



Black-tailed Godwit conservation in the Netherlands

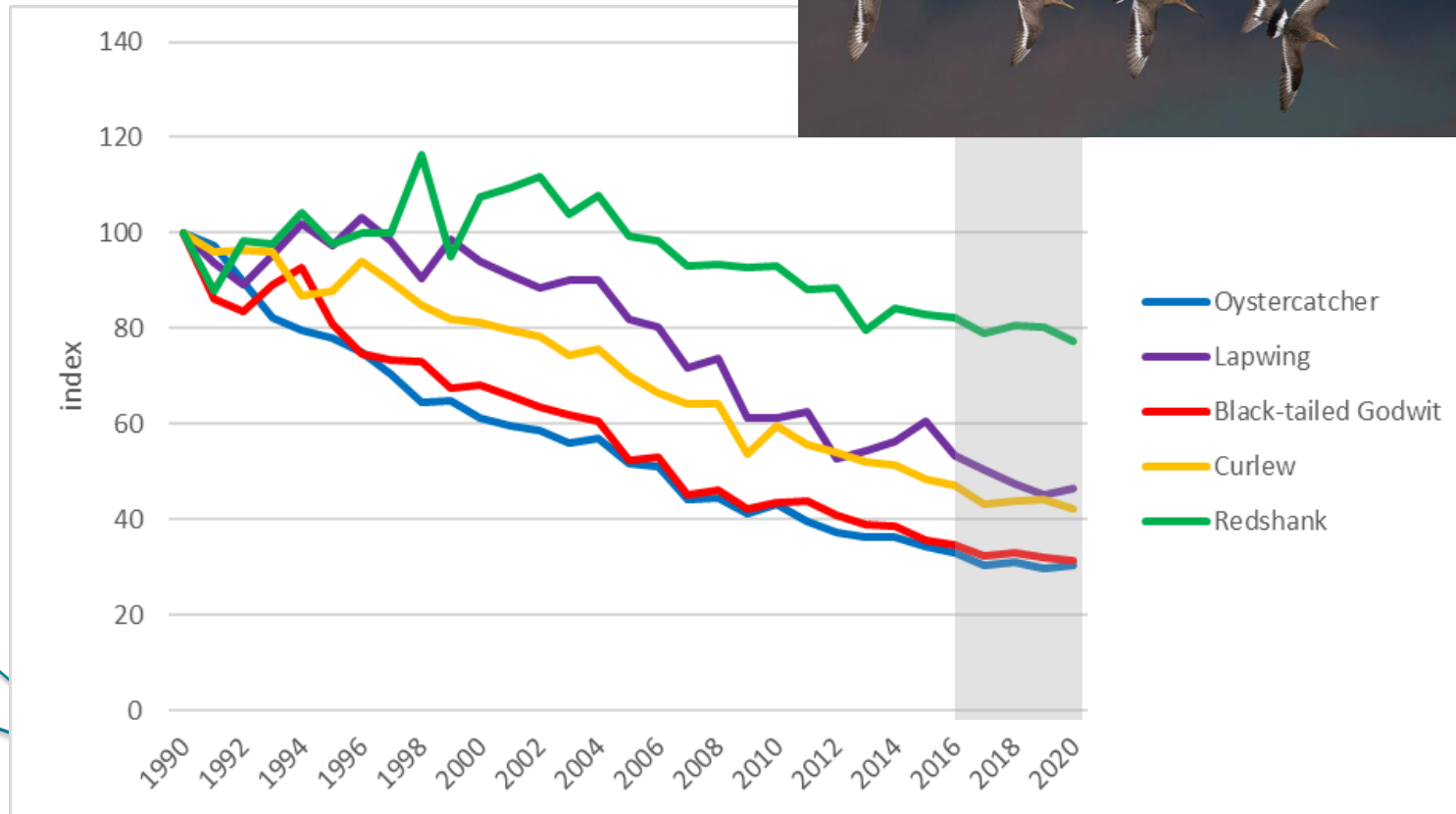
Maja Roodbergen
Erik Kleyheeg



Sovon

Meadow bird trends

- Intensification of agriculture
- Increased predation
- Climate change



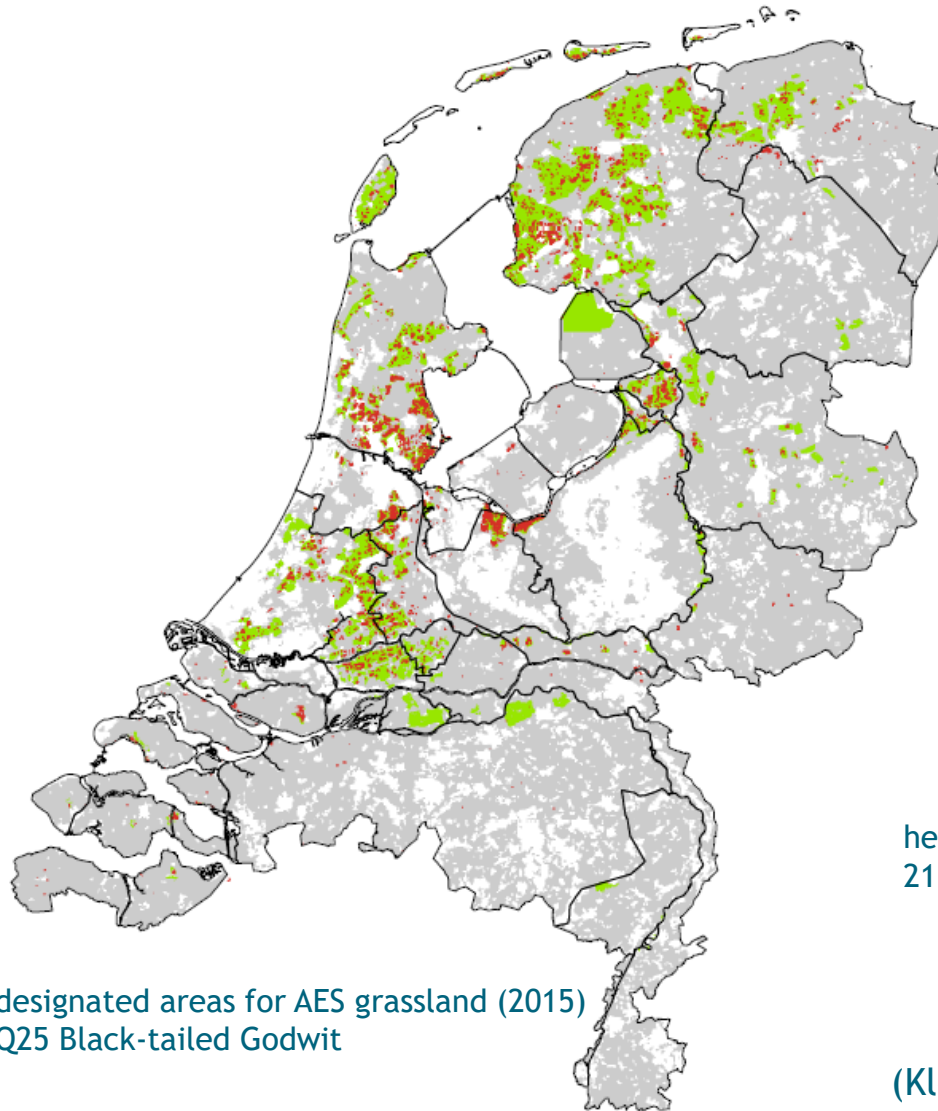
Evaluation of AES-system in 2020

(Boonstra *et al.*, 2020)

- Responsibilities and roles clearer, participation of farmers increased
- More focus on target species (but species lists too long)
- More uptake of intensive AES-schemes (but therefore smaller area) and better situated
- Too little focus on long-term habitat improvement and continuity
- No formal role for union of water authorities (waterschappen), nature conservation organisations and volunteers
- No minimum area of AES, needed for stable populations, defined
- AES-system, even when optimized, not sufficient for reversing negative trends; additional measures needed (e.g. predator control, ground water level management, structural environmental improvements)
- Include other targets (climate adaptation, CO2 and N-reductions, soil subsidence)

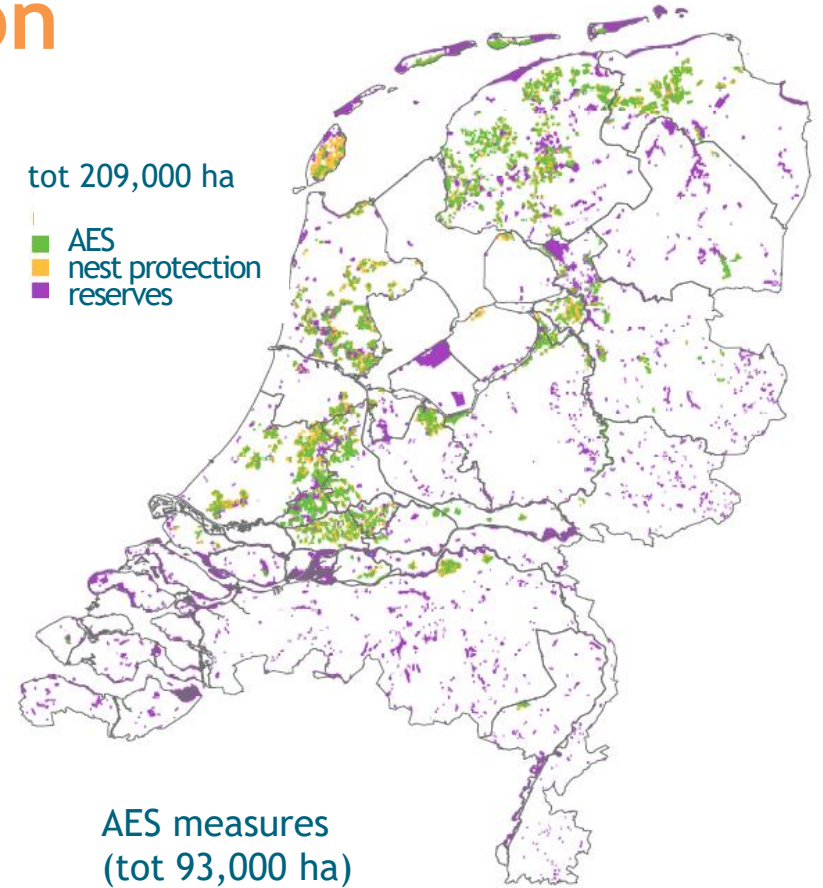


Meadow bird conservation



tot 209,000 ha

AES
nest protection
reserves



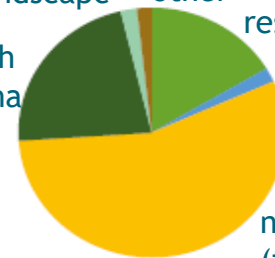
AES measures
(tot 93,000 ha)

landscape other

herb-rich
21,000 ha

resting period

wet features 1,700 ha



nest protection 52,000 ha
(from agric. activities)

(Kleyheeg et al. 2020)

Monitoring effectiveness of AES-system (planned in 2023)

Monitoring divided into evaluation of 1) management and 2) policy

- 1) *aimed at:* improving instantaneous management and choice and effectiveness of different AES-options

consists of: nest searches and counts of alarming pairs

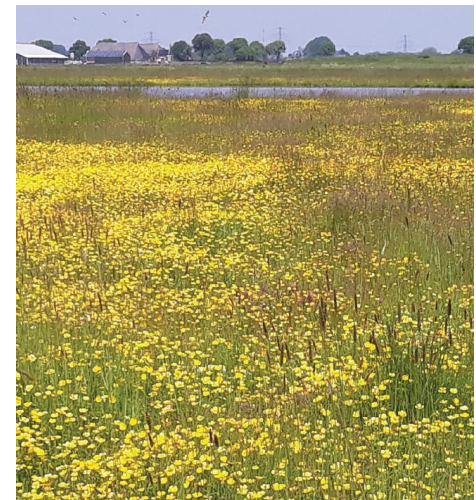
coordinated by: Collectives

- 2) *aimed at:* evaluating AES-policy with regard to numbers and trends of meadow birds

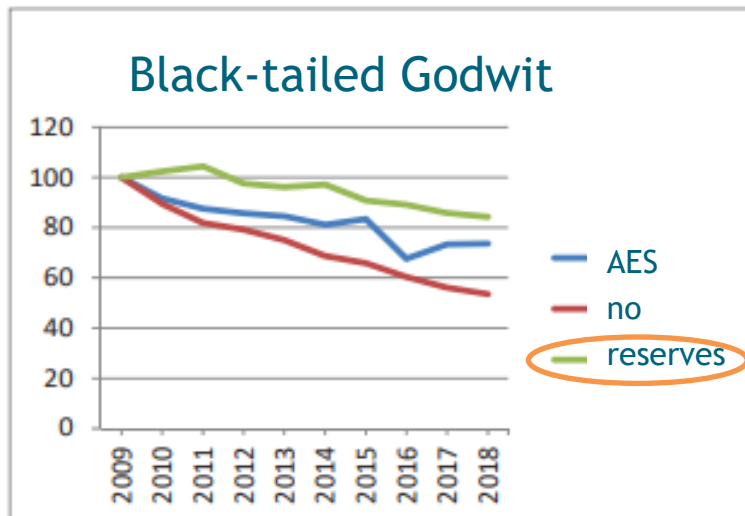
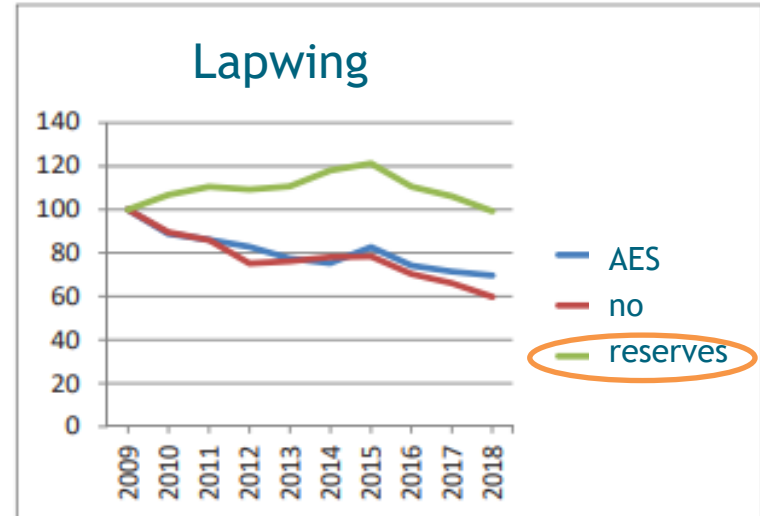
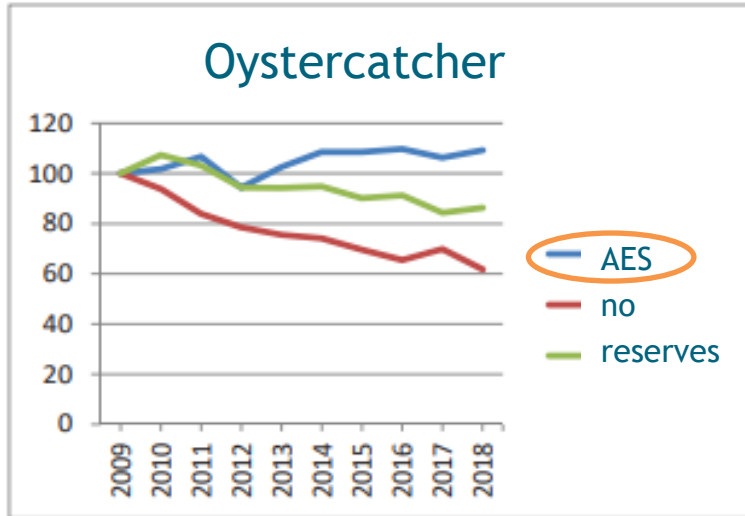
consists of: national monitoring scheme with monitoring plots in all provinces, in AES and reference locations

coordinated by: Sovon

| Species | # AES-plots | # reference plots |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| total | 377 | 279 |
| with Black-tailed Godwit | 176 | 32 |
| with Curlew | 56 | 38 |



Meadow bird conservation

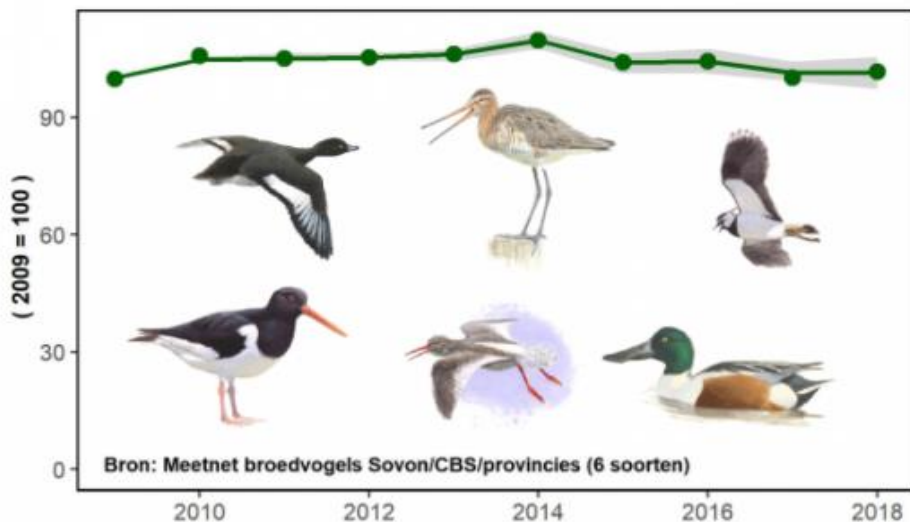


(van Turnhout *et al.*, 2019)

Meadow bird conservation

(van Turnhout *et al.*, 2019, MSI-trends)

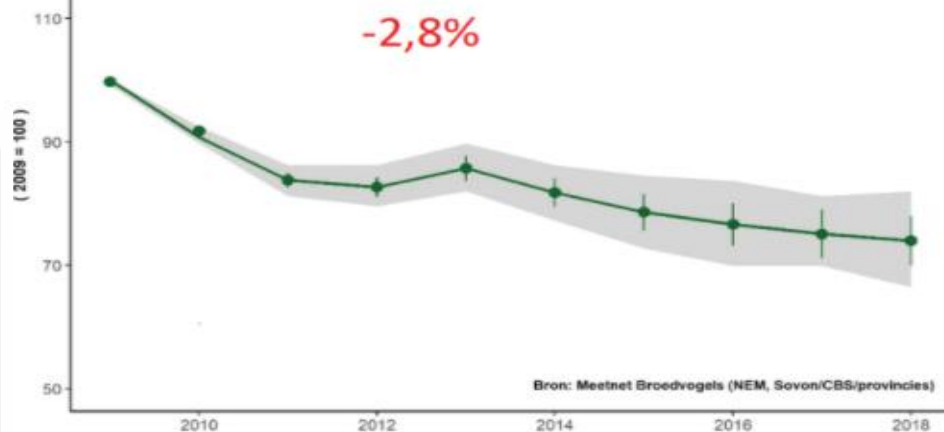
reserves



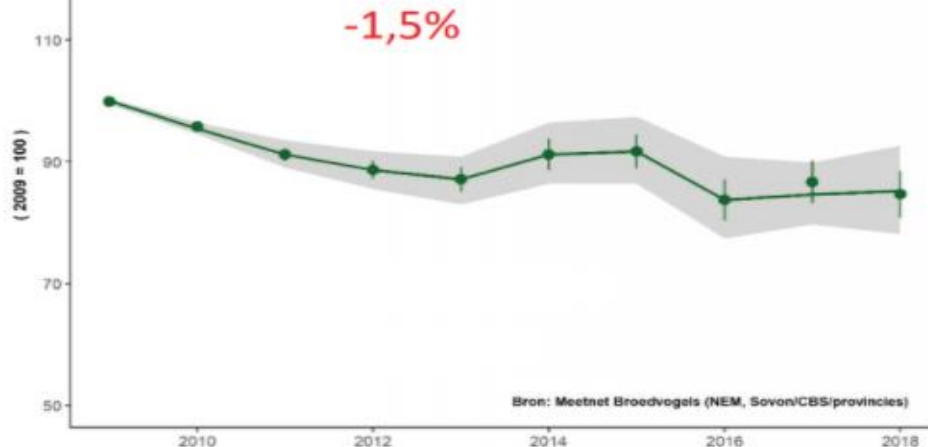
Stable in reserves, negative in AES and in grassland without management

Difference between AES and grassland without management not significant

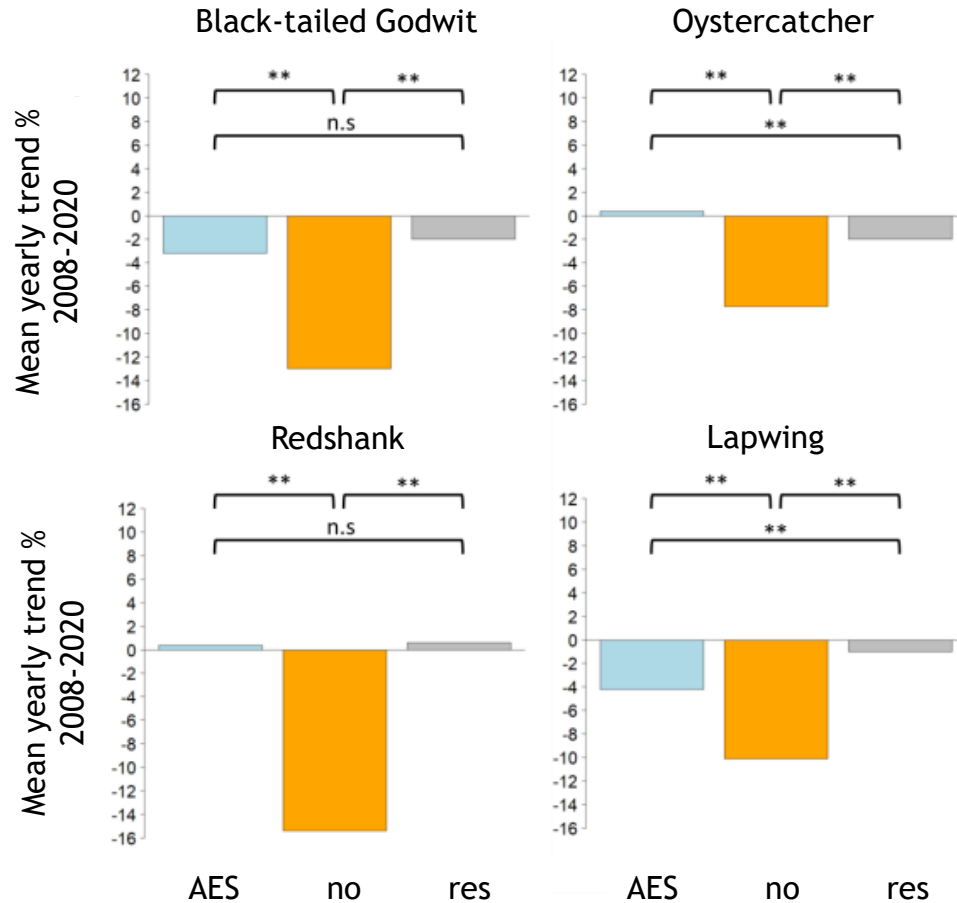
no management



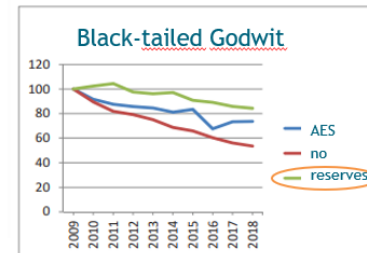
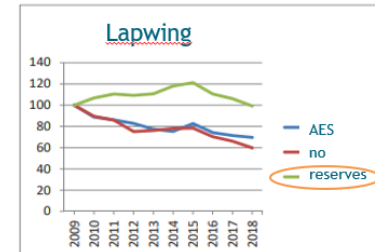
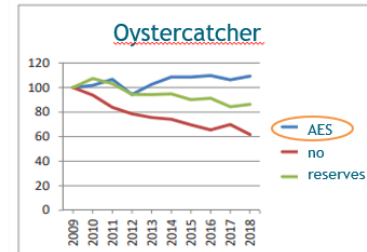
AES



Meadow bird conservation - Fryslân '08-'20



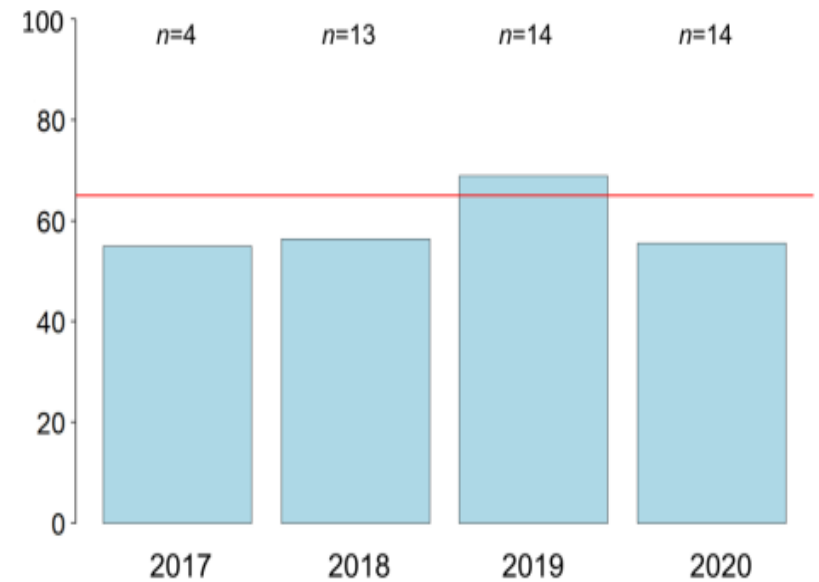
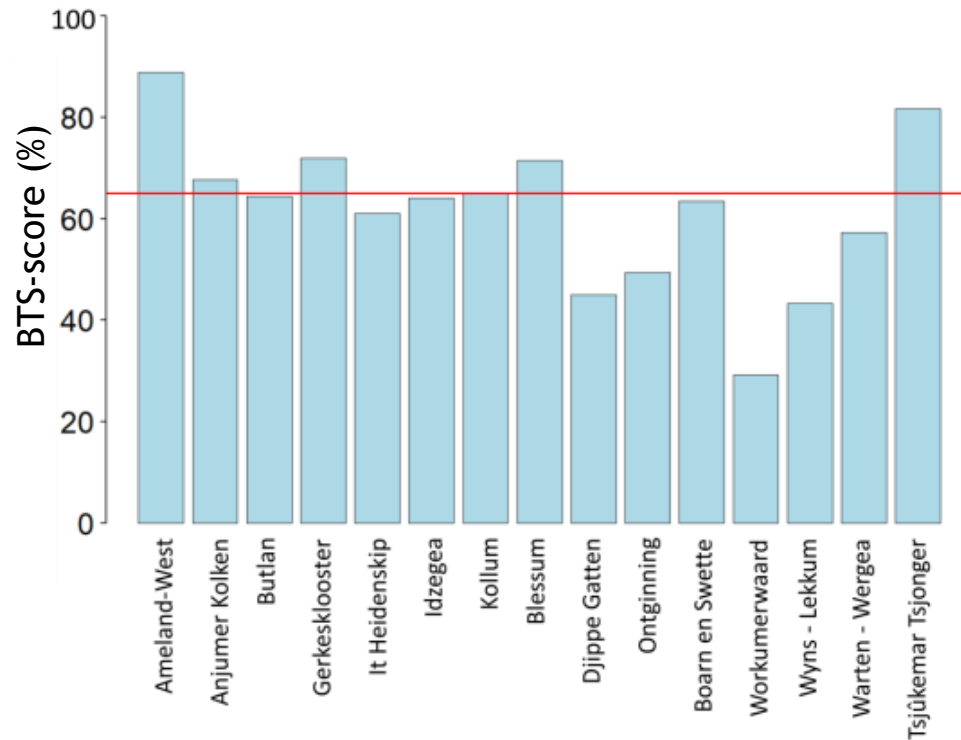
similar results as for earlier national comparison



(van Turnhout *et al.*, 2019)

Meadow bird conservation - Fryslân '08-'20

BTS-score (# alarming pairs/# breeding pairs) for Black-tailed Godwit in most sites and years too low in Frysian AES-sites in 2017-2020



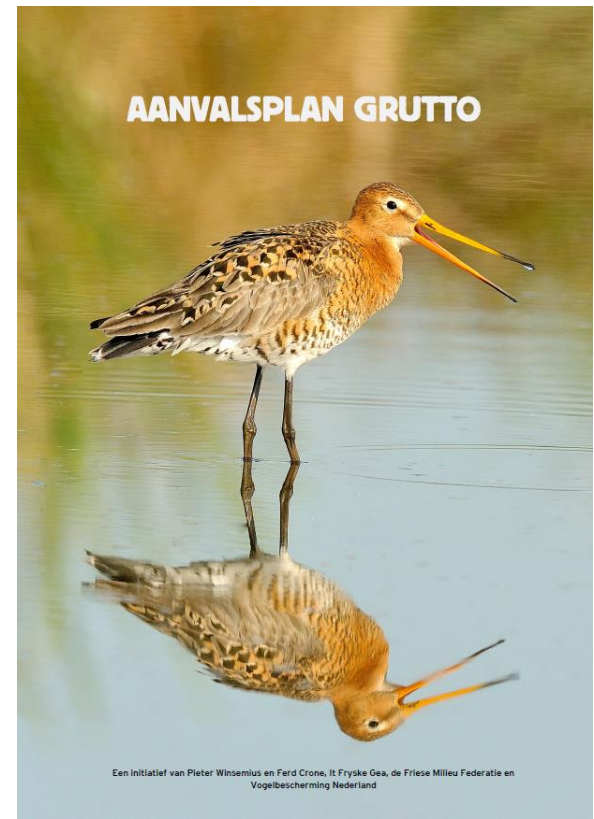
Battleplan Black-tailed Godwit

Initiative in 2020 of former Minister and 3 NGO's (It Fryske Gea, Friese Milieu Federatie and BirdLife Netherlands)

Aim: reverse negative trend of BtG and other meadow birds

Designation of c. 30 core areas of min. 1000 ha, with core (reserve) of 200 ha and 10 ha of wet features:

- Open areas with high ground water levels (10-20 cm below soil surface) in 15 Feb - 1 Jul
- Slurry/artificial fertiliser → rough manure
- Cattle density 2.5 cows/ha → 1 cow/ha
- Mowing and grazing only after fledging of chicks
- Predator control plan



Battleplan Black-tailed Godwit - finances

- Long-term investments related to land, not land owners
- For structural environmental improvements, long-term (> 15 years) management agreements, extensification of management, downgrading of land (agriculture → nature), ...
- Yearly recurrent investment of €40 billion
(€1.2 billion per core area)
- One-time investment of € 35 billion
(€ 1100 per ha) per year
- Partly to be commercially financed, e.g.
by increasing milk price, CO₂-rights, ...

Future for Black-tailed Godwit?!

