



European
Commission

List of potential **AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES** that **ECO-SCHEMES** could support

January 2021
#EUGreenDeal

The CAP is instrumental in managing the transition towards a sustainable food system and in strengthening the efforts of European farmers to contribute to the EU's climate objectives and to protect the environment. Eco-schemes are a new instrument in the CAP to support this transition. Member States will set eco-schemes in their CAP strategic plans. The Commission will assess and approve them as key tools for the CAP to deliver on the Green Deal targets.

This document contributes to the debate, enhances transparency of the process and gives farmers, administrations, scientists, stakeholders and the public the opportunity to discuss eco-schemes. This list has been established after a thorough discussion with experts.

Agricultural practices that could be supported by **eco-schemes** have to meet the following conditions:

- they should cover **activities related to climate, environment, animal welfare and antimicrobial resistance;**
- they shall be defined on the basis of **the needs and priorities identified at national/regional levels;**
- their level of ambition has to go **beyond the requirements and obligations established under the baseline (including conditionality);**
- they shall contribute **to reaching the EU Green Deal targets.**



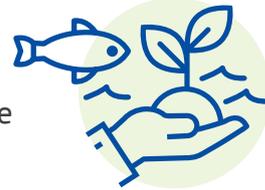
EU GREEN DEAL TARGETS



Reduce by 50% the overall use and risk of **chemical pesticides** and reduce use by 50% of more hazardous **pesticides** by 2030



Achieve at least 25% of the EU's agricultural land under **organic farming** and a significant increase in **organic aquaculture** by 2030



Reduce sales of **antimicrobials** for farmed animals and in aquaculture by 50% by 2030



Reduce **nutrient losses** by at least 50% while ensuring no deterioration in soil fertility; this will reduce use of **fertilisers** by at least 20 % by 2030



Bring back at least 10% of agricultural area **under high-diversity landscape features** by 2030

CAP Strategic Plans will put into practice enhanced conditionality, eco-schemes, farm advisory services as well as agri-environmental and climate measures and investments to address the Green Deal targets, in particular those stemming from the Farm to Fork Strategy and the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, and to fulfil the climate and environmental specific objectives of the CAP.



CLIMATE
CHANGE

ENVIRONMENTAL
CARE LANDSCAPES

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

SO 4: Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as sustainable energy

SO 5: Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air

SO 6: Contribute to the protection of biodiversity, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes

SO 9: Improve animal welfare and address antimicrobial resistance

AREAS OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND ANIMAL WELFARE ACTIONS UNDER THE CAP STRATEGIC PLANS

- a.** **Climate change mitigation,** including reduction of GHG emissions from agricultural practices, as well as maintenance of existing carbon stores and enhancement of carbon sequestration
- b.** **Climate change adaptation,** including actions to improve resilience of food production systems, and animal and plant diversity for stronger resistance to diseases and climate change
- c.** **Protection or improvement of water quality** and reduction of pressure on water resources
- d.** **Prevention of soil degradation,** soil restoration, improvement of soil fertility and of nutrient management
- e.** **Protection of biodiversity,** conservation or restoration of habitats or species, including maintenance and creation of landscape features or non-productive areas
- f.** **Actions for a sustainable and reduced use of pesticides,** particularly pesticides that present a risk for human health or environment
- g.** **Actions to enhance animal welfare** or address antimicrobial resistance

EXAMPLES OF AGRICULTURE PRACTICES

1. PRACTICES ESTABLISHED IN EU POLICY INSTRUMENTS:

- **Organic farming practices**, as defined in Regulation (EU) 2018/848 (b, c, d, f, g)
 - Conversion to organic farming (b, c, d, f, g)
 - Maintenance of organic farming (b, c, d, f, g) 
- **Integrated Pest Management practices**, as defined in Sustainable Use Directive (b, c, d, e, f) and including:
 - Buffer strips with management practices and without pesticide (c, e, f)
 - Mechanical weed control (c, e, f)
 - Increased use of resilient, pest-resistant crop varieties and species (b)
 - Land lying fallow with species composition for biodiversity purpose (c, e, f)

2. OTHER PRACTICES:

- **Agro-ecology** including
 - Crop rotation with leguminous crops (a, b, d, f)
 - Mixed cropping - multi cropping (b, d, e, f)
 - Cover crop between tree rows on permanent crops - orchards, vineyards, olive trees - above conditionality (a, c, d, e, f)
 - Winter soil cover and catch crops above conditionality (a, b, c, d)
 - Low intensity grass-based livestock system (a, c, d, g)
 - Use of crops/plant varieties more resilient to climate change (b, c, e, f)
 - Mixed species/diverse sward of permanent grassland for biodiversity purpose (pollination, birds, game feedstocks) (c, d, e, f)
 - Improved rice cultivation to decrease methane emissions (e.g. alternate wet and dry techniques) (a)
 - Practices and standards as set under organic farming rules (b, c, d, f)
- **Husbandry and animal welfare plans** including
 - Feeding plans: suitability of and access to feed and water, feed and water quality analyses (e.g. micotoxines), optimised feed strategies (g)
 - Friendly housing conditions: increased space allowances per animal, improved flooring (e.g., straw bedding provided on a daily basis), free farrowing, provision of enriched environment (e.g. rooting for pigs, perching, nest-building materials, etc.), shading/sprinklers/ventilation to cope with heat stress (b, g)
 - Practices and standards as set under organic farming rules (g)
 - Practices increasing animal robustness, fertility, longevity and adaptability, e.g. lifespan of dairy cows; breeding lower emission animals, promoting genetic diversity and resilience (a, b, g)
 - Animal health prevention and control plans: overall plan for reducing the risk of infections that require antimicrobials and covering all relevant husbandry practices, e.g. crawl space between two rearing belts, vaccination and treatments, enhanced biosecurity, use of feed additives, etc. (g)
 - Providing access to pastures and increasing grazing period for grazing animals (a, b, g)
 - Provide and manage regular access to open air areas (g)





➤ **Agro-forestry** including

- *Establishment and maintenance of landscape features above conditionality (a, c, d, e)*
- *Management and cutting plan of landscape features (e, f)*
- *Establishment and maintenance of high-biodiversity silvo-pastoral systems*

➤ **High nature value (HNV) farming** including

- *Land lying fallow with species composition for biodiversity purpose (pollination, birds, game feedstocks, etc.) (c, e, f)*
- *Shepherding on open spaces and between permanent crops, transhumance and common grazing (b, d, e, f, g)*
- *Semi-natural habitat creation and enhancement (a, b, c, d, e, f, g)*
- *Reduction of fertiliser use, low intensity management in arable crops (a, b, c, d, e, f, g)*

➤ **Carbon farming** including

- *Conservation agriculture (a, d)*
- *Rewetting wetlands/peatlands, paludiculture (a, c, d, e)*
- *Minimum water table level during winter (a, c, d)*
- *Appropriate management of residues, i.e. burying of agricultural residues, seeding on residues (a, c, d)*
- *Establishment and maintenance of permanent grassland (a, c, d, e, f)*
- *Extensive use of permanent grassland (a, c, d)*

➤ **Precision farming** including

- *Nutrients management plan, use of innovative approaches to minimise nutrient release, optimal pH for nutrient uptake, circular agriculture (a, c, d, f)*
- *Precision crop farming to reduce inputs (fertilisers, water, plant protection products) (e, f)*
- *Improving irrigation efficiency (b)*

➤ **Improve nutrient management,** including

- *implementation of nitrates-related measures that go beyond the conditionality obligations (c, d, e,)*
- *measures to reduce and prevent water, air and soil pollution from excess nutrients such as soil sampling if not already obligatory, creation of nutrient traps (c, d, e,)*



➤ **Protecting water resources,** including

- *Managing crop water demand (switching to less water intensive crops, changing planting dates, optimised irrigation schedules) (b)*

➤ **Other practices beneficial for soil,** including

- *Erosion prevention strips and wind breaks (b, d, e,)*
- *Establishment or maintenance of terraces and strip cropping (b, d, e,)*

➤ **Other practices related to GHG emissions**

- *feed additives to decrease emissions from enteric fermentation (a)*
- *Improved manure management and storage (a)*

