

Water points or ponds for fauna

Goal	<p>Availability of water for wild fauna.</p> <p>An increase of habitats for biodiversity.</p>
Target group	<p>All farms of any production type can apply this measure.</p>
Description of the measure	<p>The presence of permanent water points, either of natural or anthropic origin (rafts irrigation, drinking troughs for livestock, ditches, wells, fountains, etc.) also provides water for wild fauna.</p> <div data-bbox="354 714 1445 1205">  </div> <p>Pic. 1: Bad example of water pond, shores with high slope are not accessible for fauna.</p> <p>Pic. 2: Good example of a water pond, with low slopes and vegetation on its shores.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The water points could be permanent or temporary. Big and deep or small ponds with a low depth. ▪ Design the action to minimize long-term maintenance ▪ Better to create a set of ponds of different types (definition depth, hydro-period, vegetation cover, etc.) than one isolated pond ▪ Don't use phytosanitary products, herbicides or fertilizers around the pond. ▪ Avoid an intense use of the pond for livestock, in order to avoid the eutrophication of waters. Try to leave only a shore for livestock that can use the pond in a low density for drinking water.
Suitable sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Close to seasonal streams and in big valleys, try to build big, deep and permanent water ponds. ▪ In areas with a high slope, build small water ponds that could naturally retain the rain water, even in sunny or shaded spots to allow a bigger diversity of habitats.

<p>How a good implementation looks like</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water ponds must be accessible (allow the entry and exit of animals). Favor the perimeter, create shores and coastal areas as much as possible, wide and undulating as possible. Create very steep slopes and shores with low slope (lower of 12°) and with different depths Must have associated native vegetation, very important to avoid slopes erosion and silting of sediments. Favor the presence of trees and shrubs close to the ponds, and leave some shores with a soft slope and sand to favor birds.
<p>Effects on biodiversity (ecosystems, species, soil biodiversity)</p>	<p>In Mediterranean regions where water is a scarce resource, the presence of water ponds is very important, especially in dry seasons.</p> <p>Then it will be an important habitat and refuge of amphibians and reptiles linked to aquatic environments. That wouldn't exist in case of non-existence of these water ponds. They are also an important breeding site for amphibians and an important water source for mammals such as rabbits, foxes or lynx.</p> <p>Aquatic flora and fauna promoted, such as fishes or aquatic birds</p> <p>Aquatic invertebrate's habitat, some of them endemic or unique, such as some species and subspecies of Odonatos, Coleoptera, and Crustaceans, a value that increases even more in arid regions. In case of temporary ponds these habitats are extremely fragile and susceptible to disappear due to their small dimensions. Due to their life cycle, many species are bound to water at least at a certain point in time and are therefore dependent on water sources.</p>
<p>Other positive effects/benefit for the farmer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water ponds enable a more orderly use of the remaining resources and do not involve considerable loss of any agrarian use, since the occupied surface is generally much reduced. Water recharge of aquifers, and flood control. Soil improvement (moist and organic matter content increase) Also useful as a trough for big game species.
<p>Indicator/key data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of permanent water elements Number of temporary water elements Existence of different types of water ponds Quality of water ponds as described in "how a good implementation looks like"
<p>Risk and further recommendations</p>	<p>If the pond is used by the livestock, there is a risk of eutrophication, try to leave only a shore for livestock use, and close the other by different measures, like wood piles or stone walls, etc. In case of presence of massive algae, (then water is eutrophized) try to control the livestock units.</p>

Timeframe (When to start a measure and anticipated time for implementation)	Build the ponds before the rainy season in order to facilitate the natural water recharge
Additional special resources/ equipment/ skills needed	It is recommendable to use special machinery to build the ponds, such as backhoes.
Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ www.navarra.es/NR/rdonlyres/86815038-FE6D-404A-9A29-3C27FCCBF013/398080/SistemadeAltovalorNaturalCultivosmediterraneosenla.pdf ▪ www.conservacionvegetal.org/upload/publicaciones/45/40690-71415-manual_charcas.pdf

Further information: [Knowledge Pool](#)

This Action Fact Sheet belongs to the training package for advisors of standard organisations and companies and was developed within the project LIFE Food & Biodiversity (Biodiversity in Standards and Labels of for the Food Industry). The main objective of the project is to improve the biodiversity performance of standards and sourcing requirements in the food industry by helping standard organisations to integrate efficient biodiversity criteria into their schemes and motivating food processing companies and retailers to include comprehensive biodiversity criteria into their sourcing guidelines.

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