

A CRISIS IN AGRICULTURE – A CRISIS IN NATURE

Time to vote for an agricultural policy that supports the environment and creates green jobs

Europe's environment and agricultural system is in crisis and yet few political leaders respond to this.

Harmful farming practices are a big contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, water and soil pollution and the decline of biodiversity. Many rural areas are also suffering desperately from abandonment by farming families who can no longer make ends meet.

The 2014-2020 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform was supposed to give the CAP legitimacy in the eyes of the public by ensuring that it responded to the crisis in farming. Given that EU citizens contribute €58 billion a year to CAP spending, which is almost 40% of the EU budget, MEPs must represent the public interest and deliver the citizens' call for farming that leads to job creation and supports nature.

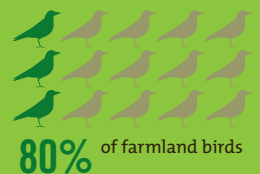
HOW CAP CURRENTLY WORKS

1) 75% of the budget is spent on untargeted **Direct Payments to farmers (Pillar 1)**, largely based on historical references to production. Under this Pillar, farmers directly receive an annual subsidy to support their business. In order to receive these subsidies, they also need to comply with basic EU legislation under cross compliance, which consists of a set of rules concerning the environment, food safety, animal and plant health and animal welfare, as well as some basic good agronomic practices. In reality the efficiency and effectiveness of the penalties and the control rates vary dramatically across the EU, and often fail to ensure the desired outcome. This weakens the system considerably.

2) The remaining 25% of the budget is used under the **Rural Development Fund (Pillar 2)** for target driven measures to improve competitiveness, the environment and the quality of life in rural areas. Only parts of these funds are used for voluntary multi-annual measures that support more advanced environmental investments and social and economic improvements. These measures have proven to help enhance sustainable farming and rural areas and maintain viable rural communities.

A DEEPENING CRISIS IN FARMING AND IN OUR COUNTRYSIDE

In rural areas, the **populations** of about ...



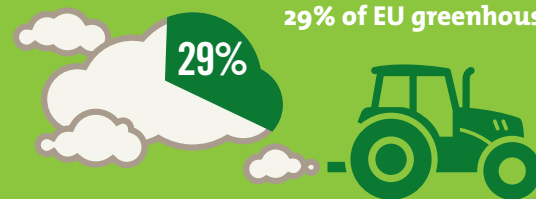
... have disappeared.

92% of rivers, lakes and aquifers in the EU are significantly affected by pollution, over-abstraction and habitat change due to agricultural activities.

3.7 Over the last 10 years, employment in farming has dropped by 25% with an overall loss of **MILLION JOBS**



The agri-food industry contributes over **29%** of EU greenhouse gas emissions



WHERE WE ARE IN THE CAP REFORM PROCESS

The European Commission proposal included some small steps towards the greening of Pillar 1, partial improvements for cross compliance and a new structure for Pillar 2. But there were few real improvements to the measures. Since then, the Council and Parliament have been reviewing the text.

For the first time ever, the European Parliament has full co-decision powers on the CAP. The Agriculture Committee approved its CAP mandate in January 2013. Their vote perpetuates a policy of untargeted and harmful CAP payments, and even reduces current environmental criteria. It also fails to adequately prioritise sustainable farming practices. These changes to the Commission proposal would strip away much of the existing and proposed environmental conditionality from farm subsidies and would be a step backwards.

77% OF ALL EUROPEANS

demand stricter environmental conditions in Europe's agricultural policy.

WHAT WOULD THE CURRENT AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE REPORT CHANGE?

The short-sighted and regressive decisions include:

1. **The Agriculture Committee significantly weakened** the European Commission's proposal to introduce a set of common good farming practices to be applied by all farmers in the EU in return for CAP subsidies (the so called "greening"). The Committee's proposal would allow Member States to replace the greening practices with weaker measures using questionable certification schemes. In addition to this, the Committee offers further exemptions from greening to many farmers.
2. **The Agriculture Committee proposes illegal double funding** for the same environmental measures under both Pillar 1 greening (Direct Payments) and Pillar 2 (Rural Development), article 29. This goes against EU Treaties and is against the good spending of public money and is non-compliant with WTO rules. This could add up to €3 billion of worthless environmental subsidies annually. Money which would be missing for environmental measures in Pillar 2 that go beyond the basic greening requirements and deliver added value.
3. **The Agriculture Committee waters down** or entirely deletes half of the existing minimum requirements concerning the environment, food safety, animal and public health from **cross compliance**. The deletion includes legislation, such as the Water Framework and the Pesticides Directives, and public health measures, such as the ban on hormones.
4. **The Agriculture Committee does not adequately prioritise High Nature Value farming or organic farming** and does not include the necessary positive sub-programmes for these sustainable farming systems, which play a crucial role in protecting the natural environment and supporting rural economies.
5. **The Agriculture Committee voted in favour of costly insurance schemes** (such as the Income Stabilization Tool) funded by the Rural Development Fund. The Income Stabilization Tool alone could cost up to €11.4 billion while the Rural Development budget is only €12.1 billion annually for 2014-2020. These untargeted support schemes would incentivize risk taking and are only of benefit to insurance companies rather than a support to beneficial farming practices.

WHAT YOU CAN DO IN THE PLENARY VOTE:

If you want the European Parliament to fight for a healthy environment and our long term food security, you must vote for change. If you agree that public subsidies should only be paid for good farming practices, which respect nature and produce healthy food sustainably for future generations, please use your vote to:

1. **ENSURE** all farmers undertake good farming practices (so-called 'greening'), respecting the environment in return for CAP direct subsidies
2. **REJECT** illegal double payments, proposed by the AGRI Committee, which would pay farmers twice for carrying out the same activity
3. **REINTRODUCE** requirements for farmers to comply with EU laws on the environment, food safety, animal and public health when receiving EU subsidies
4. **SUPPORT** High Nature Value and organic farming systems by prioritising these sustainable farming systems, for example through specific thematic sub-programmes
5. **DELETE** the Income Stabilisation tool and costly insurance schemes funded by Rural Development



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