



**BirdLife**  
INTERNATIONAL

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

TOWARDS A NEW EUROPEAN FOOD AND LAND-USE POLICY

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## DEMANDS FOR THE NEW CAP



Agriculture has been identified as the main driver of biodiversity decline in Europe. The EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has not adequately either halted this decline or reversed these worrying trends. At the same time, and in far too many cases, it also undermines the protection of essential environmental resources such as water, soil, air and the global climate. Furthermore, the CAP fails farmers both at the social and economic level, so that many smaller farms disappear and generational renewal is at risk. Neither has the CAP done enough to address malnutrition, rural depopulation and poverty, both inside the EU and in developing countries. Last but not least, it puts tax payers' acceptance of support to farmers at risk. Modern society in Europe wants to see the production of high quality food in accordance with sound environmental and animal welfare standards. In short, the **CAP has created a food and farming system that is failing on all fronts**. Therefore, BirdLife Europe & Central Asia and its EU partners call upon decision makers to transform the current CAP into a new **European Food and Land-Use Policy** that would be designed to meet today's challenges as well as the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our vision is of a policy that is fair, environmentally sustainable, healthy and globally responsible.

The only way to ensure generational renewal in rural areas, sustainable management of resources, restoration of biodiversity and improved market resilience with fair prices in the farming sector is a swift transition. We ask for the implementation of a **set of principles that deliver such a transition not only in environmental, but also social and economic terms**:

1. Open up the decision making process to all societal interests affected by this policy. In particular, decisions on environmental components of the policy must be taken by the relevant environmental authorities – from EU to local level.
2. Ensure that the future policy helps the EU meet its global commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular related to the establishment of sustainable agriculture by 2030, as well as halting biodiversity decline by 2020.

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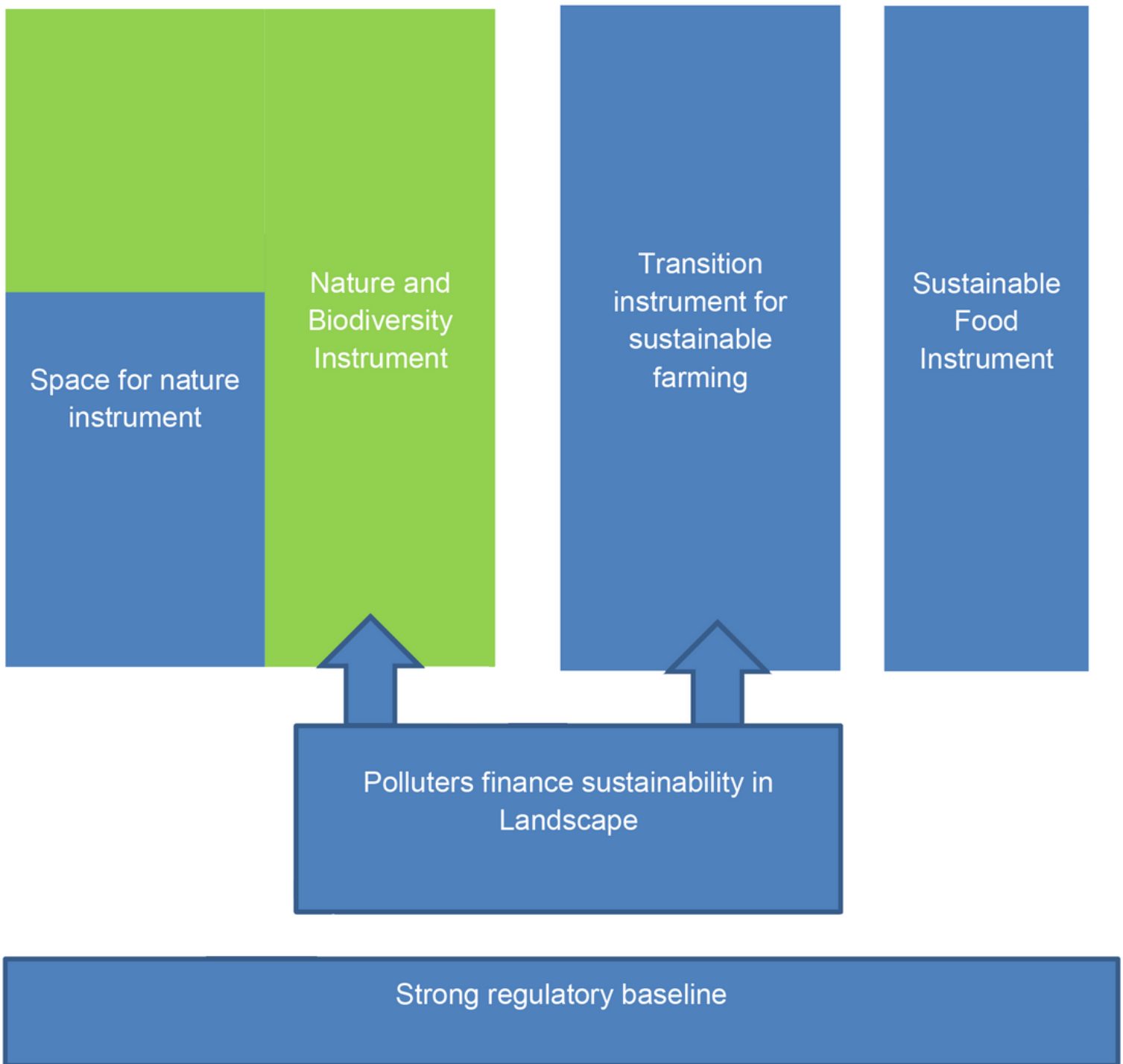
3. Ensure full coherence of the policy with established principles, strategies and legislation of the EU, such as the "the polluter pays" principle, the precautionary principle, the strict and effective enforcement of ambitious environmental and animal welfare regulation and the end of environmentally harmful subsidies.
4. Make agriculture payments effective and efficient by replacing the current "two-pillar system" with targeted support based upon the principle of "public money (only) for public goods". Any new payment system should be based on a programmatic approach as well as co-financing of Member States.
5. Invest in the transition to sustainable agricultural production, short supply chains, fair prices and consumers' demand for high quality and healthy food. Also invest in minimising food waste.
6. Establish a new "contract on nature conservation" between society and land users. Farmers must receive reliable and attractive income for specific nature conservation services through a dedicated EU funding instrument under the lead of environmental authorities.
7. Manage risks with tools that support farm diversification and knowledge transfer, rather than publicly financed "risk management" instruments for price volatility.

BirdLife Europe & Central Asia and its EU partners propose four main instruments for a new European Food and Land-Use Policy:

- **Transition instrument for sustainable farming** – a temporary investment fund (limited to two financial periods of the EU) that should help farms switch to a high-quality, nature-and-animal-friendly and profitable economic model and invest in healthy, economically diverse rural areas. It should support the long term goal to make farming sustainable and independent from public subsidies.
- **Sustainable Food instrument** – a set of investments to build up sustainable value chains, reduce food waste and increase the demand for healthy and environmentally sound food at fair prices.
- **Nature and Biodiversity instrument** – the central EU fund for financing about 75% of the costs of implementation of the EU nature legislation (e.g. Natura 2000) and other key biodiversity action in Member States. In particular, the fund should reward specific biodiversity action undertaken by farmers, foresters and other land users with an earmarked minimum budget of 15 billion EUR per annum. The fund should be programmed under the lead of environmental authorities.
- **"Space for Nature" instrument** – area-based entry level payment scheme, accessible for the vast majority of farmers, which dedicates a varying percentage of each farm to (strictly non-productive) natural elements, thereby fostering biodiversity and ecosystem services across the agricultural landscape. The scheme must be free of any exemptions, equivalences or weighting factors.
- These instruments should be complemented by **a system to raise revenue from the polluters**.

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## ANNEX 1



## BIRDLIFE'S EU PARTNERS



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