THE HIDDEN TRUTH
Environmental Impact of New EU Rural Development Programmes

BACKGROUND
One of the overarching aims of CAP reform was to make it deliver more for the environment. To find out what Andalucian Rural Development spending means for the environment, specifically for biodiversity, this factsheet analyses how public money will really be spent and what hides behind the official numbers. Despite the worrying state of the environment, Andalucia is not using its Rural Development spending in the most optimal way.

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

34% DECREASE IN FARMLAND BIRDS SINCE 1998
90% OF PROTECTED EXTENSIVE GRASSLANDS IN NATURA 200 SITES IN UNFAVOURABLE CONDITION

PAPER VS. PRACTICE

Each Rural Development programme needs to respect certain EU priorities, including the protection of ecosystems. While 38% of total public budget in Andalucia has been allocated to measures that should directly benefit biodiversity, water and soil (priority 4), the reality is that not all measures for which this money has been earmarked have high environmental value.

In Andalucia, close to 8% of this budget goes to a basic income support instrument without any environmental conditions attached to it, namely payments for farmers in Areas with Natural Constraints (ANC).

What are ‘dark green’ agri-environment measures?
There is no common definition of light or dark green measures. Our analysis uses the following principle: the scheme has been considered dark green if it targets specific species (groups of species), habitats or a specific biodiversity problem (e.g. pollinator strips).

Only 2% of farmland in Andalusia will be under contracts which will directly address the objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

HOW DOES TOTAL AGRI-ENVIRONMENT SPENDING COMPARE WITH THE LAST FUNDING PERIOD?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2007-2013</th>
<th>2014-2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dark green</td>
<td>118.7</td>
<td>55.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other measures</td>
<td>332.5</td>
<td>272.4</td>
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There will be a 35% cut in total Agri-Environment spending for the 2014-2020 period in comparison with the 2007-2013 programming period.

Figures in millions of euros. 2007-2013 figures don’t include organic measures.
OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

ANDALUCIA must

✓ Increase the budget for ‘dark green’ measures at the expense of allocations for intensive crops.

✓ Include further prescriptions to ensure biodiversity benefits (for example in measures supporting grazing, sustainable systems, etc.).

✓ Carry out enlargement of the ‘steppe’ birds scheme to other important areas beyond Natura 2000 sites, as already identified by the competent administration.

✓ Guarantee environmental contents and proper prioritisation of Natura 2000 within advisory and knowledge transfer measures.

✓ Develop regional values or objectives for common environmental and biodiversity indicators.

✓ Develop a basic system to monitor the impact of RD schemes on Natura 2000.

✓ Increase support across all the measures for extensive livestock and transhumance systems.

EUROPE must

✓ Ensure that a well-designed greening and reinforced cross compliance represent a firm baseline for Pillar 2 environmental measures. This could help free up money for more efficient and targeted measures that benefit the environment and biodiversity.

✓ Ensure the CAP is designed in a way which helps reach the EU Biodiversity Strategy goals by 2020. So far evidence shows that the agriculture target is the most problematic.

✓ Have a genuine system for tracking environmental spending. Only measures with clear environmental objectives and delivery can be included. Areas of Natural Constraints (ANCs) must not be counted as environmentally-beneficial measures as there are no environmental obligations or management requirements attached to the payments.

✓ Ensure proper monitoring of the Rural Development schemes’ delivery.

Europe needs to take a proper look at the whole of its agricultural policy to see whether it is working for or against environmental commitments and priorities. Even if Rural Development can be a large part of the answer and has the potential to play a positive role in many parts of Europe, the figures unfortunately show adjustments are necessary for this policy to truly deliver on its objectives. It is now clear that this reformed CAP still has a long way to go before it can be called green.

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The data in this factsheet is based on the first version of the Rural Development Programme.