

## AUSTRIA

### Österreichisches Programm für die Entwicklung des Ländlichen Raums 2007-2013 (*Austrian Rural Development Programme 2007-2013*)

*(The text of this summary sheet was  
finalised in December 2010 in  
accordance with the version of the RDP  
that was current at this time)*



Copyright: LFZ / Buchgraber

### Relevant Contact Details

#### Address:

Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft,  
Abteilung II/6, Stubenring 1, A-1010 Wien

**Telephone number:** (+43 1) 711 000

**Managing Authority Website:** <http://www.lebensministerium.at/>

#### Other useful links:

Rural Development Programme (RDP)

[http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rurdev/enrd/countryinformation/programming/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rurdev/enrd/countryinformation/programming/index_en.htm),

National Strategy Plan

<http://www.oerok.gv.at/fileadmin/Bilder/3.Reiter->

[Regionalpolitik/6\\_Laendlicher\\_Raum/LE\\_20Nationale\\_20Strategie\\_20\\_20SFC\\_20Version.pdf](http://www.oerok.gv.at/fileadmin/Bilder/3.Reiter-Regionalpolitik/6_Laendlicher_Raum/LE_20Nationale_20Strategie_20_20SFC_20Version.pdf)

National Rural Network

<http://www.netzwerk-land.at/>

## Climate Change and Renewable Energy issues in 2007-2013 RDP

Climate change (CC) is fundamental to the context for agriculture and policy making. EU agriculture must play an important role in mitigating this phenomenon by curbing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; at the same time it needs to adapt to the expected climatic adversities which will have serious consequences on production processes. Rural development offers a range of possibilities to support farming practices and investments that can contribute to climate change *mitigation* efforts (including the increase of the use of *Renewable Energy* (RE) resources) and additionally effect *adaptation* benefits. CC challenges have been well recognized in the analysis of the 2007-2013 EU Rural Development Programmes (RDP) and addressed in their strategy. Following the Health Check (HC) of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the 'new challenges' of the RD policy include 'climate change' and 'renewable energy' for which an additional budget of approximately 1 billion EUR<sup>(1)</sup> have been made available for Member States (MS) to spend on these issues<sup>(2)</sup>. As a consequence, the operations related to these newly introduced EC priorities have been further strengthened in the RDPs.

<sup>(1)</sup> 19.8% of the total additional funds released.

<sup>(2)</sup> The budget allocated to the 'new challenges' includes the funds released by the HC of the CAP (including voluntary modulation and transfers according to Art. 136 of regulation (EC) N. 73/2009) and the European Economic Recovery Package (EERP).

## Introduction – overview of Member State RDP

The issue of climate change is addressed within the Austrian RDP baseline analysis. However, the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in relation to climate change is limited and it does emerge as one of the main issues. A high potential for the generation of environmentally-friendly energy is however identified as one of the strengths.

Climate change is addressed as a strategic objective, particularly with regard to mitigation and renewable energies, although adaptation (including water management) is less prominent. The three main strategic objectives of the Austrian RDP, plus the related CC issues, are:

### 1 Improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry

The agricultural production of renewable raw materials (for energy generation) is identified in relation to this objective, but is claimed to play a limited role within the current RDP. Heat generation using wood from sustainable forestry is however expected to continue contributing a significant share of the national energy balance. The related measure is **M123** – *Adding value to agricultural and forestry products*.

### 2 Sustainable use of natural resources and preservation of the cultural landscape

Greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture are mentioned in relation to this objective and **measure 214** – *Agri-environment payments* – is the most relevant measure.

### 3 Preservation and development of attractive and vital rural areas

There are no explicit references relevant to climate change issues under this objective, however **measure 321** – *Basic services for the economy and rural population* – is important in terms of biomass production as a form of diversification into non-agricultural activities.

The explicit links made in the Austrian amended RDP between climate change and the measures and actions in the plan are limited to a few measures. For example, measures 214 and 123 are allocated to the EC priority of 'combating, adapting to and mitigating the consequences of climate change'. The main focus regarding *mitigation* is reduced fertiliser use and better manure management. *Adaptation* is focused on maintaining the genetic resource base and encouraging more environmentally friendly farm operations. Detailed in two measures, *renewable energies* receive the most direct attention in the Austrian RDP and are explicitly referred to in terms of i) support for biomass as a farm energy source and ii) investment in renewable energy services for the rural economy.

The 'new challenges' of climate change, biodiversity, renewable energies, water management and restructuring of the dairy sector had already been safeguarded in the approved Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. Broadband infrastructure is stated to be the only one of the challenges newly included in the amended RDP. There were no new measures included in the latter, but some alterations to existing measures have been made, notably: a) the operations matching the 'new challenges' receive additional funding (M121, 123, 214 and 321), and b) the area eligible to funding within the framework of M215 is extended from three Austrian regions to the whole of Austria.

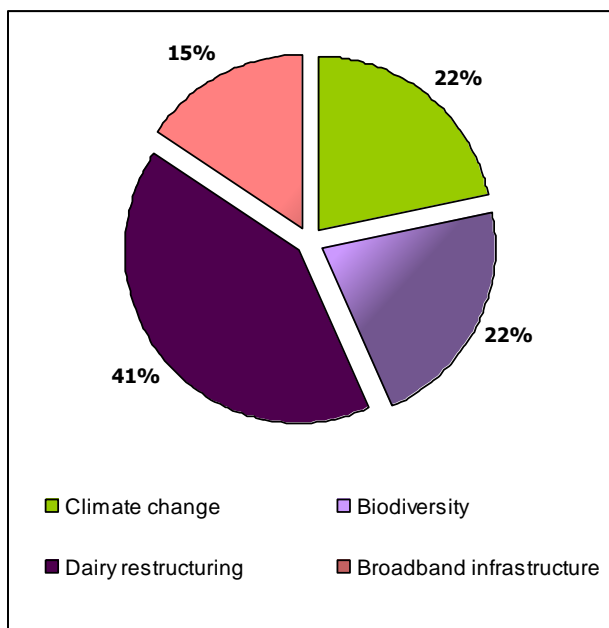
The expected results and impacts of the latest updated Austrian RDP (following the adoption of the Health Check and European Economic Recovery Package and additional funds from Modulation) now include methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) reduction and carbon sequestration with regard to mitigation, plus biotope/habitat creation and management with regard to adaptation (e.g. M214, target for total area under agri-environmental support: 235,000 ha).

The EAFRD resources reduced in axis 1 were shifted, amongst others, to axis 2 (€926,767) and axis 3 (€7,919,383).

In axis 2 there are more funds available in the amended RDP e.g. increased public expenditure for the CC-relevant **measure 214** (€25.6 million more).

Also in axis 3 there are more funds available following the RDP amendment, including increased public funding for the CC-relevant **measure 321**.

### Allocation of the additional resources per type of priority



The overall budget of the Austrian RDP in terms of total public expenditure amounts to €8,018,944,389.46 of which €4,025,575,992 is EAFRD contribution.

This includes an additional allocation of €97 million (EAFRD contribution) as a result of the 'new challenges' raised by the HC and the adoption of the European Economic Recovery Plan (EERP). Following these changes, additional financial support to the RDP objectives related to climate change (+€21 million, 22% of the new EAFRD funds allocated to the programme), biodiversity (also +€21 million, 22%), restructuring of the dairy sector (+€40 million, 41%) and broadband infrastructure (+€15 million, 15%) has been enhanced for the period 2010-2013.

These new financial supports should be considered in addition to the initial RDP which was already addressing CC and RE. All of the 'new challenges' except broadband infrastructure had been priorities of the Austrian National Strategy Plan before the Health Check, and had accordingly been included already in the approved programme.

Full details of the overall RDP budget allocation can be found in the RDP fiche for Austria that is available at:

[http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/rural-development-policy/country-information/rural-development-policy-fiches/en/rural-development-policy-fiches\\_home\\_en.cfm](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/rural-development-policy/country-information/rural-development-policy-fiches/en/rural-development-policy-fiches_home_en.cfm)

### Mitigation

#### *Activities aimed at reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions*

There have been no additional measures and operations introduced relating to climate change following the Health Check. Reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions is referred to in the amended RDP e.g. with regard to measure 214. There is a reasonable level of support for a range of activities within four measures in the Austrian plan which potentially contributing to the reduction of agricultural emissions (although this objective is not always explicitly referred to).

The main measure through which the RDP seeks to support efforts to reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions is **measure 214 – Agri-environment payments**. Five key operations are referenced under this measure which could help to reduce emissions, namely:

- subsidies for reduced fertiliser use;
- support for manure management (specifically slurry);
- encouragement for the use of organic practices to help landscape conservation;
- support for soil conservation;
- subsidies for the extensification of pasture management.

Further axis 2 support for activities potentially helping to mitigate climate change is provided under measure 221 – *First afforestation of agricultural land*.

Within axis 1, **measure 121 – Modernisation of agricultural holdings** – contributes to the reduction of GHG emissions through investment support e.g. related to setting up fertiliser storage facilities. Measure 123 – *Adding value to agricultural and forestry products* – is also to be mentioned with regard to the reduction of emissions. In relation to measure 111 – *Vocational training and information actions* – reference is made to education programmes which focus on nature conservation and the environment which implies benefits regarding CC issues.

## Adaptation

### *Prevention of, and coping with, potential impacts of climate change on agriculture*

There have been no additional measures and operations introduced relating to climate change following the Health Check. Preventative actions such as flood management or the restoration of agricultural potential after extreme weather events are not included in the Austrian plan. Regarding climate change issues, it can be stated that the focus is more on mitigation than adaptation.

With respect to the latter, the primary measure is **M214**. Under this measure support is detailed for encouraging agricultural operations that consider future environmental issues with an emphasis on careful management. Specific actions detailed include:

- pesticide management focussing on reduced use;
- more careful planting to protect the climate and environment;
- preservation of hedgerows and the conservation of genetic resources (plants and animals).

Another axis 2 measure to be mentioned is M221 which counts among its objectives a reduction of agricultural areas for the environment's benefit.

Under axis 1, **measure 121** provides subsidies for construction improvements, such as those related to improved manure storage facilities. 'Improvements' are referenced with regard to consideration of environmental and resource conditions. Measure 111 provides vocational training and information which addresses 'environmental thinking'.

## Main RDP measures which contribute to address CC mitigation/adaptation issues

Axis/Measure	Description	Type of operation	Potential effects <sup>3</sup>
<b>Axis 1</b>			
<b>Measure 121</b>	<b>Modernisation of agricultural holdings</b>	Investment support (e.g. construction of manure storage facilities)	Reduction of emissions
Measure 123	Adding value to agricultural and forestry products	Investment support for the introduction and application of new production procedures/techniques	Reduction of emissions
Measure 111	Vocational training and information actions	Qualifications regarding environmental awareness and management in farming and forestry	Increased participation in nature conservation and environmental measures
<b>Axis 2</b>			
<b>Measure 214</b>	<b>Agri-environment payments</b>	Improve efficiency of nitrogen fertiliser/manure use regarding better storage, more precise application, planning of use etc.  Soil management practices (e.g. tillage methods, catch crops, diversified crop rotations)	Reduction of methane (CH <sub>4</sub> ) and nitrous oxide (N <sub>2</sub> O) emissions Potential for carbon sequestration  Adaptation to the effects of climate change and more sustainable soil management
Measure 221	First afforestation of agricultural land	Afforestation and management of newly planted trees and shrubs	Potential for carbon sequestration

## Renewable energies

*Electricity, heating and transport fuels produced from biomass (such as biofuels, bio-gas) and other renewable sources (solar, wind, geothermal).*

There have been no additional measures and operations introduced relating to climate change following the Health Check. The Austrian RDP includes reference to renewable energies with regard to several axis 1 and 3 measures. The main aspects supported are the increased use and generation of renewable raw materials and energy on farms (axis 1), and the development of renewable energy services within the rural economy (axis 3). Little further detail is given with respect to types of renewable energy sources or the scope of biomass projects, and no reference is made to wider aspects such as energy crops. Under the RDP sections describing the individual measures, there is no explicit reference to climate change as such with regard to the renewable energy actions detailed.

<sup>3</sup> Cells marked grey indicate reduction of GHG emissions, while the others refer to more general environmental effects.

Within axis 1, there are two key measures, namely **M123** and **121**. In **measure 123** heat generation using wood from forestry and the agricultural production of renewable raw materials are the focus, while the emphasis of **measure 121** is on biomass heating facilities. Measure 111 is also relevant regarding training on the use of renewable raw materials and renewable energy.

The most relevant measure within axis 3, **M321** – *Basic services for the economy and rural population* – defines subsidies for investment in renewable energy generation and use. Measure 311 – *Diversification into non-agricultural activities* – provides support for operations (renewable energy generation, energy-related services) beyond those covered by M121 and 321.

### Main implemented RDP measures related to the development of renewable energy sources

Axis/Measure	Description	Type of operation	Potential effects
<b>Axis 1</b>			
<b>Measure 123</b>	<b>Adding value to agricultural and forestry products</b>	Investment support for increased value added of forestry products, especially the use of wood for energy generation  Agricultural production of renewable raw materials (for energy generation)	Heat generation using wood from sustainable forestry is expected to continue contributing a significant share of the national energy balance
<b>Measure 121</b>	<b>Modernisation of agricultural holdings</b>	Investment support for biomass heating facilities	Increased use of renewable resources and renewable energy
Measure 111	Vocational training and information actions	Qualification regarding the use of renewable raw materials and renewable energy	Increased use of renewable resources and renewable energy
<b>Axis 3</b>			
<b>Measure 321</b>	<b>Basic services for the economy and rural population</b>	Investment support for the generation and use of renewable energy	Increased use of renewable energy
Measure 311	Diversification into non-agricultural activities	Energy generation from renewable raw materials and energy-related services (other than the issues covered by M121 and 321)	Increased use of renewable energy