

<http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-debate>

**Wildlife and Countryside Link response to the European Commission's public debate on the future of the CAP after 2013**

Wildlife and Countryside Link (Link) brings together over 30 voluntary organisations concerned with the conservation and protection of wildlife and the countryside. Our members practise and advocate environmentally sensitive land management, and encourage respect for and enjoyment of natural landscapes and features, the historic and marine environment and biodiversity. Taken together our members have the support of over 8 million people in the UK and manage over 690,000 hectares of land.

This response is supported by the following 14 organisations;

- Amphibian and Reptile Conservation
- Association of Rivers Trusts
- Bat Conservation Trust
- Buglife – the Invertebrate Conservation Trust
- Butterfly Conservation
- Council for British Archaeology
- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- The Grasslands Trust
- Plantlife International
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust
- The Wildlife Trusts
- Woodland Trust

**Question 1: Why do we need a European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)?**

- ❖ Link believes there is a need for European level interventions in land management policy due to the market failure to secure the public goods needed and wanted by society, particularly; the protection of biodiversity, the sustainable use of our water and soil resources, the character of Europe's landscapes, mitigating and adapting to climate change challenges and ensuring the secure and sustainable production of animal welfare friendly food and other commodities.
- ❖ Many of Europe's resources are 'common' in nature and demand integrated policy approaches. Uncoordinated interventions at a national level may prevent a coherent approach to delivering environmental public goods. To accelerate the transition of European agriculture toward sustainable use of natural resources and reward farmers for the delivery of public goods at an EU level, CAP is required. By protecting and enhancing Europe's natural resource base the CAP will secure the raw materials required for food production and Europe's long-term food security.

### Question 2: What do citizens expect from agriculture?

EU citizens expect:

- ❖ Land to be managed to improve and sustain biodiversity;
- ❖ Food to be produced to the highest environmental and animal welfare standards; (Eurobarometer 336,2010);
- ❖ Our culturally and environmentally important landscapes and woodlands to be protected and enhanced;
- ❖ Public money to be used to support sustainable agricultural activities and nature conservation priorities in areas where farming has an important role in maintaining landscape character and nature e.g. Natura 2000 sites;
- ❖ Agriculture to play its part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enabling wildlife to better adapt to climate change through the protection of High Nature Value (HNV) systems and improving the permeability and wildlife-friendliness of the wider countryside; and,
- ❖ Money raised through taxation to be spent in an effective, efficient and transparent way, in particular to counteract the market failure to secure environmental public goods delivery through appropriate land management.

### Question 3: Why reform the CAP?

- ❖ Almost 50% of Europe's landmass is agricultural. Therefore the CAP can have a significant influence on the natural environment and is one of the few financing instruments that can deliver environmental protection and landscape scale conservation.
- ❖ The current CAP is not delivering efficiently on any clearly defined public policy objective: 57% of CAP spending is locked into Single Farm Payment entitlements that are very poorly linked to how individual farmers manage their land and what they deliver for society. The largest payments are paid to resource intensive enterprises, effectively under-rewarding more extensive nature friendly food production systems.
- ❖ Animal welfare payments are not mandatory under Pillar II. Only 16 of the 104 Member State Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) have included them.
- ❖ The policy aims of the CAP must be modernised and its measures properly aligned to deliver legitimate public policy objectives which respect the principles of *polluter pays* and *public money for public goods*.

### Question 4: What tools do we need for the CAP of tomorrow?

- ❖ Link supports the ideas for CAP reform contained within our publication, *Beyond the Pillars*:  
[http://www.wcl.org.uk/docs/Link\\_Beyond\\_the\\_Pillars\\_11Mar08.pdf](http://www.wcl.org.uk/docs/Link_Beyond_the_Pillars_11Mar08.pdf)
- ❖ We also support the concrete and detailed proposal for a new CAP developed by a coalition of environmental and farming organisations:  
[http://www.birdlife.org/eu/pdfs/Proposal\\_for\\_a\\_new\\_common\\_agricultural\\_policy\\_FINAL\\_100302.pdf](http://www.birdlife.org/eu/pdfs/Proposal_for_a_new_common_agricultural_policy_FINAL_100302.pdf)
- ❖ We need a new contract between farmers and society based on a system of payments that incentivise sustainable farming practices which go significantly beyond legal requirements. We need to invest in more sustainable agriculture via agri-environment payments that support Natura 2000, the Water Framework Directive, and landscape and historic environmental objectives.

- ❖ All this must be done in a strategic, coherent and programmed way, with robust accountability standards. Transparency, monitoring, evaluation, consultation, cost-effectiveness, and avoiding negative externalities on non-EU countries must be operational priorities.

**Wildlife and Countryside Link  
June 2010**

