

Annex II B: Country Report Bulgaria

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The National Agriculture and Rural Development Plan for Bulgaria in 2000-2006 assigns 2.4% of the budget to „the promotion of agricultural methods which do not harm the environment and of environmental protection". The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has developed a "Code of GFP" based on national agricultural and environmental legislation as a baseline for agri-environment measures. The three areas where the code applies are water pollution, land use and soil quality, and designated sites and objects.

The Ministry of Environment and Water has drafted a Code of Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Water in accordance with the requirements of the EU Nitrates Directive. Farmers participating in pilot projects are required to keep a copy of the Code and are encouraged to follow its advice and recommendations (Redman and Stefanova 2001).

According to Stefanova 2003 Bulgaria has got, on one side, strict environmental legislation, but the regulations are often not enforced, and standards of GFP are at the moment not generally used in reality.

"Verifiable standards of Good Farming Practice" (Stefanova 2003):

These standards are mandatory for all farmers participating in agri-environment schemes.

Use (storage) of fertilisers, slurry and manure:

Only use of approved fertilisers (no definition of maximum amounts of fertilisers yet, as many farmers don't use mineral fertilisers at all)

Nitrate (+ general rules of fertilising):

Water Act (and Ordinances):

- No application of fertiliser or organic manure in sanitary protection zone around water sources used for communal drinking water
- Construction of new cattle shed or storing of manure within 20 metres of open water is prohibited
- No disposal of manure or fertiliser or pesticides directly into any open water, drainage ditch or well

Potassium and Phosphate: -

Pesticide Use:

- Only use of registered plant protection products
- When using pesticides, all recommendations and regulations for their application and disposal have to be observed.
- No storing or disposing of pesticides within 20 metres of open water (*Water Act*)

Water Use (Irrigation):

- No use of water for irrigation that is polluted with excessive levels of harmful substances and waste

Soil Conservation:

- Farmers must apply the animal manure produced on the farm on their agricultural land in order to maintain and restore soil fertility. The excess manure should be stored without any danger for soil and water pollution.

Animal housing / Animal husbandry: -

Landscape and Biodiversity:

- No removal or destroying of listed habitats or features (when a farm takes part in the Whole Farm Agreement)

Farm Management: -

Other:

- No actions must be undertaken that are likely to damage listed archaeological sites and cultural monuments.
- Farmers are prohibited to use agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes without permission.
- Any obvious pollution problem affecting quality and safety of soil and water has to be reported.

Control:

Controlling authority for GFP is in most cases the Ministry of Agriculture; the Ministry of Health controls sanitary issues.

The European Commission commented on the SAPARD plan and asked Bulgaria to include the stocking rate in the codes of GFP and to add tables with GFP, national legislation, controlling institution, verification method and actions for which Codes of GFP are designed.

As a result, Bulgaria added several principles to GFP:

- Develop management plan for the whole farm, introducing environmental planning
- Introducing farm records and accounts
- The stocking rate per ha must not exceed 2 LU/ha (for cattle) and 13 sheep and goats
- Table with recommended levels on use of fertilisers

References:

National Agriculture and Rural Development Plan for Bulgaria in 2000-2006

Redman M.; Stefanova V. (2001): Experience with compiling Standards of Good Farming Practice in Bulgaria. Agri-Environment Bulletin Issue 5 – December 2001

Stefanova, V. (2003): Presentation on workshop about GFP in CEECs, 7-8 April 2003 in Budapest