



LAST CHANCE CAP

AGRICULTURE POLICY MUST **LIMIT GLOBAL WARMING**

Droughts and floods undermine farmers' ability to produce food, and climate change has made the agriculture sector increasingly vulnerable to these extreme weather events. But the agriculture sector is also driving this climate chaos as it is one of the biggest sources of different greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that cause global warming, threatening rural livelihoods and future generations' ability to farm. To limit global warming to 1.5°C, the agriculture sector needs a complete overhaul, in particular through a reduction in livestock production.

CHALLENGES

- Livestock production creates additional emissions from enteric fermentation and manure disposal. Research shows that even the most sustainable beef and dairy producers have a more damaging impact on our environment than the least sustainable vegetable and cereal producers.
- While carbon can be sequestered in to soil and biomass, it can also be released if soils are managed unsustainably or the biomass is burned.
- 67% of deforestation caused by agriculture is driven by growing soy and corn for animal feed or for pasture. This results in huge above and below ground carbon capture.
- Emissions from processing, particularly emissions from slaughterhouse effluent, are greater than processing emissions for most other products.
- There are high levels of waste produced in the production of fresh animal products as they are prone to spoilage.
- Moving towards net-zero emissions will require policies that reduce absolute emissions throughout international supply chains in the long term.

 THE WORLD'S TOP 20 **MEAT AND DAIRY COMPANIES** EMIT MORE **GREENHOUSE GASES** THAN **GERMANY** DOES.

Source: Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Foundation

 **DRAINED PEATLANDS** MAKE UP 0.3% OF THE WORLD'S SURFACE, BUT ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR **5% OF THE WORLD'S ANTHROPOGENIC CO2 EMISSIONS.**

Source: Greifswald Mire Centre

 THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MORE THAN **10%** OF THE EU'S GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS.
THAT'S MORE THAN THE GREENHOUSE GASES EMITTED FROM ALL THE TRUCKS AND BUSES IN THE EU.

Source: GHG inventory report 2018, European Environment Agency

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CASE STUDIES

EMISSIONS EFFICIENCY IN IRELAND

With 30% of its GHG emissions coming from agriculture, Ireland is the only country, which chose 'Resource efficiency and climate' as the main priority of its Rural Development Programme. The measures included support for cover crops, creation of hedgerows, optimisation of fertiliser use, animal management and even a breeding programme. At the same time Ireland's national strategy for the agricultural sector aims to increase production and exports. Therefore, emissions from agriculture are actually projected to increase. In other words, any relative gains in emissions efficiency are cancelled out by an overall increase in production and in turn an absolute increase in emissions.



SOIL CARBON CONSERVATION

Agricultural soils can store carbon and are a potential GHG 'sink'. Yet currently net-emissions from agricultural soils are positive. Measures to conserve or even increase soil carbon content include leaving crop residues on the field during fallow periods and low- and no-tillage systems. Particularly in northern Europe (Germany, Poland, Baltic states), many agricultural soils have been claimed from wetlands in the past. These carbon-rich peatland soils are a major source of emissions. Raising the water levels (rewetting) and switching to alternative farming methods and crops such as reed or Sphagnum (paludiculture), do not just stop the loss of soil carbon they make these farming systems more resilient to extreme weather events. They can also be used as nutrient buffers when planted around water bodies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Real money for nature, the environment and climate**

The 50% of overall CAP budget that is ring-fenced for environment and climate measures needs to be applied in both pillars. All schemes must be based on actual reductions in emissions, rather than efficiency savings which are widely shown to increase resource use. To reduce emissions of pollutants such as methane or ammonia and to minimise antibiotic use, CAP funds must also be dedicated to encouraging farmers to transition towards lower numbers of livestock raised in ecologically-managed systems with high animal welfare standards.

- **End subsidies that freeze structural change of the livestock sector**

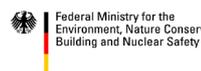
CAP money should not support factory farms with large numbers of animals in cramped conditions. The CAP must avoid any spending aimed at encouraging the production and consumption of animal products and accelerate a transition towards sustainable livestock production and healthy and sustainable diets that are higher in plant-based foods and include considerably less and better produced meat, dairy and eggs.

- **Track climate expenditure in a more targeted manner**, where farm subsidies lead to effective reductions in GHG emissions or carbon sequestration.

Given the huge amount of the EU budget that is spent on the Common Agricultural Policy every year, the policy should support farmers to transition to sustainable farming and reduce emissions through farming methods that work in harmony with the environment and not against it.



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