

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



PROMISE



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



REALITY



47%

of EU farmland and nearly 89% of farmers will not have to respect rules that protect biodiversity.¹

1

Almost half of EU farmland will not be required to include natural elements that protect biodiversity, such as buffer strips between fields, trees, hedges and ponds. This will make it even more difficult for animals such as 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...



26.4%

of all arable land, or more than 60% of arable holdings, are not required to carry out any meaningful crop diversification.²

2

Over a quarter of the arable land in the EU will not be required to do a three crop diversification. The EU 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 more targeted funding for environmental measures, but...



the more environmentally targeted part of the CAP - Rural Development - received a 38% bigger cut than Direct Payments.³

3

Disproportionate cuts to the more conditional and environmentally focused Rural Development Fund means that there will most likely be less money available for green farmers, who are applying better farming practices to their everyday work.

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 the European Council Conclusions on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-202 and the CAP



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. Even worse, in some countries this so called "green" reform will constitute a step backwards on previous environmental

achievements through disproportionate cuts to the much greener Rural Development Fund and a decrease in environmental requirements.

But it is not over yet.

Now all efforts have to focus on getting the most out of the implementation of the reform. The European Commission has the ability to make this happen.

Decision makers are urged to take this final opportunity and:

1

Optimise the quality of Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs)

- Incentivize the use of true ecological infrastructures, such as buffer strips, trees, hedges and ponds rather than crops through the weighting mechanism.
- Ensure the quality of Ecological Focus Areas through additional criteria (e.g. management requirements to avoid pesticide and fertilizer use on EFAs).

2

Ensure that **crop diversification measures** distinguish between crops on the basis of botanical family.

3

Ensure that **Rural Development Programmes** only contain truly sustainable measures that are going significantly beyond the greening requirements and cross compliance under direct payments.

- Ensure that the 30% minimum spending for the environment is only filled with high quality environmental measures, such as agri-environment-climate, forest-environment and Natura 2000 measures.
- Reject all environmentally harmful measures under Rural Development.

4

Ensure that the **equivalence mechanism** can only be used as a way of improving the greening measures and outcomes, rather than watering down existing measures.

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