

These measures are primarily about the **health** of the **pasture** – which is linked to **biodiversity**. Monitoring means repeating the same recording regularly.

If you want to monitor change and be able to be quite specific about what has changed, you need to:

- Use a set area (or preferably a few of them) to search in which is small enough that you can reasonably get a good look at everything in it (e.g. a 2m square). The number of squares you use should represent the size of your field and how variable the sward is (so you need more if it is a big field or if the grassland composition changes across the field). Ideally you need to revisit **the same** squares.

If you just want to get a general feel for your pastures in terms of either how different they are to one another or how they are changing in response to particular practices, you could:

- Take a set route through the field (maybe a zig zag, or straight line across from one gate to another depending on field size and variability) and look at the plants within a metre or two of you on either side.

RECORD

1. Numbers of legume species

Examples shown here

<http://www.livingfield.co.uk/living-field-garden/living-exhibits/legumes/>

2. Numbers of dicots (species which are not legumes or grasses) e.g. plantain, dandelion

Examples shown here

<https://www.field-studies-council.org/shop/publications/grassland-plants-1-guide/>

3. Number of grass species

Examples shown here

<https://www.field-studies-council.org/shop/publications/grasses-guide/>

4. % of grass compared to other species (assess from above)

5. % of bare soil visible (assess from above)

6. % of plants that cattle don't like to eat – e.g. dock, thistle

7. How tall is the vegetation? Is it the same across the field? (Use a plate meter if you have one or a measuring stick at 10-20 locations across a field, record canopy cover too)

For canopy cover you could use

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=okstate.edu.canopeo&hl=en_GB&gl=US

8. Does grass grow well all year in this field? If not when does it grow best and is that particular grass species growing better at different times?

9. How many days does it take for manure to disappear? (You may need to monitor separately)

Example recording sheet

	Field 1/Sample plot 1/visit 1	Field 2/Sample plot 2/visit 2																																								
No. of legume species																																										
No. of dicot species																																										
No. of grass species																																										
% of grass																																										
% of bare soil																																										
% undesirable plants																																										
Vegetation height (15 points)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>																					<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>																				
Canopy cover (15 points)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>																					<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>																				
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