



## The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) after 2013

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### Summary

Agriculture and water are interrelated: There is an undeniable strong link between agricultural activities and the water sector on the other. The on-going European process of the adoption of the proposed new EU legislation on CAP reform after 2013 brings a unique opportunity to address a large part of the environmental pressures from agriculture on water bodies (surface water, groundwater). As the providers of water- and environmental services EUREAU members are committed to action that protects water resources and reduce pollution.

**EUREAU would like to emphasize the importance for the European water sector that good water management remains a crucial part of the proposals for the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013.**

The most important points for EUREAU are:

#### 1. Greening Measures<sup>1</sup>

One of the objectives of the new CAP is the enhancement of environmental performance through a mandatory "greening" component of direct payments. 30% of the direct payments will be so called green payments.

EUREAU would like to underline that the EC identified water, soil, climate and biodiversity as four priority areas. Therefore, measures to protect water resources (*Blueing measures*; for example buffer strips and water retention) should continue to be an important part of these greening measures as these are important components to reach a sustainable agricultural practice.

One of these greening measures are **Ecological Focus Areas**. Farmers shall ensure that at least 7 % of their eligible is ecological focus area such as land left fallow, terraces, landscape features, buffer strips and afforested areas. EUREAU is of the opinion that establishing ecological focus areas could be a very important replacement of the old set-a-side schemes if it is used in a wise way. Therefore the requirements should be more ambitious since they only refer to farms > 10 ha.

- **EUREAU can fully support the greening measures in Pillar I of the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013 as incentives for farmers, especially the ecological focus areas.**
- **EUREAU can not support any amendments that water down the 7% and which decreases EFA's to 3 % in the first years, to 5% as from 2016 to a possible 7% as from 2018.**

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing rules for direct payments to farmers under support schemes within the framework of the CAP COM(2011)625

- EUREAU can support the amendments on permanent grassland and permanent pasture (Article 31). In particular the paragraph, where the conversion of a maximum of 5 % will not be allowed on carbon rich soils, wetlands and semi natural grassland and pastures is supported by the European water sector.

## 2. Environmental certification schemes<sup>2</sup>

In addition to these greening measures, the European Commission, European Parliament and the European Council have put forward the idea of environmental certification schemes.

- EUREAU would like to emphasize that the certification schemes should have the equivalent impact to the greening measures when it comes to measures for protecting water quality and - quantity. The four objectives water, soil, climate and biodiversity should also remain priority in these certification schemes.
- Furthermore, it will have to be clearly indicated which management authority will have the legal obligation approve these certification schemes and monitor them carefully. EUREAU supports the addition of water management plans as part of these certification schemes.
- EUREAU can support amendments on the certification schemes. However, EUREAU can not support the text “*beneficiaries of agri-environment-climate payments established pursuant to Article 29 of regulation (EU) N° [...] [RDR], or*” (Article 29, paragraph 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> indent) which is now part of the Article, after the vote in COM AGRI.  
In our view, this would mean that beneficiaries of the rural development programme will automatically receive payments under the direct payment scheme. EUREAU considers that this is, firstly, very difficult to measure. Secondly it will lead therefore to too much red tape and, thirdly, with very little benefits for the (aquatic) environment.

## 3. Water as a Union priority<sup>3</sup>

Better water management and increased efficiency in water use by agriculture as should areas that are influenced by agriculture and forestry should be considered a Union priority. Support to farmers shall only be granted in relation to specific requirements of Natura 2000 and the Water Framework Directive. Furthermore, it is also important that the scope of the support should be extended.

## 4. Cross compliance and the Water Framework Directive<sup>4</sup>

With regard to the upcoming reform of the CAP, EUREAU calls for a policy that is well integrated with other policy areas, such as the European water policy. EUREAU therefore supports the intention of the European Commission to be committed to the introduction of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Pesticides regulation within the remit of cross compliance when all Member States will have fully implemented them in particular with clear obligations for farmers.

- EUREAU advocates to include in Regulation COM (2011)625/3 the introduction of the WFD (2000/60/EC) and the Pesticides regulation (EC/1107/2009) in cross compliance once they are implemented and practical applicable.

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<sup>2</sup> Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing rules for direct payments to farmers under support schemes within the framework of the CAP COM(2011)625

<sup>3</sup> Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) COM(2011)627

<sup>4</sup> Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy (COM(2011)0628)