

THE UK WAS PROMISED A GREEN AGRICULTURE REFORM — but this is what we got!



PROMISE



We were promised a 'greener' policy to help reverse wildlife declines, but...



REALITY



Rural Development was hit by heavy funding cuts, despite its environmental credentials.

1 In the UK, Rural Development funds were cut by 5.5%, over twice the cuts applied to Pillar I Direct Payments. This means less money for progressive farmers who want to look after the natural environment and poorer prospects for meeting Government targets to halt biodiversity declines by 2020. It is therefore critical that Governments across the UK transfer the maximum allowed from Pillar I into Rural Development and use this for targeted environmental schemes.



We were promised a 'public money for public goods' CAP deal, but ...



the final deal could amount to greenwash with no new environmental benefits delivered.

2 If UK Governments implement greening with every exemption and loophole, large areas will not have to implement Ecological Focus Areas (EFA). In those that will have to, existing landscape features and land types often already exceed the 5% target, despite some (e.g. nitrogen fixing crops) having very limited benefit for wildlife. It is vital that a more ambitious approach to greening is taken, providing additional environmental benefit and not simply business as usual.



HNV

We were promised support for High Nature Value (HNV) farming, but...



the final deal continues to neglect them, despite their importance for wildlife.

3 HNV systems provide vital environmental services and are culturally very important, but they receive little public support and many are struggling to survive. Existing CAP mechanisms, such as agri-environment schemes, have helped to slow their decline, but aren't enough to make HNV farms commercially viable. Governments across the UK must do much more to support HNV farming, explicitly recognising and rewarding their outstanding environmental value.



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

Politicians promised European citizens a CAP that would secure greener and more sustainable agriculture in exchange for the billions of euros they pay annually in taxes.

But now the reform has failed to deliver a shift towards more sustainable farming and in some countries there will be a step backwards on previous achievements through disproportionate cuts to the much greener Rural Development budget.

But it is not over yet.

Now all efforts must be focused on getting the most out of the implementation of this reform. Governments across the four UK countries have significant flexibility to make the best of a bad deal at home.

Governments across the four UK countries must take this final opportunity to:

1

Direct Payments:

- Shift maximum funds from Pillar I to Rural Development.
- Implement robust greening requirements which represent real added environmental value.
- Fully protect all sensitive grasslands.

2

Rural Development Programmes:

- Prioritise agri-environment-climate measures that go significantly beyond new greening requirements and really deliver for biodiversity.
- Prioritise biodiversity as a key element of agri-environment-climate measures.
- Significantly improve support for HNV farming systems, and ensure that this is explicitly linked to the continuation of sensitive land management.

Only if all of this is delivered, will we see real environmental improvements on UK farmland.

