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Climate

Delivering the EU Green Deal and a Green Recovery in the new CAP

A CAP for a climate neutral Europe



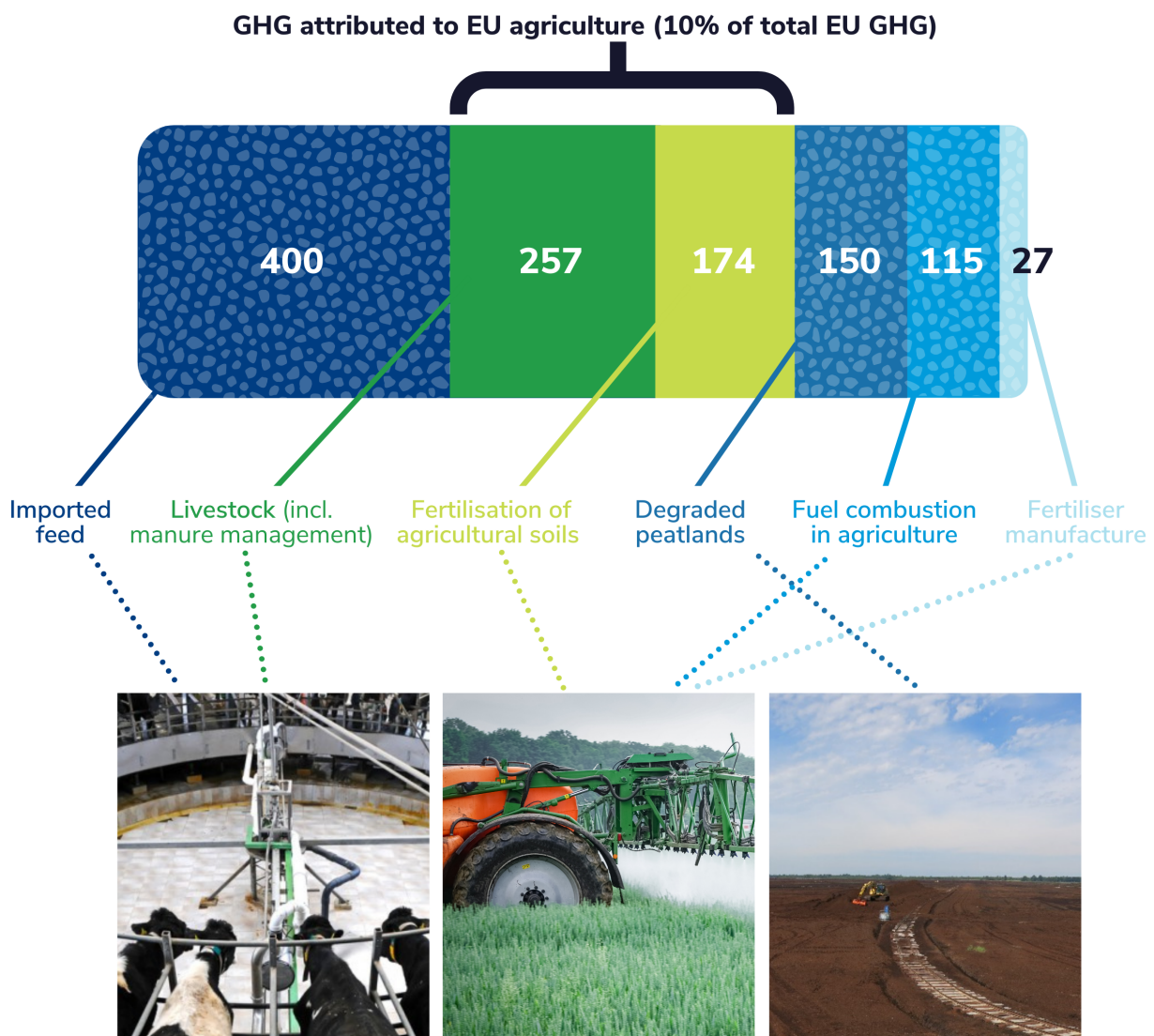
A better future where people and nature thrive together

The problems

European agriculture is currently a major contributor to the climate crisis. In addition to 'agricultural emissions' from livestock farming and fertiliser use, which account for around 10% of the EU's total GHG emissions but only show part of the picture, substantial climate impacts are linked to imports of livestock feed, direct and indirect energy use, and unsustainable farming practices on peatlands.

GHG emissions linked to EU Agriculture¹

(Mt CO₂eq, EU-28)



References

- 1 Emissions data from [GHG Emissions reported to the UNFCCC, 2020](#); for Degraded peatlands: [Greifswald Mire Centrum](#); for Fuel combustion in agriculture: [IDDRI Agroecology and carbon-neutrality in Europe by 2050](#); for Imported feed: [Leip et al \(2015\)](#).
- 2 See [IDDRI's Agroecology and carbon neutrality in Europe by 2050](#) and [IEEP's Net-Zero in Agriculture: How to get there](#).

The solutions

Agriculture has the potential to deliver crucial climate mitigation solutions.

Research has estimated that GHG emissions reductions from agriculture of nearly **50% by 2050** compared to 2010 are feasible, while feeding all Europeans more sustainably, and maintaining some export capacity².

Achieving this potential will require:

- 1 Strongly reducing livestock numbers and moving towards more plant-based diets**, in line with a 'less and better' approach to animal farming and consumption, to cut GHG emissions from livestock and drastically reduce land used for livestock feed in the EU and abroad.
- 2 Mainstreaming agroecological practices and phasing out synthetic fertilisers**, to cut emissions from the manufacture and application of fertiliser and from the use of heavy farm machinery, while restoring soil health and increasing soil organic carbon.
- 3 Redeploying natural grasslands, investing in agroforestry, and protecting and restoring peatlands**, to boost natural carbon sinks by locking up carbon in soils and above-ground biomass.



Sustainable pasture



Natural fertiliser



Restored peatland

The EU has committed to be climate neutral by 2050. Emissions reductions in the next decade will determine our success or failure in staying under 2°C of global warming. Agriculture must contribute to this effort.

The **Farm to Fork Strategy** commits to reduce the "climate footprint of the EU food system". More specifically, it aims to promote "farming practices that remove CO₂ from the atmosphere" and sets a target to "reduce the use of fertilisers by at least 20% by 2030".

In addition, the **Biodiversity Strategy** commits to deploy "nature-based solutions, such as protecting and restoring wetlands, peatlands and coastal ecosystems, or sustainably managing [...] grasslands and agricultural soils". It stresses the "urgent need to bring back at least 10% of agricultural area under high-diversity landscape features" - including buffer strips, hedges, trees, and ponds, which "enhance carbon sequestration [...] and support climate adaptation".

Picture credits

Front cover **Marius Gerome, Unsplash**

Page 2 Left **AgriLand** Middle **Countrypixel, Adobe Stock** Right **Arc2020**

Page 3 Top **Greifswald Mire Centre**; Middle **Soil Capital**; Bottom **Pasture for Life**.

Align the CAP with the EU Green Deal

A clear direction

Require Member States to set national targets against the agriculture-related EU Green Deal targets and to ensure sufficient progress towards those EU-level objectives through their CAP Strategic Plans.

Amend **articles 6, 7, 92, 95, 97 and 106**

No harm

Ensure the CAP does not fund unsustainable practices and production systems, by setting strict and common rules in conditionality, introducing robust climate safeguards for coupled support and investment support, and reviewing eligibility rules for Direct Payments to remove perverse incentives (e.g. incentives for farmers to cut trees and hedges or drain peatlands to maintain their CAP support).

Amend **article 4**
Adopt the ENVI opinion on **articles 3, 11, 12, 17, 29-31, 68 and Annex III**

Climate action

Dedicate sufficient CAP funds to climate action in agriculture, by setting ambitious ringfencing of funds in each Pillar, including earmarking €15bn/year for biodiversity measures; by moving ANC payments to Pillar 1 and excluding them from environmental ringfencing; and by ensuring Green Recovery funds are spent in line with the Farm to Fork Strategy. Additionally, the “climate tracking” methodology must be reformed to end greenwashing.

Adopt the ENVI opinion on **articles 66(28a) and 86**
Amend **article 84a and 87**

Accountability

Ensure good governance in the new CAP by reinforcing the rules for CAP Strategic Plans approval, enhancing the transparency and involvement of civil society in that process, and strengthening the requirements on Member States to collect good data and on the Commission to monitor and evaluate the performance of the CAP.

Amend **articles 94, 106, 111, 127 and 129**

Beyond the CAP

The CAP is a crucial instrument to deliver the EU's climate commitments in agriculture, but not the only one. EU climate laws and policies must also address agricultural emissions and all EU policies must be coherent with the EU Green Deal. Complementary policy measures targeted at supply chain actors and addressing the demand-side must help steer the food system towards climate-neutrality, and a sustainable trade policy must prevent carbon leakage.



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