



MINISTRY OF
AGRICULTURE



**The National Strategy of Hungary for Landscape:
elements for the contribution of agriculture to
landscape quality**

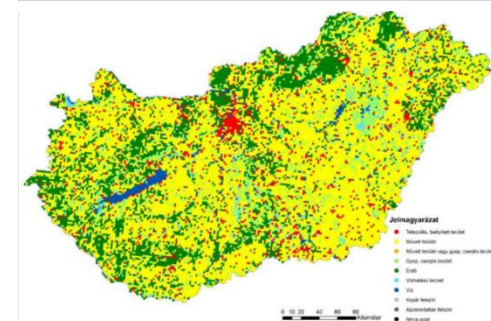
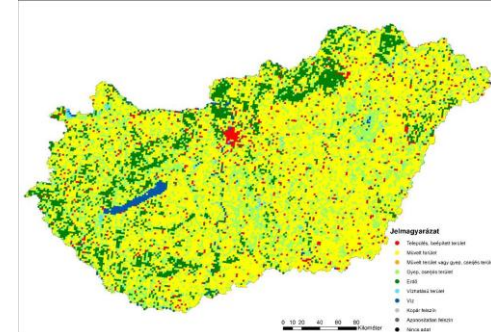
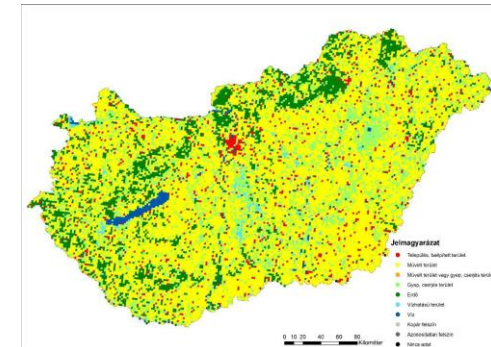
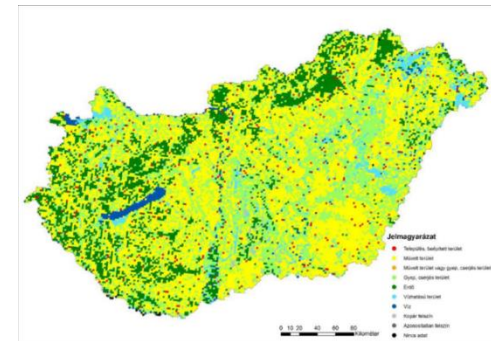
Mrs Krisztina Kincses
National Representative of the European Landscape
Convention, Hungary
President of the Council of Europe Conference on the
European Landscape Convention

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

NATIONAL DAYS ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION IN FRANCE
Strasbourg, France
26-27 November 2019

Background information

- The **National Landscape Strategy for Hungary for the period 2017-2026** was approved by the Hungarian Government in 2017.
- The entire administrative area of settlements, including water bodies, is considered to form part of the landscape asset of the country in accordance with the European Landscape Convention.



Background information

- This national strategy reflects the creation of the Hungarian landscape from its past to the present identifying the **most dominant landscape formation processes**.
- The strategy reviews the **evolution of Hungarian landscape policy** and reflects how Hungary satisfies **international expectations** in this respect.
- It demonstrates the **drivers which determine the condition** of Hungarian landscapes as well as the **quality** of the national landscape.



Landscape quality

- Approximately **half** of the Hungarian landscapes are of **an everyday quality**.
- About a **quarter** of them are **intensively used** landscapes and are often represented in a degraded condition.
- The **remaining quarter** are semi-natural landscapes which, while under extensive cultivation, nevertheless **offer a more positive perception**, producing typically favourable psychological effects that are mainly associated with plants and water, with vistas, pleasant sounds, good thermal sensations, other natural associations, colours, natural shapes, etc.



Agricultural lands

- In the past 25 years, the overall size of areas specifically dedicated to agriculture has **decreased** by approximately 1.2 million hectare.
- However, despite the shrinking size of these production areas, Hungary is still among the leaders in terms of the national proportion of agricultural lands in Europe.
- Arable cultivation is the **dominant sector** of Hungarian agriculture with the **main production being grain**, chiefly wheat, corn and sunflower.
- **Diversification is low** in large-scale farming.
- Nearly 90% of **small farms** are engaged in the production of a **maximum of three types of crops** and nearly half of them cultivate **only one**.
- **The traditional land use** (e.g. grazing, wine growing, fruit and vegetable production, homestead farming) is **shrinking** and **as a result, landscape is losing its traditional patchwork pattern on an increasing scale**.



Animal husbandry

- Although **animal husbandry** has significantly decreased there is still a strong concentration of this type of farming in Hungary.
- Livestock farming has changed, grazing has diminished and thereby the livestock farming (stalls) generally far from arable land thus **separated from grasslands and crop production**.
- However, it is important to note that **the landscape-specific farming and the development of short food chains can ensure healthier food** and can also **open new opportunities for launching products of increased value**.



Flooding

- Between 10-15% of the arable lands is now more **often** subject to **flooding**.
- This increase in flooding is partly caused by the **degradation of soil** structure over several decades caused by inadequate soil cultivation, the lack of deep ploughing and subsoil loosening (e.g. plough sole) and the **lack of permanent crops**.



Motivation

- Financial support, strengthening green farming, sustainable land use and better landscape management **motivate and enable farmers** to use agricultural **production methods** that are **compatible** with sustainability, as well as contributing to an efficient and intelligent utilization of landscape and natural resources.
- The Common Agricultural Policy, through funds made available to farmers, is able to **stimulate favourable changes in agricultural land use**, especially in rural landscapes, where binding requirements related to payments commit farmers to specific actions.



Reform of Common Agricultural Policy

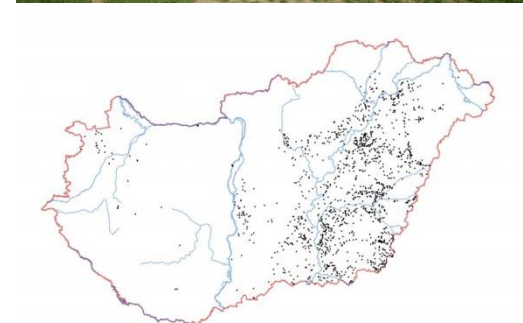
- Green farming practices can help to realise compulsory changes in the course of land usage.
- Farmers profiting from such funds, according to the domestic requirements of *Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition* are obliged to **preserve** Cumanian Barrows / **burial mounds** (tumulii), **conserve shadoofs** (traditional wells with lifting arms) and **groups of trees and bushes**, as well as maintaining other features such as **river banks and lake shores**.
- These landscape elements to be preserved are **eligible as ecological focus areas** also, allowing **additional support**.



Reform of Common Agricultural Policy

- The impact of domestic regulations related to European funds is already appreciable.

Payments with domestic requirements of *Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition* contribute to maintain approximately **1000 ex lege protected burial mounds** (tumulii) and more than **3000 shadoofs** (traditional wells with lifting arms).





Kincses, K.: The National Strategy of Hungary for Landscape: elements for the contribution of agriculture to landscape quality
Strasbourg, France, 26-27 November 2019

Reform of Common Agricultural Policy

- As a result of the latest reform of Common Agricultural Policy, since 2015, a greater diversification of crops has been realised along with the conservation of permanent grasslands and other important landscape elements that represent the traditional patchwork pattern of the Hungarian landscape.
- The most important green farming practices are therefore concerned with **crop diversification**, the **maintenance of permanent grasslands** and the **identification of ecological focus areas**.
- However, this important **development of the green infrastructure network requires greater coordination**.



National Landscape Strategy

- The strategy sets out dual vision: it outlines the future status of Hungarian landscapes as well as establishing a vision of Hungarian landscape policy. This policy draws on the concept that land use must be based on landscape configuration and assets.
- The overall objective of the National Landscape Strategy is:
Responsible land use based on landscape configuration and assets.
- **Proper landscape management based on landscape configuration and assets** is an instrument **to ensure that important environmental, economic and social interests contribute substantially to our well-being.**



National Landscape Strategy

To achieve this overall objective, adherence to the following overlying principles must be realised in the implementation of the National Landscape Strategy:

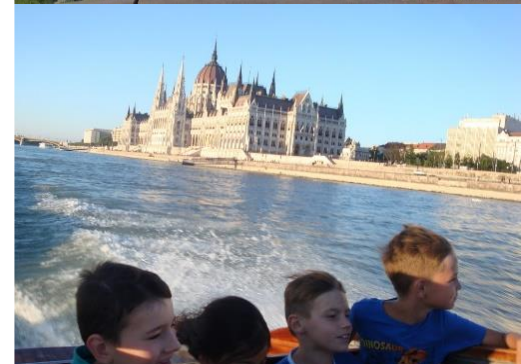
- A) General protection of natural resources and cultural heritage;
- B) Intelligent and rational use of areas;
- C) The mitigation of the impacts of climate change and adaptation to it.



National Landscape Strategy

To achieve the overall objectives, three headline targets are set by the strategy.

- I. Laying the foundations for land use based on landscape configuration and assets;
- II. Liveable landscape – liveable settlements – intelligent land use;
- III. Enhancing landscape identity.



National Landscape Strategy

- The National Landscape Strategy **sets out 97 actions** for the government, local governments, civil organisations, universities and research institutions.
- The **main promoter** of the interventions is of course **the government**, which provides for the realisation of the measures through the government programme, sectoral policies and finance.



National Landscape Strategy

In accordance with the sub-objective I.1: Establishing the framework for land use based on landscape configuration and assets:

To achieve the overall objective, first **the registries containing the spatial data of landscape configurations** and providing the planning system and the work of the authorities **must be developed through both site surveys and using automated methods.**

This development includes the updating of existing databases as well as the identification and creation of missing spatial data structures. The following actions are noted as follows:

- **Improvement of the soil register** e.g. updating **agronomic data on soil structure** that **influence soil fertility.**
- **Improving the register of fruit production areas.**
- Undertaking a **survey** and condition **assessment of areas affected by melioration.**
- Undertaking a **survey** and **re-assessment of agro-ecological potential.**



National Landscape Strategy

In accordance with sub-objective I.3: Integrating land use based on landscape configuration and assets into decision-making:

Land use based on landscape configuration and assets should be represented as a principle in **strategic and planning documents and in legal regulations**. **Support schemes and economic incentives** should take the landscape configuration and assets into account as much as possible.

Calls for proposals related to activities significantly modifying land cover should take into account the principle of land use based on landscape configuration and assets as much as possible.

The **ministries** and the **sectors** should reinforce common reflection and cooperation during the **modelling and the complex management of the processes** provoking changes in landscape.



National Landscape Strategy

In accordance with the sub-objective II.3: Production functions based on landscape configuration and assets

Agriculture and forest management must adjust to the local configurations and assets, while taking into account the requirements for safety and security of national food supply and sustainability.

Adapting to climate change, agriculture will need to invest in using more diverse cultivars.

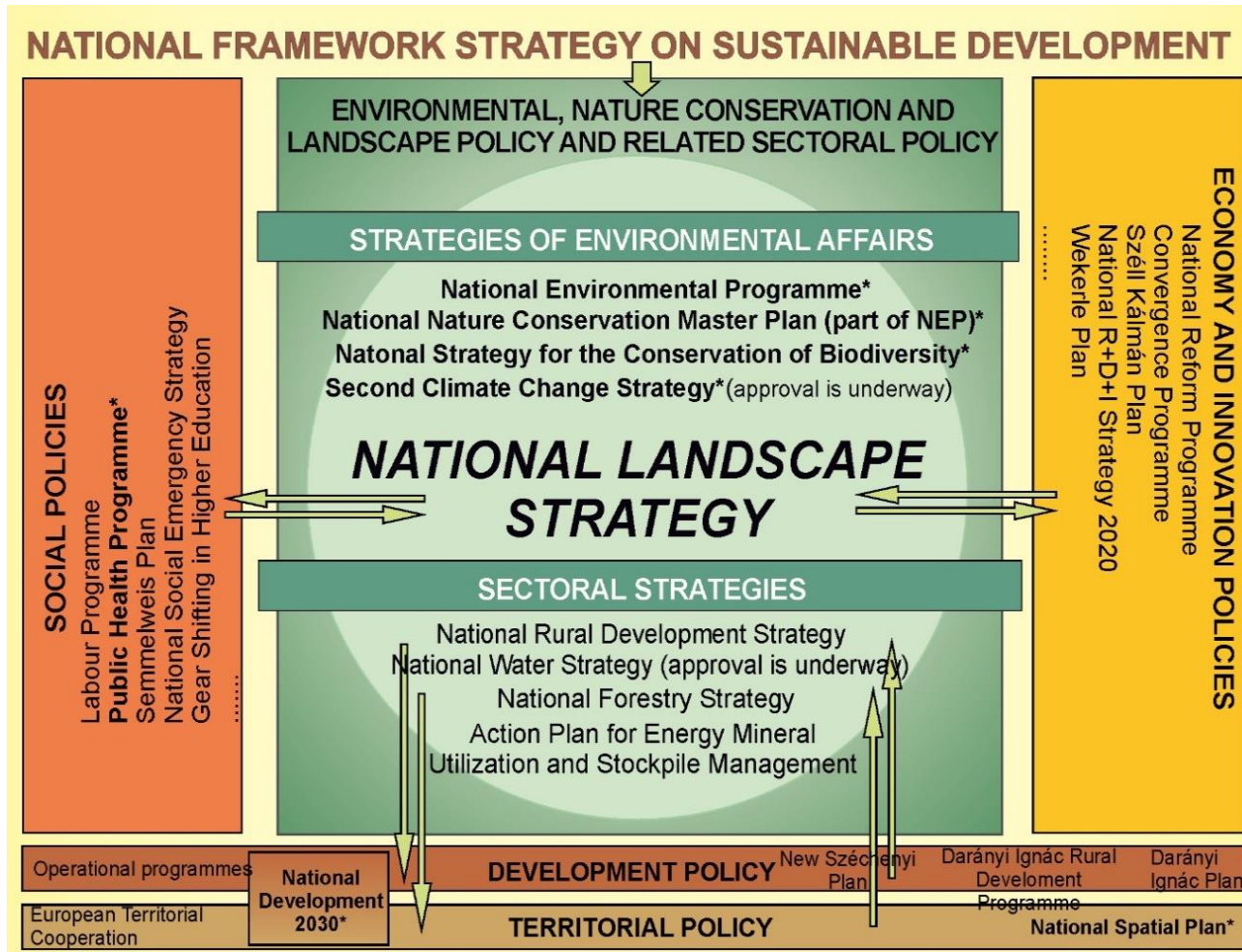
Forest management should also adopt a **patchwork system**.

Agriculture and forest management in adapting to climate change also have a key role in influencing climate. Therefore, the goal in agriculture and forest management is **to maintain areas permanently covered with plants in order to improve the balance of water and heat**.

In production areas, consensus-based rehabilitation interventions; in some areas, **changes in land use** or **change in intensity** of use are necessary for the adjustment to landscape configuration and assets.



The Hungarian planning scheme



To ensure a more holistic approach, the National Landscape Strategy can only properly succeed in its role if the overlying landscape approach and related actions are integrated with other strategic policies in the next review.



Thank you for your attention!

