



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA  
MINISTRSTVO ZA KMETIJSTVO,  
GOZDARSTVO IN PREHRANO

# The Common Agricultural Policy in relation to the soils and regenerative agriculture in Slovenia

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# Importance of agricultural soils

- Soil is one of the most important natural resources, providing us with vital goods and services to sustain life.
- Important for the implementation of many ecosystem services, such as biodiversity, atmospheric carbon sink, rainwater retention and treatment.
- Soil contains about a quarter of all biodiversity, which is crucial for soil health and the proper functioning of ecosystem services.



# Importance of agricultural soils

- As carbon sink, soils can sequester CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere and thus mitigate climate change.
- Agricultural soil in the EU contains about 14 billion tonnes of carbon in the topsoil, which is well over the 4.4 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases we emit in the EU each year.
- Healthy, fertile soil is at the heart of food security, so any threat to these functions is also a threat to food availability.



# Legal framework

- At EU level there is no common legally binding framework for the conservation and sustainable use of soils.
- At national level, we have established a systematic monitoring of agricultural land with the 2021 amendments of the Agriculture Act.
- Monitoring of the state of agricultural soils is envisaged as state monitoring and as an obligation for farmers on water source protection areas.



# European Green Deal

- The cornerstone of the European Green Deal is the transition to a healthier and more sustainable food system.
- At the heart of the Green Deal is the Farm to Fork strategy and the Biodiversity strategy. Both strategies are key to the transition and indicate a new and better balance between nature, food systems and biodiversity.



# European Green Deal targets

## Targets relevant for agriculture:

- 50% reduction in the joint use and risks of chemical pesticides and the use of more dangerous pesticides (two targets),
- 50% reduction in sales of antimicrobials for livestock and aquaculture,
- 25% of EU agricultural land devoted to organic farming,
- 10% of agricultural land with highly diverse landscape features,
- **50% reduction in nutrient losses while preventing deterioration of soil fertility. (this will reduce the use of fertilizers by at least 20% by 2030).**



# Common Agricultural Policy

- The new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) will support sustainable transition and strengthen agriculture's efforts to tackle climate change and protect the environment.
- The policy focuses on **nine specific objectives**, linked to common EU goals for social, environmental, and economic sustainability.
- Specific objective 4 on environmental care and sustainable development and **efficient management of natural resources** like soil, water and air.





# CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027

- National **CAP strategic plans** must reflect the Green Deal ambitions, taken into account the state of play at national level, and will **directly contribute and support** the achievement of sustainable transition and related targets.

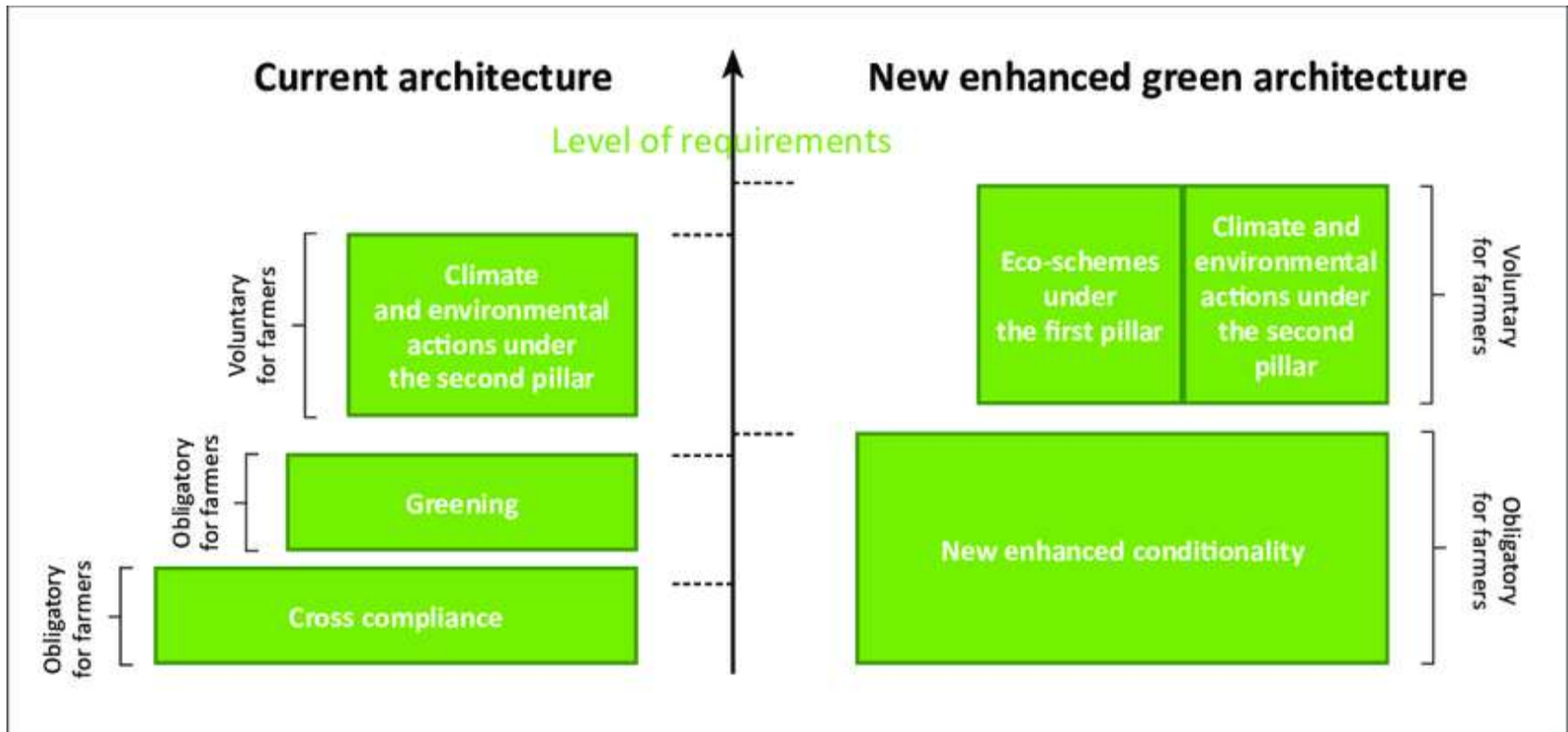


# CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027

- New CAP strategic plan is under preparation and will contain a set of measures (interventions) to achieve these ambitions through
- **"green architecture"**, consisting of:
  - enhanced conditionality,
  - „eco-schemes“ ( Climate and environment scheme) and
  - Agri-environment-climate measures.
- Green architecture is build of three blocks: basis is enhanced conditionality, obligatory for farmers, other two blocks above are beyond that and voluntary for farmers.



# CAP „green architecture“





# Enhanced conditionality

- Under CAP farmers receive basic (direct) payments for each hectare of their land if they fulfil certain requirements or conditions.
- There are **three** Good agricultural and environmental conditions (GAEC) standards directly related with the sustainable management of agricultural land:
  - Preventing soil erosion;
  - Increasing soil organic matter;
  - Improving soil structure.



# Climate and environment scheme (‘eco-scheme’)

Second block of „green architecture“

- New instrument under CAP, reward farmers for environmental care and climate actions.
- Practices go beyond good agricultural practice and mandatory standards (GAEC).
- One year commitment for farmers.
- Proposed interventions related to the regenerative agriculture in arable land:
  - Catch (intermediate) crops
  - Minimum (no) tillage.



# Agriculture and environment management scheme (AECM)

Third block of the „green architecture“

- Beyond GAEC and ‚eco-schemes‘ requirements.
- 5 years commitment for farmers.
- Proposed interventions directly related to the regenerative agriculture:
  - Crop rotation (above minimum standards),
  - Green cover of arable land,
  - Sowing of crops for incorporation into soils.



# Conservational agriculture

- Separate intervention for sustainable management of agricultural land.
- 5 years commitment for farmers.
- Main requirements of the intervention:
  - Minimum (no) tillage
  - Diversification of crops
  - Constant cover of land (green or harvest residues)



# Challenges

- Challenge is to increase awareness raising among farmers for regenerative agriculture management practices.
- Interventions for supporting regenerative agriculture will be available in the new CAP Strategis plan.
- Interventions are voluntary for farmers, the challenge is to encourage and attract farmers to get involved (to subscribe) to these interventions.





# Challenges

- Difficult for farmers to transform usual agricultural practices and techniques.
- Farmers are mainly choosing CAP interventions which are close to their usual practice and not too ambitious.