

EVENT

Climate Talk
Agriculture
Climate

The Common Agricultural Policy: Barrier to - or Driver for Climate Change Mitigation in Agriculture?



[1]

What is the role of the Common Agricultural Policy in addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation? Has the recent round of CAP reform sufficiently contributed to the effort to address these issues? These questions were the focus of the 25th Climate Talk, jointly organized by Ecologic Institute and the Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), which featured presentations by Clemens Neumann (BMELV), Reinhild Benning (BUND), and Sandra Naumann (Ecologic Institute).

Agriculture is simultaneously a significant contributor to and directly affected by climate change. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is a key funding instrument in the EU that can support both mitigation and adaptation in agriculture and land management more broadly. Nonetheless, climate-related objectives have not featured strongly in the most recent programming period (2007-2013).

The new programming period (2014-2020) thus presents a challenge but also an opportunity to make the CAP more sustainable and integrate climate change concerns. In October 2011, the European Commission introduced a package of legislative proposals which were aimed at greening the new CAP. These proposals, more explicitly than before, addressed climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as introduced several provisions

which would improve the environmental impact of the policy. Since then, many environmental provisions have been weakened during the negotiations, and how climate-related measures are designed and implemented will ultimately be decided by the Member States.

A lively and dynamic discussion centered on the following issues:

- What role does agriculture play in climate change mitigation and how can it adapt to climate change?
- How can climate change best be integrated into agricultural policy, and
- what types of instruments are most suitable?
- What opportunities exist outside the CAP at national or regional level?

The discussion confirmed that the second Pillar of the CAP focusing on rural development is the most important tool for climate protection in agriculture. Member States have to allocate at least 30% of rural development funds for targeted environmental and climate protection measures. In particular, measures such as the cultivation of legumes, reduced use of fertilizers and pesticides, or organic farming methods should be encouraged.

In contrast, the agreed "greening measures" in the 1st Pillar of the CAP, including the maintenance of permanent pasture, crop diversification, and the provision of so-called ecological compensation areas, do not provide a significant contribution to environmental and climate protection since their requirements have been weakened substantially from the original proposals. For example, the most recent agreement does not completely exclude the possibility that pesticides may be applied in ecological focus areas.

Against this background, many of the respondents advocated that greater financial resources should be allocated to the 2nd Pillar - beyond its current share of 25% (ca. 0,9 billion €) of the total agricultural budget.

Further options were also identified for addressing climate change mitigation in agriculture, such as reducing food waste and the consumption of animal products, as well as the increasing importance of regional foods. These options, however, would necessitate a fundamental rethinking in our society, a process that is still in its infancy.

The discussion also highlighted that climate change action in agriculture can only be successful and sustainable if farmers are actively involved in the decision-making process and appropriate advice is provided to farmers.

While many participants saw a need for action and commitment to climate protection in agriculture at the national and EU level, some

also emphasized the role of international institutions (for example, the WTO).

26 September 2013

Berlin

Clemens Neumann

Reinhild Benning

[Sandra Naumann](#) [2]

Ecologic Related Articles

- Climate Talk: China's next Five Year Plan - Towards a Green Revolution? (中国 绿色革命 中国: 绿色革命 - 绿色革命?)
- Sustainable and Climate Friendly Soil Management (SmartSOIL)
- Climate Proofing of Cohesion Policy and Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)
- Climate Change Mitigation in German Agriculture

Organizer

Ecologic Institute, Germany

German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Germany

Speaker

Clemens Neumann (BMELV)

Reinhild Benning (BUND)

Speaker

Sandra Naumann

Team

Dr. Camilla Bausch

Sandra Naumann

Benjamin Görlach

Dr. Ana Frelih-Larsen

Stephanie Wunder

Sarina Bstieler

Team

Dr. Susanne Dröge (SWP)

Date

26 September 2013

Location

Berlin, Germany

Language

German

Keywords

Agricultural Policy, CAP, Agriculture, Climate Change

Source URL (modified on 11/20/2018 - 16:00): <https://www.ecologic.eu/9955>

Links

[1] https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2013/climate_talk_web_28.jpg

[2] <https://www.ecologic.eu/1783>

