

ITALY WAS PROMISED A GREEN AGRICULTURE POLICY — but this is what we got!



PROMISE



We were promised a space for nature in Italian farmland, but...



REALITY



57%

of Italian farmland, or more than 90% of all farmers will not have to respect rules that protect biodiversity.¹

1

57% of utilized agriculture area (UAA) in Italy will not be required to include ecological focus areas that protect biodiversity, such as buffer strips between fields, trees, hedges and ponds. This will make it even more difficult for animals like birds, insects, butterflies, bees and small mammals to survive in farmland areas. Less space for nature has further negative impacts on water and soil quality.



We were promised less monoculture farming and a more diverse and healthy landscape, but...



51%

of arable land in Italy, or more than 48% of all arable farmers are not required to carry out any meaningful crop diversification.²

2

Half of the arable land in Italy will not be required to do a three crop diversification. The criteria set for diversification will be based on genus which renders diversification completely ineffective. The government is thereby allowing large monocultures to perpetuate biodiversity loss, soil depletion and increased pesticide and fertilizer use. This results in irreversible and damaging consequences for the climate as well as air and water quality.



We were promised to have all agricultural land contributing to a more sustainable countryside, but...



more than 21% of UAA in Italy have been exempted from any kind of greening requirement.³

3

All permanent crops have been exempted from greening, meaning that there is no difference between those that have a high value for nature and those that harm the environment. Secular and traditional olive groves already contribute to biodiversity and are therefore eligible for greening payment. But, new intensive and irrigated olive groves are destroying biodiversity and will also receive the greening payment without having to make any effort towards mitigating their harmful environmental impacts.

¹ Statistics from Eurostat http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Agri-environmental_indicator_-_soil_cover

² Statistics from Eurostat http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Agri-environmental_indicator_-_cropping_patterns

³ Statistics from L'agricoltura italiana conta 2012. INEA.



The average European household contributed €277 per year to the CAP between 2007-2013.

In exchange for the billions of euros paid annually in taxes, Europeans were promised a green and more sustainable CAP reform.

But now the reform is over and greener and more sustainable farming is unlikely to take form because exemptions from green measures have become the rule rather than the exception. The rural development budget for Italy has increased by 1.4% but this is not a guarantee that

the investment in measures for environment and biodiversity will be raised. There will now be competition with other measures such as risk management.

But it is not over yet.

Now all efforts have to focus on getting the most out of the implementation of the reform. Regional and Italian governments have the ability to make this happen.

The Regional and Italian governments are urged to take this final opportunity and:

1

Under Direct Payments:

- Prepare to verify the effectiveness of greening on the ground.
- Move money from pillar 1 to pillar 2, not the other way around.

2

Rural Development:

- Allow real involvement of all stakeholders, including environmental NGOs, starting with the programming phase of the RDPs.
- Implement measures that contribute to the effective management of Natura 2000 sites.
- Promote agri-environment agreements in order to coordinate measures in areas with similar environmental problems. This will prevent the useless spread of measures on the ground and will provide interesting and measurable results.
- Create a national programme for organic farming with the objective of doubling the amount of UAA cultivated with the organic method by 2020.
- Use risk management measures to solve conflicts between breeding and large carnivores (wolves, bears, etc).
- Create a national programme for innovation within the European Programme for Innovation to be finalized in the environmental objectives of the CAP.

Only if this is achieved can we see a Common Agriculture Policy that contributes to nature protection, maximizes opportunities for Italian farmers and delivers on its promise for a greener Europe.