

BRINGING LIFE BACK TO THE FIELDS: THE POWER OF HEDGEROWS

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WHY?

- Agricultural **intensification** and expanding **land use** for food production are drivers of **biodiversity loss** as they replace diverse natural ecosystems with simplified landscapes, weakening essential ecosystem services and **threatening long-term agricultural sustainability**.
- Hedgerows are a **sustainable** land management solution that reintroduce habitat **diversity** and **ecological connectivity** into farmland by creating permanent strips of natural vegetation.

HOW DO THEY WORK?

- They increase habitat **diversity** and create **semi-natural environments** in agricultural landscapes.
- They support **biodiversity** by providing **food, shelter**, and ecological **connectivity** for many species.
- They promote **pollination** and natural **pest control**, benefiting agricultural productivity.

STUDY IN BRITTANY, FRANCE

The ecological benefits of hedgerows depend on strong and coordinated **land-use policies** that **protect** and **maintain** connected hedgerow networks rather than allowing continued fragmentation through agricultural intensification.

GLOBAL META-ANALYSIS

Hedgerows consistently support biodiversity across **different climates worldwide**, making them an effective **compromise** between productive farmland and fully natural habitats, although they cannot entirely replace untouched ecosystems

WHERE DO WE MOST NEED THEM?

- **Tropical regions**, which sustain exceptionally **high levels of global biodiversity**, could strongly benefit from hedgerow policies because rapid **agricultural expansion** and **deforestation** lead to **fragmented habitats** and accelerated **biodiversity loss** in these ecologically important ecosystems.
- In many developing tropical regions where agriculture is dominated by smallholders with limited access to modern technologies, hedgerows could improve **soil quality, biodiversity**, and the **sustainability** of agricultural production.

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