

**Closed file N° 1998/3:
« Habitat for the survival of European
Hamster (*Cricetus cricetus*) in Alsace
(France) »**

French Government Report

A continuous and increasing collective commitment

National strategy to preserve hamsters' populations (general framework NAP 2012-2016):

- A wide protected area where the State focuses its actions (three sub-areas: north, centre and south)
 - New AEMs fostering collective action of the farmers
 - Reinforcement operations within the collective AEM areas
- + Monitoring of the populations (annual census)

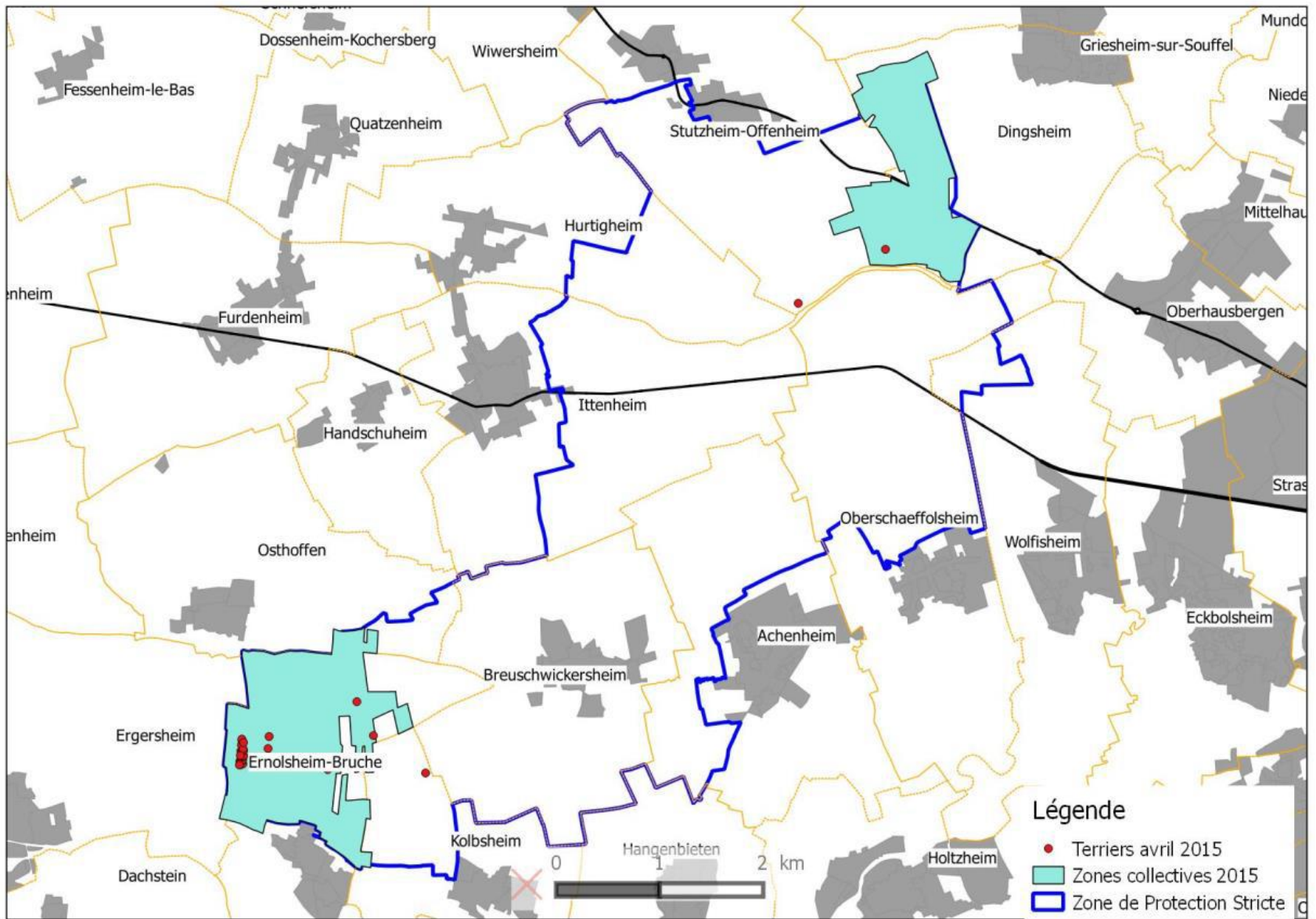


Figure 1 : collectives areas in SPA North (source ONCFS)

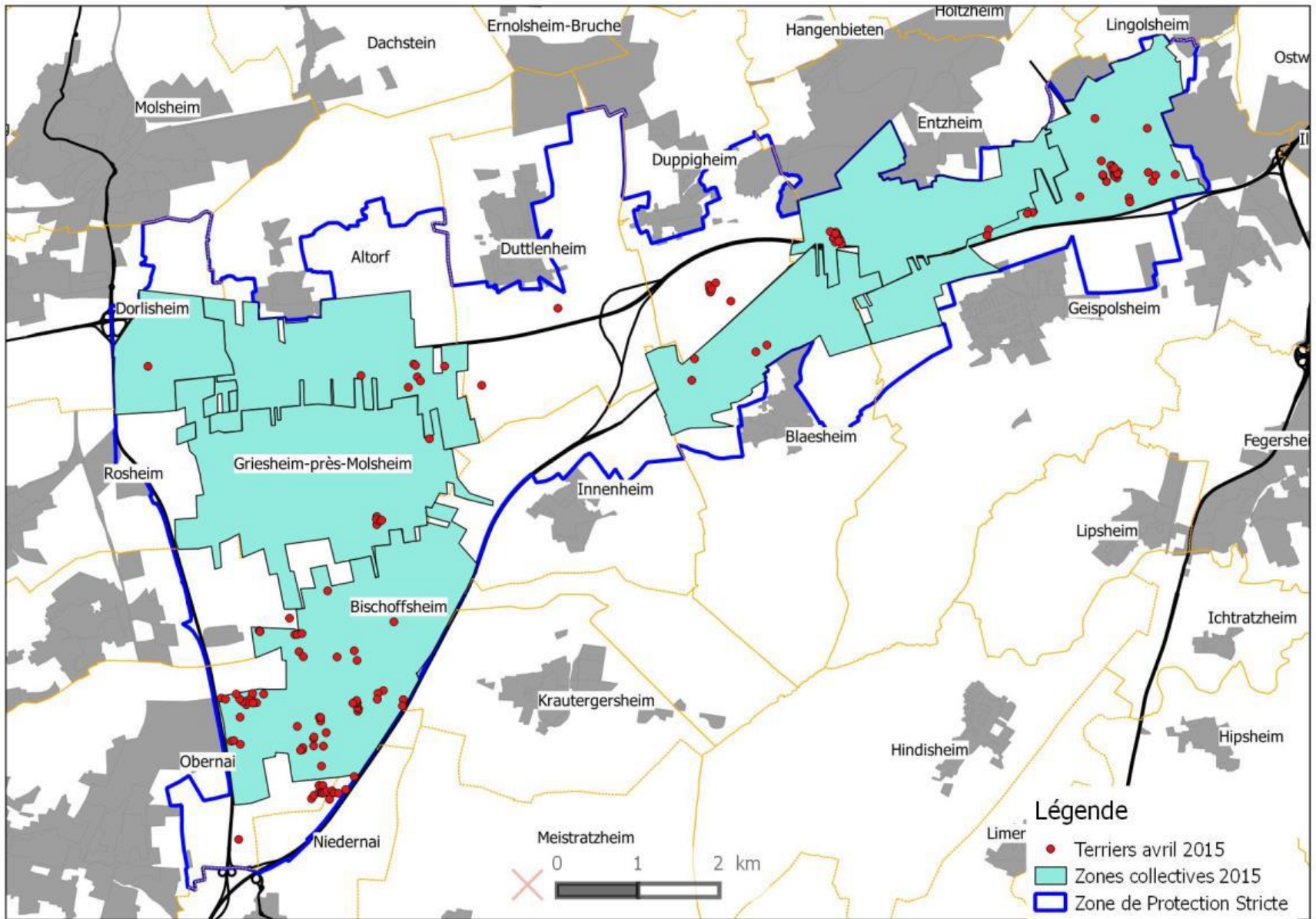


Figure 2 : collectives areas in SPA Center (source ONCFS)

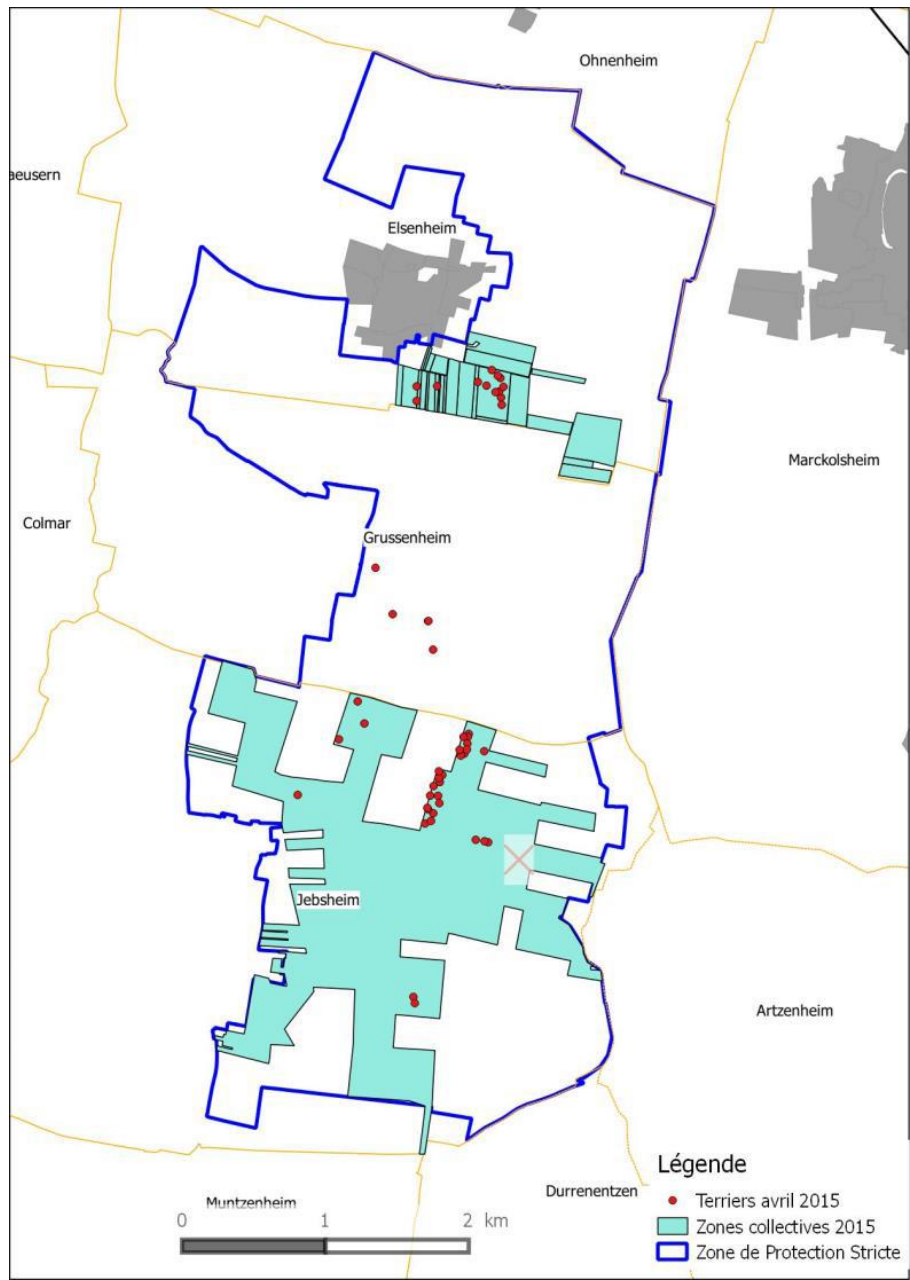


Figure 3 : collectives areas in SPA South (source ONCFS)

The results

	2013	2014	2015
Contractualized areas for favourable agriculture (ha)	1,621	2,881	2,995
Refuge stripes (wheat, alfalfa) ha	53	107	113
Number of collective areas	5	9	10
Number of farmers involved in collective measures	64	130	146
Number of released hamsters	508 (6 sites)	427 (6 sites)	437 (5 sites)
Number of « communes » with confirmed presence of hamster	13	17	18
Number of hamsters' burrows in the Special Protection Areas	319	436	225

Possible explanations for the decrease in the burrows' numbers

- « Fixation » of hamster populations due to the absence of harvest (stored grains from the previous year available)
- Delayed opening of the burrows (after the April census)
- External factors (climate, predation...)

Future prospects

- Assessment of the National action plan (NAP) 2012-2016
- Elaboration of a new NAP 2017-2021
- Maintenance of wide strict protection areas
- Set up of new collective AEM
- Continuation of reinforcement with an improvement of the release protocol
- strengthening of the regulation – contractualization of the obligations
- Diversification of breeding structures
- Improvement of the knowledge of the species through the implementation of new approaches and techniques