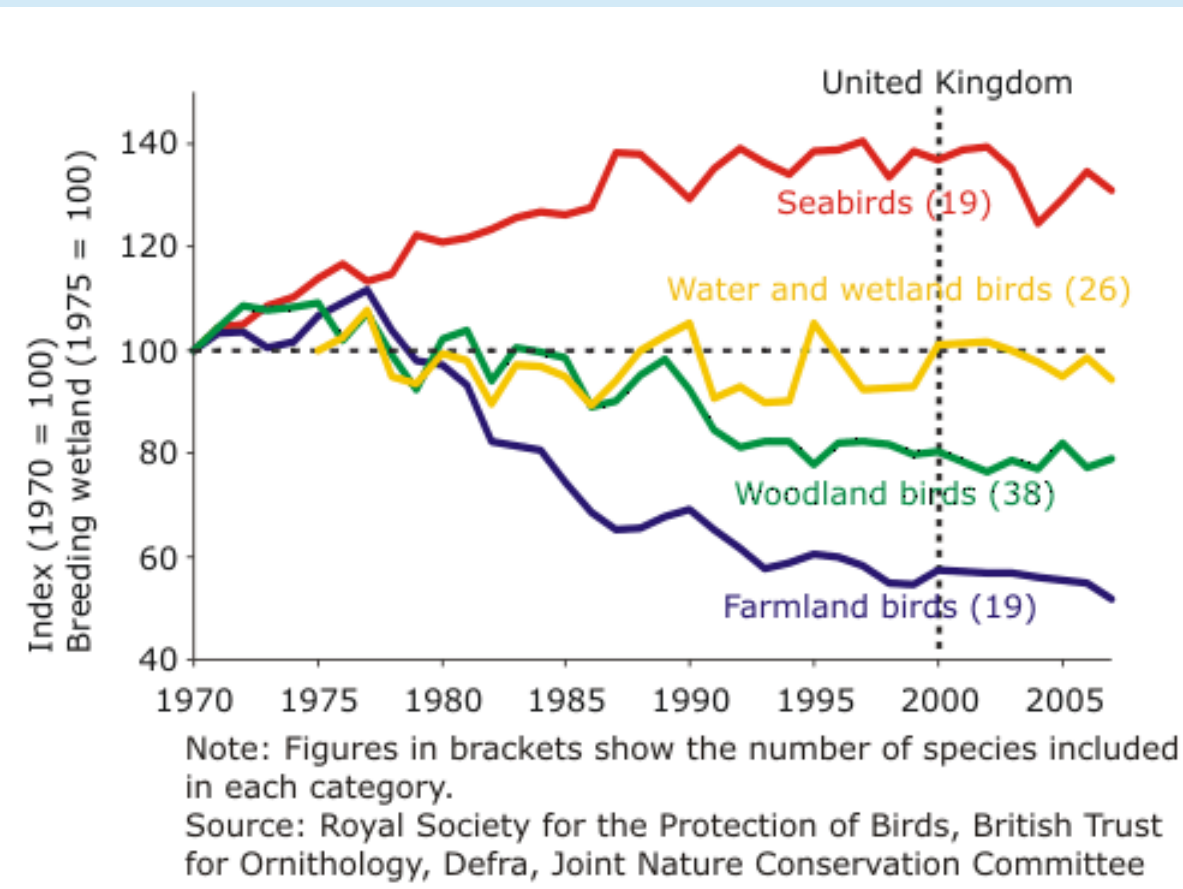
Scotland: 1994-2007 (BTO)

Stable (but at low levels):

- Linnet
- Skylark
- Starling
- Yellowhammer

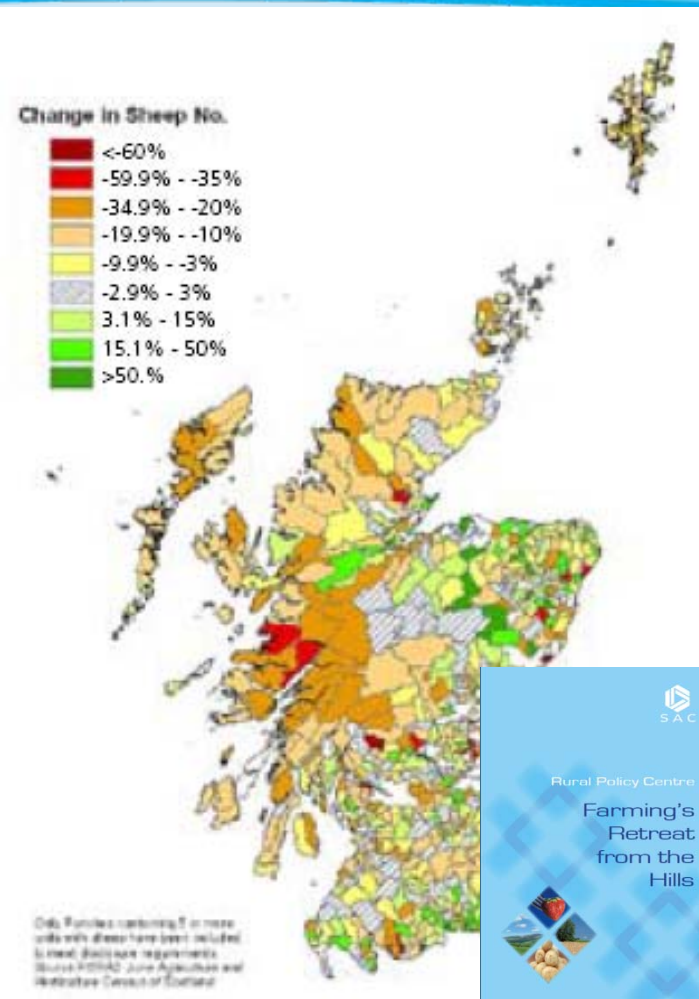
Declined:

- Curlew (-48%)
- Kestrel (-56%)
- Lapwing (-38%)
- Meadow pipit (-23%)



Wild bird population index: 1970-2007

Where are we now?



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The CAP must fit for environment

5 September 2008

Davey Fitch
Media Officer
E-mail: davey.fitch@rps.org.uk

A better deal is possible for Scotland's environment and the Scottish Government should be fighting for it. A new report published today by the Scottish Government's consultation on the conclusion of the Government's consultation on the Policy (CAP), points the way forward for a fairer deal for more farmers as well as the environment cope with the countryside.

The current CAP leaves Scotland at the bottom of funding and our farmers receive far lower direct payments than their European counterparts. With the current CAP cost more in tax, everyone has an interest in seeing it reformed. Beyond the CAP - Towards a Sustainable Land Use Policy calls for a viable future for the Scottish Government's coming back to Scottish farmers and crofters, and custodians for the countryside and biodiversity.

The LINK report calls for payments to be made available to protect priority habitats and species, at both the preventing habitat fragmentation and securing and maintaining designated nature conservation areas. It also calls for supporting sustainable rural communities and sustainable management of vital soil and water resources. It also calls for securing the long term future of High Nature Value farmland and landscape benefits.

The CAP's huge €40.9bn budget - which began as a commitment to produce food - now lacks a clear direct link to the environment. It is vulnerable to budget cuts; already funds have been diverted to the environment. Scotland's land managers are particularly vulnerable and this would give the CAP relevance and broad support.

Stratton, Director of RPS Scotland, said:



Beyond the CAP

Towards a Sustainable Land Use Policy that works for Scotland



Where are we heading?



What more needs to be done?



- Put farmland biodiversity conservation higher up the list of policy priorities

Make existing budget go further:

- Require substantial changes at farm level
e.g. need minimum amount of habitat diversity to qualify for Single Farm Payment?

Pro-actively target agri-environment

Direct additional support to
High Nature Value farming



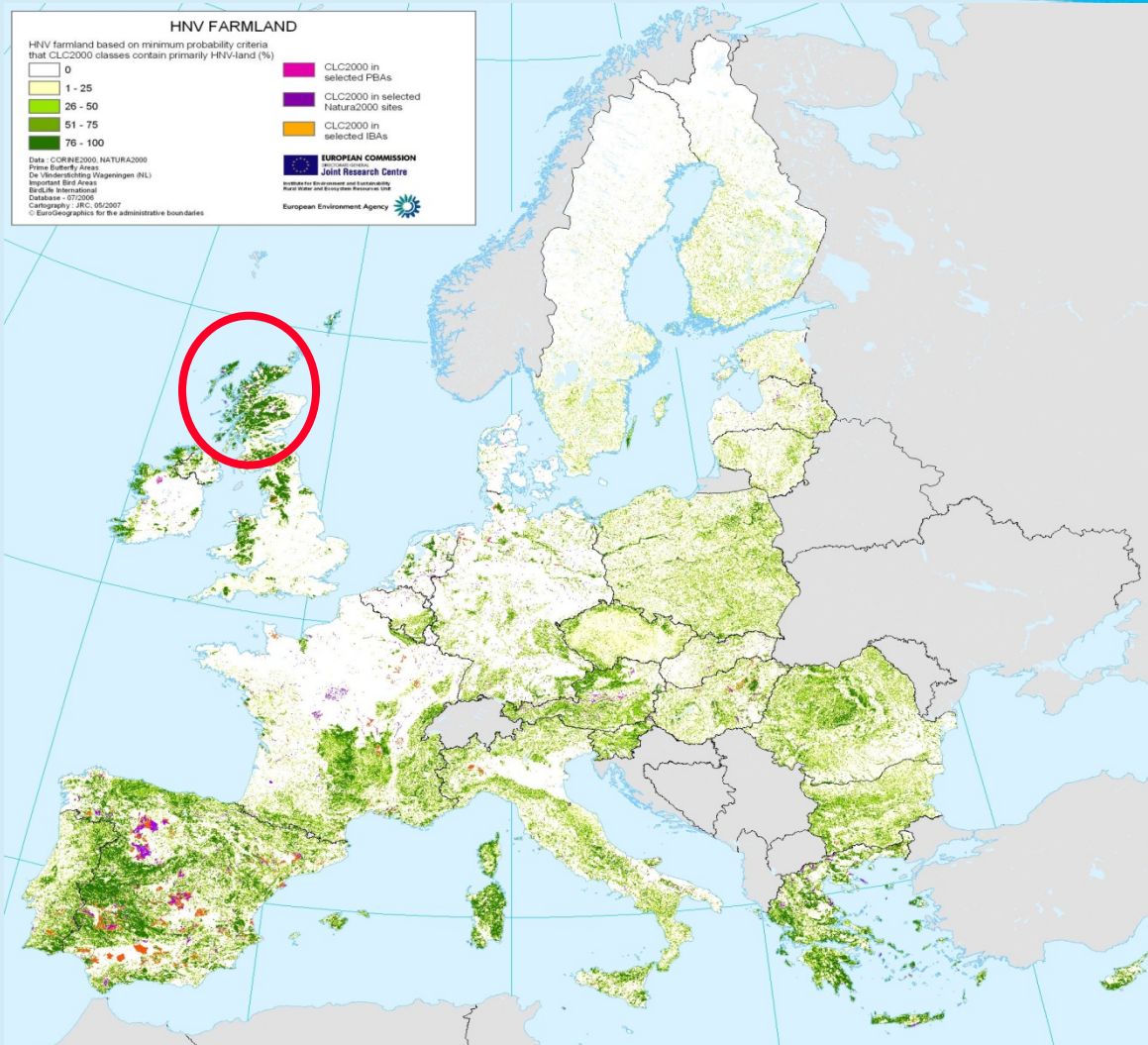
High Nature Value farming



- The underlying principle to the HNV concept was, and remains, basically:
 - A large proportion (c. 30% of EU farmland) is of particularly high nature conservation value
 - That market pressures are increasingly making these farms economically unviable
 - Intensifying or abandoning farming on these farms would adversely impact the HNV
 - There is therefore a case to direct additional financial support to these farms to help maintain the HNV



Potential HNV farmland in EU27





SAC

S✓**ccess** through **Knowledge**