

## Introduction and content summary

Field boundaries such as hedged banks, hedges and others are present in Europe in many different forms. In most instances they enclose areas used for farming. They are part of Europe's cultural landscape history and a habitat for complex ecological communities.

This book gives a wide ranging overview of the field boundaries found in Europe. Findings regarding the worldwide history, formation and geographical range of field boundaries are also detailed.

It provides a detailed documentation of hedged banks, hedges, field walls and traditional fences based on results from a survey undertaken over a period of 30 years in which photos were taken, drawings made, descriptions written and measurements were taken. This project was solely financed by the author. The appearance, function, characteristics, condition and woody growth as well as the different uses of the field boundaries are covered in detail. So too are the methods of cutting woody growth, weaving, bending and other types of maintenance. The loss of field boundaries, the extent of damage and the causes of damage, as well as newly built examples are also described.

The book is split into two volumes. The first volume provides an overview of Europe, while the second volume is dedicated to detailed descriptions of the different countries surveyed. The historical description of field boundaries ranges from the Palaeolithic Age up to the present day. The hedged banks, field walls (dry stone walls and stone banks), dead brushwood fences, stick picket fences, woven vertical branch fences, wattle fences and other traditional fences are summarised, classified and their distribution illustrated. The woody growth on the banks and field walls is assessed and standardised. The tree and woody growth is evaluated and set out in tables. In addition, about 170 different earth banks, 160 stone faced banks, 10 peat banks, 330 field walls, 240 hedge styles, 70 dead brushwood hedges, stick picket fences, vertical branch fences, wattle fences and other traditional wooden fences are depicted in diagrams. Other types are described and illustrated.

The significance of hedged banks and field walls to the farming industry is also discussed as well as the economic implications of the creation of new ones. The effect of excessive cutting of woody growth on yields is also detailed.

A brief overview of the international agreements and EU responsibilities regarding the protection of hedged banks and other landscape elements is given. The ecological significance of hedged banks and hedges is described with the help of examples. The numerous methods of cutting and maintenance, as well as their influence on the hedge and woody growth structure, on the organisms therein and on the character of the landscape, are presented in detail.

The use of woody growth from field boundaries as a source of wood fuel and the impacts of this are also detailed.

The European chapter ends with a general overview of the

types of damage which affect field boundaries, the reasons for loss and also the construction of new hedge banks and field walls.

This is followed by detailed information on the individual countries surveyed as presented below:

1. The country name with a photo of a typical field boundary landscape.
2. Map and description of the hedged banks and field wall survey route.
3. General information about the country.
4. Pictorial representation of typical hedge banks and field wall landscapes.
5. Brief country settlement description.
6. The section "Hedged banks, field walls (dry stone walls/stone banks)" contains a selection of different terms connected with field boundaries which are translated from the respective country's language. A description of the history and development of hedged banks and field walls follows in as much detail as possible. An overview of the status of hedged banks and field walls is then given, together with an account of the appearance and types of woody growth associated with them. Information regarding maintenance methods, condition, types of damage and the legal protection status is provided.
7. The chapter "Banks and field walls" contains illustrations of a variety of such types of boundaries.
8. Dead brushwood hedges, stick picket fences, woven vertical branch fences, wattle fences and traditional wooden fences are described in as much detail as possible.
9. This section is dedicated to passages, gateways, crossings, waterways and ditches.
10. The section "Vegetation growth" gives an overview of the vegetation types found.
11. The Chapter "Vegetation cutting styles on hedged banks and field wall hedges" presents information about the folding, laying and bending of living woody growth as well as various hedge styles.
12. A section "Damage" covers the major damaging activities inflicted on hedged banks and field walls.
13. "Maintenance" covers, in particular, the traditional management of the woody growth on banks and field walls.
14. The description of building of new hedged banks and field walls is also presented.
15. In the "Literature" section documents used during the survey and in each country description is quoted.