

COMMUNAUTÉ FRANÇAISE DE BELGIQUE
UNIVERSITÉ DE LIÈGE – GEMBLOUX AGRO-BIO TECH

**ÉTUDE DE LA CONNECTIVITÉ
HYDROLOGIQUE ET SÉDIMENTAIRE
EN MILIEU DE PLATEAU LIMONEUX
AGRICOLE – MESURE,
MODÉLISATION ET AMÉNAGEMENT
D’UN BASSIN-VERSANT**

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Dissertation originale présentée en vue de l’obtention du grade de docteur en
sciences agronomiques et ingénierie biologique

Promoteur : Prof. Aurore DEGRÉ
Année civile : 2020

Résumé

Le ruissellement et l'érosion qui en découle impliquent de nombreuses conséquences en milieu agricole en Europe de l'ouest. Les coulées boueuses survenant après certains événements pluvieux induisent des dégâts sur la parcelle (perte en sol, perte d'éléments chimiques, dégâts aux cultures, etc.) et hors de celle-ci lors de la sédimentation (dégâts aux infrastructures, aux habitations, pollution chimique, etc.). Les causes des schémas spatiaux de redistribution des sédiments sont nombreuses et varient dans le temps et dans l'espace. Depuis quelques années, la notion de connectivité permet de mieux décrire les mouvements d'eau et de sédiments sur le bassin-versant. Son étude en contexte de plateau limoneux pouvant être approfondie, la connectivité demande à être décrite via des mesures et des modélisations pour comprendre les schémas spatiaux de redistribution.

Le site étudié est un bassin-versant limoneux (356 ha) en contexte agricole belge. Les techniques de mesure (ex : acquisition du modèle numérique de terrain par drone) et de modélisation demandent le choix d'une taille de pixel adéquate. L'impact de ce choix a été testé en utilisant un indice de connectivité (IC de Borselli). Entre 25 cm et 10 m, des différences de 20 % au niveau de l'IC sont observables et finalement 1 m apparaît comme étant la taille de pixel adéquate pour étudier la connectivité en région agricole, au vu des comparaisons réalisées sur le terrain. Il a de plus été démontré qu'au-delà de cette taille, les schémas spatiaux de connectivité (ex : éléments linéaires du paysage) sont affectés. En deçà, le temps de calcul est décuplé et les informations supplémentaires sur la connectivité sont marginales.

La prédiction du ruissellement et de l'érosion consécutifs à un événement pluvieux demande l'utilisation de modèles. LandSoil, un modèle à base experte, permet de quantifier l'érosion sans multiplier le nombre de paramètres. La validation du modèle avec des mesures de terrain spatialisées est nécessaire. Des canaux de mesures de hauteur, des débitmètres et des réglettes graduées ont mis en évidence une bonne quantification du modèle sur des zones >10 ha. L'analyse des résultats a pointé une grande influence de l'occupation du sol, de l'allocation des cultures, du design du bassin-versant ainsi que des pentes. Au niveau des éléments linéaires du paysage, les bandes enherbées déposent des sédiments pour des pentes <2 %. Les bandes boisées diminuent fortement la connectivité mais déposent des quantités moindres de sédiments. Les limites de parcelles jouent quant à elles un rôle prépondérant sur le transport des sédiments mais pas sur leur quantité.

La démonstration faite des performances de LandSoil pour la quantification du ruissellement et de l'érosion en région agricole belge permet de réaliser des scénarios d'aménagements. Ultime étape avant la mise en œuvre, l'utilisation de modèles est un outil de communication avec les pouvoirs compétents. La comparaison de 9 scénarios d'aménagements pour limiter l'érosion a été réalisée, tous venant d'experts. Ils comprennent bande enherbée, bande de bois, fascine, haie ainsi que travail sur le sens et l'intensité du labour. L'efficacité des scénarios au niveau export de ruissellement et de sédiments est comprise entre 1 et 17 % pour le ruissellement et entre 4 et 53 % pour l'érosion pour la période de retour de 100 ans

(entre 1 et 34 % pour le ruissellement et entre 1 et 85 % pour l'érosion pour la période de retour de 2 ans). La période de retour testée a un effet important sur la réduction du ruissellement et de l'érosion. Les haies permettent de diminuer significativement le ruissellement alors que les bandes enherbées et les bois déposent plus de sédiments. Les fascines ont un rôle antiérosif pour de faibles aires contributives ou pour de grandes densités d'installation dans le paysage. Les volumes de dépôt dépendent du degré de déconnexion de l'aménagement ainsi que de l'aire déconnectée en amont de celui-ci. Un point important pour tous les dispositifs est le positionnement près des sources d'érosion linéaire, dans le chemin d'écoulement concentré ou directement en amont de zones à risque.

Pour des objectifs de recherche en adéquation avec les qualités et inconvénients de LandSoil, pour des bassins-versant de petite taille (quelques centaines d'hectares maximum) et en mesurant les inputs minutieusement, ce modèle devient un outil puissant de quantification du ruissellement et de l'érosion en zone agricole.

Mots-clés : Ceinture loessique belge, bassin-versant agricole, connectivité sédimentaire, taille de pixel, dynamique de l'érosion/dépôt, modélisation.

Abstract

Runoff and consequent erosion involve numerous consequences in agricultural land in Western Europe. Muddy floods occurring after some rainfall events induce damages to the field (soil loss, chemical elements loss, crop damages, etc.) and downstream the field (damages to infrastructures, to houses, chemical pollution, etc.). Causes of spatial patterns of sediments redistribution are numerous and change over space and time. For a few years, notion of connectivity has permitted to better describe water and sediments movements in the catchment. In order to go further in the knowledge in silty plateau context, connectivity need to be described with measurements and modellings to understand spatial patterns of redistribution.

The studied site is a loamy catchment (356 ha) in Belgian agricultural context. Measurements techniques (e.g. acquisition of digital elevation model with a drone) and modelling ask for the choice of a suitable pixel size. The impact of this choice was tested in using a connectivity index (IC of Borselli). Between 25 cm and 10 m, differences of 20% for the IC are observable and finally 1 m appears to be the optimal pixel size to study connectivity in agricultural land. Beyond this size, spatial patterns of connectivity (e.g. linear features in the landscape) are affected. Below this size, calculation time is multiplied and supplementary information on connectivity is marginal.

Runoff and erosion prediction after a rainfall event ask to use models. LandSoil, an expert-based model, permits to quantify erosion avoiding over-parameterization. Model validation with field measurements is necessary. Water heights in flumes, flowmeters and graduated rulers highlighted a good quantification of the model on areas larger than 10 ha. Results analysis pointed a great influence of land use, land allocation, landscape design and slope gradients. Regarding linear features, grass strips deposit sediments for slopes <2%. Wooded strips highly decrease connectivity but deposit less sediment. Field limits play a crucial role in the transport of sediment but not regarding the amount.

LandSoil validation for runoff and erosion quantification in Belgian agricultural land permits to design management plans. Last stage before implementation, use of models is a tool to communicate with stakeholders. Comparison of 9 management plans to limit erosion was done, all coming from experts. It includes grass strip, woodland strip, fascine, hedge and tillage direction and intensity. The efficiency of scenarios for water and sediment export is comprised between 1 and 17% for runoff and between 4 and 53% for erosion for the 100 years return period (between 1 and 34% for runoff and between 1 and 85% for erosion for the 2 years return period). The tested return period has an important effect on reduction of runoff and erosion. Hedges permit to significantly decrease runoff whereas grass strips and woods deposit more sediment. Fascines have an anti-erosive role for small contributing area or for high densities of installation in the landscape. Deposition volumes depend on the degree of disconnectivity of the feature and on the upstream disconnected area of this feature. An important point for all features is the location near linear erosion sources, across channels of concentrated runoff or immediately upstream of local assets at risk.

For research objectives in agreement with advantages and disadvantages of LandSoil, for small catchments (several hundreds of hectares maximum) and with high quality inputs measurements, this model becomes a powerful tool for runoff and erosion quantification in agricultural areas.

Keywords: Belgian loess belt, agricultural catchment, sediment connectivity, pixel size, erosion/deposition dynamics, modelling.

Remerciements

Je tiens d'abord à remercier toutes les personnes de l'Axe Echanges Eau – Sol Plante qui ont contribué de près ou de loin à la finalisation de cette thèse. Tout d'abord, Aurore Degré qui a toujours été disponible et de bon conseil pendant ces 6 années. Il est vrai que ce n'est pas toujours très motivant de recevoir un retour de soumission d'article et à chaque fois, j'ai été remis sur de bonnes bases pour continuer. Ensuite, Gilles S. que j'ai de très nombreuses fois sollicité pour des tâches aussi diverses qu'il est possible de trouver. Stéphane, accompagnateur de sorties de terrain et de très bonne aide pour les travaux pratiques. Katia, pour son travail précis et rapide pour les papiers, les commandes, les informations. Daniel, toujours serviable et jardinier officiel du bâtiment. Et tous les autres pour les moments de travail ou de détente (Félix, Victor, Jean-Thomas, Gilles, etc.).

Ensuite, merci aux membres de mon comité de thèse (Charles Bielders, Philippe Lejeune, Gilles Colinet, Marc Dufrêne) pour leur aide et leurs conseils et réorientations au cours des réunions pour toujours rester sur les bons rails.

Je remercie également mes proches sans qui ces quelques années de thèse auraient été plus difficiles à finaliser. Laure qui me soutient (même si elle ne sait toujours pas exactement ce que j'ai fait pendant ces années). Julia, sans qui le challenge aurait été trop facile avec de bonnes nuits réparatrices. Mes parents, frère et sœur qui sont là depuis le début de mes études. Christine, Manuel et Camille faisant partie intégrante de la décontraction des week-ends.

Merci à toutes les personnes rencontrées au cours des conférences (particulièrement le groupe Connecteur) permettant d'enrichir l'expérience et d'agrandir la vision de la thématique à d'autres horizons. La liste est longue mais voici quelques noms : Olivier Cerdan, Rens Masselink, Jantiene Baartman, Frédéric Darboux, Joao Nunes, John Wainwright, Pasquale Borrelli, Adrian Chappell, Marco Cavalli, Panos Panagos. Un merci tout particulier à Olivier Cerdan pour ses conseils et sa présence dans le jury.

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Liste des abréviations

Français

BV: bassin-versant

BE: bande enherbée

IC: indice de connectivité

CR: coefficient de ruissellement

GISER: gestion intégrée sol-érosion-ruissellement

MNS: modèle numérique de surface

MNT: modèle numérique de terrain

FCR: facies-couverture végétale-rugosité du sol

TCS: techniques culturelles simplifiées

English

DEM: digital elevation model

FIC: field assessment of connectivity index

IC: index of connectivity

FCR: soil crusting-vegetation cover-soil roughness

RMSE: root mean square error

UAV: unmanned aerial vehicle

SD: standard deviation

GCP: ground control point

Chapitre 1

**Introduction : mise en contexte, objectifs
et stratégie scientifique**

1. Mise en contexte de la recherche

1.1 *Erosion des sols*

1.1.1 Définition

L'érosion des sols est définie comme la menace principale qui pèse sur les sols européens (Van Beek and Tóth, 2012a). Le phénomène d'érosion altère la surface du sol et se traduit par la succession de 3 processus. D'abord, le détachement des particules de sol lorsque l'énergie cinétique de la précipitation est supérieure à la force de cohésion du sol. Ensuite, les particules arrachées sont transportées par l'action d'un agent de transport (eau, vent, glace, gravité, travail du sol, arrachage des cultures) à des distances plus ou moins grandes. Enfin, la particule de sol est déposée lorsque la capacité de transport n'est plus suffisante (Dautrebande, 2006).

1.1.2 Types d'érosion

En Belgique, l'érosion hydrique, l'érosion aratoire et l'érosion par récolte des racines et tubercules sont les principaux types d'érosion.

L'érosion hydrique implique l'impact de gouttes de pluie sur la surface du sol arrachant les particules. Le ruissellement entraîne alors avec lui les particules de sol individualisées pour les déposer plus loin. Il peut être hortonien si la capacité d'infiltration du sol est inférieure à l'intensité de la précipitation ou par saturation si la porosité du sol est entièrement remplie d'eau. La topographie détermine le type de ruissellement et donc aussi d'érosion. Si les pentes sont faibles et homogènes, l'eau va ruisseler en lame impliquant une érosion diffuse. Si la pente augmente, des incisions se creusent (rigoles ou ravines selon la taille) dans le sol, on parle d'érosion concentrée. Ce type d'érosion est responsable du déplacement de plus grandes quantités de sédiments à cause des vitesses de ruissellement plus élevées (Bollinne, 1977; Vandaele and Poesen, 1995; Vandaele, 1997).

L'érosion aratoire se traduit par le déplacement de terre d'amont en aval de la parcelle suite à l'action des machines agricoles. La terre est érodée en aval des limites de parcelle ou dans les parties convexes et se redépose en amont des limites de parcelle ou dans les parties concaves (Govers et al., 1994; Van Oost et al., 2000). La direction et la force du travail du sol ont chacune une influence sur la quantité de terre érodée. Cette forme d'érosion est responsable de la redistribution de grandes quantités de sédiments en région limoneuse agricole (Govers et al., 1994).

L'érosion par récolte se produit lorsque des cultures à racines ou tubercules (pomme de terre, betterave, etc.) sont exportées de la parcelle emportant avec elles des quantités de terre collée au tubercule (Poesen et al., 2001).

1.1.3 Facteurs influençant l'érosion

De nombreux facteurs influencent l'érosion. Certains sont naturels et propres au site où se déroule le phénomène érosif. La texture du sol, le climat, la topographie en

font partie (Morgan, 2005; Verheijen et al., 2009). D'autres facteurs sont anthropiques et modifient également l'impact érosif. Par exemple, le travail du sol et le choix des machines agricoles ont une influence non-négligeable. Finalement, l'homme a également un poids sur certains facteurs naturels. La modification du climat et particulièrement l'érosivité des pluies ou l'augmentation des longueurs de pente en sont des exemples.

1.1.4 Conséquences de l'érosion

Les conséquences de l'érosion sont nombreuses. Dans un premier temps, celles-ci affectent la parcelle agricole en elle-même. Si la terre est exportée de la parcelle, une diminution de la quantité de terre peut impacter le rendement des cultures en diminuant le taux de matière organique en surface et la quantité d'eau disponible (Gillijns et al., 2005). Plus directement, les plants peuvent être emportés ou dégradés. Si la terre se redépose sur la parcelle, les dégâts aux cultures et la perte de structure du sol impacte également les rendements. Dans un deuxième temps, le ruissellement et les sédiments emportés en aval de la parcelle ont de nombreux impacts. L'emportement d'engrais impacte la qualité des eaux de surface par pollution chimique, physique ou biologique (Boardman et al., 1994; Cerdan et al., 2002). Les coulées boueuses impliquent des dégâts aux habitations et aux infrastructures routières (Bielders et al., 2003; Evrard et al., 2007). L'envasement des cours d'eau peut également modifier les débits de cours d'eau (Verstraeten and Poesen, 2001) et impacter la biologie du cours d'eau.

Ces dernières décennies, le phénomène d'érosion augmente particulièrement en zone agricole (Boardman and Vandaele, 2010; Nearing et al., 2004). Principalement sous l'effet anthropique, les quantités de terre érodée et déposée ont tendance à croître. De nombreux facteurs permettent d'expliquer cette augmentation. Parmi eux, on retrouve la grande érodibilité des sols limoneux notamment due à la baisse du taux de matière organique, l'augmentation de l'érosivité des pluies, l'évolution du parcellaire agricole, l'augmentation des surfaces de cultures sarclées ou encore l'utilisation de nouvelles machines agricoles.

A l'échelle régionale, les dégâts dus à l'érosion peuvent être très importants. Il est estimé que la Région wallonne dépense 600 000 € par an pour les dégâts aux agriculteurs, aux riverains et aux collectivités (Dogot et al., 2014). Il est à noter que ce chiffre résulte d'une enquête approfondie de terrain et représente les coûts directs tangibles annuels en prenant en compte les différents événements et leur occurrence sur une période de 30 ans. Par exemple, pour le seul exemple d'Orp-Jauche en 2011, la collectivité a dépensé quasiment 1 500 000 € suite aux coulées boueuses. De plus, 90 % de la moyenne annuelle calculée sur 30 ans sont liés aux sous-bassins hydrographiques de la Dyle-Gette, de la Sambre, de la Meuse Aval et de la Senne ce qui montre que certaines zones sont beaucoup plus impactées pour les causes évoquées ci-dessus. Ces coûts démontrent l'importance des investissements nécessaires pour mieux comprendre le phénomène érosif et en diminuer les conséquences.

1.1.5 Mesure et modélisation de l'érosion

Afin de pouvoir mettre en place des plans stratégiques de lutte antiérosive adéquats, il est indispensable de pouvoir qualifier et quantifier l'érosion et le dépôt. De nombreuses études ont été réalisées sur le sujet mais la compréhension des flux d'eau et de sédiments est un challenge (Baartman et al., 2013; Keesstra et al., 2009). Le nombre de facteurs et les variabilités spatiale et temporelle de ces facteurs complexifient l'élaboration de la connaissance (Cammeraat, 2002; Hurst et al., 2012; López-Vicente et al., 2013). Traditionnellement, l'approche de mesure se réalise à l'échelle de la parcelle ou du versant (Biddocu et al., 2017), que cela soit en laboratoire ou en champs. La majorité des éléments ayant un rôle dans le phénomène érosif peut être décrit physiquement et quantifié à l'échelle de la parcelle. L'infiltration des sols est mesurée en utilisant un simulateur de pluie (Chouksey et al., 2017), en déterminant la conductivité hydraulique à saturation (Nijp et al., 2017) ou en déterminant la conductivité pour des tensions autres que 0 (De Pue et al., 2019). D'autres processus ont été étudiés comme l'érosion par splash (Fernández-Raga et al., 2017), diffuse (Dlamini et al., 2011) ou concentrée (Wells et al., 2016). Une autre approche a été ensuite développée prenant en compte le BV (Hutton et al., 2014; Pineux et al., 2017). Certains processus sont différents en changeant d'échelle liés principalement à l'hétérogénéité spatiale et temporelle (López-Vicente et al., 2013). Par exemple, à plus large échelle, les phénomènes de réinfiltration et de chemins préférentiels apparaissent. Les processus décrits à l'échelle de la parcelle ne peuvent pas être extrapolés sur le BV, la connectivité entre les différents éléments modifiant le fonctionnement du système. Il a été démontré que l'apparition d'autres processus en élargissant l'échelle était le facteur principal déterminant les quantités de sédiments érodés (De Vente and Poesen, 2005).

La modélisation de l'érosion se réalise via toutes sortes de modèles allant des modèles empiriques à ceux physiquement basés en passant par des modèles conceptuels. La plupart des modèles ont en commun de se baser sur des mesures à fine échelle pour prédire la valeur des paramètres et finalement quantifier les sédiments à l'échelle du BV (Kalantari et al., 2015; Masselink, 2017). De plus, la calibration est souvent réalisée à partir de données à l'exutoire. Ce changement d'échelle pour la modélisation et cette calibration sur un point amènent des quantités prédites correctes mais avec potentiellement un comportement erroné du BV (Brazier et al., 2000). Il n'est pas simplement nécessaire de quantifier les sédiments érodés à l'exutoire mais également de comprendre la dynamique interne du BV qui puisse expliquer ces valeurs obtenues. Ce n'est qu'en adoptant cette approche qu'il sera possible d'intégrer complètement l'érosion et ses processus. Dans ce but, un concept appelé « connectivité » a été introduit pour comprendre les connexions au sein du BV. Au-delà de cette calibration, il est nécessaire de valider le modèle avec des mesures spatialisées mais il y a actuellement un manque de ce genre de données.

1.2 Connectivité hydrologique et sédimentaire

Le concept de connectivité (hydrologique et sédimentaire) est né à la fin du XX^{ème} siècle. Le concept de connectivité est primordial pour comprendre les variations spatiales du ruissellement et de l'érosion dans le BV. Les différentes connexions et déconnexions au sein du BV peuvent expliquer les lieux et quantités de ruissellement et de réinfiltration pour la connectivité hydrologique, d'érosion et de dépôt pour la connectivité sédimentaire (Akram et al., 2014; Navarro Hevia et al., 2015; Rodríguez-Blanco et al., 2013; Rose et al., 2003). Le couplage des différentes parties du BV est considéré comme un facteur majeur expliquant le bilan sédimentaire (Borselli et al., 2008; Hooke, 2003).

1.2.1 Définition

Malgré certaines *reviews*, le monde scientifique ne s'accorde pas encore sur une définition unique de la connectivité. Le nombre de facteurs, leurs interactions et les objectifs de chaque étude sont autant de raisons qui expliquent que les définitions sont nombreuses. Par ailleurs, la localisation de l'étude est un paramètre important expliquant la multitude de définitions. En effet, les processus dominants contrôlant la formation de ruissellement, de sédiments ainsi que leur transfert font varier les définitions d'un groupe de recherche à l'autre. Il y a une relation étroite entre le groupe de recherche, leur approche, leur objectif, leur situation géographique et leur interprétation du concept. Cependant, certaines définitions sont plus communément utilisées. Voici donc les définitions existantes applicables pour ce document et pour le contexte d'étude de plateau limoneux agricole (Bracken et al., 2013):

- Tous les temps associés au déplacement d'eau ou de sédiments traversant un point précis du paysage.
- La mesure dans laquelle l'eau et les sédiments qui traversent les BVs peuvent être déposés ou exportés de ceux-ci.
- Le chemin des sédiments à travers le système de chenaux, qui correspond au transfert de sédiments d'une zone ou d'un lieu à un autre et au potentiel de déplacement d'une particule spécifique dans le système.
- Les liens internes au BV entre le ruissellement et la génération de sédiments; deux types de connectivité: la connectivité diffuse lorsque le ruissellement de surface atteint les chenaux d'écoulement via des flux diffus et la connectivité directe via des chenaux ou ravines.

Une autre distinction importante est la différence entre connectivité latérale et connectivité longitudinale. La première réfère au transfert de sédiments depuis les versants jusqu'au chenal et la deuxième depuis le chenal jusqu'au réseau hydrographique (Heckmann and Schwanghart, 2013). Le degré de couplage entre ces deux connectivités explique la connectivité globale du BV.

1.2.2 Conceptualisation

Pour mieux appréhender la notion, la connectivité a été conceptualisée et deux éléments distincts ont été identifiés: la connectivité statique ou structurale et la connectivité dynamique ou fonctionnelle (Bracken et al., 2013).

L'aspect structural se réfère aux schémas spatiaux du paysage comme la distribution spatiale des unités paysagères qui influencent les transferts de ruissellement et de sédiments. Cela regroupe les facteurs du paysage statiques à courtes échelles temporelles qui sont descriptibles et mesurables : topographie, type de sol, couvert végétal, etc. (Lexartza-Artza and Wainwright, 2011; Michaelides and Chappell, 2009; Wainwright et al., 2011). Des indices de connectivité peuvent résumer et quantifier l'aspect structural de la connectivité : Indice de Connectivité, *Field assessment of Connectivity Index*, etc.

L'aspect fonctionnel est plus difficilement quantifiable et a donc assez peu d'études le concernant. Il décrit comment les schémas spatiaux interagissent avec les processus du bassin-versant pour produire le ruissellement, les sédiments ainsi que leur transfert au sein du BV. Même si l'approche est moins directe et la mesure difficile, l'aspect dynamique est crucial pour comprendre la totalité du phénomène érosif. Il n'est pas seulement une succession d'états statiques mais également les processus réels qui produisent les flux et qui permettent de faire varier les variables d'état. Du fait que le terme « fonctionnel » est ambigu, cette partie est appelée aussi connectivité basée sur les processus. Ce terme est plus utile pour comprendre comment les différents processus se lient entre eux dans le temps et dans l'espace pour développer les connexions de flux. Le transfert des sédiments depuis les sources jusqu'aux puits n'est pas toujours continu (Heckmann and Schwanghart, 2013). Cela passe par une succession de stockage et d'appauvrissement (Hooke, 2003). Un processus stockant les sédiments est remplacé par un autre les remobilisant. On parle de cascades de sédiments (Burt and Allison, 2010). Cette succession de processus est dépendante de l'intensité du forçage défini par l'événement pluvieux. Selon l'érosivité de la précipitation, certains processus s'activent ou au contraire se désactivent faisant varier la connectivité globale du BV. La façon dont on approche la partie dynamique de la connectivité dépend du lieu de l'étude, des objectifs et des moyens mis en œuvre. Mais dans tous les cas, celle-ci sera approchée indirectement puisque les processus ne sont pas mesurables directement.

1.2.3 Approches de la connectivité

Dans le monde scientifique, plusieurs approches se complémentent pour pouvoir totalement appréhender la connectivité:

- Mesure de la teneur en eau du sol (connectivité hydrologique).
- Compréhension des schémas de flux d'eau et de sédiments et des processus sur les versants.
- Inclusion de la topographie notamment des éléments anthropiques.

- Développement de modèles de prédiction.
- Développement d'indices (Bracken et al., 2013).

La mesure de la teneur en eau permet de comprendre comment l'eau est en mouvement dans le bassin-versant et comment celle-ci est stockée ou exportée activant ou désactivant certaines connexions. L'observation et la quantification des schémas d'humidité du sol peuvent expliquer la quantité de ruissellement à l'exutoire.

La quantification directe des flux d'eau et de sédiments mettent en évidence les connexions et déconnexions au sein du BV. L'échelle d'étude est importante, certaines mettant en évidence ou, au contraire, cachant des connexions.

La topographie explique deux types de connectivité, la connectivité directe via les chenaux d'écoulement concentrés et la connectivité diffuse sur des zones plus planes. Le ruissellement diffus rejoint les chenaux concentrés par la suite. Même si ce n'est pas le seul facteur, la topographie dirige en grande partie le chemin d'écoulement de l'eau et des sédiments à la surface du sol. Les changements de topographie sont donc importants à prendre en compte sur de plus grandes échelles de temps.

Il existe de nombreux types de modèles permettant de quantifier le ruissellement et l'érosion. Peu d'entre eux incluent explicitement le concept de connectivité mais beaucoup d'entre eux le font implicitement. Les modèles spatialement distribués qui font évoluer les propriétés du sol et la topographie dans le temps permettent de faire évoluer la connectivité sur le BV.

Il n'y a pas de consensus sur les nombreux indices permettant de quantifier la connectivité. Certains s'intéressent à l'approche concernant les flux d'eau, d'autres sur la topographie et la détermination des chemins d'écoulement ou encore d'autres sont statistiques.

Etant donné que la première approche ne s'intéresse qu'à la connectivité hydrologique, les 4 autres approches seront utilisées dans le cadre de ce document (schémas de flux d'eau et de sédiments, inclusion de la topographie notamment les éléments anthropiques, utilisation de modèles de prédiction et utilisation d'indices).

1.2.4 Impact des éléments linéaires du paysage

Les éléments linéaires du paysage représentent un enjeu majeur pour la connectivité et donc le ruissellement et l'érosion au sein des BVs. Ils sont un type d'influence humaine sur la connectivité. Leurs impacts varient dans le temps et dans l'espace. Cela suggère que la connectivité dans les différentes parties du BV contrôle la propagation des changements à travers le système (Hooke, 2006). Certains éléments forment une barrière impliquant un transfert discontinu des sédiments au sein du BV découpant certaines zones de l'aval: les bandes enherbées, les fascines, les haies, les bois, etc. (Fryirs et al., 2007; Heckmann and Schwanghart, 2013). D'autres éléments peuvent au contraire augmenter la connectivité en

facilitant le passage de l'eau et des sédiments: les routes. Certains éléments comme les limites de parcelle peuvent appartenir à l'une ou l'autre catégorie selon leur orientation et leur position dans le BV.

La plantation d'arbres peut permettre une diminution importante de l'exportation d'eau et de sédiments (Poeppl et al., 2012). Cette diminution s'opère de deux manières. La première est la diminution de production. Dépendant de la localisation et de la proportion en surface des bois, l'efficacité varie mais peut aller jusqu'à 60 % de sédiments produits en moins (Keesstra et al., 2009). En étant positionnés au niveau des ravines et avec une croissance avancée des arbres, la majeure source de sédiments est ainsi découpée de l'exutoire (Liébault et al., 2005). La deuxième est la réinfiltration d'eau et le dépôt de sédiments diminuant le rendement en sédiments. Cette description dépend de nombreux facteurs comme la localisation géographique, le lieu de plantation, l'essence et la composition du sous-bois. Pour cette raison, les descriptions ci-dessus se limitent à un contexte européen avec une bonne croissance du sous-bois.

L'efficacité du piège à sédiments que constituent les bandes enherbées dépend de la pente, de la largeur de la bande, du type de végétation et des caractéristiques de ruissellement et d'érosion du BV (Pan et al., 2011). Dépendant beaucoup du contexte de l'étude, la diminution du rendement en sédiments est généralement conséquente; supérieure à 60 % (Blanco-Canqui et al., 2004; Daniels and Gilliam, 1996).

Les haies et les haies enherbées ont généralement de grandes capacités d'infiltration de l'ordre de 5 à 6 fois celles des bandes enherbées (Richet et al., 2017), environ 400 mm h^{-1} (75 mm h^{-1} pour les bandes enherbées). La diminution de ruissellement et de sédiments en aval des haies est surtout marquée pour des hauteurs d'eau ruisselant importantes ou lorsque la concentration des flux a déjà eu lieu. Toutefois, si la concentration de flux est trop importante et qu'elle crée un passage préférentiel à travers la haie, celle-ci peut être surpassée (ou abîmée). Il en résulte une efficacité de contrôle de l'érosion diminuée et une augmentation des ravines éphémères. Les propriétés des flux (eau et sédiments) ne sont que légèrement modifiées lorsque la lame d'eau est petite. Il est donc important de veiller à la localisation des haies. En outre, leur orientation (ainsi que celle du travail du sol) doit être réfléchie pour ne pas créer des flux parallèles aux haies, augmentant également l'érosion en ravines (Vieira and Dabney, 2012).

Pourtant de plus en plus populaires dans certaines régions au même titre que les haies, la recherche sur les fascines au point de vue du ruissellement et de l'érosion est limitée. Toutefois, leur faible superficie par rapport aux bandes enherbées est un argument de poids pour l'acceptation des aménagements par les agriculteurs (Richet et al., 2017). Les fascines ont une capacité d'infiltration d'un ordre de grandeur en moins par rapport aux haies. Elles ont une bonne efficacité de pièges à sédiments si la densité des branches est suffisamment élevée et si l'entretien de l'aménagement est correctement réalisé (Richet et al., 2017).

Souvent rencontrées dans les bassins agricoles belges, les routes modifient les directions de flux (eau et sédiments) en interceptant tout ou une partie de celui-ci dans certains cas (Doten et al., 2006). Il peut également arriver que la taille et la forme du BV soient affectées en redirigeant les flux vers un autre BV ou au contraire en interceptant ceux-ci d'un autre BV.

1.2.5 Impact du travail du sol

L'importance de l'érosion provoquée par le travail du sol est avérée dans les régions agricoles avec un sol limoneux comme celui du centre de la Belgique (Govers et al., 1994). En plus des sédiments venant directement du travail du sol, celui-ci modifie de nombreuses caractéristiques du système sol-plante ce qui peut faire varier les autres types d'érosion également. En effet, des différences s'observent au niveau des flux d'eau, de la relation sol-eau-plante, de la qualité et productivité des sols ou encore d'autres processus dynamiques dans les paysages agricoles (Wang et al., 2016). En modifiant profondément la structure du sol, le travail du sol fait varier la conductivité hydraulique des sols ce qui impacte la quantité de ruissellement produit. En plus de cela, l'érodibilité des sols est modifiée ce qui rend le sol plus ou moins sensible selon le type de travail du sol à la production et à l'entrainement des sédiments. La direction du labour est également un paramètre important pouvant modifier les directions de flux au sein de la parcelle (Kouselou et al., 2018) et donc modifier la connectivité du BV.

L'agriculture conventionnelle utilisant le labour augmente la sensibilité du sol à l'érosion et est responsable du mouvement de grandes quantités de sédiments en région limoneuse agricole (Govers et al., 1994). A côté de cela, l'agriculture de conservation est de nos jours en plein développement. Elle reprend plusieurs aspects distincts. Le premier implique une couverture végétale >30 % tout au long de l'année diminuant l'ampleur du phénomène érosif (D'Haene, 2008). Un deuxième aspect s'intéresse aux techniques de labour (techniques culturales simplifiées [TCS] ou non-labour). En diminuant la profondeur de labour ou en pratiquant du non-labour, la capacité d'infiltration et la capacité de stockage des sols augmentent par rapport à l'agriculture conventionnelle (Alliaume et al., 2014). Les chiffres sont assez variables concernant les répercussions des TCS et du non-labour au niveau du ruissellement et de l'érosion. La plupart des études s'accordent pour dire qu'il y a un impact significativement positif au niveau de la quantité d'eau infiltrée (Sun et al., 2015). Pour l'érosion, la diminution de la compaction et la meilleure structure des sols en conséquence des TCS et du non-labour réduiraient l'érosion (D'Haene, 2008). Cette dernière répercussion s'observe quelques années après le passage du labour aux TCS ou au non-labour lorsque la structure du sol est rétablie.

1.2.6 Elaboration de stratégies de contrôle de l'érosion

La quantification de l'érosion et l'effet des éléments linéaires sur la connectivité permettent d'établir des plans stratégiques de lutte contre l'érosion (aménagements et pratiques de conservation des sols (Shi et al., 2004)). Plus qu'une addition de différentes mesures individuelles, ces plans sont en fait une interaction complète et

intégrée au niveau du paysage. La réponse d'un BV à différentes configurations internes et donc différentes connectivités au même événement climatique peut être très différente (Wainwright, 2006).

En Région wallonne, un service d'aide est proposé aux communes via la cellule GISER de l'administration (Gestion Intégrée Sol Erosion Ruissellement). Après une demande de la commune, l'équipe en charge fournit des conseils et une expertise technique permettant de réduire les inondations et coulées boueuses rencontrées sur les BVs impactés pointés par la commune. La première étape est une demande de la commune auprès de la cellule suivie de certaines informations générales (localisation, priorité des sites à traiter, personne de contact). Après une localisation des sites au niveau des cartes d'axes de ruissellement, une visite de terrain permet d'identifier certains points clés (identification du chemin des eaux, importance des influences anthropiques et environnementales, confrontation avec des témoignages de riverains, définition des pistes de solutions réalisables). Ensuite, le rapport permet d'établir le diagnostic des sites et de proposer des mesures ou aménagements concernant la commune, les riverains ou les agriculteurs. La commune devient ensuite le pilote de la concertation entre les différents acteurs et la cellule peut être présente en tant qu'expert technique. Finalement, les aménagements sont mis en œuvre avec l'appui de la cellule (travaux préparatoires de terrain, document technique des aménagements et encadrement des travaux). Un suivi est réalisé au niveau de l'efficacité et des feedbacks des aménagements. En cas de situation urgente, la procédure peut être simplifiée pour agir rapidement (GISER, 2015). L'élaboration des propositions de mesures et d'aménagements se base sur une expertise de terrain sans outil de quantification à proprement parler. Il y a un besoin de développer ce genre d'outil permettant d'objectiver les scénarios mis en place.

1.2.7 Mesure de la connectivité

Les études sur la mesure de la connectivité sont encore trop peu nombreuses. Celle-ci est souvent utilisée comme un outil pour expliquer d'autres processus (ex: apport de sédiments dans Conte et al. (2017), dynamique de la couverture végétale et résilience dans Shi et al. (2017), développement et conservation de la biodiversité dans Xia et al. (2016)) et pas comme une fin en soi. Une des raisons à cela est le consensus du monde scientifique sur la difficulté, voire l'impossibilité, de mesurer directement la connectivité. Celle-ci est en fait quantifiée à partir d'autres variables.

Pour approcher la connectivité, la mesure se fait en 3 étapes¹ :

- Mesure de la connectivité structurale. Il s'agit de définir la topographie (MNT de haute précision), couverture du sol, type de sol, etc. Cette mesure de la connectivité structurale est dépendante de la résolution utilisée et

¹ Brazier et al., 2015. Can we measure connectivity? Cost connecteur, working group 2, EGU 2015, Vienne, Autriche

aucune règle précise n'est aujourd'hui donnée. Il y a lieu d'objectiver l'effet de la résolution sur la mesure de cette partie de la connectivité.

- Mesure des flux de ruissellement et de sédiments en plusieurs points sur le BV via des sondes de hauteurs d'eau, des débitmètres, des échantillonneurs automatiques, etc.
- Mesure de la connectivité fonctionnelle. Il s'agit de relier les flux mesurés à la connectivité structurale, en d'autres mots définir dans le temps et dans l'espace l'origine de l'eau et des sédiments mesurés. C'est la partie la plus difficilement mesurable. Certaines techniques sont en développement pour retracer le passage de l'eau (ex: thermographie (Pfister et al., 2010), réseau de résistances électriques (Masselink, 2017), réseau de mesure de teneur en eau (Ali and Roy, 2010) ou le passage des sédiments à l'aide de traceurs (Guzmán et al., 2013; Masselink, 2017)). L'utilisation de traceurs est fortement étudiée puisqu'il s'agit d'une méthode directe, efficace et réalisable pour étudier la source des sédiments et leur mouvement dans le BV (Zhang et al., 2019). Les applications utilisant les traceurs sont nombreuses et diversifiées. Les propriétés physiques, géochimiques, isotopiques et biologiques des sols sont utilisées pour pouvoir tracer les sédiments (Tian et al., 2019). Chaque traceur possède ses propres propriétés. Par exemple, l'utilisation des radionucléides (en particulier ^{137}Cs) seuls ou en association avec d'autres traceurs permet de retracer l'origine des sédiments (surface du sol ou sous-sol). Cette distinction permet de différencier des sédiments issus de plusieurs processus érosifs (diffus ou en rigoles au niveau de la surface, en ravines au niveau du sous-sol) (Ben Slimane et al., 2013).

1.2.8 Modélisation de la connectivité

De la même manière que pour les mesures, les études de modélisation sur la connectivité restent marginales et exploratoires. Pourtant, il a été montré que les modèles incorporant la connectivité apportent un bénéfice pour la précision des résultats concernant le ruissellement et l'érosion (Gumièvre et al., 2011; Lesschen et al., 2009; Liu and Fu, 2016; López-Vicente et al., 2013; Medeiros et al., 2010). Pour certains, la connectivité fonctionne comme une entrée, qu'elle soit implémentée de manière explicite ou implicite (Cavalli et al., 2013; Peñuela et al., 2013). Pour d'autres, la connectivité est plutôt une sortie (Baartman et al., 2013). Dans tous les cas, il y a un manque de données mesurées pour valider les résultats (Gumièvre et al., 2011; Kirkby, 2014; Pineux et al., 2017).

1.3 Zone d'étude

Les expériences ont été menées au sein de deux BVs qui sont enchâssés l'un dans l'autre (Figure 1-1). Le plus petit fait 125 ha et le plus grand 356 ha. Il sera question du petit BV dans les chapitres 2 et 3 alors que le grand fera l'objet du chapitre 4. Ces BVs ont été utilisés pour la disponibilité des données. En effet, les BVs ont été l'objet d'une sélection rigoureuse reprenant différentes caractéristiques (région

wallonne, ceinture limoneuse, essentiellement agricole, facilité d'accès et d'instrumentation et accord des exploitants principalement). Ensuite, ils ont été instrumentés avec plusieurs points de mesure de débits, de hauteurs d'eau, d'échantilleurs automatiques, d'appareils photos et d'une station météorologique. Le détail de l'installation est décrit dans Pineux (2018) et Bielders et al. (2011).

La pédologie est composée de luvisols et de cambisols, dérivés des lœss du quaternaire (Annexe 1). La carte des sols du petit BV a été remise à jour par des sondages (Pineux, 2018). Les pentes sont relativement faibles entre 0 et 15 %, 4 % en moyenne (Annexe 2). Le climat est tempéré avec une précipitation moyenne annuelle de 826 mm an^{-1} (Annexe 3). L'occupation du sol est agricole à plus de 93 % (céréales, betterave sucrière, pomme de terre, maïs, lin, chicorée, prairie) et le reste est composé de bandes enherbées, bandes boisées, routes ou autres infrastructures.

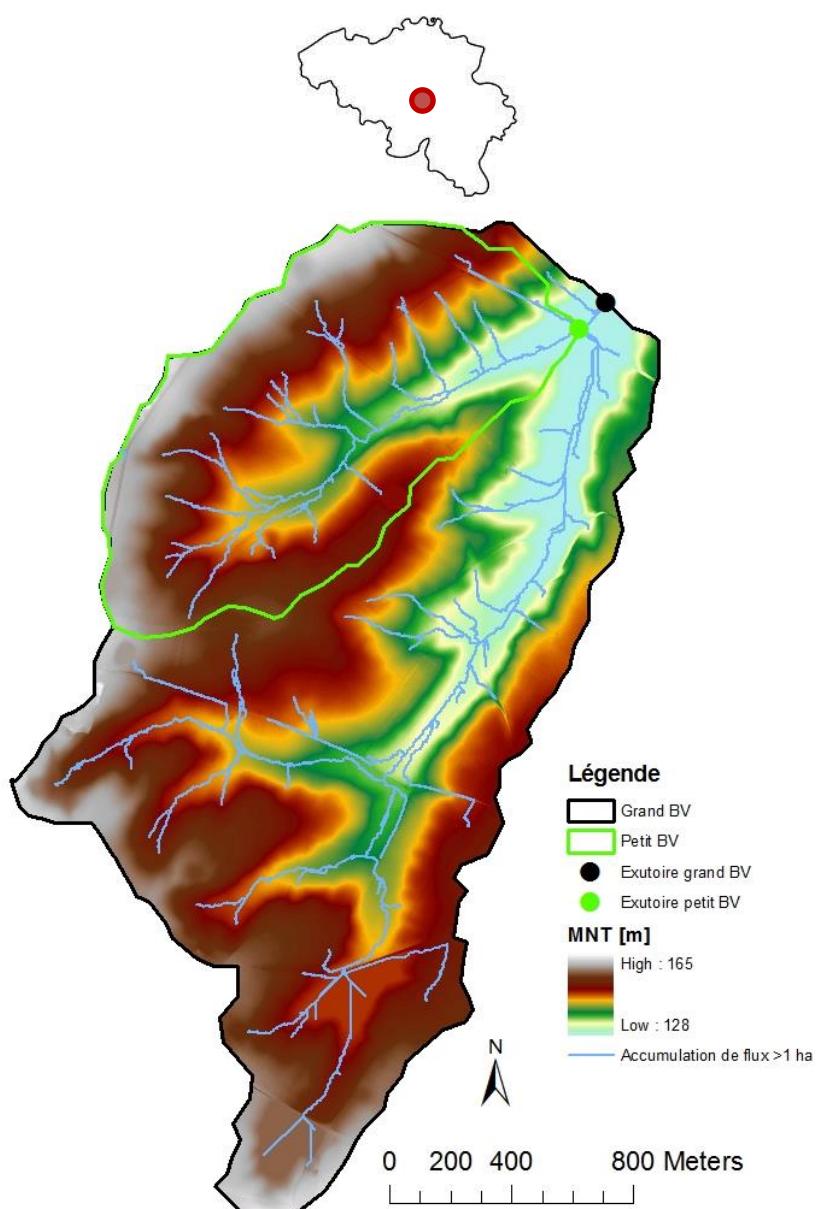


Figure 1-1 : Présentation des sites d'études (localisation et délimitation des BVs, exutoires, MNT et accumulation de flux).

2. Objectifs et stratégie de recherche mise en œuvre

L'agriculture wallonne connaît des difficultés économiques, sociétales et environnementales importantes. Au niveau économique, l'agriculture présente une valeur ajoutée nette négative en plus de ne pas montrer de réelle rationalité économique (SPW, 2019). En effet, les primes européennes nécessaires pour soutenir les agriculteurs sont en moyenne 1.36 fois supérieures au revenu de ces mêmes agriculteurs. Au niveau environnemental, les actions anthropiques et les enjeux actuels nécessitent la modification de certaines pratiques pour diminuer les pressions sur l'environnement. L'écoconditionnalité verse des aides pour permettre le respect de ces critères environnementaux mais également pour maintenir en vie les exploitations agricoles wallonnes. En parallèle de ce débat de société entre économie et environnement, il est nécessaire de rationaliser les investissements pour maximiser le revenu des agriculteurs tout en minimisant les pressions environnementales. Parmi ces pressions, l'érosion des sols constitue un enjeu majeur. A l'heure où l'augmentation du phénomène érosif en milieu agricole a de lourdes conséquences sur l'environnement et les populations, il est nécessaire d'augmenter notre connaissance sur le phénomène. Des mesures de terrain sont nécessaires pour comprendre comment les connexions s'activent ou se désactivent dans le bassin-versant. Ces mêmes mesures peuvent permettre de valider des modèles de quantification de la production de sédiments et de leur dépôt. Une fois validés, ces modèles sont un outil puissant de prédiction de l'effet de plans stratégiques de lutte antiérosive. Les échelles de temps et d'espace investiguées sont également importantes. Au niveau du temps, les études réalisées se concentrent sur des durées courtes (<1 an) pour la gestion immédiate des techniques ou très longues (>100 ans) pour les processus de pédogenèse (Pineux, 2018). Au niveau de l'espace, une trop fine échelle spatiale oublie certains processus alors qu'une trop large échelle lisse ces mêmes processus (Kirk, 2006). Le choix a donc été fait de réaliser ce document à des échelles intermédiaires de temps et d'espace (quelques années pour le temps et le BV pour l'espace).

Dans le monde scientifique, le ruissellement et l'érosion sont des phénomènes qui ont été, sont et seront encore largement étudiés. De la même manière, l'approche de la connectivité pour expliquer les mouvements de l'eau et des sédiments est largement utilisée. L'objectif de toutes ces études est de limiter les conséquences négatives dues au ruissellement et à l'érosion via des pratiques agricoles ou des mesures adéquates sur le BV. Par contre, actuellement, il y a un manque d'outils permettant de quantifier l'impact de ces mesures. Dans ce contexte, l'objectif global de la thèse est la conservation des sols à l'échelle du BV. Celui-ci se décline en 3 objectifs spécifiques:

- 1) Le chapitre 2 vise l'étude de l'effet de la **Résolution spatiale** du MNT sur la quantification de la connectivité structurale et détermination d'une **Résolution optimale en région de plateau agricole limoneux**. Il s'agit d'un chapitre technique palliant un manque pour justifier l'utilisation de telle ou telle résolution dans un contexte particulier de zone agricole limoneuse.
- 2) Une fois cette résolution déterminée, elle est utilisée dans le chapitre 3. Cette partie vise d'abord à **calibrer un modèle événementiel de règles expertes** (LandSoil) de quantification de l'érosion/dépôt et d'évolution du paysage. Ensuite, la **validation** de celui-ci est examinée avec des **données spatialisées** acquises sur le terrain.
- 3) La validation du modèle au chapitre 3 permet d'étudier l'effet des pratiques agricoles et des aménagements antiérosifs. Le chapitre 4 vise à **quantifier l'efficacité de plans stratégiques de lutte antiérosive**. Différentes stratégies seront comparées pour analyser leur influence sur la connectivité et l'exportation de ruissellement et de sédiments sur le BV.

Concernant l'organisation de ce manuscrit, les chapitres suivants incluent des articles scientifiques (soumis ou acceptés dans des revues internationales à comité de lecture) où les méthodologies spécifiques y sont détaillées. Les références bibliographiques sont regroupées en un seul ensemble à la fin de document.

Chapitre 2

**How pixel size affects a sediment
connectivity index in central Belgium**

Le contenu de ce chapitre a été publié dans la revue *Earth surface processes and landforms (ESPL)*

Cantreul, V., Bielders, C., Calsamiglia, A., Degré, A., 2018. How pixel size affects a sediment connectivity index in central Belgium. *Earth surface processes and landforms*, 43(4), 884–893. doi:10.1002/esp.4295

Abstract

Connectivity has become an increasingly used concept in hydrological and sediment research. In order to quantify it, various indices have been proposed since the start of the 21st century including the index of connectivity. This index is based on a limited number of factors, the most important one being topography. Sediment connectivity indices values probably depend on the digital elevation model (DEM) resolution. The aim of this study was, first, to compare the effect of DEM pixel size (between 0.25 and 10 m, using an UAV) in the Belgian loess belt, a plateau area. We show that the index values were lower when the pixel size decreased (a difference of about 20% in value between 0.25 and 10 m). In addition, the impact of linear features in the catchment (e.g. grass strip, bank and road) was lower with the largest pixel sizes, and the connectivity pattern was affected with a pixel size of 5m or more. At lower pixel sizes (1 m or below), some more disconnected regions appeared. These corresponded with zones where there had been water stagnation during and after rainfalls, and was corroborated by field observations. This confirmed the need for a proper resolution according to the objectives of the study. The second aim of this study was to deduce a minimum pixel size for connectivity study, helping local erosion or sedimentation location and consequent land management decisions. In our context, 1m stands as the optimum DEM resolution. This pixel size permitted location of all “key areas” in terms of erosion. Very high resolutions (<0.5 m) did not generate much more information, and their calculation time was far greater.

Keywords

Sediment connectivity, index, DEM, pixel size, cultivated catchment.

1. Introduction

The redistribution of water and sediments has a significant impact on environmental systems and on populations (Boardman et al., 2003; Cerdan et al., 2002; Evrard et al., 2007; Souchère et al., 1998; Verstraeten and Poesen, 1999). Understanding the spatial variability of erosion and sediment redistribution after rainfall event is therefore an important research topic in efforts to limit the consequences of soil erosion (Foerster et al., 2014; Gay et al., 2016). This is a challenging issue because of the numerous characteristics (e.g. topography, climate, soil and land use) and often non-linear and scale-dependent processes that influence the spatial and temporal variability of erosion and sedimentation (Cammeraat, 2002; Hurst et al., 2012; López-Vicente et al., 2013). The catchment has been identified as the most appropriate spatial scale in the study of hydrological processes (Brocca et

al., 2012). A catchment's behaviour notably depends on its size, topography, land use, soil cover, soil type, rainfall intensity, rainfall duration and anthropic actions (Castillo et al., 2003; Dunjó et al., 2004; Dunne et al., 1991; Van Rompaey et al., 2002). These characteristics influence the short term catchment response to rainfall as well as the longer term annual stream and sediment flows (Rust et al., 2014).

Runoff pathways and the consequent erosion in small catchments can be fairly complex. A few decades ago, the concept of connectivity began to be increasingly introduced into studies aimed at improving our understanding of catchment behaviour. There is no commonly accepted definition, however, of "connectivity". In this study, it was defined as: "All the subsequent positions and times associated with the movement of water or sediment passing through a point in the landscape" (Baartman et al., 2013; Bracken and Croke, 2007; Bracken et al., 2013; Western et al., 2001).

Connections between the different compartments of the catchment play an important role in the distribution of water and sediments. Hydrological connectivity is separated into structural or potential connectivity on the one hand, and process-based or functional connectivity on the other (Bracken et al., 2015). The first relates to properties that emerge from the structure/function interaction. It describes the extent to which landscape units are linked to each other (Wainwright et al., 2011). The second relates to processes that occur during rainfall and that can modify the structure.

Modelling is a necessary tool for estimating and quantifying stream flows and other catchment responses to rainfall (Singh et al., 2011). The challenge is to use hydrological processes, properties and state variables correctly in order to quantify the catchment response (Boll et al., 2015; Fenicia et al., 2008; Mello et al., 2016; Sogbedji and McIsaac, 2002; von Gunten et al., 2014). The model therefore has to rely on spatially distributed information in order to include catchment processes linked to hydrological connectivity (Pechlivanidis et al., 2010). Despite mixing both static and dynamic process responses, the hydrological connectivity concept contributes to a better understanding of catchment behaviour and its modelling (Peñuela et al., 2016). Several studies have demonstrated the role of hydrological connectivity processes in the improvement of model prediction accuracy (López-Vicente et al., 2013; Reid et al., 2007). This concept allows the spatial heterogeneities that are key to improving catchment behavior modelling to be taken into account (López-Vicente et al., 2013). In this framework, some indices permit to resume and quantify model outputs about catchment responses to rainfall (Zhang et al., 2014). Indices are so closely linked to models and allow visualizing some complex processes with one number.

Some research has been carried out on developing indices to quantify structural connectivity at the catchment scale. The most widely used one is the index of sediment connectivity (IC) developed by Borselli et al. (2008). Numerous studies have applied or modified the IC under different contexts in order to describe

sediment connectivity (Cavalli et al., 2013; Gay et al., 2016; Kalantari et al., 2017; López-Vicente et al., 2015; Sougnez et al., 2011). It is a geomorphometric index that requires digital elevation model (DEM) and land use data (Borselli et al., 2008). It uses upslope and downslope components to take into account contributing area and routing to a sink. The IC allows linking the head, hillslopes and channels to the outlet. It can help to locate local erosion or sedimentation and consequent land management decisions. Topography is the main input in the IC. A DEM is characterized mainly by its resolution. Pixel size has been recognized as very important for hydrological processes and erosion modelling (Keesstra et al., 2014). It influences index value as well as calculation time (Arana et al., 2011). With the advent of new technologies (e.g. drones and LiDAR), very high resolution digital elevation models (DEMs) are available (Brasington et al., 2012). Indeed, for an IC user, DEM resolution represents an important choice. This study looks first at the sensitivity of the IC (Cavalli et al., 2013) to DEM resolution (0.25, 0.50, 0.75, 1, 2, 5 and 10 m) in a catchment in the Belgian loess belt, a plateau area. Brardinoni et al. (2015) tested the resolution effect in a mountainous alpine area. They found that pixel size had a relatively strong effect on index values. These results, however, might not be directly relevant in the plateau agricultural context. Using connectivity maps resulting from various DEM pixel sizes, this study wanted to confirm results from mountainous area in plateau agricultural area. The second aim of the paper is to identify an optimal resolution for connectivity study in plateau agricultural context, in terms of being the best compromise between time of calculation and results accuracy.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Study area

The study area was the Hevillers experimental catchment in the Belgian loess belt ($50^{\circ}36'23.02''$ N, $4^{\circ}35'42.33''$ E). The catchment covers 124 ha. Soils are derived from quaternary loess with good drainage. The dominant soil types are Cambisols and Luvisols (Pineux et al., 2017). The land use is mostly agricultural ($\approx 95\%$ of surface). Cultivation is conventional in the area, based on mouldboard ploughing to a depth of 25-30 cm, except for a small field downstream where no tillage is practiced. The main crop rotations are wheat-potato-wheat, wheat-sugar beet-wheat, wheat-barley, maize, wheat-maize-wheat and barley-sugar beet. The remaining 5% of the area consists of grass strips, roads, paths and woods (Figure 2-1). The combination of sensitive soils and intensive agriculture fosters erosion (Pineux et al., 2017). The Belgian loess belt is known for the high rates of soil erosion by water and frequent muddy floods (Bielders et al., 2003; Boardman and Vandaele, 2010; Boardman, 2010; Evrard et al., 2007, 2010). Annual average precipitation reaches 826 mm year^{-1} . Elevation ranges between 128 and 161 m and the slope gradients range between 0 and 15%.

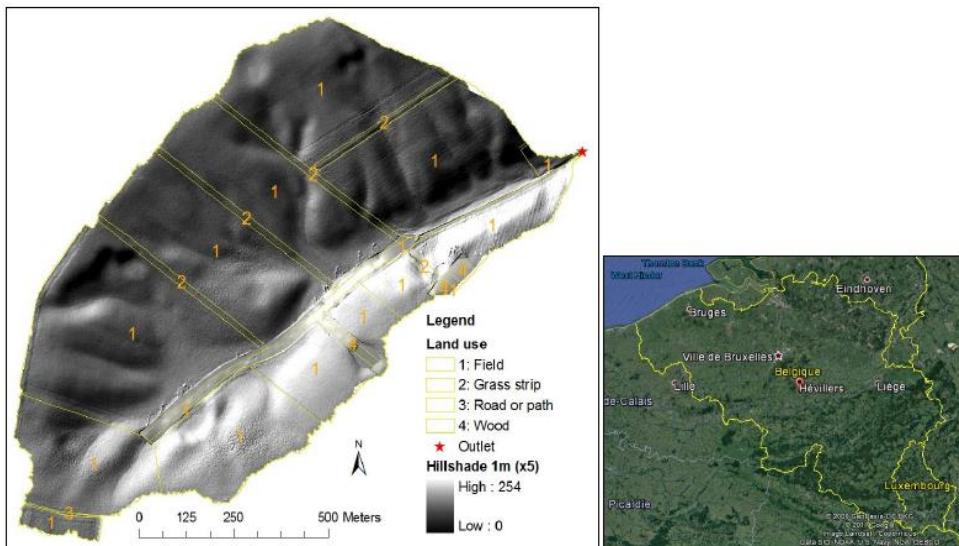


Figure 2-1 : Catchment presentation showing location (Google Earth), hillshade (exaggeration 5X), land use and outlet.

2.2 Digital elevation model

The original DEM used for this study was built via a flight with a mini-UAV Gatewing X100. It allows to build a 3D elevation model from 2D aerial pictures (Westoby et al., 2012). The use of a drone enabled us to obtain a high spatial resolution with a low elevation flight using a fast and cheap acquisition method (Lisein et al., 2014²).

The flight took place in December 2014 in order to ensure that the soils were as bare as possible. The flight was completely automated (Pineux et al., 2017). The flight plan was monitored by a ground control station that defined the flight parameters (zone to cover, height of flight, overlap of images, direction of take-off and landing).

The embedded sensor was a compact Ricoh GR4 camera (10 megapixels charged coupled device, 6 mm focal length or 28 mm in a 35 mm equivalent focal length). This device takes color images, is used in manual mode, ISO sensitivity and exposure time are defined immediately before take-off, depending on the luminosity (Lisein et al., 2015³).

²French scientific meeting, drones and light airborne observation equipment, Montpellier, France (24-26th June 2014)

³Study day on the contribution of drones to the environment, Montpellier, France (26th March 2015)

Before the aerial survey, 20 ground control points (GCPs) were set up at the site, geolocated by using a Leica GPS1200, operating in static real time kinematic mode. The purpose was to calibrate the camera, avoid non-linear distortions and georeference the DEMs (Agisoft, 2014; Sona et al., 2014).

Table 2-1 : Information about DEM (Pineux et al., 2017).

| | |
|---|---------|
| Number of images | 1075 |
| Aligned images | 1072 |
| Flying altitude (m) | 205 |
| Ground resolution (m pix ⁻¹) | 0.06 |
| Tie-points for the point cloud | 2.2E+06 |
| Markers | 20 |
| Markers projections | 401 |
| Reprojection error (pixel) | 0.60 |

Table 2-2 : Error values about DEM (Pineux et al., 2017).

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------|------|
| RMSE (m) | Total | 0.10 |
| | x | 0.04 |
| | y | 0.03 |
| | z | 0.09 |
| MAE (m) | Total | 0.09 |
| | x | 0.03 |
| | y | 0.02 |
| | z | 0.08 |
| Mean reprojection error (in pixel) | 0.50 | |

A total of 1075 pictures were taken at an elevation of 205 m with an 80% overlap on all sides and using 20 GCPs for photogrammetrical study (Pineux et al., 2017). The DEM was built via a photogrammetric workflow that uses Photoscan software and includes tie point generation (Verhoeven, 2011), aerotriangulation, dense matching (Fonstad et al., 2013) and orthorectification. Table 2-1and Table 2-2show information about DEM.

The seven used DEMs were obtained by “DEM calculation” in Photoscan adjusting the parameters according to each desired resolution.

The areas numbered 2 and 4 in Figure 2-1 represent grass strips, bushes and woods. The DEM from the UAV is hardly usable for these parts of the catchment due to vegetation influence. Hence, these pixels were removed, 108 dGPS points

were measured inside these zones thanks to a Leica 1200 and an interpolation with the IDW method was applied using these “field points” to fill in the missing zone. Several comparative studies have shown only slight differences between interpolation methods in terms of accuracy criteria (Arun, 2013; Muhammad et al., 2013; Polat et al., 2015). In Figure 2-1, the impact of these areas is visible, albeit attenuated. It represents less than 2% of the surface and interpolated areas therefore had a relatively small impact on catchment results.

2.3 Index of connectivity

A widely used method for quantifying hydrological connectivity is the IC proposed by Borselli et al. (2008). The IC allows the links among the different parts of a catchment to be represented: head of catchment, hillslopes, main channel and outlet (Croke et al., 2005).

It is calculated as follows:

Equation 2-1.

$$IC = \log_{10} \frac{D_{up}}{D_{down}} = \log_{10} \frac{\bar{W}\bar{S}\sqrt{A}}{\sum_i \frac{d_i}{W_i S_i}}$$

D_{up} = Upslope component [m]

D_{down} = Downslope component [m]

\bar{W} = Average weighting factor of the upslope contributing area [-]

\bar{S} = Average slope gradient of the upslope contributing area [$m m^{-1}$]

A = Upslope contributing area [m^2]

d_i = Length of the flow path from the i^{th} cell to the nearest sink according to the steepest downslope direction [m]

W_i = Weighting factor of the i^{th} cell [-]

S_i = Slope gradient of the i^{th} cell [$m m^{-1}$]

The IC is defined between $-\infty$ and $+\infty$, with increasing connectivity for higher IC values (Annex 4). The upslope component is the potential for producing sediment upslope and the downslope component takes into account the flow path length that a particle has to travel in order to reach the nearest target or sink (Borselli et al., 2008).

Cavalli et al. (2013) used a multiple flow D-infinity approach (Tarboton, 1997) to calculate the contributing area instead of the single flow D8 algorithm. Some studies have demonstrated the advantages of D-infinity over methods that restrict the choice to eight directions (Tarboton, 1997; Willgoose, 2004). The multiple flow algorithm

is better able to simulate divergent flows (Cavalli et al., 2013). In addition, if the DEM's pixels size is smaller than the width of the channel, the single flow algorithm will underestimate this channel size (1 pixel width) and therefore limit the size of the drainage area (Cavalli et al., 2014). In addition, Cavalli et al. (2014) set a lower slope value of 0.005 m m^{-1} to prevent from infinite values in the downslope component and an upper slope value of 1 m m^{-1} to prevent from bias coming from steep slopes. In the present paper, Cavalli et al. (2014) tool was used.

2.4 Weighting factor

The weighting factor (W) represents the easiness for runoff and sediment movement (Borselli et al., 2008; Foerster et al., 2014). These processes are linked to soil surface properties and land use. The weighting factor can be chosen freely in the calculation of IC, but it is very important and has to be based on soil surface characteristics that are known to have an impact on the runoff and sediment processes involved (Borselli et al., 2008). These influences vary during the process, as well as in time and space. The weighting factor can be derived from many properties, ranging from vegetation (e.g. type, litter, coverage) and soil (e.g. infiltration, stability) to land use management (e.g. tillage) (Borselli et al., 2008). The choice also depends on the objective and region of study (Foerster et al., 2014). For example, in the Alpine region, Cavalli et al. (2013) did not use the C-factor as a weighting factor because the area had very homogeneous land use (unvegetated areas with rocks). According to the same authors, for other areas with heterogeneous land use, or for assessing the influence of various types of vegetation cover, the C-factor and Manning's coefficient could be the right choice (Cavalli et al., 2014).

The weighting factor should also be easy to measure or to obtain and applicable to both downslope and upslope areas. The weighting factor value needs to be situated between 0 and 1 for comparisons with other weighting factors and in order to avoid bias where there are very high factor values (Cavalli et al., 2014). There are many possibilities and the choice will have a great influence on the results (Borselli et al., 2008; Cavalli et al., 2013; Gay et al., 2016; Kalantari et al., 2017). Borselli et al. (2008) evaluated existing parameters from other models (e.g. hydraulic roughness, vegetation cover, soil erodibility). They concluded that the C-factor of the USLE model was the best choice. It takes crop and soil loss management into account. A C-factor value of zero means the soil is completely protected, but a rise in C-factor value indicates that the soil is at greater risk of erosion (Wischmeier and Smith, 1978).

Table 2-3 : Mean annual C-factor for various crop rotations and land uses (method of Maugnard et al.(2013)).

| Land use | C-factor [-] | Land use | C-factor [-] |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Road | 1 | Wheat-Barley | 0.36 |
| Path | 0.90 | Maize-Maize-Maize | 0.54 |
| Wood | 0.082 | Sugar beet-Wheat | 0.40 |
| Grass strip | 0.003 | Wheat-Maize-Wheat | 0.52 |
| Wheat-Potato-Wheat | 0.49 | Barley-Wheat | 0.37 |
| Wheat-Sugar beet-Wheat | 0.40 | Barley-Sugar beet | 0.35 |

In this study, C-factor was chosen as weighting factor because of the mostly agricultural land use. This permits to take into account the risk of erosion of the different crops in the catchment. It doesn't need to be standardized because C-factor is situated between 0 and 1. Table 2-3 presents the C-factor values used in the IC calculation in our study calculated with the method of Maugnard et al. (2013). Roads and paths are strongly susceptible to runoff (Verspecht et al., 2011) and therefore, although sediment production on paved roads is minimal, we set the C factor of roads at 1 in order to emphasize their role in sediment transfer rather than in sediment production. In contrast, woods and grass strips had a low C-factor. Cropped fields had C-factor values of between 0.35 and 0.54. The highest values were linked to maize growing, which in Belgium involves leaving the soil bare during the most erosive periods of the year. Table 2-3 also shows that potato cultivation resulted a slight increase in the C-factor (Gabriels et al., 2003).

2.5 Orthophotoplan and field observations

An orthophotoplan was created using a flight with a mini-UAV Gatewing X100 (cf. part2.2). The flight took place on the 13th of March 2017 during the drying period after a rainfall (31.7 mm were measured between the 28th of February and the 9th of March 2017).

The orthophotoplan and field observations (e.g. humid or dry spots) are used as ground true information in order to validate and assess the quality of the index's outputs.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Effect of DEM resolution

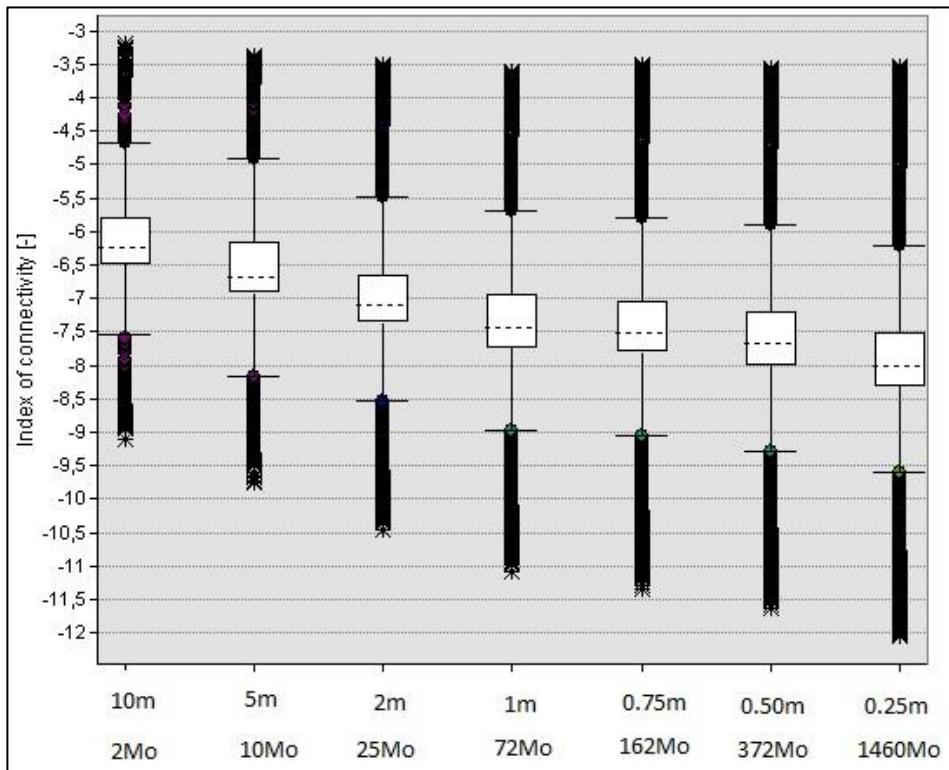


Figure 2-2 : Boxplot with various pixel sizes (horizontal dotted line = median value, box ends = percentile 25 (Q1) and percentile 75 (Q3), whiskers = $Q1 - 1.5 * (Q3 - Q1)$ and $Q3 + 1.5 * (Q3 - Q1)$, stars = outliers). File size takes IC, weighting factor and DEM files into account.

Table 2-4 : Statistical parameters for the various resolutions.

| | 10 m | 5 m | 2 m | 1 m | 75 cm | 50 cm | 25 cm |
|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Mean | -6.26 | -6.52 | -6.97 | -7.32 | -7.38 | -7.59 | -7.88 |
| Median | -6.49 | -6.75 | -7.18 | -7.51 | -7.54 | -7.75 | -8.04 |
| Min | -9.45 | -9.97 | -10.56 | -11.11 | -11.37 | -11.59 | -12.09 |
| Max | -3.13 | -3.34 | -3.64 | -3.51 | -3.51 | -3.52 | -3.51 |
| SD | 0.75 | 0.76 | 0.80 | 0.85 | 0.81 | 0.85 | 0.84 |

Table 2-5 : Slopes and flow lengths for the various pixel sizes.

| Pixel size [m] | Slope [%] | | Flow length [m] | |
|----------------|-----------|------|-----------------|-----|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| 0.25 | 2.42 | 4.86 | 1353 | 552 |
| 0.5 | 3.15 | 3.89 | 1292 | 537 |
| 0.75 | 3.36 | 3.36 | 1274 | 523 |
| 1 | 3.84 | 2.53 | 1227 | 498 |
| 2 | 3.71 | 2.40 | 1202 | 470 |
| 5 | 3.86 | 2.06 | 1158 | 455 |
| 10 | 3.76 | 1.91 | 1147 | 440 |

Figure 2-2 represents a boxplot of IC values for all tested resolutions. Table 2-4 and Table 2-5 present statistical parameters (mean IC, median IC, minimum IC, mean slope, etc.). The IC tended to increase when the pixel size increased (Figure 2-2 and Table 2-4). For instance, the median IC decreased from -6.5 for the 10 m pixel size to -8 for the 25 cm pixel size, a difference of about 20%. This trend was the same for the percentiles 25 and 75. These results, obtained for the Belgian loess belt, were consistent with those from the Alpine region in Italy (Brardinoni et al., 2015). This can be explained by the simplification and reduction of flow paths (Brardinoni et al., 2015) and the mitigation of slopes (Brandt, 2016; Cavazzi et al., 2013; Claessens et al., 2005).

Table 2-5 shows that the slope did not change much above 1 m of pixel size. From 1 to 10 m pixel sizes, the IC modification cannot really be explained by slope changes. Reduction of flow paths is constant as the pixel size increases and can explain IC variations. A shorter travel of sediments to outlet induces a higher connectivity (Van Nieuwenhuyse et al., 2012), resulting in higher IC values. Therefore, when connectivity maps are compared for different catchments, the same pixel size needs to be used (Bothale and Pandey, 2013). Different pixel sizes restrict the comparison of two catchments to a qualitative approach, based on the connectivity pattern. Other studies using indices based on topographical data have also shown the effect of the pixel size on results (Cavazzi et al., 2013; d' Ozouville et al., 2008; Legorreta Paulin et al., 2010; Sørensen and Seibert, 2007).

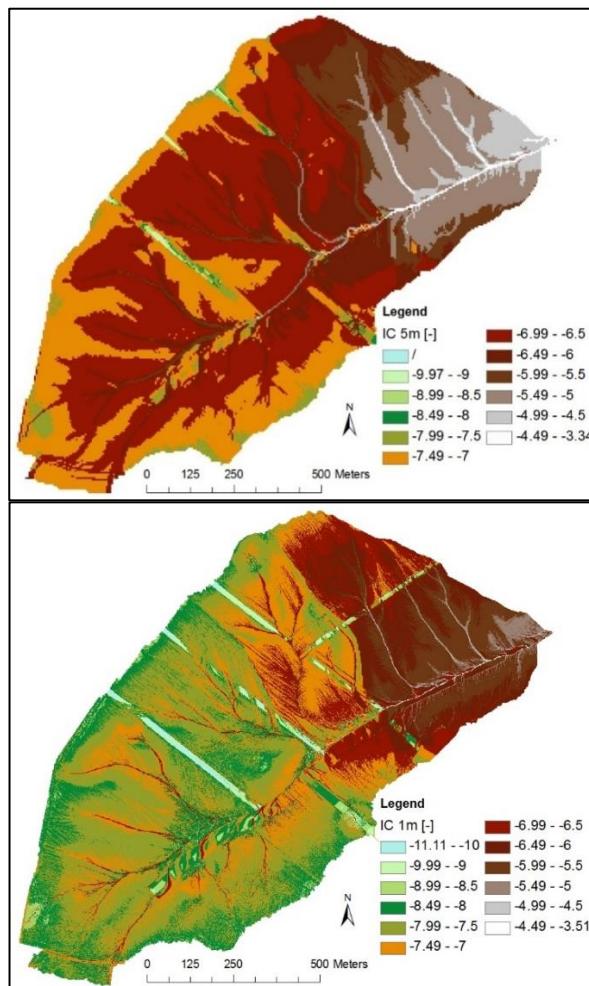
With regard to the maximum IC values, they were fairly similar for all pixel sizes, lying between -3 and -3.5 (Table 2-4). These pixels corresponded to locations near

the outlet because it represented the most connected pixels in the catchment. The downstream effect became negligible and these pixels were not greatly affected by changes in resolution.

The distribution was highly asymmetric, with the median at the bottom of the box and many outliers. There were many more pixels with a low IC value, probably because the flow paths were small compared with the diffuse erosion areas in the fields.

Obviously, pixel size had an impact on the resulting connectivity maps. But these results had to relate to the catchment size. Brardinoni et al. (2015) showed that the impact of catchment size was strong. Larger basins were characterized by smoother slopes, more sediment storage and therefore lower connectivity values.

3.2 Optimal pixel size for connectivity study



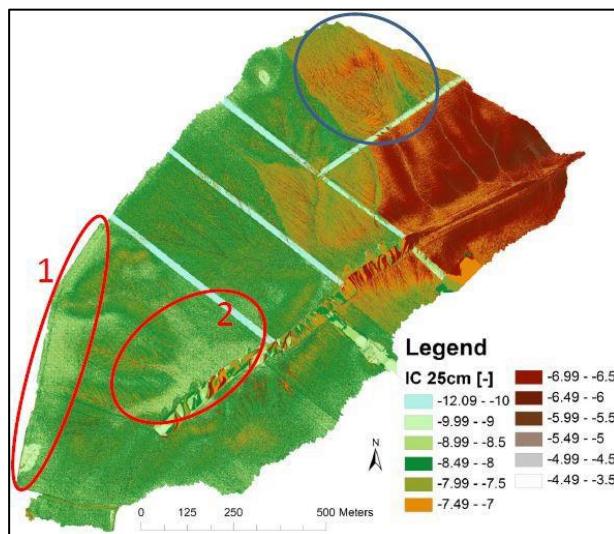


Figure 2-3 : a) IC map for the 5 m pixel size b) IC map for the 1 m pixel size c) IC map for the 25 cm pixel size with identification of more disconnected areas (red circles) and uphill zones of grass strips (blue circle).

In Figure 2-3, the same patterns (e.g. flow paths, more disconnected areas) were visible at the same locations, but there were some differences in the catchment for the different resolutions (Annex 5). For the 5 m pixel size (Figure 2-3a), the values were higher, with straighter flow paths (same results for Brardinoni *et al.*, 2015) and nearly no visualization of linear features such as grass strips or fields limits. This was linked to the small size of the connections compared with the resolution. The pixel size value (5 m) was greater than the width of the feature. The larger the pixel size, the fewer small areas (e.g. grass strips, roads or field limits) were visible (Legorreta Paulin *et al.*, 2010).

The increase in precision with a resolution of 1 m allowed field limits, linear features and complex flow paths to be observed more easily (Figure 2-3b). The secondary flow paths were not visible above the 1 m pixel size. With a very high resolution (Figure 2-3c), some more disconnected areas appeared in blue (the largest were indicated by red circles). Circle 1 had low IC values because of low slopes, a small contributing area and a long flow distance to the outlet. For circle 2, these characteristics could not explain low values at first glance. At this stage, it could be mathematical artefacts (Bothale and Pandey, 2013) or valuable information coming from the lowest pixel sizes. A field observation permitted to answer this question. These “blue areas” corresponded to more disconnected areas with water stagnation after rainfall. This was corroborated in Figure 2-4, showing a dark spot in the field that was more humid than surrounding zones. This picture was taken the 17th of March 2016 after 29.7 mm has rained between the 1st and the 7th of March. The outer

edges of this spot were located on the map using a Leica 1200 dGPS (Figure 2-4) and they corresponded to the more disconnected zone on the IC map explained above. The disconnected areas were not visible for the 5 and 10 m pixel sizes, slightly visible for the 2 m and clearly visible for 1 m pixel size and lower ones.

For smaller pixel sizes (<1 m), linear features (e.g. grass strips) were more visible. These features were characterized by a very low weighting factor, which explained the low IC. In addition, these disconnected features had a great impact on the IC pixel values uphill (blue circle in Figure 2-3c). These pixels were more disconnected when there was a grass strip downhill, which is logical because the role of this feature is to reduce water speed and catch sediments (Evrard et al., 2008a) or, in other words, to reduce connectivity. The effect exists a little bit for 1 m pixel size but not above 1 m. Let's note that 25 cm pixel size seemed to create noise in the DEM linked to very high resolutions DEM (Bhattacharya et al., 2013; Hanssen, 2001; Zebker et al., 1994).

In summary, smaller pixel sizes (1 m or below) enabled more account to be taken of connectivity features (e.g. field limits, grass strips, disconnected areas) and more accurate flow paths and secondary paths to be determined. This highlighted the need to obtain small pixel size DEM. Many studies agree that a small DEM pixel size is necessary to obtain a good resolution in terms of topographic and hydrologic results (Cavazza et al., 2013; d' Ozouville et al., 2008; Legorreta Paulin et al., 2010; Sørensen and Seibert, 2007). Small pixel size allows variance in data to be taken into account (Akbari et al., 2009). Sorensen and Seibert (2007), however, noted that a highly accurate DEM weakened some correlations for landscape analysis and modelling and that the most appropriate DEM pixel size was not necessarily the smallest one. Claessens et al. (2005) also noted that the choice of pixel size depended on the specific application and Akbari et al. (2009) added that study site characteristics and data availability had great influence on choice.

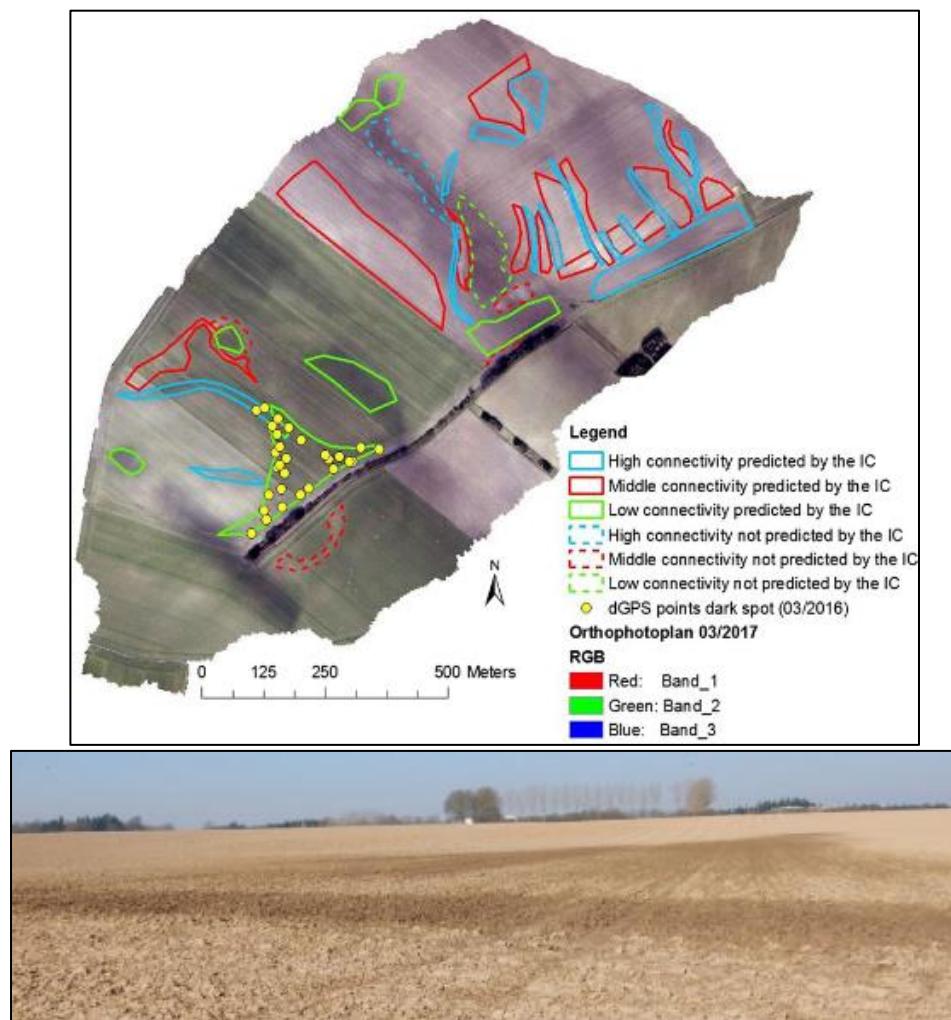


Figure 2-4 : a) Orthophotoplan of March 2017 with polygons corresponding to high, middle and low connectivity predicted or not by the IC b) Picture of a dark spot in the field taken in March 2016 (low connectivity area).

Table 2-6 : Statistics of IC for the different identified zones and different pixel sizes.

| | Mean IC 5 m [-] | SD IC 5 m [-] | Mean IC 1m [-] | SD IC 1 m [-] | Mean IC 25 cm [-] | SD IC 25 cm [-] |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| High connectivity zone | -5.38 | 0.75 | -6.21 | 0.79 | -7.10 | 0.79 |
| Middle connectivity zone | -6.12 | 0.71 | -6.89 | 0.84 | -7.46 | 0.90 |
| Low connectivity zone | -6.71 | 0.56 | -7.75 | 0.57 | -8.31 | 0.53 |
| High connectivity not shown zone | -6.66 | 0.29 | -7.28 | 0.42 | -8.18 | 0.74 |
| Middle connectivity not shown zone | -6.66 | 0.42 | -7.41 | 0.52 | -7.87 | 0.52 |
| Low connectivity not shown zone | -6.57 | 0.17 | -7.29 | 0.51 | -7.94 | 0.80 |

To decide if 1 m pixel size was sufficient or not to study hydrological and sediment connectivity, orthophotoplan of the 13th of March 2017 was used (Figure 2-4). Dark, light spots or marks of the water and sediment flows on the orthophotoplan were linked to the values from the IC map (Figure 2-4 and Figure 2-5). Narrow dark bands were related to “high connectivity zones”, the water and sediment flows had marked the landscape. Generally not far from these zones, light areas were classified as “middle connectivity zones”. At these places, the transfer of water and sediments was quick and the soil dried faster which explained the lighter colour. A third category named “low connectivity” was characterized by dark zones with various shapes because of the more humid soil. It was easier to identify these areas in no covered fields in the lower part of the catchment because of the image contrast. On Figure 2-4, these three types of zones were identified on the orthophotoplan. Most of them were predicted by the IC map (Figure 2-5); a few zones were missing on the IC map. Table 2-6 confirms these results for all pixel sizes. Indeed, for high, middle and low connectivity predicted by the IC, the IC mean was respectively higher for high, middle and low connectivity zones. This was not the case for high, middle and low connectivity zones not predicted by the IC (zones visible on the orthophotoplan but not predicted by the IC). These missing zones are mainly located near the old grass strips. These strips were destroyed in 2015 after the DEM but before the orthophotoplan production. This could be an explanation for these few zones not predicted by the IC. Let’s note that the big dark rectangular zone visible in the upper part of the catchment on Figure 2-4 was not considered in the discussion as its shape suggests it was a shadow. Indeed, in Figure 2-6, this spot is not visible on satellite images while the other zones discussed before are.

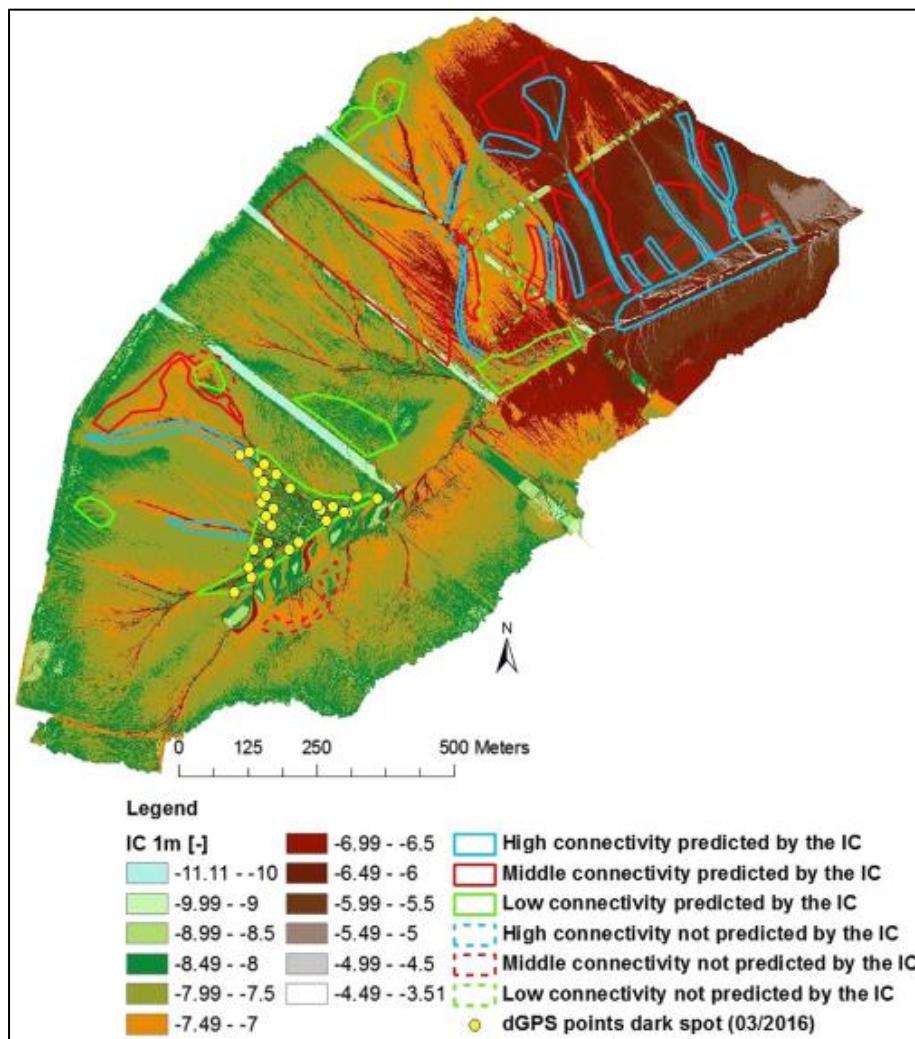


Figure 2-5 : IC map for the 1 m pixel size with polygons corresponding to high, middle and low connectivity predicted or not by the IC.

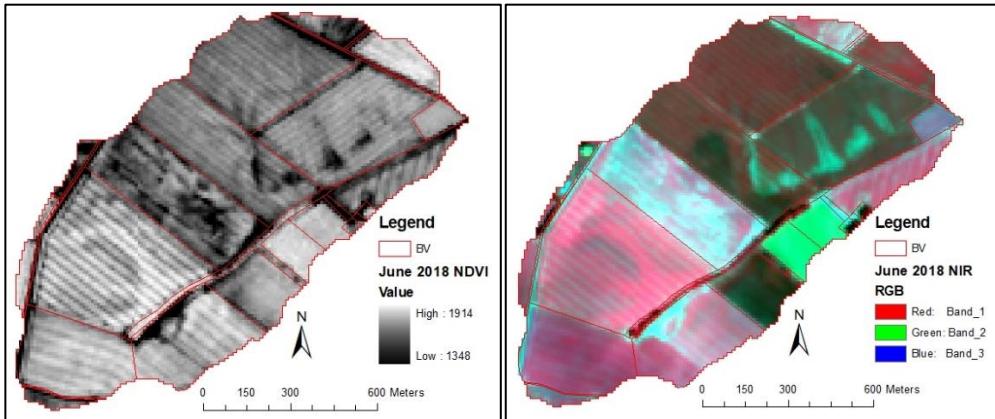


Figure 2-6 : Maps of NDVI and NIR for the catchment for June 2018.

In this study, the smallest pixel size (25 cm) did not give much more information on the hydrological connectivity of the catchment than the 1 m pixel size. In addition, this small pixel size required a long calculation time (Arana et al., 2011) of about respectively 20 and 700 times the 1 m and 10 m time of calculation (Figure 2-2) even though the area covered by the catchment was only 124 ha. From our findings, 1 m appeared to be a good compromise between calculation time and results usefulness. It avoided the need for lengthy calculations and enabled linear features, as well as water stagnation zones, to be observed.

4. Conclusion

Using different pixel sizes in an IC calculation provided the same global pattern on connectivity maps (location of major flow paths, general behaviour of the catchment) but some significant differences existed. Overall, there was a mean difference of about 20% in IC values between pixel sizes of 10 m and 0.25 m, with coarser resolutions showing more connectivity because of the simplification of flow paths, the mitigation of slopes could not explain all the differences. This confirmed results obtained for the Italian alpine region. This was not true, however, for the highest IC values found near the outlet because the resolution impact was less prominent there.

At a pixel size of 5 m or more, there was a great loss of information on straight flow paths and no visualization of linear features (e.g. grass strips, field limits). At a resolution of 1 m, it was possible to see secondary flow paths, very disconnected grass strips as well as more disconnected areas that field observations showed to be water stagnation zones after rainfall. This could be seen to some extent for the 2 m pixel size but was clearer for 1 m pixel size and lower. This all highlighted the importance of a high DEM resolution for hydrological connectivity studies. It was

not necessary in our study, however, to have a DEM with pixel size lower than 1 m. On the orthophotoplan of March 2017, three “key areas” could be located using the shape and the colour of patches: “high connectivity zone” for narrow dark bands marked in the landscape, “middle connectivity zone” for surrounding light drier bands and “low connectivity zone” for all shapes dark more humid spots. Almost all this areas could be identified on the IC map with the 1 m pixel size.

Of course, pixel size should be linked to the study objective, which in our case focused on sediment connectivity at catchment scale and on evaluating differences among resolutions. In our study, 1 m was the optimum pixel size in terms of our objective and was a good compromise between results accuracy and processing time. Under this pixel size, the amount of information was not much greater, the time of calculation became more important, and noise appeared in the DEM. There was no single suitable pixel size, but a range of suitable pixel sizes, depending on factors such as study site characteristics (Akbari et al., 2009), availability and quality of data, the application (Claessens et al., 2005), the catchment type and the catchment size.

Chapitre 3

Performance of the LandSoil expert-based model to map erosion and sedimentation: Application to a cultivated catchment in central Belgium

Le contenu de ce chapitre est adapté d'un article publié dans la revue *Earth surface processes and landforms (ESPL)*.

Cantreul, V., Bielders, C., Pineux, N., Swerts, G., Degré, A., 2020. Performance of the LandSoil expert-based model to map erosion and sedimentation: Application to a cultivated catchment in central Belgium, *Earth surface processes and landforms*, 43(4), 884–893. doi:10.1002/esp.4808

Abstract

Intensive agricultural practices on sensitive soils induce high erosion rates in central Belgium. Expert-rules models quantify runoff and erosion at catchment scale, avoiding over-parameterization, and can include some direct or indirect connectivity features. The aim of this paper is to test the ability of an expert-based model, LandSoil, to quantify runoff and to locate erosion and sedimentation areas in a small cultivated loamy catchment in Belgium during the years 2014, 2015 and 2016. Spatialized data are important for assessing model outputs and the erosive response. Measurements of runoff and observation of spatial erosion/deposition patterns, especially around major connectivity points, permitted an assessment of the reliability of the model results. Runoff modelling gave contrasting results (good linear adjustment at the outlet of the 83 ha sub-catchment (point 1): r^2 of 0.96, Nash-Sutcliffe criterion of 0.95; less good at the outlet of the 3.9 ha sub-catchment (point 2): r^2 of 0.28, Nash-Sutcliffe criterion of -0.47). For point 2, the poor results are explained by the very few runoff events observed, a scaling effect and the small area with a single land use. Graduated rulers demonstrate that the model is able to provide a coherent pattern of erosion/deposition. The study highlights great sensitivity to the effect of land use, land allocation, landscape design and slope gradients. Grass strips induce deposition of eroded particles when slopes are gentle (<2%). Woodland strips decrease connectivity by being in the stream but deposit thinner sediment layers. Field boundaries have a role in the transport, but not really the quantity, of sediments. This model validation in the Belgian loess context allows us to use LandSoil in other similar environments in order to estimate the effects of landscape management scenarios.

Keywords

Erosion, connectivity, modelling, expert rules, spatialized data.

1. Introduction

Soil erosion by water on agricultural fields and subsequent sediment transport has large and varied consequences on the environment and population (Bielders et al., 2003; Boardman, 1988; Evrard et al., 2007; Fiener et al., 2011; Verstraeten and Poesen, 1999). These impacts (e.g. muddy floods, sedimentation of rivers and retention ponds, crop destruction, loss of soil and nutrients) have risen over the last few decades and are expected to worsen in the future (Boardman and Vandaele, 2010; Nearing et al., 2004) especially because of anthropic activities (e.g. increased size of agricultural plots, destruction of linear landscape elements, increased tillage intensity and resulting loss of soil organic matter, climatic changes).

For nearly a century there have been many studies on erosion processes, including detachment, transport and sedimentation, in order to better understand these

processes and find appropriate solutions. Erosion-related processes depend on numerous factors, are strongly non-linear and are characterized by large spatial and temporal variability, which makes the study of soil erosion highly complex (Hurst et al., 2012; López-Vicente et al., 2013). Spatial and temporal heterogeneities of rainfalls and soil characteristics are a challenge. Initially, many studies have focused on runoff and erosion at the field scale (Biddoccu et al., 2017). More recently, the catchment scale was preferred because many of the off-site consequences of erosion have to be managed at catchment scale, and because it gives additional information on processes occurring between different fields (Hutton et al., 2014; Pineux et al., 2017). In particular, it has become apparent that the internal functioning of the catchment, especially connections between different spatial units (e.g. grass strips, field boundaries or roads), plays a crucial role in the understanding of runoff and sediment transfers (Akram et al., 2014; Navarro Hevia et al., 2015; Rodríguez-Blanco et al., 2013; Rose et al., 2003). It is therefore necessary to better understand phenomena around these specific spots in order to better represent the whole-system behaviour.

To deal with heterogeneities, the concept of connectivity was introduced at the end of the 20th century. It identifies erosion processes and tries to understand how they occur to explain water and sediment movements in the catchment (Baartman et al., 2013; Bracken and Croke, 2007; Western et al., 2001). Considering the diversity of definitions of the connectivity concept in the literature, it is important to clearly specify the definition used in this study. Connectivity is here defined as “the physical linkage of sediment through the system, which is the transfer of sediment from one zone or location to another and the potential for a specific particle to move through the system” (Bracken et al., 2013). In the catchment, linear landscape elements (e.g. grass strip, wood strip, road, field boundary) change connectivity aspects, showing why this concept can help to better understand runoff and erosion patterns.

Models have improved our understanding of water and sediment transfer in catchments (Boll et al., 2015; Da Silva et al., 2013; Evrard et al., 2009; Singh et al., 2011). Many models have been developed to evaluate management practices. In this framework of runoff and erosion modelling at catchment scale, incorporating water and sediment connectivity is a mean to improve model outputs (Couturier et al., 2013; Nunes et al., 2018; Takken et al., 2005). Various studies have demonstrated the benefits of using models that include connectivity aspects in order to quantify runoff and erosion more accurately (Gumièvre et al., 2011; Lesschen et al., 2009; Liu and Fu, 2016; López-Vicente et al., 2013; Medeiros et al., 2010). This concept takes heterogeneities into account, which constitutes a key to improve catchment behaviour modelling (López-Vicente et al., 2013). For instance, Smith et al. (2018) demonstrated that models that capture the effects of spatial and temporal variations in agricultural and conservation practices on soil erosion and sediment delivery greatly improve the model outcome and facilitate decision making regarding catchment management practices. The difficulty lies in integrating connectivity into

models without over-parameterization (Heckmann et al., 2014), because highly parameterized models have operational limitations (Blöschl and Sivapalan, 1995; Lane et al., 1995; Seyfried and Wilcox, 1995).

Among the different types of models, expert-based models try to represent erosion in the catchment by considering only the dominant erosion processes for a specific situation in order to prevent over-parameterization (Cerdan et al., 2002; Evrard et al., 2009; Paroissien et al., 2015). They allow quantification of runoff and sediment flows following rules defined by experts. STREAM and LandSoil are examples of expert-based models. Using limited inputs, including the digital elevation model (DEM), field boundaries, infiltration capacity, imbibition rainfall and potential sediment concentration, it permits the quantification of runoff and sediment production in a spatially distributed way in the catchment. LandSoil includes some connectivity features to model runoff and erosion directly (e.g. through topography, field boundaries or grass strips) or indirectly (e.g. through soil surface characteristics).

LandSoil (and its predecessor STREAM) has been used in several studies in Western Europe in the past few years. More specifically, the model has been used to model interrill erosion in different environments, analyze the impact of erosion on agricultural landscape evolution, model the impact of land use change and rainfall seasonality on sediment export, assess soil redistribution in a hedgerow landscape and model ephemeral gully erosion (Cerdan et al., 2002; Ciampalini et al., 2012; Evrard et al., 2009; Lacoste et al., 2014; Souchère et al., 2003). As for most modelling efforts, the validity of the LandSoil model has so far been mostly tested against data recorded at the catchment outlet or for a limited number of locations where water and sediment flows are monitored within catchments. However, as highlighted by various authors, a correct mass balance at the catchment scale does not necessarily imply a correct representation of the spatial patterns of erosion and deposition (Jetten et al., 2003; Takken et al., 1999). There is a need for spatialized data to test modelling results (Pineux et al., 2017). The objective of the present study was therefore to evaluate the capacity of the LandSoil model to quantify runoff, but mostly to represent erosion and deposition patterns in two nested catchments between 2014 and 2016, and more specifically to investigate the effect of linear landscape elements.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Study area

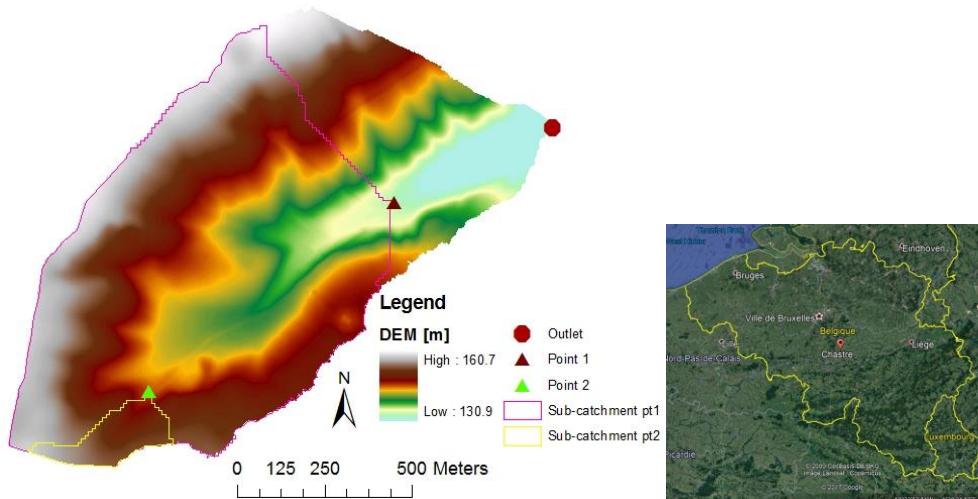


Figure 3-1 : Presentation of the study area (location, DEM, measurement points and outlet).

The study area is an experimental catchment located in the town of Chastre (Figure 3-1) in the middle of the Belgian loess belt ($50^{\circ}36'23.02''$ N, $4^{\circ}35'42.33''$ E). The Belgian loess belt is known for high rates of soil erosion by water and frequent muddy floods (Bielders et al., 2003; Boardman and Vandaele, 2010; Boardman, 2010; Evrard et al., 2007, 2010). The 124 ha catchment is described in detail in Pineux et al. (2017) and Cantreul et al. (2017). Sub-catchment 1 has a size of 84 ha and sub-catchment 2 is 3.9 ha. Predominant soils are Cambisols and Luvisols, all derived from quaternary loess, which are very sensitive to diffuse and concentrated erosion (Evrard et al., 2008b). Land use is more than 95% agricultural. Cultivation is conventional in the area, based on mouldboard ploughing to a depth of 25–30 cm, except for a small field downstream where no tillage is practiced (Cantreul et al., 2017). Main crop rotations are composed of wheat, potato, sugar beet, barley, corn and flax (Figure 3-2). The remaining 5% of land is composed of grass strips and a woodland strip; linear landscape elements which are the main focus of the present study. Grass strips were present until November 2014 and then removed. The woodland strip is composed of mixed tree species (broadleaf and coniferous trees) from 2 to 5 m high. Undergrowth is composed of grass or bushes where the tree density is lower (less than 5% of the strip). Annual average precipitation reaches 826 mm year^{-1} . Elevation ranges between 128 and 161 m and the slope gradient ranges between 0 and 15%, 4% on average (Cantreul et al., 2017). There are two measurement points (points 1 and 2 on Figure 3-1) in the catchment, located along the main flow axis for discharge measurements with a flume and a flowmeter. A

weather station is located close to point 1 with a tipping bucket rain gauge and a disdrometer with a 1 minute time step. A disdrometer measures the rainfall amount and intensity but it underestimates rainfall amount, especially for rainfall intensities higher than 20 mm h^{-1} (Liu et al., 2013). Rain gauge measurements were used for rainfall amounts and the disdrometer for rainfall intensity.

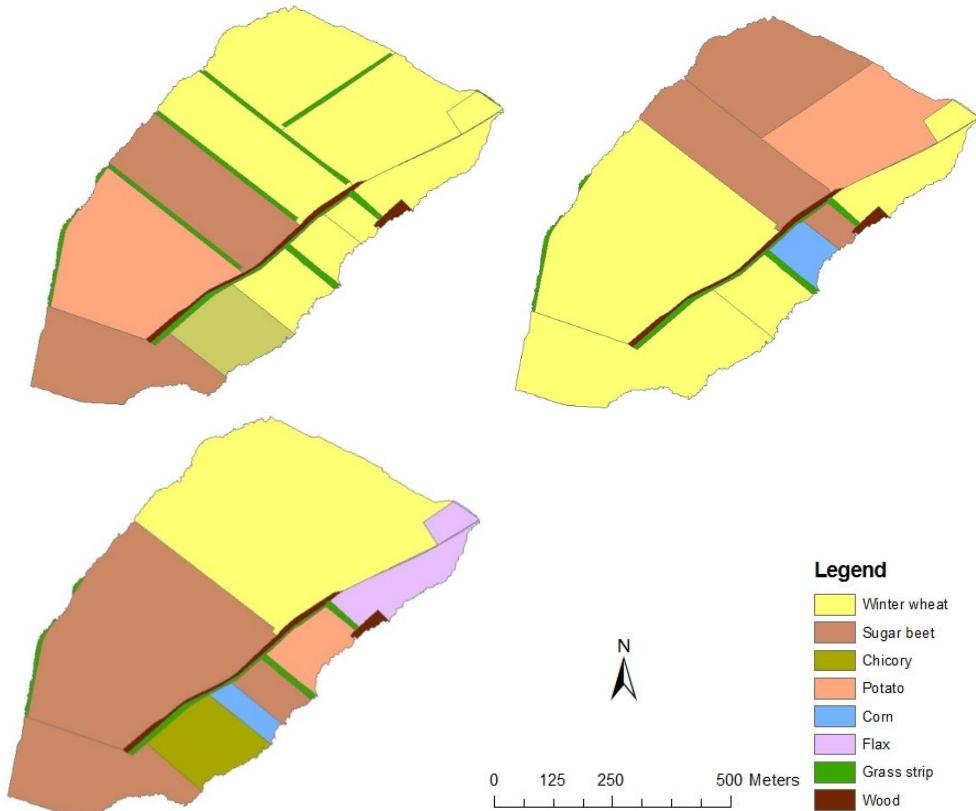


Figure 3-2 : Field allocation for 2014, 2015 and 2016.

2.2 *LandSoil* model

LandSoil is a spatially-distributed model based on the STREAM erosion (Cerdan et al., 2002; Cerdan et al., 2002; Souchère et al., 1998, 2003) and the WaTEM/SEDEM tillage erosion model (Govers et al., 1994). STREAM models runoff and erosion at plot or small catchment spatial scale and at rainfall event time scale. It is adapted as an ArcGis template which provides ready-to-use layouts to make the interface easy to understand. The objective with LandSoil is to analyze topographic evolution in an agricultural landscape resulting from soil redistribution in the catchment (Ciampalini et al., 2012). After each rainfall or ploughing event, a new digital elevation model is calculated taking into account all eroded or deposited soil transported in the runoff water flow.

2.2.1 Model inputs

The basic idea of LandSoil is that soil surface characteristics are the major factors that influence runoff generation and erosion processes in small cultivated catchments (Cerdan et al., 2002). For a few decades, the scientific community has worked on soil surface characteristics which are important for runoff and erosion purposes (Boiffin, 1986; Govers et al., 1990; Le Bissonnais et al., 2005). These characteristics are soil roughness (both parallel and perpendicular to the main slope direction), soil surface crusting and vegetation cover. For each month and crop, the four properties are quantified in categories. The model therefore relies on spatially distributed information in order to include catchment processes linked to hydrological connectivity. The main properties are taken into account as follows (Cerdan et al., 2002):

- Soil roughness: -1: not indicated, 0: 0 to 1 cm, 1: 1 to 2 cm, 2: 2 to 5 cm, 3: 5 to 10 cm, 4: 10 to 15 cm, 5: >15 cm. It represents the difference in height between the deepest part of microdepressions and the lowest point of their divide.
- Soil surface crusting: -1: not indicated, 0: initial fragmentary stage, 11: first stage of degradation/structural crusts, 12: structural crust with local presence of sedimentary crust, 2: general sedimentary stage. The physical meaning of the levels of soil surface crusting comes from Boiffin (1986) and Bresson & Boiffin (1990) who established a classification system for surface crusts formed by rainfall in loamy soils.
- Vegetation cover: -1: not indicated, 1: 0 to 20%, 2: 21 to 60%, 3: 61 to 100% (Annex 6).

LandSoil also requires a digital elevation model, land use, field boundaries (dead furrow, head land, road or ordinary boundary) and rainfall characteristics (duration, quantity, intensity, 48 h antecedent rainfall).

2.2.2 Model operation

A detailed description of the LandSoil model is available in Souchère et al. (1998, 2003) and Cerdan et al. (2002; 2002).

2.2.2.1 Runoff calculation

For each combination of vegetation cover, soil roughness and soil surface crusting, a steady-state soil infiltration capacity is assigned following an expert rule. For central Belgium, Evrard et al. (2009) adapted the original rule from Le Bissonnais et al. (2005, 1998). However, lower sand content in this study catchment compared to the catchments studied by Evrard et al. (2009) might lead to significant differences in infiltration capacity (20% sand for Evrard et al. (2009), 5% for Chastre catchment). This was confirmed by preliminary measurements (unpublished). For this reason, a new field measurement campaign was carried out in June 2018 and June 2019 using a Decagon® Mini Disk portable tension infiltrometer. Eighteen combinations of vegetation cover, soil roughness and soil surface crusting were

measured, and 11 others were extrapolated by comparison between Evrard et al.'s (2009) expert rule and our measurements.

By incorporating the 48 h antecedent rainfall, an imbibition rainfall value is assigned for each combination of infiltration capacity and 48 h antecedent rainfall. In environments with low evapotranspiration, it represents a good measure of the soil moisture content at the beginning of the rainfall. It is the rainfall quantity required to saturate the soil before runoff (Cerdan et al., 2002).

Afterwards, an infiltration/runoff balance is calculated as (Annex 7):

Equation 3-1.

$$B = T - W - I t$$

B = Infiltration/runoff balance [mm]

T = Total rainfall event amount [mm]

W = Imbibition rainfall [mm]

I = Steady-state soil infiltration rate [mm h^{-1}]

t = Rainfall event duration [h]

The runoff routing is calculated for each pixel of the catchment using a modified single-flow algorithm (Souchère et al., 1998). It permits runoff to follow the main linear direction, such as tillage direction or a ditch for instance, rather than follow the steepest downslope. The choice of routing along a topographic path flow or ploughing direction is determined by the threshold effect based on soil surface roughness (Ciampalini et al., 2012).

2.2.2.2 Erosion calculation

The erosion types considered in the model are water erosion (rill, interrill and ephemeral gully) and tillage erosion (Ciampalini et al., 2012).

Several studies have highlighted the importance of ephemeral gully erosion in central Belgium (Maugnard et al., 2014; Vandaele and Poesen, 1995). In the model, rill and gully erosion are calculated using an empirical relationship developed by Souchère et al. (2003). An ephemeral gully occurs when overland flow discharge exceeds critical shear strength for gully initiation. The module operation works as follows:

- Evaluation of flow discharge depending on:
 - o Slope factor. Depending on the slope percentage, a factor is assigned between 1 and 4; 4 being the highest slope.
 - o Friction factor. This is calculated using soil roughness, vegetation cover and land use. It varies between 1 and 5, the highest value corresponding to low friction.
- Evaluation of the shear strength:
 - o Cohesion factor. Following land use, vegetation cover and soil surface crusting (the first two take into account the effect of root density and compaction of subsurface soil layers), a factor is

assigned between 1 and 5; 5 having the lowest resistance to gully initiation.

- Sensitivity to gully erosion = runoff volume \times slope factor \times friction factor \times cohesion factor.
- Assignment of a rill/gully section (values from observed rill sections) depending on the calculated sensitivity to gully erosion.

Interrill erosion occurs when particles eroded by splash are remobilized by runoff on hillslopes. LandSoil models this process with an expert rule, assigning a potential sediment concentration to the runoff water for each combination of vegetation cover, soil roughness, soil crusting and rainfall intensity (Cerdan et al., 2002). Potential sediment concentrations were adapted for central Belgium by Evrard et al. (2009) based on 5 years of measurements of vegetation cover, soil roughness, soil crusting, rainfall characteristics and sediment concentration in the runoff.

Deposition occurs when sediment load in the flow exceeds its transport capacity (Cerdan et al., 2002). The reduction of the transport capacity is calculated using different threshold functions, taking into account changes in topography (vertical curvature, slope gradient), increase in infiltration rate and increase in vegetation cover. A maximum sediment concentration derived from field measurements (Cerdan et al., 2002), both for rill/gully and interrill erosion, is applied. Topographic characteristics inducing deposition are slope gradient $<2\%$ and vertical curvature > 0.055 . Vegetation induces deposition if vegetation cover $>60\%$. When reaching these thresholds, sediments are deposited with a concentration in excess of 10 g l^{-1} . Regarding grass strips, the literature (Deletic and Fletcher, 2006; Lecomte, 1999; Van Dijk et al., 1996) has reported sediment concentrations after strips below 2 g l^{-1} . The threshold value was set to 5 g l^{-1} above which sediments are deposited (Cerdan et al., 2002).

Tillage erosion is identified as the most important process leading to redistribution of the soil in agricultural landscapes (Govers et al., 1994) such as the Belgian loess belt. It depends on soil properties, landscape characteristics and the tillage implements used (Van Muysen et al., 2000).

To convert erosion mass to erosion depth, one single value of bulk density can be defined in LandSoil. Based on measurements on cultivated soils in the Belgian loam belt (Kader et al., 2010), a mean value of 1.3 g cm^{-3} was used. This value is also used for deposition height calculations.

2.2.2.3 Flow routing

LandSoil calculates a flow direction only taking DEM into account. After that, a tillage model is applied that modifies runoff directions and is derived from rules based on field observations or resulting from statistical analysis (Souchère et al., 1998). Dead furrows or tillage are linear landscape elements that modify flow direction. Aspect, derived from the DEM, is combined with tillage direction to obtain the slope angle. Then, a discriminant function based on slope angle and slope intensity is used to choose the cell following topography or tillage (Annex 8). In addition, roughness determination in each plot decides whether the discriminant

function is to be applied or if tillage direction is used directly (Souchère et al., 1998). When parallel and perpendicular roughness varies by 2 classes or more, the discriminant function is applied.

2.2.2.4 Implementation of connectivity features and flow routing

Connectivity features existing in the catchment during the study period were grass strips, a woodland strip and field boundaries. For runoff and erosion calculations, strips behave like any other plot with soil surface properties determining water and sediment amounts. Field boundaries (dead furrow, headland, road or ordinary limit) introduce anthropic factors to the flow direction model. The choice between slope and tillage or headland direction represents the first anthropic level. Dead furrows and roads constitute the second anthropic level, adding some preferential flows. For dead furrow the flow direction is the direction of the furrow, but for roads it keeps the slope direction and assigns an infiltration capacity of zero (Cerdan et al., 2002; Cerdan et al., 2002; Souchère et al., 1998, 2003).

2.2.3 Model outputs

For runoff, LandSoil builds different spatially distributed maps which provide information on infiltration and runoff catchment behaviour during a rainfall event (e.g. imbibition rainfall [mm], saturated infiltration capacity [mm h^{-1}], infiltration/runoff balance [mm] or runoff accumulation [m^3]). Table 3-1 summarizes all these outputs.

For sediments, the model provides map results for different processes: diffuse erosion, linear erosion, tillage erosion, total erosion, deposition and topography modification (Table 3-1).

Table 3-1 : LandSoil outputs.

| Runoff | Diffuse erosion | Linear erosion | Tillage erosion | Deposition | Total erosion | Topography |
|--|--|---|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Imbibition rainfall [mm] | Potential sediment concentration [g l^{-1}] | Rill section [m^2] | Sediment mass translocation [kg] | Sediment mass deposited by runoff [T] | Total sediment mass accumulation [T] | New DEM after erosion event [m] |
| Saturated infiltration capacity [mm h^{-1}] | Sediment mass in the water runoff [kg] | Sediment mass eroded from the rill [kg] | | Sediment mass deposited in the rill [T] | | Altitude variation after erosion event [m] |
| Infiltration/runoff balance [mm] | Sediment accumulation [T] | Sediment accumulation in the rill [T] | | | | |
| Runoff accumulation [m^3] | | | | | | |

2.3 Data

2.3.1 Digital elevation model

The DEM used in this study was constructed from LiDAR acquisitions from the Service Public de Wallonie, Belgium. The flights covered the whole region between 12 December 2012 and 9 March 2014 (Figure 3-1). The resolution is 1 m, this was previously shown to be the best resolution for sediment connectivity studies in the central Belgium context (Cantreul et al., 2017). The planimetric precision is less than 1 m, and absolute altimetric precision is 0.12 m. All details about flight parameters, methods used to process the point cloud or corrections to the gross DEM are described in the LiDAR DEM production report (Région Wallonne, 2015).

2.3.2 Adapted soil surface properties and expert rules

Table 3-2 : Soil surface properties for each crop and for each month. F=soil surface crusting, C=cover percentage, R=roughness (values for each month that has been modelled).

| Land use | April 14 | May 14 | June 14 | July 14 | August 14 | April 15 |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Winter wheat | F12 C3 R2 | F12 C3 R3 | F2 C3 R1 | F12 C3 R3 | F0 C1 R3 | F12 C3 R2 |
| Sugar beet | F0 C1 R3 | F11 C1 R2 | F12 C2 R1 | F12 C3 R2 | F12 C3 R2 | F12 C1 R3 |
| Chicory | F0 C1 R3 | F11 C1 R2 | F11 C3 R0 | F12 C3 R2 | F12 C3 R2 | F12 C1 R3 |
| Potato | F0 C1 R3 | F0 C1 R1 | F12 C3 R0 | F11 C3 R1 | F11 C3 R1 | F0 C1 R2 |
| Corn | / | / | / | / | | F12 C1 R3 |
| Flax | / | / | / | / | | / |
| Grassland ⁴ | F11 C3 R4 |
| Wood ⁵ | F0 C3 R5 |

| Land use | May 15 | June 15 | June 16 | July 16 | August 16 | September 16 |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| Winter wheat | F12 C3 R2 | F12 C3 R3 | F12 C3 R3 | F12 C3 R2 | F11 C1 R3 | F11 C1 R1 |
| Sugar beet | F12 C1 R3 | F11 C2 R2 | F12 C1 R1 | F12 C3 R1 | F12 C3 R0 | F12 C3 R2 |
| Chicory | F12 C1 R3 | F11 C2 R2 | F11 C2 R1 | F2 C3 R0 | F12 C3 R1 | F12 C3 R1 |
| Potato | F0 C1 R1 | F12 C3 R1 | F11 C2 R1 | F2 C3 R0 | F12 C3 R1 | F0 C1 R4 |
| Corn | F12 C1 R3 | F11 C2 R2 | F12 C1 R3 | F2 C2 R0 | F12 C3 R1 | F0 C1 R4 |
| Flax | / | / | F11 C2 R3 | F12 C3 R1 | F12 C3 R1 | F0 C1 R4 |
| Grassland ⁶ | F11 C3 R4 |
| Wood ⁷ | F0 C3 R5 |

The soil surface properties were observed monthly in the catchment for each crop. They were supplemented by observations made close by in the Belgian loess belt (Evrard et al., 2008a). The different classes are provided in Table 3-2. Table 3-3 presents the technical itinerary for all crops.

⁴Soil surface characteristics modified to fit with measured infiltration capacity.

⁵Soil surface characteristics modified to fit with measured infiltration capacity.

⁶Soil surface characteristics modified to fit with measured infiltration capacity.

⁷Soil surface characteristics modified to fit with measured infiltration capacity.

Table 3-3 : Technical itinerary for all crops during the measurement period.

| | April | May | June | July | August | September |
|--------------------|---------|---------|------|------------|------------|------------|
| Winter wheat | | | | Harvesting | Plowing | |
| Sugar beet | Seeding | | | | | |
| Chicory | Seeding | | | | | |
| Potato | Ridging | Seeding | | | | Harvesting |
| Corn | Seeding | | | | | |
| Flax | Seeding | | | | Harvesting | |
| Mustard cover crop | | | | | Seeding | |

Table 3-4 : Saturated infiltration capacities in mm h⁻¹ for each combination of soil surface properties in the catchment of Chastre (Values in brackets relate to standard deviation of measurements).

| | | Soil surface crusting [-] | | | |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Roughness [cm] | Vegetation cover [%] | F0 | F11 | F12 | F2 |
| R5 | C3 | 75 | | | |
| | C2 | | | | |
| | C1 | | | | |
| R4 | C3 | | 75 | | |
| | C2 | 74 (35.0) | | | |
| | C1 | 50 | | | |
| R3 | C3 | | | 25 (28.2) | |
| | C2 | | 18 | | |
| | C1 | 25 | 18 | 15 | |
| R2 | C3 | | | 18 (3.2) | |
| | C2 | | 18 | 12 (3.0) | |
| | C1 | 18 | 10 | 9 (1.4) | 6 (2.5) |
| R1 | C3 | | 18 | 15 (1.9) | 10 (4.4) |
| | C2 | | 14 (4.1) | 11 (0.4) | |
| | C1 | 15 | 8 (2.2) | 6 (1.2) | 6 (2.1) |
| R0 | C3 | | 10 | 10 (2.6) | 4 (1.0) |
| | C2 | | 8 (2.4) | 5 (2.0) | 4 (1.6) |
| | C1 | | | 6 (2.3) | 4 (1.9) |

* Red: Measurements with the Mini-Disk. Green: Estimated values

Table 3-4 presents saturated infiltration capacity for all combinations of soil properties observed between 2014 and 2016 in the catchment. The combinations observed during June 2018 and June 2019 (time of the Mini Disk measurements) are in red, representing the mean of 5 different measurement locations. The other values needed for LandSoil (in green) were deduced by comparisons between red values and the corresponding values from Evrard et al. (2009). The infiltration capacity, governed by soil surface characteristics, is one of the most sensitive inputs in the LandSoil model (Ciampalini et al., 2017). Observed values taken during the field campaign were smaller than those from Evrard et al. (2009). One limitation of the measurements with the Mini Disk is that the saturated hydraulic conductivity is estimated by extrapolation of unsaturated hydraulic conductivities for higher soil suctions. It may thus underestimate infiltration capacity because macropores are

already desaturated at the first suction head (Bhave and Sreeja, 2013). However, Bhave and Sreeja (2013) reported marginal differences in infiltration rates if measurements are taken when the soil water content is high and if a low suction head (close to the saturation) is used. For that reason, measurements were performed on relatively wet soil 2 days after several rainfall events and the suction head of the tension infiltrometer was 2 cm. In addition, De Pue et al. (2019) reported that the determination of the saturated hydraulic conductivity is overestimated using K_s or K_s and $K(h)$ measurements. The best precision is achieved with only $K(h)$ measurements. For this reason, the authors recommended to add Mini Disk measurements in order to better approach $K(h)$ between 0 and -100 cm. The use of a constant head infiltrometer was not possible because it is a destructive method for fields (farmers denied permission).

Table 3-5 : Potential sediment concentration (g l^{-1}) for each combination of soil surface properties and rainfall intensity at 6 minutes time step for the Belgian loess belt (Evrard et al., 2009).

| | | | Soil surface crusting | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|--|-----------------------|-------|------|-----|
| Roughness [cm] | Vegetal cover [%] | Maximal intensity [mm h^{-1}] | F0 | F11 | F12 | F2 |
| R0 | C1 | 0-10 | | | | |
| | | 10-40 | | | | |
| | | > 40 | | | | |
| | C2 | 0-10 | | | 0-1 | 0-1 |
| | | 10-40 | | | 0-1 | 1-5 |
| | | > 40 | | | 0-1 | 1-5 |
| | C3 | 0-10 | | | 0-1 | 0-1 |
| | | 10-40 | | | 0-1 | 0-1 |
| | | > 40 | | | 1-5 | 1-5 |
| R1 | C1 | 0-10 | 0-1 | 1-5 | | |
| | | 10-40 | 1-5 | 10-15 | | |
| | | > 40 | 5-10 | 30-40 | | |
| | C2 | 0-10 | | 1-5 | 1-5 | |
| | | 10-40 | | 10-15 | 5-10 | |
| | | > 40 | | 30-40 | 5-10 | |
| | C3 | 0-10 | | 1-5 | 0-1 | 0-1 |
| | | 10-40 | | 5-10 | 1-5 | 1-5 |
| | | > 40 | | 10-15 | 5-10 | 1-5 |

| Roughness [cm] | Vegetal cover [%] | Maximal intensity [mm h ⁻¹] | Soil surface crusting | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|---|-----------------------|-------|-------|----|
| | | | F0 | F11 | F12 | F2 |
| R2 | C1 | 0-10 | 1-5 | 1-5 | 1-5 | |
| | | 10-40 | 5-10 | 10-15 | 5-10 | |
| | | > 40 | 10-15 | 30-50 | 10-15 | |
| | C2 | 0-10 | | 1-5 | | |
| | | 10-40 | | 10-15 | | |
| | | > 40 | | 15-25 | | |
| | C3 | 0-10 | | | 0-1 | |
| | | 10-40 | | | 5-10 | |
| | | > 40 | | | 10-15 | |
| R3 | C1 | 0-10 | 1-5 | 5-10 | 0-1 | |
| | | 10-40 | 5-10 | 10-15 | 1-5 | |
| | | > 40 | 10-15 | 25-35 | 5-10 | |
| | C2 | 0-10 | | 5-10 | | |
| | | 10-40 | | 10-15 | | |
| | | > 40 | | 15-25 | | |
| | C3 | 0-10 | | | 0-1 | |
| | | 10-40 | | | 1-5 | |
| | | > 40 | | | 1-5 | |
| R4 | C1 | 0-10 | 1-5 | | | |
| | | 10-40 | 5-10 | | | |
| | | > 40 | 10-15 | | | |
| | C2 | 0-10 | 5-10 | | | |
| | | 10-40 | 10-15 | | | |
| | | > 40 | 15-25 | | | |
| | C3 | 0-10 | | 5-10 | | |
| | | 10-40 | | 10-15 | | |
| | | > 40 | | 25-35 | | |

| Roughness [cm] | Vegetal cover [%] | Maximal intensity [mm h ⁻¹] | Soil surface crusting | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|---|-----------------------|-----|-----|----|
| | | | F0 | F11 | F12 | F2 |
| R5 | C1 | 0-10 | | | | |
| | | 10-40 | | | | |
| | | > 40 | | | | |
| | C2 | 0-10 | | | | |
| | | 10-40 | | | | |
| | | > 40 | | | | |
| | C3 | 0-10 | 1-5 | | | |
| | | 10-40 | 5-10 | | | |
| | | > 40 | 10-15 | | | |

Table 3-5 presents potential sediment concentration in the water flow for all combinations of soil surface properties and rainfall intensities. These values were adapted for the Belgian loess belt by Evrard et al. (2009). Values come from measurements on 2 catchments in central Belgium (94 and 300 ha) with samplings of storm runoff and seasonal correction. The quality of the adaptation was considered to be good with RMSE = 0.05 T ha⁻¹ year⁻¹ (Evrard et al., 2009). The central value of the classes was used in the model.

Rules for rill erosion and prediction of ephemeral gullies from Souchère et al. (2003) were applied without any changes.

2.3.3 Rainfall events selection

To select rainfall events, a list of all rainfall events during the modelling period (=period during which rulers measurements were carried out) was made. Each rainfall event was separated by 3 hours without rain. Water amount, duration, effective duration (intensity >2 mm h⁻¹), maximal intensity at 1 minute time step (mm h⁻¹), time of beginning and 48 h-antecedent rainfall were calculated for each event. All the data were derived from the rainfall gauge except the maximal intensity which was calculated using the disdrometer. The second step was to select effective rainfalls, i.e., rainfall events producing significant runoff. For that purpose, a peak height of 20 cm at the outlet flume was arbitrarily defined as the threshold value, corresponding to a discharge of 22 l s⁻¹ (Annex 9).

The time step used for rainfall was 1 minute because this is the most accurate step to calculate the effective duration of rainfall (measurement time of the pluviometer and the disdrometer). The rainfall selection procedure selected 83% of the total rainfall amount and 92% of the rainfall erosivity for the period using Wischmeier and Smith's method (1978).

2.3.4 Imbibition rainfall

Table 3-6 : Imbibition rainfall for each class of 48 h-antecedent rainfall and each soil sensitivity to runoff class (red = calculated, standard deviation in brackets).

| P48 | 0 | 0-15 | 15-40 | >40 mm |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| Sensitivity class (represents infiltration capacity values) | | | | |
| 0 | 9 (6.7) | 6 (3.5) | 4 (3.1) | / |
| 1 | 9 (6.7) | 6 (3.5) | 4 (3.1) | / |
| 2 | 7.3 (5.2) | 4.7 (2.9) | 2.6 (2.3) | / |
| 3 | 3.7 (2.6) | 2.3 (1.4) | 1.3 (1.1) | / |
| 4 | 2.4 (1.7) | 1.6 (1) | 0.9 (0.8) | / |
| 5 | 1.8 (1.3) | 1.2 (0.7) | 0.6 (0.6) | / |
| 6 | 1.8 (1.3) | 1.2 (0.7) | 0.6 (0.6) | / |
| 7 | 1.8 (1.3) | 1.2 (0.7) | 0.6 (0.6) | / |
| 8 | 1.8 (1.3) | 1.2 (0.7) | 0.6 (0.6) | / |
| 9 | 1.5 (1) | 0.9 (0.6) | 0.5 (0.5) | / |
| 10 | 1.5 (1) | 0.9 (0.6) | 0.5 (0.5) | / |
| 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | / |
| 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | / |
| 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | / |
| 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | / |

The imbibition rainfall table was adapted to the catchment, using the rainfall gauge and the flowmeter at point 1. For all rainfall events during the winter period (saturation overland flow), the time of the last rainfall and the amount of rainfall between the beginning of the rainfall event and the beginning of the runoff was calculated. Some rainfalls had a single sensitivity class (representing the infiltration capacity) for the catchment. According to the 48 h-antecedent rainfall, the imbibition rainfall was directly determined. For the rainfalls with multiple sensitivity classes, area weighted means were calculated to define the values. The imbibition rainfalls in black were estimated to have a gradation in the values according to the sensitivity classes. Table 3-6 presents imbibition rainfall for all classes of 48 h-antecedent rainfall. Water quantities were much smaller than original values by Evrard et al. (2009), which is logical because infiltration capacity was also smaller.

2.4 Field measurements



Figure 3-3 : Position of rulers with graduated scale for model validation.

For comparison purposes, graduated rulers were placed at various locations in the catchment to measure erosion and deposition (Annex 10). Within the catchment, 11, 6 and 10 zones with a total of 100, 51 and 65 rulers each were monitored for 2014, 2015 and 2016, respectively (Figure 3-3). Rulers were placed in the field not far from linear landscape elements (field boundaries, grass strips and woodland strip) in the flow paths of water and sediments between April and September for the three years. They could not be placed on hillslopes or throughout the year because of the technical operations of farmers. In 2014, zone 2014_8 was situated at a field boundary not far from the outlet, zones 2014_1, 2014_2, 2014_3 and 2014_5 were upstream of the woodland strip, zone 2014_7 before a grass strip, zones 2014_6 and 2014_9 in a field. In 2015, zone 2015_1 was situated at a field boundary, zones 2015_3, 2015_5 and 2015_6 in a field and zone 2015_4 before a grass strip. In 2016, zones 2016_2, 2016_3, 2016_6, 2016_8 and 2016_9 were situated at a field boundary, zone 2016_1 in a field and zones 2016_7, 2016_10 before the woodland strip. Field observations including height of marker and deposit sampling (bulk density determination) were performed several times (01/04/2014, 03/06/2014, 17/07/2014, 14/08/2014, 25/04/2015, 09/06/2015, 09/07/2015, 29/06/2016, 11/07/2016 and 08/09/2016) in order to discriminate between successive large rainfall events.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Runoff

Table 3-7 : Rainfall and runoff amount for April-September 2014, 2015 and 2016.

| | Rainfall amount [mm] | Selected rainfall [mm] | Runoff [mm] | Runoff coefficient [%] |
|------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 2014 | 332.4 | 305.2 | 13.1 | 4.3 |
| 2015 | 80.6 | 64.6 | 0.7 | 1.1 |
| 2016 | 128.4 | 115.6 | 5.2 | 4.5 |

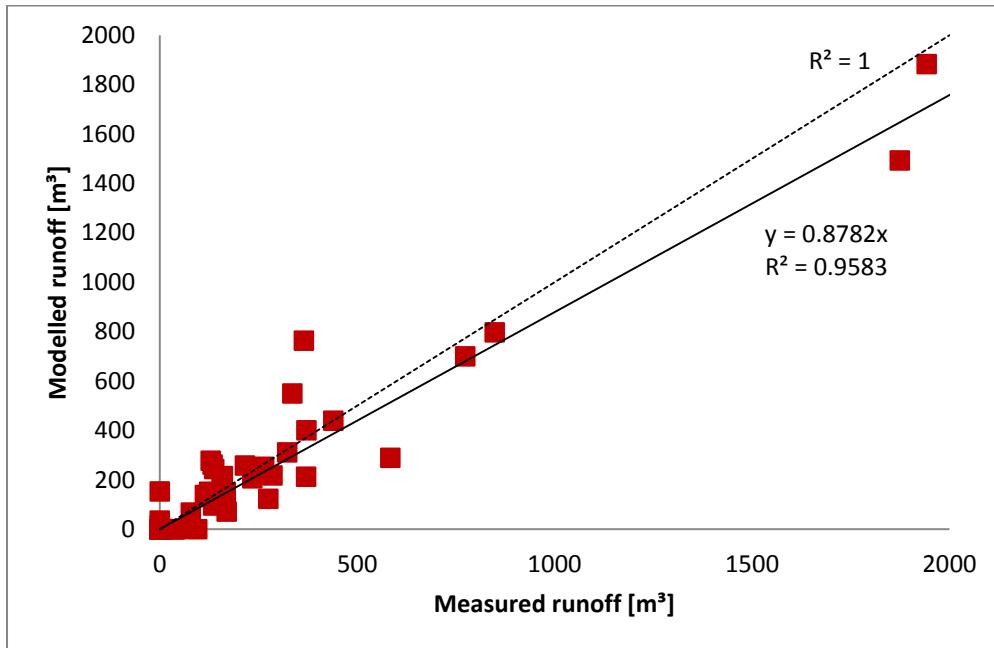


Figure 3-4 : Comparison between measured and modelled runoff for point 1 (2014, 2015 and 2016).

Table 3-7 presents rainfall and runoff amounts for events when field measurements were recorded in 2014, 2015 and 2016. The global runoff coefficient was quite small for the 3 years, indicating that small amounts of water and sediments reached the outlet even though some are mobilized in the catchment. This underlines the importance of spatialized data and several monitoring points (Pineux et al., 2017). In particular, for 2015 the value is very small compared to the literature (Cerdan et al., 2004; Evrard et al., 2008a; Ryken et al., 2018) at about 1%. In 2014 and 2016, the global runoff coefficients were respectively equal to 4.3 and 4.5%. The slight greater value for 2016 was linked to a high proportion of row crops: 90% (45 and 39% for 2014 and 2015). In addition, the disappearance of grass strips and some field boundaries might have resulted in higher hydrological connectivity for 2016. For 2014, the value of the runoff coefficient was mainly due to rainfalls in June. This represented the most erosive month. The percentage soil cover in row crops was limited (Table 3-2), leading to the highest value of Wischmeier C-factor (Maugnard et al., 2013).

Figure 3-4 presents results for point 1. There is a good agreement between measured and modelled runoff volumes with a linear adjustment of $0.88 \times x$, an r^2 of 0.96 and a Nash-Sutcliffe criterion of 0.95. Results are comparable to those of Cerdan et al. (2002) and Evrard et al. (2009). Based on the Nash-Sutcliffe criterion, the model performance is very good (Moriasi et al., 2007).

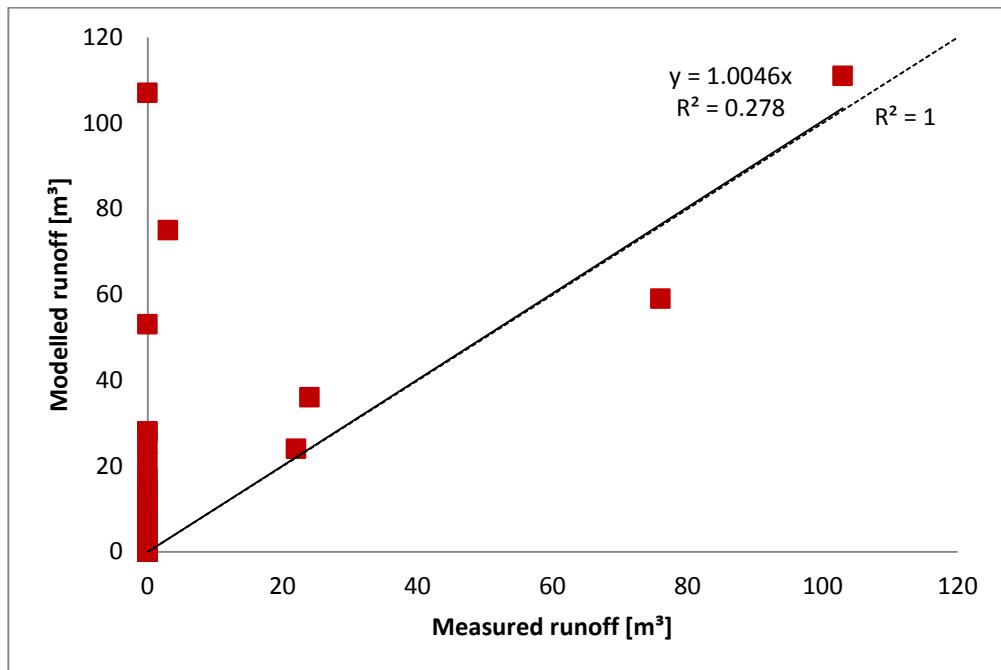


Figure 3-5 : Comparison between measured and modelled runoff for point 2 (2014, 2015 and 2016).

Figure 3-5 presents runoff results for point 2. This point is situated uphill in the catchment (3.9 ha), thus most events generated no (measured and modelled) or very little runoff. The adjustment ($1.00*x$ with an r^2 of 0.28 and a Nash-Sutcliffe criterion of -0.47) shows a poor adjustment. Most events indicate no measured but little modelled runoff (between 0 and 30 m³). Most of these events correspond to long-lasting or low-intensity events. According to Evrard et al. (2009), LandSoil (STREAM) was not designed to simulate these types of events. The model is much more effective in predicting runoff generated by convective storms than during long-lasting and low-intensity events. The model does not take into account runoff caused by saturation. This is linked to the reinfiltration process. In long low intensity rainfalls, runoff has more time for reinfiltration. Time taken for runoff to go to the outlet is not calculated in the model. But this hypothesis is unlikely to explain the relation between modelled and observed runoff volume for point 2. The reason is that the same events are right modelled in Figure 3-4 for point 1. Another important point shown here is the scaling effect of the runoff modelling. Cerdan et al. (2004) demonstrated a big difference in runoff response in relation to the contributing area (or size of the catchment). This is linked to different connectivity processes occurring, implying a different behaviour of the system. Modelled runoff coefficients and volumes are bigger when the size of the contributing area decreases. The LandSoil (STREAM) model aggregates processes at the event time scale and at

field spatial scale. It does not permit to take into account heterogeneities in the field. Within a catchment with multiple fields, these heterogeneities are compensated to right model the catchment behaviour but with a single land use, it leads to difficulties in modelling small areas.

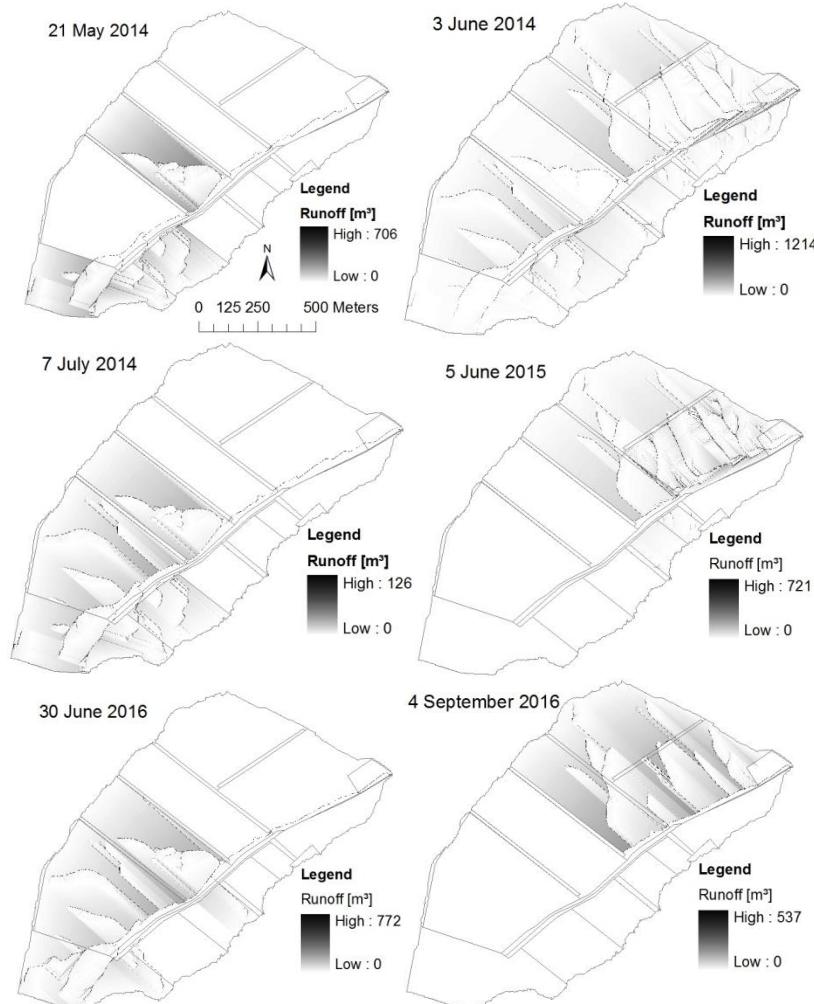


Figure 3-6 : Predicted runoff volume accumulation for 6 rainfall events (21 May 2014, 3 June 2014, 7 July 2014, 5 June 2015, 30 June 2016 and 4 September 2016).

Figure 3-6 presents the predicted spatial pattern of runoff for 6 different rainfall events chosen among all simulations to represent contrasted situations (21/05/2014, 03/06/2014, 07/07/2014, 05/06/2015, 30/06/2016 and 04/09/2016). Depending on the year and the time of the year (Figure 3-2, Table 3-2), runoff came from sugar beets, potatoes or cereals. Row crops produced runoff during spring and early summer when erosive rainfalls fall over partially covered soils. Cereals generated

runoff for big events in spring and July and in September after harvest. This underlines the importance of land allocation regarding runoff throughout the year. In addition, landscape design (position of field boundaries, furrow and tillage directions) involves changes in runoff volume (03/06/2014), flow direction and consequent flow accumulation. This has a major influence on hydrological connectivity, modifying production and transfer of runoff through the catchment to the outlet.

3.2 Erosion

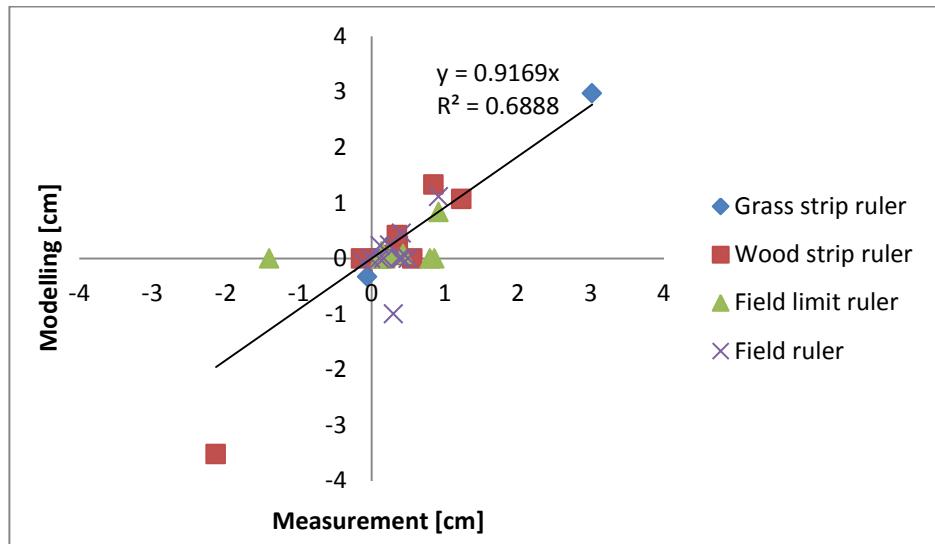


Figure 3-7 : Comparison between graduated ruler measurements and erosion modelling for different types of features (positive values refer to deposition and negative values to erosion).

Table 3-8 : Comparison between graduated ruler measurements and erosion modelling (positive values refer to deposition and negative values to erosion).

| Grass strip ruler | Date | Measurement [cm] | SD measurement [cm] | Mean model [cm] | SD model [cm] |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 2014_7 | 01/04 => 03/06 | 3.02 | 2.34 | 2.97 | 1.65 |
| | 03/06 => 17/07 | 0.14 | 0.55 | 0 | 0 |
| | 17/07 => 14/08 | -0.06 | 0.17 | -0.33 | 0.56 |
| 2015_4 | 25/04 => 09/06 | 0.30 | 0.57 | 0.32 | 0.13 |

| Wood strip ruler | Date | Measurement [cm] | SD measurement [cm] | Mean model [cm] | SD model [cm] |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 2014_1 | 01/04 => 03/06 | -2.13 | 1.15 | -3.52 | 6.06 |
| | 03/06 => 17/07 | 0.85 | 0.58 | 1.33 | 2.02 |
| 2014_2 | 03/06 => 17/07 | 0.14 | 0.75 | 0 | 0 |
| 2014_3 | 03/06 => 17/07 | 0.56 | 1.16 | 0 | 0 |
| 2014_5 | 01/04 => 03/06 | 0.36 | 0.48 | 0.23 | 0.3 |
| | 03/06 => 17/07 | 0.29 | 0.49 | 0.06 | 0.03 |
| | 17/07 => 14/08 | -0.14 | 0.38 | 0 | 0 |
| 2016_5 | 29/06 => 08/09 | 0.35 | 0.49 | 0.42 | 0.72 |
| 2016_7 | 29/06 => 11/07 | 0.11 | 0.33 | 0 | 0 |
| 2016_10 | 29/06 => 08/09 | 1.23 | 0.71 | 1.07 | 1.33 |
| Field boundary ruler | | | | | |
| 2014_8 | 01/04 => 03/06 | 0.43 | 0.62 | 0.08 | 0.02 |
| | 03/06 => 14/06 | 0.14 | 0.27 | 0 | 0 |
| 2014_11 | 03/06 => 14/08 | 0.14 | 0.38 | 0.13 | 0.09 |
| 2015_1 | 25/04 => 09/06 | 0.92 | 0.66 | 0.83 | 1.44 |
| | 09/06 => 09/07 | -1.40 | 2.07 | 0 | 0 |
| 2016_2 | 29/06 => 08/09 | 0.23 | 0.54 | 0.07 | 0.01 |
| 2016_3 | 29/06 => 11/07 | 0.11 | 0.29 | 0 | 0 |
| 2016_6 | 29/06 => 08/09 | 0.19 | 0.47 | 0 | 0 |
| 2016_8 | 29/06 => 08/09 | 0.86 | 1.30 | 0 | 0 |
| 2016_9 | 29/06 => 08/09 | 0.80 | 1.18 | 0 | 0 |
| Field ruler | | | | | |
| 2014_4 | 03/06 => 17/07 | 0.50 | 0.29 | 0 | 0 |
| 2014_6 | 01/04 => 03/06 | 0.92 | 3.16 | 1.11 | 1.26 |
| | 03/06 => 17/07 | 0.12 | 0.51 | 0.23 | 0.40 |
| | 17/07 => 14/08 | 0.41 | 0.38 | 0.45 | 0.74 |
| 2014_9 | 03/06 => 17/07 | 0.30 | 0.57 | -1.00 | 1.73 |
| | 14/07 => 14/08 | 0.17 | 0.68 | 0 | 0 |
| 2014_10 | 03/06 => 14/08 | 0.25 | 0.38 | 0.24 | 0.09 |
| 2015_3 | 25/04 => 09/06 | -0.11 | 0.55 | -0.08 | 0.03 |
| 2015_5 | 09/06 => 09/07 | 0.38 | 0.55 | 0 | 0 |
| 2015_6 | 09/06 => 09/07 | 0.42 | 0.42 | 0 | 0 |

| | Date | Measurement [cm] | SD measurement [cm] | Mean model [cm] | SD model [cm] |
|--------|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 2016_1 | 29/06 => 11/07 | -0.01 | 0.25 | 0 | 0 |
| 2016_4 | 29/06 => 11/07 | 0.11 | 0.35 | 0 | 0 |

Figure 3-7 and Table 3-8 present the comparison between graduated ruler measurements and erosion modelling for the different linear landscape elements. The new DEM at the end of the period of interest is compared to the original DEM. This way, it is possible to compare observed and modelled erosion and deposition depths. For each zone, a mean and a standard deviation of the measured height variations are calculated. For the model, in order to take into account the uncertainty on the exact location, local pixel value and the 2 closest neighbours were considered.

There is a good agreement between measurement and modelling with a regression slope of 0.92 and an r^2 of 0.69. The regression coefficients seem good but it is strongly influenced by the two extreme points. In addition, high standard deviations (Table 3-8) do not allow conclusions to be drawn about the correct representation of erosion processes and their spatial pattern. There are many more results for deposition than for erosion (6 erosion cases and 30 deposition cases). This is directly linked to the position of the rulers in fields. The location strategy aims to focus on deposition because LandSoil takes it into account. In addition, except for linear erosion, erosion places are characterized by little erosion on large areas (diffuse erosion) and are not measurable because of the rulers precision.

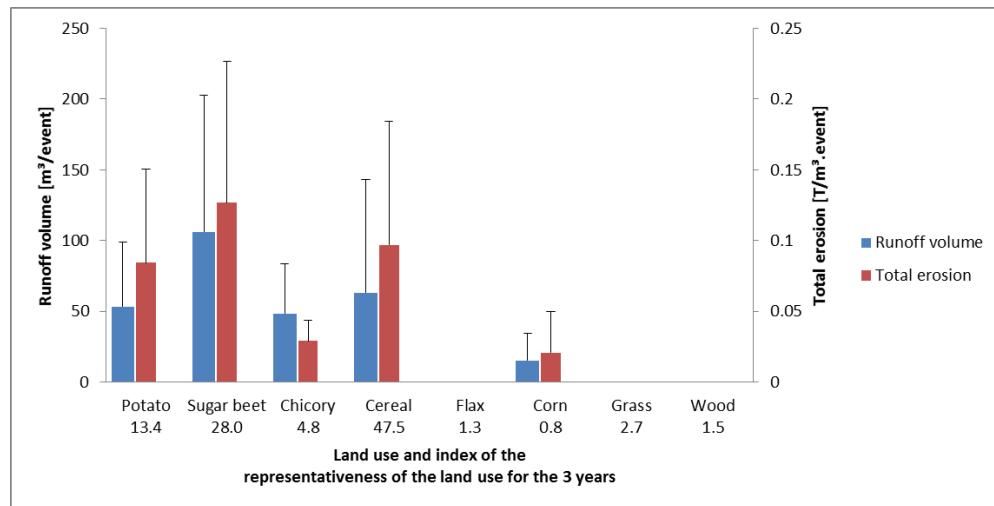


Figure 3-8 : Bar chart of the modelled runoff volume [$\text{m}^3 \text{ event}^{-1}$] and modelled total erosion rate [T m^{-3} of runoff event $^{-1}$] by land use for 2014, 2015 and 2016⁸. Error bars represent standard deviations.

Concerning the woodland strip, zone 2014_1 directly upstream of the woodland strip presents a high erosion rate between 1 April and 3 June 2014, 2.1 cm measured and 3.5 cm modelled. The sugar beet of the uphill field was characterized by low vegetation cover during the more erosive period in spring (188.8 mm h^{-1} on 21 May 2014). This underlines that land use, and especially the use of row crops, has a strong impact on erosion rates (David e++t al., 2014). Figure 3-8 shows runoff ($\text{m}^3 \text{ event}^{-1}$) and erosion rates (T m^{-3} of runoff event $^{-1}$) by land use for the 3 years studied. The runoff volumes and sediment amounts were calculated for each land use by comparing input and output values for each field. It does not take into account surfaces of each land use. Runoff is the highest for sugar beet ($106 \text{ m}^3 \text{ event}^{-1}$), cereals ($63 \text{ m}^3 \text{ event}^{-1}$), potato ($53 \text{ m}^3 \text{ event}^{-1}$) and chicory ($48 \text{ m}^3 \text{ event}^{-1}$). The high value for cereals is explained by the high proportion of cereals in the catchment (47.5%). This confirms the impact of row crops. For erosion, results are more contrasted because linear erosion also depends on the size of the accumulated channel and thus on the position in the catchment. For example, total erosion value of cereals is linked to the position of the fields in 2014 and 2016 near the outlet. This involved high linear erosion rates because of water and sediment coming from upstream. Sugar beet has the highest erosion rates, followed by cereals and potato. Again, the surfaces of the different land uses have an impact in the values. Corn

⁸Index between 0 and 100% taking into account the area of land use and the number of events of the year.

$$\text{Index}_{\text{land use}} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^3 \text{area}_i * \text{number of events}_i}{\sum_{i=1}^3 \text{area}_{\text{tot}} * \text{number of events}_i} \text{ where } i$$

fields in 2015 and 2016 were located uphill in the catchment, not in the concentrated flow paths. Sediments coming from these fields were only due to diffuse erosion and show strong erosion for corn.

The woodland strip induces less sediment deposition than grass strips mainly due to higher slope gradients upstream of the woodland strip. Landscape design (position of strips, field boundaries and land use allocation), associated with slope gradients, has a strong impact on runoff and erosion control, influencing connectivity on hillslopes (David et al., 2014).

Regarding the grass strips, zone 2014_7 directly upstream of a grass strip shows a deposition of more than 3 cm between 1 April and 3 June. This underlines the role of the grass strip in reducing runoff speed, to deposit eroded soil particles and thus to decrease connectivity (Ciampalini et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2018). The very low slopes of this zone reinforce the deposition process. The upstream field was planted with sugar beet which induces high erosion rates during spring. Eroded sediments were deposited immediately before the grass strip. The other periods of the year and the other grass strips induced less sediment deposition because of respectively lower erosion rates and steeper slopes (Zhang et al., 2018).

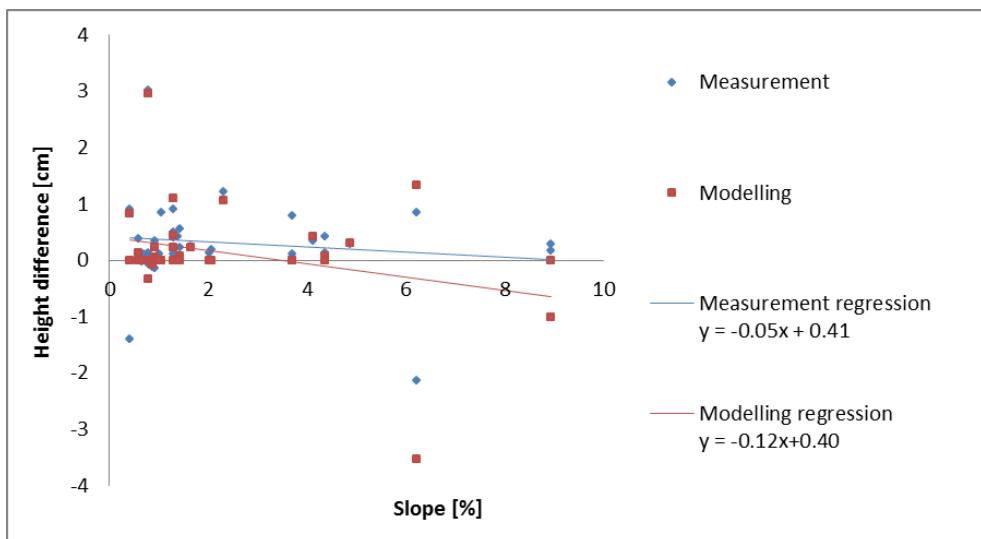


Figure 3-9 : Graph of the height difference as a function of the slope for measurement and modelling (positive values refer to deposition and negative values to erosion).

Figure 3-9 describes the role of the slope in the erosion and deposition pattern. It shows a negative trend between height variations and slope. The trend is stronger for modelling than for measurement. The steeper the slope, the greater the erosion and the gentler the slope, the thicker the deposition. Of course, this trend must be

nuanced by low slopes situated uphill in the catchment and associated with erosion, or by steeper slopes of field boundaries associated with deposition.

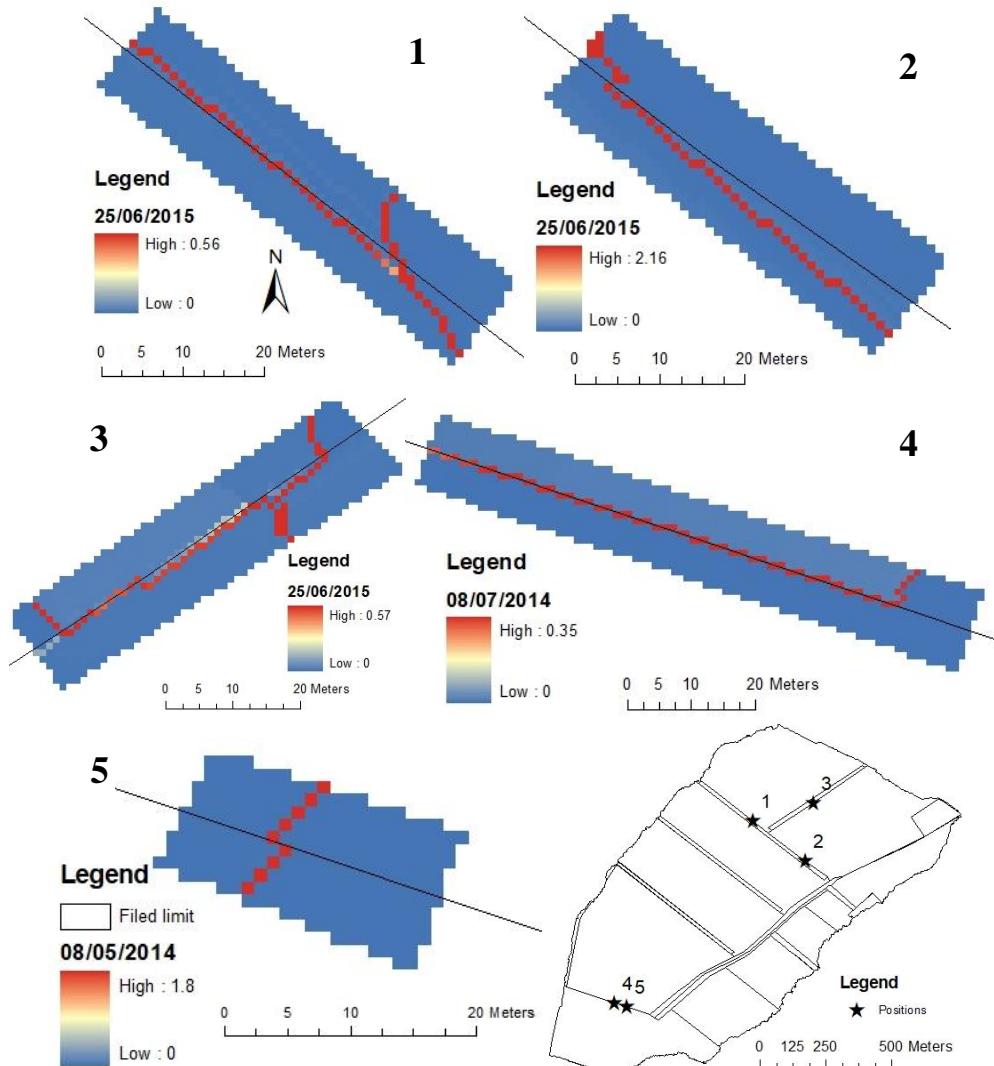


Figure 3-10 : Total erosion [T] at specified field boundaries.

Field boundaries do not seem to play a great role in the amount of eroded and deposited particles but they influence the transport of particles by becoming a channel for small erosion rates. Figure 3-10 shows the total erosion rate at specified field boundaries. Field boundaries are a flow path for sediments (and runoff) when the erosion amount is low. At higher values, a flow path crosses the field boundary to go further in the catchment. As Figure 3-10 shows, the erosion amount is not deeply modified by passage along the field boundary.



Figure 3-11 : Orthophotoplan of 26 June 2019 after a large runoff event (10 June 2019) and the location of field, ephemeral gullies and deposition sites (blue: erosion sites, orange: deposition sites).

As discussed, land use allocation and landscape design have a great impact on erosion rate and connectivity. A high erosion rate involves considerable on-site damages with lots of sediment carried away. Connectivity is of even greater importance because it is responsible for off-site damages, the biggest economical and societal threat of erosion (Boardman et al., 2019). From 2014 to 2016, the disappearance of grass strips and some field boundaries increased the length of

ephemeral gullies leading to higher connectivity and rising export of eroded sediments. Boardman and Vandaele (2016) showed that large areas of single crops lead to longer ephemeral gullies and a reduction of potential deposition sites. In 2019, management practices returned to older field boundaries, thereby limiting the length of flow paths and maintaining more deposition sites (Figure 3-11). It limits export of sediments by decreasing sediment connectivity.

4. Conclusion

The objective of this study was to test the capacity of an expert-based model (LandSoil) to represent erosion and deposition in a cultivated catchment in Belgium. Specific attention was given to the behaviour of some connectivity features, especially linear landscape elements. The catchment scale was used in this study since it is the most appropriate scale to investigate hydrological or sediment connectivity and to design integrated mitigation measures (Brocca et al., 2012; Rogger et al., 2017).

The rainfall selection permitted the inclusion of 92% of the erosivity in the model using 3 different criteria. A measurement campaign using a Mini Disk tension infiltrometer in June 2018 and 2019 highlighted much smaller infiltration capacities than those reported by Evrard et al. (2009) who first adapted the model parameters for central Belgium. This is mainly due to differences in texture, especially sand percentage. The infiltration capacity, related to soil surface crusting, soil roughness and vegetation cover, was identified as the second most sensitive input in the model after the rainfall amount (Ciampalini et al., 2017). The imbibition rainfall table was adapted to the catchment and also shows lower values than previous ones, suggesting that even in homogeneous regions like the loess belt, infiltration and imbibition rules must be updated.

Comparison between measured and modelled runoff volumes showed very close correspondence for the 84 ha sub-catchment. For point 2, there were too few runoff events to conclude the quality of the modelling. The small contributing area (3.9 ha) shows too high modelled runoff because of a scaling effect, confirming that LandSoil is not able to correctly model a small area with homogeneous land use. Heterogeneities in a small field with single land use cannot be modelled and are not compensated each other as this is the case within the whole catchment. The good agreement between measurements and model for the biggest sub-catchment allowed the erosion pattern to be compared, which was calculated on the basis of the runoff volume.

Graduated rulers permitted the evaluation of modelling outputs at some locations in the catchment. The comparison for the 27 measurement zones was satisfactory, although standard deviations of measurements and modelling remained high. Land use and field allocation have a very strong influence on erosion generation and sediment movement in the catchment. David et al. (2014) found similar results. Landscape design associated with slope gradients represents other characteristics

that have great influence on erosion and deposition processes. Field boundaries do not seem to have a big impact on amounts of eroded and deposited particles, but play a role in transport acting as a channel for small erosion rates. Grass strips deposit sediment because of runoff speed reduction and infiltration in the strip, although other processes could interact. The process is amplified by low slopes in addition to the grass strip and confirmed the considerable interaction between grass strips and topography for erosion management (Boubakari and Morgan, 2006; Zhang et al., 2018). The woodland strip deposited less soil than grass strips because of steeper slopes upstream.

All these measurements tested the modelling of erosion processes for the studied catchment. The role of linear landscape elements could be highlighted. A study with more rulers could improve results. Rulers were placed in the thalweg between April and September; it would be interesting to also have results for hillslopes and in the winter period. Other methods could also help to reach objectives, like drones (Pineux et al., 2017) with subtraction of successive flights, radionuclides (Le Gall et al., 2016; Meusburger et al., 2016) or other tracers (Ryken et al., 2018; Steegen et al., 2000).

The quite good behaviour of the model allows us to use LandSoil modelling in other environments, with other land use and different slopes to those of the study zone, and to quantify the impact of management scenarios.

Chapitre 4

**How do erosion management scenarios
impact runoff and erosion? A connectivity
approach**

Ce chapitre a été soumis dans la revue *International water and soil conservation research*.

Abstract

Erosion damages in agricultural catchments in loamy Belgian region call for modelling tools able to quantify the impact of management practices on runoff and sediment yield. Expert-based models give a way to easily represent different erosion control measures plans and compare which one suits the best to the catchment. However, human effect on catchment management is seldom evaluated. The aim of the paper is a comparison using LandSoil model of erosion control scenarios developed by 9 experts with a 2 and a 100 years return periods. A first global comparison to baseline shows varied efficiency for scenarios (between 1 and 17% of reduction for runoff and between 3 and 52% of reduction for sediments at the outlet for the 100 years return period). For the 2 years, efficiencies are higher and runoff coefficients are lower (between 4 and 6%, between 48 and 58% for the 100 years). It pointed a great influence of hedges on runoff reinfiltration and of grass strips, grassed waterways and wood on sediment trapping. Using index of connectivity, the study underlines the preponderant role of connectivity in the efficiency of scenarios. Connectivity and deposition volumes analysis underline the importance of size of the features (length and width), location (near linear erosion sources, across channels of concentrated runoff) and density of installation in the landscape (depending on the type of feature). Efficiency of barriers depends on the disconnection of the upstream area and the size of this area. It gives a way to plan actions more efficiently. Erosion control management needs to combine soil conservation, deposition of sediments in the catchment and disconnection of the outlet to decrease export of water and sediments.

Key words

Erosion control, expert-based model, comparison, connectivity, management.

1. Introduction

Erosion resulting from runoff is a major threat to European soils (Van Beek and Tóth, 2012b). This is particularly true for central Belgium where both loamy soils, sensitive to erosion, and agricultural practices worsen the situation. Water and sediment production following rainfall events cause rill or gully erosion, muddy floods, crops destruction, or loss of soil fertility (Boardman and Vandaele, 2010; Maugnard et al., 2014; Nearing et al., 2004; Pineux et al., 2017). Over the last decades, these impacts have risen in Western Europe as a result of more intensive rainfalls (Klik and Eitzinger, 2010), increasing acreage of summer crops (De Walque et al., 2017) while vulnerability of infrastructure increases due to urbanization (Podmanicky et al., 2011).

Besides through adoption of field-scale soil conservation practices, agriculture can counterbalance the negative effects of erosion through land use planning at catchment scale. To better frame agriculture for soil conservation, there is a need to keep on studying erosion processes. Coupled phenomena of runoff and erosion depend on a lot of factors which are variable in time and space (Hurst et al., 2012; López-Vicente et al., 2013). The relationship between erosion and management is equivocal. For rill erosion for instance, the areas generating runoff and those eroding sediments can differ (Auzet et al., 1990). Understanding the processes linking runoff generation, flow concentration and erosion is a must to address appropriate anti-erosive measures (Ludwig et al., 1995).

Catchment scale constitutes the reference for management purpose (Raclot et al., 2009). To develop knowledge in the management plans efficiency, there is a need to quantify runoff and erosion. However, most advisors propose expert-based management plans, without any quantification of the global effectiveness of the combined measures. To evaluate impacts of measures, it is necessary to take into account water and sediment export from the catchment (off-site impacts). The outlet is often considered as a “dark spot” to control and manage (Sommerlot et al., 2013). But internal behaviour of the catchment (on-site impacts) plays a role in the eroded and transported sediments through the catchment. Therefore, in order to combine the settlements protection and soil conservation objectives, studying the spatialized behaviour of the catchment must be included in the management plan (Mohammed et al., 2018). To handle with spatial and temporal variability of processes, hydrological and sediment connectivity concept was created (López-Vicente et al., 2013). Connectivity analysis is a tool to better understand connections between the different spatial units (Baartman et al., 2013; Bracken and Croke, 2007; Bracken et al., 2013; Western et al., 2001). Study of linkage between head of catchment, hillslopes, stream and outlet helps to better approach system behaviour for water and sediment production, transport and deposition.

To quantify runoff and erosion in including connectivity aspects, modelling is a strong tool (Baartman et al., 2020). Among the plenty of types, “expert-based” models integrate major runoff and erosion processes while maintaining a low level of complexity. “Expert-based” models follow some rules defined by experts to quantify sediment production and transfers. LandSoil is one of these models used in several studies during the last years, mainly in France but also in Belgium (Ciampalini et al., 2012, 2017; Lacoste et al., 2014; Evrard et al., 2009; Cerdan et al., 2004). In previous studies, Cerdan et al. (2002), Evrard et al. (2009, 2010), Souchère et al. (2005) showed how LandSoil could model water and sediment flows in small agricultural catchments. This type of models easily allows to incorporate management measures and to quantify their efficiency. In central Belgium, a study by Cantreul et al. (2020) updated expert rules to adapt the model to agricultural catchments on loamy soils, including some specific features related to connectivity (e.g. grass strips, woodland strips, field limits). In integrating direct or indirect connectivity features, it improves modelling results (Nunes et al., 2018) and

provides spatially distributed indices relevant to understand the catchment processes. Even if the inclusion of connectivity features brings additional complexity in studying links and exchanges between the different parts of the catchment, it helps to quantify runoff and erosion more accurately (Lesschen et al., 2009; Liu and Fu, 2016; López-Vicente et al., 2013; Medeiros et al., 2010). This concept allows taking into account heterogeneities which constitutes a key to improve catchment behaviour modelling (López-Vicente et al., 2013).

Tools for erosion management plans are numerous. Soil conservation practices constitute the first key to decrease erosion in agricultural landscapes (Araya Weldelessie et al., 2011; Gay, 2009). Tillage direction and intensity represent important factors for sediments export decrease from the field. In addition to these practices, installation of grass buffers, woodland strips, hedges or fascines has the role in depositing sediments before export (Richet et al., 2017). Grass buffers and woodland strips have been studied a lot in the past few decades (Gril et al., 2011; Ouvry et al., 2010; Wanyama et al., 2012; Yanosek, 2006). The role of infiltrating runoff and trapping sediment was demonstrated (Richet et al., 2017; Yanosek, 2006). But the area required by these measures is non-negligible and constitutes an argument against the installation of strips (Richet et al., 2017). Hedges and fascines are more flexible and require less area. But their hydraulic properties and situations in which they are more efficient are not really known (Richet et al., 2017). The objective of this paper is to compare erosion management plans designed by different experts according to their experience. Possible mitigation measures include tillage direction and intensity, other agricultural practices or vegetative barriers. As we postulate that connectivity permits to improve the design of erosion management plans (Kumar et al., 2015; Peñuela et al., 2018), we focus this study on connectivity issues. A first general comparison will be followed by connectivity and linear features analysis to describe impacts of each scenario on runoff and erosion. A quick economical point will discuss about the costs of the measures. A last discussion about the multifunctional aspects of the vegetative barriers and sensitivity of the experts will be conducted since it represents an important issue.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Study area

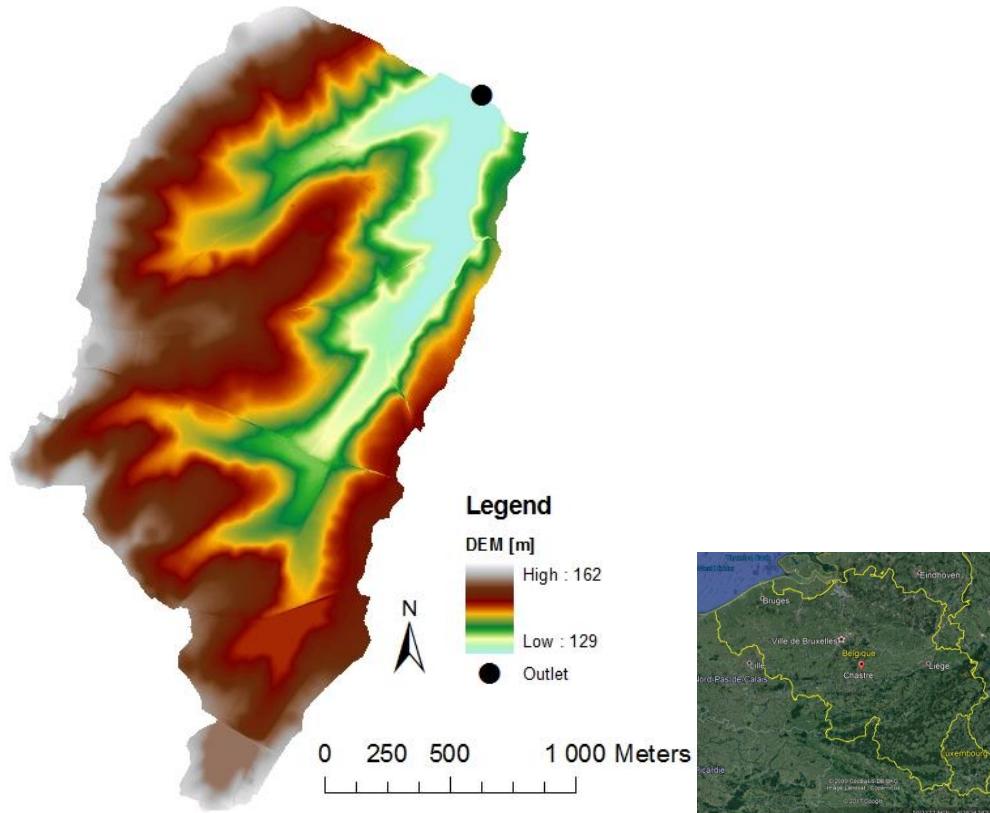


Figure 4-1 : Study area presentation (location, DEM and outlet).

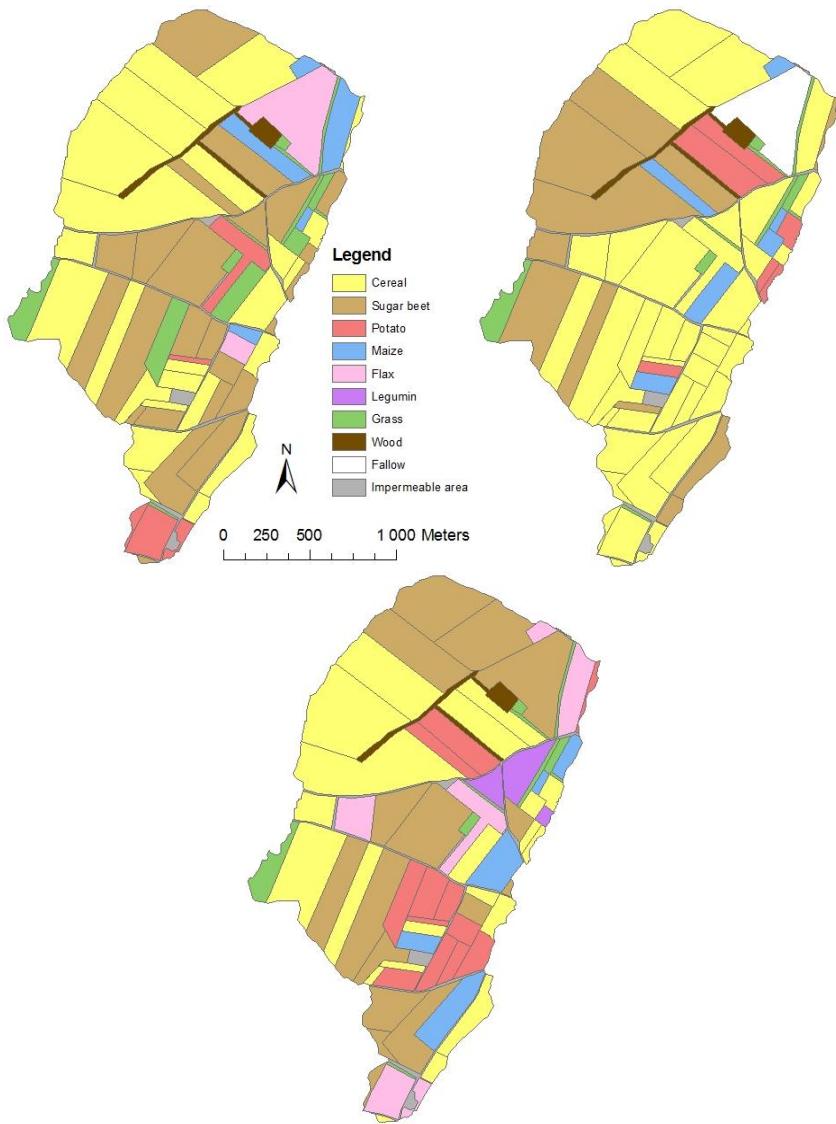


Figure 4-2 : Field allocation for 2011, 2012 and 2013.

The study zone is located in Hevillers (Figure 4-1), in the loess belt of central Belgium ($50^{\circ}36'23.02''$ N, $4^{\circ}35'42.33''$ E). The Belgian loess belt is known for high rates of soil erosion by water and frequent muddy floods (Bielders et al., 2003; Boardman and Vandaele, 2010; Boardman, 2010; Evrard et al., 2007, 2010; Verstraeten and Poesen, 1999; Verstraeten et al., 2006). The size of the catchment is 356 ha. A 116 ha sub-catchment (very similar to the 356 ha catchment for land use, soils and slopes) is detailed in Pineux et al. (2017), Cantreul et al. (2017) and Cantreul et al. (2020). Most soils are Luvisols and Cambisols with siltloam texture,

derived from quaternary loess. Land use is more than 93% agricultural. Cultivation is conventional with mouldboard ploughing to a depth of 25-30 cm except for a small field before the outlet where no tillage is practiced. Main crop rotations are composed of wheat, potato, sugar beet, barley, maize and flax. Proportion of row crops is 41, 35 and 49% for 2011, 2012 and 2013 (Figure 4-2). The other 7% is composed of green areas, grass strips, wood strips and impermeable areas. Annual average precipitation reaches 826 mm year^{-1} . Elevation ranges between 129 and 162 m and the slope gradient ranges between 0 and 15%, with 4% on average.

2.2 *LandSoil model*

LandSoil is a spatially-distributed model deriving from the STREAM erosion (Cerdan et al., 2002; Cerdan et al., 2002; Souchère et al., 1998, 2003) and the WaTEM/SEDEM tillage erosion model (Govers et al., 1994). The scales used in LandSoil to model runoff and erosion are the plot for the space and the rainfall event for the time. A new digital elevation model is created at the end of the event to investigate topography after soil redistribution (Ciampalini et al., 2012).

Soil surface characteristics are mainly responsible for the runoff and sediment generation (Cerdan et al., 2002). The past studies selected three characteristics which are the most important in runoff and erosion purposes (Boiffin, 1986; Govers et al., 1990; Le Bissonnais et al., 2005). It is the soil roughness (both parallel and perpendicular to the main slope direction), the soil surface crusting and the vegetation cover. The three characteristics are classed in categories (Cerdan et al., 2002) for each field and for each month. The categories are developed in Cantreul et al. (2020). The other inputs of LandSoil are a digital elevation model, land use, field boundaries (dead furrow, head land, road or ordinary boundary) and rainfall characteristics (duration, quantity, intensity, 48 h antecedent rainfall).

All the model details are described in Souchère et al. (1998, 2003) and Cerdan et al. (2002; 2002). The runoff/infiltration balance is calculated using rainfall amount, imbibition rainfall (Table 3-6), steady-state infiltration capacity and time of rainfall event (Equation 3-1). The infiltration capacities were updated by a measurement campaign with a Decagon® Mini Disk portable tension infiltrometer for each combination of vegetation cover, soil roughness and soil surface crusting (Table 3-4).

The modelled erosion types are water erosion (rill, interrill and ephemeral gully) and tillage erosion (Ciampalini et al., 2012). Rill and ephemeral gully erosion are responsible for high sediment amount in central Belgium catchments (Vandaele and Poesen, 1995; Maugnard et al., 2014). LandSoil models rill/gully initiation when flow discharge is higher than shear strength (Cantreul et al., 2020; Souchère et al., 2003). A sensitivity to gully erosion is calculated in multiplying runoff volume, slope factor, friction factor and cohesion factor. A rill/gully section is assigned whose values are coming from observed ones. For interrill erosion, LandSoil assigned a potential sediment concentration of the water runoff. This expert rule is function of vegetation cover, soil roughness, soil crusting and rainfall intensity on

the field plot (Cerdan et al., 2002). Values were updated for central Belgium by Evrard et al. (2009). Deposition (for rill/gully and interrill erosion) occurs when the transport capacity of the water flow is no longer sufficient. The situations where a deposition takes place are slope gradient $<2\%$, vertical curvature > 0.055 and vegetation cover $>60\%$ (Cerdan et al., 2002). In these configurations, sediments are deposited to decrease the flow concentration to 10 g l^{-1} . Tillage erosion is a major source of sediment in agricultural land (Govers et al., 1994). It depends on soil properties, landscape characteristics and tillage implements used (Van Muysen et al., 2000). In the present chapter, tillage erosion is simplified. Indeed, the only parameter for tillage erosion is the K_{till} which depend on tillage implements. The modification of soil surface characteristics and consequent properties (infiltration capacity, imbibition rainfall, soil erodibility, etc.) are not taken into account. It is definitely the major impact of tillage but really difficult to implement.

The routing of flow is directing by topography and tillage (Annex 8). The topographic single flow direction is modified with tillage which is coming from field observations and statistical analysis (Cantreul et al., 2020). In measured catchments, more than 50% of the area shows a modification of the flow because of tillage (Souchère et al., 1998). Depending of difference between parallel and perpendicular roughnesses, the tillage direction or a discriminant function are used to decide the direction to follow (Ciampalini et al., 2012). For dead furrows, it keeps the direction of the furrow. But for roads, the flow direction follows the slope and a 0 mm h^{-1} infiltration capacity is assigned (Cerdan et al., 2002; Cerdan et al., 2002; Souchère et al., 1998, 2003). The bulk density retained to convert sediment mass into depth is 1.3 g cm^{-3} (Kader et al., 2010).

Table 4-1 : Characteristics of the different linear features.

| Linear feature | Infiltration capacity [mm h^{-1}] | Transport capacity [g l^{-1}] |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Grass strip | 74 (Akram et al., 2015; Cantreul et al., 2020; Le Bissonnais et al., 2004) | 5 (Cerdan et al., 2002; Deletic and Fletcher, 2006; Lecomte, 1999; Van Dijk et al., 1996) |
| Woodl and strip | 74 (Akram et al., 2015; Cantreul et al., 2020; Le Bissonnais et al., 2004) | 5 (Cerdan et al., 2002; Deletic and Fletcher, 2006; Lecomte, 1999; Van Dijk et al., 1996) |
| Hedge | 400 (Richet et al., 2017) | 5 (Richet et al., 2017) |
| Fascine | 50 (Richet et al., 2017) | 5 (Richet et al., 2017) |

In this study, a particular attention is made to characteristics of linear features. Table 4-1 summarizes infiltration capacity and maximum sediment concentration before deposition for all the linear features. Literature (Deletic and Fletcher, 2006; Lecomte, 1999; Van Dijk et al., 1996) reported concentrations for grass and wood strips below 2 g l^{-1} . The threshold value was set to 5 g l^{-1} above which sediments are deposited (Cerdan et al., 2002). Similar to grass strips, hedges and fascines (brushwood fences) showed outflow sediment concentration of the vegetative barrier

around 2 g l⁻¹ (Richet et al., 2017). The same threshold value of 5 g l⁻¹ for deposition was selected. The modelling of fascines remains challenging because of very few available data and large diversity of fascines types.

2.3 Index of connectivity

As discussed before, comparison of amounts of runoff and sediments at some points in the catchment is not sufficient to understand the whole system behaviour. In this framework, connectivity is a way to quantify effects of management measures and efficiency of scenarios. Index of connectivity is used in this study to spatially understand system behaviour. It quantifies structural connectivity in the catchment using an upslope (contributing area) and a downslope (flow path to the target) component (Borselli et al., 2008).

Equation 4-1.

$$IC = \log_{10} \frac{\bar{W}\bar{S}\sqrt{A}}{\sum_i \frac{d_i}{W_i S_i}}$$

\bar{W} = Average weighting factor of the upslope contributing area [-]

\bar{S} = Average slope gradient of the upslope contributing area [m m⁻¹]

A = Upslope contributing area [m²]

d_i = Length of the flow path from the ith cell to the nearest sink according to the steepest downslope direction [m]

W_i = Weighting factor of the ith cell [-]

S_i = Slope gradient of the ith cell [m m⁻¹]

C-factor of Wischmeier was selected as weighting factor (Wischmeier and Smith, 1978). It permits to take into account changes with land use and particularly with agricultural land use. In the results section, IC reduction is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures. Comparing IC value upstream and downstream the measure, it is possible to estimate the impact of the measure on connectivity.

Cavalli et al. (2014) made some changes in the original index to adapt its use to very high resolution DEM. Firstly, a value of 0.005 m m⁻¹ was added to the computed value of slope in order to avoid infinites. Secondly, the multiple flow D-infinity approach (Tarboton, 1997) was used to calculate contributing area, instead of the single-flow direction algorithm of the original index calculation. Cavalli (2014) toolbox was used to compute index of connectivity for each scenario.

2.4 Data

2.4.1 Digital elevation model

The input DEM in LandSoil for this study is coming from LiDAR acquisitions of the Public service of the Walloon Region in Belgium (Figure 4-1). More details about the DEM is provided in Région Wallonne (2015) et Cantreul et al. (2017).

2.4.2 Inputs

Table 4-2 : Soil surface characteristics in May.

| | Soil crusting [-] | Soil roughness [cm] | Soil cover [%] |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Cereal | F12 | 2-5 | 61-100 |
| Sugar beet | F12 | 5-10 | 0-20 |
| Potato | F11 | 1-2 | 0-20 |
| Corn | F12 | 5-10 | 0-20 |
| Flax | F0 | 2-5 | 0-20 |
| Bare fallow | F2 | 0-1 | 0-20 |
| Concrete surface ⁹ | / | / | / |
| Grassland ¹⁰ | F11 | 10-15 | 61-100 |
| Woodland ¹¹ | F0 | >15 | 61-100 |
| Hedge | / | / | / |
| Fascine | / | / | / |

Soil surface characteristics (soil crusting, soil roughness parallel to tillage direction and soil cover) are presented in Table 4-2 (Cantreul et al., 2020). The selected period is May, as it is the worst case in terms of runoff and erosion. In May, row crops are not well developed, leaving the soil bare during intense rainfalls in spring (Vandaele and Poesen, 1995).

Expert rules for loamy Belgian context are presented in Table 3-4, Table 3-5, Table 3-6 and described in Cantreul et al. (2020).

2.4.3 Rainfall

The rainfall return period tested for this study is 100 years, time into consideration for measures dimensioning in the European legislation¹². Based on the local intensity-duration-frequency curves¹³, the 1-hour rainfall reaches 45.5 mm with a

⁹Infiltration capacity = 0 mm.h⁻¹ and no erosion.

¹⁰Soil surface characteristics modified to fit with measured infiltration capacity.

¹¹Soil surface characteristics modified to fit with measured infiltration capacity.

¹²https://www.giser.be/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Broch.-RisqueInondPermisDemandeur-Web.page_.pdf.

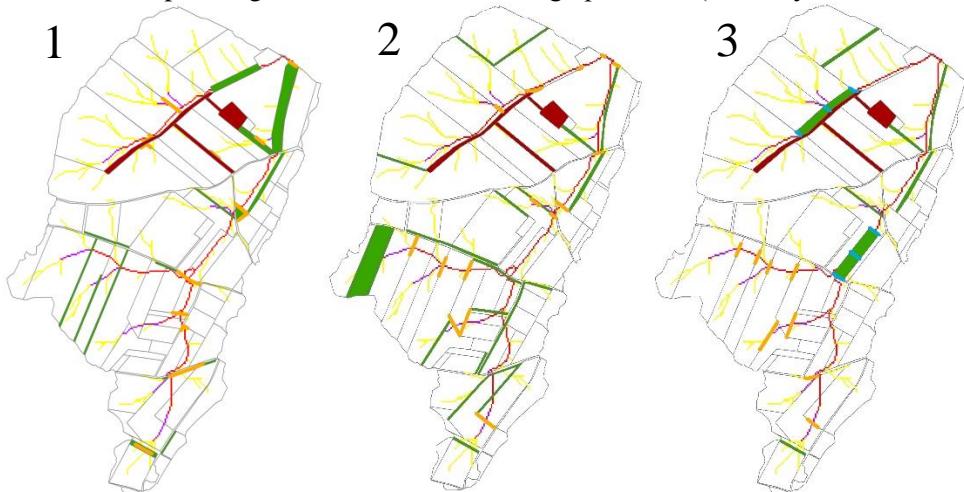
¹³ IRM, statistiques des précipitations extrêmes des communes belges Court-Saint-Étienne (ins 25023).

maximum intensity of 240 mm h^{-1} . The maximum intensity was calculated with Montana coefficients on the basis of a double-triangle rainfall. The high-intensity triangle represents 50% of the rainfall amount and 15% of the total rainfall duration. The intensity of the low-intensity triangle is 60 mm.h^{-1} at the maximum.

With this return period, some of the measures could overflow and decrease efficiency of the management plan. For that reason, another lower return period was tested. A 2 years rainfall return period of 16.1 mm and a maximum intensity of 120 mm h^{-1} was implemented. The high-intensity triangle represents 10% of the total rainfall duration and the intensity of the low-intensity triangle is 40 mm.h^{-1} at the maximum.

2.4.4 Scenarios

Nine experts were selected to take part in the scenario comparison. The users are very familiar with soil erosion, with different training (agronomy, geography, earth sciences, geomorphology, ecology, environmental engineering) from different countries (Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Portugal) and come from different horizons (university, research center, public administration). Each user received a folder with orthophotoplan, outlet, flow accumulation, digital elevation model, slope, soil types, land use for 2011, 2012 and 2013, pictures of a muddy flood in the catchment. The request was “to imagine an efficient runoff/erosion management plan for the catchment and based on the use of following features: grass strips, woodland strips, hedges, dead fascines or tillage practices (intensity and direction)”.



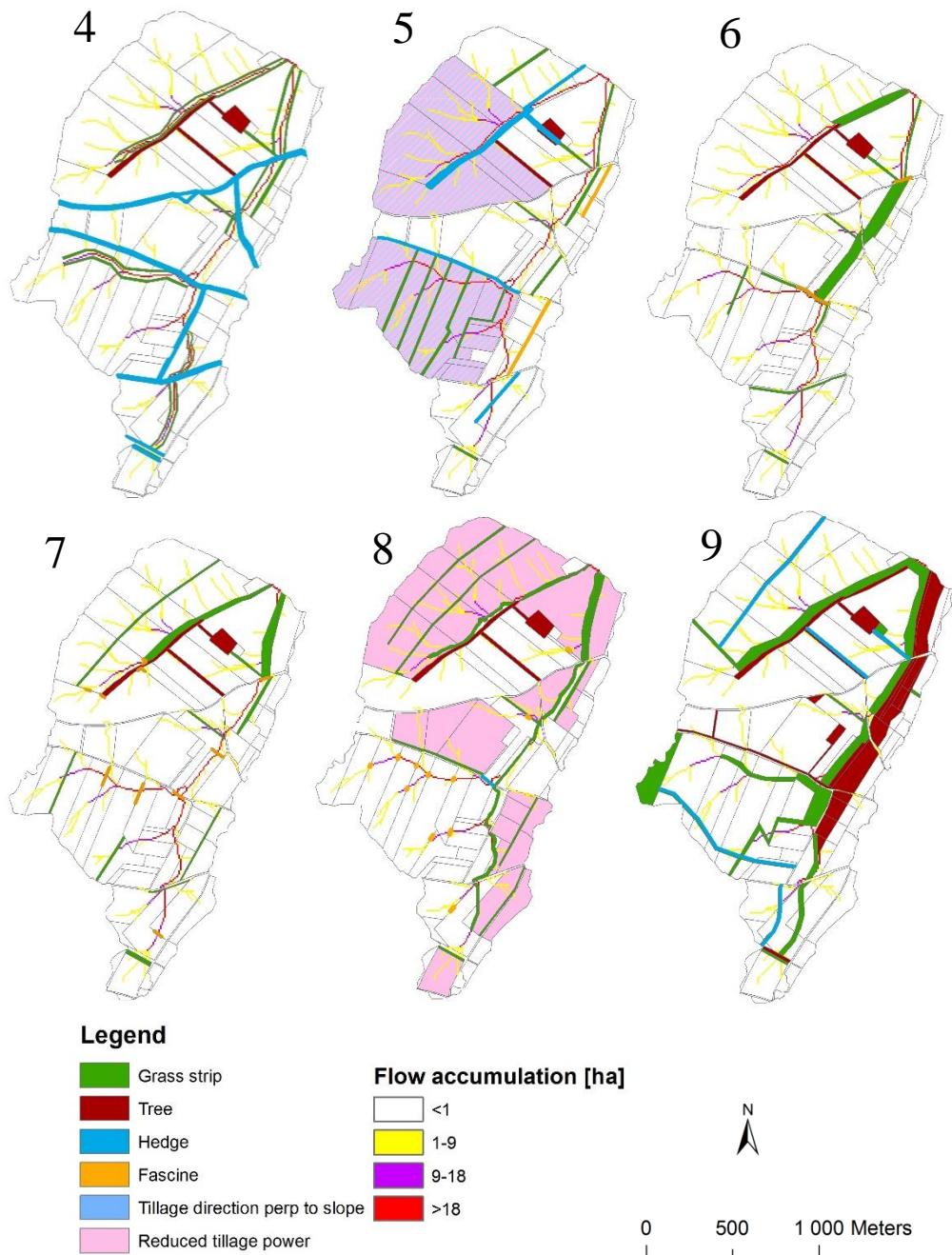


Figure 4-3 : Presentation of scenarios.

Table 4-3 : Characteristics of scenarios with percentage of catchment area.

| Scenario | Grass strip [ha] | Grassed waterway [ha] | Hedge [m] | Fascine [m] | Wood [ha] | Agricultural practices | Total measures [ha] |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|----------------|--|---------------------|
| 0 (baseline) | 3 (0.9%) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.5 (1.6%) | No | 8.5 (2.5%) |
| 1 | 6.8 (1.9%) | 5.7 (1.6%) | 0 | 1406 | 5.5 (1.6%) | No | 18.1 (5.1%) |
| 2 | 16.1 (4.5%) | 0 | 0 | 1431 | 5.5 (1.6%) | No | 21.7 (6.1%) |
| 3 | 3.9 (1.1%) | 5.2 (1.4%) | 396 | 956 | 5.5 (1.6%) | No | 14.7 (4.2%) |
| 4 | 12.1 (3.4%) | 0 | 10538 | 0 | 5.5 (1.6%) | No | 18.7 (5.3%) |
| 5 | 10.2 (3.2%) | 0 | 3136 | 983 | 2.7 (1.0%) | Yes (tillage direction and tillage intensity) | 13.3 (3.8%) |
| 6 | 4.8 (1.3%) | 11.3 (3.2%) | 0 | 272 | 5.5 (1.6%) | No | 21.6 (6.1%) |
| 7 | 6.5 (1.8%) | 7.4 (2.1%) | 0 | 801 | 5.5 (1.6%) | No | 19.5 (5.5%) |
| 8 | 15.3 (4.3%) | 10 (2.8%) | 102 | 245 | 5.5 (1.6%) | Yes (tillage intensity) | 30.8 (8.7%) |
| 9 | 12.3 (3.5%) | 22.4 (6.3%) | 3347 | 0 | 30.8 (8.7%) | No | 65.8 (18.6%) |

Figure 4-3 and Table 4-3 present the different scenarios for erosion control designed by experts. Scenarios characteristics are really different. Only scenarios 5 and 8 combine hedges, fascines, grass strips, woodland strips and agricultural practices changes. Scenario 9 implements large areas of grass strips (34 ha) and woods (30 ha). Scenario 4 provides more than 10 km of hedges whereas scenarios 1 and 2 consider more than 1.4 km of fascines.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Global analysis

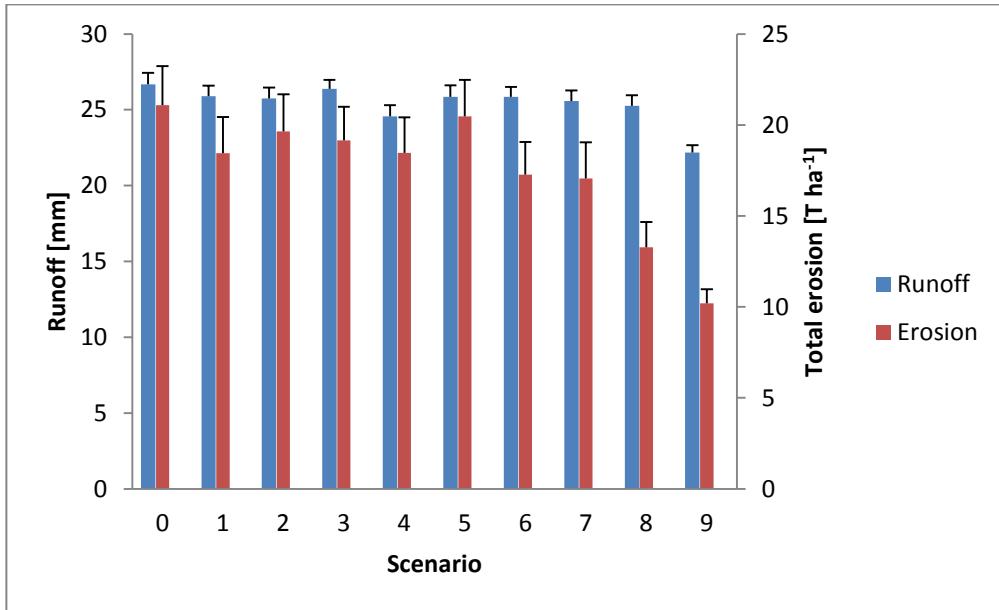


Figure 4-4 : Comparison for runoff and total erosion export for the different scenarios for the 100 years rainfall return period (runoff in blue and erosion in red). Values represent means at the outlet (error bars = standard deviations for 2011, 2012 and 2013). The “0” scenario is the baseline, without any experts mitigation measures.

Table 4-4 : Reduction proportion of runoff and erosion for each scenario in 2011, 2012 and 2013 [%].

| Scenario | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|----------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Runoff | Erosion | Runoff | Erosion | Runoff | Erosion |
| 1 | 2.7 | 13.6 | 3.2 | 11.7 | 2.9 | 12.3 |
| 2 | 3.5 | 8.5 | 3.5 | 4.7 | 3.6 | 7.3 |
| 3 | 0.4 | 4.5 | 1.5 | 13.4 | 1.4 | 9.4 |
| 4 | 8.1 | 12.5 | 8.0 | 12.7 | 7.6 | 12.0 |
| 5 | 3.1 | 3.9 | 2.9 | 1.0 | 3.2 | 3.8 |
| 6 | 2.8 | 17.0 | 3.7 | 19.8 | 2.8 | 17.6 |
| 7 | 3.9 | 19.5 | 4.3 | 20.4 | 4.1 | 17.7 |
| 8 | 5.2 | 36.6 | 5.5 | 37.9 | 5.2 | 36.7 |
| 9 | 16.2 | 51.0 | 17.2 | 50.5 | 17.2 | 53.1 |

Figure 4-4 shows the comparison between the different scenarios for runoff volume and total erosion export. Logically, the baseline scenario (scenario 0, before adding the experts control measures) gives the highest runoff volume and total erosion amount. Efficiencies are comprised between 1 and 17% of reduction for runoff and between 4 and 53% for erosion. It is low compared to literature even if results are variable (between 22 and 55% of reduction for runoff and between 30 and 90% for erosion). It depends on the context and the tested return period of rainfall of the studies (Gilley et al., 2000; Liu et al., 2018; Ouvry et al., 2010; Richet et al., 2017; Smolikowski et al., 2001). Scenario 9 has the lowest water and sediment export. This is linked to the high proportion of grassed and wooded areas, more than 18% of the catchment area, and 3.3 km of hedges. Table 4-4 describes a reduction of 17% for runoff and 53% for sediments, on average for the 3 years, compared to baseline. Scenario 4 reduces runoff by 8% and stands as the second best scenario right after scenario 9, but has one of the highest erosion export with only 12% reduction. That means that the 10.5 km of hedges infiltrate water runoff but have less impact on sediment production and deposition. Scenarios using mainly hedges (4, 5 and 9) have greater efficiency for runoff compared to erosion. Smolikowski et al. (2001) found on experimental plots a 49% of reduction for runoff but only 32% for erosion, confirming bigger impact of hedges on runoff. This is due to high infiltration rate of hedges as implemented in the model. For scenario 5, modeled reduction for erosion (3%) is far lower than those from other scenarios and from literature studies using hedges. Richet et al. (2017) found greater efficiency for sediments for hedges when it is located close to linear erosion sources, across channels of concentrated runoff or immediately upstream of local assets at risk. For scenario 4 (and to a lesser extent for scenario 5), low sediment trapping is partially explained by locations of hedges. Long rows of hedges are not only planted on linear

erosion but also on interrill erosion places. Finer texture of interrill erosion particles explains this lower sediment trapping (Richet et al., 2017). In the model, sediments amounts for interrill erosion are far lower than for sheet erosion. This explains a lower deposition for interrill erosion. Other studies pointed out greater efficiency for hedges in sediment trapping in using grass hedges, e.g. vetiver (Gilley et al., 2000; Liu et al., 2018). High areas of grass strips (and grassed waterways) and woods induce higher deposition rate and consequently lower erosion export (scenarios 8 and 9, (Ouvry et al., 2010)). Compared to fascines and hedges, higher width of strips and woods permit to deposit more sediment.

In general, standard deviations between the 3 years for all scenarios are low. That shows that the catchment reacts the same way to the management plans for the 3 years. One exception is scenario 3 showing 4% of sediments reduction for 2011 and 13% for 2012, 2013 being between both with 9% (Table 4-4). A hypothesis would be the position of row crop fields (erosion sources), being more localized right upstream of the measures for 2012 (Richet et al., 2017).

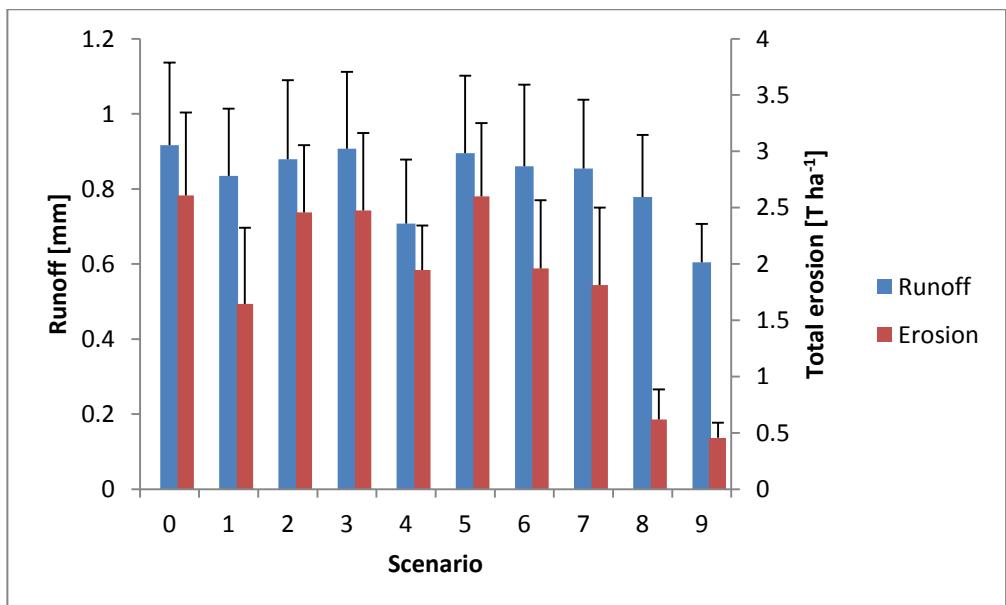


Figure 4-5 : Comparison for runoff and total erosion export for the different scenarios for the 2 years rainfall return period (runoff in blue and erosion in red). Values represent mean at the outlet (error bars = standard deviations for 2011, 2012 and 2013). The “0” scenario is the baseline, without any experts mitigation measures.

Even if European legislation calls for a 100 years return period for management plan, the return period could influence scenarios efficiency. Figure 4-5 shows the runoff volume and the total erosion export for each scenario for a 2 years rainfall

return period. The runoff coefficients for the 2 years return period are comprised between 4 and 6%. For the 100 years, it was much higher between 48 and 58%. This is in agreement with studies which pointed rise of runoff coefficients with the return period (Evrard, 2008). For runoff, the efficiency is strongly higher for the 2 years return period for scenarios which implemented hedges. That is the case for scenarios 4 and 9. Scenario 4 has a runoff reduction percentage of 23% for 2 years return period (8% for T=100 years) and scenario 9 has a reduction of 33% for the 2 years return period (17% for T=100 years). With a high infiltration rate, hedges strongly reduce the infiltration/runoff balance (Equation 3-1). These zones correspond to the highest volumes of runoff reinfiltration. For scenario 5, the location of hedges does not reduce water export as stated for the 100 years return period. Scenarios 1, 6, 7 and 8 have a slight reduction. This is linked to the grassed waterways which maximize the area on the flow accumulation. For erosion, scenarios with grass and woodland strips have higher efficiencies than for the 100 years return period. With the 100 years return period, features could be overflowed in reality. That is not taken into account in the model. The differences between the two tested return periods are underestimated.

3.2 Connectivity analysis

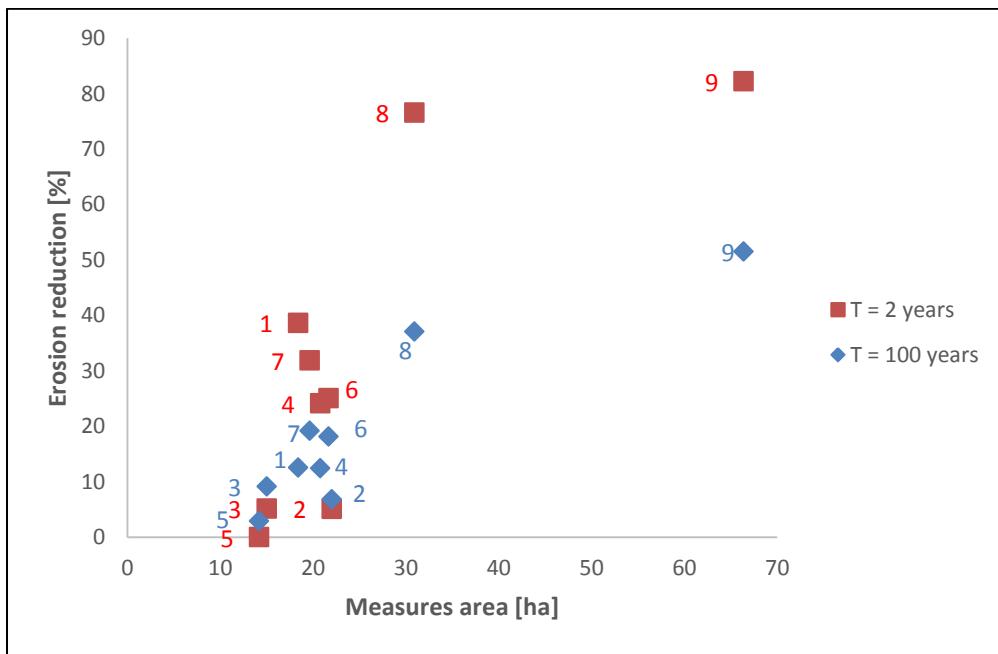


Figure 4-6 : Erosion reduction in function of measures area for each scenario compared to baseline for the 2 return periods.

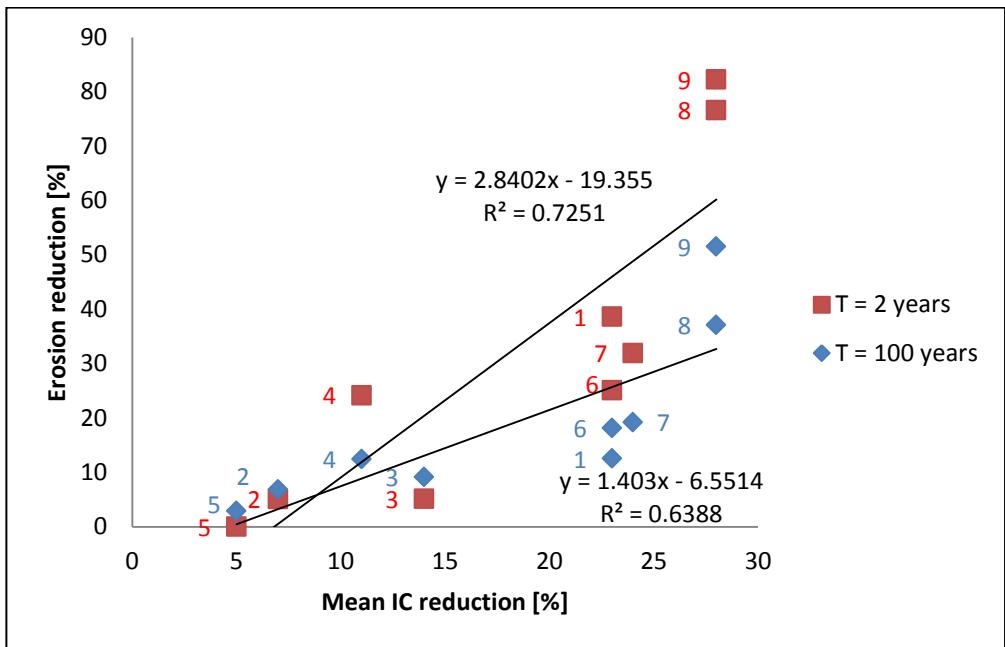
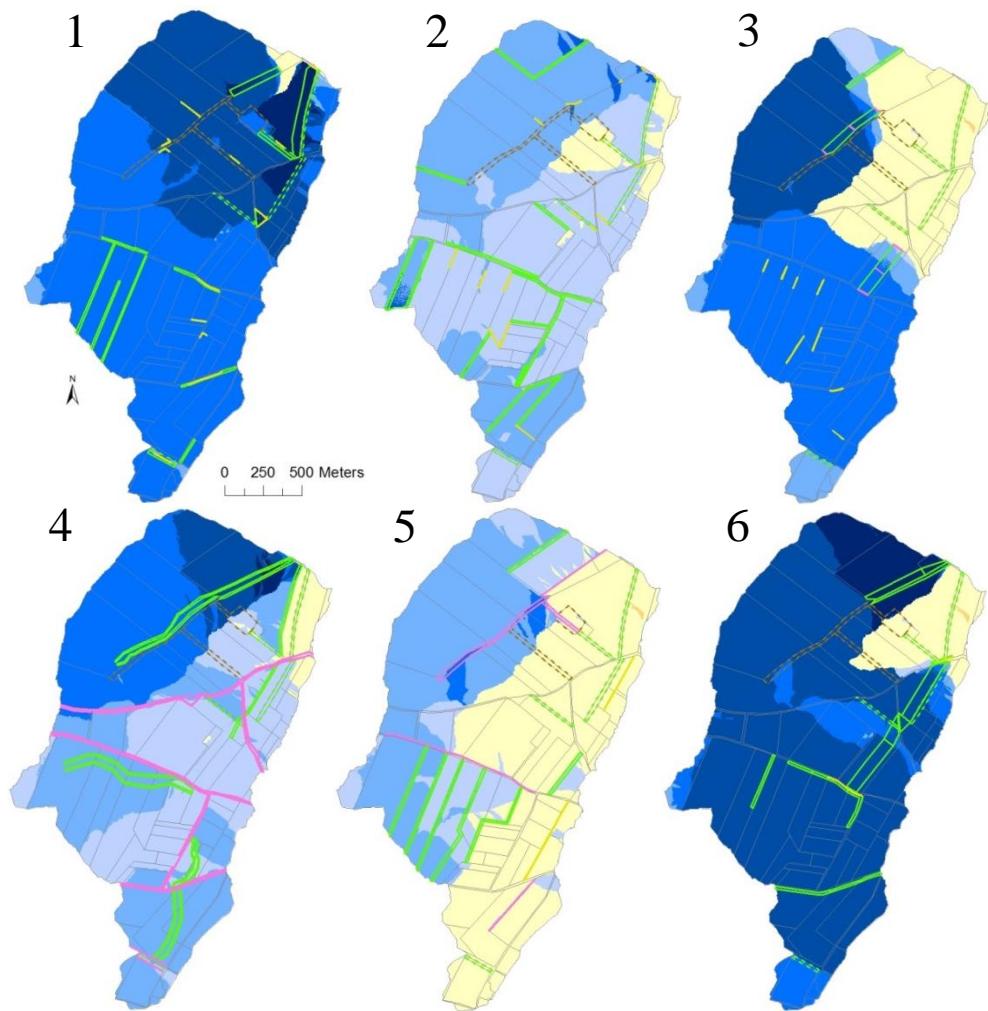


Figure 4-7 : Erosion reduction in function of IC reduction for each scenario compared to baseline for the 2 return periods.

Figure 4-6 and Figure 4-7 give erosion reduction in function of the measures area and IC reduction for each scenario compared to baseline. The trend of Figure 4-6 shows that the area of measures is a good indicator for the reduction of erosion. But the trend is not linear and the reduction of erosion seems less and less important as the measures area increases. The strongest trend for Figure 4-7 indicates that connectivity plays a crucial role in the reduction of erosion. The position of the measures that influences the IC reduction is the first indicator retained to explain the erosion reduction. That shows that scenario effectiveness is definitely linked to connectivity reduction (Baartman et al., 2020). In addition, the highest slope for the 2 years return period confirms this conclusion because it has a higher efficiency in erosion reduction than the 100 years return period.



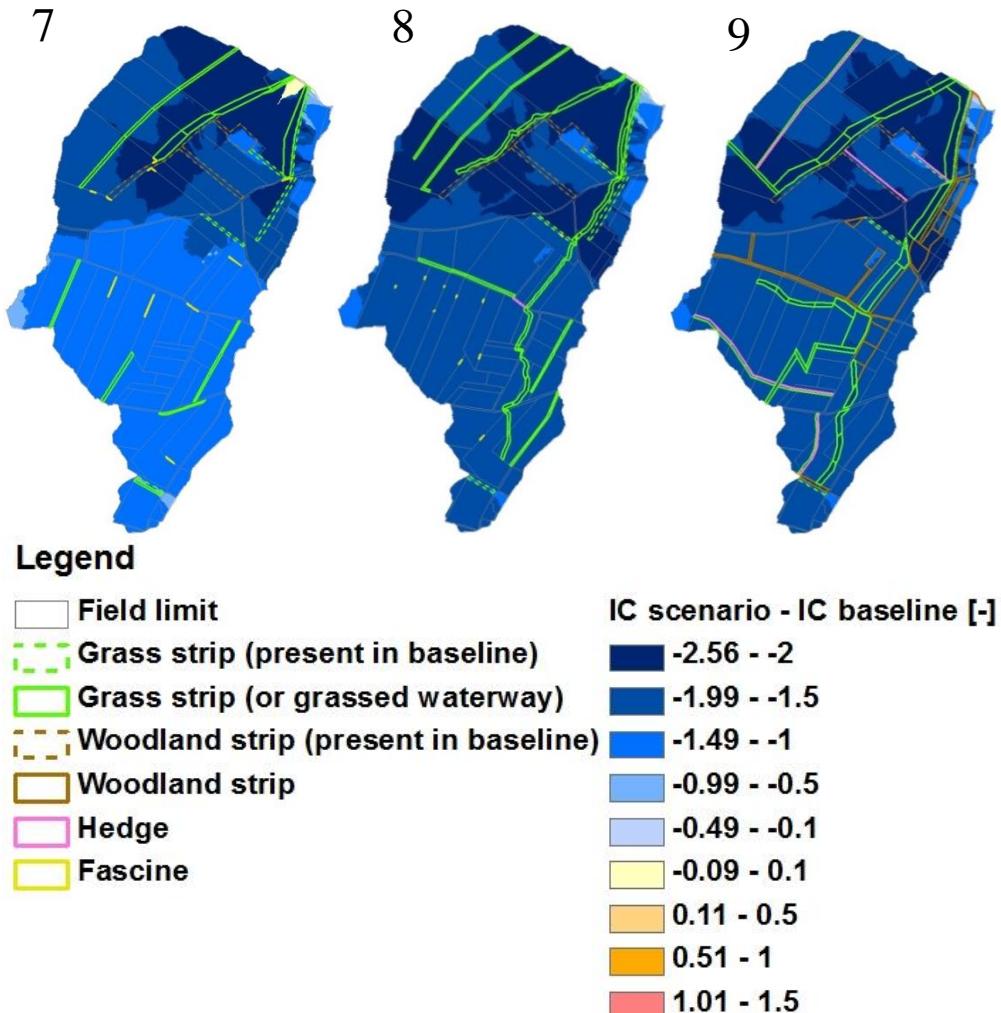


Figure 4-8 : IC differences maps between IC of the scenarios and IC of the baseline (scenario 0).

In addition to water and sediment exports, spatial results of the IC analyze how each type of measure and their position affect the disconnection of the catchment. Figure 4-8 presents the maps of differences between IC of the scenarios and IC of the baseline. Overall, scenarios 8 and 9 (to a lesser extent 6 and 7) show a disconnection of more than 2 units of IC. At the opposite, scenarios 2 and 5 have no effect or a little disconnection compared to baseline. For others (3 and 6), disconnection is spatially heterogeneous with strong decrease of IC in the upper part of the catchment and no effect in the right downstream part.

Grassed waterways disconnect strongly the catchment when planted in the upper part (scenarios 4, 8 and 9) and very strongly when planted in the lower part

(scenarios 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9). For scenario 4, the term “grassed waterways” cannot really be used because it is planted on the sides of the flow and not on it. The efficiency is lower for this scenario even if it shows a disconnection, again bigger in the downstream part. Scenario 3 added hedges on the waterway but it does not disconnect more the upstream area. For grass strips, the upstream disconnection is clear but to a lesser extent than grassed waterways. The reasons are that grass strips are less wide and planted perpendicular to the flow concentration axis and not along it. This orientation is really important for the position of the strips. For example, for scenario 5, the 5 strips in the upper part of the catchment have different efficiencies. The one on the right cuts the flow concentration axis at this end and not perpendicular to it. The connectivity is nearly not changed. The following strip cuts two flow concentration axis, with 53 and 9 ha upstream the strip. The disconnected area is much higher for the 9 ha flow concentration axis. The two last strips strongly disconnect because of small upstream area (<25 ha). Strips of scenarios 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9 behave in the same way with greater efficiency for small flow accumulation and when the strips cuts the flow concentration axis perpendicular. That confirms findings from Gumièvre et al. (2015) who concluded that the first and second key sensitivity parameters are density of installation of the strips in the catchment (linked to the upper area of the strips) and location. Strips directly downstream roads (scenarios 1, 2 and 8) have no change on connectivity because of modified flow direction by road taking the flow.

For hedges and fascines, disconnections are lower in intensity and in upstream area than for grass strips and grassed waterways. Again, the position of the measure is really important for the degree of efficiency. The position on the flow concentration axis and the upstream area affected by the measure are two important elements. Scenarios 2 and 5 show disconnections for hedges and fascines when flow accumulation is small, round 1 or 2 ha maximum. For larger hedges (hedges of 5 m and 20 m wide downstream the scenario 5), the intensity of the disconnection is the same but the disconnected upstream area is larger.

Only scenario 9 implemented woodland strips in addition to the woodland strips included in the baseline. The strips are planted along the waterways or downstream of a road. It does not disconnect the catchment more than the baseline.

3.3 Linear features analysis

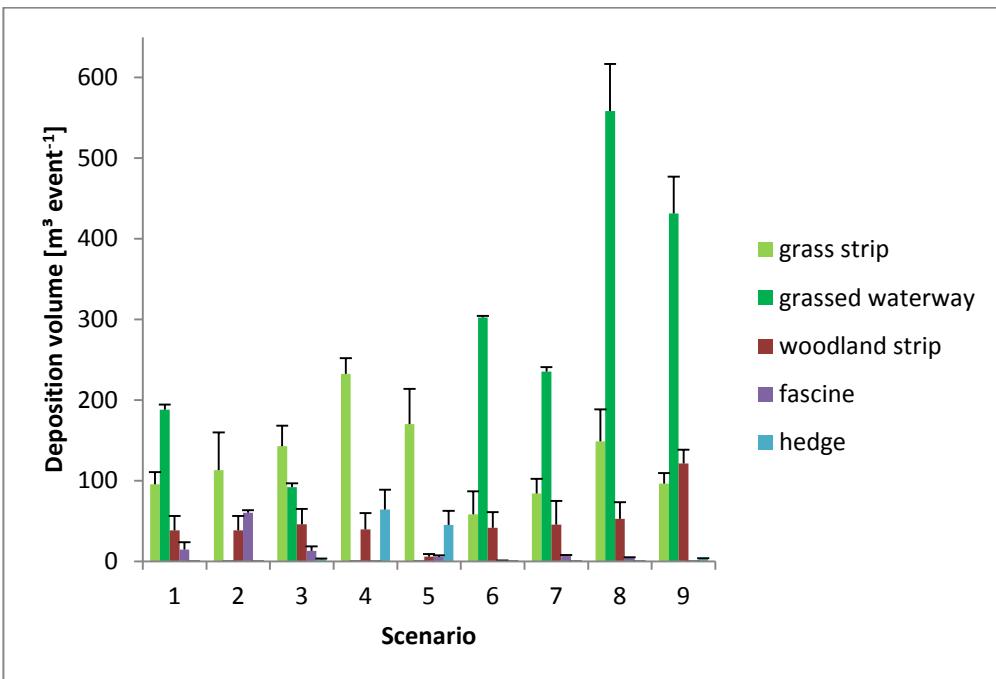


Figure 4-9 : Mean deposition volume for the 3 years [$\text{m}^3 \text{event}^{-1}$] for each linear feature, for each scenario and for the 100 years return period (error bar = standard deviation of the mean value).

Figure 4-9 shows mean deposition volume of sediments for each linear feature. Deposition volumes vary a lot. As implementation of features in the model for deposition is the same, the differences are explained by disconnectivity of the feature (degree and size of the upstream disconnected area). Standard deviations for volumes are situated between 0 and 64% of the mean values involving a great effect of the land use and the land allocation on deposition.

Except for scenario 3, grassed waterway involves the highest deposition rate (Figure 4-9). For scenario 8, the deposition volume for grassed waterways represents 12% of the erosion export. With large areas of grasslands and woodlands, scenario 9 has a lower erosion export at the outlet than scenario 8 but also a lower deposition rate (round 85%). The low sediment export of scenario 9 is thus more explained by a low sediment production than by a high deposition rate. Grassed waterways of scenario 3 are much more upstream in the catchment than in other scenarios. Confirming a conclusion of the connectivity analysis, the deposition volume is smaller for upstream features.

Grass and woodland strips are second and third measures for the volumes of deposition. That confirms a previous statement. For grass strips, scenario 4 has a

deposition of more than $200 \text{ m}^3 \text{ event}^{-1}$. After that, scenarios 3, 5 and 8 also show high deposition volumes for grass strips. This is definitely linked to location of the strips. For woodland strip, scenario 9 is the only one which implemented this measure in addition to the strips present in the baseline. The slight differences in the volumes for other scenarios are explained by interactions between woodland strips and other measures.

For hedges, scenarios 4 and 5 involve deposition of about $50 \text{ m}^3 \text{ event}^{-1}$, much bigger than other scenarios. For scenario 4, the difference is due to the 10 kilometers of hedges and for scenario 5; it is due to higher width of downstream hedges. Location is not ideal because the disconnectivity is lower but length or width of these scenarios compensate. In the model, the overflooding of the measure for heavy rainfall is not taken into account. It constitutes a big difference with the reality. For scenario 8, the hedge receives runoff on the edge. Feature is thus not long enough to buffer the flows and hold backwater even after deposition (Frankl et al., 2018). In addition, hedge is not perpendicular to flow accumulation which is the best orientation to deposit sediments (Dalton et al., 1996). For scenario 9, hedges are not located, for most of them, in the flow paths.

Positions of fascines for scenarios 1, 3 and mainly 2 involve higher mean depositions than for other scenarios. Fascines for these 3 scenarios are repeated several times in the thalweg or/and associated with other measures. That shows that fascines are more effective for small contributing area, for high density of installation in the landscape and in association.

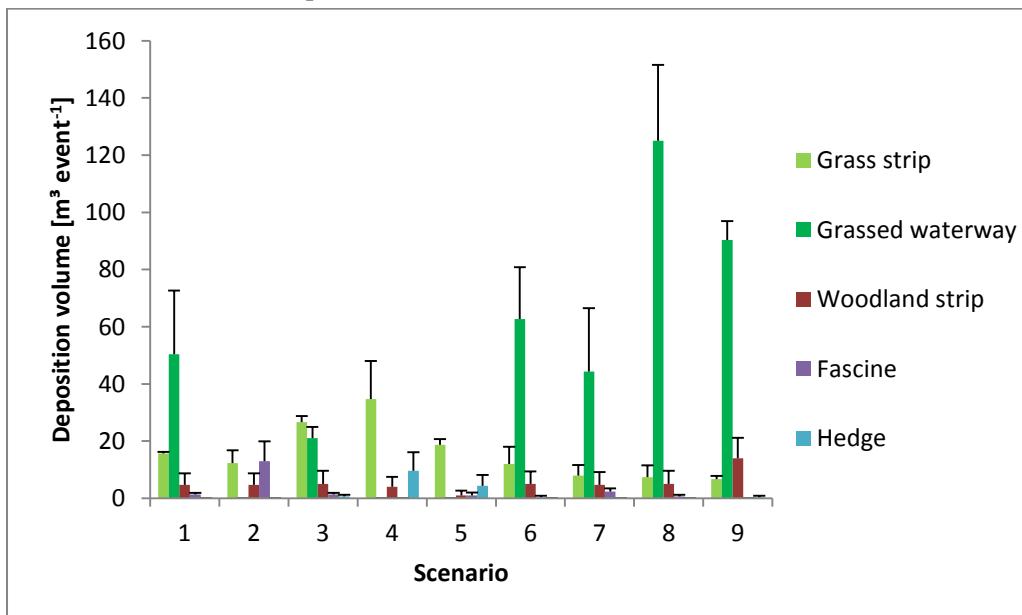


Figure 4-10 : Mean deposition volume for the 3 years [$\text{m}^3 \text{ event}^{-1}$] for each linear feature, for each scenario and for the 2 years return period (error bar = standard deviation of the mean value).

Figure 4-10 presents the mean deposition volume for the 2 years return period. The general trend of the Figure 4-9 and the Figure 4-10 (for the 100 and the 2 years return period) is identical. The only difference is the amount of sediment deposited. The 2 years return period deposits on average 17% of the total deposition for the 100 years return period (standard deviation of 4%) for all features and for all scenarios. That means that all features behave the same way with the return period. But smaller amounts of transported sediment volumes deposit 83% less sediment.

3.4 Economical aspect of measures and scenarios

Table 4-5 : Measures costs and maintenance (Anonymous, 2008; Coufourier et al., 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2008d).

| Measure | Installation cost | Maintenance | Maintenance frequency | Lifetime |
|---------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Grassed strip or waterway | Between 283 and 417 € ha ⁻¹ | Mowing + cleaning if siltation | 1 year | Persistent |
| Woodland strip | 3600 € ha ⁻¹ | Inter-row mowing the first year + shrub control | Several years | Persistent |
| Hedge | Between 10 and 15 € ml ⁻¹ in function of hedge configuration | Trimming | Between 1 and 8 years | Persistent |
| Dead fascine | Between 15 and 21 € ml ⁻¹ | Compaction of branches | Regular | From 2 to 4 years |
| Living fascine | Between 19 and 23 € ml ⁻¹ | Trimming | Between 1 and 8 years | Persistent |

Table 4-6 : Scenarios costs [€].

| Scenario | Grassed strip and waterway | Woodl and strip | Hedge | Fascine | Total |
|----------|----------------------------|-----------------|--------|---------|--------|
| 1 | 3325 | 0 | 0 | 25308 | 28633 |
| 2 | 4585 | 0 | 0 | 25758 | 30343 |
| 3 | 2135 | 0 | 4950 | 17208 | 24293 |
| 4 | 3185 | 0 | 131725 | 0 | 134910 |
| 5 | 2520 | 0 | 39200 | 17694 | 59414 |
| 6 | 4585 | 0 | 0 | 4896 | 9481 |
| 7 | 3815 | 0 | 0 | 14418 | 18233 |
| 8 | 7805 | 0 | 1275 | 4410 | 13490 |
| 9 | 11095 | 90972 | 41837 | 0 | 143904 |

Table 4-5 presents measures costs and maintenance. It is difficult to compare measures costs because units are different. Grassed strips and waterways are less expensive than woodland strips. Hedges and fascines are in the same order of values. The maintenance, maintenance frequency and lifetime are quite important. It is important to note the small lifetime of dead fascines compared to persistent measures.

In addition to runoff and erosion reductions, scenarios have to be compared from an economic point of view. With large areas of woodland strips, scenario 9 is the most expensive with more than 140 000 € (Table 4-6). Scenarios which implement lots of hedge strips are the 3 most expensive. After that, the differences are smaller for all the other scenarios. It is comprised between 9 500 € for scenario 6 and 30 300 € for scenario 2. The watershed is situated in the agro-geographic region of *plateau limoneux brabançon*, classified as very sensitive to runoff and erosion. More precisely, the hydrographic sub-basin is the *Dyle-Gette* which is responsible for the highest annual costs (228 000 € year⁻¹) at the Walloon Region scale (Dogot et al., 2014). To this statement, it is appropriate to add the value of the lost soil. It is difficult to exactly quantify damages costs and lost soil for the watershed. But it is obvious that price of the scenarios are far lower compared to these costs.

3.5 Multifunctional aspect of catchment management

The demand formulated to the experts was to design a realistic anti-erosive management scenario. Looking at the scenarios, it appears that various strategies came out, probably related to the sensitivity and the experience of each person. Even if the scientific community agrees that catchment scale is the best scale to manage erosion (Giardino et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2013), multiple objectives can be listed. In many cases, damages to houses due to muddy floods occur at the catchment outlet and actions are planned to decrease water and sediment export. In implementing one or two grassed waterways at the outlet, scenarios 1, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 decrease a lot connectivity at the outlet and participate in this objective. Without any other actions, that would involve water and sediments movements in the catchment and deposition right before outlet. But managing erosion includes keeping soil in the fields and not only having “an outlet thinking”. This is possible in two ways: decrease the detachment of soil particles and deposit sediments in several places in the catchment. Decreasing soil particle detachment is possible in modifying agricultural practices and in particular intensity or/and direction of tillage in this study (Ryken et al., 2018). Only scenarios 5 and 8 implemented such practices. Sediment deposition in the whole catchment implies installation of other measures (grass strip, woodland strip, hedge or fascine in this study). This is applied by all scenarios even if some are more efficient than others to decrease connectivity globally in the catchment.

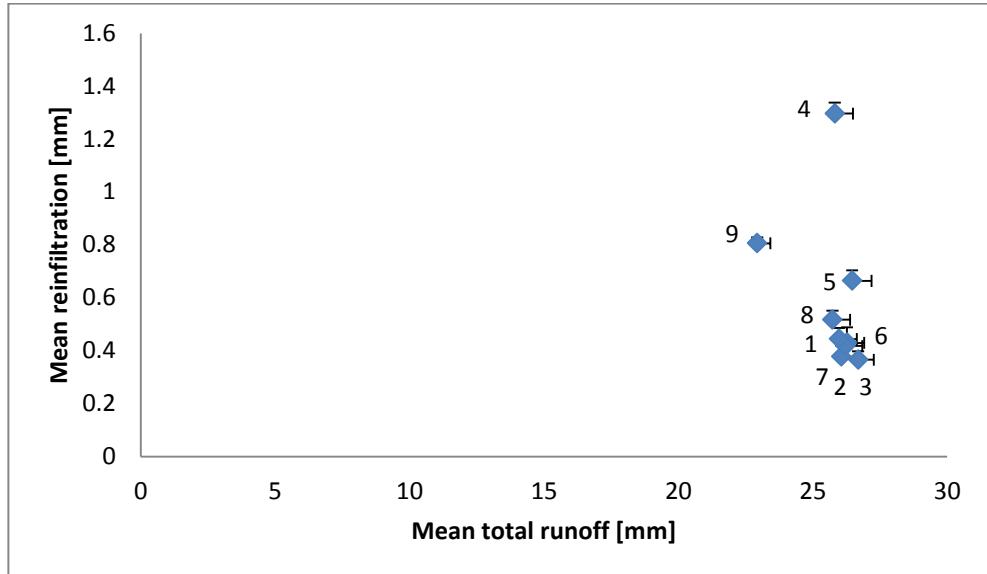


Figure 4-11: Mean reinfiltrationin function of mean total runoff for the 3 years for the 100 years return period (error bar = standard deviation).

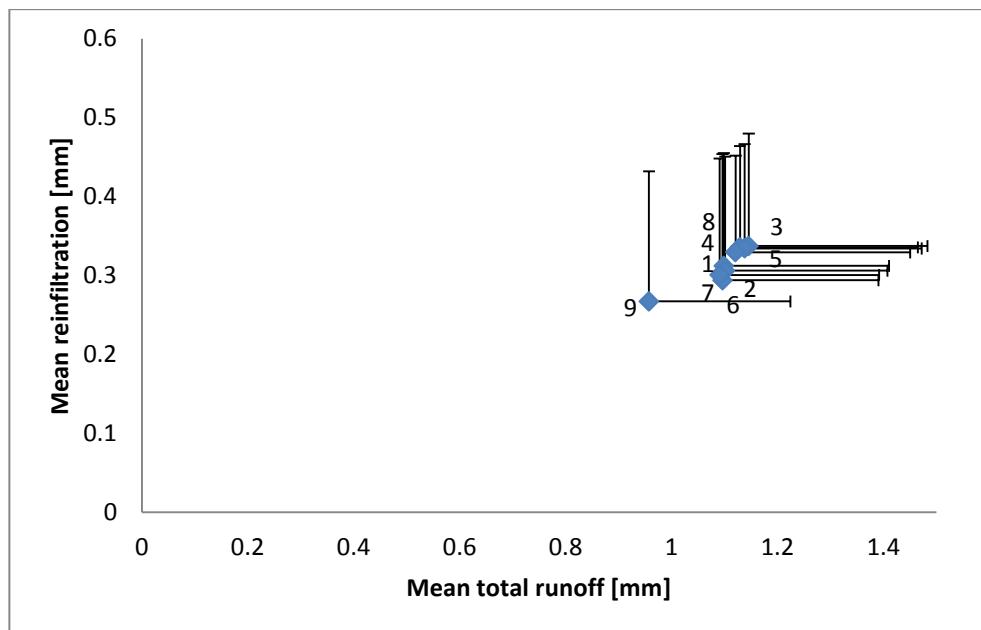


Figure 4-12 : Mean reinfiltration in function of mean total runoff for the 3 years for the 2 years return period (error bar = standard deviation).

Figure 4-11 and Figure 4-12 represent the relation between total runoff and reinfiltration respectively for the 100 and 2 years return periods. For 100 years, the total runoff created in the catchment is nearly the same for all scenarios (slightly lower for scenario 9). The production of water is constant for the scenarios and features have a minor impact. Large areas of wood and grass for scenario 9 decrease water production of about 20%. For reinfiltration, there is a clear impact of hedges on values. Scenarios 4, 9 and to a lesser impact 5 reinfiltrate respectively 3, 2 and 1.5 times more water than other scenarios. The differences are explained by lengths of hedges (10 kms for scenario 4) and by position (hedges not in the flow accumulation for scenario 5). For the 2 years return period, only the scenario 9 stands out with less total runoff. Standard deviations are much more important for the 2 years return period.

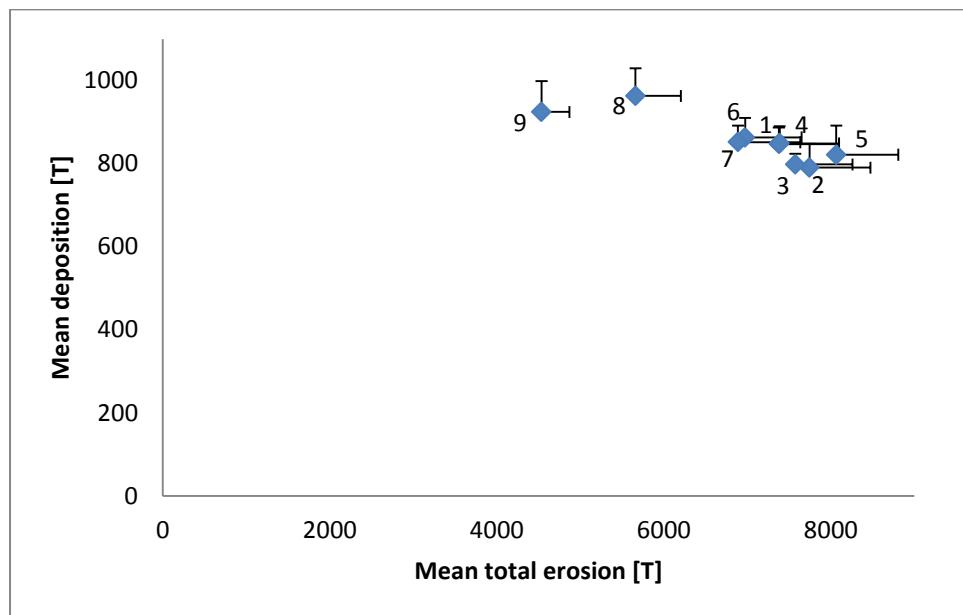


Figure 4-13 : Mean deposition in function of mean total erosion for the 3 years for the 100 years return period (error bar = standard deviation).

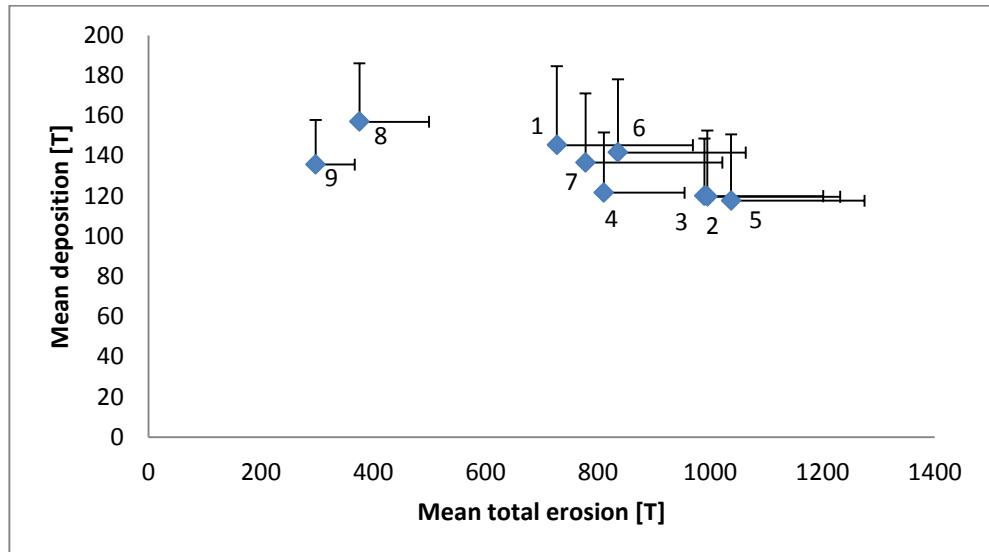


Figure 4-14 : Mean deposition in function of mean total erosion for the 3 years for the 2 years return period (error bar= standard deviation).

Figure 4-13 and Figure 4-14 give the relation between the mean mobilized sediment and the mean deposition for the 100 and 2 years return periods, respectively. For the two return periods, the behaviour is globally the same. There are big differences between scenarios for amount of mobilized sediment (44% and 70% between the 2 extreme scenarios) for 100 and 2 years return periods. For deposition, the differences are lower (15% and 25% of differences between the 2 extreme scenarios) for the 100 and 2 years return periods. The differences between the scenarios for sediment export are mainly due to sediment production and in second to sediment deposition. There are particularly a difference between scenarios 8, 9 and the others for sediment production. The differences in Figure 4-9 and Figure 4-10 between scenarios for sediment deposition are respectively of 72 and 80%. These figures compare deposition for the different features. It is far more important than deposition calculated in Figure 4-13 and Figure 4-14. That means that differences for deposition upstream the features are partially compensated by deposition elsewhere in the catchment (because of slope gradient, vertical curvature or vegetation cover).

Besides decreasing damages, erosion management could seek other objectives. Decreasing runoff and sediment export could help increasing water quality and avoiding pollution (Beheim et al., 2010). That might be one additional objective of scenarios 1, 4, 6, 7, 8 or 9. Thinking about tillage could decrease soil compaction and increasing crop yields (Bogunovic et al., 2018). Experts of scenarios 5 and 8 might think about these considerations. Other objectives are biodiversity stimulation and landscape enhancement thanks to strips and hedges (Dimitrov et al., 2018;

Doyon et al., 2005; Josefsson et al., 2013). Expert of scenario 9 might be sensitive to this point because of interconnections between all actions creating paths for movements of different species.

A last remark having great importance in the long-(mid-) term efficiency is the installation and the management of vegetative barriers. If grass and woodland strips do not require a lot of maintenance, hedges and mainly fascines need specific installation (e.g. homogeneous fascine or high density of branches) and regular maintenance. On average, without right management, fascines have a life expectancy of 4 years (Bielders et al., 2016; Degré et al., 2015). This could restrict fascines installations, especially for farmers for whom erosion and management purpose are not a priority (Frankl et al., 2018).

4. Conclusion

Spatially distributed quantification of efficiency of erosion management scenarios is a challenge. The objective of the study was to compare different modeled scenarios of erosion control measures with LandSoil, all designed by experts. An attention is allowed to connectivity modification within scenarios. Runoff and erosion control of vegetative barriers still asks a lot of questions (Richet et al., 2017). The choices for implementation for designer included grass strip, woodland strip, fascine, hedge and agricultural practices including tillage direction or intensity of tillage. Nine scenarios were compared to a baseline.

Global analysis shows a low efficiency in general for the 100 years return period for all scenarios compared to literature. The efficiency of scenarios to limit runoff and sediments export depends on the control measures number, types, size and location. Due to high infiltration rate, hedges tend to reduce a lot runoff but sediment trapping is highly influenced by hedges location. To raise effectiveness, it needs to be planted long enough, near linear erosion sources, across channels of concentrated runoff or immediately upstream of local assets at risk. Grass strips and woods decrease a lot sediments export due to higher width of features. The return period has an impact on the reduction of runoff and erosion in the catchment.

Connectivity indices calculation shows a net correlation with sediments export. This explains the need for more detailed connectivity features analysis. The pixel analysis of disconnections in the catchment due to control measures identified 2 major points: the upper contributing area to the measure (directly linked to the density of installation of measures in the landscape) and the location perpendicular to the flow, near linear erosion sources. Grassed waterways are the most effective disconnection features when located near the outlet. That involves deposition before outlet and less water and sediment export. For fascines and hedges, disconnections are lower in intensity and in area. It is more efficient when flow accumulation at the measure is round 1 or 2 ha maximum (25 ha for grass strips) for the studied catchment.

Linear features analysis complements the information for management. Location and management of barriers are of primary importance in the reduction of water and sediment export (Frankl et al., 2018; Richet et al., 2017). Deposition thresholds are the same for each feature meaning that the effectiveness differences are due to location, size and density of installation in the landscape. More data are necessary to improve vegetative barriers modelling. Grassed waterways, grass strips and woods have higher deposition volumes than hedges and fascines. It also confirms that these last are more efficient, for LandSoil, for small contributing area and for high density of installation in the landscape. But contrary to what connectivity analysis pointed, woodland strip in scenario 9 (the only which implements woodland strips) deposited high volume of sediments, comparable to the grass strips.

There are as many ways to design an erosion management plan as designers. It is important to clearly identify the strategy of him/her. The experience and the sensitivity of the designer are implicitly taken into account in the scenarios. For erosion control purpose, 3 steps are to keep in mind. Firstly, there is a need to conserve soil in the fields in changing agricultural practices (e.g. decreasing lengths of single crop, thinking about tillage direction and intensity). Secondly, eroded sediments have to be deposited at several places in the catchment in combining measures. Thirdly, to avoid water and sediments export, the outlet must be disconnected. These 3 steps complement each other to fully manage catchments for erosion purpose. In the study, the differences between sediment exports for the scenarios are mainly due to sediment production and to a lesser extent to sediment deposition. In addition to erosion control, catchment management reaches other objectives (e.g. biodiversity stimulation, landscape enhancing, and pollution control). That definitely shows that natural resource management interconnects soil, water and nature.

After validation, models permit to analyze different erosion control measures scenarios and to quantify effectiveness for runoff and sediment exports. It represents an important tool for management and stakeholder's decision or communication.

Chapitre 5

**Discussion générale, conclusions et
perspectives**

1. Quoi de neuf finalement ?

La compréhension et la quantification de l'érosion sont un challenge majeur dans la communauté scientifique à l'heure actuelle. La multitude des processus, leurs interactions et la variation spatiale et temporelle expliquent la difficulté du défi. Dans ce but, la connectivité hydrologique (ruissellement) et sédimentaire (érosion) apportent sans nul doute des pistes permettant de mieux appréhender les mouvements d'eau et de sédiments au sein du BV. L'érosion est un phénomène spatialisé et demande donc une **quantification distribuée** également. Les modèles deviennent alors incontournables pour obtenir cette spatialisation mais ils doivent être utilisés pertinemment et être validés par des **données de terrain elles aussi distribuées spatialement**.

Dans cette thèse, les **connectivités hydrologique et sédimentaire** ont été étudiées en région de plateau limoneux belge. La notion de connectivité a été utilisée à la fois en tant que paramètre décrivant le bassin-versant pour qualifier son fonctionnement et en tant que variable issue de la modélisation pour estimer l'impact des scénarios d'aménagement.

Un des éléments les plus importants dans l'étude du phénomène érosif est le bassin-versant (BV). Le BV est caractérisé par un nombre important de caractéristiques dont la topographie. Le modèle numérique de terrain (MNT) est indéniablement une entrée importante de tous les modèles. Plus particulièrement, la **Résolution** du MNT doit être choisie (dans la mesure des données disponibles) par l'utilisateur. Ce choix a une influence importante sur les éléments de connexions visibles sur le BV ainsi que sur le temps de calcul des modèles. Le **chapitre 2** a discuté de deux choses distinctes: l'impact de la résolution sur un indice de connectivité au sein du BV et le choix d'une résolution optimale à l'étude de la connectivité en relief de plateau limoneux.

La première partie a mis en évidence un impact non négligeable de la résolution (~20 %) sur la connectivité au sein du BV ce qui appuie la nécessité de l'étudier. D'autres études dans la région alpine ont montré le même ordre de grandeur de différence ce qui suggère que l'environnement joue un rôle mineur dans ces différences (étant donné que la structure des bassins en région limoneuse de plateau et en région alpine montagneuse est très différente). La différence induite par la résolution est expliquée par la simplification du réseau d'écoulement lorsque la taille de pixel augmente. La diminution de la longueur de trajet jusqu'à l'exutoire augmente la connectivité au sein du BV. Par contre, la diminution des pourcentages de pentes ne peut expliquer ces différences. Cette modification de connectivité ne touche pas les zones se trouvant près de l'exutoire, leur trajet jusque l'exutoire étant très peu modifié. Cette remarque fait surgir une réflexion importante: la taille du BV d'étude joue un rôle dans la variation de la connectivité selon les résolutions. Plus un BV est grand (sans prendre en compte sa structure), plus les chemins d'écoulement vont être modifiés par le changement de résolution et plus la connectivité se verra changée également (mis à part les zones plus connectées près de l'exutoire). De cette

analyse, on peut en retenir qu'il est nécessaire pour chaque utilisateur de veiller à la résolution qu'il utilise car il peut faire varier la connectivité de son BV (sans qu'il y ait un changement en réalité). Ce dernier devra y songer encore plus s'il est en présence d'un BV étendu.

Certaines études ont montré que la plus haute résolution n'est pas toujours la meilleure. La deuxième partie a déterminé qu'**1 m** représentait la taille de pixel optimale pour l'étude de la connectivité en région de plateau limoneux pour des bassins-versants du même ordre de grandeur que celui étudié. En dessous d'une résolution d'1 m, outre la simplification des chemins d'écoulement qui modifie la connectivité, les éléments linéaires ne sont pas visibles (bande enherbée, limite de parcelle, route, etc.). Ces **éléments linéaires** sont très importants dans l'activation ou la désactivation des connexions au sein du BV. Cela empêche de choisir une telle résolution dans notre contexte au risque de perdre une bonne partie des éléments de connectivité. En diminuant la taille de pixel, à partir de la résolution d'1 m et pour les résolutions plus fines, des tâches plus déconnectées apparaissent. Celles-ci ont été corroborées par des photos aériennes en période de ressuyage montrant des taches sombres plus humides à ces endroits. Egalement à partir d'1 m de résolution, l'effet des bandes enherbées apparaît en déconnectant les zones situées en amont. Ceci peut démontrer l'effet de tels aménagements pour diminuer la connectivité en réduisant la vitesse de ruissellement et en capturant certains sédiments. En augmentant la résolution (50 cm ou en dessous), on peut constater deux impacts majeurs. Premièrement, des **interférences** dues à du bruit dans le MNT apparaissent. Ces artefacts ont déjà été observés dans plusieurs autres études(Hare et al., 2001; Stal et al., 2013). Deuxièmement, la taille des données de calcul autrement dit la **vitesse de calcul** est multipliée par 20 entre les résolutions d'1 m et de 25 cm. Un dernier élément de confirmation est l'analyse d'orthophotoplans. La comparaison entre un orthophotoplan et la carte d'IC pour 1 m de résolution permet de retrouver sur la carte quasiment l'ensemble des zones connectées ou déconnectées (marquées dans le paysage ou plus humides) visibles sur l'orthophotoplan. Les quelques zones non prédites par l'IC sont liées à d'anciennes bandes enherbées disparues ou à des zones d'ombre dues probablement à des nuages sur l'orthophotoplan. Ce dernier argument tend à confirmer que la résolution d'1 m est optimale pour notre environnement (relief de plateau limoneux) et notre objectif d'étude (étude de la connectivité hydrologique et sédimentaire à l'échelle du BV).

Un utilisateur voulant étudier la connectivité et l'érosion à l'échelle du BV devra donc prendre en compte beaucoup de critères avant de choisir sa taille de pixel idéale, chaque contexte ayant ses propres spécificités. Ainsi, le premier facteur limitant est les **possibilités techniques** pour obtenir des MNTs de haute résolution. Ensuite, **l'objectif de l'étude** est crucial dans ce choix. La résolution choisie ne sera pas la même si on s'intéresse à la microtopographie d'une parcelle ou au rendement en sédiments d'un BV entier. Finalement, le contexte d'étude et la taille du BV sont à prendre en compte. Le contexte fait varier les processus impliqués dans la connectivité et une étude de plusieurs résolutions est alors nécessaire pour la

détermination de la résolution optimale. En plus du temps de calcul, la **taille du BV** a, quant à elle, une influence sur la modification de la connectivité (IC). Plus un BV est étendu, plus la modification sera importante.

Une fois la résolution optimale déterminée, la quantification du ruissellement et de l'érosion nécessite l'utilisation de modèles. Parmi la pléiade de modèles, les modèles à base experte permettent de prendre en compte les processus érosifs majeurs sans demander la détermination de trop de paramètres augmentant l'incertitude totale. En plus de cela, dans un contexte agricole, ils intègrent directement les processus de connexions du BV à savoir l'effet parcelle et les éléments linéaires du paysage. Evidemment, et comme à chaque fois, il faut que cela corresponde à l'objectif puisque ce type de modèle a une résolution temporelle événementielle et ne prend pas en compte la dynamique durant la précipitation. Ces modèles, trop souvent utilisés sans réelle validation, demandent une **calibration** et une **validation spatialisée** afin de s'assurer de la pertinence des résultats. Le **chapitre 3** a utilisé des mesures ponctuelles de ruissellement ainsi que des mesures spatialisées issues de réglettes graduées pour évaluer la qualité des résultats du modèle LandSoil (évolution de STREAM). La première étape est de mettre à jour les règles pouvant varier par rapport aux études utilisant LandSoil déjà réalisées (caractéristiques de la surface de sol mensuelles FCR, règles de la capacité d'infiltration et de la pluie d'imbibition) et de sélectionner les pluies les plus érosives. Ensuite, la comparaison avec les mesures permet de confronter les résultats.

La préparation des données d'entrées demande de la réflexion et de la rigueur. Outre les données topographiques et propres au BV, certaines règles de décision doivent être mises à jour (même si des versions existent pour des bassins-versants de même type). Ainsi, pour notre exemple, les **FCR**, la règle de **capacité d'infiltration** et de **pluie d'imbibition** ont été revues. Pour les capacités d'infiltration, une différence de teneurs en sable de 15 % implique des différences de capacités d'infiltration de l'ordre de 50 %. Il en est de même pour les pluies d'imbibition. Cela implique que la transposition des règles d'infiltration et de pluies d'imbibition ne peut se faire que pour des sols avec une granulométrie très semblable.

Les deux points de mesure de la hauteur de ruissellement ont montré des résultats contrastés mettant en évidence les points forts et faibles de ce modèle. Considérant l'exutoire dont la surface contributive est de 84 ha, le modèle LandSoil a montré de très bons résultats. En revanche, pour le bassin-versant de 3.9 ha, les résultats se sont avérés beaucoup moins bons. Cela est directement lié à la manière de fonctionner de ce type de modèles. Certains événements induisent une modélisation de ruissellement pour la petite surface contributive alors qu'aucune mesure n'est réalisée. Ils correspondent à de **longs événements peu intenses** pouvant engendrer un **ruissellement par saturation** dans la réalité. Ce processus n'est pas pris en compte par le modèle ne se préoccupant que du ruissellement hortonien. La dynamique pendant l'événement n'étant pas prise en compte, le temps de parcours jusqu'à l'exutoire pour la **réinfiltration** ne peut pas être modélisé. Un autre point venant appuyer cela est l'effet d'échelle mis en évidence dans d'autres études. Plus

la taille de la zone d'étude est petite, plus le coefficient de ruissellement modélisé est grand. Cela est lié à l'**hétérogénéité au sein de la parcelle** qui ne peut pas être prise en compte. Cela est dû aux résolutions du modèle: **échelle de temps événementielle et échelle spatiale de la parcelle** pour les FCR. La modélisation de petites zones homogènes du point de vue de l'occupation du sol est donc plus sujette à des erreurs. Un dernier point important également lié au calcul du ruissellement est le **déclenchement du ruissellement**. Si le bilan infiltration/ruissellement est proche de 0 en positif ou en négatif (0 = point où le ruissellement devient plus important que l'infiltration), une très faible variation de la capacité d'infiltration peut transformer un événement non-ruisselant en un événement ruisselant (Ex : Pluie de 20 mm pendant 1 h sur 100 ha, infiltration de 20 mm h^{-1} → pas de ruissellement. Avec une diminution du régime d'infiltration de 5 % → ruissellement = 1000 m^3). Pour rappel, l'incertitude sur les mesures de capacités d'infiltration est comprise entre 4 et 113 % selon les FCR.

Concernant l'érosion, malgré un nombre de **réglettes** trop faible (surtout en parties érosives par rapport au dépôt) et un ajustement fortement influencé par quelques points, la comparaison montre de bonnes valeurs d'ajustement. Les schémas spatiaux peuvent ainsi être analysés. La caractéristique la plus importante repérée est l'**occupation du sol**. Comme analysé de nombreuses fois dans le passé (Arnhold et al., 2014), les cultures sarclées (pomme de terre, betterave, maïs, chicorée, etc.) ont une forte influence sur le ruissellement et l'érosion. Un deuxième élément est la **répartition spatiale** de ces cultures. Encore plus au niveau de l'érosion où la quantité de sédiments arrachés par érosion linéaire dépend de l'accumulation de flux, la distribution des cultures au sein du BV a une forte influence. En plus de la quantité de sédiments pouvant varier (et donc la longueur et la tailles des ravines), la **diminution des longueurs de monoculture** multiplie les possibilités de dépôt. Sans modifier la proportion de cultures sarclées, il est donc possible de produire moins de sédiments, d'en déposer plus en jouant sur la succession de différentes cultures. Un troisième élément influant également sur la connectivité est la présence et la **position des éléments linéaires** du paysage (ex : bande enherbée, bande boisée, limite de parcelle). Les bandes enherbées possèdent un pouvoir de sédimentation lorsqu'elles sont placées adéquatement. Leur meilleure efficacité est rencontrée lorsqu'elles sont directement en aval d'une zone érosive et sur de faibles pentes. La réduction du ruissellement grâce à la végétation de la bande est maximum et la sédimentation également pouvant atteindre jusqu'à 70 voire 80 % de dépôt. Les bandes boisées ont le même rôle mais une efficacité moindre. Cela est dû à une combinaison du placement de la bande sur le BV sur des pentes plus fortes et la plus faible rugosité de la végétation au sol freinant moins le ruissellement. Les limites de parcelles ne semblent pas jouer un rôle prépondérant dans l'arrachage des sédiments mais plutôt dans le transport de ceux-ci.

L'objectif final de l'utilisation de modèles est la quantification de scénarios antiérosifs et de voir leur effet. Le **chapitre 4** vise à comparer 9 **scénarios d'aménagements** créés par des **experts** à une situation de référence sans ajout

d'aménagement. Le choix entre **bande enherbée**, **bande boisée**, **fascine**, **haie** et **travail du sol (sens et intensité)** est donné aux experts. La littérature peu nombreuse sur les caractéristiques des fascines ainsi que les différents types (paille ou fagot, morte ou vivante) rend incertaine l'implémentation dans les modèles.

La comparaison des scénarios a montré une **efficacité globalement petite** pour la période de retour de 100 ans mais une **influence importante de l'aménageur de l'espace rural** (et donc du scénario d'aménagements) sur le ruissellement et l'érosion au sein du BV et à son exutoire. Logiquement, les scénarios avec beaucoup d'aménagements (grandes surfaces de BE et de bois, grandes longueurs de haies et de fascines) montrent une diminution nette et plus grande que les autres scénarios à propos du ruissellement et de l'érosion. Il a déjà été montré au chapitre précédent que les aménagements ont un effet sur la connectivité du BV. Un élément important à souligner est le **lien existant entre l'augmentation de la connectivité et l'augmentation de l'export de sédiments**. Il a également été démontré que les cultures et leur répartition ont un effet sur la connectivité. Ainsi, les scénarios ont des effets différents selon l'année et les rotations de cultures. Le gestionnaire doit penser ses aménagements au moins sur une rotation complète.

Analyser l'efficacité ex-ante du scénario d'aménagement peut se faire au moyen de la connectivité (en calculant l'indice de connectivité IC par exemple). Grâce à cela, il est possible de voir où le scénario est le plus et le moins efficace et ainsi de l'adapter. Certains scénarios déconnectent davantage, d'autres ont un impact très hétérogène au sein du BV. Les chenaux enherbés montrent une forte déconnexion. Les bandes enherbées déconnectent aussi mais il y a un gros **impact de la densité de plantation et de l'orientation des bandes** (efficacité optimale pour des surfaces contributives <25 ha et perpendiculaire au flux). Les fascines et haies montrent une déconnexion plus faible en intensité et en surface affectée. De nouveau, le lieu d'implantation, l'orientation et le nombre des aménagements ont une grande importance (meilleure efficacité pour une surface contributive <2 ha et perpendiculaire au flux).

Une analyse par type d'aménagement permet de préciser certains points au niveau de la localisation des aménagements pour maximiser leur efficacité. Le volume de dépôt des aménagements dépend du degré de déconnexion de l'amont ainsi que de la surface contributive impactée par cette déconnexion. Ceci est directement lié à la **taille et la localisation des aménagements** (puisque les règles de dépôt des différents aménagements sont les mêmes). Les chenaux enherbés représentent l'aménagement le plus efficace en termes de déconnexion et de dépôt de sédiments. De plus, les chenaux en aval du BV déconnectent plus que ceux situés plus en amont. Les scénarios privilégiant les **haies** montrent une réduction importante du ruissellement grâce à la **grande capacité d'infiltration de celles-ci**. Par contre, l'efficacité au niveau érosif est moindre. La localisation des haies près des sources de sédiments dans le **chemin concentré** est importante pour augmenter l'efficacité de « piéges à sédiments ». Le dépôt est moindre pour l'érosion diffuse car la texture plus fine des particules implique un transport sur de plus longues distances. Les

bandes enherbées et bandes boisées déposent plus de sédiments. Grâce à leur plus grande largeur, le ralentissement de la vitesse de ruissellement permet une sédimentation accrue.

Comme décrit dans d'autres études, la **période de retour testée** (100 ans) montre une **influence majeure sur l'efficacité des scénarios**. La période de retour de 2 ans montre une plus grande efficacité ($T = 100$ ans \Rightarrow diminution de l'export de ruissellement compris entre 1 et 17 % et de sédiments compris entre 4 et 53 %, $T = 2$ ans \Rightarrow diminution de l'export de ruissellement compris entre 1 et 34 % et de sédiments compris entre 1 et 85 %). Comme le modèle ne prend pas en compte le risque de surpassement des aménagements pour la période de retour de 100 ans, cette différence entre les périodes de retour est sous-estimée. Au niveau des volumes de sédiments déposés, le comportement des aménagements est le même pour les 2 périodes de retour testées. Mais en moyenne, la quantité de sédiments déposés est de 83 % inférieure pour la période de retour de 2 ans. Cela est lié aux moins grands flux de sédiments. La réflexion pour analyser un scénario d'aménagements doit donc se réaliser également au niveau de la période de retour testée. Au niveau du dépôt, le changement de période de retour ne modifie pas le comportement des BVs pour tous les scénarios. Par contre, la grosse différence entre les scénarios pour les 2 périodes de retour se trouve au niveau de l'export d'eau et de sédiments du BV. Pour le ruissellement, cela s'explique par la réinfiltration plus grande pour certains aménagements (les haies et dans une moindre mesure les chenaux enherbés). Pour l'érosion, comme la dynamique de dépôt est la même entre les scénarios, la différence se situe au niveau de la production de sédiments.

Au-delà de l'analyse de l'efficacité des aménagements, les objectifs et la philosophie du gestionnaire ont un impact majeur sur le scénario mis en place. Ainsi, en donnant un objectif identique d'élaboration d'un scénario de lutte antiérosive, il est remarquable de constater la diversité des interprétations qui est fonction de l'**expérience et de la sensibilité de chacun**. Depuis la diminution des exports d'eau et de sédiments jusqu'à la conservation des sédiments dans leur parcelle, la lutte antiérosive a plusieurs manières d'être interprétée. Le scénario le plus abouti sera celui qui couple ces interprétations pour réaliser une approche intégrée sur la totalité du BV. De plus, la lutte antiérosive peut être couplée à d'autres objectifs « annexes » tels que l'augmentation de la qualité des eaux de surface, l'augmentation de la biodiversité, l'embellissement du paysage, etc. Ainsi, l'initiateur du projet antiérosif doit être très précis sur les objectifs de la mise en place d'un scénario.

Toutes ces recommandations d'aménagement nous amènent maintenant à la mise en œuvre. Ce paragraphe a pour but de rassembler les éléments positifs (et d'éviter les éléments négatifs) de chacun des 9 scénarios dans un **nouveau scénario de synthèse**. Les objectifs de ce scénario reprennent les 4 étapes clefs discutées pour réaliser un plan d'aménagements à savoir la **diminution de la production de sédiments**, le **dépôt à plusieurs endroits** dans le BV, le **découplage de l'exutoire** et enfin la **maximisation des externalités positives des aménagements**. Une

attention toute particulière est retenue pour que ce scénario soit **réaliste** (tant au niveau des décideurs, que des aménageurs ou des agriculteurs). La Figure 5-1 reprend finalement ce scénario avec 1.6 ha de bandes enherbées (0.5 % de la surface du BV), 12.2 ha de chenaux enherbés (3.4 %), 8.8 ha de bandes boisées (2.5 %), 2350 m de haies et 740 m de fascines. En plus de ces aménagements, un changement d'orientation du travail du sol dans certaines parcelles a été réalisé pour qu'il soit perpendiculaire à la pente. L'intensité du travail du sol n'a pas été modifiée puisque celui-ci a un impact mineur sur les résultats. Pour rappel, celui-ci s'implémente via le Ktill et ne prend pas ici en compte les changements des caractéristiques de la surface du sol. La réflexion de mise en œuvre de ce scénario s'établit comme suit et pourrait servir de compléments de bonnes pratiques d'aménagement :

- Diminuer la production de sédiments. Premièrement, en réfléchissant au sens du travail du sol perpendiculaire à la pente dans certaines parcelles à grandes longueurs, cela permet de diminuer les vitesses de ruissellement et donc de diminuer l'arrachage et l'entraînement des sédiments. Deuxièmement, en implantant des bandes enherbées, des chenaux enherbés et des bandes de bois, cela participe à cet objectif même si ce n'est pas le but premier de ces aménagements. Troisièmement, la mise en place de haies permet de réinfiltrer de l'eau de ruissellement et donc de diminuer la production de sédiments en aval de celles-ci. Il est à noter que la prise en compte de l'intensité et des techniques de labour tendraient à largement renforcer cet objectif mais cela sort du cadre de cette thèse. Une méthodologie de recherche permettant de mesurer l'impact de ces techniques sur les caractéristiques du sol (et donc la capacité d'infiltration, la résistance au cisaillement, etc.) est à développer pour compléter ce point.
- Déposer les sédiments à plusieurs endroits dans le BV. Pour ce faire, des fascines ont été imaginées à chaque limite de parcelle lorsqu'un flux concentré la traverse. Cela permet de déposer les sédiments en plusieurs endroits et surtout d'avoir une grande densité d'installation des fascines augmentant leur efficacité (conclusion du chapitre 4). Le choix des fascines comme la localisation de celles-ci au niveau des limites de parcelle ont été retenus pour ne pas entraver le travail des agriculteurs. Les fascines (mortes) n'ont pas de réenracinement ce qui est un argument en faveur de leur acceptation en région agricole.
- Déconnexion de l'exutoire. Des chenaux enherbés ont été installés en aval du BV au niveau du flux permettant de conduire ce flux jusque l'exutoire en réinfiltrant de l'eau de ruissellement et en déposant des sédiments (conclusion du chapitre 4). De nouveau, la localisation a également été réfléchie pour ne pas couper une parcelle en plusieurs morceaux.
- Maximiser les externalités positives des aménagements. Une première réflexion au niveau de la connectivité verte consiste à implémenter des bandes ou chenaux enherbés en périphérie de bandes boisées. Cela permet un mouvement des différentes espèces au sein du BV. En plus de cela, les

haies participent également à la biodiversité en reliant certaines bandes et pouvant également accueillir certaines espèces vivantes. Une deuxième réflexion au niveau du paysage montre une diversité d'aménagements à vocation naturelle au sein du BV. Une troisième réflexion pour la connectivité bleue via les haies a été réalisée. En effet, avec leur grande capacité d'infiltration, cela permet d'agir également sur le ruissellement (avec un effet corrélé sur l'érosion).

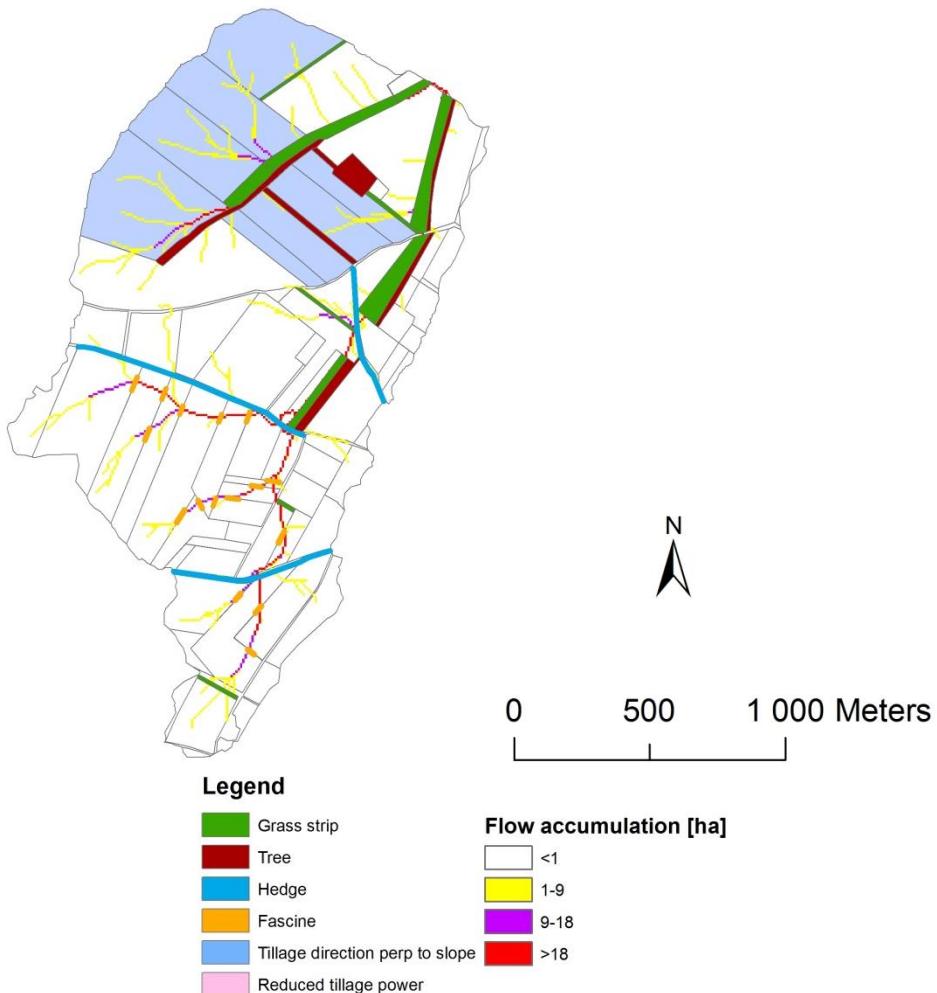


Figure 5-1 : Présentation du scénario 10.

Sur le papier, ce scénario permet de diminuer le ruissellement et l'érosion sur le BV tout en développant certains services écosystémiques. Il est toutefois nécessaire de vérifier cela (au niveau du ruissellement et de l'érosion) en comparant les résultats du scénario 10 à ceux des autres scénarios.

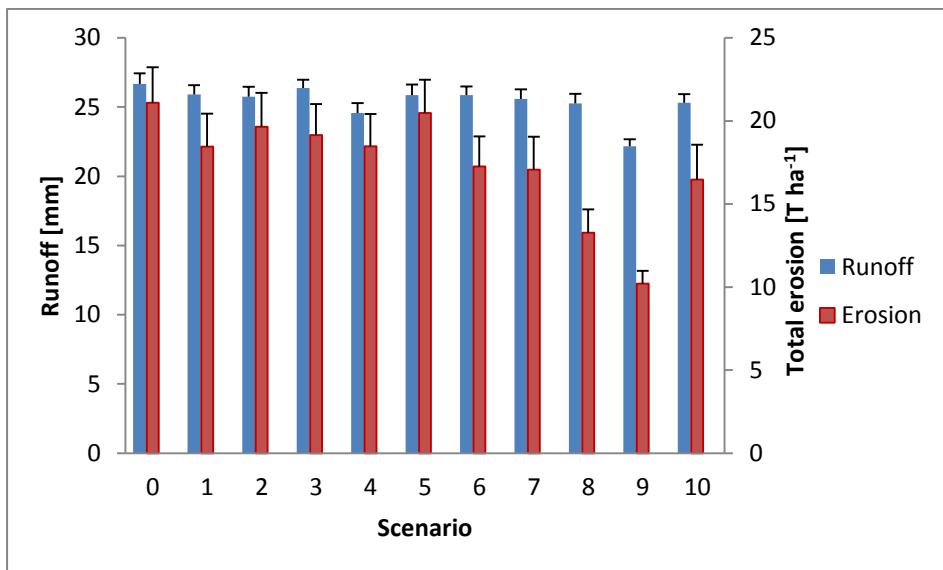


Figure 5-2 : Comparaison pour le ruissellement et l'érosion totale pour les différents scénarios (y compris le scénario 10) pour la période de retour de 100 ans. Les valeurs représentent les moyennes à l'exutoire (barres d'erreur = écarts-types pour 2011, 2012 et 2013). Le « 0 » représente la référence sans ajout d'aménagements antiérosifs.

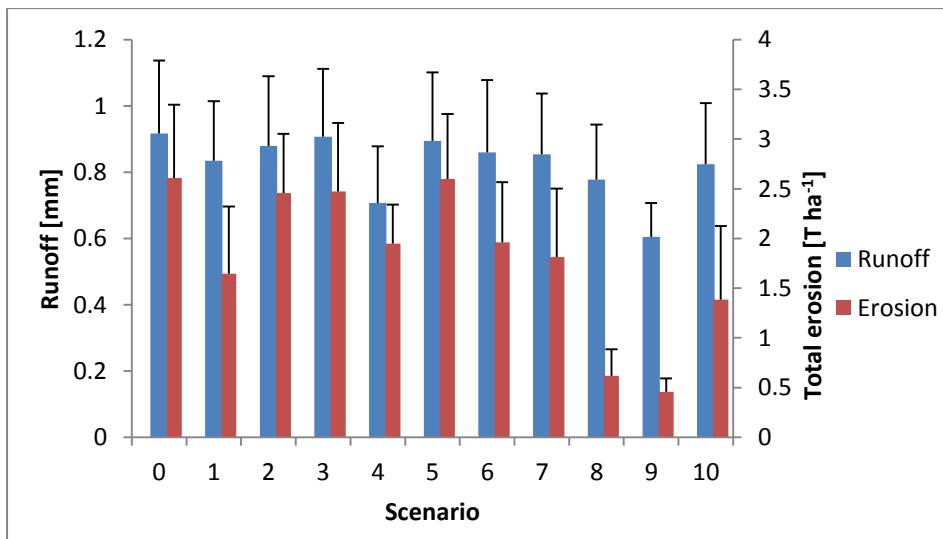


Figure 5-3 : Comparaison pour le ruissellement et l'érosion totale pour les différents scénarios (y compris le scénario 10) pour la période de retour de 2 ans. Les valeurs représentent les moyennes à l'exutoire (barres d'erreur = écarts-types pour 2011, 2012 et 2013). Le « 0 » représente la référence sans ajout d'aménagements antiérosifs.

La Figure 5-2 et la Figure 5-3 comparent les exports d'eau et de sédiments pour le BV. Le scénario 10 est le troisième scénario le plus efficace au niveau de la réduction de l'érosion après les scénarios 8 et 9. Il diminue le ruissellement de 11 % et l'érosion de 47 % pour la période de retour de 2 ans (5 % et 22 % pour la période de retour de 100 ans). Comparé au scénario 9 qui est le plus efficace, le scénario 10 implique presque 3 fois moins de surface d'aménagements (cf. Table 4-3). Par rapport au scénario 8, la différence se trouve au niveau de la réflexion pour créer un scénario réaliste pour chaque acteur. En effet, le scénario 10 propose des aménagements uniquement en limites de parcelles et ne coupe pas de parcelles en plusieurs parties.

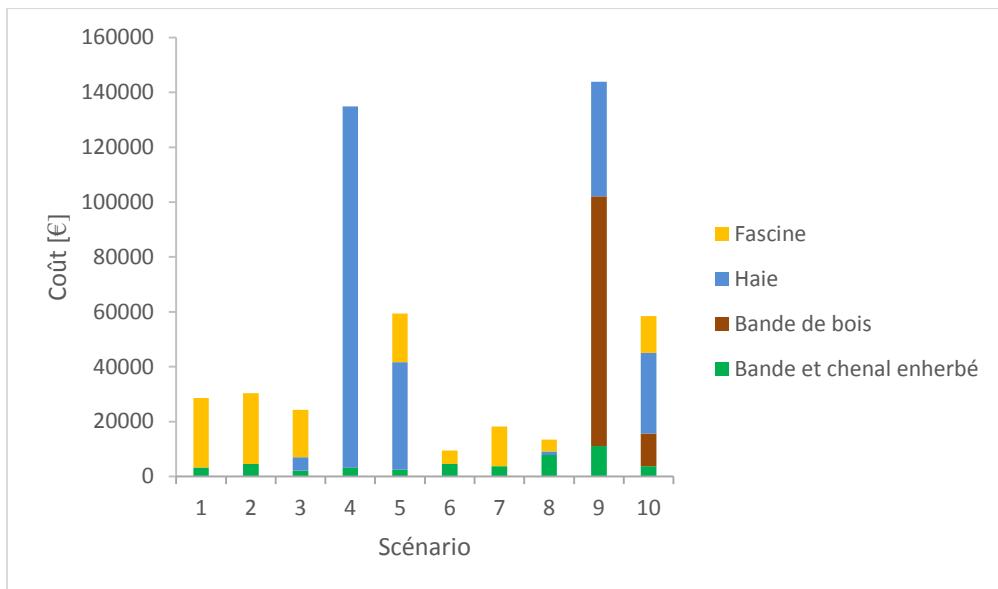


Figure 5-4 : Comparaison des scénarios au niveau des prix de chaque type d'aménagement.

Au niveau économique, le scénario 10 est estimé à 58 000 € soit le quatrième scénario le plus cher (Figure 5-4). Cela est dû pour moitié à la présence des haies ayant pour fonction principale l'augmentation des externalités positives du scénario. Ce point n'est pas pris en compte dans la majorité des scénarios.

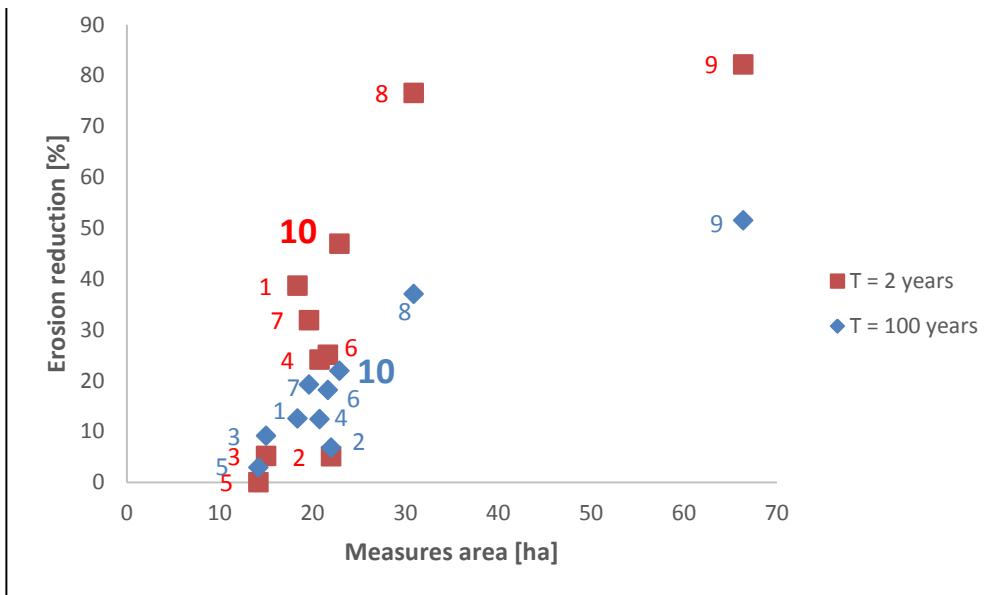


Figure 5-5 : Réduction de l'érosion en fonction de la surface d'aménagements pour chaque scénario (y compris le scenario 10) en comparaison à la référence pour les 2 périodes de retour.

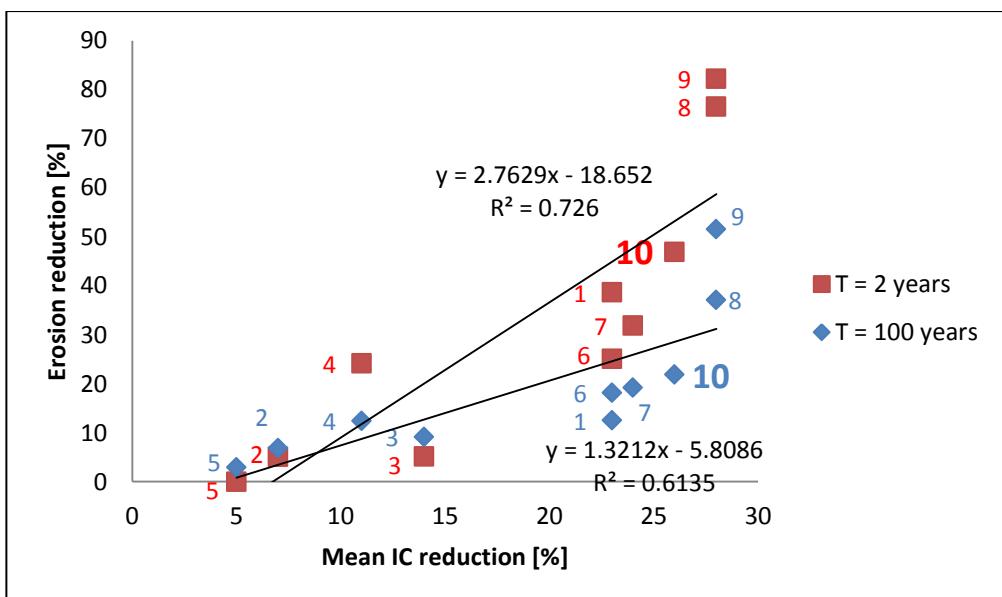


Figure 5-6 : Réduction de l'érosion en fonction de la diminution de l'IC pour chaque scénario (y compris le scenario 10) en comparaison à la référence pour les 2 périodes de retour.

La

Figure 5-5 et la Figure 5-6 permettent de replacer le scénario 10 en mettant en relation la diminution de l'érosion avec respectivement la surface des aménagements et la diminution de la connectivité. Au niveau de la

Figure 5-5, le scénario 10 se trouve près des scénarios 6 et 7 pour la période de retour de 100 ans impliquant des surfaces d'aménagement et des réductions d'érosion quasiment équivalentes. Par contre pour la période de retour de 2 ans (plus proche de la période de retour retenue pour les plans d'aménagement), la situation est différente. La surface d'aménagement du scénario 10 est entre 0 et 1 % supérieure aux scénarios 1, 2, 4, 6 et 7 (cf. Table 4-3). Pourtant, la réduction de l'érosion est respectivement 8 %, 42 %, 23 %, 22 % et 15 % plus importante que pour ces scénarios (cf. Table 4-4). Cela montre l'efficacité de la position des aménagements maximisant le rapport entre la réduction de l'érosion et la surface des aménagements. L'efficacité est 30 % inférieure aux scénarios 8 et 9 pour les raisons citées au paragraphe précédent. Au niveau de la Figure 5-6, le scénario 10 se trouve exactement dans la relation établie entre la diminution de l'érosion et la diminution de l'IC. Cela démontre de nouveau que la connectivité est un facteur explicatif pertinent des différences d'efficacité des scénarios.

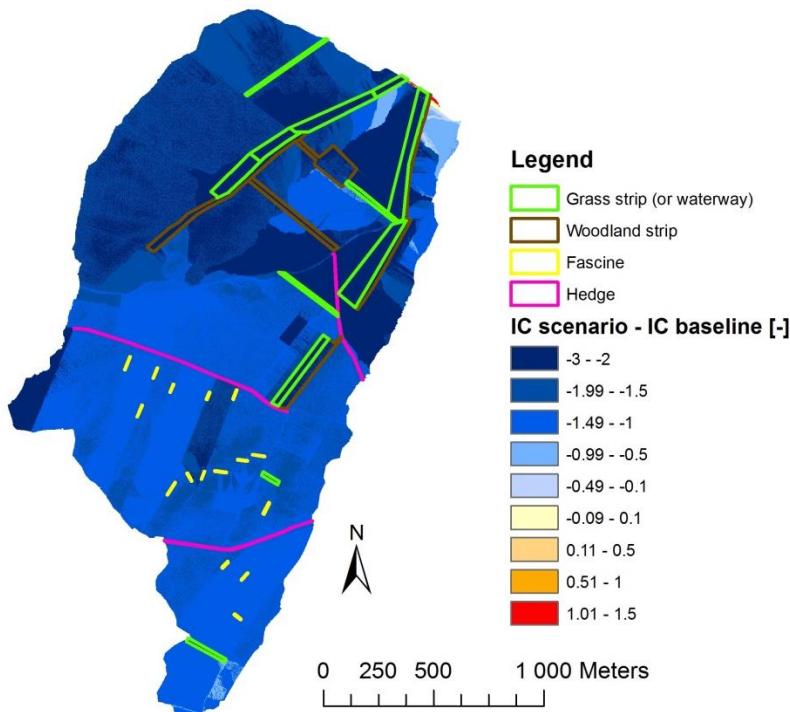


Figure 5-7 : Différence d'IC entre la carte du scénario 10 et celle de la référence (scénario 0).

La Figure 5-7 montre comment les aménagements du scenario 10 déconnectent les différentes parties du BV de l'exutoire. Grâce principalement aux chenaux et bandes enherbés implantés en aval du BV, cette partie se trouve relativement fort déconnectée comme montré pour les autres scénarios (cf. Figure 4-8). C'est d'ailleurs la raison de la localisation de ces aménagements à cet endroit du BV. Les bandes boisées déjà présentes dans la référence ainsi que celles ajoutées ont une influence mineure sur la connectivité. Leur fonction était plutôt d'augmenter la pluridisciplinarité des aménagements. Il en est de même pour les haies. Les fascines montrent une déconnexion moins forte en amont du BV. Cette déconnexion est d'ailleurs en partie due à la présence des chenaux enherbés plus en aval. Cette carte ne permet pas de juger de la déconnexion proprement dite due aux fascines. La philosophie de leur installation est qu'il y ait une faible surface contributive entre les fascines implantées le long des axes d'écoulement.

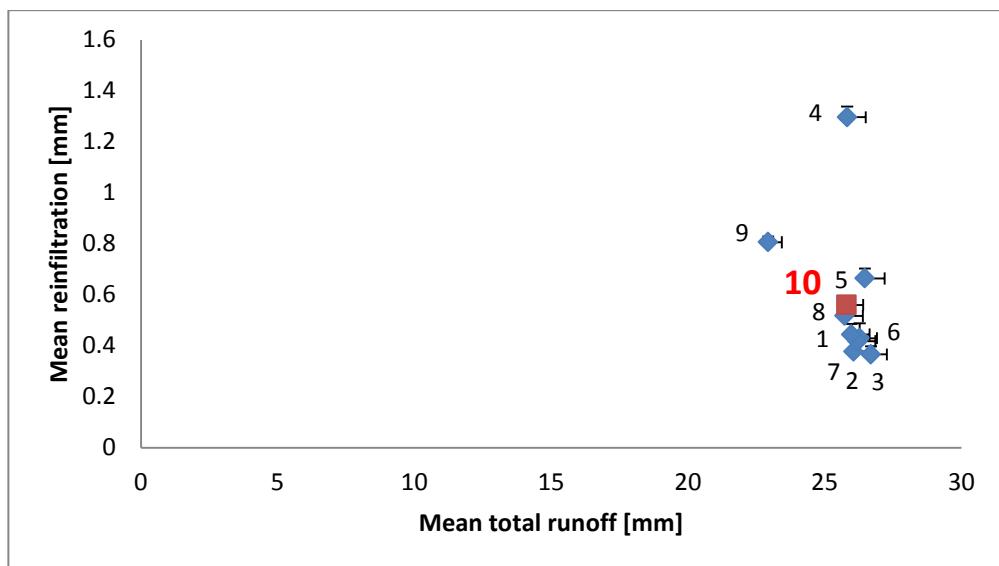


Figure 5-8 : Réinfiltration moyenne en fonction du ruissellement total moyen pour les 3 ans et pour la période de retour de 100 ans (barre d'erreur=écart-type).

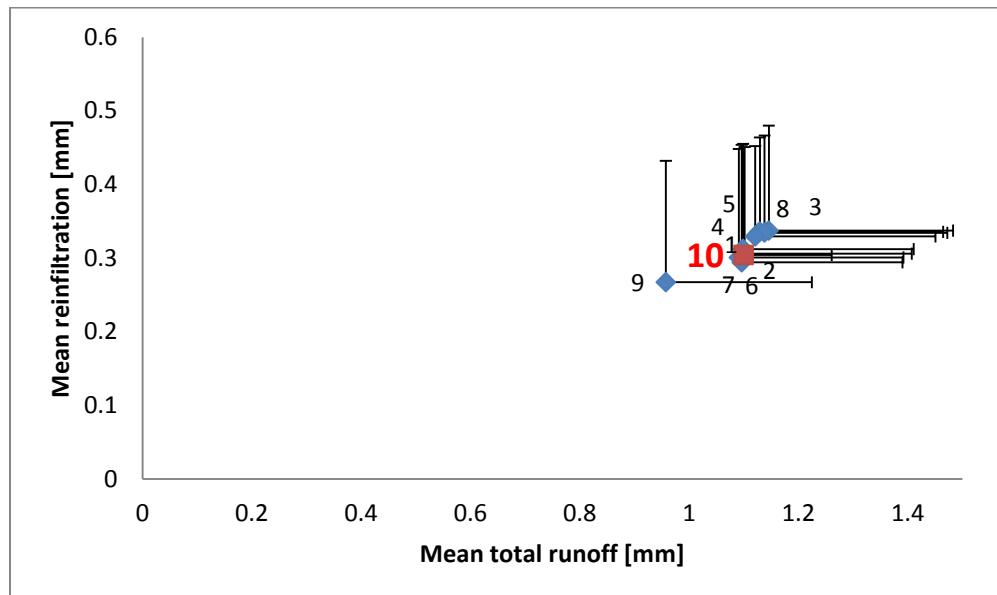


Figure 5-9 : Réinfiltration moyenne en fonction du ruissellement total moyen pour les 3 ans et pour la période de retour de 2 ans (barre d'erreur=écart-type).

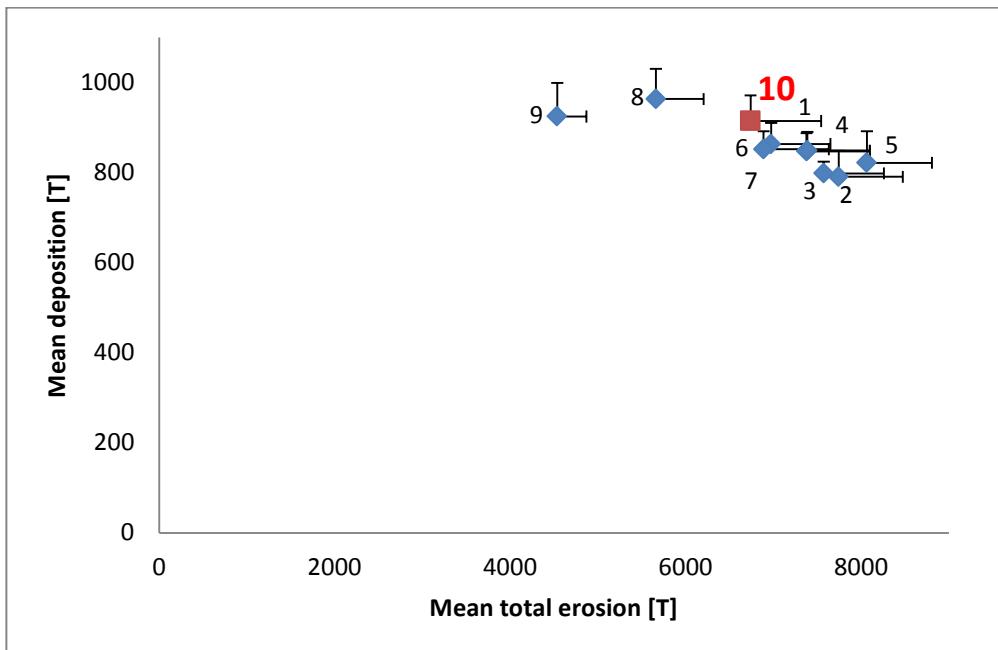


Figure 5-10 : Dépôt moyen en fonction de l'érosion totale produite moyenne pour les 3 ans et pour la période de retour de 100 ans (barre d'erreur=écart-type).

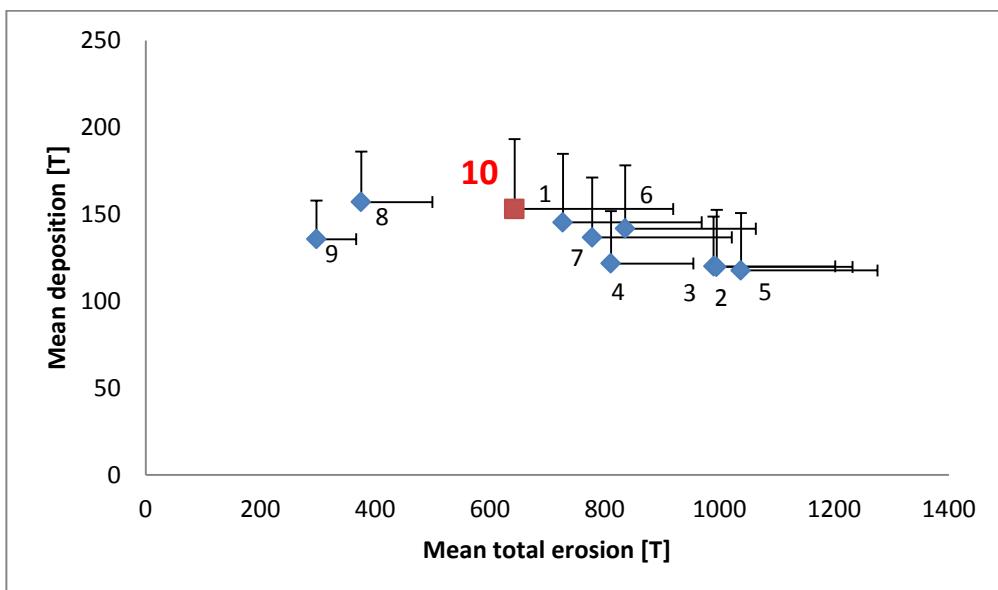


Figure 5-11 : Dépôt moyen en fonction de l'érosion totale produite moyenne pour les 3 ans et pour la période de retour de 2 ans (barre d'erreur=écart-type).

La Figure 5-8 et la Figure 5-9 montrent pour chaque période de retour l'importance relative de la réinfiltration par rapport à la production de ruissellement. Comme on pouvait s'y attendre, l'influence du scénario 10 est faible puisqu'elle se trouve au même endroit sur les 2 graphes que les autres scénarios (hormis les scénarios 4 et 9). Pour rappel, le scénario 9 a proposé des grandes surfaces d'aménagement diminuant la production et augmentant la réinfiltration. Pour le scénario 4, les plus de 10 kilomètres de haies ont une influence positive sur la réinfiltration. Pour le scénario 10, les 3 kilomètres de haies ne suffisent pas pour montrer cette influence. Elles ne croisent d'ailleurs que 3 fois des flux concentrés sur le BV prouvant que leur fonction de réinfiltration est secondaire.

La Figure 5-10 et la Figure 5-11 font la même relation pour les sédiments, à savoir entre le dépôt et la production de ceux-ci. L'impact du scénario 10 est plus présent, surtout pour la période de retour de 2 ans ce qui confirme une conclusion précédente (cf.

Figure 5-5 et Figure 5-6). La production de sédiments est entre 12 et 38 % inférieure aux scénarios 1 à 7 (entre 3 et 16 % pour la période de retour de 100 ans). Au niveau du dépôt, le scénario 10 rivalise même avec les 2 scénarios les plus efficaces en termes d'érosion (8 et 9). Pour la période de retour de 2 ans, le dépôt est 11 % supérieur au scénario 9 et seulement 2 % inférieur au scénario 8 déposant le plus de sédiments sur le BV.

Après toutes ces analyses du scénario 10, il semble qu'il permette d'allier toutes les fonctions que l'on peut demander à un tel plan d'aménagement. Il se trouve dans les scénarios les plus efficaces investigués dans ce chapitre au niveau ruissellement et érosion. En plus de cet objectif principal, il permet de multiplier les fonctions de ces aménagements pour augmenter les externalités positives. Il faut ajouter la faible consommation de surface et le coût raisonnable du scénario (en comparaison aux coûts des dégâts et du patrimoine sol). Un dernier point crucial est que ce scénario semble ancré dans la réalité de terrain et pourrait rencontrer les attentes de tous les acteurs impliqués. Toutes ces raisons confirment le complément des bonnes pratiques développé dans ce chapitre grâce à l'apport des 10 scénarios.

2. Pistes futures

Après cette discussion générale et le développement des principales conclusions de ce document, il est temps de dresser une liste de perspectives. L'identification des faiblesses du processus de quantification de l'érosion avec LandSoil permet de caractériser des pistes de recherche à développer dans le futur.

Le travail d'analyse des différentes résolutions au chapitre 2 a été réalisé en utilisant un indice de connectivité. Il demande à être confirmé par d'autres moyens (autres indices). Plus particulièrement, des indices permettant de rendre compte de la connectivité fonctionnelle ou des indices à l'échelle du BV doivent confirmer ces conclusions, même si les derniers cités sont plus difficiles à calculer (Heckmann et

al., 2018). En plus, les techniques utilisant des UAV et les techniques de traitements photogrammétriques étant amenées à évoluer, il est plus que probable que le bruit des MNT à haute résolution soit très fortement atténué voire supprimé. Il reste toujours le poids des données qui demande des ordinateurs puissants et peut représenter un frein. Toutefois, à la vue des avancées actuelles, il n'est pas forcément nécessaire d'aller vers de telles résolutions n'amenant pas réellement de nouvelles informations. Evidemment, cela doit être relié à l'objectif d'étude. Si celui-ci est l'étude de la microtopographie d'une parcelle, une très haute résolution est évidemment nécessaire. En résumé, le choix d'une taille de pixel n'est pas fixe (même pour un même environnement). Il dépend de deux choses principales: **l'objectif de l'étude et la disponibilité des données**. Finalement, l'expertise et la réflexion de l'utilisateur sont nécessaires.

Au niveau de la quantification du ruissellement et de l'érosion, il est clair que les modèles sont de redoutables instruments. Pourtant, 3 étapes importantes se dressent devant le modélisateur: **le choix du modèle, la mesure des entrées et la validation des sorties**.

Dans cette thèse, **LandSoil a été choisi** car il répond à l'objectif recherché de quantification du ruissellement et de l'érosion de manière globale dans de petits bassins-versants agricoles (sans étudier la dynamique au cours de l'événement, effet splash, modification des FCR pendant l'évènement, etc.). LandSoil permet de rendre compte de la complexité du phénomène érosif en limitant le nombre d'entrées à mesurer et les incertitudes qui y sont liées. En plus, il intègre explicitement les processus liés à la connectivité qui est un élément majeur de compréhension de l'érosion (limites de parcelles, bandes enherbées, haies, routes, sens du travail du sol, etc.). Une étude récente de comparaison de différents modèles sur la représentation de la connectivité sur un BV semi-virtuel (le même que le BV d'étude de cette thèse) a permis de confronter LandSoil à d'autres modèles et estimer si son utilisation est appropriée à notre objectif (Baartman et al., 2020). Cette étude a comparé les modèles LandSoil, WaterSed, OpenLisem, Erosion 3D et FullSWOF 2D à propos de 53 scénarios incluant 2 périodes de retour, 3 tailles de parcelles, 5 allocations des cultures (50 % céréales, 50 % betterave sucrière), une orientation du travail du sol perpendiculaire à la pente et une inclusion de 2 % de bandes enherbées (Annexe 11). Cette diversité de types de modèles et de facteurs testés dans les scénarios permet de comparer LandSoil aux autres modèles au niveau des résultats. Les similitudes et différences obtenues peuvent être expliquées par le fonctionnement des différents modèles. De cette étude, il ressort en premier lieu que les facteurs influençant le plus la connectivité pour LandSoil sont par ordre d'importance la précipitation, la taille des parcelles, l'allocation des cultures et l'orientation du travail du sol perpendiculaire à la pente (Annexe12, Table 7-9). La précipitation est donc le facteur prépondérant pour l'ensemble des modèles. L'augmentation de l'intensité des pluies est responsable de l'augmentation de l'érosion et du rendement en sédiments (Baartman et al., 2012; Fiener et al., 2019) ce qui est en accord avec l'ordre de priorité des modèles. En ce qui concerne la taille

des parcelles, elle est plus importante pour LandSoil (et WaterSed) que pour les autres modèles. Cela confirme qu'augmenter les possibilités de dépôt en réduisant les longueurs de parcelles permet de diminuer la quantité de sédiments exportés (conclusion du chapitre 3). Un deuxième élément (Annexe 12, Figure 7-13) vient démontrer l'importance de l'occupation du sol dans les résultats de LandSoil (conclusion chapitre 3). La répartition des points pour la taille de la zone connectée à l'exutoire montre une grande influence des allocations de céréales et de betteraves sucrières. LandSoil permet donc de rendre compte, dans la quantification de l'érosion, des variations dues à la précipitation, à l'occupation du sol et aux rotations de cultures. Le sens du travail du sol et l'incorporation de 2 % de bandes enherbées semblent jouer un rôle mineur comme pour tous les autres modèles. Dans le chapitre 4 de comparaison des scénarios antiérosifs, les aménagements représentent plus de 2 % et ont un effet manifeste sur la connectivité du BV. LandSoil représente donc un bon choix de modèle pour cette thèse. Un dernier argument est qu'il a de grandes similitudes avec tous les autres modèles au niveau de la matrice d'accord pour la surface totale et avec Erosion 3D pour la matrice d'accord des surfaces connectées (Annexe 12, Figure 7-15). Finalement, une des conclusions de cette comparaison de modèles est que la paramétrisation de l'infiltration, de l'érodibilité et des mesures de conservation est aussi importante que la structure des modèles. Cela donne encore plus d'importance au deuxième point évoqué après le choix du modèle: la mesure des données d'entrée et la validation des sorties.

L'acquisition des données d'entrée et la validation des sorties du modèle sont sûrement les choses les plus importantes à développer dans le futur. Les modèles peuvent être un outil puissant de quantification si nous sommes sûrs de leur bonne utilisation. Les entrées du modèle doivent être minutieusement préparées et cela demande certaines mesures en amont. C'est un des points les plus importants à développer puisqu'ils dictent les résultats du modèle. Les recherches à ce niveau sont bien insuffisantes et doivent être développées: des campagnes de terrain pour mesurer les FCR, l'infiltration, l'imbibition, les règles d'arrachage et de dépôt. Particulièrement à ce niveau, le dépôt engendré par des éléments linéaires n'est pas encore connu avec certitude, encore plus pour certains aménagements comme les fascines. Un autre point est la mesure mensuelle des FCR. Celle-ci pourrait être diminuée à la décade ou à la semaine car certains phénomènes modifient profondément les FCR au cours d'un même mois (travail du sol, récolte, croissance végétale, etc.). Bien entendu, cela dépend de nouveau de l'objectif de l'étude. Si celle-ci est à plus long terme, de telles mesures ainsi que la modélisation en aval deviendraient chronophages. La règle d'infiltration doit être complétée pour augmenter le nombre de combinaisons FCR mesurées et pour diminuer les écarts-types des combinaisons déjà mesurées. Les entrées ont été mesurées même si elles avaient déjà été mises à jour pour un BV dont les caractéristiques sont assez proches de celui utilisé dans le cadre de cette thèse. Par exemple, pour l'infiltration, des différences de teneur en sable de 10 à 15 % impliquent des différences de capacité d'infiltration de 50 %. Cela pointe une **première limite du modèle qui est la transposition des règles expertes**. Un créneau de recherche à développer est de

déterminer plus objectivement la possibilité de transposer ces règles dans des bassins-versants similaires (même taille, mêmes types de sol, même occupation du sol, etc.). Récolter ou mesurer ces règles permettraient de se rendre compte de leur variabilité et de quantifier leur influence sur les résultats du modèle.

La validation demande clairement plus de mesures pour pouvoir confirmer les résultats obtenus. Au niveau de l'érosion, les mesures avec les réglettes doivent être spatialisées pour vérifier les schémas spatiaux et pas seulement certains points du BV. Elles doivent reprendre un nombre de mesures suffisantes. Dans la limite du possible, une couverture complète du bassin au point de vue spatial et une série temporelle sur l'année est à privilégier. En plus, plusieurs années de rotation culturelle doivent être prises en compte pour pallier la variation dues aux cultures. Une fois ces étapes réalisées, le modèle peut être utilisé sans fin (dans les limites de calibration et de validation) pour quantifier des situations érosives, développer des scénarios de gestion du BV et communiquer avec les pouvoirs décisionnels. Cette étape de validation pointe tout de même une **deuxième limite de LandSoil**. En effet, les coefficients de ruissellement et les taux d'érosion sont beaucoup plus élevés pour le modèle que pour les mesures pour de tout petits bassins-versants (<5 ha) homogènes point de vue occupation du sol (Figure 3-5 et Table 3-8). Comme dit au chapitre 3, ce comportement a déjà été observé ailleurs (Cerdan et al., 2004). A l'opposé, pour de très grands bassins-versants (>1000 ha), les processus de ruissellement plusieurs heures/jours après l'événement pluvieux et de réinfiltration ne peuvent pas être pris en compte par LandSoil. Cela est inhérent au fonctionnement du modèle et l'objectif de l'étude doit être en adéquation avec le choix du modèle. LandSoil doit donc se limiter à la quantification du ruissellement et de l'érosion sur des bassins-versants agricoles compris entre 5 et 1000 ha avec un parcellaire clairement défini mettant en avant les processus liés à la connectivité.

Au niveau des scénarios d'aménagement du BV, il est primordial d'intégrer l'ensemble des dispositifs pour analyser le comportement hydrologique global du BV. Il est intéressant de coupler plusieurs éléments différents ayant chacun un rôle spécifique. Les haies permettent d'avoir un impact conséquent sur le ruissellement grâce à leur grande capacité d'infiltration. Les chenaux enherbés permettent de déconnecter, de déposer et de diminuer les rigoles temporaires. Les bandes enherbées et les bandes boisées ont un pouvoir de sédimentation important. Les fascines sont encore trop peu connues pour permettre de réellement statuer sur leurs propriétés hydrauliques et antiérosives. Quel que soit l'élément installé, la localisation est très importante. Grâce à une réflexion approfondie, il est possible de réduire significativement la production et l'export de ruissellement et de sédiments. Un essai de modélisation incorporant un par un les aménagements permettrait de se rendre compte de l'effet marginal d'un aménagement. En allant plus loin, ces objectifs de conservation des sols et de limitation de l'érosion peuvent être couplés à d'autres objectifs comme la biodiversité, la qualité des eaux de surface ou encore le paysage. Les coulées boueuses étant de plus en plus susceptibles de se produire

souvent, ce genre de réflexion globale et intégrée est la piste à privilégier dans le futur.

Il est à noter que les objectifs poursuivis dans cette thèse pour la conservation des sols et la diminution de l'érosion à l'échelle du BV sont réalisables à court terme. A moyen voire à long terme, une réflexion complète de l'aménagement rural est nécessaire pour pérenniser la valeur ajoutée attendue de l'agriculture tout en diminuant significativement la pression qu'elle exerce sur l'environnement. Dans un contexte actuel où les pressions environnementales sont pointées du doigt à juste titre, nous devons repenser certaines bases de l'agriculture afin de pouvoir rencontrer les objectifs économiques, sociétaux et environnementaux recherchés. La réussite de ces objectifs dépendra de la capacité d'adaptation du monde rural. Pour y arriver, le parcellaire agricole doit être redessiné. En diminuant la taille des parcelles par exemple, cela permettrait au niveau environnemental de :

- Diminuer les longueurs de pente et ainsi modérer le ruissellement et l'érosion (Baartman et al., 2020). Moins de vitesse de ruissellement implique un détachement moindre des particules de sol.
- Avoir une succession de cultures différentes en descendant la pente (céréales et cultures sarclées). L'érosion serait diminuée et la capacité de dépôt augmentée.
- Augmenter le nombre de limites de parcelle permettant de multiplier les possibilités d'installation d'éléments linéaires antiérosifs. Cela aurait pour impact de diminuer la connectivité hydrologique et sédimentaire (chapitre 4).
- Augmenter la connectivité verte en permettant une installation et circulation encore plus aisée de la biodiversité.
- Maximiser les externalités positives comme l'embellissement paysager, l'entretien de vieux chemins oubliés, la pollinisation, etc.

Il est évident que le parcellaire ne serait pas suffisant et pour que cette réflexion soit cohérente, elle doit être intégrée de manière globale. Ainsi, une des principales raisons du remembrement agricole du XX^{ème} siècle était la diminution des temps et des coûts d'exploitation. Il faudrait ainsi se tourner vers des techniques culturales simplifiées (non-labour, strip-till, etc.) conservant des rendements corrects et surtout réduisant les coûts permettant de justifier un bilan identique voire meilleur dans certains cas par rapport à l'agriculture conventionnelle. En plus de cela, cette nouvelle manière de penser l'agriculture permet de réduire fortement l'application d'intrants nocifs pour l'environnement (pesticides, herbicides, engrais, etc.). Ceci est en adéquation avec les objectifs environnementaux de promotion de la biodiversité. Les apports scientifiques de cette thèse doivent donc être remis dans un contexte plus global de conservation des sols et d'autres objectifs environnementaux et économiques intimement liés.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhydrol.2014.06.032>

Annexes

1. Carte des sols du bassin-versant d'Hévillers

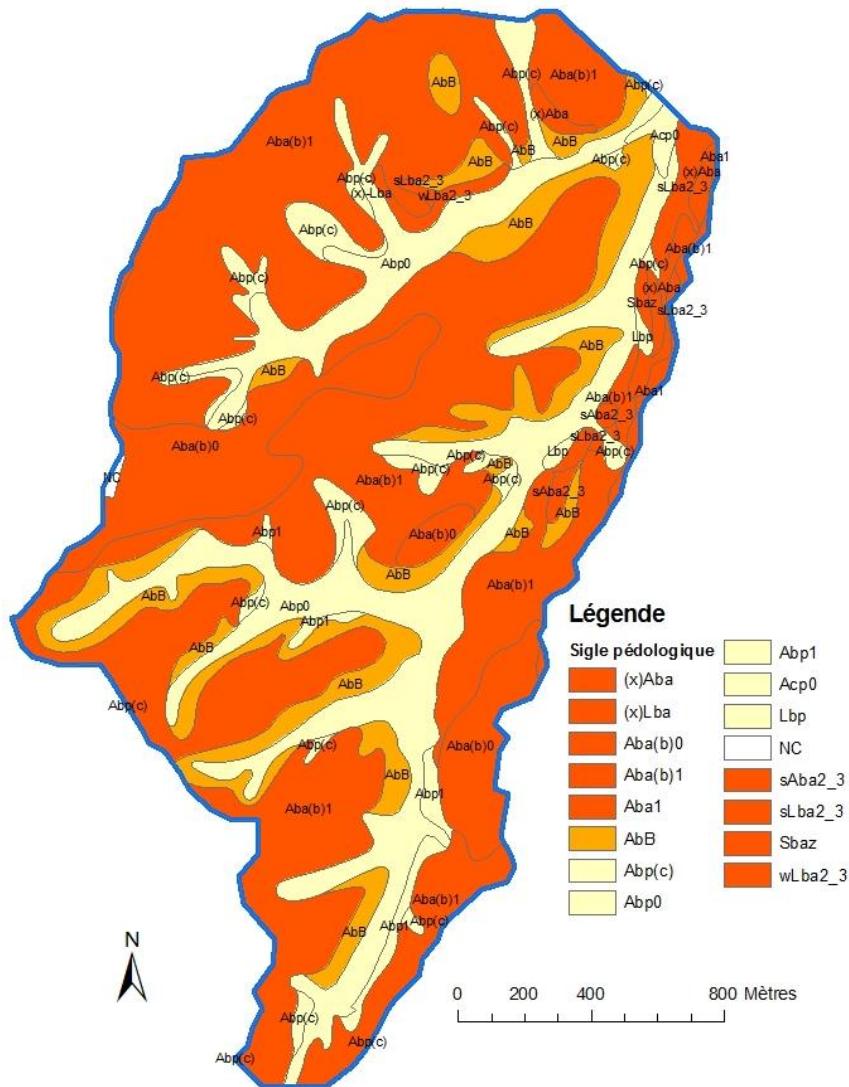


Figure 7-1 : Carte des sols du bassin-versant d'Hévillers.

Tableau 7-1 : Analyse granulométrique du sigle AbB1b. Les horizons ont été délimités via des descriptions de profil de pédologues¹⁴.

| Horizon | Profondeur (cm) | Carbone organique (%) | Granulométrie (%) | | |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| | | | Argile | Limon | Sable |
| Ap1 | 0-15 | 2.9 | 15.5 | 78.3 | 6.2 |
| Ap2 | 15-30 | / | / | / | / |
| Bt | 30-90 | / | 23.9 | 71.8 | 4.3 |
| BC | 90+ | / | 25.5 | 68.8 | 5.7 |

Tableau 7-2 : Analyse granulométrique du sigle AbB2a. Les horizons ont été délimités via des descriptions de profil de pédologues.

| Horizon | Profondeur (cm) | Carbone organique (%) | Granulométrie (%) | | |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| | | | Argile | Limon | Sable |
| Ap1 | 0-10 | 1.2 | 19.2 | 74.6 | 6.2 |
| Ap2 | 10-20 | / | / | / | / |
| Ap3 | 20-35 | / | / | / | / |
| Bt1 | 35-70 | / | 20.1 | 73.8 | 6.1 |
| Bt2 | 70-100 | / | / | / | / |
| C | 100+ | / | 21.4 | 72.2 | 6.4 |

Tableau 7-3 : Analyse granulométrique du sigle AbB2a. Les horizons ont été délimités via des descriptions de profil de pédologues.

| Horizon | Profondeur (cm) | Carbone organique (%) | Granulométrie (%) | | |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| | | | Argile | Limon | Sable |
| Ap1 | 0-15 | 1.6 | 14.5 | 77.6 | 7.9 |
| Ap2 | 15-20 | 1.1 | / | / | / |
| Ap3 | 20-35 | / | / | / | / |
| Bt | 35-105 | / | 23.9 | 71.2 | 4.9 |
| BC | 105+ | / | 23.9 | 70.8 | 5.3 |

¹⁴PCNSW, Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech.

Tableau 7-4 : Analyse granulométrique du sigle Abp0. Les horizons ont été délimités via des descriptions de profil de pédologues.

| Horizon | Profondeur (cm) | Carbone organique (%) | Granulométrie (%) | | |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| | | | Argile | Limon | Sable |
| Ap1 | 0-10 | 1.4 | 13.7 | 78.1 | 8.2 |
| Ap2 | 10-25 | / | / | / | / |
| Ap3 | 25-40 | 2.3 | / | / | / |
| C1 | 40-70 | / | 13.4 | 78.2 | 8.4 |
| C2 | 70-90 | / | 13.1 | 76.2 | 10.7 |
| C3 | 90-95 | / | / | / | / |
| C4 | 95+ | / | / | / | / |

2. Classe de pente du bassin-versant d'Hévillers

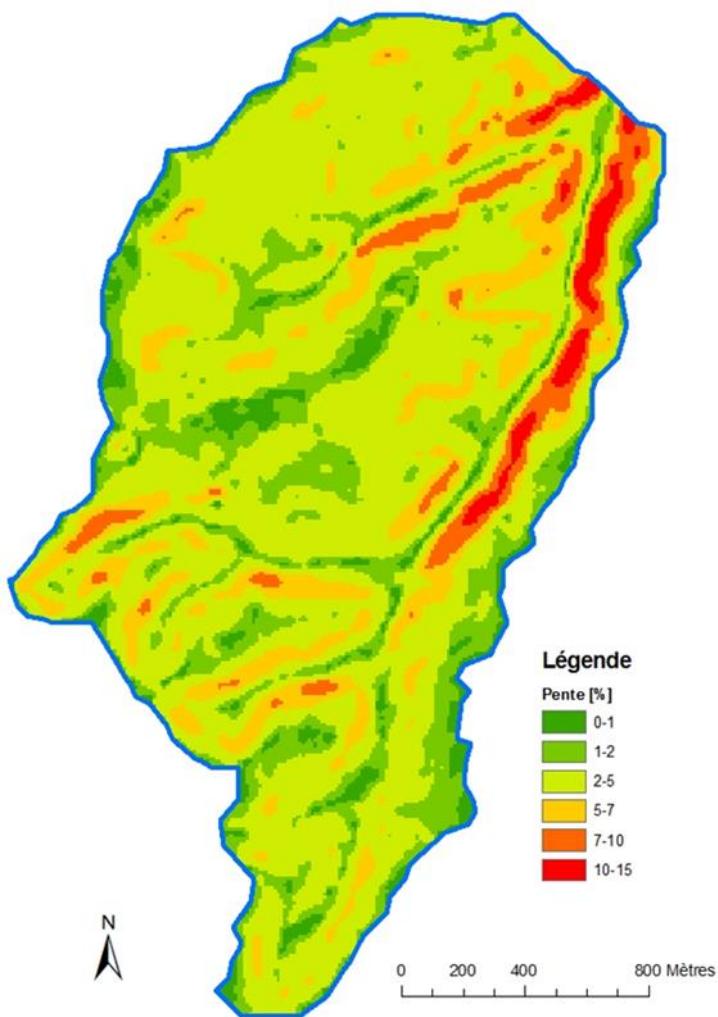


Figure 7-2 : Classe de pente du bassin-versant d'Hévillers.

3. Diagramme climatique d'Hévillers (Source : <http://fr.climate-data.org/>, 30/11/17)

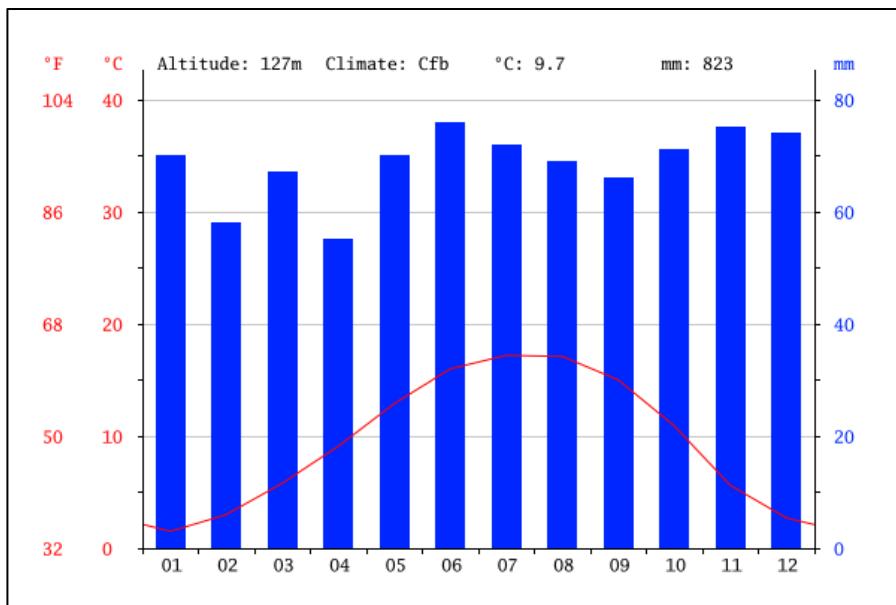


Figure 7-3 : Diagramme climatique d'Hévillers.

4. Definition of IC upslope and downslope component in the landscape for IC (Borselli et al., 2008)

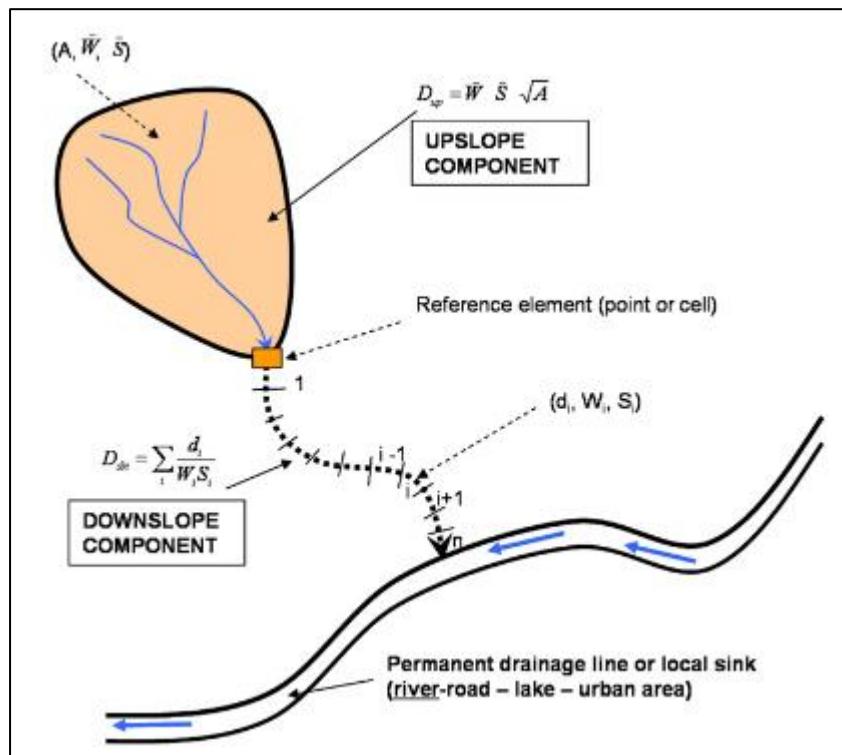
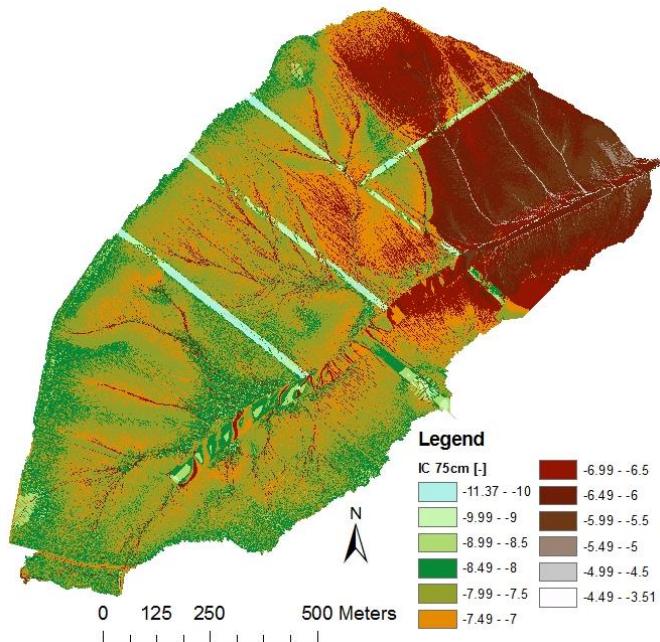
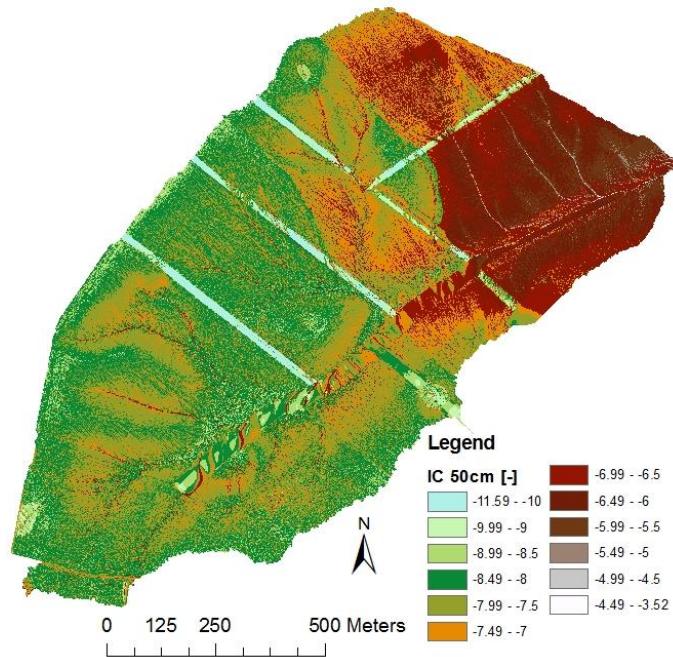


Figure 7-4 : Definition of IC upslope and downslope components in the landscape for IC (Borselli et al., 2008).

5. IC maps for different pixel sizes (50 cm, 75 cm, 2 m and 10 m)



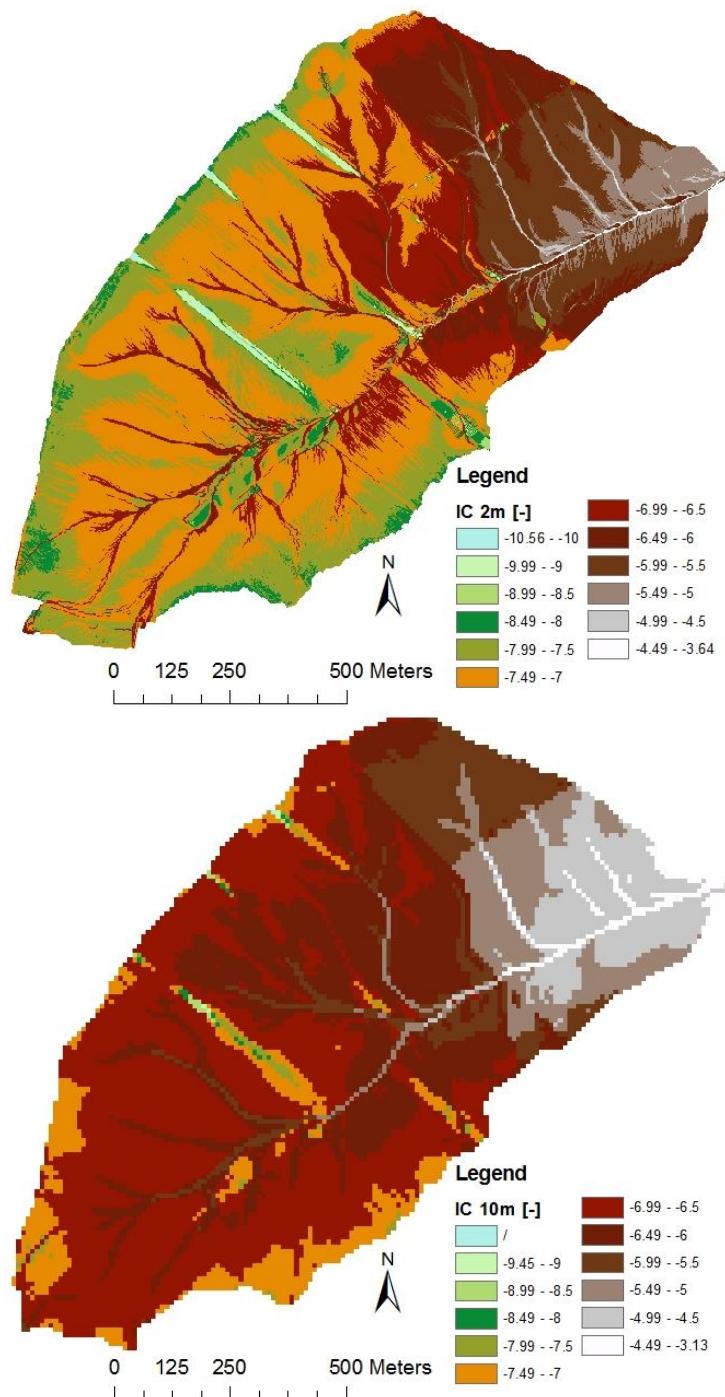


Figure 7-5 : IC maps for different pixel sizes (50 cm, 75 cm, 2 m and 10 m).

6. Photos et détails à propos des FCR (Pineux, 2018)

Tableau 7-1 : Tableau décrivant les différents stades de faciès.

| Classe | Description |
|--------|--|
| F0 | Structure fragmentaire initiale conférée par le travail du sol, toutes les particules sont clairement distinguables. |
| F11 | Stade fragmentaire altéré avec une croûte structurale discontinue. |
| F12 | Stade de transition avec une apparence de croûte structurale continue et croûte sédimentaire dans les dépressions. |
| F2 | Stade continu avec croûte sédimentaire généralisée. |



Figure 7-6 : Photos des différents stades de faciès.



Figure 7-7 : Photos des différentes classes de couverture végétale.

Tableau 7-2 : Tableau décrivant les différentes classes de rugosité du sol.

| Classe | Indice de rugosité (cm) | Situation agroclimatique |
|--------|-------------------------|---|
| R0 | 0-1 | Champ récolté avec compaction intense, champ ensemencé avec une croûte importante. |
| R1 | 1-2 | Champ ensemencé avec lit de semences modérément encrouté ou très affiné. |
| R2 | 2-5 | Champ récemment ensemencé avec de grandes mottes, champs labourés encroutés sans résidus. |
| R3 | 5-10 | Champ déchaumé et récemment ensemencé avec une surface très motteuse. |
| R4 | 10-15 | Champ labouré. |
| R5 | > 15 | Champ avec présence de grosses mottes. |



Figure 7-8 : Photos de différentes classes de rugosité.

7. Infiltration/runoff balance calculation

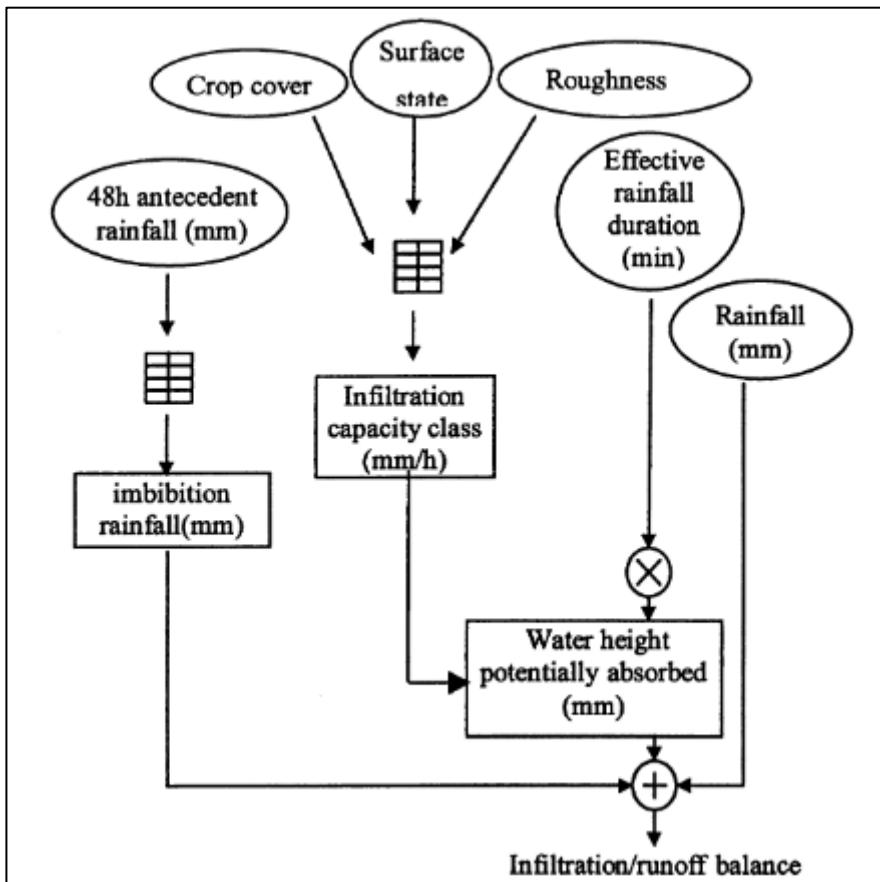


Figure 7-9 : Infiltration/runoff balance calculation.

8. Flow direction in the LandSoil model

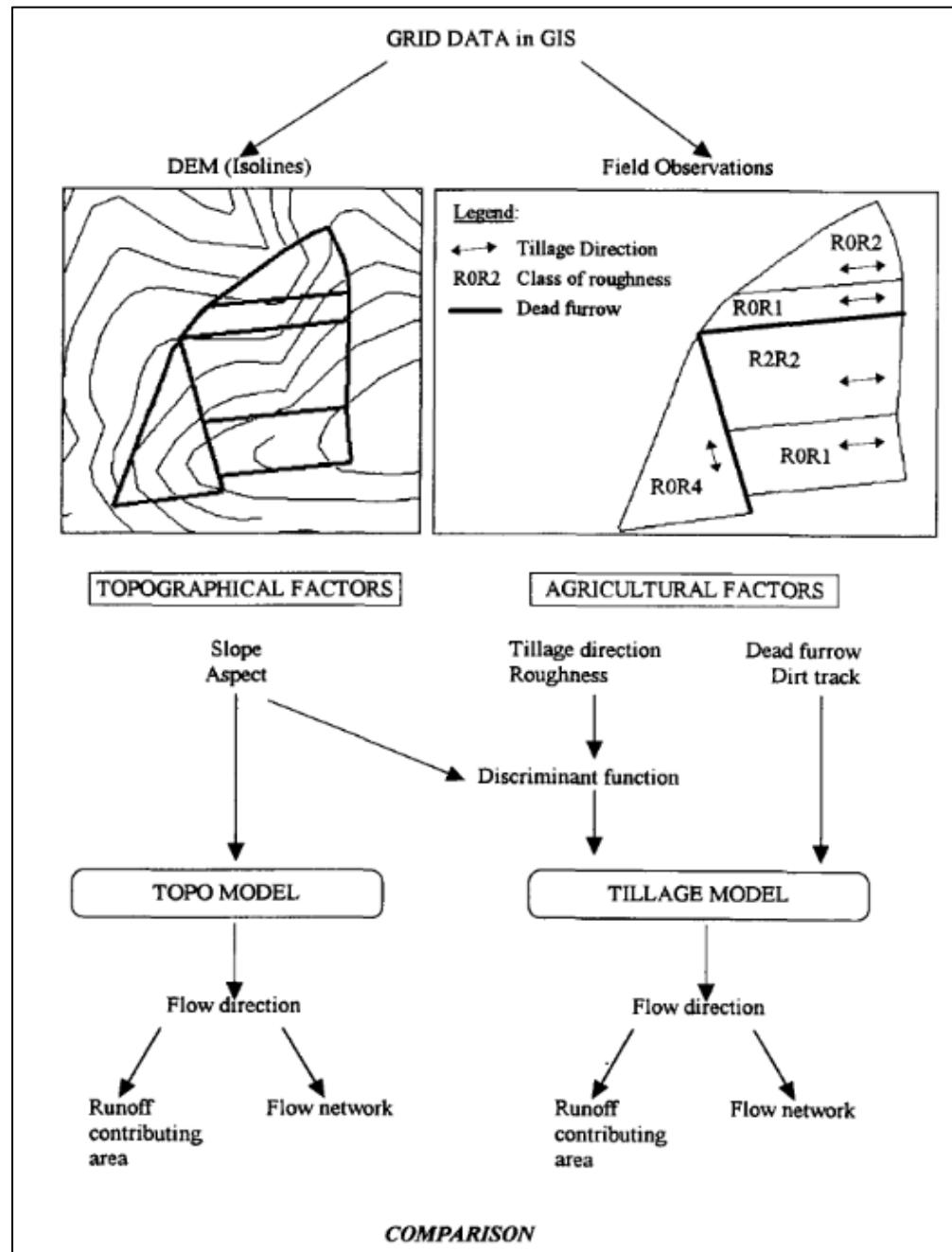


Figure 7-10 : Flow direction in the LandSoil model.

9. Rainfalls selection for 2014, 2015 and 2016

Table 7-3 : Rainfalls selection for 2014, 2015 and 2016.

| Date | Effective duration [min] | Maximal intensity [mm h ⁻¹] | Rainfall amount [mm] | 48h-antecedent rainfall [mm] | Amount/duration [mm min ⁻¹] |
|------------|--------------------------|---|----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| 07/04/2014 | 31 | 11.39 | 6.6 | 0 | 0.21 |
| 21/04/2014 | 11 | 2 | 2.2 | 0.2 | 0.20 |
| 22/04/2014 | 12 | 5.52 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 0.20 |
| 24/04/2014 | 13 | 2.89 | 2.6 | 4 | 0.20 |
| 01/05/2014 | 28 | 15.3 | 5.8 | 0 | 0.21 |
| 06/05/2014 | 43 | 10.44 | 8.8 | 0 | 0.20 |
| 07/05/2014 | 10 | 10.25 | 2 | 8.8 | 0.20 |
| 08/05/2014 | 41 | 8.34 | 8.2 | 10.8 | 0.20 |
| 10/05/2014 | 18 | 7.011 | 3.6 | 4.4 | 0.20 |
| 12/05/2014 | 29 | 21.65 | 7.4 | 3.8 | 0.26 |
| 21/05/2014 | 80 | 188.8 | 16 | 0 | 0.20 |
| 03/06/2014 | 22 | 29.54 | 5.2 | 0.2 | 0.24 |
| 05/07/2014 | 9 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 0.22 |
| 05/07/2014 | 24 | 51.02 | 6.2 | 2 | 0.26 |
| 06/07/2014 | 24 | 39.52 | 6.2 | 8.2 | 0.26 |
| 07/07/2014 | 99 | 6.84 | 18.4 | 6.4 | 0.19 |
| 08/07/2014 | 224 | 10.17 | 41.4 | 18.6 | 0.18 |
| 11/07/2014 | 44 | 30.04 | 9.8 | 39.4 | 0.22 |
| 20/07/2014 | 8 | 17.8 | 1.8 | 0 | 0.23 |
| 20/07/2014 | 7 | 36.21 | 2.2 | 1.8 | 0.31 |
| 22/07/2014 | 16 | 12 | 2.6 | 4 | 0.16 |
| 27/07/2014 | 13 | 5.175 | 3.6 | 0 | 0.28 |
| 28/07/2014 | 26 | 31.71 | 6 | 3.6 | 0.23 |
| 29/07/2014 | 69 | 28.42 | 24.2 | 9.6 | 0.35 |
| 25/04/2015 | 14 | 6.047 | 2.8 | 0 | 0.20 |
| 25/04/2015 | 33 | 10.54 | 6.8 | 2.8 | 0.21 |
| 26/04/2015 | 7 | 10.95 | 1.4 | 10.4 | 0.20 |
| 26/04/2015 | 28 | 12 | 5.6 | 11.8 | 0.20 |

| Date | Effective duration [min] | Maximal intensity [mm h ⁻¹] | Rainfall amount [mm] | 48 h-antecedent rainfall [mm] | Amount/duration [mm min ⁻¹] |
|------------|--------------------------|---|----------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| 03/05/2015 | 47 | 71.74 | 9.4 | 0 | 0.20 |
| 04/05/2015 | 35 | 60.94 | 7 | 9.4 | 0.20 |
| 15/05/2015 | 10 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 0.20 |
| 29/05/2015 | 13 | 4.096 | 2.6 | 0.2 | 0.20 |
| 31/05/2015 | 31 | 20.75 | 6.6 | 3.2 | 0.21 |
| 05/06/2015 | 38 | 64.19 | 18.6 | 0 | 0.49 |
| 26/06/2015 | 8 | 24 | 1.8 | 0 | 0.23 |
| 12/05/2016 | 10 | 24.57 | 2.4 | 0 | 0.24 |
| 27/05/2016 | 48 | 29.64 | 10.8 | 0.8 | 0.23 |
| 28/05/2016 | 14 | 22.65 | 3.2 | 11.4 | 0.23 |
| 29/05/2016 | 11 | 42.27 | 2.2 | 14.4 | 0.20 |
| 30/05/2016 | 71 | 12 | 14.2 | 6 | 0.20 |
| 30/05/2016 | 35 | 36 | 8.4 | 20 | 0.24 |
| 31/05/2016 | 9 | 14.12 | 2 | 25.2 | 0.22 |
| 01/06/2016 | 60 | 25.85 | 5.6 | 17.2 | 0.09 |
| 01/06/2016 | 108 | 22 | 15.8 | 13.2 | 0.15 |
| 02/06/2016 | 10 | 3.518 | 2 | 21.6 | 0.20 |
| 02/06/2016 | 10 | 3.372 | 2 | 23.6 | 0.20 |
| 04/06/2016 | 40 | 27.41 | 4.8 | 8 | 0.12 |
| 05/06/2016 | 27 | 64.19 | 7.2 | 5.2 | 0.27 |
| 07/06/2016 | 15 | 6.614 | 3 | 7.4 | 0.20 |
| 12/06/2016 | 18 | 16.81 | 3.8 | 0.8 | 0.21 |
| 13/06/2016 | 20 | 17 | 4.2 | 4.6 | 0.21 |
| 14/06/2016 | 27 | 44.59 | 3.2 | 8.4 | 0.12 |
| 14/06/2016 | 12 | 45 | 3.6 | 11.4 | 0.30 |
| 14/06/2016 | 11 | 8.66 | 2.2 | 11 | 0.20 |
| 15/06/2016 | 13 | 7.352 | 2.6 | 9.2 | 0.20 |
| 16/06/2016 | 30 | 68.96 | 8.4 | 11.6 | 0.28 |
| 16/06/2016 | 18 | 7.8 | 3.8 | 12.8 | 0.21 |
| 17/06/2016 | 29 | 39.17 | 3.4 | 13.2 | 0.12 |
| 17/06/2016 | 16 | 13.8 | 3.2 | 16.2 | 0.20 |
| 18/06/2016 | 23 | 46.8 | 6.2 | 14.4 | 0.27 |
| 20/06/2016 | 35 | 3.389 | 7 | 7 | 0.20 |

| Date | Effective duration [min] | Maximal intensity [mm h^{-1}] | Rainfall amount [mm] | 48h antecedent rainfall [mm] | Amount/duration [mm min^{-1}] |
|------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 21/06/2016 | 6 | 36 | 1.6 | 7.4 | 0.27 |
| 23/06/2016 | 27 | 106.5 | 18.2 | 0.4 | 0.67 |
| 25/06/2016 | 16 | 28.4 | 4 | 18.2 | 0.25 |
| 26/06/2016 | 10 | 12 | 2 | 4 | 0.20 |
| 13/07/2016 | 21 | 8.17 | 4.2 | 1.2 | 0.20 |
| 14/07/2016 | 23 | 36.7 | 6.6 | 6 | 0.29 |
| 22/07/2016 | 34 | 11.16 | 6.8 | 0 | 0.20 |
| 23/07/2016 | 26 | 58.41 | 10 | 7.2 | 0.38 |
| 28/07/2016 | 23 | 28.13 | 5.8 | 0 | 0.25 |
| 28/07/2016 | 16 | 8.81 | 3.2 | 6.2 | 0.20 |
| 01/08/2016 | 210 | 29.26 | 40.4 | 0 | 0.19 |
| 10/08/2016 | 24 | 15.54 | 3.4 | 0 | 0.14 |
| 11/08/2016 | 15 | 12 | 3 | 3.4 | 0.20 |
| 21/08/2016 | 9 | 22.44 | 2.4 | 1.2 | 0.27 |
| 29/08/2016 | 18 | 11.81 | 2.6 | 0 | 0.14 |
| 04/09/2016 | 33 | 116.9 | 11.4 | 0.4 | 0.35 |

10. Pictures of graduated rulers



Figure 7-11 : Pictures of graduated rulers.

11. Cost Connecteur study about comparison of 5 models in a semi-virtual cultivated catchment (inputs)

Table 7-4 : Overview of model features.

| Model | | Surface runoff | | | Flow direction | | | Process representations | | | | | | |
|------------|---------------------|--|-----------------------------|---------|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|------|---------------------|---|---------------------|--|
| Name | Version | Infiltration | Type of runoff infiltration | Routing | Single / Multiple flow | Affected by tillage direction | Dynamic during modelling | Splash | Interrill | Rill | Ephemeral gullyning | Sediment transport | grain size specific | Deposition |
| EROSION 3D | | Green-Ampt | Hortonian | Yes | kinematic wave | yes | yes | yes | yes | no | no | momentum-flux-approach | yes | Deposition because of surface conditions and transport capacity |
| FulSWOT_2D | 1.07.01, 16/02/2017 | Green-Ampt, data driven based on surface conditions [expert rules] | Hortonian and/or saturation | Yes | Full water equations modified D8 with tillage direction | multiple flow | no | no | no | no | no | maximum sediment concentration | no | yes, applying maximum sediment concentration following land use, slope etc |
| LandSoil | 3.7.1, 14/02/2011 | | Hortonian | yes | | single flow | yes | no | yes | yes | yes | | | As a function of surface conditions, transport capacity and rate depends on flow width, sediment concentration and settling velocity |
| OpenLseM | 2.01 | Green-Ampt, data driven based on surface conditions | Hortonian and/or saturation | yes | kinematic wave | single flow | no | yes | yes | no | no | splash delivery function and stream power for overland flow | no | Deposition because of surface conditions and transport capacity |
| Watershed | V1.0 | | Hortonian and/or saturation | yes | D8 or MFD (depending on local slope) | variable | No | yes | yes | yes | yes | Local sediment concentration is transported (and cumulated/deposited) along with runoff | no | Deposition because of surface conditions and transport capacity |

| Model | Representing time and space | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|---|
| | Spatial resolution [m] | Time step [s] |
| Erosion3D | 1 | variable |
| FullSWOF_2D | 1 | variable |
| LandSoil | 1 | event |
| OpenSoil | 1 | variable (user-choice), but fixed within one event (here: 5s) |
| Watershed | 1 | event |

Table 7-5 : Soil parameters for all scenarios.

| Soil property | Unit | Value |
|---|-----------------------------|-------|
| Vol. water content initial (field capacity) | $\text{m}^3 \text{ m}^{-3}$ | 0.38 |
| Vol. water content wilting point | $\text{m}^3 \text{ m}^{-3}$ | 0.16 |
| Vol. water content saturated | $\text{m}^3 \text{ m}^{-3}$ | 0.49 |
| Particle density | kg m^{-3} | 2650 |
| Bulk density | kg m^{-3} | 1350 |
| Stoniness | % mass | 0 |
| Depth | m | 2 |
| Sand (50-2000 μm) | % | 14 |
| Silt (2-50 μm) | % | 69 |
| Clay (<2 μm) | % | 17 |
| Soil organic carbon content | g kg^{-1} | 11 |
| Matric head at wetting front (Green & Ampt) | mm | 250 |
| Median diameter (d50) | μm | 35 |
| Soil cohesion | kPa | 7 |
| Aggregate stability according to drop test | No. of drops | 10 |

Table 7-6 : Overview of the scenarios of different fields sizes and inclusion of grass strips.

| Scenarios | Rainfall | Abbreviations | Different parcel arrangements | Number of simulations |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Baseline | 1 yr, 10 yr, 50 yr | BA ₁ , BA ₁₀ , BA ₅₀ | 0 | 3 |
| Small fields | 10 yr, 50 yr | SF ₁₀ , SF ₅₀ | 5 | 10 |
| Medium fields | 10 yr, 50 yr | MF ₁₀ , MF ₅₀ | 5 | 10 |
| Medium fields, conservation | 10 yr, 50 yr | MF-cons ₁₀ , MF-cons ₅₀ | 5 | 10 |
| Large fields | 10 yr, 50 yr | LF ₁₀ , LF ₅₀ | 5 | 10 |
| Medium fields with grass strips | 10 yr, 50 yr | MF-gras ₁₀ , MF-gras ₅₀ | 5 | 10 |
| | | | | Total: 53 |

Table 7-7 : Rainfall duration and intensity as used by all models for the 1, 10 and 50-year return periods.

| Rainfall | Unit | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Return period | year | 1 | 10 | 50 |
| Duration | minute | 60 | 60 | 60 |
| Constant intensity | Mm h ⁻¹ | 17.4 | 29.9 | 38.7 |
| Kinetic energy | MJ mm ⁻¹ ha ⁻¹ | 0.203 | 0.243 | 0.260 |

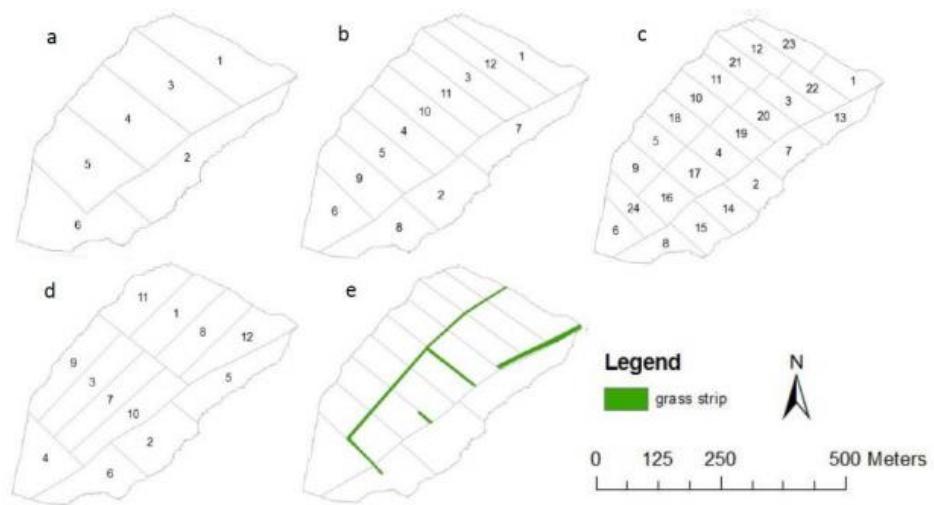


Figure 7-12 : The various scenarios of field size and orientation with (a) large fields, (b) medium-sized fields, (c) small fields, (d) medium-sized fields oriented perpendicular to the slope ('conservation') and (e) medium sized fields with grass strips and grassed waterway (depicted in green).

Table 7-8 : Soil and vegetation characteristics specific for each land use type.

| Parameters | Unit | Bare | Wheat | Sugarbeet | Grass strip |
|--|--------------------|--|---------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Crusting stage | / | F2 (sedimentary stage) | F12 (local depositional crusts) | F12 | F0 (fragmentary stage) |
| Roughness index | / | R0 (0-1 cm) | R1 (1-2 cm) | R1 (1-2 cm) | R1 (1-2cm) |
| Cover index | / | C1 (0-20%) | C3 (61-100%) | C1 (0-20%) | C3 (61-100%) |
| Final infiltration capacity – Saturated hydraulic conductivity | mm h ⁻¹ | 10 | 50 | 20 | 20 |
| Sediment concentration – interrill | g l ⁻¹ | 3 | 5 | 10 | 0 |
| Manning | SI units | 0.010 | 0.024 | 0.015 | 0.30 |
| Random roughness (RR) | mm | 6 | 6 | 6 | 12 |
| Depression storage | m | $=10*((0.327-0.037*slope+0,0012*slope^2)*RR+(-0.017+0.007*slope-0.0002*slope^2)*RR^2)$ | | | |
| Height oriented roughness | mm | 0 | 20 | 20 | 12 |
| Vegetation cover | % | 0 | 70 | 10 | 100 |
| Vegetation height | cm | 0 | 35 | 7.5 | 15 |
| Residue cover | % | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

12. Cost Connecteur study about comparison of 5 models in a semi-virtual cultivated catchment (outputs)

Table 7-9 : Ranking of the Absolute Mean Difference (AMD) in Water Relative Export (WRE), Sediment Relative Export (SRE), Connected Area Water (CAW), and Connected Area Sediment (CAS) as affected by the factors rainfall, field size, field allocation and conservation measures. Ranks from 1 (highest) to 4 (lowest) also illustrated by color coding from dark to light color. AMD values between brackets. Data for FullSWOF not shown because the model did not produce any runoff.

| Model | Erosion 3D | | | | OpenLisem | | | |
|-----------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | WRE | SRE | CAW | CAS | WRE | SRE | CAW | CAS |
| Rainfall | 1 (0.119) | 1 (0.088) | 1 (0.320) | 1 (0.320) | 1 (0.140) | 1 (0.095) | 1 (0.337) | 1 (0.267) |
| Field size | 4 (0.034) | 4 (0.036) | 4 (0.041) | 4 (0.035) | 3 (0.009) | 4 (0.017) | 3 (0.003) | 4 (0.007) |
| Crop allocation | 3 (0.046) | 2 (0.086) | 3 (0.047) | 3 (0.048) | 2 (0.025) | 2 (0.037) | 2 (0.027) | 2 (0.056) |
| Conservation | 2 (0.087) | 3 (0.040) | 2 (0.053) | 2 (0.057) | 4 (0.007) | 3 (0.020) | 4 (0.001) | 3 (0.010) |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Model | Landsoil | | | | WaterSed | | | |
| | WRE | SRE | CAW | CAS | WRE | SRE | CAW | CAS |
| Rainfall | 1 (0.094) | 2 (0.112) | 1 (0.132) | 1 (0.131) | 1 (0.160) | 1 (0.110) | 1 (0.290) | 1 (0.290) |
| Field size | 2 (0.044) | 1 (0.149) | 2 (0.063) | 2 (0.064) | 2 (0.017) | 2 (0.010) | 3 (0.003) | 3 (0.003) |
| Crop allocation | 3 (0.017) | 3 (0.053) | 3 (0.055) | 3 (0.054) | 3 (0.010) | 4 (0.004) | 2 (0.008) | 2 (0.008) |
| Conservation | 4 (0.006) | 4 (0.032) | 4 (0.039) | 4 (0.042) | 4 (0.005) | 3 (0.007) | 4 (0.001) | 4 (0.002) |

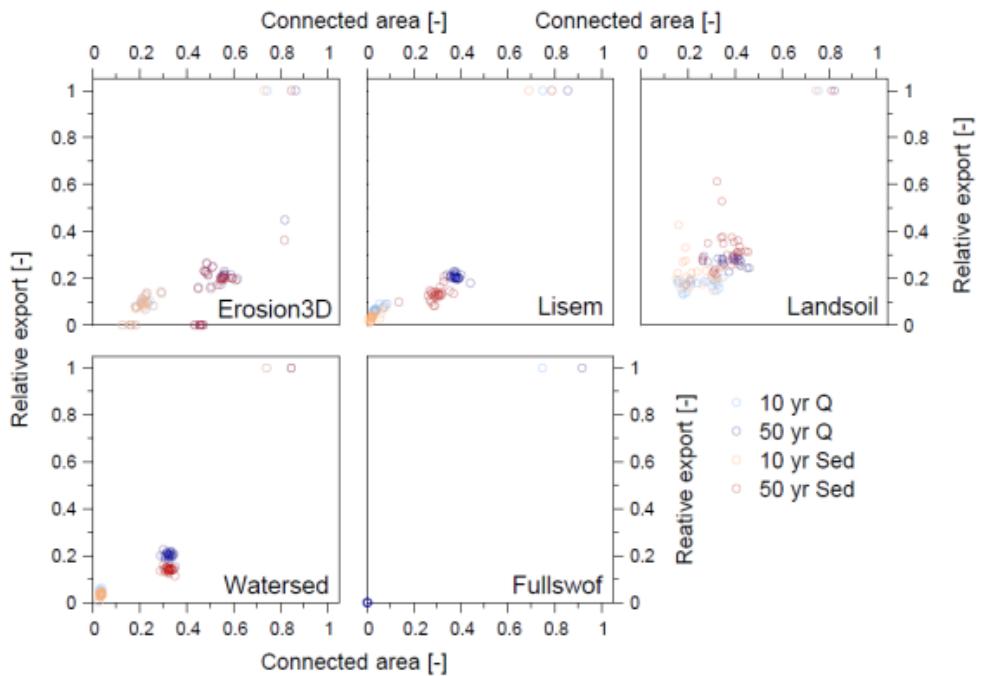


Figure 7-13 : Relationships between relative exports and connected area for the 53 scenarios and each of the five models. Red dots represent relative sediments exports (Sed in legend) while blue dots represent relative water exports (Q in legend). Lighter coloured dots represent the 10-year rainfall return period, darker coloured dots the 50-year return period. The four dots with a value of 1.0 for relative export represent the simulated results for the reference baseline scenarios.

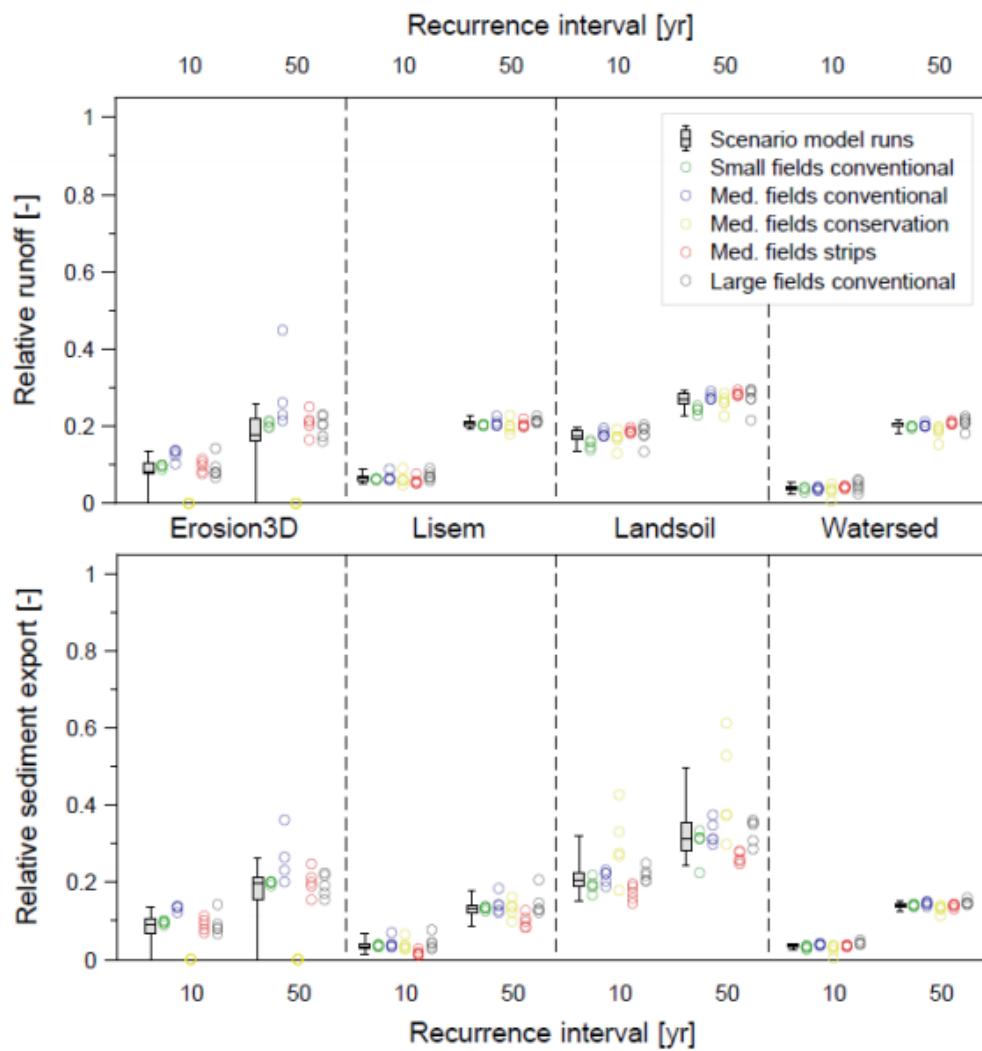


Figure 7-14 : Modelled relative water (upper graphs) and sediment (lower graphs) export differentiated for the five field designs; boxplots summarise the scenarios and field designs for each recurrence interval and model. Boxplots give median, 1st and 3rd quartile and 5% and 95% quantiles. Note: FullSWOF_2D is not included as it does not produce runoff for the scenarios.

Table 7-10 : 99th percentile of IC values, averaged across all models, ranked for all scenarios.
 Grey: large fields conventional, blue: medium fields conventional, green: small fields conventional, yellow: medium fields conservation, orange: medium fields grass strips.

| Rank | Scenario | | 99 th percentile IC [-] |
|------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Field map | Land use pattern | |
| 1 | Large fields | 3 | -3.46 |
| 2 | Medium fields; conservation | 1 | -3.49 |
| 3 | Medium fields; conservation | 4 | -3.53 |
| 4 | Small fields | 3 | -3.55 |
| 5 | Small fields | 2 | -3.56 |
| 6 | Medium fields | 1 | -3.56 |
| 7 | Large fields | 1 | -3.58 |
| 8 | Large fields | 4 | -3.58 |
| 9 | Medium fields | 4 | -3.59 |
| 10 | Large fields | 5 | -3.62 |
| 11 | Small fields | 1 | -3.62 |
| 12 | Small fields | 5 | -3.62 |
| 13 | Medium fields | 3 | -3.63 |
| 14 | Medium fields | 2 | -3.64 |
| 15 | Small fields | 4 | -3.64 |
| 16 | Large fields | 2 | -3.66 |
| 17 | Medium fields; conservation | 5 | -3.66 |
| 18 | Medium fields | 5 | -3.67 |
| 19 | Medium fields; conservation | 3 | -3.67 |
| 20 | Medium fields; conservation | 2 | -3.75 |
| 21 | Medium fields with grass strips | 1 | -3.95 |
| 22 | Medium fields with grass strips | 2 | -3.97 |
| 23 | Medium fields with grass strips | 3 | -3.96 |
| 24 | Medium fields with grass strips | 4 | -3.93 |
| 25 | Medium fields with grass strips | 5 | -4 |

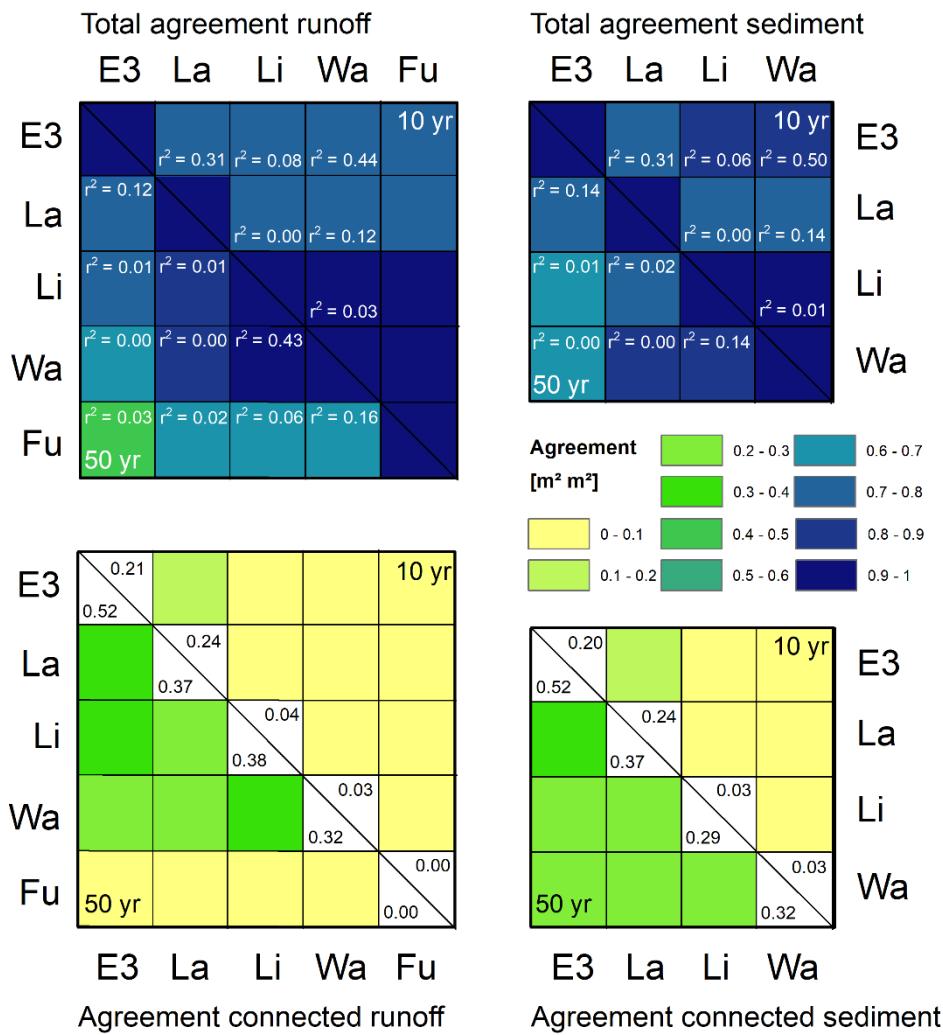


Figure 7-15 : Model agreement regarding the total area (upper panels) and the connected area (lower panels) for both runoff (left panels) and sediment (right panels). Colours indicate the mean area of agreement (%) for all scenarios, r^2 values indicate the agreement of the total connected area.