Preparing for the Implementation of Agri-Environment Schemes in Central and Eastern Europe

PROCEEDINGS

Expert Seminar

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Organized jointly by

Avalon
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Contents

Abbreviations Used in this Report

CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CBC	Cross-Border Co-operation
CEC	Commission of the European Community
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CEECs	Central and Eastern European Countries
CoGAP	Codes of Good Agricultural Practice
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
EU	European Union
GEF	Global Environment Fund
GFP	Good Farming Practice
IEEP	Institute for European Environmental Policy
LFA	Less Favoured Area
MS	Member States
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RDR	Rural Development Regulation 1257/99
SAPARD	Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development
SPP	Special Preparatory Programme
STAR	Committee on agricultural structures and rural development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WTO	World Trade Organisation

INTRODUCTION

Agri-environment schemes have become a key part of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), covering about 20% of utilisable agricultural area (UAA) in the EU. They are the most promising instrument to-date for integrating environmental and nature protection objectives into farm management and their importance is underlined by the fact that they are the only obligatory measure under the new Rural Development Regulation 1257/1999.

The development of agri-environment schemes has been quite uneven across the EU. This is largely due to their administrative complexity and the policy traditions of different Member States. For example, most southern EU countries have implemented comparatively small agri-environment schemes. In contrast, agri-environment schemes are a very important policy instrument in those states that joined the EU most recently e.g. over 90% of agricultural area in Finland is included in the national agri-environment programme.

In preparation for accession, all applicant countries need to build the administrative capacity and knowledge to implement agri-environment schemes. At the latest the introduction of full agri-environment schemes should occur upon joining the EU, however all ten countries are in fact already planning to implement pilot schemes - either as part of their SAPARD programme or as a national measure.

This expert seminar was organised jointly by Avalon, the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP - London) and Daphne - the Institute of Applied Ecology.

It is part of a ten country project co-ordinated by Avalon that aims to build upon previous work and deepen the understanding of agri-environment schemes in all CEECs. The project is entitled "Developing the Know-How for the Implementation of Agri-environment Schemes in Central and Eastern Europe" and is providing technical support through a number of activities including the:

- organisation of expert missions;
- publication of regular of agri-environment bulletins;
- preparation of an expert directory and updated technical manual, and;
- organisation of this seminar.

The main objective of the seminar was to facilitate as much "learning from experience" as possible by the participants. It was anticipated that this learning would both be from EU experts to CEEC experts and - just as importantly - from CEEC expert to CEEC expert.

POLICY UPDATE

Report on policy developments from the SAPARD unit

Valery Morard

Main points from presentation

Acceptance of SAPARD plans
During the course of autumn 2000 the SAPARD programmes of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) have been formally adopted by the European Commission (EC), establishing pre-condition for the 2000 budget to be utilised. All SAPARD plans are now publicly available, and can be downloaded off the internet at *http://europa.eu.int/comm.dg06/external/enlarge/index.en.htm.*

Financial arrangements
It is expected that all multi-annual finance agreements between the Commission and the CEECs will be agreed by the end of 2000, which allows unutilised 2000 funds to be rolled over into the following two years. Accreditation of the national Paying Agencies which will be responsible for paying and controlling functions does not have a fixed timetable. It is however important that preparation of these agencies is not done in haste as the SAPARD programme can only start after the Commission is satisfied that the agency meets their requirements.

SAPARD and the environment
The environmental dimension of SAPARD plans should not be limited only to agri-environment programmes. Environmental conditions have been attached to all measures, something which the SAPARD unit is proud of, and environmental objectives are also included in the *acquis* (eg Nitrates Directive). It is important for applicant countries, therefore, to use their SAPARD programme to prepare for implementation of environmental legislation after accession.

Agri-environment in SAPARD
Nine out of the ten CEECs have included a pilot agri-environment scheme in their SAPARD plan. The Commission encouraged accession countries to include agri-environmental measures to plant the seeds for efficient and successful schemes in the future. Representatives of the Member States in the STAR committee paid particular attention to progress in their development. Pilot agri-environment measures are considered useful for developing practical experience of administration and implementation at institutional and farm level.

Pilot schemes should be of a limited area, as the administration costs of setting up the first scheme are expected to be large. Pilot areas should cover representative issues, and should initially be established in regions which can guarantee success.

Table showing Agri-environmental pilot actions within the 10 SAPARD programmes

Country	Agri-environment SAPARD measure?	EU contribution (in thousand Euros)	SAPARD budget (%)[4]	Area (in hectares)	Number of pilot areas	Number of farmers
Bulgaria	Yes	9,000	2	32,000	?	?
Czech Rep.	Yes	4,584	3	5-20,000	5	150-200*
Estonia	Yes	1,210	1	?	3+	?
Hungary	Yes	11,330	4	400,000	15	?
Latvia	Yes[1]	6,970	5	43,000*	?	1,100*
Lithuania	Yes	2,124	1	4,700	2+	?
Poland	Yes[2]	22,920	2	33,000	6	3,500
Romania	Yes	26,571	3	36,000	7	3,000*
Slovakia	Yes	4,500	4	10,000	5	2,000*
Slovenia	No[3]	-	-	-	-	-
CEECs		89,209	2	>578,700		>10,000

[1] Includes 3 measures of the plan.
[2] Includes afforestation of agricultural land.
[3] No specific measure in the plan but national programme in preparation.
[4] It was noted that the average agri-environment budget in rural development programmes of EU Member States is often above 50%.
*Estimated.

Payment calculations

It is important that payment ceilings are set at the start, and these are expected to be lower for the CEE Accession Countries than in Member States. It is preferable for income foregone to be based on practical calculations not rough estimations, and additional costs should include savings (for instance as a result of reduced inputs). Payments could include non-remunerative capital works, but these can be difficult to define. Non-remunerative is usually agreed to be an investment which does not lead to significant increase in farm value. However, fence building is a clear example of an action which causes confusion, as it can be revenue-building in some situations. Experience of defining 'non-remunerative works' according to implementation of the new Rural Development Regulation 1257/1999 in the Member States can be useful. The classification of an action will depend on the type of scheme, the provisions attached, and normal conditions in the region. Final decisions will often be based on detailed leval evaluation.

The budgetary clearance department of the SAPARD programme needs to ensure controllability of commitments, and control in Accession Countries will be at the same level of 5% which is used in EU Member States.

It can be better not to automatically use the 20% incentive element when calculating payment levels, as this may not be necessary to attract farmers into a scheme. It is always possible to increase payments at a later stage if uptake is low.

Good Farming Practice

Good Farming Practice (GFP) should be applied across the whole farm in an agri-environment agreement. GFP should reflect the regionally traditional method of farming and the landscape aspects of the farm area. Any definition of GFP needs to be based on verifiable standards, including environmental legislation. Payments cannot be provided to meet this basic standard. Payments can only be made for environmental management that goes beyond it.

LEARNING FROM EU AND CEEC EXPERIENCE

Good farming practice in Northern Ireland

Dr Harry Gracey

Commission Regulation 1750/1999 lays down the detailed rules for application of the Rural Development Regulation (1257/1999). Under Section 9, which sets out the rules for several measures including agri-environment and less favoured areas, Article 28 states that:

> *"Usual good farming practice is the standard of farming which a reasonable farmer would follow in the region concerned.*
>
> *Member states shall set out verifiable standards in their rural development plans. In any case, these standards shall entail compliance with general mandatory environmental requirements."*

Regulation 1750/1999 also states (Article 19) that where a farmer enters into an agri-environmental commitment in relation to part of the farm, he shall adhere to at least the standard of good farming practice in relation to the whole of the farm. Also in Chapter V the Council Regulation 1257/1999 (Less Favoured Areas and Areas with Environmental Restrictions) Article 14.2 states that compensatory allowances shall be granted per hectare of areas used for agriculture to farmers who apply usual good farming practices compatible with the need to safeguard the environment and maintain the countryside, in particular by sustainable farming.

The approach proposed in Northern Ireland will have three elements to be known as Good Farming Practice. First, the compliance with existing environment protection legislation. Second, a new list of 'verifiable standards', which will be mandatory and will be included as conditions for all new agri-environment agreements and LFA allowance payments. The first two elements of good farming practice are mandatory and, as detailed below, incur financial penalties. The third element is one of encouragement whereby all farmers who are either joining agri-environment schemes or receiving LFA allowance payments will be given an explanatory booklet on Good Farming Practice and offered training. Again this is detailed below.

Northern Ireland has wide ranging environmental protection legislation, of which the main items are summarised in the table below. These items make up the minimum environmental standards for the purpose of other articles of the RDR. This legislation is enforced by other Government Departments or Agencies and the body responsible for each item is indicated. Although DARD staff do not have the responsibility to enforce this legislation, when conducting their regular on the spot inspections of scheme compliance (minimum level 5%), they will carry out a basic check of compliance with legislation and will report any breaches of the legislation to the relevant authority and ask them to carry out an inspection. In addition to the regular on the spot inspections, DARD will investigate alleged breaches of the Good Farming Practice that come to its attention as a result of the activities of its staff or following reports from others. Also, arrangements will be made for the authorities, which enforce this legislation, to notify DARD of any cases where farmers are convicted of offences under relevant provisions of this legislation or, in appropriate cases, against whom a statutory enforcement notice has been raised. Where such notification is received in relation to farmers participating in agri-environment schemes (and/or in receipt of LFA allowances), consideration will be given to whether penalties for breach of agreement should be effected, in relation to the objectives of the agreement, or in extreme cases, for exclusion from the scheme. Any penalty would be proportionate to the offence.

The **verifiable standards of Good Farming Practice** are ones which are complementary to existing legislative requirements and are capable of verification by DARD staff to EU audit standards as part of our existing checks on 5% of agri-environment scheme participants and LFA farmers. These standards have been chosen so that they are agriculturally practicable and otherwise beneficial throughout Northern Ireland (e.g. by preventing environmental damage). If these conditions are breached, proportionate penalties will be applied.

All farmers joining agri-environment schemes and farmers receiving LFA allowance payments will be offered training in addition to being provided with an explanatory booklet on Good Farming Practice. The explanatory booklet will embrace the DARD Codes on Good Agricultural Practice for the protection of water, soil and air. Farmers will be encouraged to follow the recommendations and advice contained in these Codes as far as possible, but compliance will not be subject to 5% checks as the standards are not all verifiable and penalties will not be applied. Farmers will be required to retain copies of the Codes while they remain in an agri-environment scheme or continue to claim LFA payments.

No payments will be made under the Schemes for complying with the legislative requirements or with the verifiable standards.

The following **verifiable standards** are proposed:

- **overgrazing:** this is defined as 'grazing land with livestock in such numbers as to adversely affect the growth, quality or species composition of vegetation (other than vegetation normally grazed to destruction) on that land to a significant degree'. Because of the enormous variation in conditions that can arise, a single maximum stocking density for the whole of Northern Ireland would not be appropriate. Instead, cases of suspected overgrazing which are identified in the course of inspections will be referred to professional staff who will investigate them using a standard methodology. They will carry out a site-specific appraisal of whether overgrazing is occurring and ascertain the causes. This appraisal will be used to set a management regime including a maximum stocking rate to be observed on that site, for which no compensation is payable.

  In relation to the LFA Compensatory Allowances the eligible forage area (from IACS) will automatically be divided into the sum of paid livestock units in each scheme to obtain LU/ha of eligible land. The same calculation will be used to identify farms with stocking densities above 1.8LU/ha for inspection in relation to possible overgrazing. All such farms identified at the start of the scheme in 2001 will be inspected within 18 months. Thereafter all farms newly falling into this category will be inspected within 12 months. All farms which continue to stock above 1.8 LU/ha will be inspected at least every 3 years. Furthermore in areas where experience shows that overgrazing can occur at a lower stocking density, DARD will ensure that the risk analysis used in determining the selection of farms for physical inspections will be weighted towards those farms with the highest stocking densities even if below 1.8 LU/ha. Failure to follow this regime would be a breach of this condition and would lead to a loss of all entitlement to LFA payments.

- **supplementary feeding:** no supplementary feeding is permitted on moorland, wetland, species-rich grassland, coastal habitats, broad-leaved woodland/scrub habitats or archaeological features (*see definitions) or adjacent to watercourses. Where supplementary feeding is permitted, the feed must be provided in such a way that the vegetation is not excessively trampled or poached by animals or rutted by vehicles used to transport feed. Cases of suspected unsuitable supplementary feeding will be investigated.

- **field boundaries:** removal or destruction of any hedges or stone walls on the farm will not be permitted except by prior permission from the Department. Enforcement will be through visual assessment of any recent damage during field checks.

- **Areas of Special Scientific Interest:** farmers are required to notify Environment and Heritage Service of any intended operations that are likely to damage statutorily designated ASSIs. It will be a condition of the schemes that participants will not proceed with any operations without having obtained prior approval from Environment and Heritage Service. Checks will be made to see that any damaging operations that appear to have been carried out have had approval from EHS.

- **Pollution:** where an inspection reveals that there is an obvious pollution problem on a holding or that the farmer has breached regulations in terms of waste disposal on land, the matter would be reported to the Environment and Heritage Service.

- **sheep dip:** any farmer proposing to dispose of sheep dip on his land must obtain prior authorisation from Environment and Heritage Service. Checks will be made to see that either authorisation has been obtained or that there is a reason why no authorisation is needed in that individual case.

- **hedgerows:** trimming of hedgerows, hedge laying and coppicing on the farm must not be carried out between 1 March and 31 August. Enforcement will be through visual evidence of recent damage during any checks carried out in these months.

- **Habitats, Archaeological Features and Earth Science Sites:** farmers are prohibited from any operations such as in-filling; reclamation; extraction of peat, sands or gravels without necessary permissions; woodland clearance; that are likely to damage wetland, moorland, broadleaved woodland/scrub, species-rich grassland and coastal habitats, archaeological features and earth science sites. Enforcement will be through visual assessment of recent damage during field checks.

MINIMUM ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

The environmental protection legislation that applies to farming practice in Northern Ireland is virtually identical in content to, and sets the same standards as, the equivalent legislation that applies in the rest of the United Kingdom. The only significant differences are in the titles of the legislation and the equivalent Northern Ireland enforcement authorities. The table below summarises the Northern Ireland legislation applicable, the penalties that it may impose and the appropriate enforcement agency.

Relevant Legislation	Subject	Penalty	Enforcement Agency
The Water Act (NI) 1972/ *The Water (NI) Order 1999	Pollution of water	Up to £20,000	Environment and Heritage Service (EHS)
Groundwater Regulations (NI) 1998	Disposal or tipping	Up to £20,000	EHS
*Control of Pollution (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) Regulations (NI) 2000	Storage and handling of these substances	Up to £5,000	EHS
The Action Programme for Nitrate Vulnerable Zones Regulations (NI) 1999	Measures to reduce nitrate leaching	Unlimited fine	EHS
The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995	Damage to European sites	Up to £5,000 and possible requirement to restore	EHS
Wildlife (NI) Order 1985	Wildlife offences	Up to £5,000	EHS
Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985; amended 1989	Damage to sites of Special Scientific Interest	Up to £5,000	EHS
Part III of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985	Misuse of pesticides	Unlimited fine	Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
Plant Protection Products Regulations (NI) 1995	Misuse of pesticides	Unlimited fine	HSE
Clean Air (NI) Order 1981	Emitting dark smoke	Up to £5,000	Department of the Environment (DOE)
Game Law (Amendment) Act (NI) 1951	Burning heather, ferns, gorse etc.	£200	DOE
Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995	Damaging ancient monuments	Unlimited fine	EHS

*New legislation coming into operation during the coming year

***Definitions:-**

"**moorland**": areas of bog, dwarf shrub heath and montane habitats;

"**wetlands**": areas of naturally high water table including fen, marsh, swamp, standing waters, saline lagoons, rivers and streams;

"**species-rich grasslands**": areas of neutral, acid, wet and calcareous grassland (including limestone pavement). These have a low productive sward. Ryegrass, timothy and white clover comprise less than 25% of the sward;

"**broadleaved woodland/scrub**": vegetation dominated by broadleaved trees and shrubs containing less than 15% conifers;

"coastal habitats": areas of maritime cliff and slopes, sand dunes, vegetated shingle, saltmarsh and all areas below high water mark;

"earth science sites" are areas of bedrock or surface deposits that provide important evidence for the patterns, processes and dating of geological and biological events from the beginning of the Earth's history to the present day;

"**archaeological features**" are those man-made parts of the environment which represent the physical effort, aspirations and achievements of all previous generations. They date from the earliest human presence in Ireland to the recent past and are a finite and non-renewable resource. These include megalithic tombs, standing stones, stone circles, cairns, barrows, hillforts, raths, cashels, churches and castles.

Additional points

Good Farming Practice
GFP is now the essential agri-environment baseline according to Regulation 1257/1999. It will be required of over 50% of farmers in Northern Ireland, who are participating in agri-environment schemes or are beneficiaries of LFA payments.

Diversity of terms and measures
In addition there are three Codes of Good Agricultural Practice for water, soil and air in Northern Ireland. To avoid confusion amongst farmers it is essential to provide training for farmers unaccustomed to these concepts.

Training
In Northern Ireland it is compulsory for the trainers to have a degree in agriculture and a post-graduate environmental degree, or an environmental degree and post-graduate work in agriculture, as it is believed that farmers can only be encouraged and persuaded by people who have a thorough understanding of and sympathy for the issues they face.

Implementation of agri-environment schemes in Finland

Marjatta Kemppainen-Mäkelä

The Rural Development Programme for the 2000-2006 period in Finland (according to Regulation 1257/1999) includes the:

- Horizontal Rural Development Programme (LFA and Agri-environmental schemes covering all of continental Finland)
- Regional rural development programme (regional measures outside Objective 1 regions)
- Rural Development Programme in Åland Islands (LFA, Agri-environmental and regional measures)

The agri-environmental scheme 2000-2006:

- continues the agri-environmental measures of the 1995-1999 programme (some modifications are made)
- The participation level is even higher than during 1995-1999. The new scheme covers about 96 % (90 % previously) of the cultivated area, about 91 % of the farmers are participating in the scheme.

The objectives of the agri-environmental scheme are to:

- reduce the load on the environment (surface and ground waters, air)
- reduce the risks caused by plant protection products
- take care of biodiversity
- manage the rural landscape
- increase the amount of humus in the soil
- maintain the good conditions for agricultural production in the long term

The scheme is implemented through the General Protection Scheme (GPS), containing basic measures and additional measures (which give more flexibility in the implementation of measures), and the Special Protection Scheme.

To be eligible for the GPS a farmer has to a commit for five years to measures that vary depending on the type of farm (arable or also animal production).

General Protection Scheme

Basic measures (crop production farm, livestock farm, and horticultural crops of group 1 and group 2) compulsory for each applicant are:

- environmental planning and monitoring in farming
- basic fertilisation levels of arable crops (the objective is to reduce the phosphorus and nitrogen load due to fertilisation through increased accuracy in the application of fertilisers on different parcels, cutting peak quantities of fertilisation or continuing fertiliser use that is already environmentally sustainable. Fertilisation must be based on regular soil mapping and annual cultivation plans. The nutrient quantities include both the nutrients of the artificial fertilisers and those in the animal manure and similar organic fertilisers that may be applied. The maximum fertilisation levels are shown on the table on the next page)
- plant protection
- headlands and filter strips
- maintaining biodiversity and landscape
- basic measures on livestock farms (if a farm has animal production)

In addition to the basic measures, a farm must select one additional measure from a given list of possible measures. At least one of these measures has to be implemented from the first commitment year for five years.

The list of possible additional measures includes:

- more accurate fertilisation
- plant cover in winter and reduced tillage
- additional measures on livestock farms: reduction of ammonia emissions, improving the welfare of animals, treatment of washing water from milking rooms
- additional measures on horticultural farms (more accurate follow up of nutrients, measuring soluble nitrogen, organic cover in weed control)

Special Protection Scheme

In addition to the general scheme, a farm can enter into special undertakings (SPS). In order to be eligible for support based on such commitments the farmer must also implement the basic measures.

Commitments concerning special measures are made for 5 or 10 years for the following measures:

- establishment and management of wetlands and sedimentation ponds
- other methods for the treatment of run-off water
- organic production and conversion to it
- arable farming in groundwater areas
- efficient use of manure
- traditional biotopes
- other measures to enhance biodiversity
- improvement and management of landscape
- raising of local breeds
- cultivation of local crops
- reduction of acidity in certain areas

Table of the basic fertilisation levels. To be eligible for the support, the use of plant nutrients (N and P) per hectare of arable land may not exceed the following quantities on the farm:

Plant species	Nitrogen kg/ha/year	Phosphorus kg/ha/year
Fodder cereals	90	15
Spring wheat	100	15
Winter wheat, autumn	20	15
Winter wheat, spring	100	-
Rye, autumn	20	15
Rye, spring	100	-
Oilseed crops	100	15
Sugar beets	120	30
Potatoes	60	40
Industrial potatoes	80	40
Silage	180	30
Grass	90	15
	60 (additional nitrogen if aftermath collected)	

Preparing the Programmes

Background:

- Rural Environment Programme 1992 (prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of the Environment) based on voluntary measures by farmers
- A working group of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry published a guidebook "Good Agricultural Practices" in 1993, which was distributed to every farmer in Finland to provide instructions on farming methods that take the management and protection of the environment into account.

The Finnish Agri-Environmental Programme 1995-1999 (FAEP) according to the Regulation 2078/1992:

A large working group started its work in spring 1994 to prepare the FAEP. The Commission accepted the programme in October 1995. The programme consisted of four elements: the general agricultural environment protection scheme (basic support), the supplementary protection scheme, the scheme for advisory services and training, and the scheme for demonstration projects.

The agri-environmental scheme 2000-2006 (AES) (Part of the Horizontal Rural Development Programme according to Regulation 1257/1999):

A large working group started its work in August 1998. The proposal for the AES was ready in May 1999.

- AES continues the agri-environmental measures of the 1995-1999 programme
- Minor adjustments have been made according to the experience from the former programme period, e.g. there are possibilities for optional undertakings
- The basic structure (obligatory) originates from the Annex of Regulation 1750/1999

Negotiations with the European Commission

The Horizontal Rural Development Plan (including AES) was sent to the Commission in September 1999.

The plan was in the STAR committee on 24 May 2000 and was approved by the Commission on 27 June 2000

Requirements for Programme Presentation and Explanation at EU Level

From the programme period of 1995-1999 we learned that all the documents handled during negotiations with the commission have to be officially registred. Commission officers were changed several times during the negotiation process and documents were missing. When subsequently misunderstandings in interpretation of the documents arose the Commission representatives alleged they had not receiced documents and for the Commission it was unclear what really had been approved. In a situation like this "the Commission is right".

Concerning the **Horizontal Rural Development Programme** all administrative details are written in the programme document (altogether 181 pages + annexes of about 50 pages). According to our experience from the previous programme period this is the only way to secure that the Commission representatives are aware of all important details.Our earlier programme was more general, the detailed requirements were written in the national legislation. An important lesson we learned was that the Commission does not study the national legislation. This was told us in programme negotiations in 2000 and so now all the relevant details are included in the programme document.

How to Maximise Environmental Benefits through Scheme Design

- an overall evaluation of the environmental impact is obligatory (EU-guidelines + STAR working document)
- we could gain also from the experience from the earlier programme. An evaluation of the earlier proramme was made in 1998 and it was a good help in developing measures for the new programme.

Special Aspects of Whole Farm Schemes

The assumption when preparing the AES was that the number of farmers committing to the basic measures would be 75 % (stricter requirements than in the earlier programme). Now that the participation is 91 % of all farmers there are financial problems to be solved.

Important characteristics of a whole farm scheme include:

- beneficial for the environment
- a big challenge (eg. educating of numbers of farmers is a demanding task)
- implementation and bureaucracy is quite a hard task

What to Consider when Building an Agri-environmental Scheme from Scratch

1. as our experience shows, a lot of preparatory work had been already done in the beginning of 90s
2. there has to be a good co-operation between authorities involved, NGOs (non governmental organisations) and stakeholders (farmers).
3. contacts with the other Member States + the Commission
4. local conditions – good description
5. reliable calculations of costs and income losses are needed
6. description of administration, control plans etc.

Conclusions - What are the Main Lessons to be Learnt from the Finnish Experience?

Finland was amongst the first Member States presenting the programme in 1999 to the Commission and the Finnish Horizontal Rural Development Programme was the first which was approved. Our hope was that the Programme could be approved by the Commission already in March, because we started the implementation (training, applications etc.) of the new programme from the beginning of the year 2000. The application time was over when the programme was finally approved. Some minor adjustments were necessary even during the last phases of the negotiation process, which caused extra work for the administration, and farmers of course were frustrated.

Two main lessons can be drawn from our experience:

1. hard work, flexible working hours, patience, detailed description of measures and accuracy in calculations of support levels are needed

2. we have stored all documents, including even e-mails, concerning the programme and the negotiation process in order to be able to back up our point of view if interpreting of details is needed in the future.

Additional points

Training

Farmers in the Finnish agri-environment programme are obliged to attend training sessions every 5 years. An indication of the scale of the training scheme in Finland during the first phase of the agri-environment programme is that 60,000 farmers were trained. Trainers must meet certain education requirements, and operate out of regional centres which are responsible for operating the agri-environment programme.

Control

It is difficult to control aspects such as fertilising levels, but in Finland farmers are obliged to keep receipts and records of management and make them available for monitoring. If suspicion arises over data provided by a farmer, a soil analysis will take place. This method of control is satisfactory for the Commission's standards.

Environmental planning

When the Finnish agri-environmental scheme was first introduced 75,000 environmental plans were made on behalf of farmers. With the help of advisory services, and after a two-day training session, farmers are now expected to write their own environmental plans.

Development of an Estonian agri-environment programme

Merit Mikk

Proposals for the Estonian AEP

An overview of the development and implementation of the proposed agri-environment programme for Estonia is given in Figure 1.

Estonia started developing proposals for AEP in 1997 with support from the Dutch-funded MATRA Programme (International Nature Management Programme) for a project entitled "*Agri-environmental Programmes in Central and Eastern European Countries*".

Comprehensive proposals for a national AEP were then completed by an international team in December 1999 under the PHARE CBC project *"Development of an Agri-Environmental Scheme in Estonia"*. More recently valuable additional assistance has also been provided via two assignments undertaken by foreign/local experts within the framework of the PHARE project entitled *"Support to the EU Accession Process in Estonia"*.

The Estonian MoA has therefore made good use of external funding opportunities to support the development of its agri-environment programme.

The overall objectives of the Estonian national agri-environment programme (AEP) are to:

1. promote the uptake of environmentally- friendly agricultural practices which protect and enhance traditional landscapes, biodiversity and the wider environment;

2. contribute to providing an appropriate income for farmers who deliver these environmental benefits;

3. increase farmers awareness of more environmentally- friendly production practices;

4. provide a basis for a range of alternative economic activities in rural areas, such as the production of organic food, direct marketing (e.g. on-farm sales) and rural tourism;

5. support a positive image for farmers amongst other members of Estonian society.

The structure of the proposed national AEP is summarised in Figure 2. A number of the proposed AEP measures are already being introduced as state-funded horizontal measures for Estonia – including an Organic Farming Support Scheme (July 2000) and a Native Cattle Support Scheme (scheduled for autumn 2000). These are equivalent to the proposed national AEP measures SM1 and SM2A respectively (Figure 2), although they are not yet fully in accordance with them. Other measures (e.g. semi-natural habitats) will be introduced during 2001.

The capacity of the MoA for implementing an AEP and ultimately (upon joining the EU) fulfilling its obligations under the Rural Development Regulation has increased greatly during the last 12 months - most notably with the creation of an Environment Bureau in the MoA Department of Agriculture and the appointment of 2 staff members responsible for all aspects of agri-environmental policy (soon to be expanded to 4 staff members).

The pilot AEP project is scheduled to start in Spring 2001.

FIGURE 1: Overview of the development and implementation of the Estonian AEP

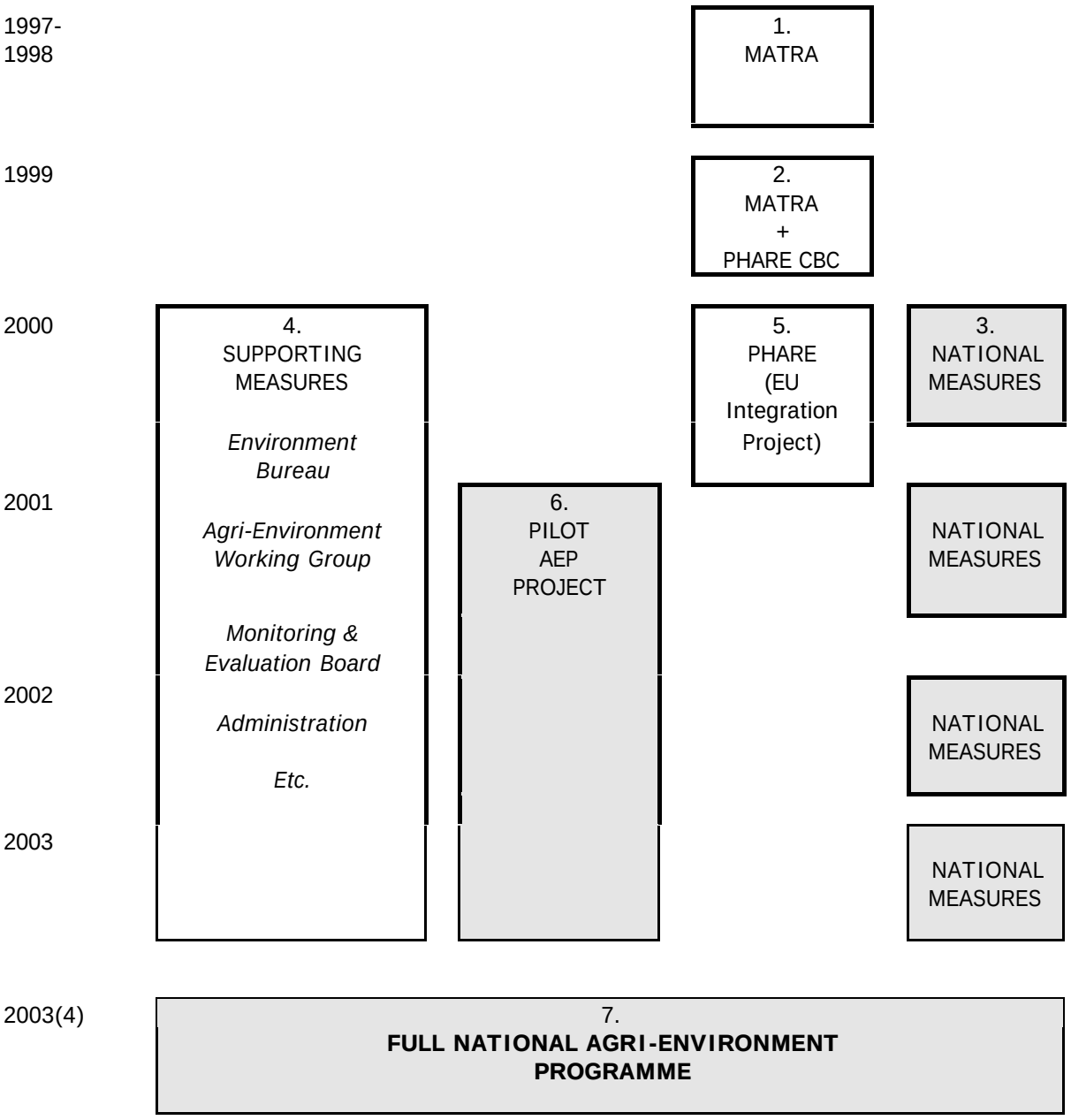
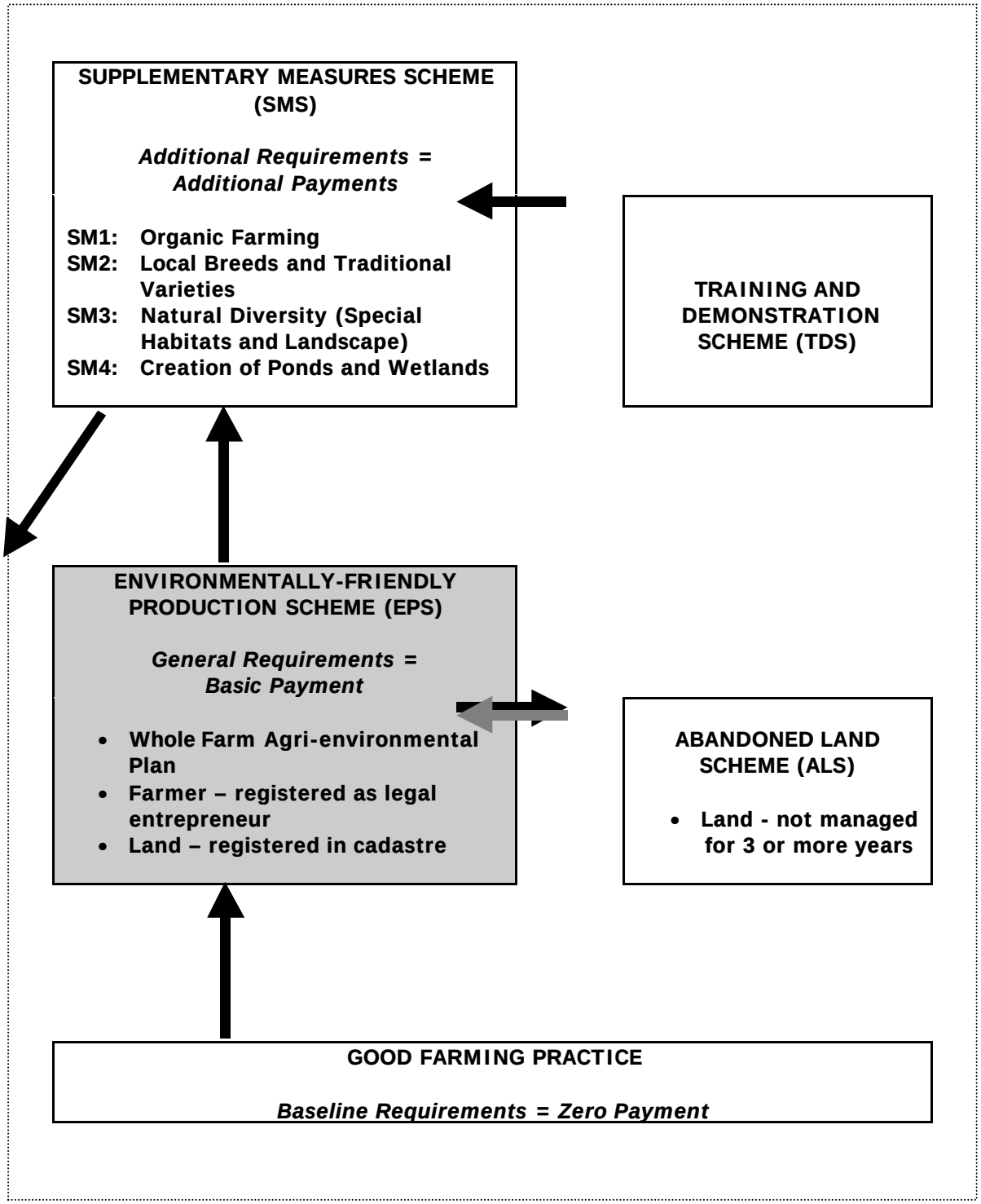


FIGURE 2: Structure of the proposed Estonian AEP



Preparation of Action Plan (2000-2003) for Implementation of AEP

An important part of the preparation for implementation of the AEP has been a detailed Action Plan (up to the end of 2003) prepared with assistance from the PHARE project entitled *"Support to the EU Accession Process in Estonia"*.

The objectives of the Action Plan are to identify clearly:

- the necessary steps for implementation of the proposed pilot and national agri-environment programmes, including administrative procedures and legal considerations;
- who is responsible for implementation, including a timetable for action;
- the full costs of implementation.

The anticipated outcomes of the Action Plan are as follows:

1. the phased introduction of individual agri-environmental measures during 2000-2002. These will complement the Organic Farming measure (equivalent to national AEP measure SM1) and Native Cattle Scheme (equivalent to national AEP measure SM2A).

   The measures should include (in suggested order of introduction):

   - **Semi-natural Habitat Scheme** (equivalent to national AEP measure SM3A)
   - **Native Horse Scheme** (equivalent to national AEP measure SM2A)
   - **Abandoned Land Scheme** (equivalent to national AEP measure ALS)
   - **Hedges and Stone Walls Scheme** (equivalent to national AEP measures SM3B and SM3C)

2. full implementation of proposed **Pilot Agri-environment Programme** from 2001;

3. readiness for full implementation of proposed **National Agri-environment Programme** (including full harmonisation with appropriate EC legislation) from 2003.

The Action Plan is presented on a quarterly (3 monthly) basis with 4 areas of action:

- General
- Administration and Legal
- Information and Training
- Monitoring and Evaluation

In each quarter (3 month) period the necessary actions are identified for:

- Supporting activities
- Tasks specific to implementation of AEP Pilot Project
- Tasks specific to implementation of national AEP

Implementation of the AEP Pilot Project

In both pilot areas full set of the measures will be implemented and the same administration structure used as it is proposed for the national AEP. The aims of the pilot project are as follows:

- to test the practical implementation of the AEP including realistic assessment of the time and resources, the quality of the farmers and advisors training, potential problems with the application, control and monitoring procedures

- to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed national AEP measures including levels of uptake, acceptability of payment levels, environmental and socio-economic impact resulted

- to refine the management prescriptions of the AEP measures
- to demonstrate and promote the concept of an AEP in Estonia amongst farmers, policy makers, politicians and members of the general public

The indicative timetable, activities and associated problems for implementation of the pilot project are:

October - November 2000

Final section of the areas - MoA Environmental Bureau together with **advisory board** proposed to implement the pilot project in 2001 on 2 areas:

Intensive agricultural region: Palamuse community
Extensive agriculture region: Lümanda + Kihelkonna community

Problem: Not finally approved by the MoA

December 2000 - February 2001

Preparation for the implementation of the 2001 pilot project - MoA **contracted** private institution to co- ordinate this phase. The activities include collection of background information in pilot areas, training of administrators and advisors, information days for farmers and preparation of information materials, preparation of selection criteria, application forms etc.

Problems: Legal basis for implementation are still missing, total budget available for payments not clear

March 2000 - December 2001

Implementation of the pilot project with national funds - co-ordinated by the MoA. Training and monitoring contracted out.

2002

Implementation of the year 2 pilot project – plus expansion to include additional area(s):

Nitrate sensitive area
Broadening the extensive agriculture pilot area

2003

Implementation of the year 3 pilot project - **SAPARD** funding available (?). The project to be continued on same areas + new areas to be selected?

Additional points

Main threats to wildlife
Semi-natural habitats have become endangered as abandonment of previously agricultural land has increased during the last decade. In other areas intensification of agriculture has led to a reduction of landscape elements.

Training
Agri-environment training is considered very important, and it is obligatory for farmers to attend a two-day training course before entering the Estonian scheme.

Problems encountered
Land reform in Estonia has delayed registration in the cadastre, so entering five-year contracts with farmers is often impossible. As contracts cannot be made for more than one year at present, a succession of one year contracts with an obligation to renew the contract for 3 years are being introduced. It is hoped that this problem will be solved within 2-3 years.

Implementation of Agri-environment Schemes in Bulgaria

Yanka Kazakova

Biodiversity In Bulgaria

In consequence of human activity during the last few decades a number of Bulgarian species reached the level of extinction. In the basis of Bulgaria's policy of biodiversity protection stands the system of protected areas. Ministry of Environment and Water prepared a new Law on Protected Areas voted 1998. Until 1998 the national system of protected areas consists of 3 national parks, 9 natural parks, 90 reserves, 2241 natural sightseeings, 123 protected sites and 972 historical places. The number of protected plants is 389 and this of protected animals is 473.

Agri-Environmental Concerns

Soil Erosion - *Erosion processes endanger about 60% of Bulgaria's total area and 72% of the country arable land***.**
Acid Content of Soils on the Increase - *The acidification of soils is a serious problem at present. Genetically acidified soils (including forest soils) comprise about 50% of the country's territory.*
Soil salinisation - *Saline soils cover 35 thousand ha, accounting for 0.6% of the country's arable land and 2.4% of Bulgaria's irrigatable land.*
Chemical pollution - *Soils polluted with heavy metals in Bulgaria total about 43,000 ha or 0.9% of the country's agricultural land.*
Soil Pollution Due to Overuse of Fertilisers and Pesticides - *Since 1991 the use of fertilisers has drastically declined.*

SAPARD Programme in Bulgaria

The two main objectives of the Rural Development Plan over the period 2000-2006 will be achieved on the basis of investment support in the following priority areas:

- Improvement of the production, processing and marketing of agricultural and forestry products as well as the processing and marketing of fishery products in compliance with EU acquis; promotion of environmentally-friendly farming and environmental protection.
- Integrated rural development aimed at protecting and strengthening rural economies and communities
- Investment in human resources – vocational training for agricultural producers and other persons working in the agricultural sector, involved in the agricultural production, forestry and diversification of activities in the rural areas
- Technical assistance

Agri-Environmental Measure in the NARDP

One of the greatest challenges for Bulgaria in the process of economical restructuring is to balance the sufficient production of food and the increase of the employment rate with preventive protection of the environment.
The **overall objective** of the measure is to encourage and support farmers to start using environmentally friendly agricultural production methods.

Development of the Agri-environmental measure

Initially, the measure was developed as one consisting of 3 proposals for agri-environmental pilot projects.

Revising the 3 proposals under the new conditions (limited number of pilot projects and direct payments' support) it came out that 2 of them are not relevant any longer.

At that stage, it seemed most appropriate to change the character and structure of the measure and to develop just a framework for the future activities.

The Agri-environment measure as approved by EC on September 13, 2000.

The natural and structural diversity of Bulgaria, combined with a high number of environmental sensitive areas demands a number of pilot projects to cover the general and specific objectives of the measure. Each pilot project will cover a certain geographical zone or environmental sensitive area or type of agro-ecosystem and will include at least one and usually more agri-environmental actions corresponding to the different managerial needs of the agro-ecosystem.

Agri-environmental Actions

1. Organic crop farming
2. Organic livestock farming
3. Extensification of grazing systems
4. Maintenance of endangered local races of farm animals
5. Maintenance of endangered local varieties of cultivated crops
6. Maintenance and restoration of landscape features
7. Conversion of arable land to extensive permanent pasture land in environmental sensitive areas and in areas with high erosion potential
8. Management of abandoned agricultural lands
9. Management of abandoned forest lands

The implementation of more than one environmental action per holding demands a certain level of training and know-how by farmers, by farmers' consultants and the administration, that have not been reached yet in Bulgaria. Apart some exceptions, the majority of holdings will implement one agri-environmental action.

Institutional Capacity

The development of agri-environmental policy was not a main objective of any of the structures of the Ministry of Agriculture. It was not until June 2000, when a proposal for the establishment of new division in the Rural Development Directorate was made and a decision for its establishment taken. It is expected that the new unit will commence activities on 1 January 2001.

Technical Assistance for the Development of the Agri-Environmental Measure

Technical Assistance for the development of the NARDP, relevant to the Agri-environmental measure:

1. Phare Twinning Project. Twinning Partner - Greek Ministry of Agriculture. September 1999 – September 2000.
2. Phare Programme, Local Expert Facility, June 1999 – December 2000
3. Cooperation with non-governmental organizations

Future Technical Assistance, specifically for the Agri-environmental measure:

1. Phare Project Preparatory Facility (expected since October 1999)
2. Avalon, IEEP Technical Assistance Project

Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths:

- Farmers very interested to "try" Agri-environmental programmes
- Good cooperation and partnerships with NGOs for the development of pilot projects
- Establishment of Agri-environmental Division in MAF
- Some experience gained from the initial development of the measure

Weaknesses:

- Lack of specific experience in the process of implementation, monitoring, evaluation, etc.
- Late establishment of Agri-environmental Division. Most of the newly appointed experts probably will not have experience in agri-environment and will need time to adjust
- Specific technical assistance for the AE measure (Phare PPF) expected since October 1999
- Lack of resources for targeted development of pilot projects
- Farmers are not actually aware of the specific character of the measure.

Additional points

Expertise
Bulgaria lacks sufficient agri-environment experts to take policy forward and raise awareness of the agri-environment programme amongst farmers and conduct training programmes. This has been identified as a key point for building the national agri-environment programme and ensuring optimum uptake in pilot areas.

Funding
Bulgaria has been able to use funds from a PHARE twinning project with Greece to assist in setting up the agri-environment programme, and is expecting to receive an 'Expert Mission' as part of the Avalon/IEEP *Know-how* project.

REVIEW

Review of key issues emerging in the development of agri-environment programmes in CEEC

All delegates

- Lack of resources for development of pilot projects (PHARE is now reluctant to give money for preparation of agri-environment programmes alongside SAPARD)
- Lack of awareness amongst farmers
- Lack of definition of 'integrated' and 'low input' systems
- Problem of control without an Integrated Administration and Control System
- Lack of institutional support (eg lack of legislation and paying agencies)
- Overlap/harmonisation of national legislation with EU legislation
- Confusion over concepts and terms
- Other horizontal issues (eg afforestation) for agri-environment
- Lack of experience in agri-environment issues
- Lack of experts and trainers[1]
- Lack of knowledge of where to seek funding for agri-environment projects
- Lack of experience in arranging consultation with NGOs, government agencies, scientists, and representatives of farmers' groups.
- Lack of comprehension of how to allow transition from pilot projects to national projects

Overview of agri-environment developments in CEEC

David Baldock

Impetus behind developments

National initiatives, both on agri-environment and Less Favoured Areas, paved the way for the pioneering development of agri-environment policy in several CEECs. Countries such as Hungary and Slovenia had already made steps to create national schemes by 1997 and others have followed. Another impetus for the development of national and pilot programmes was the Avalon/IEEP/Veen Ecology Project which began in Poland and embraced a further 7 countries in 1997, before Bulgaria and Romania joined at the beginning of 1999. CEECs continued to develop pilot schemes for SAPARD proposals during 2000, and a new phase begins now that the schemes have been approved.

Avalon/IEEP/Veen Ecology project

The multi-partner project was built on the work of national teams drawing together experts from inside and outside government. One of the most important achievements was the creation of these national teams, rapidly building up a reservoir of agri-environment knowledge. The project outputs also included a manual for designing agri-environment schemes which was translated into all national languages, publication of national and pilot agri-environment programmes (for all countries except Bulgaria and Romania which are still in the process of finalising their programmes), a major contribution to proposals for agri-environment measures in SAPARD, and a Synthesis Report containing an overview of the outputs and experience gained from the project.

[1] It was noted however that the Technical Assistance measure under SAPARD could be used for training.

Issues arising

A fundamental and challenging issue identified during the project was the need among CEECs to identify a clear strategic role for agri-environment in rural policy. For some it was unclear whether schemes could contribute significantly to increasing farm incomes as well as pursuing environmental objectives. Work was required to establish precise objectives, but agri-environment programmes were seen as helpful in addressing a variety of issues of importance in the region. These include the promotion of organic farming, protection of high natural value grasslands, prevention and control of abandonment, pollution control, training, and soil erosion (which is a problem in Estonia and Bulgaria). Some countries already had a legal basis for introducing incentive schemes (Hungary for instance) but in other countries it can prove difficult to find resources for the legal preparations. Organising inter-institutional co-operation (for instance between the ministries of agriculture and environment) was a relatively novel exercise for some countries and in need of elaboration.

Calculation of payments was clearly a major issue which also came to the fore in discussion during the project. Clarification was needed about the exact approach required in defining environmental 'services', the role of paying agencies, the calculation of payment levels, means of delivering payments efficiently and various problems in conforming to EU policy on payments.

Scheme design

It appears that many CEECs have a clearer idea of the importance of a baseline code of good environmental practice for agriculture than several Member States, and proposals for Good Farming Practice were made in many national reports. Many different types of scheme were developed, incorporating prescriptions which both drew on EU experience and displayed a willingness to try new approaches. Preventing scrub invasion was an objective for many grassland schemes. Multi-tier options were popular and several countries opted for a basic entry scheme, with more targeted and demanding upper tiers. A whole farm as opposed to part farm approach was also popular, partly as this was encouraged by SAPARD.

Involvement with the farming community

Many countries embarking on agri-environment policy found that there was a limited institutional base from which to build co-operation and communication with farmers, so involving the farming community often proved challenging. Plans for scheme promotion at national and local levels are now planned, and is intended to make available technical advice and information from national and local sources, and provide ongoing support and contact to farmers under agri-environment agreements.

Funding

Pilot agri-environment measures now appear in all but one SAPARD programme. They account for only a small share of the SAPARD budget, but additional national budgets are larger than the SAPARD budget in some countries (see table from Valery Morard's presentation).

Agricultural policy development
Accession countries are having to follow a constantly moving target. They were encouraged to follow the model of Regulation 2078/92 which has now been superseded by the Rural Development Regulation 1257/1999. The RDR will go through a review process in 2003, and reform of the CAP is expected by 2006. Direct payments are currently an important feature of the CAP. However, their longer term future in both the EU and accession countries is uncertain. They may become subject to degressivity[2] for example, and there is a growing debate on environmental cross-compliance. The outcome could have implications for agri-environment and other policy measures in CEECs.

[2] Payments being reduced over time.

Table showing current status of agri-environment schemes in CEE

Key: Pl = planned
Dr = drafted
Ac = accepted
Op = operational
* Ministry of Environment initiative

Country	National programmes	Pilot programmes	Supporting legislation	Specified baseline of agricultural practice	LFA / national equivalent measures
Bulgaria	Pl	Dr	Dr	Dr	LFA Op*
Czech Rep.	Pl	Ac	Op	Dr	LFA Op Organic Op Rare domestic species Op Conversion from arable to grass Op
Estonia	Dr	Ac	Pilot Dr National Pl	Part (Nitrates Directive Code) Ac (All Ac 10th December?)	LFA Pl/Dr Organic Op Semi-natural habitats Ac* Rare domestic species Op
Hungary	Ac	Dr	Pl/Dr	Pl/Dr	LFA Pl Organic Op
Latvia	Dr	Dr	SAPARD Ac National Pl	Dr	LFA Dr Organic Part Pl
Lithuania	Dr	Dr	Op	Ac	Organic Op
Poland	Dr	Dr (SAPARD – Ac)	Pl (Ac May 2001?)	Dr	LFA Pl Organic Op Rare domestic species Op
Romania	Pl	Dr (SAPARD – Ac)	Pl	Part Dr	Afforestation and soil erosion Op
Slovakia	Dr	(SAPARD) Ac	Pl	Dr	Organic Op Conversion to grassland Op LFA Op
Slovenia	Dr	Not applicable	Op	Nitrates & Pesticides Op Others Dr	LFA Op Organic Op Anti-erosion Op Mountain meadows Op Rare domestic species Op Integrated production of fruit and vegetables Op

WORKSHOP SESSION 1

Sharing experience in the use of pre-accession funds for building agri-environment programmes

Vyara Stefanova

Purpose of the Workshop

The purpose of the workshop is to share the experience of using pre-accession funds for building agri-environmental programmes.

Background

This section outlines the experience of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Bulgaria. The pre-accession funds for Bulgaria can be summarised in the following categories:

- on-going Phare programmes
- future PHARE programmes
- Structural funds (SAPARD and ISPA)
- other EU activities
- other bilateral activities.

Recognizing the increasing role of the agri-environmental policy in the Common agricultural policy Bulgarian Ministry of agriculture has put a lot of efforts to fund the development of agri-environmental programmes in Bulgaria under the Special preparatory programme.

1. One of the main components of this programme is the SAPARD Twinning Project – that is implemented by the Greek MoA. The first priority of the twinning programme was the Preparation of the National Agriculture and Rural Development Plan (NARDP). A special component under this priority was the development of the measure 1.3. Development of environmentally friendly agricultural practices and activities. Together with the Greek experts the following main tasks were accomplish:

    - development of the scope and the actions of the agri- environmental measure
    - development of the different regulations for the implementation of the measure
    - meetings with different NGOs and promotion of the measure

2. As a continuation of the Twinning project the Bulgarian MoAF has managed to dedicate part of the funds from the Programme Preparation Facility (PHARE Project) to the further development of the agricultural measure. The main tasks of this project will be:

    - to check the situation in the country in relations to the agri-environmental and organic sector and to make an overall analyses of the sectors
    - to verify the existing and potential pilot projects and pilot projects areas
    - to identify the beneficiaries and the types of grant aid eligible under the measure, that would best achieve the developmental objectives

    In accordance with EU policy in that sector the experts of the Rural Developmental Directorate in MoAF have made a proposal to develop an Agri-environmental department within the Rural Development Directorate. The main function of the department are determined as follows:

- to develop agri-environmental schemes;
- institutional building and coordination in the sector;
- preparation of the agri-environmental programmes and looking for different sources for their funding;
- payments calculations;
- vocational training in the sector;
- control, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the schemes.

3. Two proposals for PHARE 2000 and PHARE 2001 are directly or indirectly related to the functions of this Department.

   PHARE 2000 (Institutional building to facilitate the Implementation of SAPARD) (approved) - The special objectives of this project summary sheet are related the capacity building in the agri-environmental sector. Different interactive workshops are proposed to be held on national, regional and local level.

   PHARE 2001 – Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture recognizes the necessity for harmonization of the legislation in the agri-environmental sector even creation of a new laws – when such are not existing and this is one of the priorities of the proposal for PHARE 2001 funding.

4. Bilateral programmes – The bilateral programmes are another source of funding the agri-environmental initiatives. They are directed toward different governmental and non-governmental organization. For the moment two of them are of big significance for the development of the schemes:

   - Project "Agri-environmental schemes in Bulgaria and Romania" in accordance to the 2078/92 EC regulation, financed by the Dutch Ministry and managed by AVALON Foundation. Under this project were developed 2 pilot projects and recommendation for development of national agri-environmental programme.

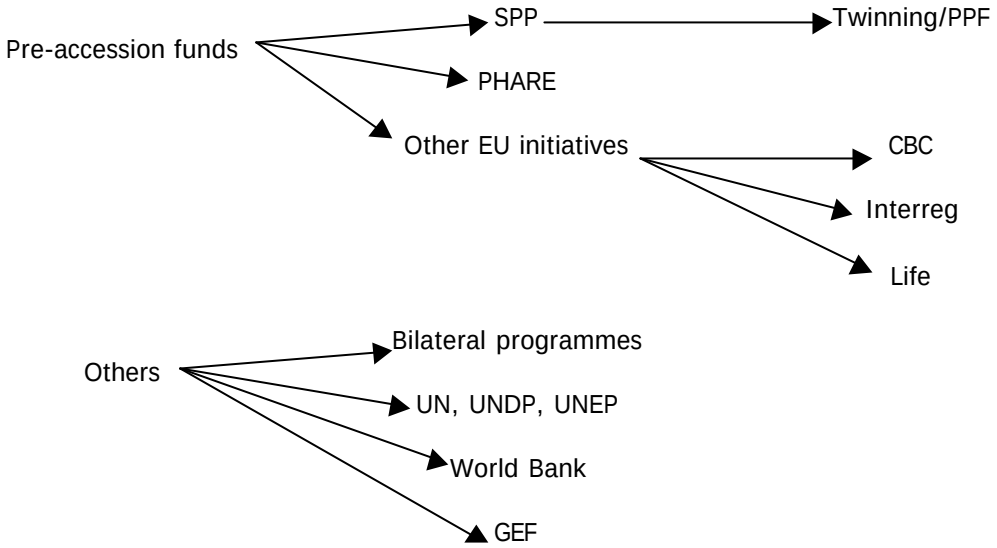
   - The new initiative of AVALON and IEEP for supporting the implementation of agri-environmental Programmes in CEEC. The first task that will be implemented under this project is the technical assistance for the development of a National agri-environmental programme.

Key Issues for Discussion in the Workshop

- what sources of funding can be used to develop proposals for agri-environmental programmes
- what are the main technical activities that could be supported (general programme design; detailed development of the measures, harmonization of legislation, capacity building
- what is the best way to present the proposals to funders – personal contacts or following the procedures

Feedback from Workshop

Main funds available



Country examples

- Estonia has used PHARE since 1999 to make progress with preparation of agri-environment programmes.
- The Czech Republic have a twinning project for SAPARD concerned mainly with advice on preparation of their Rural Development Plan for SAPARD and institutional building. They are trying to design a PHARE programme for agri-environment assistance in 2001, but it appears that PHARE is reluctant to give money for a measure which it is possible to fund under SAPARD. The Czech Republic are also looking for possibilities for funding a biodiversity project with GEF, UNDP or UNEP, but it is unlikely that funds could be used for payments to farmers.
- Slovenia rejected funding through SAPARD system as they wished to have a uniform national approach which could not be accommodated under SAPARD regulations. Experience of PHARE projects in Slovenia has found that they can take 2/3 years to be accepted and a further 2 years for funds to become available. Cross-border and PHARE funds have proved to be more useful. Slovenia found a twinning programme to be the best way of getting technical assistance from the EU, but has concluded that the most reliable method of funding is to rely on national sources.
- Experience from Slovakia suggests that the Commission delegation in each country which is focused on the EU integration process can be useful for identifying possible sources of funding. In Slovakia, Danish environment organisations have provided support for developing agri-environment programmes. Financial support for a pilot agri-environment scheme focused on wetlands, including payments to farmers, is likely to approved by UNDP.

Main points arising

- Technical assistance under SAPARD should be used for agri-environmental training.
- The Regional Environment Centre runs training programmes for agri-environment specialists, and delegates are encouraged to monitor their website for details.
- LIFE projects are sometimes useful to raise awareness.
- Applying for EU funds requires a great deal of paperwork, yet only around one in five succeed. The resource input/output ratio is therefore rather unsatisfactory.
- Funding can be used for many other initiatives other than direct payments, for instance training, awareness raising and capacity-building.

Environmental monitoring and evaluation

Davy McCracken

Purpose of the Workshop

The main purpose of this workshop is to highlight key issues to take into account and identify appropriate action which needs to be taken when designing and implementing monitoring and evaluation programmes.

Background

Objectives of monitoring and evaluation: The primary aim of monitoring and evaluation is the gathering of information on scheme functioning which can be used for future improvements in design.

Monitoring is the process by which data on the activities, outputs and results of individual measures are gathered during the implementation of an agri-environment programme. Monitoring must make it possible to determine how management contracts have been implemented in practice and monitoring data also have to be collected in a way that facilitates the adjustment of agri-environment schemes on the basis of the needs that become apparent during implementation.

Evaluation is the in-depth analysis of the impact of measures with regard to pre-determined objectives, based on the data resulting from the monitoring and from other relevant sources of information. Evaluation should provide a proper analysis and interpretation of the impacts of the scheme in question, including links with other policies and programmes. Evaluation must therefore cover socio-economic, agricultural and environmental aspects, and should be devised on the basis of trends in and the characteristics of the area of application.

As well as providing important feedback for European agricultural policy making, scheme monitoring and evaluation are also very useful for internal scheme revision. To this end, it is essential that monitoring and evaluation programmes are able to provide answers to the following questions:

- ***Relevance****:* To what extent are the scheme's objectives still important? Do the farmers obligations still meet the requirements of the implementing Regulations or of national biodiversity strategies?

- ***Effectiveness****:* How far have the scheme's impacts contributed to achieving its specific and general objectives?

- ***Efficiency****:* How cost-effectively have the scheme incentives and administrative resources been converted into outputs and results? Are the payment levels still appropriate?

Approach to monitoring and evaluation: The design of monitoring and evaluation procedures can be quite complex and the following basic considerations should be taken into account:

- ***Planning:*** Monitoring and evaluation require early and careful planning. It is therefore essential to include these aspects into the earliest scheme designs.

- ***Objectives:*** The main purpose of monitoring programmes is to obtain information on the success of a given policy in achieving its principal objectives. This is only possible if the programme objectives are clearly defined, at different levels of detail.

- ***Scheme evaluators:*** Independence and expertise are thus very important factors in the choice of evaluators. Hence, although it is advisable to include the officials responsible for agri-environment schemes in the monitoring and evaluation processes, independent experts should contribute substantially to these tasks.

- ***Links with other policies:*** Monitoring and evaluation procedures for agri-environment schemes may be usefully complemented by an examination of links to other policies, especially agricultural measures, in order to assess complementarity and competition between them.

Monitoring procedures should be cost-effective and provide clear and useful results. Monitoring data which serve no real purpose or which are not sufficiently reliable are not worth collecting as they are of no use in the evaluation phase. Therefore, quality has to be given preference over quantity. This principle also applies to the selection of personnel and monitoring methodology. At the same time an effort should be made to cover all the important objectives of a given scheme. The following guidelines aim at providing a comprehensive framework for achieving both these objectives:

- ***The use of indicators:*** As it is not practical nor even physically possible to measure all the parameters affected by agri-environment schemes in the field, a system of indicators should be developed. Ideally, such indicators should be simple and clear as well as operational and meaningful. They need to be based on available and reliable data, and facilitate practical and cost-efficient evaluation at regular intervals. In some cases, especially for schemes targeted at biodiversity conservation, they will need to be complemented by detailed biological and/or environmental surveys and evaluation procedures.

- ***Indicator selection:*** The selection of the most appropriate elements and indicators should be made systematically. Indicators should fulfil three basic functions: simplification, quantification and communication. Furthermore, the data sources on which monitoring and evaluation are based must be made explicit. Finally, if monitoring systems for other policies or programmes could provide important information for the evaluation of an agri-environment scheme such data should be made use of.

- ***Standards:*** The results of indicators and monitoring are only meaningful if they can be compared with certain standards. Such standards have to be selected and defined before monitoring begins. Three different types of standards are most commonly used: (1) baselines, i.e. the environmental/socio-economic/agricultural situation before the start of a programme to which changes can be compared; (2) benchmarks, i.e. standards by which the performance of a measure can be assessed in terms of expected outputs, results and outcomes; and (3) control farms, i.e. the comparison of the situation on farms in the scheme with similar farms outwith the scheme

Where the resources are not available for applying all the recommended methods a selection of the most appropriate procedures has to be made.

Some Issues for Consideration in the Workshop

The list below highlights some of the issues regarded as potentially important by the Facilitator. These have, however, simply been provided to stimulate discussion and it is expected that additional issues will arise and be considered during the workshop. All the issues will be considered together with the question "*What measures need to be taken when designing and implementing monitoring and evaluation programmes to ensure that these issues are taken into account?*"

- ***Infrastructure requirements:*** All aspects of the monitoring and evaluation programme cannot be considered in isolation (e.g. from simply an agricultural production or environmental viewpoint). Individuals involved in planning, implementing, monitoring and

evaluating agri-environment schemes require a broad understanding of both agricultural and environmental issues. Careful consideration needs to be given during the planning phase as to what personnel and infrastructure for the transfer of knowledge and understanding already exists, whether these can be made use of or adapted, and what else is required.

- ***Training***: Training will be required to ensure that those involved in the monitoring and evaluation programmes not only have an understanding of agricultural and environmental issues but also are able to interpret correctly and explain the results and reports.

- ***The type of information to collect***: Administrative-related information (e.g. number of farms entered in scheme, area of farmland covered) is usually the easiest to collect but only provides one part of the story. In order to judge the real value of any programme it is essential to also collect and interpret biodiversity data and information.

- ***Complexities of ecological relationships***: Although a lot is known about broad habitat and management requirements of many plants and animals, many subtle and complex relationships exist (e.g. with timing of farm management practices, history of management) which can affect the outcome of a particular management practice. Different groups of organisms also operate are different scales on farmland and hence would be affected in different ways depending on the management being practised. These factors have important implications for the choice of what biodiversity indicators to target, how to monitor these, how to interpret the results.

- ***Prioritisation of indicators***: It is impossible to monitor the effects of agri-environment programmes on every aspect of biodiversity on farmland. Careful consideration therefore needs to be given to what provides the most useful information and what can be collected cost-effectively. Given the differences in effects on different groups it is also important to monitor a range of indicators and at different scales.

- ***Farmer involvement and ownership***: Ultimately the success of agri-environment programmes depend on the farmers who are practising the farming systems and implementing the schemes on the ground. It is therefore essential that they understand and appreciate what they are being asked to do and why they are being asked to do it. There is also a role for farmers in developing schemes and collecting some of the monitoring information. It is also essential that they are not forgotten with regard to feedback as to how successful the measures have been on their farms.

- ***Regular Feedback***: Monitoring and evaluation is not an end in itself, but rather is an integral part of the process of successful implementation of agri-environment schemes. Monitoring and evaluation therefore has to be accurate, effective and conducted during the schemes lifetime. Regular and timely feedback (both formal and informal) is therefore essential to allow any changes required to be identified and implemented effectively.

Feedback from the Workshop

Main issues

- Many countries lack good quality biological and socio-economic data.
- Many different methodologies have been used when collecting data, which makes comparison and replication difficult.
- Co-ordination between ministries, researchers and other organisations has been insufficient in many countries.
- Combining data collection with other EU activities such as Natura 2000 has been a challenge in CEECs.
- It is important to plan the requirements of the end results before undertaking research.
- It is important to know who will carry out research when designing monitoring and evaluation procedures.
- Education and training are very important to raise competence levels.
- Programmes must be practical and not overly ambitious.
- It is particularly important in pilot projects to have monitoring programmes, and resources should be put aside for this.
- Monitoring and evaluation programmes may attract different funding sources to the general development of agri-environment schemes.
- Monitoring should not necessarily focus on particular species or groups, but can be designed to assess how management has affected these groups by collecting landscape type information which is easier to collect. Resources needed for monitoring programmes can be minimised by using the basic ecology of important species groups to design easily monitored indicators.

TECHNICAL FORUM

Payment calculations – experiences from Czech Republic

Jaroslav Prazan

Introduction

During agri-environmental program preparation it became clear the payment calculation are one of the most difficult and for final approval important step. The reason is among others:

- amount paid should not "overpay and underpay" farmers (causes inefficiency of program),
- final figures should be defendable (during approval process),
- for budget reasons etc.

The following presentation will describe experiences in several steps of calculation process and factors, which were found especially difficult or important.

Concept

- Arguments for any payments (is there right to pay for such service? is there really loss?)
- Minimum payments make sense (it is necessary to decide what minimum payment is worthwhile to pay to farmers, is benefit from such a small service and payment so important to raise cost of administration etc., calculation should be done before decision if to introduce payments)
- Does it comply with condition: voluntary activities (is it required by legislation or not? Relevant legislation should be analysed)
- When to introduce incentives? (it was decided to not use incentives in initial phase to have betters starting point for discussion with EU and farmers about incentives introduction).

Data needed

- Regional/national (it was necessary to decide if to use regional or national farm data, in which case it make sense, it was possible to use division of areas according to type of climate etc.)
- Farm accountancy data (major part of data needed are available from annual surveys done by Research Institute of Agricultural Economics Praha)
- Survey for peculiar costs (costs which are not regularly monitored were calculated of collected by farm advisor. For example hand mowing, shrubs replacement etc.).

Calculations (based on following principles)

- Income foregone
- Cost incurred
- Incentives.

Experiences overview

The biggest difficulties:

1. To create concept "for what to pay" (for example: now farmers are extensive therefore sensitive to environment – how to defend payments for continuation? What is an actual loss? Can we use opportunity cost as foregone income? What is reference yield for opportunity cost definition? Finally: reference yield was regarded as "economically optimal" yield defined by Research Institute of Plant Production. This exercise was difficult especially because of lack of understanding of application in policy making)

2. To identify proper data (regional/national? Regional are not usually available – what resolution is reasonable? Some regions and types of farms were so exceptional it was difficult to use national data. On the other hand if the focus was to specific it would be undefendable to pay so high transactional costs – balance!)

3. Processing of data into payments (similar obstacle to previous. During calculation process it became clear some links between payments and supported features such as field margins should be simplified, but avoid potentially big group of framers better off or worse off. Examples: exact amount of pools, shape of fields/average length of fences, real decrease of yields of grass etc.)

4. To design it into system which is acceptable in EU (it was not clear in some cases if proposed approach is acceptable by EU representatives such as: gradual decrease of payments in case of fences – in order to avoid substantial loss of interest of farmers money)

5. Valuation of production with negative gross margin (For example: gross margin for beef was negative in time of calculation, market for hay was not developed it means there were not many possibilities to use usual approach – animal density decrease. Solution: – full cost of grass production/ha as price was taken and for comparison price of hay from few cases was collected)

6. Explanation to farmers and conservationists (did not understand the concept – what is compulsory/voluntary = paid/not paid, especially in protected areas where some areas are under strict protection according law etc.

Positive experiences:

1. FADN implemented in Czech Republic (RIAE as mentioned above)

2. Excellent team (it was managed to build high capacity team, regional and national too)

3. It is possible to manage (even in case some data are not available it is possible to organise surveys to collect necessary data – usually contractors should be hired to manage the process – methodology is available).

Additional points

Production curves related to inputs are available in most countries, and from this the opportunity cost of difference inputs can be calculated. Problems can arise however when inputs are low and therefore compensation cannot be paid for a lowering of output.

Accounts of gross margin is a new term in CEECs, and is used in EU Member States to measure income foregone. When the gross margin was calculated in the Czech Republic it came to a negative figure, showing that where grazing is discontinued farmers would save money and should therefore make payments themselves rather than receive them. A similar situation faces many CEECs, although the economic situation is improving.

Modulation was not included in payment calculations in the Czech Republic as farm size differs greatly, therefore payments are calculated per hectare, regardless of farm size. It was considered important to attract the bigger farms as they formed a large part of the pilot areas (for instance only 3 farms cover almost the whole of one pilot area).

The main difficulties arising

- How to create a new concept of payments for environmental services.
- How to calculate the reference yield, as often data is lacking.
- How to design a system which is acceptable in the EU (for instance is reduction of nitrate pollution payment calculation reliable? How can you calculate payments for building fences?).
- How to assess production with a negative gross margin.
- How to explain the concepts (for instance of management which is compulsory/voluntary, paid/not paid) to farmers.

Positive experiences

Due to the creation of a committed and excellent team, at national and regional level, it has been found possible to calculate payments even in circumstances where data is lacking.

Estimating Budgets for the Pilot area of the "Dévaványa" ESA

László Podmaniczky

Aims and general guidelines

The farming requirements of the Dévaványa pilot area have been compiled with respect to the demands of the great bustard as an indicator species, though the area is rich in other important, protected and strictly protected species (e.g. Montagu's harrier, short-eared owl, pratincole, stone curlew) as well. Generally, farming prescriptions suitable for the great bustard are suitable for the other important species, too.

Due to the extent of the area and the habits of the species, the way of habitat improvement measures vary with different parts of the areas. In areas that are traditionally favored by the great bustard tiers are strict, the aim is to create a large, homogenous and undisturbed habitat; whereas in areas where there are small game (partridge) the aim is to create a diverse landscape with hiding places and easily available food. Therefore the farming prescription packages were created so as to reflect these zonal differences.

Farming prescriptions were elaborated with respect to the following nature conservation objectives:

- the development and reconstruction of habitats;
- the protection of nesting places and expansion of areas that are suitable for nesting;
- the creation of feeding source;
- the creation of land use and landscape structure that enhances biodiversity;
- the reduction of agricultural pressure and contamination of the environment;
- the establishment of eco-corridors.

Grassland management and the reintroduction of grasslands must be supported in order to improve and develop habitats. According to calculations, it is expected that farmers will undertake introduction of grassland only with a substantial support, including post-establishment years, since only few of them have the necessary animal stock required for grassland management. Due to the priority of species protection, farming prescriptions to areas comprising great bustard habitats must also be highly supported.

Zonal protection and support categories

The pilot area is divided into smaller parts (zones) according to the various habitat types. There are different farming prescription packages (tiers) in the various zones that were designated on the basis of the following principles:

Zone I: Areas with general nature conservation objectives

Natural values might occur in these areas but not with increased frequence. These areas may serve as feeding or nesting sites for protected or strictly protected species. The aim is, especially in the case of ground-nesters, to provide undisturbed nesting and suitable feeding sites, to decrease environmental pressure and to reconstruct the habitats. In order to achieve these goals, the establishment of large uninterrupted grasslands is proposed. In some parts of this zone arable lands that border existing grasslands were designated to be converted into grasslands. For remaining arable lands SZ1-3 packages are made available.

Zone II. Areas especially important for the great bustard

These areas are especially favored for rutting and nesting, so their protection and avoiding its disturbance is essential for annual reproduction. Their importance explains their higher support. In order to achieve these goals, the establishment of large uninterrupted grasslands is advised. In some parts of this zone arable lands that border existing grasslands were designated to be converted into grasslands. Where the area, regardless of the advice on becoming grassland remains arable, only the A-3 packages are made available as mentioned above.

Zone III. Brimstone wort habitats

The objective is to preserve the populations of the brimstone wort and the related Fisher's estaurine moth and to make their dispersal potential. In order to achieve these goals, the establishment of large uninterrupted grasslands is advised. In some parts of this zone arable lands that border existing grasslands were designated to be converted into grasslands. Where the area, regardless of the advice on becoming grassland remains arable, only the A1-3 packages are made available as mentioned above.

Zone IV: Areas of small game and partridge

These areas are less important for the protected species, but are favored habitats for small game, granivorous and singing birds and predators. These are located 150-200 meters on the two sides of busy highways. The objective is to create a diverse habitat and to provide it with continuous food, hiding and reproduction sites.

Zone V. Important nesting areas of strictly protected birds of prey

These are agricultural areas near forests. With the regulation of agricultural management, our objective is to ensure the undisturbance of the reproduction of these birds.
The zonal system of the pilot area is presented in Map 1. Map 2 summarizes the supported packages in each zone. In zones I., II. and III. the map divides arable lands into group A and B. Group B means arable lands that should be converted into grasslands. Support is also given to this under an investment project. Where the arable use remains dominant, only packages A1-3 (alfalfa establishment, perennial leguminous crops) are supported.

Conversion of management type

One may join the support system of ESA-s in each management type. Tiers related to a different management type than the considered area are available only **after an uptake of a conversion program**. If a farmer wants to sign up for a 5-year grassland ESA on arable lands, he can do so only after implementing the appropriate (arable to grassland conversion) investment program. The relevant investments may be supported by special grants, namely:

- establishment of hedgerows and/or bushes;
- arable-grassland conversion;
- arable-orchard conversion, orchard establishment;
- buying (endemic) animal stock, related building;
- buying equipment and additional machines;
- soil protection, soil improvement.

General conditions of joining

General conditions of joining includes the conversion of arable lands into grasslands and the maintenance of so converted grasslands for a minimum of 10 years in the pilot area. Once the grassland is established, one of the grassland packages (G 1-9) may support its maintenance, according to the use and location of the grassland. **Map 3** locates the proposed areas for grassland conversion. Optional methods of grassland introduction supported by the National Park are listed in tiers G 10-12.

Optional, supported conversion packages

Package G-10: Grassland introduction with seed mixture

The farmer must comply with the following:

- sowing must be done with the mixture proposed by the National Park;
- sowing must be done in the fall.

Package G-11: Alfalfa based grassing

The farmer must comply with the following:

- sowing must be started with alfalfa;
- in order to achieve a spontaneous grassland establishment underseeding, fertilizers and other methods designed to lengthen the alfalfa period are prohibited;
- while alfalfa is dying out, grassing is taking place spontaneously in the area. Once the grassland is established, the chosen grassland package (G 1-9) may be implemented.

Package G-12: Ley farming

The farmer must comply with the following:

- all cultivation must be abandoned in the arable land;
- plant residues must be crushed annually to promote spontaneous grassland formation.

Payment system

Farmers undertaking the tiers of activities and technologies described in the previous chapter shall sign a state contract for a minimum of 5 years and shall be given an annual support on a per hectare basis. Payments per farming prescription packages (tiers) are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Tier (supported activities and technologies) related payments (HUF/ha) (estimation)

Supported use	Payment (HUF)
Non-supported area	0
Zone I: Areas with general nature conservation objecitves	5 000 – 10 000
Zone II. Areas especially important for the great bustard	20 000 – 40 000
Zone III. Brimstone wort habitats	25 000 – 50 000
Zone IV: Areas of small game and partridge	10 000 – 20 000
Zone V. Important nesting areas of strictly protected birds of prey	50 000 – 100 000

In order to calculate the total sum of payment demand for the 12,000 hectares to be supported, payments have to be added up by the area demand of each category. In case that farmers involve all their lands in the programs the total sum of payments is shown in Table 2 calculating with the strictest tiers (the highest support) and the least strict tiers (the lowest support).

Table 2: The area of supported activities and total sum of payments, assuming total participation (estimation)

Supported use	Area (ha)	Payment (HUF/ha)		Payment (thousand HUF)	
		Min.	max.	min.	max.
Non-supported area	778	0	0	0	0
Zone I: Areas with general nature conservation objectives	8,826	5 000	10 000	44 125	88 250
Zone II. Areas especially important for the great bustard	1,691	20 000	40 000	33 820	67 640
Zone III. Brimstone wort habitats	183	25 000	50 000	4 575	9 150
Zone IV: Areas of small game and partridge	414	10 000	20 000	4 140	8 280
Zone V. Important nesting areas of strictly protected birds of prey	46	50 000	100 000	2 300	4 600
Total	11,940			88 960	177 920
Average		7 452	14 905		

Additional points

Issues arising

- Calculating annual costs for a pilot programme can be challenging, as estimating uptake is difficult.

Experience from other countries

- In Finland it is firstly calculated how many core measures can be financially supported during a year, and farmers must follow the basic measures and can choose one additional measure. Payments for basic measures are nationally uniform, so some farmers will inevitably be over or under paid, but this system is acceptable to the Commission.
- In Wales the first agri-environment programme used a menu-scheme in which farmers could choose extra measures, but this can result in insufficient availability of financial resources. The new scheme is moving to a different system which still ranks farms by environmental value, but when the agreements have reached the annual budget all applications above a minimum environmental score are offered agreement in the next budgetary year.
- In Northern Ireland it has been found that a menu-based selection system is difficult to budget due to the unknown percentage of farmers applying for more costly management agreements.

TIR GOFAL: The Agri-environment Scheme for Wales (UK)

Clunie Keenleyside[3]

Farming in Wales

Wales covers an area of 20,000 square kilometres, bounded on three sides by the sea; more than half the land area is above 200m and much over 600m; the coastal areas have a moist, mild climate but in the hills the climate is colder, with higher rainfall; the land is often exposed to strong winds. Of the 27,900 farms in Wales 60% are beef and sheep farms and 14% are dairy farms; the rest are in horticulture, arable, pigs and poultry.

Average farm size is 53 hectares, but many of the hill sheep farms are much larger with extensive areas of unimproved grassland or heathland. The trend over the past 50 years has been to agricultural improvement, particularly of grazing land, and to specialisation. As a result many semi-natural habitats have been ploughed up and replaced with agricultural grass species, or native grasslands have been destroyed through the use of fertilisers and herbicides; there has also been a significant loss of farmers and farm workers, and many holdings no longer have the spare labour for the traditional management of hedges and stone walls.

Aims and operation of Tir Gofal

Tir Gofal is a new all-Wales agri-environment scheme, available on farmed land throughout Wales. It is designed to assist farmers in caring for the wildlife, landscape and historic features on their land and to provide new opportunities for the public to enjoy the Welsh countryside. Agreements apply to the whole farm and last for ten years. The name Tir Gofal is Welsh for 'land in care' and the scheme was launched in March, 1999. The scheme is run under the Common Agricultural Policy agri-environment measures, jointly funded by the UK Government and the European Union.

Tir Gofal is delivered throughout Wales by the government-funded Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), in partnership with other agencies. The Countryside Council for Wales is responsible for nature and landscape conservation in Wales; its duties include giving advice to government and managing nature reserves.

There are five main elements to Tir Gofal, which are described in more detail later in this paper:

1. **environmental care of the whole farm** - all land on the farm, even if it is intensively managed for agriculture, must be managed in a way which does not harm the environment by, for example, pollution or damage to traditional features; there is an annual payment per hectare for this;

2. **management of existing semi-natural habitats** - it is compulsory for all existing semi-natural habitats on the farm to be managed according to the scheme guidelines; there are annual payments per hectare of habitat;

3. **optional creation or restoration of habitats and features -** in addition, the farmer can select from a range of voluntary options for the restoration or creation of certain habitats or features which would improve the biodiversity or landscape of the farm; this includes the creation of new paths or access areas for public use; there are annual payments per hectare of habitat;

[3] The original version of this paper was written in March 1999 by David Parker and Brian Pawson who both work for the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) as Director Conservation and Agri-environment Policy Officer respectively.

4. **investment in the environment** - one-off payments are available for specific work designed to protect and manage habitats and features and to support new access provision;

5. **environmental training for farmers** - farmers joining Tir Gofal will have the opportunity to attend courses on managing specific habitats, such as wetlands and woodlands, as well as practical training in skills such as drystone walling and hedge laying.

The scheme is managed by Tir Gofal Project Officers working from the eleven District Offices of CCW. It was decided at an early stage to provide a local service to farmers and to run Tir Gofal as an integrated part of CCW's locally based operation. At the farm level, Tir Gofal Project Officers will be able to receive advice from the Environment Agency and CADW Welsh Historic Monuments, as well as acting as agents of the Forestry Commission in Wales.

The Tir Gofal scheme has been allocated a budget which provides sufficient funding for about 600 agreements per year for the first three years. Selection of successful farms will be according to the degree of environmental benefit they offer.

Applying for Tir Gofal

To enter the scheme an applicant must be able to show that they have a controlling interest in the land for the ten year duration of the agreement. Eligible land includes that held under freehold, agricultural or farm business tenancies; common land may be eligible in some circumstances. The land must be in some kind of agricultural production, which can include the grazing of horses. The entire area of eligible land on the holding, including detached parcels (but excluding any land outside Wales), must be entered into the scheme. The minimum acceptable area is 3 hectares. Farmers complete a detailed application form with a map of the farm showing the existing habitats and the voluntary options they wish to offer.

Tir Gofal is a voluntary scheme and both CCW and the government want to achieve value for money and the best environmental benefit. A system is used to score all applications and rank them in order of environmental merit; the scoring system allows lowland, intensively managed farms to compete with upland farms which have large quantities of semi-natural habitat. In broad terms the system takes account of existing environmental features on the farm as well as the benefits which could come from using the voluntary options to restore and/or create both habitats or features.

In each of the first two years of the scheme, after the applications had been ranked, those expected to give most environmental gain were offered agreements first, working down the list until the budget for the year had been used up. In the third year (2001) the applications will be scored and ranked as before, but all farmers who achieve scores above a minimum value will be offered agreements, although those with the lowest scores may have to wait another year if the number of applicants exceeds the budget.

A Tir Gofal agreement

There are four parts to each Tir Gofal agreement:-

I) environmental care of the whole farm

The Whole Farm Section is the essential foundation of every Tir Gofal Agreement and seeks to achieve the better environmental management of the whole farm. The main elements are as follows:

- Retain all existing traditional field boundaries and associated features (hedges, walls, earth banks and slate fences, stone gate posts and stone stiles) and maintain those that are agreed with the Project Officer as being stockproof on entry into the Scheme. Leave at least 25% of all hedges untrimmed each year. Retain a buffer strip 1metre wide from the base of the field boundary (on each side) without using any cultivations, fertilisers, lime, herbicides or other pesticides unless spot treating notifiable weeds.

- Safeguard any archaeological or historic features and maintain in good repair any traditional buildings agreed with the project officer as being weatherproof on entry into the Scheme.

- Retain individual trees and replace where necessary. Retain dead trees unless they cause a hazard or obstruction.

- Do not introduce any non-native species (plant, fish, bird or animal) other than with the approval of the Project Officer.

- Safeguard any rock features and geological sites by avoiding physical disturbance and establishing a 2 metre wide buffer strip around the base of the feature. Similarly, all ponds, streams and rivers must be protected by a 1 metre wide buffer strip (extended to a width of 10 metres when using farmyard manure, slurry or other organic manures).

- Keep the farm clear of scrap and other rubbish and notify the Project Officer if it is intended to dispose of any off-farm wastes on improved grassland or arable land under agreement.

- Stocking rates on land subject to agreement should not be increased above levels carried in 1998 unless this is necessary to achieve the environmental objectives of the Scheme. Overall stocking rates should not exceed 2.4LSU/ha.

- Public access on foot must be allowed to all unenclosed moorland, heathland and grassland. Access onto areas of unenclosed land will be via existing rights of way. Where no such rights of way exist, scheme participants will be encouraged to volunteer the creation of new permissive footpaths.

- Legal responsibilities relating to public rights on way on agreement land must be complied with. This includes keeping them free from obstructions and re-instating them after ploughing.

- Scheme participants must comply with all relevant legal requirements in respect of agriculture and the environment and will be responsible for obtaining any necessary consents such as planning permission or felling licences before starting work.

- Agreement holders are expected to manage their land in accordance with the published Codes of Good Agricultural Practice for Air, Soil and Water.

- Agreement holders must consult the Project Officer before undertaking any construction, or alteration of buildings or features, any works involving watercourses or water bodies, clearing any vegetation, establishing new hay or silage feeding sites, quarrying or excavations, or use of the land for commercial or recreational activities under the agreement holder's control.

ii) management of existing semi-natural habitats

These prescriptions relate to existing semi-natural habitats on the farm whose conservation is essential if the existing biodiversity of the countryside is to be maintained and enhanced. The habitats follow those in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and each is covered by detailed management prescriptions. The broad habitat types are as follows:

1. **Semi-natural Broadleaved Woodland**
2. **Scrub**
3. **Orchards and Parklands**
4. **High Mountain Heath**
5. **Upland Heath**
6. **Lowland and Coastal Heath**
7. **Unimproved Acid Grassland**
8. **Unimproved Neutral Grassland**

9. Unimproved Limestone Grassland
10. Semi-improved Grasslands / Haymeadows
11. Marshy Grassland
12A. Blanket Bog
12B. Lowland Raised Bog
13. Reedbeds, Swamps and Fens
14. Coastal Grazing Marsh and Floodplain Grassland
15. Saltmarsh
16. Coastal Grassland and Cliff
17. Sand Dune

The general management prescriptions for unimproved grassland provide a good example of the type of agricultural adjustment which will be required for Tir Gofal. More detailed prescriptions will be required for particular grassland types, but the minimum requirement is to manage all grassland:

- without any cultivations or the use of lime, inorganic or organic fertilisers (use of farm yard manure will be allowed on specific sites);
- without the installation of new drainage;
- without the use of pesticides, other than for spot treating notifiable weeds;
- without clearing ditches or carrying out any rolling, chain harrowing or supplementary feeding;
- by using a specified grazing regime and stocking density.

iii) optional creation or restoration of habitats and features

These constitute probably the most exciting part of the new scheme and represent the means by which CCW can influence the management of whole landscapes for the benefit of key species such as skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) and marsh fritillary (*Eurodryas aurinia*), as well as ensuring that other objectives such as aesthetic quality, cultural value and public enjoyment are also satisfied.

There are many different voluntary prescriptions which farmers can apply for as part of Tir Gofal. These centre around the protection of landscape and historic features, as well as the less intensive management of both improved grassland and arable land, together with the provision of new public access opportunities. Whilst space does not allow for a full description of all prescriptions, an outline is presented below.

Landscape and Historic Features

Agreement holders may undertake restoration work on a combination of hedgerows, walls, slate fences and earth banks. Farmers must follow all of the requirements of the Whole Farm Section where existing traditional boundaries are already stock proof. Elsewhere on the holding, environmental investment payments are available for coppicing, hedge laying, planting and protective fencing as well as the gapping up and rebuilding of stone walls, slate fences and earth banks. Historic features, such as earthworks or buried archaeological remains, can be safeguarded through the removal of scrub, the conversion of arable land to less intensively managed grassland and the raising of water levels where appropriate.

Arable Land

These prescriptions have been included in Tir Gofal to encourage the use of less intensive cropping regimes on existing arable land as well as to persuade at least some farmers to reintroduce an element of arable farming on all-grass farms. In the past, when farms had to be more self sufficient for winter feed for stock, some arable farming took place on most Welsh farms. The decline of arable land has resulted in the serious decline of many species of farmland birds, plants and insects. Support of spring cereal cropping, retention of winter stubbles and the provision of fallow margins (headlands) is designed to both halt and to reverse these declines.

Grassland Restoration

It is a major aim of Tir Gofal to achieve the restoration of species-rich grasslands in the Welsh countryside. A range of measures are proposed, including the elimination of fertiliser use on semi-improved and improved grassland, the creation of buffer zones adjacent to watercourses and the better management of improved grassland for birds. Project Officers will have discretion in determining whether a given option is appropriate for a particular site with most emphasis given to the creation of new links between existing habitats as well as opportunities to enhance small pockets of relict wetland and species-rich grasslands.

Establishment of new habitats and features

The philosophy behind Tir Gofal recognises that as there has been a severe loss of semi-natural habitat in the Welsh countryside; it is necessary to undertake, in addition to habitat restoration, the creation of new habitats wherever possible. A number of prescriptions are available including the planting of new woodland, the re-establishment of heathland, the creation of streamside corridors, and the raising of water levels on existing habitats such as grazing marsh as well as on improved grassland.

New Public Access Opportunities

Increasing public access to the countryside is a key objective of Tir Gofal. As part of the Whole Farm Section, farmers must allow access to all unenclosed moorland, heathland and grassland. Access is limited to walkers, who may bring dogs on leads. Any temporary closure of this land for environmental or agricultural reasons must be agreed in advance with the Project Officer. In the event that unenclosed land is not accessible by existing public rights of way or other legal access the farmer will be encouraged to create new permissive paths which allow access onto the unenclosed area. The farmer will be eligible for annual payments for such paths as well as environmental investment payments for any initial construction works such as steps or bridges.

Tir Gofal can also be used to create new opportunities for the use of enclosed land by walkers, horse riders, cyclists, people with disabilities, or educational groups. There are safeguards to prevent this use becoming a public right, but all new access created under Tir Gofal will be publicised. Any publicity will make it clear that this access is for the life of the agreement only and indicate the conditions that apply, for example, dogs must be kept on leads.

New permissive access will only be approved where it is sensible, safe and environmentally sound, and where it adds to existing access. Land close to settlements or routes which give access to good viewpoints or to woodland are examples of new access likely to be acceptable.

iv) investment in the environment

Environmental investment payments are available for a wide range of works to complement the Whole Farm Section and/or detailed prescriptions for habitats or access. The restoration of traditional boundaries is always popular with farmers but has been limited to 10m per hectare of farm per year to ensure any landscape changes are of a gradual nature. Other projects can include new fencing for environmental purposes, restoration and creation of ponds, tree planting, scrub management, bracken control, and the restoration of traditional farm buildings. As with the traditional boundaries, the total available expenditure on these other capital works is subject to a maximum amount per agreement.

Environmental training for farmers

Many modern farmers are not familiar with the traditional skills needed to manage habitats and landscape features. Farmers joining Tir Gofal (and members of their families) are invited to attend a free introductory training session to learn about the scheme. Farmers can also attend training courses free of charge in the environmental management of specific habitats, such as wetlands and woodlands. Training courses in practical skills, such as building stone walls or

laying hedges, are available to farmers but for these there is a charge of 50% of the cost, because such skills have a value outside the Tir Gofal agreement (for example skilled farmers can work as contractors for other Tir Gofal farmers). All Tir Gofal training is optional, but farmers are encouraged to take advantage of the courses available.

Monitoring Tir Gofal

The designers of Tir Gofal have tackled the major criticism of other agri-environment schemes which is that monitoring has not been able to establish the success, or otherwise, of these schemes in delivering environmental benefits. In common with most other schemes, Tir Gofal will have Performance Indicators (PIs) relating to delivery, such as the number of farms coming into the scheme. Although useful these do not provide information on the environmental outcomes of the scheme for individual farms or habitats. In order to address this deficiency, Tir Gofal will also have PIs which relate to environmental outcomes.

As the management prescriptions for Tir Gofal will be set at farm level (and monitoring will also be done at this level), PIs will be set at farm level too. For key habitats within an agreement, as well as for landscape and access features, a series of targets will be set which will be dependent both on the starting conditions and the precise prescriptions which are agreed. The targets will provide a clear indication of what the agreement is expected to achieve within a specified period. In practice, such targets are likely to be set for the most valued part of the farm, ie. those which scored most highly in the ranking process and/or those which are expected to produce the greatest environmental gain.

Future development of Tir Gofal

The current level of funding which has been allocated to Tir Gofal will deliver approximately 600 agreements per year for the next three years. With about 20,000 farm holdings greater than 3 ha in Wales, it is clear that more funding is needed to make a real difference to Welsh landscape and biodiversity. Having 10,000 farms in Tir Gofal after 10 years of the scheme is an ambitious, but hopefully realistic target which we will work hard to achieve. At the same time, CCW will continue to press for reform of the CAP commodity regimes, striving to ensure that agricultural subsidies provide support for farmers in managing their land in a way which is both agriculturally and environmentally sustainable in the long term.

Additional points on Application Procedures and Selection Criteria

Pilot programme objectives

- It is important to design pilot programmes which could be expanded to include many farmers (20-50% of all farmers in the country for instance).

Application/selection process

- The application form is a valuable source of statistics for monitoring and evaluation.
- Transparency is important, as in a competitive selection process farmers must know that the evaluation is fair. For instance the Countryside Council for Wales (agency responsible for the agri-environment scheme) publish their selection criteria and have a complaints procedure.
- Consistency between regional offices is important.
- The selection process must be tested before launching the scheme.
- The demands on administration must be realistic.

Basis for selection

- There must be minimum standard for those to join scheme, such as a minimum land area, capability for farm management (eg availability of grazing animals) and adequate legal interest for the full term of agreement.
- It is possible to favour a particular type of farmer (eg young farmers or farmers of small farms).
- Particular areas or environmental problems can be favoured.
- Farms can be selected according to which offer the best environmental value.

Systems of selection

1. Competing system – top ranked farmers receive a site visit (but no promise of an agreement as they may have given inaccurate information in their application), and the maximum amount of farmers are entered into the scheme that the total budget allows. Farmers who are not able to obtain an agreement must re-submit their application the following year, but this creates uncertainty as the standard of competition may change.
2. Threshold – a scoring system and threshold is set, and applications which score above this threshold receive a site visit. If the visit confirms the point score is above a minimum threshold, an agreement will be offered if the budget is available in the first year, otherwise the applicant enters a waiting list and will be offered an agreement in the following year.

Field Visits

- Field visits may have to be during a certain season, and this must be considered when setting the application timetable.

WORKSHOP SESSION 2

Good Farming Practice and Agri-environment Baselines

Jan-Erik Petersen

Introduction

Due to international trade agreements, public environmental concerns and market forces environmental standards are becoming a key part of the European model of agriculture and are likely to play a significant role in future agriculture policy. These standards, such as 'Good Farming Practice' according to Regulation 1257/1999 and Codes of Good Agricultural Practice (CoGAPs), are necessary to ensure minimum environmental protection on farmland and a level playing field across Europe. Within agri-environment schemes, environmental baselines set minimum standards above which farmers can receive monetary compensation for management practices. They are also useful in avoiding against the 'halo effect' when a farmer receives agri-environment payments for part of a farm while intensifying the remainder.

Environmental standards in agriculture and the use of Good Farming Practice as environmental baseline in agri-environment schemes are outlined below, and their relationship with CoGAPS is illustrated with some examples. The background paper concludes with a short list of questions to analyse the existing situation in CEE and discuss options for the future. This list is not exclusive and we would welcome suggestions for further questions to be raised in discussion.

Levels of environmental standards

Conceptually, there are three main levels of environmental performance in agriculture that are communicated using different environmental standards:

- The first refers to compliance with national and EU environmental legislation, for example national landscape and nature protection laws or the Nitrates Directive. This can be thought of as a 'red line', the obligatory minimum, which can be legally enforced.

- The second, Good Agricultural Practice, refers to the minimum standards that farmers should respect - the 'blue zone'. This includes respect for environmental law, following advice from extension services and taking into account scientific and technical progress. A single, uniform code of Good Agricultural Practice for the whole of Europe would not be appropriate given the major variations between localities, regions and individual countries. As a consequence, the 'blue zone' will combine a variety of 'blue lines' defined for different European regions.

- The third level refers to the production of environmental goods and services above this baseline within a 'green zone'. Different 'green lines' can be defined within this zone. Environmental entry conditions for agri-environment schemes are now based on what is called 'good farming practice', as required by Regulation 1257/1999. Farmers who ensure environmental management above this green line are eligible for agri-environmental payments.

The development of environmental standards should in the first instance take into consideration the environmental targets they are meant to achieve, with regard to water quality, soil erosion, biodiversity conservation etc. However, it will be helpful for both agriculture and environmental authorities to work with farmers, NGOs and other stakeholders to ensure the practicability and

effectiveness of the standards proposed. Whereas certain obligations are essential, they should be realistic, readily understood by farmers and avoid unnecessary bureaucracy.

Codes of Good Agricultural Practice

In England three handbooks have been published on CoGAPs for Protection of Air, Soil and Water which contain a mixture of advice, recommendations and obligations. They comprise three elements: firstly compliance with existing environmental standards, secondly a more limited set of 'verifiable standards', and thirdly environmental standards which cannot be strictly defined and need to be considered voluntary. The English Water Code provides examples for all three levels of environmental standards. Environmental legislation is represented by 'Control of Pollution Regulations' (Silage, Slurry and Fuel Oil) of 1991, verifiable standards consist of sheep dip as well as silage and slurry store requirements, and non-verifiable standards include not clearly defined statements such as "good irrigation practice".

However, most of the practices recommended in CoGAPs cannot be enforced and do not relate to biodiversity or landscape protection. Receipt of payments in agri-environment schemes and Less Favoured Area measures under EU Regulation 1257/1999 now depends on compliance with 'Good Farming Practice'. Good Farming Practice is to be defined by EU Member States on the basis of verifiable standards that can be clearly defined and controlled at farm level.

Good Farming Practice as environmental baseline in agri-environment schemes

Regulation 1257/1999 and its implementing regulation 1750/1999 together require that farmers entering into agri-environment commitments respect Good Farming Practice across the whole of their farm. Thus, Good Farming Practice acts as a baseline for which no payments are made. Agri-environment payments are intended to compensate or provide an incentive for farmers to undertake measures that go beyond Good Farming Practice. Article 28 of Regulation 1750/1999 defines Good Farming Practice as follows:

> *"Usual good farming practice is the standard of farming which a reasonable farmer would follow in the region concerned.*
>
> *Member States shall set out verifiable standards in their rural development plans. In any case, these standards shall entail compliance with general mandatory environmental requirements."*

Annex IV in the England Rural Development Plan (RDP) sets out the approach taken by one Member State. The proposed approach to Good Farming Practice in the RDP is based on two elements: First, compliance with existing environmental legislation; second, a list of 'verifiable standards' which will be included as conditions for all new agri-environment agreements or LFA compensatory allowance payments. In addition, all farmers joining agri-environment schemes will be given copies of the Codes of Good Agricultural Practice for Air, Soil and Water and encouraged to comply with the recommendations in them.

Two phrases are important for assessing the role of CoGAPs within RDR baseline requirements. First of all, copies of the three CoGAPs are ***additional*** to other requirements, and secondly, farmers will be ***encouraged*** to comply with them. Thus, existing environmental legislation and newly defined verifiable standards are the key environmental baseline within agri-environment schemes. In Northern Ireland the following verifiable standards have been introduced (for more information see background paper by Dr Harry Gracey):

- avoidance of overgrazing,
- no supplementary feeding,
- no removal or destruction of hedges or stone walls,
- prior approval for disposal of sheep dip,
- ban of trimming of hedgerows, and
- allowing hedge-laying and coppicing only between 1st March and 31st August.

Diagram 1: Relationship between levels of environmental standards

Environmental
Benefit

Green zone	**Agri-environment baseline**	**Verifiable standards of Good Farming Practice, including (2a) and (1)**
Blue zone	**Codes of Good Agricultural Practice**	**(2a) Verifiable and (2b) non-verifiable standards plus (1)**
Red line	**Environmental legislation**	**(1) Obligatory minimum standards**

Results of the workshop discussion

The following key questions were discussed during the workshop on agri-environment baselines:

1) What relevant legislation does currently exist in CEE countries?

Several representatives of CEECs stated that there is quite a dense regulatory framework for agriculture in many applicant countries. This extends to water resources, river and coastal ecosystems, biodiversity protection and other areas. Although enforcement is still poor in many instances this led to the conclusion that environmental legislation already sets quite high environmental baseline standards in most applicant countries.

2) Are CoGAPs a suitable baseline for agri-environment schemes in CEE or is it better to start afresh?

To avoid confusion between the role of CoGAPs and the definition of Good Farming Practice necessary under Regulation 1257/1999 it was recommended not to use existing CoGAPS, or those under preparation in the framework of the Nitrates Directive implementation, as environmental baseline for agri-environment schemes. It was regarded as better to draw up new verifiable standards of Good Farming Practice even in the framework of pilot agri-environment schemes.

3) What verifiable standards of Good Farming Practice do you propose for your countries?

Not many new verifiable standards were suggested, partly because not much time was given to this agenda item. Two examples were given: green cover of arable land over winter, and average rates of fertiliser application on the farm where farm book keeping is sufficiently reliable.

4) What is the best approach for defining agri-environment baselines in the framework of implementation of pilot agri-environment schemes in CEE?

Agri-environment baselines in current pilot schemes should correspond to the standards set by Regulation 1257/1999. In this framework, EU delegates reminded the participants that Good Farming Practice is described in Regulation 1750/1999 (Art. 28) as *'the standard of farming which a reasonable farmer would follow in the region concerned'.* 'Reasonable' can be interpreted as the

farmer following relevant existing legislation and not deliberately damaging or destroying environmental assets.

Many EU countries base their definition of Good Farming Practice on existing environmental legislation and regulations. In this context, and in the light of dense existing environmental regulation, the participants of the workshop agreed that the best approach for defining verifiable standards of Good Farming Practice in CEE would be the following:

a) compile an inventory of existing environmental legislation;

b) describe verifiable standards arising from existing legislation where appropriate;

c) identify procedures for controlling individual verifiable standards;

d) consult with other government bodies on proposed verifiable standards as needed;

e) present the outcome of the exercise to the European Commission showing how newly defined verifiable standards relate to existing legislation, or, where necessary, in what way they go beyond current regulation.

Additional comments

- Planned pilot agri-environment schemes should be used as a test ground for standards of Good Farming Practice wherever possible.

- The standards applied in pilot areas should be those that are likely to become future national standards.

- Thus bear in mind that any standards proposed should potentially be applicable across the country and do not demand overlarge administrative or monitoring resources when applied nationally.

- Be aware that environmental standards in pilot schemes may set a precedent for future agri-environment baselines when agri-environment measures are extended after accession.

Training and awareness-raising

Harry Gracey and Anne Liro

This was an 'open' workshop session where the subject of discussion was selected by the delegates. It was a unanimous decision to discuss training and awareness since they are fundamental to the successful implementation of any agri-environment programme.

Feedback from the Workshop

Target audience

Farmers, advisors, paying agencies, Ministerial staff, NGOs, and everyone involved from development to implementation and delivery of agri-environment schemes will benefit from training. The success of schemes ultimately depends on competent trainers, and they must be selected according to the target audience. In most cases farmers are the most effective at encouraging other farmers to embrace new methods of management.

Demonstration farms:

Demonstration farms and exchange visits between regions are useful methods of training and awareness raising. It is important that the managers of demonstration farms have credibility amongst their peers. It is not necessary for demonstration farms to be the most profitable in an area, but the farmers must be respected as leaders of innovation.

Background information:

A high priority in all countries should be the preparation of a manual for staff containing comprehensive background information.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

David Baldock

It is clear that remarkable progress has been made since conception of the first agri-environment project in the seven country study 1997. The relationships formed and synergy created between agri-environment experts in all countries involved have proved valuable for sharing and disseminating experience and knowledge. It has become clear that awareness-raising and capacity-building is increasingly important in accession countries to build the critical mass of supportive organisations and experts needed to take agri-environment policy forward.

Experience from the existing Member States has been beneficial to CEECs when drawing up national and pilot agri-environment programmes, but it is increasingly clear that exchange between CEEC experts is gaining value. Despite this, IEEP and Avalon look forward to supplying ongoing assistance to increase momentum for this important initiative under the current project, partly funded by the European Commission. IEEP will be revising the agri-environment manual in due course, providing an expert directory to assist communications, and producing an agri-environment bulletin to keep up-to-date information flowing throughout the ever-increasing network of agri-environment experts in CEE. Avalon and IEEP would also welcome feedback on the needs, problems, issues, and successes in building agri-environment programmes in CEE.

ANNEX 1: Seminar Programme

Friday, 8 December

09:00	Registration (collect delegate packs and badges) with Tea and Coffee	
09:30	General introduction to the 'Know How' project	*Martien Lankester*
	All delegates briefly introduce themselves	
	Morning session introduced and chaired by *Martien Lankester*	
10:00	**Policy Update from the SAPARD Unit**	*Valery Morard*
	Learning from EU and CEEC Experience - some country case studies	
10:30	**Northern Ireland**	*Harry Gracey*
11:00	**Finland**	*Marjatta Kempainen-Mäkelä*
11:30	Tea and Coffee	
12:00	**Estonia**	*Merit Mikk*
12:30	**Bulgaria**	*Yanka Kazakova*
13:00	Lunch	
	Afternoon session introduced and chaired by *Martien Lankester*	
14:00	**Overview of Agri-environment Developments in CEEC**	*David Baldock*
14:30	**Review of Key Issues Emerging in Agri-environment Programmes in CEEC**	*All Delegates*
	Brief 3 minute presentation from each MoA on key problems and issues experienced in developing pilot projects and national programmes, followed by summary/discussion and selection of subject for the 'open' workshop on day 2	(facilitators: *Mark Redman* and *Jan-Erik Petersen*)
15:30	Tea and Coffee	
	Workshop Session 1	
	Delegates to split into two groups - A and B. Each workshop will be facilitated and work towards preparing a short summary that defines key issues, appropriate action etc.	
16:00	Group A (facilitator: *Davy McCracken*)	Group B (facilitator: *Viara Stefanova*)
	Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation - Principles and Practice	**Sharing Experience in the Use of Pre-Accession Funds for Building Agri-environment Programmes**
17:30	Day 1 of seminar ends	
19:00	Dinner	

Saturday, 9 December

Morning session introduced and chaired by *David Baldock*

09:45 Tea and Coffee

10:00 **Report Back on Workshop Session 1**
(10 minute presentation on summary from each of the previous workshops + 10 minute discussion)

10:30 **Technical Forum** - a step-by-step approach to key administration issues

Forum will involve a series of short technical presentations (maximum 20 minutes) on key administration issues, followed by 10 minutes of questions. Each presentation to be accompanied by a short briefing paper.

Payment Calculations	*Jaroslav Prazan*
Estimating Budgets for Pilot and National Programmes	*Laszlo Podmaniczky*

11:30 Tea and Coffee

Application Procedures and Selection Criteria for Applicants	*Clunie Keenleyside*

Further technical questions, answers and discussion (30-40 minutes)

13:00 Lunch

Workshop Session 2

14:00	Group A (facilitator: *Jan-Erik Petersen*)	Group B (facilitator: *to be confirmed*)
	Environmental Baseline Requirements and CoGAP	**Open Workshop** (topic to be chosen on Day 1)

15:30 Tea and Coffee

Final afternoon session introduced and chaired by *David Baldock*

16:00 **Report Back on Workshop Session 2**
(10 minute presentation on summary from each of the previous workshops + 10 minute discussion)

16:30 **Closing Discussion and Chairman's Summing-up**

17:30 Day 2 of seminar ends

20:00 Dinner and entertainment

ANNEX 2: List of Participants

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ANNEX 3: Delegates' Evaluation of Seminar

All delegates were given an evaluation form. The results from the analysis of the forms returned are presented below.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1. Quality of pre-seminar organisation				
Information about the seminar	38%	63%		
Organisation of travel (if applicable)	46%	54%		

2. Quality of programme and presentations				
Content of the programme	31%	69%		
Suitability of speakers	31%	69%		
Subjects covered		94%	6%	
Discussion	25%	69%	6%	
Clarity of presentations	13%	81%	6%	
Background material	6%	81%	13%	
Entertainment	25%	69%		

3. Seminar venue				
Suitability of seminar room	19%	69%	12%	
Quality of food	38%	56%	6%	
Quality of accomodation	25%	56%	19%	

	Yes	No
4. Seminar participants		
Representation of relevant organisations and nationalities?	100%	

5. Overall impressions		
Expectations met?	100%	