



## Revision of Common Agricultural Policy – CAP after 2013

### Greening of the 1<sup>st</sup> pillar (direct payments) *“Blueing measures” to protect drinking water resources*

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#### Background:

The on-going European process of the adoption of the proposed new EU legislation on Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform after 2013 brings a unique opportunity to address a large part of the environmental pressures from agriculture on drinking water resources.

The revision to CAP includes a proposal that specific environmental measures or “greening measures” should be included in Pillar I. In order to receive green payments the revision proposes that farmers ought to have instigated activity in three greening measures: crop diversification, permanent grass land and ecological focus areas.

EUREAU supports the greening measures of agricultural practices as incentives for farmers but emphasises that water resources protection is one of the most important components to reach a sustainable agricultural practice. As such EUREAU underlines that more specific **“Blueing measures”** should be included in the new legislation.

EUREAU proposes “Blueing measures” should be included in the revised CAP in the following areas:

1. Plant nutrition and fertilization;
2. Land utilisation and cultivation;
3. Plant protection (pest management);
4. Water management;
5. Organisation and management

More examples of what could be included in such measures are outlined in the following sections.

## EUREAU's blueing measures:

### 1. Plant nutrition and fertilization

- Limitation of the annual net balance surplus to a maximum for an agricultural area
- Limitation of the stocking rate to the equivalent of a maximum from livestock manure
- Cultivate crops specifically to prevent the leaching of nitrates where soils are susceptible
- Provide specialised training and advice on calculating and applying fertilisers and maintain full documentation of fertiliser application

### 2. Land utilisation and cultivation

- Limitation of a maximum of 45 % per crop type on holdings's arable land, with multi-annual crops being considered separately in each individual cropping year.
- Extensively management of at least 15% of the agricultural area on grassland-only holdings.
- Allocation of "ecological focus areas" (land left fallow, buffer strips, afforested areas, terraces, landscape features, etc.) to be set at 10% of farmer's eligible arable land (including grassland).
- Cultivation of crops to minimise water demand, pesticide requirements and soil erosion e.g.
  - Cultivation of corn in "stripes" (erosion control) and keeping of stripes in between with grass
  - Planting of catch crops
  - Gentle "Mulching" in order to avoid mineralisation
  - Application of innovative tillage practices
  - Planting of winter time vegetation
- Establishing of wetlands to treat runoff to minimise the contributions to diffuse pollution.

### 3. Plant protection (Pest management)

- Demonstrate that plant management practices, especially through the application of pesticides
  - Provision of specialised training and advice on spray preparation, application and maintenance (including special consideration for application in designated protected areas)
  - Establishment of certified professional operator schemes and knowledge proof tests
  - Provide full documentation of pesticides application
  - Use of spray drift reduction technology (SDRT)
  - Designation of multi-functional field margin buffer zones
  - Training on integrated Pest Management (PM) programmes
  - Allocation of pesticide container take back and recycling schemes
  - Installation of biobeds/on-farm water management
  - Securitisation of the area of preparation of the treatment (processing) pesticides

- Reduction of use of substances of particular concern (indicator: level of specific residues in drinking water resources)

#### **4. Water management**

- Demonstrate the sustainable use of water e.g.
  - Use of improved irrigation practices (e.g. drop irrigation)
  - Establishing of metering
  - Considering water storage
  - Use of re-used water in agriculture

#### **5. Organisation and management**

- Develop water resources management plans at a farm level (reference UK, Italy)
- Demonstrate a voluntarily cooperation between farmers and water utilities in water catchment areas