



**Pesticide
Action
Network**
Europe

Which Common Agricultural Policy after 2013? PAN Europe position paper

[Two page summary](#)

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Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe believes in the creation of a Common Agricultural Policy encouraging farmers to look for long term sustainable solutions. The way forward is a CAP encouraging pioneers and compensating farmers for delivering health and environmental benefits through introduction of sustainable agricultural practices and use of natural alternatives, where possible.

1. Why are citizens concerned about pesticides?

People who are most exposed to pesticides are farmers and farm workers as they are in direct contact with the chemicals, sometimes daily. However, we are all exposed indirectly to pesticides and other agrochemicals. The rural population experience direct exposure when pesticides are sprayed in open fields, people walking along public footpaths, children playing in gardens within spray drift range, waiting for the bus on rural roads, etc. Urban dwellers may experience direct exposure, e.g. when taking children to play in recently treated public areas. Pregnant and nursing mothers can be exposed directly through food, occupational use, gardening and household use, the house being exposed near sprayed fields, or indirectly through their partner's professional or amateur use. Pesticides matters to us all.

Studies in the UK and Germany have conservatively estimated annual external costs of pesticides use to be US\$257m and \$166m, respectively, paid by sufferers of pesticide-related poor health, the environment and citizens (Pretty & Waibel, 2005). It is therefore not only economic but also moral feasible that the CAP complement positive moves for IPM in the private sector with concrete policy support and effective new CAP measures to encourage the concept of sustainability.

2. A post 2013 CAP able to boost sustainable practices in the EU

A new CAP should build on the already existing environmental and public health directives, and especially kick off sustainable agriculture in the EU building on the fact that the EU Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides makes it mandatory for all EU farmers to apply Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as from 2014. Article 14 of this directive says *"professional users of pesticides switch to practices and products with the lowest risk to human health and the environment among those available for the same pest problem, and stresses that "Member states shall take all necessary measures to promote low pesticide-input pest management, giving wherever possible priority to non-chemical methods"*.

The future CAP must aim at a transition to sustainable agricultural practices, away from monoculture, standardisation and unsustainable intensive production **enabling farmers to shift to safer farming methods and alternatives treatments**, to reach the longer term objective where only sustainable agriculture receives public funding.

A shift to more sustainable systems has of course already started with the introduction of

organic farming. A concept which needs to be developed further. However, time has come also to develop the concept of sustainability in conventional farming.

In a post 2013 CAP, farmers wishing to receive public funding should be obliged to provide **individual project plans** identifying how they will **apply sustainable agricultural practices in an approach of 'prevention first'**, and how - for the farmers who wishes to - to move towards more natural agro-ecosystems. CAP support must be offered to the farmer/land manager as a package of measures to match development of a sustainable agricultural project.

It is also the time to change the spirit of the CAP, by **enabling pioneers**, away from an approach of business as usual and into an approach of rewarding and motivating those farmers who 'go the extra mile' and encourage the rest to take the first steps up the IP ladder to safer and more sustainable farming.

The traditional 'pillars' approach of the CAP should be redesigned into effective **building blocks**, where **support is granted not on historical output, but on current practices** and offered to farmers developing **sustainable practices in an approach of prevention first**.

Farmers should be compensated for employing agricultural practices avoiding monoculture, rotating crop systems, smaller plots, setting up buffer zones, buffer strips, hedges etc. in a spirit of **'the more you deliver sustainable practices, the more public funding you get'**. Achieving this objective will require a mixture of mandatory and voluntary approaches, and where possible also defining banned practices (or at least define unsustainable practices which in the longer run should not be entitled to receive public support).

Also, in accordance with the EU Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides, it should be **mandatory** for EU and Member States **to offer farmers**, at least temporary, **public funding for use of non chemical alternatives** Use of non chemical alternatives is of benefit for citizens (farmers, workers and bystanders), consumers and the European economy when, so it must be considered a public good worth investing in the future.

EU Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides makes it mandatory for Member States to provide necessary technical support in the form of: early warning systems for key pests and diseases; IP advisory systems and training for farmers and agronomists etc. The way forward is building on this to **establish a technical, financial and moral support framework** guiding farmers into delivering more sustainable practices.

Finally, to booth sustainable agriculture among conventional farmers in the EU it is time to **developing a specific new EU regulation for Integrated Production**.

For further information:

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Pesticide Action Network Europe (PAN Europe) was founded in 1987 and brings together consumer, public health, and environmental organisations, trades unions, women's groups and farmer associations from across 19 European countries. PAN Europe is part of the global network PAN working to minimise the negative effects and replace the use of harmful pesticides with ecologically sound alternatives.