FOREST4EU

ITHub 5 – Agroforestry Systems

FOREST4EU partner: CNPF

OG: ARBRE

OG's country: France

Type of Innovation: Process

Raising awareness and setting up tests on assisted natural hedge regeneration

Introduction

Bocage and woodland are major features of the Perche landscape, with almost 11,500 km of hedgerows in 2020. On the scale of the Charte forestière de territoire du Perche, the wooded area represents 21.25% of the area covered by the Charte forestière de territoire du Perche.

Methodology and results

The test was carried out on two linear routes with contrasting contexts, for a total length of 124 metres. The test was carried out over two days. The first day was used to identify the seed trees present and the quantity of fruiting bodies, as well as to prepare the site. The second day was used to install the plant material (fruiting shoots, seeds) and to plant the seedlings, in the form of a participatory worksite with farmers interested in the approach.

In order to preserve the Perche bocage, it is necessary to maintain and create new linear hedgerows. The technique most commonly used is plantation by landscape companies. However, there are a number of limitations to this approach, such as the unsuitability of plants (linked to the question of origin) in the local context, the difficulty of obtaining materials, the increased cost of planting and the difficulty of obtaining fundings. It is to overcome these obstacles that assisted natural regeneration of the hedge (or semi-spontaneous hedge) may prove to be an alternative to planting operations. The Parc Naturel Régional du Perche has therefore set itself the objective of raising awareness and promoting this practice among farmers, in particular by organising meetings in the field. A technical itinerary for setting up a semi-spontaneous hedge was drawn up by an external consultant, Sylvaloir, and given to the participants. The test was carried out on two linear routes with contrasting contexts, for a total length of 124 metres. The test was carried out over two days. The first day was used to identify the seed trees present and the quantity of fruiting bodies, as well as to prepare the site. The second day was used to lay out the plant material (fruiting shoots, seeds) and to plant the seedlings, in the form of a participatory worksite with farmers interested in the approach.

Lessons learned

This project has enabled the Park to build up its skills in this field, fulfilling its ambition to be an area of experimentation. This practice has an economic advantage, but despite the interest in the subject, participation in the participative worksite was low. The methodology used could also be improved, particularly in the context of the "Normandie hedgerow" call for expressions of interest. There are two threats to its development, however: firstly, the length of time it takes to install a hedge may dissuade project owners who want to have a "standard hedgerow" quickly, and secondly, the subsidy schemes do not include this alternative practice.

Figure 1. Installation of a semi-spontaneous hedge, October 2022.
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Further information

https://www.xn--reseau-national-agricultures-ruralits-bkd.fr/centre-de-ressources/projets/approche-transversale-et-systemique-de-larbre-dans-le-perche

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