The forthcoming enlargement of the European Union poses a major political, economic and ecological challenge for the EU, the Member States and the Candidate Countries. One of the last and most difficult chapters to be discussed in the accession negotiations is the agricultural chapter of the aquis communautaire. The presentations and additional background information of the international workshop entitled "EU Enlargement: Impact of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) on Environment and Nature" that took place on 4-5 September 2001 in Bonn have been published in the BfN-Skripten.

The aim of this International Workshop was to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and information concerning the EU-Enlargement, the Common Agricultural Policy and aspects related to environmental protection and nature conservation. In the first part of the Workshop, an overview was provided on these subjects as well as assessments on the impacts of the Common Agricultural Policy on nature and environment from the perspective of the
Candidate Countries and the Member States. Within the second part of the Workshop, the complex interactions between agriculture, rural development, environment and nature conservation were discussed and assessed. The results were summarised through the elaboration of a scenario of this interaction.

The Workshop has brought together an interdisciplinary selection of participants consisting of representatives from the German Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety, the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, the German Federal Environmental Agency as well as scientists and NGOs.

As part of Ecologic's preparation for the workshop a background paper was developed outlining the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and its major reforms as well as the most important instruments of the CAP regarding environment and nature, such as the rural development regulation, including agri-environmental programmes, cross-compliance and modulation. Furthermore, the EU-Enlargement negotiations, especially those regarding the agricultural chapter of the aquis communautaire, were highlighted.

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