



## FACE position on Greening under the next CAP

### I. Overview

FACE is asking for a new 'biodiversity' instrument to improve the Greening component of the next Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). In short, this biodiversity instrument would:

- Establish an entry-level measure for farmers, which would permit them to dedicate part of their farmland to non-productive use for biodiversity only;
- Enable the farmer to dedicate a minimum measurable area of farmland for biodiversity in accordance with specific land type/use characteristics, agreed at national level;
- Require national administrative structures to be adapted to ensure that this measure is simple and well-understood.

### II. Introduction

European hunters are aware that the CAP is a crucial support mechanism for agriculture and rural areas in Europe. However, the CAP has a significant impact on the environment, biodiversity and the status of many huntable species in Europe. Most small game populations have decreased due to intense agricultural practices (dramatic loss of quality habitat and food, with poor insect abundance) and the utilisation of unsustainable agricultural production methods. The impact is similar in many protected areas<sup>1</sup>. The role of farming in Europe is mainly to ensure the sustainable provision of sufficient amounts of high quality food in terms of nutrients and health, but also to develop the economy and offer a diversity of landscapes and biodiversity.

### III. Problem: Current Greening measures are not effective

It has become evident that current Greening measures<sup>2</sup> do not have a significant positive impact on farmland biodiversity<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, they can often represent an additional administrative burden for farmers and authorities. In this context, FACE is asking for a more effective Greening instrument in the next CAP to ensure agriculture's coherence with other existing EU policies such as the nature directives, the Water Framework Directive, the Nitrates Directive, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> See: <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0185809>

<sup>2</sup> Greening measures are divided into three parts:

1. Ecological Focus Areas: Farmers with more than 15 ha of arable lands should devote at least 5% of it for ecologically beneficial elements designated by their national governments.
2. Permanent grassland: Farmers should keep permanent grasslands designated by their national government.
3. Crops diversification: Farmers who have more than 10 ha should diversify their crops by growing at least two or three different ones.

<sup>3</sup> See e.g.: <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/344/6188/1090> and

<http://archive.eeb.org/index.cfm?LinkServID=0E2EEC07-5056-B741-DBA777455AA46334>



## THE VOICE OF EUROPEAN HUNTERS

FACE

Rue Belliard 205 5

B-1040 Brussels

+ 32 (0)2 732 6900

info@face.eu

www.face.eu

### IV. Reform of Greening

FACE proposes a more environmentally-friendly and simpler instrument to replace greening in the next CAP (post 2020):

- This biodiversity measure would be established at farm level proportional to the amount of the actual area dedicated to non-productive use.
- This measure would include a ban on the use of chemical inputs, tillage or cropping in the dedicated biodiversity areas that is not strictly needed for the achievement of biodiversity goals.
- Cooperation should also be promoted between stakeholders to reach the desired ecological and socio-economic objectives.
- The design at national level should be regionalised and Member States should consult with hunters and other relevant local stakeholders to ensure that measures are adapted to local socio-economic and ecological specificities.
- Agri-environmental schemes can and should complement this 'biodiversity' measure.

This instrument is simple for farmers and beneficial for biodiversity.

#### Further resources:

FACE welcomes the European Commission's **Evaluation of greening**, published in December 2017:

[https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/market-and-income-reports/greening-of-direct-payments\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/market-and-income-reports/greening-of-direct-payments_en)

FACE also welcomes the EU Court of Auditors report "**Greening: a more complex income support scheme, not yet environmentally effective**" published in December 2017:

<https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/NewsItem.aspx?nid=9338>

Both documents highlight the range of problems associated with the Greening.

