



The post-2020 CAP and soil

EU Soil Observatory Stakeholder Forum

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Two points to retain above all others

- The future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has **great potential** to contribute to care for soil
- Will it realise this potential? The **next few months may be crucial** in answering that question

So many ways to benefit soil, e.g. ...

- Precision agriculture
- Agro-ecology
- Organic farming
- Crop rotation
- Appropriate soil cover
- Appropriate tillage practices (e.g. in line with contours)
- Agroforestry, other presence of trees

The future CAP can potentially encourage all of these, and more, in various ways...

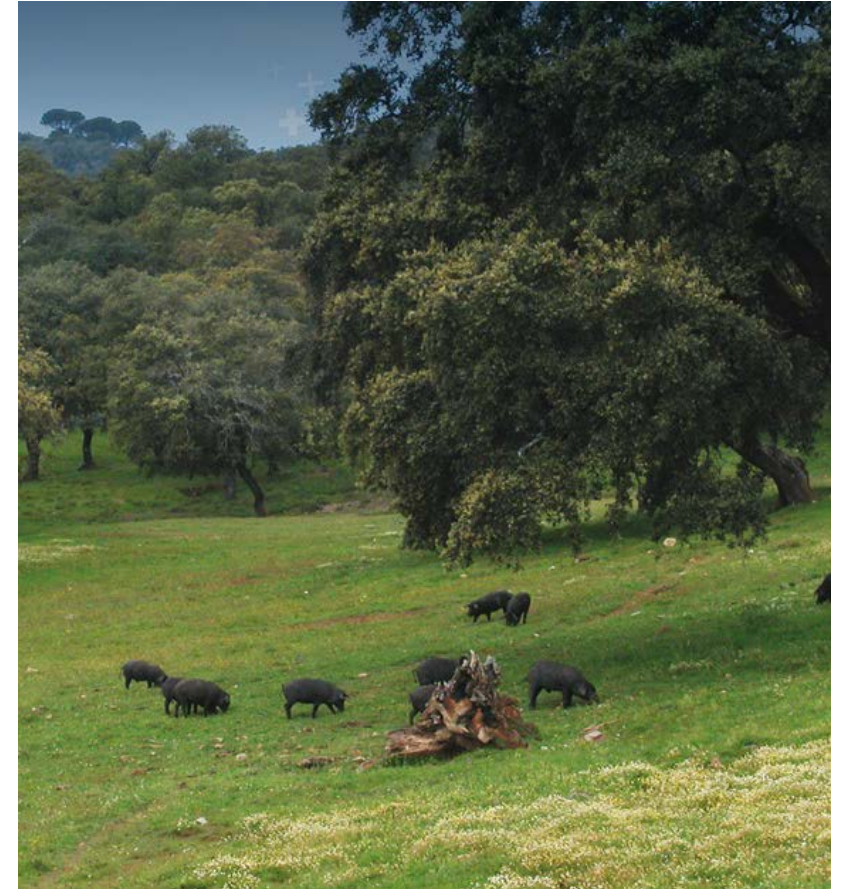
Future CAP Strategic Plans and sustainable soil management

- **Single CAP plan per MS** covering all key elements of CAP together – e.g.
 - conditionality
 - direct payments
 - support for rural development
- **Strategic approach** based on needs assessment and EU-level objectives
- **Structured dialogue** with Member States
- CAP plans will be **approved by the Commission**
- Stronger links to **legislation** on environment and climate



Enhanced conditionality

- **Improves** on current systems of “greening” and “cross-compliance”
- Aims at **wider coverage**
- Made up of Statutory Management Requirements (**SMRs**) and standards of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (**GAECs**)
- **New** requirements (e.g. new GAEC to protect wetlands and peatlands)
- **Improvements** to existing requirements



Future conditionality: GAEC standards

Climate change

- GAEC 1: Maintenance of **permanent grassland** based on a ration PG/agricultural area (at national, regional, sub-regional, holding level) (“greening”)
- GAEC 2: Protection of **wetland and peatland** (new)
- GAEC 3: **Ban on burning** arable stubble, except for plant health reasons (cross-compliance)

Water

- GAEC 4: Establishment of **buffer strips** along water courses stubble [minimum width of 3 meters] (cross-compliance)

Soil

- GAEC 5: **Tillage management** reducing soil erosion risk with slope consideration (cross-compliance)
- GAEC 6: **Minimum soil cover** to avoid bare soil in **periods that are most sensitive** (cross-compliance)
- GAEC 7: Crop **rotation** in arable land, except for crops growing under water (“greening”)

Biodiversity and landscapes

- GAEC 8: Minimum **share of agricultural area [arable land] devoted to non-productive areas or features**, retention LF, ban cutting hedges/trees during bird rearing season
- GAEC 9: **Ban on converting or ploughing permanent grassland designated as environmentally-sensitive** in Natura 2000 sites (“greening”)

Eco-schemes

- **New way** of using **CAP Pillar I funding** for dedicated schemes for the environment & climate (plus animal welfare, combating anti-microbial resistance)
- **MS must include them in CAP plans** (with minimum spending level); but voluntary for farmers
- MS have considerable **flexibility over content** (though broad “areas of action” listed in future regulation)
- Support applies to practices going beyond “**baseline**” (conditionality + other EU and national legal requirements)
- Payments are **annual**, but can be based on **multi-annual commitments**

CAP Pillar 2 – main environmental elements

Article 65

- **Environmental climate and other management commitments**

Article 67

- **Area-specific disadvantages resulting from certain mandatory requirements** (Natura + WFD payments)

Other RD interventions

- **Advice, training, co-operation, investments**
- (both “productive” and “non-productive”)

Next steps for the future CAP

By end 2021:

- Sign off basic legal acts
- Agree, sign off implementing + delegated acts
- MS formally submit their CAP Strategic Plans (informal discussion already ongoing on informal drafts - partial or full)

2022:

- Formal dialogue between MS and Commission over draft CAP Strategic Plans
- Plans to be approved no later than 6 months after submission

2023:

- CAP Strategic Plans “go live” on 1 January

“The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself”
(Roosevelt)

So let's not “go there”...!