

ENRD Workshop

Agriculture and environment: Talking the same language within the CAP Strategic Plans

Event Highlights

The workshop focused on how to integrate the objectives and targets of EU environmental legislation into the CAP Strategic Plans (CSPs), and related environmental planning tools.

As stated by Pierre Bascou (Director, DG AGRI), the CAP is key in implementing the EU's new Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy. The CSPs must comply with relevant EU and national environmental legislation, while also addressing the CAP's specific objectives for climate¹ and the environment. The CSP² must reflect a higher than 'business-as-usual' ambition in terms of environmental targets, with a convincing intervention logic to deliver them, combining both Pillar I and II interventions. The Member State Managing Authorities working on agriculture and rural development must collaborate with national environmental authorities to ensure a robust CSP.

Event information

Date & Location: 6 November 2019, Brussels, Belgium

Organisers: ENRD Contact Point

Participants: 71 participants representing Managing Authorities, environmental authorities, EU institutions, representatives of farmer associations, environmental and nature conservation organisations.

Outcomes: Exchange of experiences in different MSs and discussion on the key environmental planning tools to be used in the design of the CAP Strategic Plans.

Webpage: https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/enrd-workshop-agriculture-and-environment-speaking-same-language-within-cap_en

CAP specific objectives and environment – delivering results

What have Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) done? Lessons learned for the future

[Krzysztof Sulima](#) (DG AGRI) gave an overview of the current RDPs' progress on environmental targets and examples of effective approaches to be upscaled in the next period. These include results-based payments schemes, collective approaches and converting from intensive to less intensive practices. Training and advice play a critical role. One key lesson is the need for a greater coordination of all CAP instruments and measures.

[Andrea Obwegger](#) from the Austrian RDP Managing Authority illustrated how organic farming has benefited from RDP support. Uptake of nature conservation measures has been spurred by training and education activities coupled with area-based payments.

[Andreas Gumbert](#) (DG ENV) reminded participants that the environmental performance of the CAP must improve considerably. CSP interventions have to address the prioritised environmental needs. The environmental legislation and relevant planning tools are set

out in Annex XI of the CSP Regulation. These tools – e.g. the prioritised action framework (PAF) for Natura 2000, the Nitrates Action Programme, and River Basin Management Plans – may be less well known to national CAP authorities, and therefore the elaboration of the CSPs requires close coordination with environmental authorities.



CAP strategic planning and the new green architecture

[Mike MacKenzie](#) (DG AGRI) recalled the main 'green' elements to be included in the CSP. The plan must coherently reflect the unified objectives of the CAP. The Commission will assess the way all CSP interventions are working together to deliver these.

[Valentin Opfermann](#) (DG AGRI) and [Andreas Gumbert](#) (DG ENV) provided concrete examples of how interventions to address specific environmental needs can combine relevant good agricultural and environmental conditions (GAEC) and statutory management conditions, eco-schemes and Pillar II instruments.

¹ The stakeholders have expressed their interest in a similar event on climate legislation and the CSP.

² According to the Commission's proposal for a Regulation on the CAP Strategic Plans (COM(2018) 392 final, published on 01/06/2018)

Stakeholders' experiences and views

[Robert Hadžić](#) (Croatian Chamber of Agriculture) explained how the CAP has helped to introduce agri-environmental measures to Croatian farmers. There is now over three times more land dedicated to organic farming than prior to Croatia's EU membership. The varied landscapes of the country, including vast karst pastures, means that careful planning and tailoring of the measures to each farm is required. Access to advice is currently a key bottleneck.

[Jabier Ruiz](#) (World Wildlife Fund, EU office) reminded that eco-schemes should only pay for actions going beyond standard agronomic practices, and reward farmers that go one step further. They should be applied to improve practices and to maintain those that are good for the environment. Eco-schemes should be used to fund some of the measures that are already included in the planning tools linked to environmental legislation.

Other topics raised

Given fewer prescriptive rules from the EU on post-2020 CAP, there is scope for MSs to design more targeted schemes and interventions that are better suited to the specific conditions on the ground. Technological applications, such as remote monitoring and, for example, the development of the Farm Sustainability Tool for Nutrients, will also facilitate monitoring and related communication between beneficiaries and Paying Agencies.

Two types of eco-schemes can be applied: a) Top-up payments for environmental outcomes are categorised as decoupled payments and cannot be linked to a particular type of production nor to an obligation to produce; b) Payments for the costs incurred or the income foregone due to the adoption of specific environmental practices can be linked to production.

The Commission is prepared to provide data and support to MSs in the process of designing the CSP.



Main outcomes of group discussions: Hints for CSP planning

Both groups underlined the utility of early contacts and joint working groups in bringing MSs' agricultural and environmental authorities together to collaborate on the CSP at an early stage. The European Commission can act as a facilitator.



Biodiversity

Introduced by [Sylwia Gawrońska](#) and [Małgorzata Nowicka](#) (Poland) and [Jérémie Crespin](#) (DG ENV)

- Nature authorities to provide the needs based on legal requirements; agricultural authorities to lead the process.
- The [prioritised action framework for Natura 2000 \(PAF\)](#) is a key planning document to design the CSP (SWOT, strategy and measures).
- The involvement of regional stakeholders can ensure that local needs are reflected in the CSP.
- Ensure the economic viability of environmental measures (better cost effectiveness, added value of biodiversity friendly products, etc).
- Raise farmers' awareness of the short and long-term benefits of environmental measures.
- Specific approaches are needed to engage intensive farms – attitudes may matter more than money.



Natural resources – soil and water

Introduced by [Åsa Wolgast Broberg](#) (Sweden) and [Vasileios Tyriakidis](#) (DG ENV)

- Include environmental targets related to the [Water Framework](#) and [Nitrates](#) Directives and measures reported in the River Basin Management Plans in CSPs.
- Develop multi-functional measures capable of addressing several strategic objectives at the same time.
- Win-win solutions such as smart farming practices need to be further supported.
- Farmers will be more prepared to take up environmental measures if they improve cost-efficiency.
- Communication and advisory services are vital.
- Young farmers are often more inclined to change practices than older farmers.
- Farmers that own their land are more likely to change practices than those that do not.