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Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF)

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### Launch of BMEL project

## More insects in agricultural landscapes

What is the impact of agriculture on insects and what do insect-friendly use systems look like? Researchers in the project “FInAL – Promotion of Insects in Agricultural Landscapes” have been addressing these questions since October. The joint project, funded with around 5 million euros by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and coordinated by the Thünen Institute, is the first to examine large sections of the landscape in order to find out how the diversity and functionality of insects can be selectively increased. The Leibniz Center for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF) is providing a landscape laboratory in the Havelland Luch, northwest of Berlin. A total of three areas, representing the typical agricultural environments of Germany, are to be researched.

Over the next three project years, the researchers will develop insect-friendly cultivation systems in the landscape laboratories, which cover several square kilometers. The main focus is on renewable raw materials, i.e. plants and plant residues that are used as materials or to generate electricity, heat and biofuels. The influence of near-natural habitats, such as blossom strips and other biotopes, is also being investigated. The researchers are also looking for ways of achieving greater diversity in vegetation and thus in insect fauna on grassland. The measures will be developed jointly with the farms in order to improve their implementation in practice. As a result, tried and tested proposals are to be developed to identify ways of making agriculture more insect-friendly.

The special feature of this research project lies in the long-term perspective of promoting insects in the overall context of landscape structures and agriculture.



Federal Minister of Agriculture Julia Klöckner hands over funding approval notifications on 9 October 2018 in Berlin | Source: © BMEL | Image source in color and print quality: [www.zalf.de/de/aktuelles](http://www.zalf.de/de/aktuelles)

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**Project Partners:**

- Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF)
- Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute (TI)
- Julius Kühn Institute (JKI)
- Lower Saxony Chamber of Agriculture (LWK Nds.)

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**About the Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF) in Muencheberg, one of the institutes of the Leibniz Association:**

ZALF's mission is to scientifically explain causal relationships in agricultural landscapes, and to provide society with a knowledge-base for the sustainable use of agricultural landscapes through excellent research.

Unlike natural landscapes, agricultural landscapes are shaped by their use and their users. The research at ZALF therefore comprises the social demands placed on agricultural landscapes and the effects of their use. ZALF has been increasingly concentrating its research on the Grand Societal Challenges relevant in the context of agricultural landscapes, such as climate change, food security or the protection of biodiversity.