

Eco-schemes are payment schemes in agriculture aiming at the protection of environment and climate. They are a key element of the [Common agricultural policy \(CAP\)](#) (see Article 31 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council: [\[1\]](#)).

Eco-schemes provide support for farmers who observe agricultural practices beneficial for the environment and climate. It is a measure to reward and incentivise farmers for taking action towards a more sustainable farm and land management with the objective to maintain public goods. The participation for farmers is voluntary. Member States are however obliged to include one or more eco-schemes in their CAP Strategic Plans (CSPs). It offers more flexibility than the former greening payments of the CAP as Member States are free to set the scheme's content and budget. As a result, they can design the eco-schemes according to their environmental and climate needs on a national and regional level. Less administrative burden and annual payments instead of long-term commitments shall contribute to a simplification.

Further information

- Lampkin N., Stolze M., Meredith S., de Porras M., Haller L. and Mészáros D. (2020): [Using Eco-schemes in the new CAP: a guide for managing authorities](#). IFOAM EU, FIBL and IEEP, Brussels.

Related concepts

- [Common agricultural policy \(CAP\)](#)
- [Single payment scheme \(SPS\)](#)
- [Good agricultural and environmental conditions \(GAEC\)](#)
- [Agri-environmental indicator \(AEI\)](#)

Source

- [\[2\]](#) , Article 31: Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013.
- European Commission 2019 - [The post 2020 - Common agricultural policy: Environmental benefits and simplification](#).
- Meredith, S. and K. Hart (2019). [CAP 2021-27: Using the eco-scheme to maximise environmental and climate benefits](#) , report for IFOAM EU by IEEP, January 2019.