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AGRI-ENVIRONMENT SCHEMES AND BIODIVERSITY: LESSONS LEARNT AND EXAMPLES FROM ACROSS EUROPE

This report presents a snapshot of the diverse array of agri-environment schemes across the EU that are relevant to biodiversity conservation and outlines the main lessons that we have learnt from designing and implementing agri-environment schemes over the past 15 years. The result is a strong message:

- Agri-environment schemes remain the best tool available to deliver sustainable agriculture, but they require more budget to fulfil their potential and deliver their objectives.
- Efforts need to be made to improve the quality and consistency of agri-environment schemes across the EU
- Monitoring of the results of agri-environment schemes should be compulsory¹

1 BACKGROUND

Agri-environment schemes are compulsory across the whole of the European Union. Regulation 1257/1997 obliges Member States to introduce agri-environment schemes, and defines them as support for agricultural production methods designed to protect the environment and to maintain the countryside.

The general wording of the Regulation means that the form and scale of the agri-environment scheme is left to the Member State, and for those that implement agricultural policy regionally, the regional Government, to decide upon. This has left us with a patchwork of schemes across the EU addressing a range of objectives in a variety of ways. The quality of these schemes varies enormously and in many cases is manifestly failing to deliver the Regulation's objectives.

The sheer number of schemes makes it extremely difficult to provide a comprehensive picture of how the Regulation has been implemented. This report presents the main lessons we have learnt from being involved in designing and implementing agri-environment schemes that aim to benefit biodiversity, and provides a number of relevant examples from throughout the EU-25 that illustrate these points.

¹ Kleijn, D., Sutherland, W.J., 2003. How effective are European agri-environment schemes in conserving and promoting biodiversity? *Journal of Applied Ecology* 40, 947-969.

2 WHAT DO GOOD AGRI-ENVIRONMENT SCHEMES LOOK LIKE?

Agri-environment schemes have been applied in Europe for long enough now to be able to learn from their design and implementation. BirdLife partners have been working with Ministries throughout Europe to help develop schemes that address biodiversity decline and are able to deliver on their objectives. From this experience, we have learnt that the following eight points are crucial to the success of agri-environment schemes:

1. The scheme rewards farmers for delivering public goods
2. Schemes must be backed by a budget sufficient to deliver their aims
3. The scheme design should be based on good science
4. Management required should be agronomically feasible and practical
5. The scheme design should be an iterative process
6. Schemes should be targeted initially at existing biodiversity interest or areas where it can be demonstrated that there is real potential for habitat recreation or species recolonisation
7. Monitoring of the environmental impact of agri-environment schemes is necessary, and the results should feed into further design stages
8. Stakeholders, including farmers and environmental experts, should be consulted and involved throughout scheme design and implementation

2.1 Public money for public goods

Agri-environment schemes are paid for by taxpayers and should therefore be used to deliver benefits to the public. Benefits include environmental goods and services, such as a healthy environment, wildlife, and thriving rural communities, and are referred to as public goods. The importance of using public money, and more specifically the CAP, to deliver public goods is growing as the public demand for accountability and justification of the CAP budget increases, and pressure from other countries to introduce a fairer system of support intensifies. This means that, increasingly, paying for public goods in general, and agri-environment schemes specifically, is becoming accepted as the way forward for using the public purse to support farmers.

Unfortunately, the reputation of agri-environment schemes as a way of rewarding farmers for the public goods they produce is in danger as some Member States have failed to build their schemes upon this critical premise. In fact, there are examples of schemes from throughout the EU that produce no clear public benefit, such as the [scheme](#) that pays farmers €100/ha not to use growth regulators. These examples are wasted money and wasted opportunities; more needs to be done to ensure that such schemes are not approved in the first place and that agri-environment is used as a tool to reward farmers for delivering the public goods that we all benefit from.

2.2 Budget

One of the main factors inhibiting the role of agri-environment schemes is the lack of budget they are currently assigned at the Member State level and at the European level. Insufficient funding is preventing agri-environment schemes from delivering their objectives and fulfilling their potential to deliver sustainable agriculture across the EU..

A scheme in Emilia-Romagna, Italy, for example, has proved its potential to benefit a whole range of bird species, yet its budget for the entire area is restricted to €23,000. In Portugal, the [Castro Verde scheme](#)² demonstrates the stark relationship between how much you put into a scheme and how much you get out. Initially, this scheme was a success and covered 60% of the target area, but, after budget cuts in 2000, uptake has plummeted and coverage has sunk to 30%³.

2.3 Good science

Agri-environment schemes attempt to deliver environmental gain through introducing changes in agricultural land management. Ensuring environmental benefits are created requires an understanding of the relationship between land management and the environment⁴.

An example of a scheme based on good science is the [Entry Level Scheme](#) in England. This scheme gives farmers a variety of options, such as creating skylark plots⁵, beetle banks, etc., all of which are based on detailed ecological study that means it is known that take-up of these options will deliver biodiversity gain. The scheme has also been previously piloted in four separate regions to test its practicability.

Schemes that are not based on good science will often not deliver on their promises. The [main scheme in the Netherlands](#), for example, aims to benefit meadow bird populations by protecting nests from farm operations. However, the management requirements do not benefit them as they fail to combine nest protection with chick protection; for example, there is no scheme available include prescriptions for groundwater level, which has been shown to affect abundance of meadow birds.

2.4 Agronomically feasible

Schemes must be simple and flexible and the management prescriptions should be tested for agronomic feasibility in a pilot scheme. Where the management required by

² Borralho, R., Rio Carvalho, C., Stoate, C., Araújo, M., Reino, L.M., 1999. Avaliação intermédia do impacto do Plano Zonal de Castro Verde na avifauna. In: Beja, P., Catry, P., Moreira, F. (Eds.), Actas do II Congresso de Ornitologia da Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves. SPEA, Faro, Portugal.

³ Pinto, M., Rocha, P., Moreira, F., 2005. Long-term trends in great bustard (*Otis tarda*) populations in Portugal suggest concentration in single high quality area. *Biological Conservation* 124, 415-423.

⁴ Evans, A.D., S. Armstrong-Brown, and P.V. Grice, 2002. The role of research and development in the evolution of a "smart" agri-environment scheme. *Aspects of Applied Biology*, 67: p. 253-262.

⁵ Morris, A.J., Holland, J.M., Smith, B., Jones, N.E., 2004. Sustainable Arable Farming for an Improved Environment (SAFFIE): managing winter wheat sward structure for skylarks *Alauda arvensis*. *Ibis* 146, 155-162.

the scheme is not simple enough to be self-explanatory, agricultural advisors should be on hand to provide advice.

A pilot scheme is also important in terms of determining whether the scheme will have its desired effect on biodiversity. Research into agri-environment schemes in the Netherlands⁶, for example, found that management prescriptions that have proven to be effective under experimental conditions are not necessarily effective when implemented on real farms. It was even found that when the Dutch management agreement is implemented on farms it can have a negative impact on birds because of unexpected adverse side-effects⁷.

Flexibility can be achieved in a number of ways. A [scheme in Baden-Württemberg, Germany](#), that aims to support species rich grassland, for example, sets the outcome for the farm in terms of how many plant species should be present in the grassland, but leaves the management up to the farmer, offering only guidelines. Alternatively, management can be set at the individual level by agricultural advisors.

2.5 Iterative design

It is important that schemes are not static and are able to change and adapt as situations change, experience is gained and our knowledge develops. Combined with a monitoring system that allows understanding of the ecological and agronomic impact of a scheme, this ensures that agri-environment schemes are able to deliver environmental gain⁸.

2.6 Monitoring

All public policy, and particularly where it entails significant expenditure of public money, should have its outcome measured so that it can be evaluated against its aims and improved in response to any weaknesses that are identified. Agri-environment is no exception to this rule. This means that where schemes that are trying to deliver biodiversity, for example, their impact on biodiversity must be monitored; and where schemes are trying to reduce diffuse pollution, water quality must be monitored.

Monitoring can both prove that the public, and Government, are getting value for their money and provide the information needed to improve a scheme. The [Cirl Bunting Special project](#)⁹ in England, for example, has had a monitoring system built into the scheme from the beginning. Data from the monitoring proved that the scheme was delivering on its objectives, justifying further investment in similar schemes.

Unfortunately, examples of schemes that are accompanied by a monitoring system are extremely rare in Europe. Schemes have little, or, in most cases, no provision for

⁶ Kleijn & Sutherland (2003) *How effective are European agri-environment schemes in conserving and promoting biodiversity?* Journal of Applied Ecology 2003 40, 947-969

⁷ Kleijn, D., Berendse, F., Smit, R., Gilissen, N., 2001. Agri-environment schemes do not effectively protect biodiversity in Dutch agricultural landscapes. Nature 413, 723-725.

⁸ Evans, A.D., Armstrong-Brown, S., Grice, P.V., 2002. The role of research and development in the evolution of a "smart" agri-environment scheme. Aspects of Applied Biology 67, 253-262.

⁹ Peach, W.J., Lovett, L.J., Wotton, S.R., Jeffs, C., 2001. Countryside stewardship delivers cirl buntings (*Emberiza circlus*) in Devon, UK. Biological Conservation 101, 361-373.

monitoring, making it impossible to improve them or know whether agri-environment is delivering or not.

2.7 Targeting

Cost-efficient delivery of environmental benefits can be achieved by initially targeting resources to where there is pre-existing biodiversity interest. The level of targeting varies from only applying a scheme within designated zones, to targeting specific habitats, to simply encouraging applicants to tailor their plans to biodiversity interest present on their holdings.

An example of how this has been applied is in some of the Central and Eastern European countries that joined the EU in 2004. These countries have retained large amounts of species rich grassland that has not been re-seeded or ploughed, but, with accession, now risk losing this great asset to improvement and intensification. Fortunately, schemes targeting this habitat and rewarding farmers for maintaining it in good condition have been made available in many of the countries, including Slovakia, Czech Republic and Poland.

However, there are also cases of excessive targeting that result in excluding so many farmers that they are unable to have a significant and widespread impact on the farmland environment. The [Polish scheme](#), for example, is only available to approximately 5% of farmers. Not only does this inevitably fail to reach a significant proportion of the country, it is also unfair, when in so many other European countries all farmers are eligible for agri-environment payments.

2.8 Consulting and involving stakeholders

Where stakeholders, such as farmers' organisations, environmental and conservation organisations, etc., have been involved in the development and implementation of agri-environment schemes, they have generally been more successful in terms of uptake and delivery. Relevant stakeholders not only have expertise in their areas to offer Government officials who are designing and implementing agri-environment schemes, but their involvement from the beginning improves the profile of a scheme and guarantees a better reception¹⁰.

3 EXAMPLES OF AGR-ENVIRONMENT SCHEMES FROM THE EU-15

This section presents a number of examples of agri-environment schemes that BirdLife partners have selected because of their relevance to birds and biodiversity. Some have proven the effectiveness of agri-environment schemes as a tool for delivering biodiversity, while others demonstrate the mistakes that prevent schemes from contributing to a sustainable agriculture. The vital components of the schemes are summarised in a table in the final section.

¹⁰ Smallshire, D., Robertson, P., Thompson, P., 2004. Policy into practice: the development and delivery of agri-environment schemes and supporting advice in England. *Ibis* 146, 250-258.

3.1 The ciril bunting special project, England

In 1989, RSPB research found that the UK ciril bunting population had dropped to 118 pairs. This discovery was followed by a research programme that found that the decline was mainly a result of changes in farming practices, which had reduced both winter and summer food supplies and caused the loss of hedges and scrub for nesting sites. As a result, this scheme was launched by the English Government, with the assistance of English Nature and RSPB, with the aim of restoring the declining numbers of ciril buntings.

Between 1992 and 1998, the ciril bunting population increased by 580% to 700 pairs over the 14 years. This has been linked to the special project, with ciril bunting numbers increasing by 83% on land under Countryside Stewardship Scheme agreements and by just 2% on surrounding countryside between 1995 and 1998¹¹.

3.2 Entry-level Environmental Stewardship, England

This scheme is part of an overall agri-environment programme called Environmental Stewardship. The Entry Level Scheme (ELS) is available to all farmers, with the aim of 70% of English farmers joining. The objective is to support common and widespread farmland wildlife with a range of options on most farms, rather than more traditional targeted measures for specific species within a defined area. Also part of Environmental Stewardship is the Higher Level Scheme, which is more demanding of farmers and is targeted towards a number of priority habitats and species.

ELS farmers receive a flat rate payment of £30/ha (approximately €45) across all their land in return for agreeing to undertake a given number of options based on the farm area. Options include simple measures such as beetle banks, hedgerow management, over-winter stubbles, taking field corners out of production, skylark plots, etc. Each option has a list of prescriptions that the farmer must abide by.

This scheme was launched across the whole of England in March 2005, so it is too early to say whether the programme has delivered biodiversity. However, all the options are based on research that has proven them to be able to deliver their aims. A monitoring programme looking at the impacts of the scheme on biodiversity has been established, so we will be able to gauge its impact in the future.

3.3 Supporting species rich grassland in Baden-Württemberg, Germany

This scheme is an example of a new generation of agri-environment schemes that are 'results-led'. The scheme offers a payment of €50/ha for any grassland that contains at least four plant species out of a catalogue of 28 target species. While the output of this scheme is clearly defined and monitored, the prescriptions are more flexible so that farmers can adapt the management so that it suits their farm. Botanical monitoring not only ensures that the money is being spent on benefiting biodiversity, but provides an

¹¹ Peach, W.J., Lovett, L.J., Wotton, S.R., Jeffs, C., 2001. Countryside stewardship delivers ciril buntings (*Emberiza cirilus*) in Devon, UK. *Biological Conservation* 101, 361-373.

assessment of the conservation value of grassland in Baden-Württemberg. Previous research has shown that the whinchat shows preference for species rich grassland, and it is likely that other meadow birds will benefit such as red-backed shrike, skylark, corn bunting.

So far, this scheme covers 70,000ha. Wider uptake is inhibited by the low payment and unattractiveness of the scheme for less species rich grassland that would have to do more work to hit the biodiversity targets.

3.4 Creating habitats on arable farmland in Emilia-Romagna, Italy

The Emilia-Romagna lowland is characterised by intensive arable production and all the environmental problems this entails. This scheme aims to address these through creating habitats on the farm that improve biodiversity and help recreate the natural habitats and traditional landscape of the area. The scheme pays farmers to create and maintain wetlands and wet meadows, as well as traditional meadows that are interspersed with bushes.

Monitoring of bird species has revealed that in only a few years a diverse range of species of conservation concern have benefited. Populations that have increased on land managed under this scheme include the purple heron, black-winged stilt, lapwing, great-crested grebe as well as the common tern, little tern and whiskered tern.

While this scheme has been demonstrated to deliver biodiversity, it covers only 4283ha and has a budget of only €28,000 in Emilia-Romagna. Furthermore, it is only available in four of Italy's 21 regions, and the payment offered (a maximum of €600/ha) is inferior to that paid for afforestation, a scheme that is infamous for the environmental damage it causes.

3.5 The Castro Verde zonal scheme, Portugal

The Castro Verde Zonal scheme was created specifically to promote low intensive agriculture that is compatible with the conservation of cereal steppe birds in the Castro Verde Special Protection Area (SPA). Cereal steppes have the highest number of bird species with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe.

The scheme pays farmers from €22/ha to €108/ha to maintain traditional crop rotations and low grazing intensities, reduce pesticide inputs and to keep stubble or crop coverage over the winter.

Monitoring suggests that all dry grassland birds in the SPA have benefited, with some conservation priority species, such as the lesser kestrel, the little bustard and great bustard, successfully increasing in numbers as result of this scheme¹².

Initially, the payments offered were sufficient to make the scheme attractive to farmers and, by 2000, management agreements covered 60% of the Castro Verde SPA. In 2000,

¹² Borralho, R., Rio Carvalho, C., Stoate, C., Araújo, M., Reino, L.M., 1999. Avaliação intermédia do impacte do Plano Zonal de Castro Verde na avifauna. In: Beja, P., Catry, P., Moreira, F. (Eds.), Actas do II Congresso de Ornitologia da Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves. SPEA, Faro, Portugal.

however, the payments were reduced by 20% while the scheme requirements remained the same. As a result, farmers lost interest in the scheme and many decided not to renew their contracts after the first five years had expired; now this scheme covers only 30% of the SPA¹³.

3.6 The establishment and management of filter strips, Finland

This scheme aims to reduce diffuse pollution and soil erosion by paying farmers to establish and maintain 15m wide strips of covered but uncultivated land between fields and watercourses. While the primary aim of this scheme is to improve water quality, biodiversity can also benefit. Where the filter strip includes bushes and tall grasses, species such as Common Whitethroats, Whinchats, Sedge Warblers, and Common Reed Buntings benefit, and where it is more meadow like, skylarks and corncrakes can benefit.

Monitoring of the biodiversity impact of the Finnish agri-environment scheme is carried out by the Ministry of the Environment. The scheme could be considerably improved if it required management of the strips for wildlife as well as water pollution and soil erosion, through, for example, providing a diversity of habitats in the same area, and encouraging grazing of the strips.

The scheme has suffered from low uptake and currently filter strips cover only 4828ha. In this case, payment is sufficient, but it is lack of awareness of the scheme among farmers that is preventing it from being implemented on a sufficiently large scale to have a significant environmental benefit.

3.7 Protecting meadow bird nests in the Netherlands

Meadow bird nests are at risk of destruction from mowing and other mechanical operations in the field. This scheme aims to remove this risk by paying farmers up to €116/ha to mark and avoid nests in their fields. While it might look like a valiant attempt to save the lives of vulnerable chicks, research has demonstrated clearly that the benefit to meadow bird populations is minimal as a high mortality rate resulting from mechanical operations persists once the chick has left the nest. Meadow birds (waders) appear to avoid settling in fields under agri-environment schemes, and agri-environment schemes in the Netherlands have not led to a population increase in species of conservation concern¹⁴

¹³ Pinto, M., Rocha, P., Moreira, F., 2005. Long-term trends in great bustard (*Otis tarda*) populations in Portugal suggest concentration in single high quality area. *Biological Conservation* 124, 415-423.

¹⁴ Kleijn, D., Berendse, F., Smit, R., Gilissen, N., 2001. Agri-environment schemes do not effectively protect biodiversity in Dutch agricultural landscapes. *Nature* 413, 723-725.

Kleijn, D., Berendse, F., Smit, R., Gilissen, N., Smit, J., Brak, B., Groeneveld, R., 2004. Ecological effectiveness of agri-environment schemes in different agricultural landscapes in the Netherlands. *Conservation Biology* 18, 775-786.

Kleijn, D., van Zuijlen, G.J.C., 2004. The conservation effects of meadow bird agreements on farmland in Zeeland, The Netherlands, in the period 1989-1995. *Biological Conservation* 117, 443-451.

80-90,000 hectares are under an agri-environment contract in the Netherlands, and 70% of these consist of a nest protection agreement alone. With so many proven ways of helping farmers protect meadow birds, this is a wasted opportunity and an unjustified expense.

3.8 Reducing growth regulator use in Baden-Württemberg, Germany

This scheme pays up to €100/ha to cereal growers to not apply growth regulators, such as CCC, to their crops. Approximately 12,000 farmers benefit from this scheme, which has a total annual budget of this scheme is €6Mn/year. The stated aim is to avoid the environmental damage caused by growth regulators, but, in fact, there is no clear public benefit from stopping their use, particularly as there are many cereal breeds available that do not need growth regulators. Instead, this money could be used to pay for simple, effective and proven measures on arable land, such as field margins and beetle banks.

3.9 The protection of semi-natural and natural grasslands, Slovakia

Semi-natural and natural grasslands are an important feature of the Slovakian landscape and this scheme seeks to protect them by paying farmers €135/ha to enhance and maintain their grasslands. Management requirements include a limit on fertiliser and pesticide applications, defined stocking densities to ensure that grazed grassland is grazed at the appropriate intensity, and restrictions on mowing.

This scheme has been welcomed because semi-natural and natural grasslands are an asset that will need protection to ensure that they are not lost to intensification. However, there is no monitoring system to gauge the results of the scheme and ensure it is delivering environmental benefit, and the prescriptions are not designed to deliver maximum benefit. The mowing restrictions, for example, fail to account for breeding birds.

3.10 Adopting environmentally friendly farming methods, Cyprus

This is a general better practice scheme with the specific aim of reducing chemical inputs and improving water management. It is not specifically wildlife focused, but, as it encourages less intensive production of potatoes, citrus fruits, vines and cereals, it may have some positive impact on birds. However, there is no monitoring system for the biodiversity or environmental impacts of the scheme, so we will be unable to establish whether it is delivering the anticipated benefits.

3.11 Conserving the natural value and traditional character of the farmed landscape, Cyprus

This scheme pays farmers, and particularly those in LFAs, for a range of activities and management prescriptions that contribute to conserving the natural and traditional character of the farmed landscape. Prescriptions include the planting and maintenance of traditional agricultural trees such as hazelnut, carob and almond trees, as well of

traditional flower-bearing and aromatic bushes. It also pays for the construction and maintenance of traditional dry stone terrace walls.

While this scheme is not aimed at wildlife, increased wild bushes and plant diversity in the farmed landscape is likely to be of benefit to farmland birds in Cyprus. However, the absence of any biodiversity and environmental monitoring means that it is impossible to know what this scheme is delivering.

3.12 Grassland maintenance, Czech Republic

This aim of this scheme is to maintain species diversity and breeding birds in meadows and pastures by paying farmers to manage their grassland in a more environmentally friendly way. Management prescriptions include keeping the stocking density between 0.5 and 1LU/ha, limiting fertiliser applications and mowing ungrazed grassland twice a year. Farmers must all follow good farming practice.

In return, farmers are paid up to €95/ha, and up to €165/ha in protected areas. While a number of species that feed and nest in grassland may benefit, there is no monitoring system in place to measure the impact of this scheme.

3.13 Bird habitats on grassland, Czech Republic

Corncrakes have declined dramatically in Western Europe as a result of modern management practises. This scheme aims to prevent this loss in the Czech Republic by supporting appropriate management of grasslands. Eligible farms are those that have meadows with breeding corncrakes, as well as waders.

Required management includes not applying fertilisers, following good farming practise, and employing mowing techniques that favour breeding corncrakes and waders. That means no mechanical operations on the meadows between 15 March and 30 June and a first mowing after August 15. Mowing should be with no more than one machine and from the centre outwards. For meadows with wader birds, a second mowing can take place between September 30 and November 15.

So far, 16,500ha are managed under this scheme for corncrakes and 3,500ha for waders. No monitoring takes place to evaluate whether corncrakes, waders and other meadow birds are benefiting. The scheme has, however, introduced positive management on to these meadows and raised awareness about the plight of these species and how they can be helped. Unfortunately, the rigidity of the management required under this scheme means that greater take-up is not being achieved and the full potential of this scheme is not being realised.

3.14 Supporting sustainable agriculture, Poland

This is a basic level scheme that aims to introduce general sustainable agricultural management across the whole farm. Participant farmers must prepare an agri-environment plan, which includes a map of their farm showing the main features, and follow it. The plan should detail a three-year crop rotation, a fertiliser plan based on an annual soil analysis and a maximum application rate of 150kg N/year, and keep the farm

within a maximum stocking rate of 1.5 LU/ha. The farmer must also not remove ecological features such as wetlands and trees.

In return, farmers receive €36/ha each year, however only farmers in target areas – approximately 5% of Polish farmers - are eligible. As with most schemes in the new EU Member States, this is a new scheme and until now there has been no experience with agri-environment schemes. Successful implementation will depend on how well the Government's advisory service promote it and work with eligible farmers to encourage them to apply and then comply.

3.15 The maintenance of extensive pasture, Poland

Extensive pastures in Poland support important meadow plant species and are valuable breeding habitats for a range of meadow birds. This scheme pays farmers €67–89/ha/year to maintain their pastures and preserve the biodiversity they host. This means that the farmer must not plough the field, re-seed it, apply pesticides or herbicides and keep the pasture grazed between the 20th May and 20th October at no more than 1LU/ha.

Like the other Polish schemes, this scheme is only available to approximately 5% of farmers, and so this scheme, which could benefit many meadow birds, will not be able to be applied at a large enough scale to have a significant impact. Furthermore, it is not open to group applications, which rules out community pastures, which are grazed by many different people, e.g in the Bug river valley and the Biebrza river valley.

There is a similar scheme for the maintenance of extensive meadows, which may benefit meadow birds such as Lapwing, Black-tailed godwit, and Redshank

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Table 1: Summary of the agri-environment schemes referred to in this paper

	Country	Region (a)	Aims to help biodiversity (b)	Monitoring (c)	Proven to help biodiversity (d)	Based on scientific research (e)	Birds proven to benefit ¹⁵ (f)	Birds that may benefit (g)	Annual expenditure/€
Adopting environmentally friendly farming methods	Cyprus	n/a	N	N	N	N	None	?	?
Conserving the natural value and traditional character of the farmed landscape	Cyprus	n/a	N	N	N	N	None	Farmland birds including roller, Cyprus wheatear, Cyprus warbler, masked shrike	1,842,000
Grassland maintenance	Czech Republic	n/a	Y	N	N	N	None	Meadows Songster, Corncrake, Grey Partridge	?
Bird habitats on grassland	Czech Republic	n/a	Y	N	N	N	None	Corncrake, waders, and other meadow birds such as Songster and Grey Partridge	?
Establishment and management of filter strips	Finland	n/a	N	Y	Y	?	Common whitethroat, whinchat, sedge warbler, reed bunting, skylark, corncrake	n/a	2,361,000
Supporting species rich grassland	Germany	Baden-Württemberg	Y	Y	Y	Y	None	Winchat, red-backed shrike, skylark, corn bunting	3,500,000

Reducing growth regulator use	Germany	Baden-Württemberg	N	N	N	N	None	None	6,000,000
Creating habitats on arable farmland	Italy	Emilia-Romagna	Y	?	Y	?	Many, including: purple heron, black-winged stilt, lapwing, great-crested grebe, little tern.	n/a	28,000
Protecting meadow bird nests	Netherlands	n/a	N	?	N	?	None	None	Unknown
Supporting sustainable agriculture	Poland	n/a	N	N	N	N	None	All farmland birds	?
Maintenance of extensive pasture	Poland	n/a	Y	N	N	N	None	Pasture birds such as Hoopoe and Yellow wagtail	?
The Castro Verde zonal scheme	Portugal	n/a	Y	?	Y	?	Dry grassland birds, as well as lesser kestrel, little bustard and great bustard.	n/a	Unknown
The protection of semi-natural and natural grasslands	Slovakia	n/a	Y	N	N	?	None	Meadow birds	Unknown
Cirl Bunting special project	UK	England	Y	Y	Y	Y	Cirl Bunting	n/a	300,000
Entry-level environmental stewardship	UK	England	Y	Y	Y	Y	None	Farmland species, such as skylark, lapwing, and yellowhammer	145,000,000

Notes:

- (a) Where the scheme is delivered regionally, the relevant region is indicated here. Non-applicable (n/a) is used where the Member State does not implement agri-environment schemes regionally

- (b) It is clearly stated that this scheme aims to benefit biodiversity or wildlife, Y signifies that the scheme does, N that it does not.
- (c) There is a monitoring system designed to monitor the affect of the scheme on biodiversity over time.
- (d) Monitoring or other scientific research has confirmed that the scheme has had a positive impact on biodiversity.
- (e) The scheme design and management prescriptions have been based upon scientific research.
- (f) Monitoring or other scientific research has proven that populations of these bird species benefit from the scheme
- (g) These birds could theoretically benefit from the scheme (according to BirdLife partners), but research has not been done to confirm this.