



National Association
for the Conservation of Small Game

The ambition of this White Paper for biodiversity is to contribute to the post-2020 reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) by expressing concrete proposals, favorable to flora species, insects and thus to small wildlife in lowlands.

As Gérard Larcher, President of the French Senate, who prefaces the book, points out: « *the attention we pay to the environment is critical and its condition directly depends on the level of small game species populations and, more broadly, of all wild fauna.* »

This document gives keys to lead the European aid mechanisms, within the scope of the new CAP, towards a more active biotope conservation policy. In these difficult times for most farms, soil quality and the maintenance of biodiversity on lowlands will depend on this revision of European financial support.

In an unprecedented context of growing ecological concerns, the National Association for the Conservation of Small Game (Association nationale pour la conservation du petit gibier – ANCPG) wishes to contribute to demonstrating, with facts and deeds, that hunters – especially small game hunters – play a powerful role in maintaining biodiversity.

www.petitgibier.fr

Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy
WHITE PAPER
FOR BIODIVERSITY

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TABLE OF CONTENT

PREFACE	
For a Peaceful Dialogue <i>by Gérard Larcher</i>	p. I
INTRODUCTION	
An unprecedented opportunity	p. 3
I Fundamentals for a New Cap	p. 7
- <i>Recognizing farmers</i>	
- <i>Making facilities sustainable</i>	
- <i>Simplifying rules</i>	
- <i>Adapting measures</i>	
- <i>Lifting obstacles to contracting</i>	
- <i>Creating a European label</i>	
II Concrete Developments for a New Cap	p. 15
- <i>Integrating biodiversity into the first pillar</i>	
- <i>Rebooting the second pillar</i>	
- <i>Increasing the States' flexibility</i>	
- <i>Main MAEC and PCAE Aids for Biodiversity</i>	p. 36
Final summary and outlook	p. 39
<i>Terms and abbreviations</i>	p. 43

PREFACE
FOR A PEACEFUL DIALOGUE
by Gérard Larcher
President of the French Senate

Beyond preconceived ideas, hunting is an authentic relationship with the environment that surrounds us. The attention we pay to the environment is critical and its condition directly depends on the level of small game species populations and, more broadly, of all wild fauna.

Hunting cannot be simply defined as the taking of animals. If death is part of the act of hunting, our practice is also a shared heritage of codes, rites and « *behaviors* ». It creates not only a real bond

with nature and a knowledge of the environment, but also a special relationship with dogs.

The work of the dog is a fundamental component of our passion. The relationship between the dog and its master, the true complicity that it develops, is, for many of us, a source of emotion. And what more beautiful vibration than going to “serve” a dog at rest!

Today, the preservation of the environment is a common concern, and it must be a priority for hunters. Most people do not know how our action in terms of restoration and development of natural and agricultural areas, alongside farmers and foresters, is essential for the preservation and recovery of biodiversity. This action has been strengthened by the creation of a specific fund, with the hunting law of July 24th, 2019, in the scope of the French Office for Biodiversity (Office français de la biodiversité – OFB), which hunters and the State contri-

bute to through a financial contribution (an “eco-contribution”), intended to help finance projects carried out by hunters' federations for biodiversity protection. These actions include not only the planting of hedges, the restoration of forests and wetlands, the upkeep of habitats suitable for wildlife, but also the monitoring and regulation of species; the hunting world ensures the right balance of animal populations. I know the concrete commitment of the National Association for the Conservation of Small Game (Association nationale pour la conservation du petit gibier – ANCPG) for the restoration of wildlife-friendly agricultural environments in association with farmers.

I am convinced that the actual preservation of the environment, ecology, and the upkeep and restoration of biodiversity are not only in the hands of certain people, who are locked in an ideological posture, but a practice that can be common to both

hunters and non-hunters. It is therefore essential that we find ways to establish a peaceful dialogue between the players. The OFB is undoubtedly one of the appropriate instances to do so.

Today, biodiversity, and in particular the type that the ANCPG defends, is an undeniable challenge for our societies. It is our responsibility to share this approach. The decline of small game is not inevitable, if we act together on the farming, forestry and hunting environments.

A few years ago, I got interested in works on « *Grey Partridge, and indicator of our agricultural ecosystem* ». Small game populations are too an indicator of the well-being of our ecosystems!

G. L.

Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy

WHITE PAPER FOR BIODIVERSITY

An unprecedented opportunity

For the first time in France, agriculture has been at the heart of public debates. Its organization has been entrusted to the National Commission for Public Debate. The objective is to provide the Ministry of Agriculture and Food with ideas and proposals for the drafting of the National Strategic Plan, which will be in place for seven years, will contribute to the construction of the new Common Agricultural Policy (Cap), known as “post-2020 Cap”. It will be up to the European Commission to validate this strategic

plan for each of the countries of the Union. This is an unprecedented opportunity to initiate a transition from the agricultural model to ecosystems that respect biodiversity.

In the context of this public debate, the ANCPG, in consultation with farmers, naturalists, hunters who are members of specialized associations and technicians from hunters' federations, notably Lison Didier and Stéphane Legros, has written this *White Paper* in the form of proposals of biodiversity-friendly measures, as part of the post-2020 Cap.

Any agricultural parcel should be eligible to biodiversity programs. Recognizing farmers as essential co-managers of the landscape is critical. Beyond their role as producers, they play a major part in the return of insects and small wildlife; they should be financially encouraged in certain virtuous practices. The sustainability of biodiversity-friendly developments in agricultural environments is indeed vital,

all the more so as they make an interesting contribution to reducing the carbon footprint of farms. Farmers, who have been at the heart of biodiversity preservation for years, deserve as much support as those who are new to this commitment.

The rules for safeguarding and restoring biodiversity in agricultural areas must be simple, sustainable and concise.

Commitments to environmental programs such as those proposed by the ANCPG must not jeopardize the financial ambitions and social impacts of agricultural activity.

The commitment of farmers in the Agri-Environment and Climate Measures (Mesures agro-environnementales et climatiques – Maec) represents a small compensation compared to the overall Cap support. It is inconceivable that this virtuous commitment would involve administrative and financial risk and greater pressure on farmers.

Hunters must act as leaders in landscape preservation, which is the condition to attain “green sustainable” hunting, and demonstrate, by intensifying the proposals for the next Cap, that they make a powerful contribution to maintaining biodiversity. We are, in fact, at the crossroads for a natural return of small game!

Let us be at the center of this recovery which, in the words of Dr. Gérard Pasquet, author - 25 years ago – of the book *La chasse verte** (The green hunting), is the result of a « *constructive dialogue between farmers, foresters, hunters, fishermen and sincere naturalists to enhance the value of rural areas and to safeguard nature in a sustainable manner while making reasonable use of its riches.* »

PAUL MOUGENOT
President of the ANCPG

* Hatier, reissued by Montbel (2014)

English traduction Acronyms are in French language and are defined in annex

I Fundamentals for a New Cap

*Agricultural areas are pillars,
or are suitable to become pillars,
of biodiversity everywhere*

The erosion of biodiversity is everywhere and affects all species. However, the Agri-Environment and Climate Measures (Maec) are only available in certain areas. For example, in the Aisne Department, more than 50 % of agricultural plots do not have access to these agro-environment measures; yet biodiversity is

undoubtedly dropping more in the large open fields than anywhere else and, even in these areas, farmers must be assisted in order to act.

*The recognition of farmers
as essential managers of landscapes
and biodiversity is a prerequisite*

Farmers play a major role, beyond agricultural production, as managers of landscapes and biodiversity. This role must be valued, and they must be encouraged when adopting virtuous practices. Therefore, all agricultural plots should be eligible for biodiversity programs.

The remuneration of the spaces dedicated to biodiversity is too low compared to the potential yield of productions (a third of the yield between a biodiversity leafy cover - with Maec remuneration of 600 per hectare - and the price of renting the field to produce potatoes).

*The sustainability of biodiversity-friendly
developments in agricultural environments*

*is critical. In this sense, the recognition,
support and financing of what already exists
is just as essential as the creation of new ones
for the restoration of biodiversity*

Farmers who have been preserving biodiversity for years deserve as much support as those who are about to get involved. Areas that have been managed in this way for a long time are often the areas with the highest biodiversity.

The cultivation strips that have been planted for over two years are currently not eligible to Maec « *wildlife-friendly leafy covers* » incentive. However, the most biodiversity is found on sustainably established environments. Some advisors go so far as to propose to farmers to move or delay their development to become eligible. What a waste!

*The rules for safeguarding and restoring
biodiversity in agricultural environments must
be simple, sustainable and concise.
The post-2020 Cap must be an opportunity
to rewrite current legislation in order
to make it easier to comprehend*

There are too many constraints: accumulation, distances, different deadlines. The Cap must promote a simple and effective system from which each farmer must easily benefit. BCAE (Gaec in English), SIE, green payment obligation, fallow land decree, Maec are among the many texts farmers have to refer to in relation to their environmental obligations. Some of them change every year or almost every year.

Measures must be adaptable, and States must be responsive to adjust them, when issues with invasive exotic or harmful species are reported

Commitment to environmental programs should not jeopardize related agricultural activity or biodiversity. Therefore, the close support of farmers must allow them to be responsive in an “adjustable” system.

In this respect, the system applied in Wallonia should be looked into. When a developed area becomes “problematic” due to the presence of invasive species or unsuitable for local biodiversity, it is possible,

with the simple agreement of the environmental advisor, to move it or change its nature. Thus, the remunerated location and type of development are not fixed for the five years of the contract. It is therefore much simpler to derogate from the specifications if the issue is verified. This flexibility, which has proven its worth in Quiévrain, should be applied in France, it is only a matter of political will.

The involvement of farmers in agri-environment and climatic measures cannot mean that farms become subject to more controls

The adoption by farmers of the Maec often represents a small compensation compared to the overall Cap aid package. It is inconceivable that this virtuous commitment turns into an administrative risk and leads to greater pressure on farmers, particularly through the categorization of farms as being at risk. These are the limits of the Maec measures and the main obstacle to their success. Any farmer

who commits to this, falls into the category of “farm at risk”, where controls are tightened, even though sometimes the Maec commitment represents only a small part of the subsidy received by the farm. This creates an obstruction to contracting. It must be possible to combine, in the same area, the subsidies for maintaining biodiversity from the first and second pillars of the Cap*. Farms that are constrained by existing elements (watercourses with the five-meter buffer strip, for example) must be able to enhance them through financial measures and engage in virtuous practices (maintenance delays, etc.); however, this is not the case currently.

Create a European label to promote farms committed to the biodiversity issue, while bringing together additional funding.

Several simple criteria related to biodiversity should allow access to the label.

* The first pillar deals with direct aid to farmers; the second is dedicated to rural development.

The Cap cannot remain the only funding for agricultural biodiversity. Other funding, such as compensatory measures, must be defined. In order to ensure their efficiency, it is necessary to identify the involved farms.

II

Concrete Developments for a New Cap

The Cap consists of two “pillars”. The first one, which accounts for more than two-thirds of the budget, finances the direct aids to farmers and the market measures. The second is dedicated to rural development. Aids to maintain biodiversity must be cumulative for both in the same area.

The areas constrained by the commitments of the first pillar - green payment, Ecological Interest Areas

(“SIE” or “surfaces d’intérêt écologique”) - must thus become eligible for Maec (second pillar), in particular when these lead to more virtuous practices.

Acting on the first pillar for the true consideration of biodiversity

The creation of new categories of agricultural areas would allow better consideration of the various aspects of biodiversity. These categories should influence the attribution of direct aid according to a calculation favorable to biodiversity.

The National Association for the Conservation of Small Game (ANCPG) proposes four new categories of agricultural areas based on a pragmatic approach to agricultural financial and social realities on the one hand, and agronomic constraints on the other.

- **Agri-environment developments** should include all agricultural areas not intended for production, with a surface area greater than or equal to 10 square-meters, and without a minimum width

for linear elements. They give the right to direct aid with a coefficient x2 compared to arable land.

- **Permanent grassland** should give the right to direct aid with a coefficient equal to that of arable land.

- **Natura 2000 permanent grassland**, i.e. the area of permanent grassland in Special Protection Area or Special Areas of Conservation zones, should be eligible for direct aid with a coefficient x1.5 in relation to crops.

- **Biodiversity conservation grasslands** are the plots of land on which agricultural activity is very complicated but critical for maintaining environments and biodiversity, in particular through pastoralism. Grazing pressure is necessary but extremely low. They should be eligible for direct aid with a coefficient x2 compared to arable land.

The Cap’s current reporting system leads to a pressure on biodiversity as it favors the homogenization

of the territory. However, a well-distributed variety of crops and landscape elements best guarantees biodiversity. In fact, each crop provides each period of the year with the refuges and the food supply that conditions the dynamism of life.

The current system favors cultivated areas detrimental to developed areas, thus encouraging their erosions: the reduction of hedge width is a typical example of this phenomenon. This mechanism leads to the disappearance of permanent meadows, which are vital for biodiversity. Finally, the way the system is designed does not encourage the conversion of farmers into a manager of natural environments, where pastoral activity in particular is critical.

The situation has to be reversed by enhancing the value of areas enabling biodiversity, while simplifying

According to an INRAE/CNRS study (2020), in terms of biodiversity, the past disappearance of permanent meadows in favor of annual crops has persistent effects that can be observed over more than 20 years. Its authors recommend sanctuary these meadows in order to slow down the decline in biodiversity.

the declarations submitted by farmers. It is also a question of moving away from the areas of exceptional aid, such as the Compensatory Allowance for Permanent Natural Handicaps (Indemnité compensatoire de handicaps naturels – ICHN), to fully acknowledge farmers committed to preserving biodiversity.

The implementation of simple, common and sustainable rules on all areas under agri-environment management is a major lever for the necessary changes. The rule is simple: no phytosanitary products, no inputs, no maintenance and no use in the spring and summer periods.

- Simplifying the reading of the commitments to be complied with on all the SIE and non-productive zones of the Maecs. The rule must be adaptable, in a reactive way, in case of local problems (invasive species, pest attacks...). This is far from being the case in the current context of the Cap. For instance,

hedge maintenance is prohibited from April 1st to July 31st; maintenance of fallow land is prohibited for 40 days by prefectural order; SIE fallow land must be in place between March 1st and August 31st and honey fallow land from April 15th to October 31st. There is a clear need for flexibility and consistency between these regulations.

- Integrating all the smaller elements of agri-environment developments in the adjacent agricultural parcel, with the same level of direct aid. The aim is to simplify the Cap declarations for those who have, within their agricultural parcel, micro-elements favorable to biodiversity (less than 25 square-meters).

Thus, the current rules of the Cap force farmers, who embed sheltered bushes within their crops or on the edges of their plots, to identify them and divert them when filing their Cap declarations. The same is true for those who install micro-fittings to

create border effects. Cap declarations of these developed areas are therefore tedious and complex to fill out, and the fear of being subject to controls is yet another source of stress in this cumbersome process.

- Subject green payments to clear commitments:
 - **maintenance of permanent grasslands**;
 - **creation of varied crops**;
 - **multiplication of edge effects**, keeping in mind that a cultivation point should be at most 150-meters away from the next crop, or an agro-environment development. Each crop must be between 150- and 200-meters wide, and their layout must be adapted to the size of the tools on each farm.

These edges are essential for flight distance; for example, 70 % of partridge nests are located within 30 meters of the edge of a plot of land. Any study will show it: the size of the plot conditions the biodiversity in an agricultural environment,

where the edge effect is a determining factor. It is therefore obvious that green payments must be made conditional on this matter.

- Have SIE of at least 5 % of the arable area, of which 2 % would be committed areas, perennial for at least one year (fallow land, game crops, unharvested crops), but under no circumstances seasonal cover crops in order to take up nitrate residues of the soil (Cultures intermédiaires pièges à nitrates – Cipan).

This proposal addresses a clear objective: to make the truly effective commitments for biodiversity that permanent grasslands and crop diversification require, through the green payment.

With the current rules, a cereal farmer in the Hauts de France region will receive a green payment of 80 per hectare, whether that grower is carrying out improvements or doing the bare minimum, for example, by putting all SIE commitments into

mixed Cipan. Hence the observation of the authors of the special report 13/2020 of the Court of Auditors of the European Union on the contribution of the Cap to biodiversity, published last June 5th: « *The Cap has so far been insufficient to counteract declining biodiversity on farmland, a major threat for both farming and the environment.* »

- Distribute the SIE within a set of agricultural parcels knowing that at least 2 % of each parcel must be SIE. This dispersal of agri-environment elements within farms conditions biodiversity by multiplying connectivity; and therefore, avoids the concentration of SIE in a single parcel.

- Consider the nature of the SIE with regard to their contribution to biodiversity. Those that are not sustainable over the year, such as Cipan, must not represent more than 2 % of the operation's SIE. In fact, the sustainability of the facilities over time is what guarantees the preservation of biodiversity.

SIE such as mixed Cipan or legume crops are of little interest and should be limited. However, if these green fertilizers have been implemented by conserving the cereal stalks, either by direct seeding or by broadcast seeding, the benefit for biodiversity is real.

Mixed Cipan is an SIE with less advantages since it is not perennial and cannot constitute all of the farmer's SIE commitments.

- Maintain and harmonize the standards of the conditionality with the requirements of SIE and agri-environment developments. Areas set aside by these standards must be eligible for first and second pillar support. This is intended to simplify the commitments to be complied with in all the SIE and in the non-productive areas of the Maec measures.

In the same vein, the rules for the green payment should be based on the same environmental logic

as those of the Maec, both of which may overlap, for example in the case of buffer strips along watercourses.

- To consider, when setting up of standard conditions, new data on biodiversity conservation and development:

- keeping the buffer strip system along watercourses, with maintenance dates in accordance with agri-environment developments;

- keeping the system of non-burning of crop residues;

- keeping the BCAE (“GAEC” in English language) on irrigation withdrawals with, however, a reinforcement aimed at prohibiting the irrigation of energy crops and preserving the resource for other crops;

- keeping the system for protecting groundwater against pollution by dangerous substances;

- keeping the system for limiting erosion;

- keeping the topographical features, such as hedges,

groves, ponds, by keeping the system of maintenance dates, in accordance with the agri-environment arrangements;

– keeping minimum ground cover.

It is important that the obligations related to certain precautions concerning nitrates, pollution, etc., integrate biodiversity and do not constitute traps (maintenance date).

In addition, and this is essential: the Cap must ensure a good balance in the use of water for strictly nutritional purposes and not for renewable energy production such as, for instance, the irrigation of mechanizable crops.

*Developments so that the second pillar
better integrates the conditions of biodiversity*

Because it is possible and necessary to be able to preserve or restore biodiversity in any place, any agricultural parcel must, as a matter of principle, be eligible for an agri-environment measure (mesure

agri-environnementale “MAE”). A dozen efficient biodiversity measures must be available on all national or regional areas in application of the Rural Development Programs (Programmes de développement rural).

However, in the currently applicable regulations, a large part of the agricultural plots are not eligible for Maec. For the situation to change, each region should have a specific Maec with a minimum set of commitments for all.

- Where very specific problems are identified, such as water capture for example, it should be possible to take more precise measures within the framework of targeted Maec measures. The main principle behind this approach is that territories must be eligible for more targeted agri-environment measures, focused on local issues.

- The MAE must be compensated, i.e. the services rendered by their implementation give rise to a

higher expense than the farmer's income loss. This level of financing can be analyzed within the first pillar aid.

It is important that the areas reserved for biodiversity be remunerated at the level of the highest possible income on the plot in question. This compensation would take into account the first pillar aid and any production that remains possible on the plot (mowing or late grazing, etc.).

It is essential that the Maec plots be remunerated at least at the level of the gross operating surplus (Ebitda). For example, the dynamics of grassland turnaround in northern France can be explained by the attractiveness of potato production at a much higher ratio. Maec must not only offset the loss of income due to a change in practices, such as the value of hay due to late mowing: it must also include the loss of Ebitda due to the renunciation of more lucrative productions.

- Agri-environment measures must offer value added biodiversity adapted to the areas and species in place. For example, from the dates of post-mowing to the breeding periods of small wildlife. Too many specifications propose measures that are contrary to biodiversity preservation, such as late mowing on June 25th, which is particularly detrimental to the Corncrake. It is therefore advisable to keep only the relevant commitments and to compensate them in accordance with needs.

- A label to enhance the value of farms globally and sustainably invested in biodiversity would be an incentive. It would also meet a societal requirement: the recognition of farmers who are involved in the agricultural sector and in public opinion.

Of course, this approach can only be successful if the award criteria is simple:

- percentage of agricultural land in edges (less than 30 meters from a perennial edge);

- percentage of agricultural land within 150 meters of an agri-environment development or crop ;
- percentage of grassed area on the farm without use or maintenance during spring and summer.

This label must promote farmers, making them the preferred suppliers of agribusiness groups or local consumers, provided that they meet real environmental commitments visible on the territory and effective for biodiversity.

- Labeled farms would benefit from a removal of the threshold on Maec aid, which would open the door to private aid (support measures for projects, agribusinesses, etc.). To go further in this incentive logic, it is possible to direct the funds intended for this purpose towards the most deserving farmers. This aid can be added to the remuneration of the plots developed or managed in favor of biodiversity. This system would have the advantage of directing funding to areas already managed and of creating a

system of reference scales for certain “standardizable” measures. For example: an operator wishing to help with the preservation of hedges would easily know where to go to evaluate the cost of the project. In this way, the Maec measures will aim at offsetting the loss of production caused, with the additional financing ensuring profitability for the farmer, which makes it possible to do even more and better.

To support this incentive logic, it is conceivable to direct the funds intended for this purpose to the most deserving farmers. This aid can be added to the remuneration of plots developed or managed for biodiversity and can also make it possible to obtain funds other than those of the Cap.

- Labeled farms could benefit from a removal of the aid threshold under the Farm Competitiveness and Adaptation Plan (Plans de compétitivité et d’adaptation des exploitations “PCEA”). This

threshold elimination authorizes the contribution of private aid (compensatory measures, agribusinesses, etc.) aimed at strengthening the farmer's approach in favor of biodiversity.

To go further in the preservation and restoration of biodiversity, it is possible to direct funds to the most deserving farmers. This aid can be added to the remuneration of actions for biodiversity and can trigger funds other than those of the Cap (funds from projects that require support or compensation measures, funds from interested associations such as the federations of hunters). Thus, while the current actions are 80 % or 50 % financed according to the lines of the PCAE, it may be possible, on the basis of additional – essentially private – contributions to finance 100 % of the most relevant aid (hedge planting, scare bars, infrared detectors for wildlife...).

By setting up this Maec or PCAE funding system,

in addition to external funding, the scales thus created will guide operators of the compensatory measures towards territorial cohesion for the compensation of development projects. This system will simplify the work of developers and place farmers as a major player in environmental compensation.

Example for hedges (min. 4 meters wide including grass strip)

	<i>PCAE or MAEC subsidy</i>	<i>Possible complementary private contribution</i>
Hedge plantation	80 %	20 %
Hedge maintenance and right-of-way compensation (1,500/ha)	0.6/linear meter/yr	0.2/linear meter/yr
Plantation of compensatory hedge		100 %
Compensatory hedge maintenance		0.8/linear meter/yr

- Servicing of unsealed soils managed by farmers or communities, represents a biodiversity potential that would deserve support to reward their management of the environment. This relates to the considerable network of paths and trails; their management by farmers, which must be valued when they are adapted to this end.

New tripartite agreements between the owner of the path (municipality or land association, etc.), the farmer and the financier (Cap via the Region) should make it possible to apply a reasoned management of these spaces open to the public.

*
* *

Biodiversity must remain a point of vigilance when the post-2020 Cap will be implemented by the States and Regions. Experience shows that States must have more latitude to implement the objectives of the Union's policy. This applies to all the topics previously addressed in this *White Paper*, that would not have been included in the European framework, but also to the mechanism for instruction and allocation of aids. Thus, the creation of a single regional point of contact for the Maec would meet the need for simplification and responsiveness, which

is currently sorely lacking. It would be a one-stop shop bringing together the chambers of agriculture for the agricultural component and the hunters' federations for advice on ecology and financial engineering. The objective is to support farmers in all phases of their environmental commitment (advice, contracts, exemptions, etc.).

Obviously, it is necessary to move away from the current system of one contact person per territory, which means that a farmer working on several territories sometimes has to deal with as many advisors to develop as many specifications.

III MAIN MAEC AND PCAE AIDS FOR BIODIVERSITY

<i>Types of layout</i>	<i>MAEC</i>	<i>PCAE</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>euro/ha</i>
Hedges and tree lines	Maintenance	Plantation	Favor hedges with at least double rows and the grassed strip (4-10 meters of right-of-way)	1,500/ha
Trees, isolated bushes and fruit trees	Maintenance	Plantation		1,500/ha
Ponds	Maintenance and restauration	Creation	Promote the dense meshing of small ponds (25 to 150 square meters)	1.5/square meter
Natural grasslands	Late mowing or grazing. Farm effluent amendment only or by amendment		Pay attention to the dates of first interventions : no intervention from March 1 st to September 1 st . No grazing from July 1st.	1,000/ha
Plot or strip developed for wildlife	Creation or maintenance		No intervention from March 1 st to September 30 th except sowing in for annual blends	
Agro-environment plan	Overall revision of the farm's parcel		Plots up to 200 meters wide	
Management of field edgess	Maintenance or creation of a grassed strip from 1 to 5 m t the edge of fields		No intervention from March 1 st to September 30 th except sowing in 1 st year. Possibility to drive on part of the strip only (field entry) Maintenance as necessary, provided it has been validated by the area manager	15/100 linear meter
Strips of perennial wildlife-friendly crops	Maintenance of strips of perennial crops (miscanthus,	Creation, investment aid for plant legumes) harvesting equipment		Cost of production loss or 500/ha
Improvement of intermediary cultivations	Direct sowing with stubble preservation or broadcast sowing in the crop	Investment aid for material	Keeping stubble in place (and therefore surface feeding for wildlife). Duration 6 to 8 months Adaptive if there is a strong problem of soiling or structural defect	150/ha
Harvesting methods with less impact on wildlife	Use of a scare bar, centrifugal harvesting, speed limitation at the end of the field	Investment aid for material		–
Biodiversity fallow/pollinator/perennial SFs	Creation and maintenance of biodiversity refuge zones	Sowing and planting	Divided into several blocks ar the parcel scale in order to create a mesh and integrate according to agricultural work	1,50 ha

FINAL SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

Figures can always be questioned, yet it is undeniable that the entomofauna has been undergoing an erosion for half a century now, both in terms of variety and demography. The simplification of rural landscapes and its automatic consequence, the decrease in plant diversity, are to blame. Hence, among other things, a sometimes-drastic decrease in the food supply for many animal species - insectivores in the first place. Over the last

two decades, the rarefaction of field birds ($\pm 30\%$ according to sources), such as meadow butterflies, on the one hand and the stabilization, and even increase, of forest birds on the other, have triggered discussions on agricultural practices.

The report of the European Court of Auditors (June 2020), entitled *Biodiversity on farmland: Cap contribution has not halted the decline*, is a very valuable contribution in this matter. First, its authors detail how « *the design and funding of agri-environment-climate measures [the famous French maec], which provide support for intensive cropping farms, has been insufficiently attractive to bring about the necessary management changes to improve biodiversity performance.* » But above all, they recommend that the European Commission « *when approving Member States' Cap strategic plans, ensure that, wherever necessary, they include [...] commitments addressing the most relevant biodiversity issues*

and needs, and that the Member States make these schemes attractive for both arable and grassland farms. » This is precisely this *White Paper's* ambition: to demonstrate, through concrete, realistic and acceptable proposals to agricultural professionals, that the Cap can evolve towards a real consideration of the redeployment of biodiversity in rural areas.

This recovery of biodiversity is a considerable ecological stake in the agricultural world and requires the optimization of a very simple agro-environment phenomenon: the edge effect created by the crops' periphery. There, biodiversity havens can be enhanced by limiting the use of phytosanitary products, by delaying cereal fields harvesting, and by not harvesting fodder legumes (dehydrated alfalfa, for example). Strips of bare, unseeded land one to three meters wide also contribute to this edge effect, as do fallows (spontaneous, sorghum, millet, legumes).

This parsimonious ecological valorization provides a concrete answer to the question of the role of Cap aid in the face of biodiversity issues, a question that the organizers of the public debate on agriculture are posing.

The National Association for the Conservation of Small Game has endeavored to answer this question in a pragmatic way so that the national strategic plan for the Cap puts the recovery of biodiversity at the heart of the agricultural issues of tomorrow. ■

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANCPG

Association nationale pour la conservation du petit gibier - National Association for the Conservation of Small Game

BCAE (or “GAEC” in English language)

Bonnes conditions agricoles et environnementales - Good agricultural and environmental conditions (specifications governing the receipt of Cap aids)

Cipan

Culture intermédiaire piège à nitrates - Seasonal cover crops in order to take up nitrate residues of the soil

ICHN

Indemnité compensatoire de handicaps naturels - Compensatory Allowance for Permanent Natural Handicaps

Maec

Mesures agro-environnementales et climatiques - Agri-Environment and Climate Measures

OFB

Office français de la biodiversité - French Office for Biodiversity

PCAE

Plan de compétitivité et d'adaptation des exploitations agricoles - Farm Competitiveness and Adaptation Plan

SIE

Surfaces d'intérêt écologique - Ecological focus area