



Background

Biodiversity is crucial for both the planet and people, playing a key role in providing ecosystem services, regulation of the climate, pollination, maintaining soil health and adaptation to climate change. However, biodiversity is currently declining at an unparalleled rate, creating one of the most urgent environmental issues.

How does the strategy work?

A resilient and biodiverse dairy farming system builds on **four** interconnected **pillars of biodiversity**:

- **Functional agrobiodiversity**  
The dairy farming sector makes use of the benefits of biodiversity, such as the availability of fertile soil, sufficient water and resistance to crop pests and diseases. Closing the nutrient cycles on farm level is essential.
- **Diversity of landscape**  
Landscape elements such as hedges, trees, ditches and ditch banks bring diversity to the physical environment. This increases biodiversity, including functional agrobiodiversity. By protecting, preserving and maintaining landscape elements, conditions are created for greater biodiversity.
- **Diversity of species**  
Agricultural landscapes provide a habitat for specific types of flora and fauna. Targeted management can help preserve and strengthen these specific species.
- **Regional biodiversity**  
By connecting areas and using regional management, biodiversity can be increased at the regional level.

**Biodiversity Monitor** for the dairy farming sector is a new tool for standardised quantification of biodiversity enhancing performance in the dairy sector.

The Biodiversity Monitor for Dairy Farming uses Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the influence of individual dairy farms on biodiversity on the farm and beyond.

Positive features

- Increasing the biodiversity of dairy farm production systems helps improve soil quality and forage production, milk quality, and human health.
- Biodiversity-based dairy farms can generate a reasonable income with less environmental impacts.

Be careful, especially on these points

- Each farm has unique biodiversity and, therefore, there cannot be a prescriptive 'one size fits all approach'.
- Biodiversity is often associated with extensification of farming, which, without additional activities or services, lowers income.

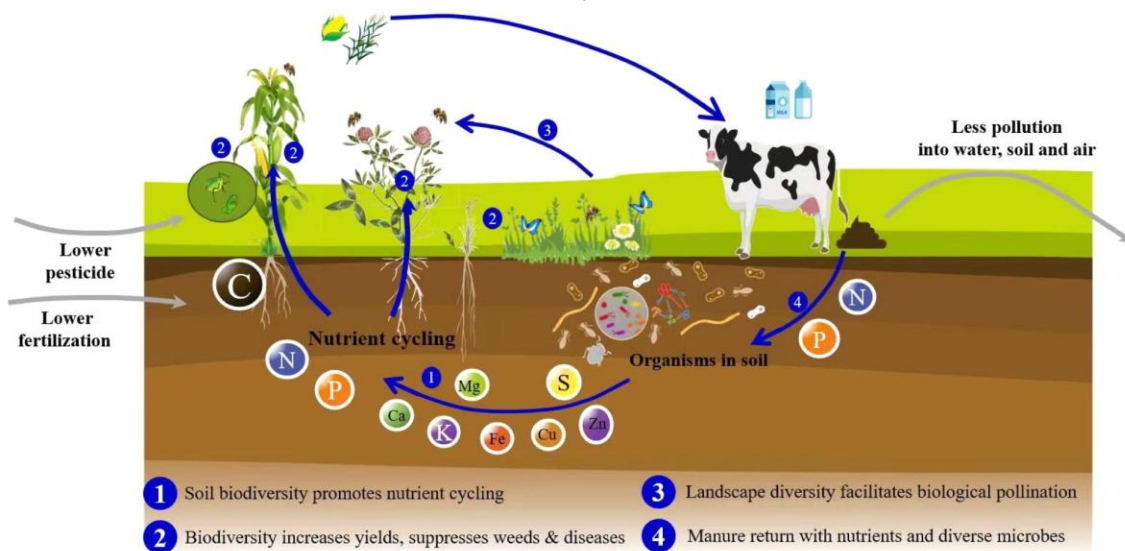
Specific advises

The quality of nature found on farms is determined by **good farm management practices** which include:

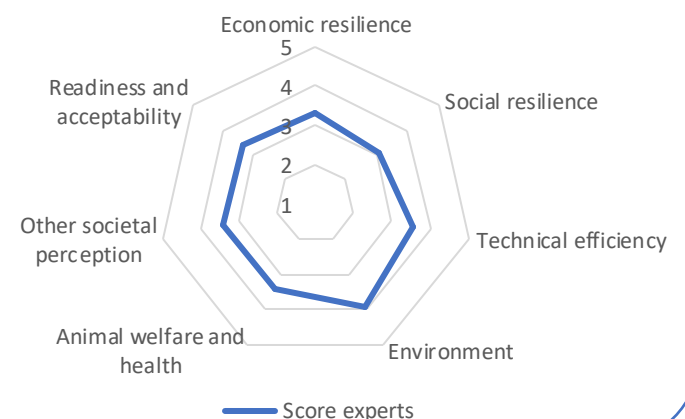
- Protecting water quality
- Management of new and existing hedgerows
- Preventing pollution.

Dairy farming with biodiversity-driven technologies and solutions will be more suited for producing quality milk and minimizing environmental damage.

Figure 1. Biodiversity-based principles applied in dairy farms in support of One Health concept



Assessment of method



**Info about monitoring biodiversity in practice:**  
[https://biodiversiteitsmonitor.nl/docs/Biodiversiteitsmonitor\\_engels.pdf](https://biodiversiteitsmonitor.nl/docs/Biodiversiteitsmonitor_engels.pdf)

Quote of the farmer:

*"Dairy farmers are committed to preserving and restoring biodiversity"*