

Common Agricultural Policy

- CAP has consistently failed to protect and enhance the ecosystems on which it depends; for example none of the habitats associated with agriculture are in favourable condition in the Atlantic region.¹
- The reform of the CAP must not miss the opportunity to help restore ecosystem health² and thereby help secure the long-term viability of the Scottish and European agricultural sector.
- Placing greater emphasis on the environment and truly “greening” the CAP will ensure that taxpayers will start to see better value for money and benefits above and beyond food production.

CAP and Ecosystem Services

The relationship between agriculture and nature is not one-way. Agriculture relies on ecosystem services derived from the natural environment³, and these include:

- Soil structure and fertility
- Nutrient cycling
- Water cycling
- Genetic diversity (used to improve crops and livestock)
- Pest control
- Pollination
- Removal of pollutants
- Carbon storage

CAP Reform

Only healthy, specie-rich and connected ecosystems can deliver the range of ecosystem services needed for Scotland to prosper. If we improve ecosystem ‘health’ we will increase the benefits we receive in the form of ecosystem services.

Comprehensive greening of CAP must take place to help restore ecosystem health, ensure sustainable food production and make sure that taxpayers receive value for money.

Key Facts and Quotes

- A key finding of the 2011 UK National Ecosystem Assessment was that “agriculture needs to better provide ecosystem services other than production”.
- 32% of priority species in the farmland environment have been recorded as declining. (National Ecosystem Assessment, 2011)
- “Pollinators (e.g. bees) have declined over the last 30 years in Scotland. Causes of decline include agricultural intensification, inappropriate use of agro-chemicals and loss of semi-natural habitat.” (National Ecosystem Assessment, 2011)
- Of the greening measures proposed by the Commission “the one with the greatest potential to deliver environmental benefit is the Ecological Focus Area”. (IEEP, 2012)
- In the last 10 years skylark and lapwing have declined in farmland habitats in Scotland by 14% and 52% respectively. (SNH, 2012)

¹ Institute for European Environmental Policy. (2009) Conservation status of habitat types and species as required under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive

² Ecosystem health refers to an ecosystem that is species rich, connected, fully functional and resilient to external pressure such as climate change

³ UK National Ecosystem Assessment (2011)

Farmers that receive direct payment must comply with certain minimum standards, called 'cross compliance', in order to receive public money. The reformed CAP must strengthen cross compliance and this should be applied to all farms irrespective of size.

A greener CAP is also vital to the delivery of Scotland's ambitious 2050 greenhouse gas reduction targets, the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and will align with the Scottish Government's Land Use Strategy.

Pillar 1 (Direct payments)

Direct payments (in the form of single farm payments in Scotland) get the majority of CAP money. Greening of this payment must take place as it is the only way to start to restore damaged environments across [the](#) whole agricultural landscape which covers over 80% of Scotland.⁴

Scottish Wildlife Trust is in agreement with the Institute for European Environmental Policy who have stated that of all the greening proposals, designating 7% of eligible farm area to Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs) is the most likely measure to deliver environmental benefit.

Presently, the vast majority of direct payment goes to the east and south west of Scotland⁵ where the most intensive agricultural practices take place. This means CAP money is only helping farmers in the most prosperous areas of Scotland. The north west of Scotland loses out to the detriment of people and wildlife.

Direct payments in Scotland must be moved from the current system that only supports intensive production on the east coast to a system that provides a flat rate per hectare across all of Scotland.

Pillar 2

Despite proposals to green direct payments, SRDP is where most of the money to deliver positive environmental outcomes will come from. The Scottish Wildlife Trust would like to see at least 50% of SRDP funds committed to the agri-environment/climate change measures. Investing 50% of SRDP in agri-environment/climate measures would also be coherent with the agenda of making CAP deliver public benefits for public good.

Changes to pillar 2 will see the introduction of six Rural Development Priorities. The Scottish Wildlife Trust would like to emphasise the importance of Priority 4 *Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems*.

Scottish Wildlife Trust and CAP

The Scottish Wildlife Trust's central aim is to *advance the conservation of Scotland's biodiversity for the benefit of present and future generations*. The Scottish Wildlife Trust uses CAP money to help achieve this aim. SRDP funding has been used to:

- Create a long term forest plan for the Cumbernauld Living Landscapes project with the aim of creating a sustainable, connected, native woodland for the benefit of biodiversity and the people of Cumbernauld.
- Support our award winning "flying flock" to graze our Bankhead Moss, BoMains Meadow, Cambus Pools, Cullaloe, and Linhouse Glen reserves. Light grazing helps maintain species-rich grasslands supporting species such as orchids and butterflies.
- Control non-native invasive grey squirrels as part of the "Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels" (SSRS) partnership project. SSRS is a project to stop the decline of Scotland's core red squirrel populations, to contain or significantly slow the progress of squirrelpox spread in South Scotland and to improve conditions for viable red squirrel populations across Scotland.

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⁴ [Scottish Government Agricultural Statistics 2011](#)

⁵ Scottish Government. (2010). Modelling Scenarios for CAP Pillar 1 Area Payments. Saughton House. Edinburgh