

TOPPS Train the Operators to Prevent Pollution from Point Sources



Life-Environnement TOPPS European Initiative: Developing good agricultural management practices in order to control point source pollution from phytopharmaceutical products used in farming

Partners:

Coordinator: Dr. Manfred Roettele, *Better Decisions* (BE) ECPA coordinator.

European partners:

- Belgium: PCF-Diensten aan bedrijven vzw/npv (PCF-DAB) and Provinciaal Onderzoeks- en Voorlichtingscentrum voor Land- en Tuinbouw (POVLT)
- Germany: Landwirtschaftskammer Westfalen – Lippe (LWK)
- Denmark: Danish Agricultural Advisory Service (DAAS) and Hardi International
- Spain: Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya – Consorci Escola Industrial de Barcelona (CEIB-UPC)
- Italy: Università di Torino – Dipartimento di Economia e Ingegneria Agraria Forestale e Ambientale (DEIAFA)
- Poland: Instytut Melioracji i Użytków Zielonych - Institute for Land Reclamation and Grassland Farming (IMUZ) and Instytut Sadownictwa i Kwiaciarnictwa - Research Institute of Pomology and Floriculture (ISK)
- UK: Harper Adams University College (HAUC)

In France, the partners are: ARVALIS – Institut du végétal (FR), CEMAGREF - (FR), with the support of UIPP (French crop protection association).

At regional level: The *Fédération Régionale de Défense contre les Organismes Nuisibles Nord Pas-de-Calais* (Nord Pas-de-Calais regional federation for the control of harmful organisms); the Nord Pas-de-Calais regional *Chambre d'Agriculture*, the company VAESKEN, SCA La Flandre, and the *Ecole des Bonnes Pratiques Phytopharmaceutiques* (School for the promotion of good practices in the use of phytopharmaceutical products used in farming).

TOPPS, which stands for Train the Operators to Prevent Pollution from Point Sources, was launched about a year ago. It is part of the European LIFE – Environment programme and is co-funded by ECPA (European Crop Protection Association).

The objective of this TOPPS programme is to put out a consistent message throughout the whole of Europe on the prevention of point source pollution by phytopharmaceutical products used in farming. It also aims to train intermediaries and farmers to use good practice in order to prevent point source pollution.

Projects:

The various projects undertaken as part of this programme focus on:

- Drawing up an inventory of all the data available across the whole of Europe on point source pollution (Internet-based database),
- Drawing up a common, pan-European, reference document listing good management practices designed to prevent point source pollution,
- Assessing the level of awareness of all the people involved in any way in the problem of point source pollution throughout Europe,
- Establishing experimental projects in various river catchment areas: farm diagnosis, training, information and selection of demonstration farms,
- Proposing a method for the large-scale dissemination of the list of good practices designed to prevent point source pollution,
- Steering a network of specialists.

Five test river catchment areas have been chosen to carry out experimental work. The projects that have been established aim to assess the phytopharmaceutical product management practices currently used on farms, as well as the level of awareness of the point source pollution problem among the various people it concerns. This project should also help identify positive as well as hindering factors in the dissemination and implementation of good management practices designed to prevent this type of pollution. Farm audits will be organised as well as training and information initiatives for farmers.

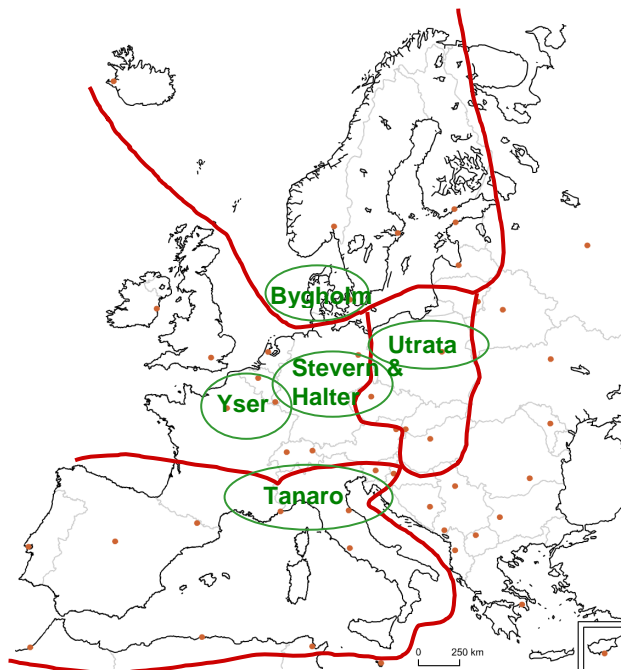


Figure 1: The four main regions around which the project is organised and the location of the river catchment areas being studied (Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy and Poland).

A French river catchment area

The Yser catchment area, one of the five river catchment areas chosen, lies across the Franco-Belgian border. Many projects had already been set up on both sides. The main new element introduced by this project is its cross-border approach. At a regional level, distributors and advice organisations have joined the programme.

ARVALIS's role

ARVALIS coordinates the project in France. Over 100 documents (regulations, information brochures, DVD, diagnostic tool, etc.) on point source pollution were gathered in France. A large number of French organisations concerned with this type of pollution have also been identified. This data will eventually be available on the TOPPS project database (available on the Internet). ARVALIS is also very involved in the development of training tools and the establishment of demonstration farms. In collaboration with CEMAGREF (Agricultural and environmental engineering research institute), ARVALIS is helping to survey the people concerned with point source pollution in order to assess their level of awareness on this issue. Finally, a large number of projects designed to improve water quality had already been established at regional level. ARVALIS was responsible for mobilising and involving local people in the establishment of TOPPS projects, therefore ensuring a consistent approach.

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Project website: <http://www.topps-life.org>