



# EKLIPSE

Knowledge & Learning Mechanism  
on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services

Developing a mechanism  
for supporting better  
decisions on our  
environment  
based on the best  
available knowledge.

## **CALL FOR EXPERTS No.2/2017 EKLIPSE – May 2017**

**Understanding Farmer Uptake: What measures are most promising to deliver on supporting biodiversity and ecosystem services in the next round of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)?**

**Deadline for Call: 25th of June, 2017**

EKLIPSE is inviting experts to join an expert working group to develop recommendations for CAP measures to improve biodiversity and related ecosystem services, with a focus on Ecological Focus Areas – this is a direct policy request from IUCN and the Swedish Board of Agriculture

- Are you an expert in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), rural development, greening measures, biodiversity, impact or programme evaluation?
- Would you like to contribute directly to a policy-relevant process in your field of expertise?
- Would you like to expand your network and learn about methods of knowledge synthesis?
- Are you interested in collaborating in a trans-disciplinary and multi-cultural setting?

Then please apply at [www.eclipse-mechanism.eu](http://www.eclipse-mechanism.eu)

### **Important dates and information:**

- Interested experts should apply before midnight on the **25th June, 2017** by following the rules and procedures detailed below.
- The Experts of the working group will be selected by **7th July, 2017** and should start its work immediately thereafter.
- We will aim to have a first expert group meeting on week starting on **24th July, 2017** and a second one early 2018.
- The deadline for reporting is **30th April, 2018**.
- Participation in this expert working group will require approximately 10% of your time – please find more information on expectations of and support to EKLIPSE Expert Working Groups [here](#).



**Horizon 2020**  
**European Union Funding**  
**For Research & Innovation**  
*Grant agreement 690474*

***EKLIPSE is developing a European Mechanism to answer requests from policy makers and other societal actors on issues related to biodiversity and ecosystem services.***

***EKLIPSE organizes and facilitates knowledge synthesis processes, horizon scanning and societal dialogue on topics that relate to or impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services by making the best knowledge available. It invites experts to contribute their knowledge.***

More information on the processes and the EKLIPSE project funded by the EU in H2020 is available at

[www.eklipse-mechanism.eu](http://www.eklipse-mechanism.eu)

## 1 Invitation to join an expert working group

EKLIPSE is inviting **experts to join an expert working group** to develop recommendations for **CAP measures to improve biodiversity and related ecosystem services (ESS), with a focus on Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs)**. Suggestions for improvements should take into account administrative feasibility (measures should be simpler), social implications and farm economics.

The expert working group will cover diverse and complementary skills (including multidisciplinary skills and a broad geographical coverage) and will interact with relevant stakeholders to ensure appropriate methodological choices and uptake of outputs.

## 2 Request to be addressed by this call

Background to this request:

This request was initially put to EKLIPSE by IUCN and the Swedish Board of Agriculture. The scoping of the request was further discussed during a workshop in April 2017 in Brussels with other stakeholders involved in European policies and biodiversity issues (other NGOs, European institutions, etc.) to ensure the policy relevance of the request detailed below. Furthermore, a first scoping activity has been carried out (« Call for Knowledge »). The results of this call can be found in the EKLIPSE KNOCK forum [http://www.eklipse-mechanism.eu/forum\\_discussion](http://www.eklipse-mechanism.eu/forum_discussion).

### *The greening measures of the CAP and rural development schemes*

The current Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) 2014-2020 prioritizes the “sustainable management of natural resources” and this was translated into the introduction of a new green direct payment scheme (‘greening’). Since 2014, 30% of the direct payments are linked to respecting three sustainable agricultural practices which are beneficial to environmental and climate change concerns, notably soil quality, biodiversity and carbon sequestration. These agricultural practices include: diversifying crops, maintaining permanent grassland and dedicating 5% of arable land to 'ecologically beneficial elements' ('ecological focus areas - EFAs'). The current CAP also includes, through Rural Development Regulation,



other policy measures that can contribute to biodiversity (Natura 2000 measures, agri-environmental and climate (AEC) measures, etc.). Rural Development Programmes are implemented by the Member States (MS) or regions, which have flexibility to select some measures (based on their strategies) which will be then contracted with farmers or other rural managers.

### *Limited effect of greening on biodiversity and related ES*

Recent articles point out that the greening measures may not deliver as many environmental benefits as expected. It appears that the flexibility available to national authorities for implementing such greening measures, although in principle creates opportunities to tailor these measures, might also have created challenges. An IEEP study<sup>1</sup> (2015) concluded that “the general pattern in most of the Member States reviewed has been to offer farmers maximum flexibility in terms of implementation”, which might not always guarantee sustainability.

### *Current policy context*

As part of the CAP process, the European Commission published two reports on greening measures: the 2016 review of greening after one year<sup>2</sup> and the 2017 report on the implementation of the EFAs<sup>5</sup>. These reports will feed into a wider evaluation of greening, which will be delivered end of 2017 or beginning of 2018. These evaluations will then contribute to the report on the CAP monitoring and evaluation due in 2018, and more largely to the discussions about **the future of the CAP (2021-2027)** that have already started, focusing on **modernising and simplifying the CAP**. By the end of 2017, a communication from the European Commission (EC) including first policy options for the future CAP, is planned. Other studies have been commissioned by NGOs, etc.<sup>3</sup>, which will also try to feed into the debate on the CAP.

Within this policy context and some early feedbacks on the greening measures currently not contributing significantly to halt biodiversity loss, there is a knowledge need to better understand the effects of the CAP greening on biodiversity and related ES, identifying which measures work and which aspects do not work as intended, and to establish options on how measures could be improved to increase their effectiveness for supporting biodiversity and related ES.

The knowledge synthesis carried out as part of EKLIPSE should aim at supporting the decision-making in the future CAP debate. It could also influence the content of Rural Development Programmes, that can be regularly updated by Member States/regions. It should try to avoid duplicating other initiatives and focus on the existing gaps.

### *Focus on the EFAs*

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<sup>1</sup> Hart K (2015), Green direct payments: implementation choices of nine Member States and their environmental implications, IEEP London

<sup>2</sup> SWD(2016) 218 final

<sup>3</sup> See for an overview: [www http://www.eklipse-mechanism.eu/forum\\_discussion](http://www.eklipse-mechanism.eu/forum_discussion)



Among the greening requirements, the EFAs are areas established, in particular, in order to safeguard and improve biodiversity on farms. EKLIPSE will provide a final list of EFA options to be considered in the knowledge synthesis, as well as a summary of evidence that they support biodiversity and related ES. As an *initial* list of EFA options (with current evidence in footnote), we suggest the following options:

- Fallow land <sup>4,5,6</sup>
- Buffer strips<sup>6</sup>
- Hedges or wooded strips <sup>4,5,6</sup>
- Field margins <sup>4,5,6</sup>
- Traditional stone walls <sup>4,5</sup>

Other options that could also be considered, provided that the summary of evidence confirms their potential for supporting biodiversity: forest hedges without production, and among landscape features: ponds and ditches.<sup>7</sup>

#### *Uptake of the measures and identification of barriers*

According to the EC report on the implementation of EFAs, landscape features, which provide best results in terms of potential positive impact on ecosystem services, have a low uptake: it is either linked to the choices of MS/regions to include or not certain EFAs in the list proposed to farmers, or to the farmers' choices to implement these types of EFAs. It illustrates how important it is that the drivers for the choices of MS and farmers should be analysed.

Considering fallow land, which has a higher uptake in the EU, it has already been pointed out that positive impacts on biodiversity will depend on the management practices. More generally, the quality (versus the quantity) of the EFA types' (conditions and management requirements) is also important for environmental benefits and it should be taken into account when proposing improvements of the measure.

Another question is that collective approaches at landscape level are seldom considered by MS. Whether it delivers positive outcomes for biodiversity and if this way of delivering EFAs could be encouraged should be looked into.

#### *Recommendations for the future CAP post 2020*

As there is no certainty of the design of the future CAP, suggestions of improvements of measures should not be limited to the current CAP framework and its delivery mechanisms.

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<sup>4</sup> Sutherland, W.J., D. L.V., N. Ockendon, and Smith R.K. 2017. What Works in Conservation. Open Books Publishers. [Synopsis & summary PLUS multiple expert consultation with Delphi]

<sup>5</sup> European Commission. 2017. Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the Ecological Focus Area obligation under the green direct payment scheme. Brussels, 29.3.2017 COM(2017) 152 final. [Rapid Evidence Assessment]

<sup>6</sup> Pe'er, G., Y. Zinngrebe, J. Hauck, S. Schindler, A. Dittrich, S. Zingg, T. Tschardtke, R. Oppermann, L.M.E. Sutcliffe, C. Sirami, J. Schmidt, C. Hoyer, C. Schleyer, and S. Lakner. (2016). Adding Some Green to the Greening: Improving the EU's Ecological Focus Areas for Biodiversity and Farmers. *Conservation Letters* DOI 10.1111/conl.12333. [Expert consultation]

<sup>7</sup> See Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 and Regulation (EU) No 639/2014 for the definition and/or criteria for each type of EFA



There might be good experiences with rural development measures that deliver good results for biodiversity and ESS and can be implemented in a simple way. But the implementation of AEC measures or Natura 2000 measures has also its disadvantages (deadweight, administrative burden, limited scale, etc.) which should be taken into account.

### 3 Objectives of the call and suggested programme of work

EKLIPSE is looking for an expert working group to propose improved or new CAP measures that would better contribute to biodiversity and related ESS, through the following tasks:

A) Based on a list of EFA options and a summary of evidence that these EFA options contribute to biodiversity and related ES provided by EKLIPSE (cf. above),

- review the summary of evidence that these specific measures work,
- understand which are most effective in terms of biodiversity and ecosystem services

B) Assess the potential measures to be effective across Europe, i.e. identify the barriers to their uptake:

- 1. at Member State (MS) level

*(Suggested methods: non-systematic review synthesis of literature, Eurostat indicators and farmers statistics; ideally covering all MS)*

- 2. at farm level

*(Suggested methods: causal-chain analysis, focus groups with extension agents or farmer group representatives, to be conducted by each expert in his/her country of residence, covering up to 10 MS.)*

Administrative and socio-economic factors should be analysed.

C) Provide recommendations to improve the delivery and uptake of the measures, and thus the benefits for biodiversity and related ESS

The recommendations should address at least European and MS level.

*(Suggested methods: Causal Criteria Analysis and Delphi process or focus group with experts (involving the responsible policy makers/stakeholders at MS level for selecting measures))*

*(Potential additional methods: Multi Criteria Analysis or Synthesis Evaluation Matrix assessing each EFA option against the outcomes of A and B at Member State and farmers decision level Study cases for successful/problematic greening implementation might be useful to illustrate the results, Bayesian belief networks, or formal consent among expert working group)*

The expert working group is expected to:

- Develop a methodological protocol based on the above suggestions;



- Write a comprehensive report answering the above questions under the quality standards of the methodologies proposed;
- Respond to and integrate the results of extended peer review on the methodological protocol and the final report;
- Integrate the outcomes of the three tasks in a manner understandable and useful to policy makers;
- Present the results at a dissemination event organized by EKLIPSE and/or the requesters.

This process of knowledge synthesis could lead to the establishment of a protocol/framework that could be used periodically to assess the effectiveness of each EFA options.

## 4 Implementation steps and timeline

The work is expected to follow the EKLIPSE [knowledge synthesis process](#), i.e. it will include the following steps:

- **Kick-off dialogue meeting with EKLIPSE** Knowledge Coordination Body (KCB) to ensure common understanding of the request among experts (within 3 weeks of nomination of expert group).
- **Preparation of the work** (to be concluded within 12 weeks of nomination)
  - Scanning of literature and other sources
  - Development of methodological protocol (with support of the EKLIPSE expert group for knowledge synthesis methods)
  - Agreement of methodological protocol with KCB and requesters
  - Review of protocol through open consultation (organized by EKLIPSE)
- **Programme of work**
  - Analysis of determinants of uptake
  - Recommendations for measures with potential to be effective across Europe
  - Early draft (to be discussed with KCB and possibly requesters)
  - Full draft completed for review.
- **Finalisation including review\***
  - Extended peer review (via open consultation, organised by EKLIPSE)
  - Presentation of process and results to requesters and stakeholders: March 2018
  - Revision
  - Final product for requester by 30th April 2018.

\*Exact order e.g. first revision then presentation or vice versa tbd

## 5 Support provided by EKLIPSE

**EKLIPSE team:** The expert working group will be supported in all steps by the EKLIPSE Secretariat in communication, documentation (via the EKLIPSE website), and dissemination of products as required for this request. The working group will be supported thematically and strategically by the KCB.



**Financial support:** EKLIPSE activities rely on in-kind contributions as in similar science-policy processes. The benefits for experts and institutions arise from the networking in the group and the visibility of expertise to policy and society via the products. EKLIPSE will actively support this visibility of experts and their institution's contributions. In addition:

- kick-off meeting, focus group meeting and final meeting will be hosted by and travel costs covered via EKLIPSE funds as needed
- upon specific request, individual experts from Eastern and Southern European countries might be supported via a honorary contract by an EKLIPSE partner institution.
- a maximum budget of € 8.000 can be granted for tasks such as the literature review and synthesis (for this a separate contract is required see section 6).

**Technical support:** Access to literature databases will be facilitated if needed. EKLIPSE will cover the layout, printing, and dissemination of interim and final products, i.e. using the OPPLA Platform<sup>8</sup>.

## 6 Eligibility and applicant information

### 6.1 Selection criteria for the composition of the Expert Group

Selection of the expert working group will be done by the KCB according to selection process and criteria outlined below (6.2) and on the EKLIPSE website.

The expert working group should cover all relevant disciplines including natural, social, economic and planning sciences.

Gender balance and geographical diversity of EU countries will be considered in the selection. If teams are applying, this will also apply, and the KCB may decide to complement a team selected with additional individual experts.

The working group is expected to have up to 10 experts.

### 6.2 Selection criteria for individual experts

- Demonstrated expertise in relation to the call covering one or more of the following: Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), greening measures, biodiversity, farming, rural development, farm economics, impact or programme evaluation, methods for knowledge synthesis.
- Experience with biodiversity and ecosystem services and/or sustainable development as well as with European policy processes.
- Experiences in inter- and transdisciplinary work on topics related to (Common) Agricultural Policy and in science-policy interface processes
- Experts will have to comply with the principles and rules of EKLIPSE (e.g. conflicts of interest policy (see [http://www.eklipse-mechanism.eu/our\\_ethical\\_framework](http://www.eklipse-mechanism.eu/our_ethical_framework) for more detail).
- Project partners of EKLIPSE and KCB members are excluded.

See [Guidance note on Preparing and managing calls for experts](#) for more information.

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<sup>8</sup> See [www.oppla.eu](http://www.oppla.eu)



### 6.3 Process and eligibility criteria for supporting contracts

Based on the needs identified by the expert working group in its kick-off meeting, EKLIPSE can support the work of the group by sub-contracting some tasks to individual experts (or institutions, from and beyond the Expert working Group) via working contracts up to a total amount of 25,000€.

The aim of these would be to carry out dedicated work supporting the Group, e.g., a literature search and/or review based on the protocols decided by the Group. An EKLIPSE partner would prepare and issue a (restricted) call for tender for this purpose.

Honorary contracts will be given upon request to experts chosen for the expert groups on an individual basis, if they could not contribute otherwise. We expect this to apply to experts especially from eastern, central and southern European countries that might not be able to join the activities otherwise. In case you require such support please contact the EKLIPSE secretariat ([secretariat@eklipse-mechanism.eu](mailto:secretariat@eklipse-mechanism.eu)).

### 6.4 Data and information policy

All results will be made publicly available through the EKLIPSE website and transparent procedures will apply, following [Creative Commons Agreement 4.0<sup>9</sup>](#), which includes the reference of authorship and involvement<sup>9</sup>.

### 6.5 Information to provide

The EKLIPSE form should be completed, including a list of relevant publications and outlining relevant experience on the topic and details of experience in previous assessments or knowledge synthesis processes.

## 7 Application and notification of results

### 7.1 How to apply

The EKLIPSE expert form can be found on the EKLIPSE website under '[Open calls](#)'. The completed form should be handed in **by midnight on June 25th, 2017**.

Should you require any further information do not hesitate to contact us: [secretariat@eklipsemechanism.eu](mailto:secretariat@eklipsemechanism.eu).

### 7.2 Announcement of the results

Successful applicants will be notified directly by EKLIPSE KCB by **July 7th 2017**. As soon as they accept the nomination, names of selected experts will be made public on the EKLIPSE website.

*EKLIPSE has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 program under grant*

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