Final 7 German Rural Development Programmes approved by the European Commission

A further 7 German Rural Development programmes for 2014-2020 have been approved by the European Commission today (May 26, 2015). This means that all 15 German RDPs are now fully up and running.

Welcoming today’s approval, EU Agriculture and Rural Development Commissioner Phil Hogan stated: "I am pleased to see the seven remaining German programmes approved today – meaning that all the 13 regional and 2 national German RDPs are now in place. One of the great strengths of our Rural Development concept is that we have core priorities set at EU level, while Member State and regions have flexibility to design their programmes to suit their situation. And we see good examples of this today where the different Länder are all looking to address environmental concerns, to encourage investment and farm modernisation, and to improve rural services and structures, but each have a different emphasis on how to pursue these goals e.g. with particular emphasis on flood prevention in coastal Länder or on biodiversity conservation in mountainous ones."

Baden-Württemberg Rural Development Programme for 2014-2020 approved by European Commission

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Baden-Württemberg was formally adopted by the European Commission on 26 May 2015, outlining Baden-Württemberg’s priorities for using more than € 1.8 billion of public money that is available for the 7-year period 2014-2020 (€ 709 million from the EU budget, including € 91 million transferred from the German envelope for CAP direct payments, and € 635 million of national co-funding, plus € 479 million of additional national funding top-ups).

The RDP for Baden-Württemberg focuses mainly on two priority areas. Under the first – restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry – nearly 9% of agricultural land and 0.6% of forest area will be placed under funded contracts to improve biodiversity. Additionally, almost 7% of farmland is targeted to be under contract to improve soil management and 4% to improve water management. Under the second main priority – competitiveness of the agri-sector and sustainable forestry – nearly 4% of farm holdings will receive support for investments in modernisation or restructuring of farms. Furthermore, the LEADER approach to local development will be strengthened and extended compared to the former programming period.

Berlin & Brandenburg Rural Development Programme for 2014-2020 approved by European Commission

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Berlin and Brandenburg (BE+BB) was formally adopted by the European Commission on 26 May 2015, outlining the priorities of Berlin and Brandenburg for using the € 1.34 billion of public money that is available for the 7-year period 2014-2020 (€ 1.05 billion from the EU budget, including € 85 million transferred from the German envelope for CAP direct payments, and € 295 million national co-funding).
The RDP for Berlin and Brandenburg focuses mainly on two priorities. Under the first - restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry – nearly 18% of farmland and 1.3% of forest land will be placed under funded contracts to improve biodiversity, almost 9% of farmland under contracts to improve water management and more than 8% of farmland under contracts to improve soil management. Under the second main priority – social inclusion and local development in rural areas – planned funding will allow more than 54% of the rural population to be covered by local development strategies. In addition, 16% of farms will receive investment support to modernise and restructure.

Lower Saxony & Bremen Rural Development Programme for 2014-2020 approved by European Commission

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Lower Saxony and Bremen was formally adopted by the European Commission on 26 May 2015, outlining Lower Saxony's and Bremen's priorities for using the € 2.3 billion of public money that is available for the 7-year period 2014-2020 (€ 1.12 billion from the EU budget, including € 181 million transferred from the German envelope for CAP direct payments, and € 506 million of national co-funding, plus € 673 million of additional national funding top-ups).

The RDP for Lower Saxony and Bremen focuses mainly on 3 priority areas. Under the first of these – restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry - 6.4% of farmland will be under biodiversity contacts and 2% of farmland will be under funded contracts to improve water management. Secondly, for enhancing food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture, 130 public bodies will receive support for coastal and flood protection. Thirdly, to address social inclusion and local development in rural areas, 42% of the rural population will be covered by local development strategies and 18% is targeted to benefit from improved services or infrastructure.

Rhineland-Palatinate Rural Development Programme for 2014-2020 approved by European Commission

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Rhineland-Palatinate (RP) was formally adopted by the European Commission on 26 May 2015, outlining Rhineland-Palatinate's priorities for using about € 661 million of public money that is available for the 7-year period 2014-2020 (€ 300 million from the EU budget, including € 53 million transferred from the German envelope for CAP direct payments, and € 221 million of national co-funding, plus € 140 million of additional national funding top-ups).

The RDP for Rhineland-Palatinate focuses mainly on 3 priority areas. Under the first of these – restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry – nearly 33% of farmland will be placed under funded contracts to improve biodiversity, more than 40% to improve water management and 22% to improve soil management and prevent soil erosion. Under the second – competitiveness of the agri-sector and sustainable forestry - 5.8% of agricultural holdings will receive support for investments in restructuring or modernisation, and 7.8% of agricultural areas will be restructured through land consolidation to increase efficiency. The third priority emphasised is that of social inclusion and local development in rural areas. This will be addressed mainly through the LEADER approach to local development, which will cover around 55% of the rural population.
Saarland Rural Development Programme for 2014-2020 approved by European Commission

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Saarland was formally adopted by the European Commission on 26 May 2015, outlining Saarland’s priorities for using the € 58 million of public funding that is available for the 7-year period 2014-2020 (€ 34 million from the EU budget, including € 5 million transferred from the envelope for CAP direct payments, and € 24 million of national co-funding).

The RDP for Saarland focuses mainly on three priority areas. To enhance the competitiveness of the agri-sector, and sustainable forestry, 9.9% of agricultural holdings are intended to receive support for investments in restructuring or modernisation. Secondly, to restore, preserve and enhance ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry, 27% of agricultural land will be placed under management contracts for supporting biodiversity, improving water management and preventing soil erosion. Thirdly, to promote social inclusion and local development in rural areas, 96% of the rural population is intended to be covered by local development strategies and 85% should benefit from improved services/infrastructure.

Schleswig-Holstein Rural Development Programme for 2014-2020 approved by European Commission

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Schleswig-Holstein was formally adopted by the European Commission on 26 May 2015, outlining Schleswig-Holstein’s priorities for using the € 869 million of public money that is available for the 7-year period 2014-2020 (€ 419 million from the EU budget, including € 71 million transferred from the German envelope for CAP direct payments, and € 203 million of national co-funding, plus € 247 million of additional national funding top-ups).

The RDP for Schleswig-Holstein focuses mainly on 3 priority areas. Under the first of these – restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry - 8% of farmland will be under biodiversity contracts, 5% under contracts to improve water management and 4% under contracts to improve soil management and reduce erosion. Secondly, to address social inclusion and local development in rural areas, 81% of the population will be covered by LEADER local development strategies. Thirdly, to improve structures, 25 sectors of the coast protection plan will receive support for flood protection. In addition 75 projects for processing and marketing will receive support.

Thuringia Rural Development Programme for 2014-2020 approved by European Commission

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Thuringia was formally adopted by the European Commission on 26 May 2015, outlining Thuringia’s priorities for using the almost € 898 million of public money that is available for the 7-year period 2014-2020 (€ 680 million from the EU budget, including € 54 million transferred from the German envelope for CAP direct payments, and € 197 million of national co-funding, plus € 21 million of additional national funding top-ups).

The RDP for Thuringia focuses mainly on 3 priority areas. Under the first of these – restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry - 18% of agricultural land and 5% of forest or other wooded area will be under biodiversity contracts. 14% of farmland and 8.5% of forestry land will be under contracts to improve water management. To improve soil management and reduce erosion, 17% of
agricultural land and 8.5% of forest land will be placed under funded contracts. Secondly, with regard to social inclusion and local development in rural areas, 63% of the rural population is targeted for improved services and infrastructure and 280 jobs will be created. Under the third priority area of competitiveness of the agri-food sector and sustainable forestry, 12% of agricultural holdings will receive RDP support for investments in modernisation or restructuring.

**Background**

Support for Rural Development is the 2nd Pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy, providing Member States with an envelope of EU funding to manage nationally or regionally under multiannual, co-funded programmes. In total, 118 programmes are foreseen in all 28 Member States. The new RD Regulation for the 2014-2020 period addresses six economic, environmental and social priorities, and programmes contain clear targets setting out what is to be achieved. It put also emphasis on networking activities at EU and national level. Moreover, in order to coordinate actions better and maximise synergies with the other European Structural & Investment Funds (ESIF), a Partnership Agreement has been agreed with each Member State highlighting its broad strategy for EU-funded structural investment.