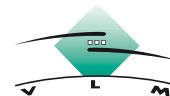
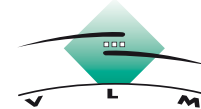


# 'The VLM, your partner in open space



# Who are we?

## VLM or Flemish Land Agency



VLAAMSE LANDMAATSCHAPPIJ  
UW PARTNER IN DE OPEN RUIMTE

As an agency being part of the Flemish government, the Flemish Land Agency is responsible for the institution of the open space and the control of manure surpluses in Flanders. Next to this the agency gives figure to country policy in Flanders. Its action area extends from the outer area to the open space in the conurbation in Flanders.

## Six times present in Flanders

As an Externally Privatised Agency (EVA) the VLM is active in the fields Environment, Nature and Energy which are part of the Ministry of the Flemish Community. Land use planning, Manure Bank and Rural Development are its core departments. Next to the head office in Brussels, the agency has a local department in each of the five provinces for the execution of its projects. Thanks to these six locations people who want to take advantage of our services, can reach and visit us in the whole of Flanders.



← Land Consolidation Project Bollebeek →



# What do we do?

A wide package of tasks

1. **Arrange** open space to be liveable
2. Put countryside policy on the **track** and continue to **inspire**
3. Active **guiding** for durable farming



# 1. Arrange open space to be liveable

Everyday the VLM is occupied with a durable open space where it is good to live, to work and to relax. On demand of and with others the VLM is looking for a quality institution which suits the characteristics of the region and fits in with the wishes of the partners and the locals engaged.

Open space becomes more and more scarce in Flanders. The demand to protect, to arrange and manage is becoming louder and louder. From the moment of its establishment we work at the institution of the open space, but in the course of the years the approach has known a strong evolution. In earlier times the institution instruments such as land consolidation, nature conservation and land use planning, took the central place. But nowadays we especially go out from the forces and the needs of the region. On demand of our partners we use our know-how and experience in the fields where others fail. For a specific region we examine where and how land use planning, land consolidation, nature conservation, soil banks, management agreements can be useful. We use our basket of instruments, measured to the demand and with respect for the identity of the region.

← *Parkbos Gent, Scheldevelde*

## The VLM, turning point for soil mobility

During the years the VLM gathered a lot of experience with the soil exchange during projects for land consolidation projects. This know-how is now put at the service of other administrations and political sectors. Doel, the Sigmaplan, the harbour in Zeebrugge, the Park forest in Ghent, the Canal area in Ghent, ...: all of these Flemish strategic projects demand a flanking policy. Through the soil bank we take measures for soil exchange and in this way help farmers which are confronted with dispossession. This is executed to the measure for the region.

Through the Flemish Soil Bank we also manage all soil related information for the Flemish Community.



## 2. Put countryside policy on the **track** and continue to **inspire**

Together with its partners we give shape to an integrated country policy. As trigger and catalyst of the renovation project on the country we offer, in dialogue with all players in the region, our know-how and act in a supporting way.

The countryside is an exciting and flourishing mixture of agriculture, economy, spatial scheduling, nature, recreation, tourism, ... To be able to keep pace with all of the social developments, the countryside needs impulses to use its aces and at the same time enable all of her functions to develop. Only an integrated countryside policy can join all forces and initiatives of all political sectors and government levels. Our department

Rural Development initiates and gives shape to this countryside policy. We organize reunions with our countryside partners and work at partnerships so that every partner can take its own responsibility in the construction of a liveable countryside full of quality.

### **The VLM and Europe**

Viability of the countryside is also a priority for Europe: the EU strongly invests in stimuli for the European countryside regions. We participate in several European projects and develop international networks. We closely follow the European legislation and actively look for European (co)financing possibilities for our countryside projects in Flanders. We are also a member of the European Leader+ programme and the Programming document for Rural development (PDPO).



← *Land Consolidation Project Elingen*

### 3. Active **guiding** for durable farming

The VLM helps to realize the environment objectives of the nitrate directive. It does this through an active encouragement of the farmers to opt for durable farming and by controlling the correct observance of the manure legislation.

Through management agreements the VLM stimulates land users to opt for a durable management of the open space.

Our department the Mestbank (Manure Bank) is responsible for pushing back of the manure surpluses in Flanders. By realizing the objectives of the nitrate directive, executing the ammoniac reduction programme and taking care of a environment sensible and affordable manure transformation, we look to solve the manure problem.

We help the managers with all of our know-how and make them sensitive for the environment issue. Communication and sensibilisation are a crucial task for the Mestbank. A well organized control is the final piece of this wide sensibilisation approach.

Within the framework of the management agree-

ments we actively approach the farmers. Our farming planners search for solutions to the measure of the farmers which want to practise nature conservation on their farms.



#### **From a quality service to full partnership**

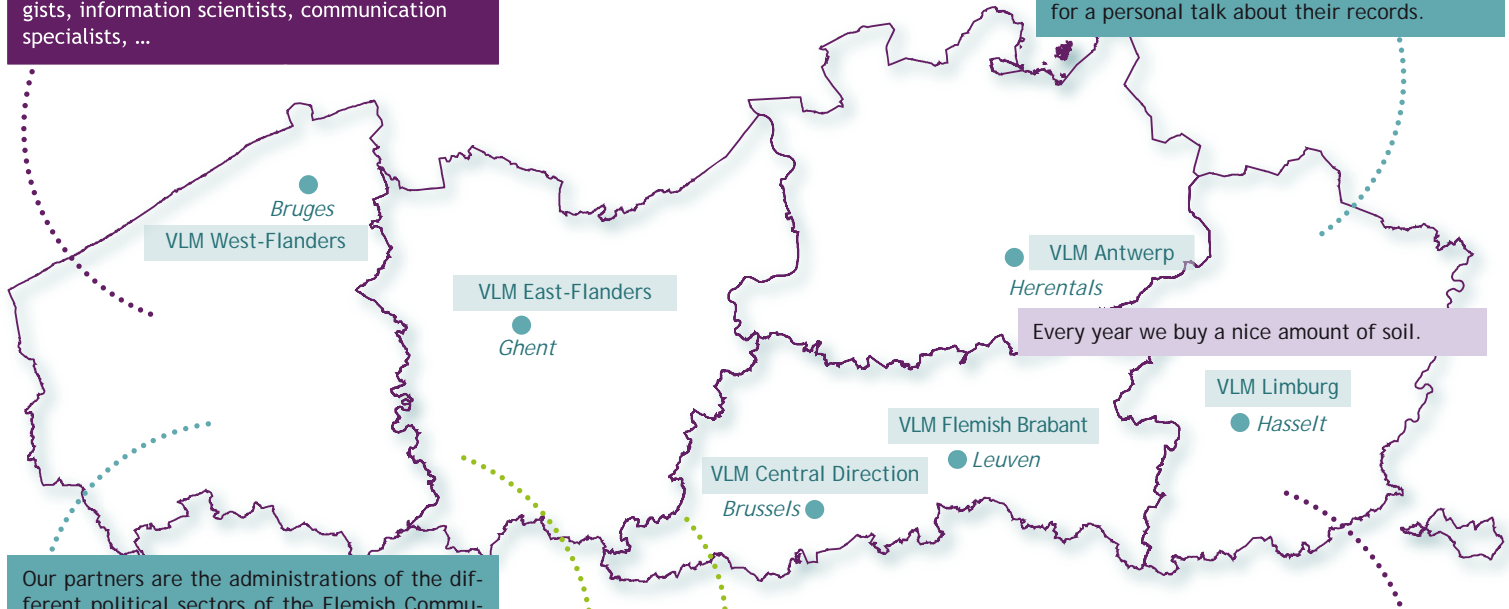
The farmer, being the most intense user and at the same time administrator of the open space, is one of our most important partners. In co-operation with all the other agencies who offer management agreements in Flanders, we launched the 'e-counter' management agreements. The farmer can consult it for all sorts of management agreements. We strongly support the farmer in his care for nature and landscape and the same time we support the local communities. We constantly strive for a better and integrated service, under the cupola of the "e-government" of the Flemish government.

# The VLM on the field

## Some facts and figures

We employ some 800 people in the most different fields: agriculture engineers, geographers, land-surveyors, environment experts, biologists, information scientists, communication specialists, ...

Every year we welcome about 10.000 farmers for a personal talk about their records.



Every year we buy a nice amount of soil.

Our partners are the administrations of the different political sectors of the Flemish Community, provinces, cities and local communities, farmers, environment associations, regional landscapes, NGO's....

240.000 ha or almost one third of the total surface of farm land in Flanders is or was engaged in the land consolidation.

At the beginning of 2006 six land use planning projects are in execution and several other plans are in one or other stage of the procedure.

One farmer out of seven has signed a contract for one or more management agreements.

## More information?

You want to know more on our activities?

An extended package of documentation?

All of our collaborators are ready for you.



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E-mail: [info@vlm.be](mailto:info@vlm.be)

or visit our website [www.vlm.be](http://www.vlm.be).

You may also contact or visit one of the following provincial departments:

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Tel: 014/25.83.00 - Fax: 014/25.83.99

#### VLM Limburg

Koningin Astridlaan 10 - 3500 Hasselt  
Tel: 011/29.87.00 - Fax: 011/29.87.99

#### VLM East-Flanders

Ganzendries 149 - 9000 Ghent  
Tel: 09/244.85.00 - Fax: 09/244.85.99

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