



The Post-2027 Common Agricultural Policy, Supporting Pollinators and Beekeeping

A Practical Guide for Policy-Makers, National Authorities, Farmers and the Beekeeping Sector

By BeeLife European Beekeeping Coordination

Abstract

This document reviews the legal framework and the practical implementation of support for farmers and beekeepers in the EU's current and future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). It explains that the 2023-27 CAP integrates national apiculture programmes into mandatory interventions in Member States' (MSs) strategic plans, with €60 million in annual funding and a minimum of 50% national co-financing. Seven intervention types—knowledge exchange, investments, analyses, hive preservation, research cooperation, promotion, and quality enhancement—form the toolbox, though most MSs prioritise training and investments, while few support restocking or the enhancement of bee product quality. Complementary agri-environment-climate measures and eco-schemes promote melliferous habitats, pollination or organic beekeeping. The brief also identifies other tools, such as crisis instruments (i.e., the EU's agricultural reserve, emergency feeding measures, or national regulations and directives for beekeeping). Looking ahead, the Commission's 2028–2034 CAP proposal introduces a farm stewardship system replacing conditionality, integrates eco-schemes and AECMs into a single pillar, and retains sectoral interventions while simplifying rules. With this document, we aim to inspire beekeepers across regions about the sector's possibilities and build synergies with other sectors.

The report is accompanied by a practical guide to pollinator-friendly intervention design (**Annex 1**), two ready-to-use eco-scheme proposals (**Annexes 2–3**), and a methodological annex documenting the data sources, classification rules and calculation conventions behind every figure cited (**Annex 4**).

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Abbreviations

TERM	MEANING
AECM	Agri-environmental and Climate Measures
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CMO	Common Market Organisation
CSP	CAP Strategic Plan
DNSH	Do No significant Harm
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EAGF EU	European Agricultural Guarantee Fund
EU	European Union
GAEC	Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale
MFF	Multi-Annual Financial Framework
MS	Member State
N2000	Nature 2000
NAP	National Apiculture Programmes
NRPP	National and Regional Partnership Plans
NSP	National Strategic Programmes
PMEF	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
RD	Rural Development
WFD	Water Framework Directive



1

Why Pollinator Stewardship Matters

Competitiveness at the expense of ecosystem services delivers only short-term benefits.

1. Why Pollinator Stewardship Matters:

Your Guide to a Pollinator-Friendly CAP post 2027

Understanding the opportunities, challenges and policy choices shaping the future of European agriculture.

The future Common Agricultural Policy will not be designed in isolation.

It will emerge within a rapidly changing European landscape shaped by growing geopolitical uncertainty, increasing pressure on food systems, climate disruption, biodiversity loss and the pursuit of greater economic competitiveness. Across Europe, policy priorities are evolving. Alongside sustainability objectives, increasing emphasis is being placed on competitiveness, strategic autonomy, security and resilience.

Yet these ambitions share a common foundation:

- **Agricultural competitiveness** cannot be sustained without productive agro-ecosystems.
- **Climate adaptation** cannot succeed without resilient landscapes.
- **Food security** cannot be guaranteed if the ecological processes underpinning agricultural production continue to deteriorate.

Among these processes, pollination remains one of the most fundamental. A productive CAP ultimately depends on productive landscapes: if flowers can no longer provide sufficient nectar and pollen, the ecological foundations of agricultural productivity begin to erode.

This is why BeeLife believes that Pollinator Stewardship must become a guiding principle of the future CAP.

The challenge is not to allocate resources, but **to ensure that public investment is deployed within a framework capable of restoring and maintaining the ecological conditions that make agricultural production possible.** Without addressing the underlying causes of pollinator decline, investments intended to improve resilience, competitiveness and sustainability will inevitably deliver only partial results.

1.1 A number of critical challenges remain unresolved.

European agriculture continues to face a series of interconnected challenges that will shape the future of farming, biodiversity and rural communities across Europe.

Dependence on plant protection products remains a significant concern, particularly in light of the continued exposure of pollinators and other beneficial organisms to **pesticide residues** in agricultural landscapes. At the same time, pollinators are confronted with a progressive decline in the availability and quality of food and nesting resources, driven by landscape simplification, habitat degradation and the loss of ecological infrastructure.

Climate change is further increasing pressure on agricultural systems, affecting flowering patterns and plant phenology, pollinator populations, crop productivity and the resilience of rural landscapes. These challenges are unfolding alongside major policy discussions on innovation, including **new genomic techniques** and **seed legislation**, which will influence the future relationship between agricultural production and biodiversity conservation.

In parallel, the implementation of the Nature Restoration Regulation, with its objective to restore pollinator populations, will require Member States to restore ecological functions across agricultural landscapes, creating both challenges and opportunities for the future CAP.

Future CAP investments will therefore only be as effective as the ecological systems that support them. Improving the quantity and quality of **resources available to pollinators**, reducing harmful pressures and making productive, resilient and pollinator-friendly landscapes the norm rather than the exception remain among the key challenges for the next programming period.

1.2 Why Pollinator Stewardship Matters

Pollinators continue to decline across Europe, despite the efforts spent by the EU and national institutions on the Pollinators initiative and related actions. Their essential role in agricultural production, ecosystem resilience and rural economies invites us to be more ambitious and profit from every opportunity to help them. For this reason, BeeLife has developed this report.

Its objective is to make information on the relationship between pollinators and the Common Agricultural Policy more accessible, more understandable and more actionable for policy-makers, beekeeping associations, farmers and stakeholders involved in shaping the future of European agriculture.

Drawing on legal analysis, implementation experiences and examples from across Member States, this report translates complex policy frameworks into practical insights and recommendations.

Throughout the report, readers will find concise notes, recommendations and key considerations highlighting the most relevant actions that can support the development of a more resilient, competitive and pollinator-friendly agricultural system.

1.3 Why This Matters for your work

The future CAP will not be shaped by a single institution or stakeholder group. Its success will depend on the collective actions of policy-makers, national administrations, farmers, beekeepers and civil society organisations.

Each of these actors plays a different role in shaping the future of European agriculture. Equally, each stands to benefit from a CAP that places Pollinator Stewardship at its core.

Whether your priority is improving policy effectiveness, supporting agricultural competitiveness, strengthening biodiversity, enhancing farm resilience or securing new opportunities for the beekeeping sector, pollinator-friendly policies can help deliver better outcomes.

The following pages highlight how a Pollinator-Friendly CAP can support the work, objectives and responsibilities of the key actors involved in shaping Europe's agricultural future.

The Key Actors of the Future CAP					
CAP	Policy Makers at EU Level	Implementing Authorities (National & Regional)	NGOs	Beekeepers & Beekeeping Associations	Farmers and Agricultural Organisations
Why this matters	Pollinators are the biological infrastructure underpinning Europe's food security, competitiveness and climate resilience.	Member States/ Regions will determine whether the future CAP delivers measurable benefits for beekeepers, farmers, biodiversity and food production.	The future CAP creates new opportunities for biodiversity, but also new risks.	The future CAP creates new opportunities but also risks reducing visibility and funding for apiculture.	Pollinators are agricultural production factors, not external beneficiaries.
How a Pollinator-Friendly CAP Can Support Your Work	- Strengthen European food security - Ensure climate resilience for food production system - Improve the long-term competitiveness of agriculture - Increase the effectiveness of public spending - Deliver measurable biodiversity outcomes - Build coherence across CAP, Nature Restoration and climate objectives	- Improve the effectiveness of CAP investments by strengthening the ecological foundations of agricultural production. - Anticipate and mitigate economic risks linked to pollinator decline, biodiversity loss and climate change. - Support long-term competitiveness by fostering agricultural systems that are both productive and ecologically resilient. - Deliver biodiversity objectives through existing CAP instruments while reducing risks associated with pollinator decline, including impacts on food production, seed availability and natural pest regulation. - Improve cost-effectiveness of agricultural support	- Improve network availability for biodiversity in terms of habitat and resources - Deliver measurable biodiversity outcomes - Reduce pesticide-related risks - Ensure climate resilience for food production system - Strengthen collaboration with farmers - Create new funding opportunities	- Create new funding opportunities - Improve forage availability - Reduce pesticide-related risks - Strengthen collaboration with farmers - Position beekeepers as providers of ecosystem services	- Improve pollination services - Increase farm resilience - Diversify farm income opportunities - Reduce dependency on external inputs - Improve environmental performance without sacrificing productivity

CAP	Policy Makers at EU Level	Implementing Authorities (National & Regional)	NGOs	Beekeepers & Beekeeping Associations	Farmers and Agricultural Organisations
What you can do	• Support Pollinator Stewardship provisions in CAP negotiations • Ensure biodiversity funding remains outcome-oriented • Maintain safeguards on pesticide reduction and habitat protection • Integrate pollinator indicators into CAP performance monitoring.	• Integrate Pollinator Stewardship in NRPPs. • Design pollinator-focused agri-environmental actions. • Develop pollinator eco-schemes. • Include pollinator criteria in investment support and advisory systems.	• Integrate Pollinator Stewardship in NRPPs • Design pollinator-focused agri-environmental actions • Maintain safeguards on pesticide reduction and habitat protection • Integrate pollinator indicators into CAP performance monitoring	• Engage early in CAP consultations • Promote Pollinator Stewardship approaches • Build alliances with farming organisations • Monitor implementation of national plans.	• Adopt pollinator-friendly practices • Participate in pollinator schemes • Collaborate with local beekeepers • Integrate pollinators into farm management

1.4 How to Navigate this Report: Choose Your Reading Path

Chapter 1: Start with the Big Picture

Understand the political, environmental and economic challenges shaping European agriculture and why pollinators are central to achieving objectives related to competitiveness, climate resilience, food security and biodiversity.

Best suited for:

-  Policy-makers •  Implementing Authorities
-  Beekeeping Associations •  Farmers and Agricultural Organisations

Chapter 2: Understanding the Rules of the Game

Explore the current CAP architecture (2023-2027), the legal framework governing implementation and the opportunities already available within existing legislation to support pollinators and biodiversity.

Best suited for:

-  Policy-makers •  Implementing Authorities
-  Beekeeping Associations •  Farmers and Agricultural Organisations

Chapter 3: Making Pollinator Stewardship Happen Today

Learn how current CAP instruments, including eco-schemes, agroclimatic and environment measures, investments and advisory services, can already support pollinators, beekeepers and farmers.

Best suited for:

-  Implementing Authorities •  Beekeeping Associations
-  Farmers and Agricultural Organisations

Chapter 4: Building a Pollinator-Friendly CAP after 2027

Examine the European Commission's proposals, identify existing gaps and discover how future CAP reforms could strengthen Pollinator Stewardship across Europe.

Best suited for:

-  Policy-makers •  Implementing Authorities
-  Beekeeping Associations •  NGOs

Chapter 5: Conclusions

A brief reflection on CAP, future priorities and recommendations for Member States and beekeeping stakeholders.

Best suited for:

-  Policy-makers •  Implementing Authorities
-  Beekeeping Associations •  Farmers and Agricultural Organisations

Annexes: From Principles to Practice

Explore the tools that turn this report's analysis into action: a practical guide to designing pollinator-friendly interventions ([Annex 1](#)), two ready-to-use eco-scheme proposals — an IPM eco-scheme ([Annex 2](#)) and a pollinator eco-scheme for arable and permanent crops ([Annex 3](#)) — and the full methodology and data conventions behind every figure cited in this report ([Annex 4](#)).

Best suited for:

-  Policy-makers •  Implementing Authorities
-  Beekeeping Associations •  Farmers and Agricultural Organisations



2

Understanding the Rules of the Game

The CAP is not defined by what it promises, but by what it enables.

2. Understanding the Rules of the Game

2.1. Background and timing

The current Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) runs from 2023 to 2027 and implements a delivery model set out in Regulation (EU) 2021/2115¹. It builds on the earlier CAP (2014-2020) and transitional regulations that extended rural development (RD) and market support measures in 2021-2022. The following sections describe the legal framework of the current CAP, the elements and measures that can directly or indirectly improve the health of (honey) bees and other pollinators, and the practice of beekeeping.

2.2. Logic of the legal framework (special focus on beekeeping)

2.2.1. The Core CAP Trio (2021 Package) — the foundation

Regulation (EU) 2021/2115¹ — CAP Strategic Plans Regulation (SPR) is the primary legal basis for the entire database. It establishes rules on support for Strategic Plans drawn up by Member States under the CAP, financed by the European Agriculture Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), covering the period from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2027. It repeals Regulations 1305/2013 (RD) and 1307/2013 (Direct Payments).



TEXTBOX 1 - POINT BEEKEEPING: Crucially, **Article 55** defines the seven apiculture intervention types (ADVICEES, INVAPI, ACTLAB, COOPAPI, PROMOBEEES, ACTQUAL, PRESBEEHIVES), their eligible scope, and the co-funding structure. Annex X sets each MS's annual EU allocation based on the 2013 beehive census, totalling €60 million per year, substantially increased from €40 million in 2019. MS must provide at least 50% match funding for the EU financial assistance they use.

1. ADVICEES - Advisory services, technical assistance and training, including networking and exchange of best practices.

2. INVAPI - Investments and other actions, including:

- (i) combating beehive diseases & invaders
- (ii) preventing climate damage and adaptation to climate change
- (iii) Restocking of beehives, bee breeding
- (iv) Rationalisation of transhumance

3. ACTLAB - Support for laboratories analysing apiculture products, bee losses and substances toxic to bees.

4. PRESBEEHIVES - Actions to preserve or increase the number of beehives in the EU (including bee breeding).

5. COOPAPI - Cooperation with specialised bodies for research programmes in beekeeping and apiculture products.

6. PROMOBEEES - Promotion, communication and marketing, including market monitoring and consumer-awareness actions on the quality of apiculture products.

7. ACTQUAL - Actions to enhance product quality.



Prior to 2023, the EU-funded National Apiculture Programmes (NAPs) lasted three years. These programmes, developed by Member States (MSs) in cooperation with beekeeping organisations, were co-financed at 50% by the EU and 50% by national funds. Since 1 January 2023, apiculture support has been integrated into the CAP National Strategic Plans (NSP) – each MS must include apiculture interventions in its plan. EU funding for the apiculture sector increased from €40 million to €60 million per year, with co-financing rates of 50% (minimum) and up to 70% for MSs choosing higher national contributions^{2,3}

Regulation (EU) 2021/2116⁴— CAP Horizontal Regulation Governs financing, management, monitoring, controls and penalties for both EAGF and EAFRD. Sets the IACS (Integrated Administration and Control System), conditionality rules and performance framework. Paired with 2021/2115 in all subsequent amendments.

Regulation (EU) 2021/2117⁵— CAP Accompanying Regulation (transitional CMO amendments). Amends Regulation (EU) 1308/2013 (CMO) and several other acts, ensuring a clean handover from the old sectoral programmes (fruit & vegetables, wine, apiculture) under the CMO to the new CAP Strategic Plan framework.

TEXTBOX 2 - POINT BEEKEEPING -

Transitional apiculture programmes running from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2022 were extended and integrated into the 2023–2027 CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) structure through this regulation⁶



2.2.2. The CMO — residual legal basis for sectoral architecture

Regulation (EU) 1308/2013²— Common Market Organisation (CMO). Among the amended provisions, the most substantial changes concern aid schemes in general and support for specific sectors (fruit & vegetables, apiculture, wine, hops, olive oil and table olives). These 'sectoral interventions' are now part of MS's Strategic Plans, and the respective provisions have been moved from the CMO Regulation to the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation. The CMO still governs residual areas, including market mechanisms, producer organisations, and trade rules.

TEXTBOX 3 - POINT BEEKEEPING - Its former Articles 55–57 on apiculture (from which the above-mentioned 7 intervention types descend) were carried over and expanded in Art. 55 of 2021/2115. The Commission retains delegated power to update the list of eligible apiculture measures by adding or adapting measures.^{7,8}



Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 on geographical indications⁷ (wine, spirits, agricultural products), amended 1308/2013 in April 2024, but does not affect apiculture provisions.

2.2.3. Delegated and Implementing Acts — the operational layer

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/126¹⁰— supplements 2021/2115 with additional requirements for specific intervention types (including apiculture) and rules for Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC) Standard 1. This is the key delegated act that governs which expenditures are eligible under the seven apiculture types (Art. 11, 12 and 36).

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1366¹¹ (still applicable for historical reference) — supplemented the old CMO Art. 55 on apiculture: established the beehive-based allocation methodology, no double-funding rules (apiculture vs RD), and co-funding mechanics. Its methodology was carried forward into Annex X of 2021/2115.

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2289¹² — rules for the application of 2021/2115 (content of CAP Strategic Plans (CSPs), performance reporting, indicator definitions).

2.2.4. The Transitional Regulation (2021–2022 bridge)

Regulation (EU) 2020/2220¹³ — CAP Transitional Regulation Extended the 2014–2020 RD programmes and CMO sectoral programmes (including apiculture) into 2021–2022, pending entry into force of the new CSPs. Transitional rules that apply beyond 31 December 2022 are set out in Regulation (EU) 2021/2117. A number of rural development programmes contracted during the 2014–22 period are running until 2025.¹⁴

2.2.5. The simplification wave

Regulation (EU) 2024/1468¹⁵ — "CAP Simplification I" (May 2024) came into force in May 2024 as part of the Commission's response to widespread farmer protests. Its main objectives were to modify certain mandatory requirements under enhanced conditionality and to improve the flexibility of their application by MS. It also introduced a simplified procedure for amending national CSPs and exempted small farms from conditionality controls and penalties. MSs are allowed to amend their CSPs more frequently. Key changes not going in a good direction for bees and pollinators:

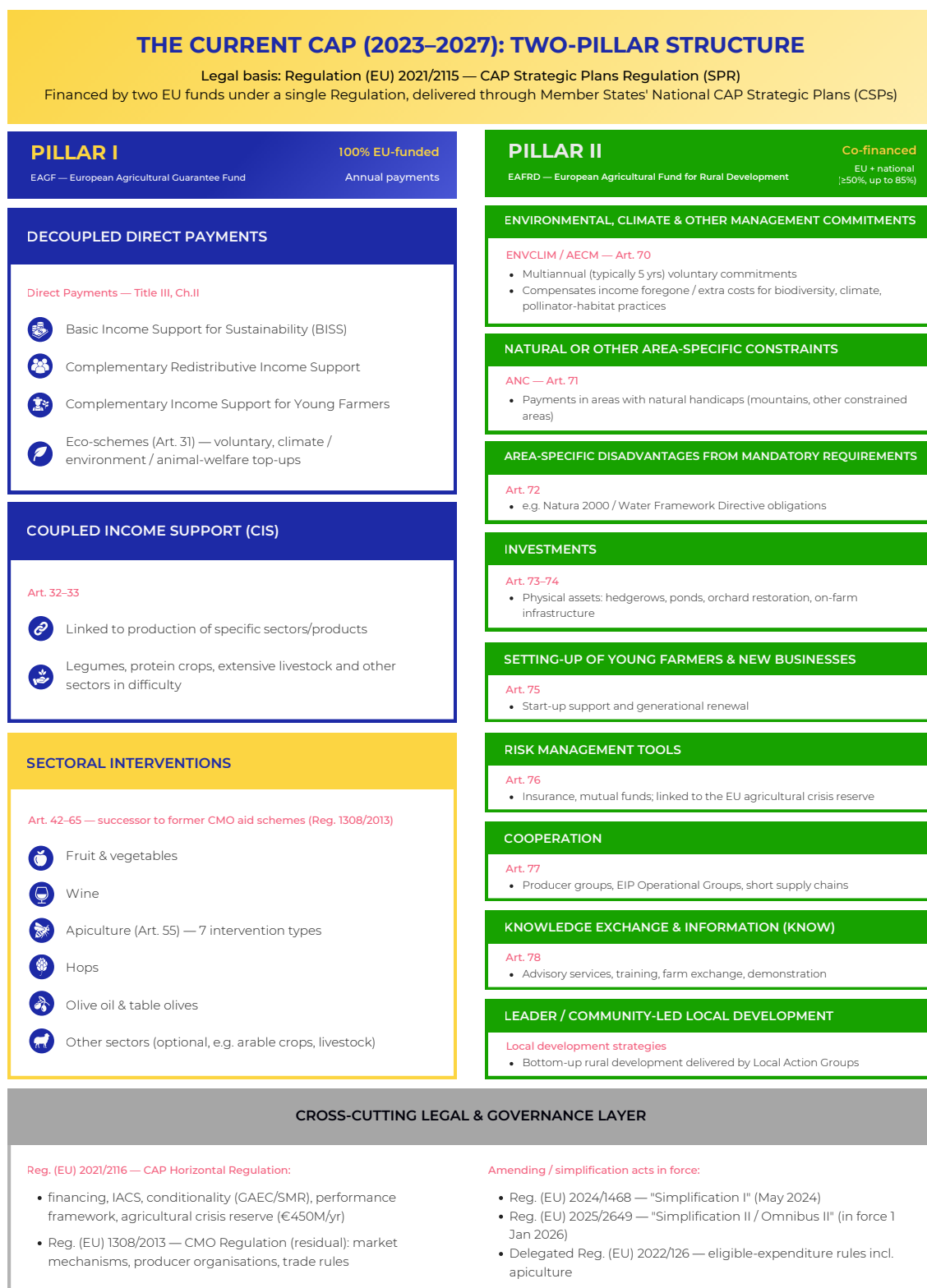
- GAEC 7 (crop rotation) and GAEC 8 (non-productive areas) softened.
- Eco-scheme design flexibility increased.

Regulation (EU) 2025/2649¹⁶ — "CAP Simplification III / Omnibus III" (December 2025). Entered into force on 1 January 2026 and aims to reduce administrative burdens, limit farm inspections, increase support for small and organic farmers, and allow crisis payments in case of natural or climatic disasters. Specifically amends 2021/2115 on the conditionality system, direct payment types, sectoral interventions (including apiculture), rural development interventions, and annual performance reporting. Many of the simplification proposals do not move toward improving the situation for pollinators in agricultural areas. This is the most recent consolidated version of 2021/2115, in force from 18 March 2026. Changes to sectoral interventions under this regulation may have affected the legal basis of some apiculture intervention types.¹⁷

Pending: COM(2024) 577¹⁸ — CMO/CAP Strengthening Farmers' Position Proposal for a regulation amending Regulations (EU) 1308/2013, (EU) 2021/2115 and (EU) 2021/2116 as regards the strengthening of the position of farmers in the food supply chain, proposed 10 December 2024. Focuses on producer organisations, fruit & vegetables, and supply chain fairness. The Council issued a confirmation of the final compromise text in early 2026, but the regulation has not yet been formally published in the Official Journal of the European Union at the time of writing.

2.2.6. Pre-2023 RD framework (still relevant for some contracted programmes)

Regulation (EU) 1305/2013¹⁹ — Rural Development Regulation (2014–2020). Formally repealed by 2021/2115 from 1 January 2023, but certain measures contracted under it (ENVCLI, INVEST, COOP, KNOW) continued to run until 2025 under transitional arrangements. This regulation included interventions that may bring opportunities to improve the situation of bees, beekeepers and pollinators in the future. Many of these interventions followed a continuum in the current CAP and will continue in the cap post-2027 (see later).



Source: BeeLife European Beekeeping Coordination, analysis of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 (as amended) and EUR-Lex · Brussels, 2026



3

Turning Existing CAP Tools into Pollinator Stewardship

*The challenge is not the absence of tools. It is
how we choose to use them.*

3. Turning Existing CAP Tools into Pollinator Stewardship

3.1 Pollinator Stewardship within the Current CAP (2023-2027)

When applied with an integrative logic proposed by the OneHealth approach, where one cannot protect human health in sick ecosystems, several interventions of the current CAP can help directly or indirectly improve the situation of bees, pollinators and the beekeeping sector. **Figure 1** shows a summary of the EU contribution to different measures with this potential.

As BeeLife, we have analysed all the interventions currently implemented by the MSs and characterised them as “Beekeepers4Biodiversity”, “Farmers4Biodiversity”, measures with Dual purposes/beneficiaries (meaning they support/benefit both beekeepers and farmers), and “Opportunities” (if implemented with the correct logic). The intervention logic behind these categories — the concrete practices that make an intervention genuinely beneficial for pollinators — is developed in **Annex 1**. The following sections include several Tables describing a selection of national interventions that can inspire MSs or the CAP-post 2027 to go in the right direction.

This report focuses on the interventions assessed as positive or as opportunities. The full assessment — covering all 2,483 interventions and €300.2 billion in cumulative public expenditure (2023–2029), including interventions assessed as neutral/unrelated and those flagged as potential risk under the “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH) lens — is available in the [BeeLife Interactive Data Dashboard](#), together with the full classification methodology (**Annex 4**).



Figure 1. Summary of the EU Contribution by category of interventions organised in Beekeepers4Biodiversity, Farmers4Biodiversity (F4B), Dual or Opportunities (Opps).

Data source: EC DG AGRI CAP Interventions Catalogue (agridata.ec.europa.eu) — adopted CSP versions as of September 2025 · BeeLife European Beekeeping Coordination enrichment (BL_Category, BL_Potential), June 2026. Legal basis: Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 as amended by Regulations (EU) 2024/1468 and (EU) 2025/2649 (in force 1 January 2026). Notes: All financial figures in €K (thousands), 2 decimal places, cumulative 2023–2029 · EU column = EU contribution only · Public = total public expenditure (EU + national) · Countries ordered alphabetically · n = number of interventions · Co-funding range shown where rates vary across interventions within a MS · AoA pivot values (Table B) may exceed row totals where eco-schemes span multiple areas. Produced by: BeeLife European Beekeeping Coordination · www.bee-life.eu · Brussels, June 2026

3.2 Supporting Pollinators through Beekeeping Measures

As already mentioned in TextBox 1, the **CAP Strategic Plan Regulation**¹ provides a menu of 7 interventions for apiculture (Art. 55 of Regulation 2021/2115), while Art. 56 authorises the Commission to adopt delegated acts should the intervention list be updated. MSs have provided aid to the beekeeping sector to support the fulfilment of Specific Objectives (SO), including supporting farm income (SO1), competitiveness (SO2), strengthening the value chain (SO3), supporting climate adaptation and resilience (SO4), supporting biodiversity (SO6), supporting young farmers (SO7), improving food quality (SO9), and supporting innovation (XCO). Each MS identified the different SOs that were more relevant for their national sector.

These seven interventions build on the eight measures in the previous CMO regulation (Article 55 of Regulation 1308/2013). **MSs must include at least one apiculture intervention in their national CAP Strategic Plan.** In most cases, MSs have chosen interventions that best fit the needs of their respective sectors. The Commission's 2023 report notes that all MSs integrated apiculture interventions, and according to the available data, no MS chose all seven, ADVIBEEES (Advisory services, technical assistance, training, information and exchange of best practices) was the most activated intervention, and that Bulgaria, Italy and Luxembourg have increased their national co-financing above 50 %.²⁰

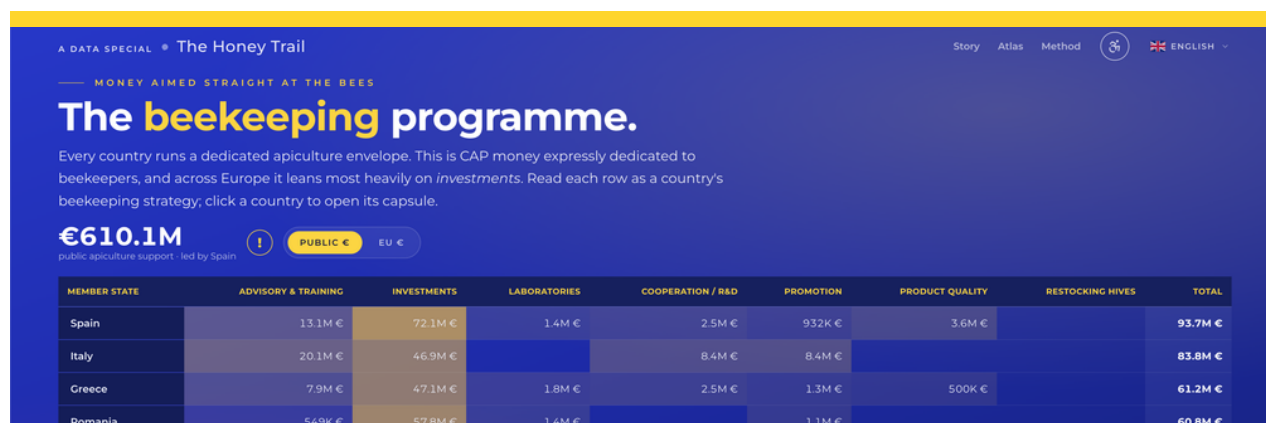
[Table A](#) summarises the apiculture interventions selected by each MS, based on the Commission's May 2024 overview²¹ and in the European Catalogue of CAP interventions.²² We included the total budgets allocated by intervention for the 2023-2029 budget period. It is noteworthy that each country or region has implemented the same sectoral interventions differently, reflecting the specific conditions of the beekeeping sector in each territory. Overall, the industry's needs are largely addressed by the types of support provided. Still, a fluent dialogue with the administration is needed to ensure the interventions align with local characteristics.

A total of 285.66 M€ was invested by the EU in the beekeeping sector for this budgetary period, with 610.1 M€ in total public expenditure when considering co-funding by countries/regions.

MSs primarily assess the success of CAP interventions, including National Beekeeping Programmes, using Result Indicators (R.X) and Output Indicators (O.X), which are set out in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. These indicators are used to monitor progress towards CAP-specific objectives (see the CAP Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (PMEF)). In the case of beekeeping, MSs use the following indicators:

- **R.35 - Measures the share of beehives supported by CAP interventions, reflecting efforts to maintain or increase managed bee populations, and;**
- **O.37 - Number of actions or units for beekeeping preservation or improvement: #beekeepers profiting from measure, #beehives affected by the subsidy, #actions supporting the sector, other.**

Table A – Apiculture interventions in Member States' CAP strategic plans 2023-2027 - National Apicultural Programmes (NAPs)



Which presents the full intervention catalogue, including the complete spending classification described in Section 3.1.

EXPLORE THE BEE LIFE CAP WEB APP

While the CAP contains dedicated interventions for the beekeeping sector, the largest opportunities for pollinator stewardship are found in measures targeting farmers and land managers. For this reason, BeeLife assessed the broader CAP intervention framework to identify instruments capable of delivering benefits for pollinators, biodiversity and beekeeping activities. The intervention logic and the typical eligible practices for beekeeper-targeted support are detailed in **Annex 1** (Beekeepers4Biodiversity).

3.3 Supporting Pollinators through Farming Measures

In CAP terms, the existence of pollinators is influenced more by farmers and landowners than beekeepers because they manage the largest land in the EU (% of Europe's surface), and they absorb the biggest CAP budgets. Therefore, the leverage for pollinator- and biodiversity-friendly farming lies in mainstream agriculture.

An analysis of all the interventions included in the current CAP reveals many opportunities for the administrations to incentivise pollinator- and biodiversity-friendly practices. As expected, most high-impact interventions fall under Eco-schemes and Agri-Environment-Climate Measures (AECMs). However, other interventions could be considered "Farmer-driven biodiversity" (**Farmers4Biodiversity**), such as Grassland extensification, Organic farming, "Crop diversification" (GAEC 7), and the wrongly called "Non-productive areas" (hedges, fallows) (GAEC8), which provide habitat for beneficial insects that provide, among others, pollination, pest control, and nutrient recycling services to farmers' production. As a result, they should be considered "Productive Areas" that enable production factors. For this reason, we refer to them as Production Factor-Providing Areas (PFP-Areas).

 The budget allocation to the different interventions at the Member State level is unevenly distributed. Some of these interventions represent less than 0.5% of national CAP budgets, being considered more niche yet targeted (e.g., biodiversity areas or crop diversification eco-schemes in Austria), while others receive 2% to 5% of the budget (e.g., organic farming in Germany). These national choices reflect a country's orientation—or lack thereof—towards 'green' measures.

There are many interventions that are neither clearly positive nor negative for biodiversity or pollination, but tweaks can be designed to yield major gains.

3.3.1. Assessing CAP Measures through a Pollinator Lens

3.3.1.1. Pollinator-friendly interventions per country

Fortunately, the southern region of Europe and large agricultural economies allocate the largest total budgets to interventions that benefit pollinators. Italy tops the ranking with 104 interventions (total budget of €15.3 billion), followed by Spain with 56 (€14 billion), Germany with 32 (€12.8 billion), France with 70 (€7.3 billion), and Poland with 40 (€6.8 billion). As can be seen, Italy and Spain have strong structural integration with both a high number of interventions and a high budget allocated to them, while Germany has fewer interventions but a higher financial weight per intervention.

Austria is a textbook model due to the high leverage, high budget share, and strong alignment with biodiversity (e.g., Austria invests 2.19% of the national budget for the Green cover of arable land - catch crop cultivation support (Eco-scheme), 2% for Extensive grassland management (called Animal welfare - grazing, Eco-scheme), 1.01% for Alpine breeding premium (movement of bovine/ewes/goats to alpine pastures) support (Coupled support), or 8.98% in the ENVCLIM Organic farming measure.

3.3.1.2. Analysis of pollinator-friendly interventions per Macro-type

In terms of macro-type of interventions, countries have mainly used or have the potential to use positive impact via Rural Development interventions (around 70% of the interventions, 775 interventions, with €62.7 billion budget), while Decoupled direct Payments (mainly Eco-Schemes) included 144 measures (€28.4 billion), Coupled Direct Payments 113 measures (€6.5 billion) and Wine Sectorial interventions (could) design 17 interventions (and €1.6 billion) to promote biodiversity in the farm. The main interventions are: AECMs, Organic farming, Landscape management, and Eco-schemes.

Across countries, most interventions account for <1% of national CAP budgets, with few reaching 2-5%, indicating that many are ecologically relevant but financially marginal.

3.3.1.3. Analysis of the main pollinator-friendly interventions

In terms of interventions, we could identify those that:

1. Integrate structural biodiversity drivers such as Organic farming, AECMs or Permanent grassland extensification;
2. Integrate Landscape enhancers, such as PFP-Areas (hedges, buffer strips), Crop diversification or Agroforestry;
3. Integrate indirect contributors, such as Protein crops, Low-input farming systems and Soil protection measures.



Unfortunately, many of the interventions with the highest ecological impact are not the most funded. This creates a policy paradox: the CAP already contains powerful tools for pollinators, but they are often underfunded or optional. On the positive side, there is no need to invent new instruments; countries would need to scale existing high-impact interventions and improve their targeting. Furthermore, there are many opportunities in the current CAP that are already funded and politically accepted but under-optimised. The objective would be to integrate implementation criteria that include biodiversity/pollinator considerations.

We will now evaluate intervention types one by one with positive or potential to contribute to pollinator stewardship.

3.3.2. Eco-schemes relevant to beekeeping and pollinators (Direct payments) - Art. 31 Reg. (EU) 2021/2115

Eco-schemes are annual, fully EU-funded (100%) decoupled direct payment top-ups for farmers who voluntarily go beyond the basic conditionality requirements in favour of climate, environmental, or animal welfare objectives.²³ BeeLife identified 126 eco-schemes across 25 MS as positively relevant for pollinators, representing **€25.84 billion in EU direct payments over 2023–2029** — by far the largest financial envelope of any intervention category in this analysis. Eco-schemes are entirely nationally designed: each eco-scheme is a sui generis intervention, meaning there is significant diversity in scope, eligibility criteria, and level of ambition across MS. Examples of eco-schemes relevant to bees are included in [Table B](#). Several eco-schemes adopted by MSs indirectly benefit pollinators and the beekeeping sector by paying farmers to create or maintain pollinator/biodiversity habitats or to adopt favourable farming practices such as extensive grazing, agro-ecology, organic production, agroforestry, low-intensity mowing, etc. The main clusters of practice types that we could identify in our analysis are:



BIODIVERSITY AND HABITAT ECO-SCHEMES: the most pollinator-relevant eco-scheme cluster and the largest by financial weight. They support farmers who maintain flower-rich field margins, establish wildflower strips, create or maintain landscape elements (hedges, ponds, orchards, beetle banks), manage semi-natural grasslands under low-input conditions, or implement whole-farm biodiversity management plans. The German scheme — provision of land to improve biodiversity and conservation of habitats, at €1,643M — is the largest individual eco-scheme in the entire catalogue and establishes a national framework for biodiversity-oriented land management that explicitly includes pollinator support among its stated objectives. Total of 36 ECO-SCHEMES interventions, activated in 19 MSs for a budget of 9,203M€ of EU contribution (RI- R.33/R.24).



REDUCED PESTICIDE USE AND IPM ECO-SCHEMES: Reduced pesticide use and integrated pest management eco-schemes provide annual income support to farmers who commit to reducing or eliminating synthetic pesticide applications, particularly insecticides and herbicides. For the beekeeping sector, these schemes are particularly important because they directly reduce the primary route of toxicological exposure for colonies — the use of insecticides on flowering crops and adjacent vegetation. Several MS have designed these eco-schemes with explicit provisions that protect crop flowering periods from pesticide application, making them a de facto risk-mitigation tool for apiculture operations. Germany, Spain, Belgium-Flanders and Greece are among the most significant adopters by financial volume. Total of 28 ECO-SCHEMES interventions, activated in 16 MSs for a budget of 4,231M€ of EU contribution (RI- R.33/R.14).



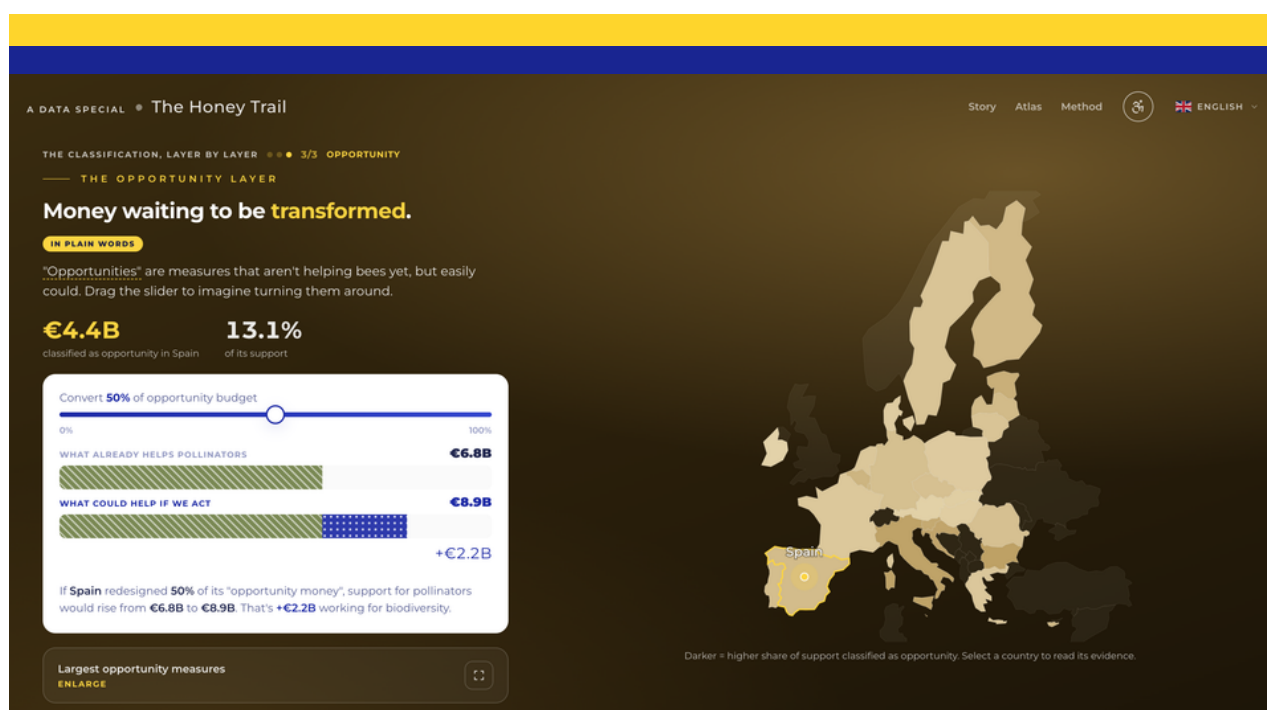
ORGANIC FARMING ECO-SCHEMES: Typically an annual top-up complementing the longer-term ENVCLIM organic conversion commitments. Greece accounts for the largest organic eco-scheme (€1,199M), reflecting the strategic importance of organic certification to Greek honey marketing, particularly for thyme honey exported to premium international markets. Sweden and Denmark also operate substantial organic eco-schemes, reinforcing their national strategies of expanding organic farmland to 30–40% of UAA, with documented co-benefits for pollinator communities in those agricultural landscapes. Total of 14 ECO-SCHEMES interventions, activated in 11 MSs for a budget of 2,440M€ of EU contribution (RI- R.29).



FLOWER STRIPS AND NON-PRODUCTIVE AREAS ECO-SCHEMES: Requiring farmers to create or maintain flower strips, buffer zones, ecological focus areas, or non-productive landscape elements. These are perhaps the most directly impactful eco-schemes for forage availability: a well-managed wildflower strip of 6 metres wide and 100 metres long can provide sufficient pollen and nectar resources to support approximately 3–5 honeybee colonies during peak bloom. The largest such eco-scheme, Romania's landscape features eco-scheme (€338M), covers extensive arable agricultural zones where landscape connectivity has been severely degraded and where pollinator forage is a genuine limiting factor for local beekeeping operations. Total of 13 ECO-SCHEMES interventions, activated in 11 MSs for a budget of 548M€ of EU contribution (RI- R.33/R.12).

Collectively, these eco-schemes illustrate how the CAP's green architecture can create **pollinator-friendly habitats** and food resources. However, most eco-schemes target general biodiversity or carbon objectives; only Cyprus explicitly supports beekeepers with an **organic beekeeping payment**. MSs should consider designing eco-schemes that directly incentivise biodiversity, pollinators or beekeeping (e.g., maintaining melliferous hedgerows, providing water sources or bee shelters, selecting seed varieties that are local and beneficial for pollinators (i.e., produce nectar and pollen, during long blooming periods). Ready-to-use blueprints for two such schemes — an IPM eco-scheme and a pollinator eco-scheme for arable and permanent crops — are provided in Annexes 2 and 3, so that any Member State can adopt them with minimal adaptation.

Table B - National Eco-schemes relevant to bees and pollinators. Note: these Eco-schemes are nationally relevant.



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3.3.3. Agri-environmental and climate measures (AECMs/ENVCLIM) - Art. 70 Reg. (EU)2021/2115

Beyond sector-specific interventions, some CAP strategic plans include “Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments” (formerly AECMs under Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, now named **ENVCLIM**) for pollinator conservation and beekeeping, promoting services that farming provides to society and rural areas. These interventions constitute the largest pool of CAP funding positively assessed by BeeLife for pollinator benefit: **347 interventions across all 28 MS, representing €19.05 billion in EU co-financing over 2023–2029 (total public expenditure: €31.13 billion).**

These are multi-annual voluntary commitments — typically five years — by which farmers go beyond the conditionality baseline and receive compensation for income foregone or additional costs incurred for maintaining or improving habitats and pollination services. Of the 347 ENVCLIM interventions in this group — all assessed as Positive for pollinator biodiversity — BeeLife classified 336 as Farmers4Biodiversity and 11 as Dual beneficiary, meaning they directly support both beekeepers and farmers (see Table B) The Commission’s overview highlights specific schemes (**Table C, Annexe 1**).

Six clusters of practice types emerge from BeeLife's analysis of the intervention, each with a distinct mechanism of pollinator support:



ORGANIC FARMING CONVERSION AND MAINTENANCE: single largest ENVCLIM practice cluster and the one with the most unambiguous positive impact on pollinators. By eliminating synthetic pesticides and inorganic fertilisers across entire farm units, organic commitments reduce the acute and chronic toxicological load on foraging bees and expand the availability of weed flora as forage resources. In extensive livestock systems, organic grazing management typically yields higher plant species richness and, by extension, greater floral abundance and diversity. Beneficiaries are farmers who commit to certified organic production for a minimum of five years; beekeeping operations on or adjacent to organically managed land benefit indirectly through improved forage quality and reduced risk of contamination in honey and bee products. Total of 40 ENVCLIM interventions, activated in 25 MSs for a budget of 7,562M€ of EU contribution (OI - 0.17 - hectares under organic farming).



BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT: FLOWER-RICH HABITATS, NATURA 2000 FARMING AND LANDSCAPE CONNECTIVITY: the most directly pollinator-relevant practice cluster. It encompasses commitments to maintain or restore species-rich grasslands, manage semi-natural habitats, create and preserve landscape elements (hedgerows, field margins, ponds, traditional orchards), and comply with or exceed Natura 2000 management requirements on farmed land. These measures expand the availability of diverse, high-quality floral resources throughout the active season and provide nesting and overwintering habitat for wild bee communities. Beekeepers benefit both from improved colony health and reduced foraging stress, and — where applicable — from enhanced marketing potential when honey is produced in or near Natura 2000 or high nature value areas. Total of 84 ENVCLIM interventions, activated in 24 MSs for a budget of 4,294M€ of EU contribution (OI - 0.14 - hectares under biodiversity contracts).



REDUCE PESTICIDE USE AND INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM): Integrated production and IPM commitments directly address one of the most critical threats to bee health: pesticide exposure. These interventions require farmers to implement IPM plans, substitute synthetic insecticides with biological control agents, respect mandatory no-spray periods during flowering, and document pesticide use for traceability. In theory, farmers should not be subsidised for implementing these measures, because IPM implementation and pesticide use record-keeping are legal requirements in Europe. ENVCLIM measures exist to bring farming practices beyond the basic legal requirements with respect to pesticide use. For beekeepers, the primary benefit is the reduction of residue contamination risk in beekeeping products (e.g., honey, wax, pollen, propolis, etc.), as well as the reduction of toxicological effects on honey bee colonies. For farmers, the primary benefit is the potential increase in the presence of a variety of pollinators, establishing relevant ecosystem services for production, such as pollination, nutrient recycling or pest control. Beneficiaries are farmers in arable, horticultural, and permanent crop systems; pollinators and beekeepers benefit indirectly through the improved health status of colonies foraging on IPM-managed land. Total of 16 ENVCLIM interventions, activated in 10 MSs for a budget of 876M€ of EU contribution (RI - R.33 - % of UAA under pollinator-beneficial practices).



HAY FARMING AND EXTENSIVE GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT: These landscapes represent some of the richest pollinator habitats in European agricultural landscapes. Late-mowing regimes, low fertiliser inputs, and the absence of herbicides maintain high botanical diversity — and therefore exceptional floral resources for both wild pollinators and honey bees. Only two MS have formally activated this cluster under ENVCLIM, though the practice is also embedded in broader biodiversity management commitments elsewhere. Austria and Sweden recognise hay meadow management as a distinct multi-annual commitment with biodiversity and beekeeping co-benefits acknowledged in the intervention rationale. Total of 3 ENVCLIM interventions, activated in 2 MSs for a budget of 445M€ of EU contribution (OI - O.14 - hectares under biodiversity contracts).



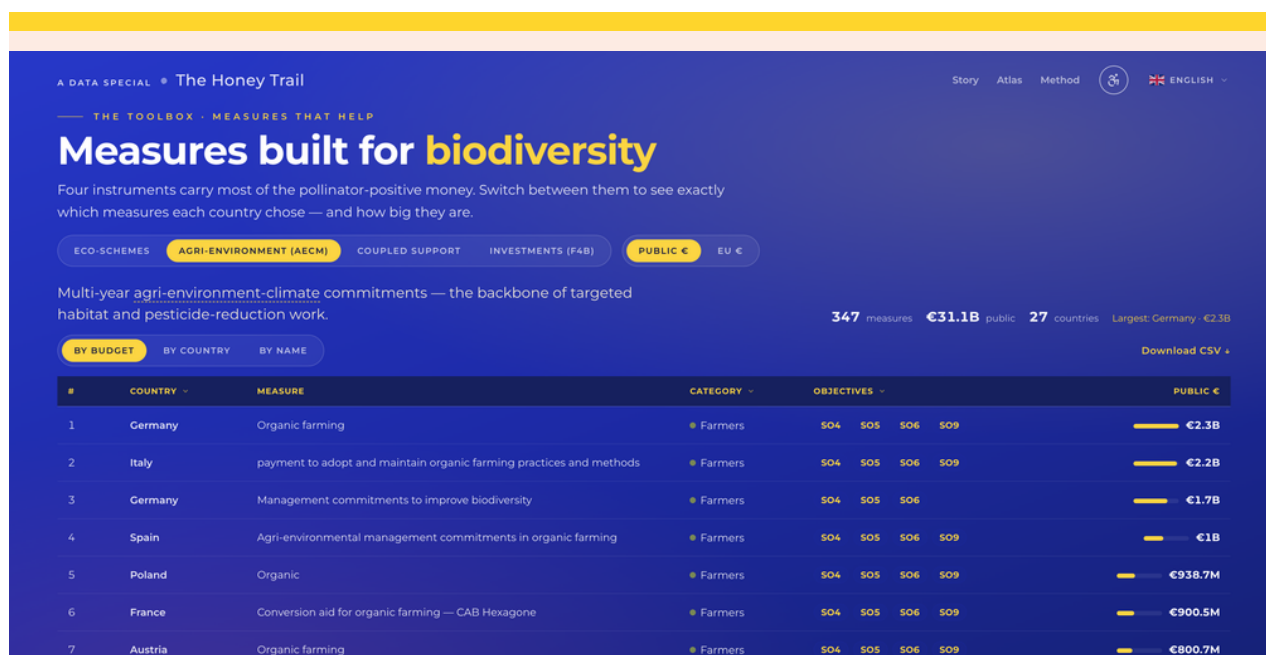
AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS: The integration of woody perennial species within agricultural systems can provide valuable nectar and pollen resources when melliferous species are selected (e.g. lime, chestnut, willow, acacia, fruit trees, sainfoin hedgerows). The actual benefit depends on the species composition selected by farmers. Several MSs have committed to agroforestry specifically within or adjacent to high-value agricultural landscapes — Greece and Italy lead the investment, with Spain and Poland also making notable commitments. The selection of melliferous and polliniferous species within agroforestry systems is a key advocacy point for BeeLife in the context of the national implementation guidelines. Total of 11 ENVCLIM interventions, activated in 8 MSs, for a budget of 115M€ of EU contribution (OI - O.16 - hectares under agroforestry commitments).



DIRECT BEEKEEPER-TARGETED ENVCLIM INTERVENTIONS (DUAL BENEFICIARIES): In these ENVCLIM interventions, beekeepers undertake obligations — typically relating to organic management of apiaries, pollination service provision, colony health monitoring, or movement management — in exchange for area or per-colony compensation. They also promote constructive collaboration between farmers and beekeepers/naturalists.

Countries involved are Bulgaria and Slovenia ("Organic beekeeping"), Greece (payments to protect bee swarms and enhance biodiversity), Spain (Beekeepers4Biodiversity on agricultural land), Finland (cultivation of draught plants for bees), France (MAECAPI – improving the pollinator potential of bees), Hungary (animal-welfare aid in the apiculture sector), Italy (SRA-ACA18 – commitments for apiculture), Latvia (management of beekeeping units for pollination), Portugal (two measures: support for beekeeping and support for Beekeepers4Biodiversity). Total of 11 ENVCLIM interventions, activated in 10 MSs for a budget of 215.2M€ of EU contribution (OI - O.14, O.17 and O.18).

Table C - Interventions under Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments (ENVCLIM, Rural Development) in Member States' CAP strategic plans 2023-2027 affecting beekeeping



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Note: The SO codes correspond to the Specific Objectives in Regulation (EU) 2021/2115; SO6 aims to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, SO4 and SO5 cover climate action and sustainable resource management, SO2 and SO3 relate to competitiveness and farmers' position in the value chain, SO8 to employment and rural growth, and SO9 to responding to societal demands. All apiculture-related AECMs focus on biodiversity (SO6) and are measured primarily using result indicator R.35 (share of beehives supported). Results and output indicators are part of Annexe I to Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and serve to monitor progress towards CAP-specific objectives (CAP Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (PMEF)). Some countries also use R.31 (preserving habitats and species), reflecting habitat-creation commitments. Each entry summarises the official definition and its measurement focus, drawn from the Commission's indicator guidance and cover-note documents: R.12 – Adaptation to climate change, R.14 – Carbon storage in soils and biomass, R.19 – Improving and protecting soils, R.21 – Protecting water quality, R.22 – Sustainable nutrient management, R.24 – Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides, R.25 – Environmental performance in the livestock sector, R.31 – Preserving habitats and species, R.33 – Improving Natura 2000 management, R.34 – Preserving landscape features, R.35 – Preserving beehives, O.14 – Hectares under agri-environment-climate commitments (non-forest), O.17 – Organic farming support.

3.3.4. Coupled Income Support for Pollinator-Relevant Crops and Livestock - Art. 33 Reg. (EU) 2021/2115

Coupled Income Support (CIS) provides annual direct payments linked to the production of specific agricultural sectors where economic, environmental or social difficulties justify maintaining production levels. BeeLife identified **57 CIS interventions across 21 MS as Farmers4Biodiversity, totalling €5.23 billion EU**, on the basis that the supported agricultural systems — when managed following agro-ecological principles — either provide critical forage resources for pollinators or maintain open habitats of high conservation value for bee communities. Two main sub-categories emerge: nectariferous and polliniferous crops, and extensive livestock systems maintaining pollinator-rich grasslands.

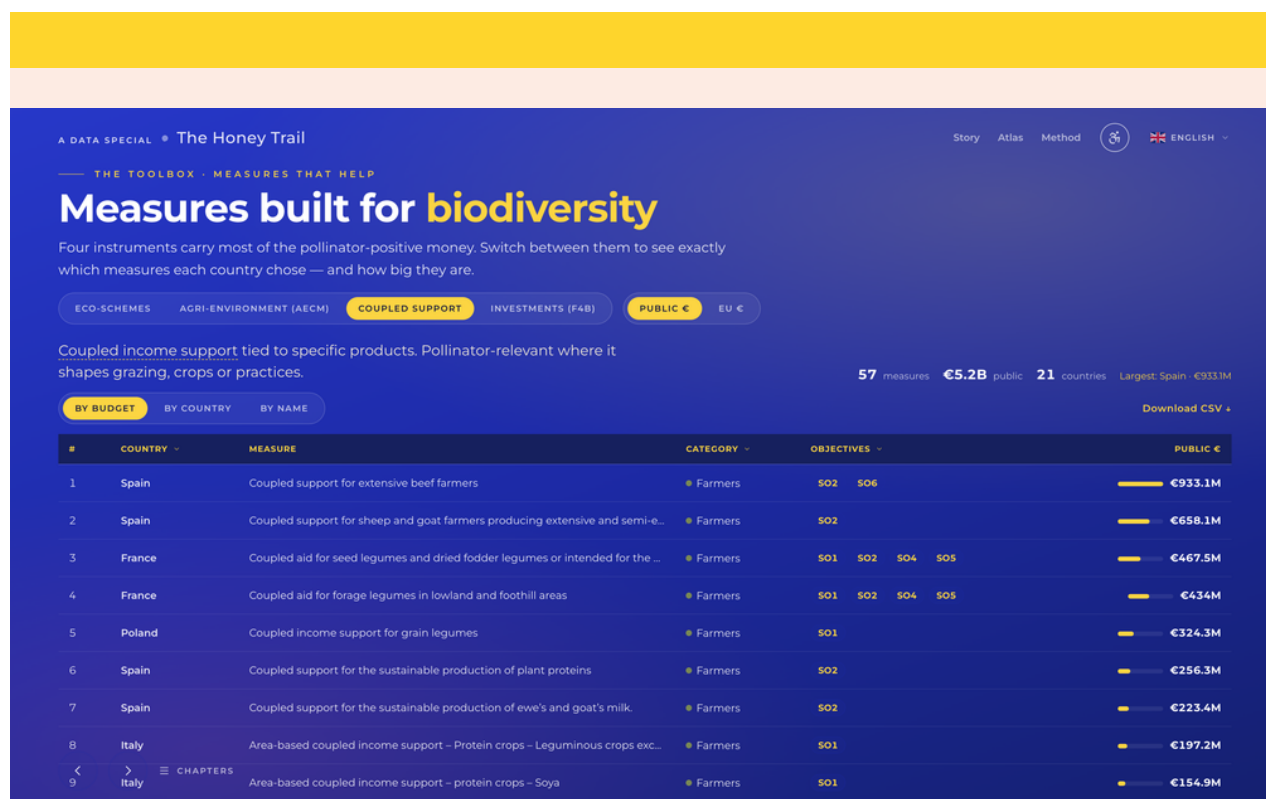


LEGUMES, FORAGE CROPS, AND NECTARIFEROUS/POLLINIFEROUS PLANTS: The largest pollinator-relevant CIS cluster by financial volume supports leguminous crops — protein crops, forage legumes, grain legumes — which are among the most important pollen and nectar sources in European arable landscapes. Legumes (clover, alfalfa, lupins, sainfoin, vetch, beans, peas, soya) produce abundant, accessible floral resources and are visited by a wide range of bee species. Their cultivation within arable rotations also diversifies the landscape mosaic and breaks monoculture patterns that impoverish forage availability for bees. BeeLife's assessment notes that the pollinator benefit is conditional on crop management following IPM principles with restrictions on insecticide use during flowering periods — a condition not universally embedded in current CIS eligibility criteria. Ideally, there are mowing systems that allow parts of flowering to remain in the fields (instead of cutting the whole parcels for hay production). Several schemes already exist, like the good collaboration of French alfalfa growers with local beekeepers.



EXTENSIVE LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS ON POLLINATOR-RICH GRASSLANDS: Extensive cattle, sheep and goat grazing systems, when maintained at appropriate densities and without agrochemical inputs, preserve open semi-natural grasslands that constitute priority habitats for pollinators. The abandonment of extensive livestock farming — a major driver of grassland loss in Europe — is arguably the second most important agricultural threat to pollinator diversity after pesticide use. CIS for extensive livestock provides economic incentives to maintain farming in areas where intensification or abandonment are the most likely alternative trajectories. Spain, with its vast dehesa system, dominates this cluster financially but is joined by France (extensive beef with forage legumes), Austria (alpine livestock transhumance), and several Eastern European MS maintaining grassland-dependent sheep and goat systems.

Table D - includes a list of CIS schemes in the different member states. It can be found here:

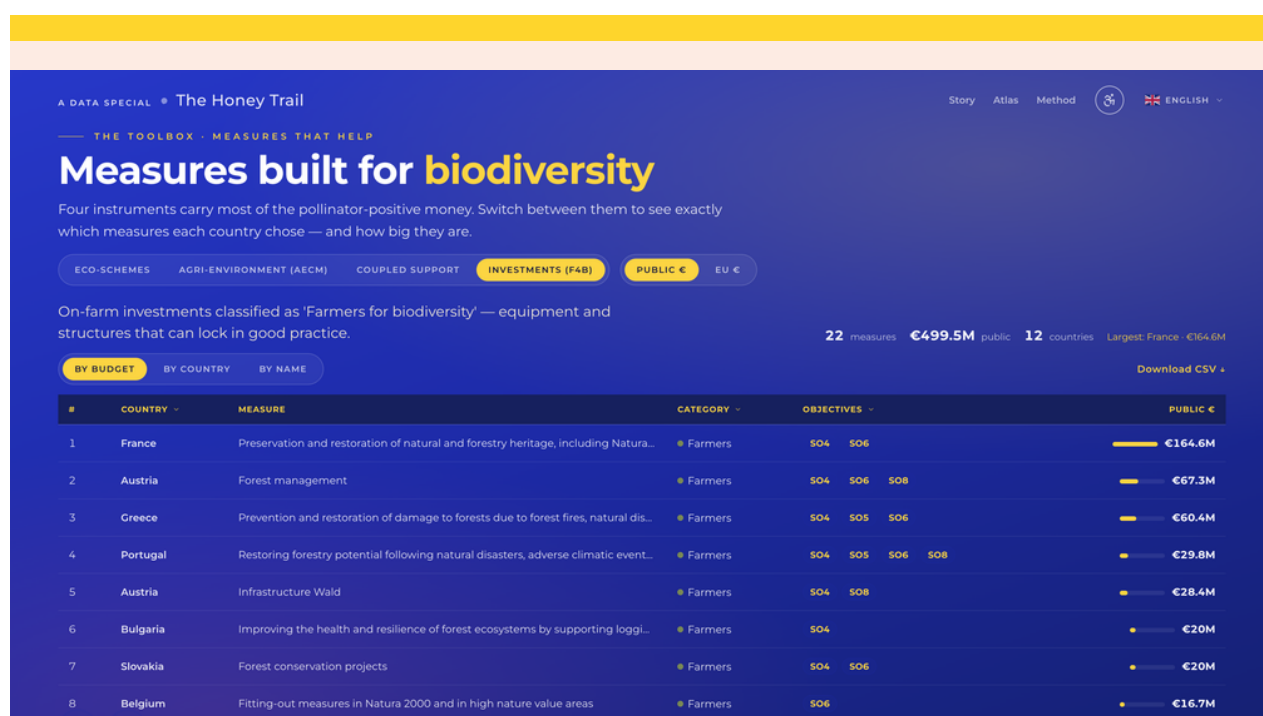


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3.3.5. Rural Development Investments - Art. 73-74 Reg. (EU) 2021/2115

BeeLife identified 22 INVEST interventions across 12 MS as Farmers4Biodiversity (€328M EU / €500M public). These are investments in physical infrastructure and assets directly supporting biodiversity and pollinator habitat, including the planting of hedgerows, creation of ponds, restoration of traditional orchards, construction of wildlife corridors, and forest ecosystem management. We included these under our classification Farmers4Biodiversity. Unlike the agri-environment commitments above, these are one-time capital investments rather than annual management payments, and they deliver durable landscape improvements with long-term pollinator benefits. The larger INVEST Opportunities envelope (€12.96B across 281 interventions) contains an additional set of productive farm investments where pollinator-relevant integration depends on MS eligibility criteria.

Table E - Interventions under the RD INVESTMENTS in Member States' CAP strategic plans 2023-2027 supporting a Farmers4Biodiversity logic.



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3.3.6. Conditional Opportunities: Additional Interventions with Potential Pollinator Benefit

Beyond the interventions with confirmed positive assessments, BeeLife identified a further set of interventions classified as Opportunities — meaning pollinator benefit is possible but is conditional on the manner of implementation, the choice of crop varieties, management practices, or the incorporation of explicit bee-protection conditions in national eligibility rules.



These represent significant untapped potential for apiculture advocacy in national CAP implementation contexts.



KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND ADVISORY SERVICES (KNOW) - €1.04B EU: BeeLife assessed 63 KNOW interventions across 25 MS as Opportunities, on the basis that knowledge transfer and advisory services carry strong *potential for dissemination of pollinator needs and awareness raising*. Whether these services actually address pollinator health, bee-safe pesticide management, or beekeeping practices depends entirely on MS-level programme design and the thematic content of advisory modules. Countries such as France (€99M KNOW), Greece (€92M), Germany (€87M) and Spain (€68M) operate large advisory programmes — if pollinator modules are systematically embedded in these services, the reach and impact on farmer behaviour could rival that of the paid management commitments described above. BeeLife advocates for explicit pollinator advisory modules to be required in all CAP-funded farm advisory services.



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RISK MANAGEMENT TOOLS (RISK) - €2.73B EU: At the EU level, the CAP Horizontal Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 sets up an agricultural reserve (crisis reserve) of at least €450 million per year. Part of the Pillar 1 budget is held back as this reserve; if unused, it is returned to direct payments. The reserve can be mobilised to provide additional support for market management or to respond to crises such as natural disasters, market disturbances or disease outbreaks.²⁴ All 22 RISK interventions across 14 MS were assessed as Opportunities, because they could have a positive potential **if conditions for accessing them involve signing a charter for reduction of inputs, implementation of IPM, and embracement of nature-based solutions**. Italy (€1.28B), France (€930M) and Greece (€200M) operate the most significant risk management schemes. None currently requires IPM or pesticide reduction commitments as eligibility conditions — but this represents a powerful policy lever: making access to publicly subsidised agricultural insurance conditional on bee-safe pesticide management would create economic incentives for pesticide reduction at scale without additional budgetary cost. The dataset, including the CAP catalogue of interventions, does not record formal national crisis reserves for apiculture.



TEXTBOX 4 - POINT BEEKEEPING - MS have used RISK interventions in 2022 when €350 million from the reserve funded a support package for producers affected by market disturbances linked to the war in Ukraine. Beekeeping could benefit from this reserve if colony losses or market disruptions require emergency support, as any other farming sector. However, it is a national decision whether the beekeeping sector can benefit from the crisis management tools.

Therefore, MSs can create **national crisis envelopes** and integrate the beekeeping sector as eligible. However, they are currently modifying their apiculture interventions (NBPs) to address specific climatic or market emergencies, instead of addressing them via RISK interventions. An example is **Italy's emergency feeding measure**: in October 2024, the European Commission approved a modification to Italy's CAP Strategic Plan allowing **emergency feeding of bees** to be funded under the EAGF (National Beekeeping Programmes, NBPs) and the EAFRD (ENVCLIM). The measure, totalling **around €25 million**, aims to help Italian beekeepers cope with adverse weather conditions and hive attacks by providing financial assistance to ensure hive survival.²⁶ Spain integrated a similar national measure in the NBPs.

France decided in 2024 to put in place an exceptional support scheme providing partial compensation for economic losses incurred by beekeeping farms due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. This was based on Article 107, paragraph 3, point b) of the TFEU and the COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION "Temporary Crisis Framework for State Aid measures to support the economy following the aggression against Ukraine by Russia (2022/C 131 I/01)" published within the OJEU.





ORCHART REPLANTING (ORCHA, SECTORAL OTHER) - 10 INTERVENTIONS, 10 MS: Ten MS have activated orchard replanting interventions in their fruit and vegetable sectoral programmes. BeeLife assessed these as Opportunities, noting that benefit is conditional on **orchards including melliferous varieties managed in an organic or agro-ecological way, with soil coverage and IPM approaches**. In practice, the selection of commercial varieties over traditional melliferous ones, and the application of systemic insecticides during bloom, frequently negate the potential pollinator benefit. Austria, Greece, Hungary, Ireland and Croatia are among the MS with these interventions; BeeLife recommends that variety selection guidelines for ORCHA interventions be amended to prioritise or incentivise melliferous cultivars.



VINYARD RESTRUCTURING (RESTRVINEY, WINE) - €1.61B EU, 13 MS: Vineyard restructuring is the largest single Opportunities envelope with a conditional assessment. BeeLife noted that **if wine production follows environmentally friendly practices — particularly restrictions on herbicide use in vineyard inter-rows and on insecticide use during flowering periods — restructured vineyards can become valuable foraging habitats**. The exceptional single positive assessment in this category comes from Portugal's biological viticulture restructuring programme (€4M), which specifically targets organic vineyard systems. Italy (€626M), France (€371M), and Spain (€238M) operate the largest RESTRVINEY interventions; their current implementation without mandatory bee-protection conditions represents a missed opportunity at scale.



PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENTS (INVEST Opportunities) - €12.96B EU: The 281 INVEST Opportunities across 28 MS — the single largest envelope in the entire analysis — were assessed as carrying **potential for dissemination of pollinator needs and awareness raising**. This seemingly limited assessment reflects the fact that productive farm investments (farm buildings, machinery, precision agriculture, irrigation) are not intrinsically related to pollinator management. However, BeeLife notes that **several investment categories within this envelope — particularly non-productive investments (OI O.21), natural heritage conservation (OI O.23), and agroforestry (OI O.24) — have high inherent pollinator relevance** and should be actively promoted among beekeepers and farmers interested in diversifying income through pollination services.

3.4. Summary of the analysis of CAP 2023-2027 interventions

According to our analysis, we identified some confirmed positive interventions for pollinators classified as “Farmers4Biodiversity” and “Dual purposes/beneficiaries” (€50.5 billion EU) that represent roughly 175 times the cumulative 2023-2029 EU apiculture envelope under the NAPs (€285.66 M, Section 3.2). Furthermore, the “Opportunities” category adds a further €18 billion that could be made pollinator-positive through targeted adjustments to national eligibility rules, particularly in interventions KNOW, RISK, RESTRVINEY and productive INVEST.

The complete classification of the catalogue — including the neutral and DNSH-risk interventions not discussed in this report — can be explored interactively in the [BeeLife Data Dashboard](#).



BeeLife's analysis demonstrates that the CAP is an extremely impactful lever for pollinator protection. The systematic integration of pollinator safeguards and biodiversity conditions into the mainstream agricultural support instruments is essential, especially where the financial resources are orders of magnitude larger.



4

Opportunities for the beekeeping sector in the CAP post-2027

*The future of agriculture is not something to
predict. It is something to design.*

4. Opportunities for the beekeeping sector in the CAP post-2027 (2028–34)

4.1. Commission proposals for the post-2027 CAP

This chapter summarises the current legislative framework and the range of measures available to EU Member States to support beekeeping, highlights the choices made in national CAP Strategic Plans, and outlines the main changes proposed for the post-2027 CAP. The following sections then examine these developments in greater detail: the proposed legislative framework and its implications, followed by recommendations for beekeepers and farmers.

From the BeeLife perspective, the post-2027 Common Agricultural Policy proposes significant changes to the way agricultural support is structured, financed and delivered across Europe. While the stated objectives include simplifying the CAP, strengthening its territorial dimension, and giving Member States greater flexibility, these changes will affect how common environmental objectives are translated into national and regional actions.

The move towards a single funding framework, the unification of environmental instruments and the replacement of current conditionality with a new Farm Stewardship system are intended to give Member States greater scope to tailor interventions to local needs. At the same time, greater flexibility implies greater responsibility for national authorities to ensure that common EU objectives remain ambitious and are effectively delivered on the ground.

The future CAP may offer greater flexibility, but flexibility will only deliver better outcomes if it is matched by clear objectives, adequate resources, effective safeguards and relevant results monitoring. Furthermore, where biodiversity actions are not mandatory, political commitment will be crucial to ensure that environmental ambition is maintained across Member States.

So, what is actually changing?

1. From two pillars to one funding framework

The current two-pillar structure is proposed to become a single funding framework, bringing together instruments that are currently managed under different pillars.



BeeLife is concerned that **integrating the CAP into a broader National and Regional Partnership Fund could dilute the visibility of apiculture as a distinct policy priority**. Within a single and potentially shared funding envelope, **beekeeping may have to compete directly with much larger and more institutionally established agricultural and livestock sectors for limited resources**. This could make it more difficult to secure dedicated support, maintain sector-specific interventions and ensure that the contribution of beekeeping to biodiversity, pollination and ecosystem resilience is adequately recognised in national and regional plans.



2. From green tools divided between the two pillars (eco-schemes + AECMs) to a unified environmental architecture (agri-environmental actions).

Eco-schemes and agri-environment and climate measures are proposed to be integrated into a unified framework of "green" or sustainable actions. The intention is to simplify the system, as similar interventions have been supported in different Member States either on the first or the second pillar, to focus more strongly on results, and to encourage farmers to adopt practices that benefit climate, biodiversity and animal welfare. Independently of whether in two pillars or one, the budget dedicated to environmental architecture should be higher to ensure an agricultural system based on nature-based solutions.



For pollinators, however, the effectiveness of this approach will depend on how ambitious these actions are, how they are designed and how consistently they are implemented across Member States. BeeLife underlines that **pollinator stewardship should be placed at the core of the future environmental architecture**, with continued or increased support for measures such as flower strips, hedgerows and other melliferous habitats.

The proposed 43% climate and environmental spending ambition for the National and Regional Partnership Plans should not be regarded as a ceiling. BeeLife calls for the entire CAP budget to be aligned with pollinator protection, ensuring that agricultural expenditure contributes to, or at least does not undermine, biodiversity and pollinator objectives.



3. From conditionality to Farm Stewardship: more flexible, incentive-based approach

One of the most significant changes concerns the relationship between mandatory requirements and voluntary incentives. Rather than relying on a common, prescriptive set of requirements, Member States would have greater scope to design measures suited to local environmental and agricultural conditions, in line with the Commission's recommendations.

The proposed approach aims to combine targeted EU-level requirements with stronger incentives for farmers to adopt environmentally beneficial practices, thereby fostering nature-based solutions and climate adaptation and resilience in agriculture and livestock production. It is intended to give farmers greater ownership of environmental outcomes while ensuring that common CAP objectives are met.



For pollinators, this shift deserves particular attention. If some practices that currently form part of the basic environmental requirements were to become mainly voluntary and dependent on financial incentives, **the minimum level of protection could vary more widely between Member States**. This would be particularly relevant to **pesticide exposure**, the availability of flowering habitats and the ecological connectivity between them. BeeLife is therefore concerned that **Farm Stewardship could result in farmers being subsidised for complying with basic legal requirements**, (as if EU citizens were paid simply for obeying road-traffic laws). Farm Stewardship should complement, rather than replace, clear and enforceable environmental safeguards, while **incentives should reward practices that go beyond the legal baseline** and deliver additional benefits for biodiversity and pollinators.



4. From EU-level design to greater national discretion

Following the logic of the current CAP implementation, the future CAP will continue to give Member States greater responsibility for translating common objectives into measures adapted to their territories. This territorial approach may allow national authorities to respond more effectively to local conditions and agricultural systems.

At the same time, greater national discretion may lead to different levels of ambition and different approaches across Member States. **The quality of implementation will therefore become as important as the design of the EU framework itself.**

It could also create new opportunities to recognise the specific contribution of pollinators and beekeeping within national/regional CAP plans.

A specific concern in this context is the design of the new protein crops sector. BeeLife stresses that this design should take account of the melliferous and polliniferous potential of different crop varieties. Member States should consider not only their contribution to protein production and farm competitiveness, but also their value as sources of nectar and pollen for honey bees and wild pollinators. Practices that reduce dependence on inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides, reasoned/partial mowing, planting of melliferous/polliniferous varieties, etc., should be incentivised for growers of protein crops.



5. From a known funding structure to a more uncertain allocation of resources

The European Union is proposing that at least 35% of the EU's overall budget for 2028–2034 should contribute to climate and environmental objectives. Since a significant share of the resources will be managed through the new National and Regional Partnership Plans, the ambition for these plans is higher: 43% of their expenditure should contribute to the same objectives.

Environmental and apiculture priorities will compete within a broader and potentially reduced funding envelope, creating challenges for a relatively small sector. **Apiculture interventions could nevertheless attract additional funding where they contribute to climate adaptation, biodiversity and risk management.**

The Commission proposes a €6.3 billion agricultural crisis reserve **within the National and Regional Partnership Plans. BeeLife notes that the reserve's operation and accessibility remain unclear** and calls for clear eligibility and activation criteria.

BeeLife also calls for the effective application of the **Do No Significant Harm** principle to subsidised investments, since the contribution of agricultural interventions to pollinator stewardship will depend on how they are designed and implemented.



4.1.1 The Proposed CAP Framework: Legislation

In July 2025, the European Commission presented its initial proposals for the **post-2027 CAP**, covering the 2028–2034 programming period. The proposals form part of the wider **Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)** for 2028–2034 and set out a new legal and financial architecture for the CAP. The proposals are currently being negotiated by the European Parliament and the Council through the **trilogue process**, with the **new framework foreseen to enter into force on 1 January 2028** (the final legislation may therefore differ from the Commission's initial proposal). Three main legislative texts provide the framework for the proposed system:

- 1. COM(2025) 560 — Proposal for a Regulation establishing conditions for the implementation of Union support to the CAP (2025/0241 COD).**²⁵ This is the new "CAP Implementation Regulation" — the successor to Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. It lays down the types of interventions, specific objectives, conditionality/farm stewardship, payment rules, and governance. All the apiculture-specific provisions that currently live in Article 55 of 2021/2115 are expected to migrate here (or into the CMO amendment below).
- 2. COM(2025) 553 — Proposal amending the CMO Regulation (EU) 1308/2013.**²⁶ Targeted CMO amendments covering the school scheme, sectoral interventions, the new protein crops sector, meat marketing standards, and emergency supply preparedness.
- 3. COM(2025) 565 - The NRP Fund Regulation.**²⁷ The overarching financial framework embedding the CAP within the broader National and Regional Partnership Plans envelope.

4.1.2 Funding: a larger framework, but a smaller CAP envelope

- **Structural change:** end of the two-pillar architecture - The new CAP will rely on a single fund, replacing the current two-pillar structure, thereby reducing complexity, rigidity, and overlap and giving EU authorities more flexibility and options. The EAGF (Pillar 1: direct payments, sectoral interventions) and the EAFRD (Pillar 2: rural development) merge into a single instrument embedded within the broader NRP.²⁸ The integration of the CAP into the National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs) will create greater synergies and more impactful measures where needed, while safeguarding the predictability of income support for the farmers. All current rural development tools will be retained and strengthened, including the LEADER programme.²⁹
- **Budget framework – the MFF (2028-34)** envisages a **National and Regional Partnership fund of €865 billion, with €300 billion ring-fenced** for income support and crisis management, including €6.3 billion for a **“unity safety net”** (Crisis Reserve).²⁸ Funding envelopes for sectoral interventions are expected to continue, but allocations will likely change as the overall budget is reduced, and intervention allocations will depend on political negotiations. The proposed CAP framework represents a 20% reduction of the CAP budget compared to the current €386.6 billion, which could severely limit the resources available for environmental and biodiversity-related interventions.

What the proposal changes in practice:

- **A stronger emphasis on competitiveness alongside climate and environmental objectives** – The proposals place greater emphasis on the competitiveness and resilience of European agriculture and aim to align the CAP with the EU's climate-neutrality goal by strengthening support for practices that mitigate and adapt to climate change, enhance soil and water protection, preserve biodiversity and improve animal welfare.³⁰
 - **From eco-schemes + AECMs to unified agri-environmental actions** - The current system of eco-schemes and Agri-Environmental-Climate measures will be merged into a single category of agri-environmental actions, co-financed by Member States. Farmers will receive incentives to adopt practices that benefit biodiversity, the climate, and animal welfare.
 - **From conditionality to Farm Stewardship** - Member States will be able to design measures suited to their local environment and conditions, guided by Commission recommendations, thereby ensuring that common environmental objectives are achieved. The GAEC and SMR standards that anchored current conditionality are replaced by the "Farm Stewardship" system.²⁹
-  This change is particularly important in relation to inputs pressure (i.e., pesticides or fertilisers). Greater flexibility can create opportunities for more targeted action, but it also raises the question of how a common minimum level of environmental protection will be maintained across Member States. This is an area that will require particular attention during the negotiations and subsequent implementation.
- **Performance-based delivery and simplification** – The Commission argues that the future CAP would simplify rules, reduce administrative burdens and improve digitalisation. The Commission's vision for agriculture and food stresses generational renewal, competitiveness, sustainability, resilience and digital transformation³¹ (Figure 2). However, current discussions suggest that performance-based delivery would be watered down.

Figure: The common CAP toolbox for supporting sustainable agriculture

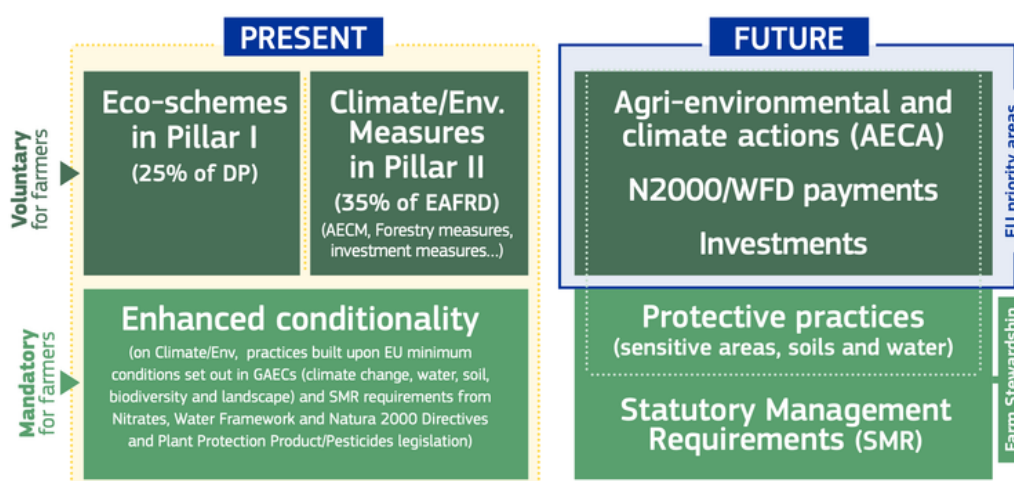


Figure 2 - Proposed Green architecture of the post-2027 CAP

(Source: https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/media/news/future-cap-proposal-aims-protect-sustainability-and-resilience-farming-2025-10-24_en) N2000/WFD - Natura 2000 and Water Framework directive)

- **Coupled Income Support expanded (CIS)** - CIS is increased, with the maximum spending going up from 13% to 20%, with an additional 5% possible for sectors and regions that need it most, such as livestock farming and sensitive border areas. Notably, the new proposal includes the possibility of coupled income support for apiculture products (Article 11 of Regulation 2025/0241 COD) — **a new option** for the beekeeping sector absent from the current CAP — though left to MS discretion.
- **New protein crops sector** - The CMO proposal introduces a dedicated protein crops sector with new sectoral interventions. BeeLife's position is that the melliferous/polliniferous potential of protein crop varieties must be considered when designing this sector.

4.2. Possibilities for the European beekeeping sector

The new CAP framework enables potential new interventions in the beekeeping sector, including: **advisory services, environmental actions, coupled income support, certification systems, and collective storage**, under a broader interpretation of eligible support measures. However, the actual accessibility of these interventions for beekeepers remains uncertain and will heavily depend on how each MS designs and implements its NRPP.

Key concerns and open questions are highlighted below, together with some ideas on how the post-2027 CAP could support apiculture, both directly and indirectly, including by recognising the services provided by the beekeeping sector to other agricultural production sectors:



Budget allocation: the €60M/year EU allocation for the beekeeping sector (Annex X of 2021/2115) has no direct equivalent confirmed for 2028–2034.

Implications for apiculture

- **The seven types of apiculture interventions (NBPs)** will remain, and Member States may extend them with other measures defined in Article 31 of CMO proposal²⁶ and adjust their focus to reflect climate adaptation, and consequently review their priorities within the CMO. Member States may review the budget allocated to NBPs.
- **Regarding beekeeping as a sector within broader NSP Plans:** as previously mentioned, removing a ring-fenced CAP budget and governance structure would reduce visibility, fragment strategic planning, and risk creating a patchwork of diverging national priorities. **This presents a further risk that the fate of agriculture will be neglected, with decisions being made by Budget Ministers rather than Ministers of Agriculture.**



Apiculture sector could benefit from additional funding sources as they are farming sectors and they contribute to climate adaptation and biodiversity. The sector could benefit from INVEST, RISK, or KNOW interventions, specific support for YOUNG newcomers, and accessing the crisis envelope²⁵. The Commission plans to maintain an agricultural crisis reserve of €6.3 billion within the NRPP.^{32,1}

Implications for apiculture

- BeeLife notes that the operation and accessibility of this reserve remain unclear, and urges clear criteria to ensure it can address climate-related shocks or market disruptions in the beekeeping sector.

1. <https://apiculture.com/files/29/Other-articles/1367/European-Commission-Unveils-New-CAP-Proposal-for-20282034.pdf#:~:text=In%20addition%2C%20while%20the%20proposal,to%20respond%20effectively%20to%20emergencies>



Coupled income support for apiculture: a new possibility via Art. 11 of COM(2025) 560, but at MS-discretionary and without defined criteria. It therefore risks creating significant disparities between the beekeeping sector of one country and another.

Implications for apiculture

- **Coupled income support (CIS) for beekeeping (Article 11)** is a new possibility proposed to cover structural costs of the beekeeping sector linked to sectoral constraints (e.g., colony losses, low prices, etc.). It is essential that beekeeping associations can negotiate with their Ministries and Regions to ensure beekeepers' access to this incentive and to implement the funding effectively, based on the specific characteristics of beekeeping in their country. However, it is important to reiterate that the vast majority of the economic challenges facing the beekeeping sector stem from environmental threats, resource richness (ensuring production and colony health), and border controls (to prevent “false honey” from depressing market prices). This is why BeeLife is making so many proposals for other farming sectors. However, it is recommended to avoid situations where the environment's carrying capacity is exceeded. This would be counterproductive for beekeeping and the environment. To avoid this, measures that incentivise the creation of resource-rich habitats are again of key importance.



Continue and strengthen the Beekeepers4Biodiversity measures already implemented by several Member States as eco-schemes or agri-environmental and climate measures (ENVCLIM). These measures should remain distinct from coupled income support for apiculture, as they are designed to deliver specific biodiversity and pollination benefits and are subject to environmental and technical conditions. (see section 3.4)

Implications for apiculture

- BeeLife stresses that coupled income support should complement, rather than replace Beekeepers4Biodiversity measures. The latter are linked to defined environmental objectives and may include conditions such as limits on colony density, minimum distances between apiaries and requirements aimed at maintaining pollination services. By contrast, coupled income support would primarily recognise the economic risks and structural constraints of beekeeping and would not necessarily require the delivery of specific biodiversity outcomes (which anyway will be delivered as they are inherent positive externalities of beekeeping). Replacing environmental measures with CIS could therefore maintain financial support for beekeepers while weakening the direct contribution of the CAP to pollination and biodiversity.

4.3. Possibilities for the farming sectors to become pollinator-friendly

Just as **Section 3.3** showed for the current CAP, the leverage for pollinators after 2027 lies overwhelmingly with mainstream farming rather than with the beekeeping envelope alone.

Article 4 of the draft CAP Implementation Regulation, COM(2025) 560²⁵, lists the environmental and climate priority areas farmers must address through Farm Stewardship and the new, unified agri-environmental actions: climate mitigation and adaptation, natural resources, biodiversity, animal welfare and antimicrobial resistance. **Article 10** explicitly covers the management of bee-friendly habitats and the enhancement of pollinator resources, confirming that the legal hooks farmers and administrations need already exist in the proposal. What is far less certain is whether the new architecture will turn these hooks into funded, verifiable action on the ground, or whether flexibility, a smaller budget and the shift from binding rules to incentives will let that ambition evaporate once national implementation begins.

Member States shall describe in the NRP Plan the production systems that they deem beneficial for the climate and environment.

For farmers and policymakers negotiating the NRPPs, three questions matter most:

1. which of today's **proven pollinator tools need to be actively protected** as the CAP is restructured;
2. which under-used or ambiguous instruments can be turned into **confirmed pollinator benefit** (a measurable established positive effect on pollinators) at little or no extra cost;
3. which specific risks in the current proposal need concrete safeguards before they become law.

4.3.1. Keep what works: protecting the CAP's proven pollinator tools

Section 3.3 identified interventions already classified as delivering confirmed benefits for pollinators worth **€50 billion** in EU funding, plus a further **€18 billion** of conditional "Opportunities". None of this needs to be reinvented; it should be preserved within the transition to the new architecture.

- **Ring-fence the merged instrument, not just the label.** Merging eco-schemes and ENVCLIM into a single category of agri-environmental actions (**Section 3.3**) is administratively sensible, but the merger must not become a quiet route to shrinking the proposed 43% climate and environmental spending ambition within NRP Plans.
- **Carry over the practice clusters that already work.** The six ENVCLIM clusters, identified in **Section 3.3.3**, should remain available as core options under the unified agri-environmental actions: organic farming conversion, flower-rich habitat and Natura 2000 management, reduced-pesticide and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) commitments, extensive grassland and hay-meadow management, melliferous agroforestry, and direct Beekeepers4Biodiversity payments. These practices should remain part of the common baseline that every Member State is expected to offer under the unified agri-environmental actions, rather than being treated as an optional subset.



The post-2027 CAP should build on the pollinator-relevant tools and practices already developed and funded under the current framework. Evidence from Member States such as Austria and Germany shows that these measures can deliver positive results. The priority for the negotiations should therefore be to preserve, strengthen and effectively transfer proven approaches across Member States.

4.3.2. Capture the opportunities: turning the CAP's grey zone green

Section 3.3.6 identified close to €18 billion in interventions, KNOW, RISK, ORCHA and RESTRVINEY (vineyard restructuring), and the wider INVEST envelope, whose pollinator benefit is conditional on how they are implemented. The new "Do No Significant Harm" (DNSH) requirement for investments is the natural legal hook to convert this grey zone into confirmed pollinator benefit, at little or no additional budgetary cost.

1. Attach bee-safe conditions to crisis and risk-management support. Making access to the future crisis reserve and to publicly co-financed agricultural insurance (RISK, €2.73 billion under the current CAP) conditional on IPM commitments and no-spray periods during flowering would turn a currently neutral instrument into a pollinator-positive one, without spending an additional euro. A fully specified IPM eco-scheme that Member States could adapt for this purpose is proposed in **Annex 2**.
2. Make DNSH operational for orchard and vineyard restructuring. For ORCHA and RESTRVINEY support (together over €1.6 billion), DNSH criteria should require melliferous variety choice and flowering-period spray restrictions in practice, not only on paper, so restructuring aid stops working against the pollinators it could easily support.
3. Embed a mandatory pollinator module in every CAP-funded advisory service. KNOW programmes worth over €1 billion already reach farmers at scale in France, Greece, Germany and Spain. Requiring pollinator-safe pesticide management and habitat content in every CAP-funded advisory contract would be one of the most cost-effective interventions available to the future CAP.
4. Redirect productive investment support toward its most pollinator-relevant sub-categories. Within the wider INVEST envelope (around €13 billion), non-productive investments, natural heritage conservation, and agroforestry already carry high inherent pollinator relevance; they should be actively promoted to farmers and beekeepers diversifying into pollination services, rather than competing unnoticed with machinery and irrigation investments.
5. Build melliferous varieties into the new protein crops sector. As the CMO amendment creates a dedicated protein crops sector, coupled support should prioritise legumes and forage varieties with genuine pollinator value (clover, alfalfa, sainfoin, vetch) and pair that support with flowering-period spray restrictions, so the sector's growth multiplies forage rather than diluting it.
6. Use the expanded ceiling for coupled income support responsibly. As the CIS ceiling rises from 13% toward 20%, with a further 5% for sectors under strain, Member States should extend it to the extensive livestock and legume-based systems already identified as Farmers4Biodiversity (**Section 3.3.4**), attaching the same agro-ecological conditions already used in schemes such as the French alfalfa growers' collaboration with local beekeepers.

4.3.3. Reduce the risks: safeguards the negotiations still need to secure

Environmental organisations have already warned that a Farm Stewardship system built mainly on incentives, combined with the removal of ring-fenced green funding, risks a **"race to the bottom"** in which Member States lower environmental ambition to protect competitiveness. Farmers and policymakers negotiating the post-2027 CAP have a narrow window to prevent this outcome through a small number of concrete safeguards.

- 1. Set an EU-wide mandatory pollinator floor within Farm Stewardship.** Greater national flexibility is welcome where it adapts measures to local conditions, but it will only protect pollinators evenly across the EU if a small set of current "protective practices", flowering-period no-spray buffers, a minimum share of non-productive landscape features, and pesticide restrictions on flowering crops, remain binding rather than becoming optional incentives that low-ambition Member States can simply skip.
- 2. Write the budget share into the Regulation, not only into guidance.** The current ambition that around 43% of CAP expenditure supports climate and environmental objectives should be set as a legal minimum in the CAP Implementation Regulation itself; non-binding targets tend to be the first casualty of national budget pressure once the two-pillar ring-fencing disappears.
- 3. Shield the environmental architecture from the overall budget cut.** If the roughly 20% reduction proposed for the 2028-2034 CAP envelope is applied proportionally across the board, funding for organic farming, biodiversity eco-schemes, and other pollinator-relevant measures will shrink even as the needs they address keep growing. Negotiators should press for agri-environmental actions to be protected within, not simply carried by, the overall reduction.
- 4. Pair flexibility with accountability.** Greater national discretion over implementation should come with binding reporting obligations, so that a Member State's decision not to fund pollinator-relevant practices is visible and politically accountable, rather than hidden inside aggregate spending figures.
- 5. Keep performance-based payments genuinely performance-based.** Current discussions already suggest this principle is being watered down. BeeLife recommends that pollinator-relevant result indicators remain compulsory, and tied to actual disbursement of funds, not treated as optional monitoring add-ons.



Whether the post-2027 CAP helps pollinators or quietly lets them slip through the cracks will not be decided by the legal text alone. It will be decided by whether a handful of low-cost, concrete safeguards, a pollinator floor, a ring-fenced budget line, and conditions attached to a few billion euros of "grey zone" funding, survive the trilogue.



5

Conclusions

The future of agriculture is not something to predict. It is something to design.

5. From Vision to Implementation

The CAP Strategic Plan Regulation provides a range of **seven apiculture interventions**. All Member States have included apiculture in their plans; however, the **choice of interventions varies considerably**, reflecting national (beekeepers) priorities. Knowledge exchange and investments are almost universal, but actions to preserve/increase beehives and enhance quality are less common. Only **Bulgaria, Italy, and Luxembourg** have increased national co-financing above the minimum 50 %, suggesting that other countries have room to expand their budgets should they find the beekeeping sector strategic. Several Member States have introduced **agri-environment-climate commitments** specifically targeting pollinators, illustrating how apiculture can contribute to biodiversity goals.

The Commission's early proposals and internal presentations indicate that the **post-2027 CAP** will strengthen environmental and climate ambitions, introduce a **Farm Stewardship** system and simplify the green architecture. Sectoral interventions for apiculture are expected to continue, but will likely be more closely integrated with biodiversity and climate objectives. The use of **“Do No Significant Harm”** criteria and performance-based payments could encourage farmers to adopt more sustainable practices (e.g., creating melliferous habitats and reducing pesticide use), from which beekeepers can indirectly benefit. A substantial budget for income support and crisis management is foreseen, but final allocations will depend on negotiations.²⁸ The future CAP also emphasises digitalisation and research, which offer opportunities for **beekeeping**, such as precision beekeeping, disease monitoring and traceability.

5.1. Recommendations for Member States and beekeeping stakeholders



Broaden the intervention mix – Countries currently limiting their apiculture support to only one or two intervention types (e.g., Ireland, Netherlands) should consider adding investments, analyses and quality improvement to address disease control, climate adaptation and market development.



Increase national co-financing – Raising co-financing rates (as done by Bulgaria, Italy and Luxembourg) would expand the overall budget for apiculture interventions and demonstrate commitment to the sector. Additional funding could be targeted at restocking and quality enhancement, which are currently less common.



Integrate ENVCLIM for pollinator habitats – Member States should develop or expand agri-environment-climate measures that create melliferous habitats (flower strips, hedgerows, extensive orchards) and reward farmers for conserving pollinators. Examples from Spain, France and Latvia illustrate how AECMs can complement sectoral interventions.²¹ (**Annex 1** sets out the corresponding intervention logic and typical practices.)

2. <https://apiculture.com/files/29/Other-articles/1367/European-Commission-Unveils-New-CAP-Proposal-for-20282034.pdf#:~:text=In%20addition%2C%20while%20the%20proposal,to%20respond%20effectively%20to%20emergencies>



Prepare for the future CAP – National administrations and beekeeping organisations must engage with the Commission's and national ongoing discussions on the post-2027 CAP. They should advocate for a continued sectoral support envelope and a robust farm stewardship system that recognises the ecological services beekeepers provide to their fellow farmers and citizens. Early adoption of digital tools (e.g., disease tracking, epidemiological studies, hive monitoring or traceability systems) will help meet future performance and DNSH requirements.



Strengthen knowledge and research networks – The widespread inclusion of knowledge-exchange and research-cooperation interventions demonstrates their importance. Member States should ensure that advisory services are also accessible to small and hobbyist beekeepers and that research addresses beekeeping challenges such as **invasive species and parasites, climate-induced forage scarcity and honey adulteration**.

5.2 Recommendations for Member States and farming stakeholders

- 1. Ring-fence the budget for agri-environmental actions.** As the two-pillar structure disappears and eco-schemes merge with ENVCLIM into a single instrument (**Section 4.1**), Member States and negotiators should set a minimum expenditure share, at least the current ~43% ambition, directly in the CAP Implementation Regulation, rather than leaving it to national discretion or non-binding guidance.
- 2. Set a mandatory pollinator floor within Farm Stewardship.** A small number of today's GAEC-equivalent "protective practices", flowering-period no-spray buffer strips, a minimum share of non-productive landscape features, and pesticide restrictions on flowering crops, should remain binding minimum requirements across all Member States, not optional incentives, to avoid a race to the bottom. A concrete pollinator eco-scheme design for arable and permanent crops, ready to be adapted into Farm Stewardship, is provided in **Annex 3**.
- 3. Attach pollinator and DNSH conditions to the CAP's "grey zone" funding.** Interventions worth close to €18 billion classified as Opportunities in the current CAP, orchard and vineyard restructuring, advisory services, risk management and productive investment support, should carry explicit bee-safe eligibility criteria under the new DNSH requirement, turning conditional funding into confirmed pollinator benefit at no additional budgetary cost.
- 4. Design coupled income support and the new protein crops sector around melliferous varieties.** As Coupled Income Support ceilings rise and a dedicated protein crops sector is created, support should prioritise legumes, forage crops and extensive livestock systems already identified as Farmers4Biodiversity (**Section 3.3.4**), with flowering-period pesticide restrictions attached as a condition of support.
- 5. Engage directly and early in the national and EU-level negotiations.** Farming organisations, beekeeping associations, and environmental stakeholders should coordinate their positions ahead of the National and Regional Partnership Plans. Most of the choices that will determine whether the post-2027 CAP helps or harms pollinators, budget shares, the content of Farm Stewardship, and the design of agri-environmental actions, will be made at Member State level, not in Brussels.



Annexes- From Principles to Practice

The future of agriculture is not something to predict. It is something to design.

The preceding sections have shown where the CAP already supports pollinators, where it could, and what is at stake in the post-2027 reform. These annexes turn that analysis into working material: the design logic, the ready-to-use proposals and the methodological record needed to move from reading to implementation.



Annex 1 — Guide to Pollinator-Friendly Interventions. The intervention logic behind the categories used throughout this report. For each of the three approaches — Farming4Biodiversity & Competitiveness, Beekeepers4Biodiversity, and Organic farming and beekeeping — it describes the rationale, the beneficiaries and the typical practices an intervention may include. Use it to design new interventions, to screen existing ones, or to argue for pollinator conditions in national implementation rules.

Annex 2 — Proposal: IPM eco-scheme. A fully specified eco-scheme rewarding integrated pest management, drafted so that a Member State can adopt it with minimal adaptation. It is the instrument this report repeatedly identifies as the fastest way to turn the CAP's "grey zone" funding pollinator-positive (Sections 3.3.2 and 4.3.2).

Annex 3 — Proposal: Pollinator eco-scheme for arable and permanent crops. A concrete scheme design that rewards flowering resources and pollinator-safe management on productive land, ready to be adapted into the current eco-scheme framework or into the post-2027 Farm Stewardship approach (Section 5.2).

Annex 4 — Methodology and Data Sources. The data source, classification rules, financial conventions and quality-assurance process behind every figure cited in this report, so the analysis can be checked, reproduced or updated by others. The full dataset remains explorable, filterable and downloadable in the BeeLife Interactive Data Dashboard [<https://insights.pollinatorhub.eu/CAP/>].



Policy-makers and implementing authorities will find in Annexes 2–4 the material for drafting and verification; farming and beekeeping organisations will find in Annex 1 the practices and arguments to bring to national negotiations. Nothing in these annexes requires new legal instruments: everything described here can be implemented within the CAP framework analysed in this report.

Annex 1. Guide to Pollinator-Friendly Interventions

FARMERS BIODIVERSITY & COMPETITIVENESS

The intervention based on farming for production competitiveness and biodiversity is based on three core objectives:

1. **Biodiversity decline is largely driven by landscape simplification, habitat loss and fragmentation, mowing regimes, and the intensity of agrochemical inputs (pesticides and fertilisers). This has to be reversed.**
2. **Pollination is a service provided by beekeepers**, sometimes with payment (e.g., often for seeds, fruits or vegetable production) , sometimes not, or by private companies but it is also an ecosystem service provided by biodiversity. Furthermore, several pollinators participate in pest control and soil structure creation.
3. **Farm management strongly determines pollinator abundance and effectiveness** through pesticide use, crop choices, and habitat availability. Habitat and forage scarcity and seasonal food gaps threaten not only the (European) beekeeping sector but also all pollinators in intensive arable agrosystems. Given the dependence of our food systems and the planet's functioning on insect pollinators, pollinator decline needs to be stopped and reversed. In doing so, protected biodiversity can ensure a sustainable future for us, European citizens, as recognised by the Nature Restoration Regulation, the Biodiversity Strategy, and Sustainable Development Goals 12 and 15. Furthermore, pollination protection and stewardship are paramount to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (directly 2, 15, and indirectly 1, 6, 8, 10, 12)³. Public support is therefore justified to compensate farmers for:
 - income foregone, and
 - additional costs linked to pollinator-friendly practices.
 - Ensuring continuous nectar and pollen availability is therefore a **land-use issue**, not a beekeeping-management issue.

Typical practices that may be included:

1. Reduction or exclusion of agrochemical pressure

- Prohibition or strong restriction of the use of insecticides with known toxicity to pollinators.
- Compulsory use of **integrated pest management (IPM)**.
- Restrictions or bans on insecticides, fungicides and herbicides
- Limits on fertiliser use, especially nitrogen
- Ban on pesticide application during flowering periods.

3. https://www.safeguard.biozentrum.uni-wuerzburg.de/Project/PublicFileSystem/media/others/SAFEGUARD_COP15_PolicyBrief.pdf

2. Creation and maintenance of pollinator/biodiversity habitats

- Establishment or preservation of **flower strips**, nectar-rich margins, or buffer zones.
- Maintenance of **semi-natural habitats** (hedgerows, field margins, uncultivated patches).
- Prohibition of reseeding with intensive grass mixtures.
- Use of traditional or low-input seed mixes.
- Avoidance of mowing or mechanical disturbance during key flowering and nesting periods.
- Maintenance of hedgerows, tree lines, stone walls and terraces
- Prohibition of removal or conversion of traditional landscape elements
- Buffer strips around sensitive features

3. Sowing of nectar- and pollen-rich plant species

Farmers must cultivate **specific plant species or seed mixtures** known to provide high-quality forage for pollinators and benefit the soil, often including: Phacelia, Buckwheat, Clover species, Borage, Mustard species (*Sinapis alba*, *Brassica* spp.), other flowering legumes or herbs adapted to the country's conditions (e.g., vetches (*Vicia* spp.), camelina, peas (*Pisum sativum*), Lupins, dandelion, cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), etc.). These plants are chosen to be: (1) highly attractive to bees, (2) adapted to short growing seasons, and (3) valuable for both honey bees and wild pollinators.

It is important to ensure crop varieties that produce nectar and pollen. Currently, plant breeding has favoured/generated varieties of crops typically visited by pollinators, such as sunflower or OSR, poor in nectar production, or with short blooming periods. These varieties should be avoided, or at least farmers choosing them should be penalised from public subsidies.

4. Temporal continuity of flowering. The measure aims to reduce forage gaps, so farmers must:

- Ensure flowering occurs at key periods when nectar and pollen are scarce
- Maintaining flowering stands long enough to be ecologically meaningful.

5. Crop and landscape management favourable to pollination, ensuring landscape connectivity

- Inclusion of **pollinator-attractive crops** or cover crops.
- ATTENTION! - Ideally, if cover crops include melliferous or polliniferous species, they should not reproduce as a monoculture (e.g., Phacelia, mustard, etc.), but they should include a mixture of seeds that will flower at different timings.
- Diversification of cropping systems to ensure continuous flowering.
- Spatial planning of crops to enhance pollinator movement and foraging efficiency to maintain spatial continuity between habitats and avoid fragmentation through land conversion.
- Early destruction of flowering stands is usually prohibited.
- Mowing or incorporation into soil is allowed only after flowering has ended.
- In some cases, grazing or cutting is restricted entirely.
- Draught crops may be required on specific parcels or as part of crop rotation.
- Often encouraged near existing semi-natural habitats or field margins to enhance connectivity.

6. Protection of nesting and overwintering sites

- Avoidance of soil disturbance in designated areas.
- Preservation of natural features that support wild pollinators (bare soil patches, old trees, grassy banks).

7. Extensive grassland management practices are critical for flowering continuity and insect life cycles.

- Limits on mowing frequency
- Delayed mowing dates to allow flowering and insect reproduction
- Restrictions on mulching
- Controlled grazing intensity

BEEKEEPERS4BIODIVERSITY

In the countries where it is applied, the logic is “**service-oriented framing of pollination**”:

- Pollination is recognised as a **public ecosystem service**.
- Beekeeping is a key contributor to biodiversity and pollination.
- A sector under pressure from (1) climate variability and drought, (2) forage scarcity, (3) pests and diseases, (4) pesticide exposure; and (5) unfair market competition.
- The policy logic is to compensate beekeepers for additional costs and income foregone, linked to practices that improve colony health, survival and ecological functionality, rather than maximising short-term honey yields.
- Beekeepers incur **additional costs and constraints** when managing colonies to optimise pollination rather than honey production.
- Public support compensates for these additional efforts without turning pollination into a private contract.

The measure is therefore designed to:

- Improve **pollination effectiveness in agricultural landscapes**
- Support **healthy and sufficiently strong colonies**
- Maintain a viable beekeeping sector aligned with biodiversity goals

Typical practices that may be included:

1. Colony strength and management requirements

- Maintaining a minimum colony strength during the pollination period, avoidance of practices leading to excessive colony weakening
- Ensuring a sufficient adult bee population and brood presence
- Restrictions on practices that weaken colonies during the flowering seasons
- Adequate supplementary feeding when natural forage is insufficient
- Restrictions on feeding practices that compromise colony resilience
- Specific obligations linked to overwintering or drought periods

2. Hive placement and mobility rules

- Placement of apiaries in locations where pollination demand exists, and to reduce stress (water availability, shade, protection from extreme heat)
- Possible obligations on temporary or seasonal placement/movement of hives
- Adaptation of the number of hives to the carrying capacity of the area.

3. Pollination-oriented management

- Prioritisation of colony development over honey harvesting during key periods
- Timing of interventions (feeding, splitting, treatments) to maximise pollination efficiency, always keeping honey quality as a priority.
- Avoidance of disruptive hive operations during flowering

4. Bee health obligations

- Disease monitoring and appropriate treatments
- Use of authorised treatment methods
- Preventive management to reduce disease pressure, with protection of colonies from stress factors (weather, starvation)

5. Record-keeping and verification

- Registration of beekeeping units
- Documentation of colony numbers and movements
- Compliance checks focused on hives

ORGANIC FARMING AND BEEKEEPING

Organic farming and beekeeping are based on three core objectives:

1. **Reduce environmental pressures** from agriculture (synthetic pesticides, fertilisers, veterinary medicines)
2. **Improve biodiversity and ecosystem functioning**, including pollinator health
3. **Respond to societal demand** for organic food and environmentally sound production systems

Typical practices that may be included:

1. Practices for organic beekeeping (apiculture)

Beekeepers must comply with EU organic rules (currently Regulation (EU) 2018/848), which typically include:

A. Hive management

- Use of natural materials for hives (wood, wax) (if possible)
- Organic beeswax for comb foundations (if possible)
- Prohibition of synthetic chemical repellents

B. Bee health and treatments

- Priority to preventive management (strong colonies, hygienic practices)
- Restricted use of veterinary treatments
- Use of authorised organic treatments for varroa control

C. Forage, environment and materials

- Placement of hives in areas which ensure the availability of nectar and pollen sources consisting essentially of organically produced crops or, where appropriate, of spontaneous vegetation or non-organically managed forests or crops that are only treated with low environmental impact methods. The siting of the apiaries shall be such that, within a radius of 3 km from the apiary site, nectar and pollen sources consist essentially of organically produced crops or spontaneous vegetation or crops treated with low environmental impact methods equivalent to those provided for in Articles 28 and 30 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 which cannot affect the qualification of beekeeping production as being organic. That requirement does not apply where flowering is not taking place, or the bee colonies are dormant;
- Avoidance of exposure to synthetic pesticides and other pollution sources: apiaries shall be kept at sufficient distance from sources that may lead to the contamination of apiculture products or to the poor health of the bees;
- Materials: The hives and materials used in beekeeping shall be made basically of natural materials presenting no risk of contamination to the environment or the apiculture products;

D. Feeding

- Supplemental feeding is allowed only under strict conditions
- Feed must be organic
- Feeding is limited to periods when colony survival is at risk

2. Practices for organic crops and livestock (context)

Although not specific to beekeeping, these practices indirectly benefit pollinators because they draw on agronomic and agroecological principles, nature-based solutions, nutrient recycling, and reduced reliance on synthetic agricultural inputs.

- Total ban on synthetic pesticides and fertilisers
- Crop rotations and diversification
- Organic feed sourcing and grazing systems

Annex 2. Proposal IPM Eco-scheme



Ideal Integrated Pest Management Eco-scheme for Pollinators

How could an IPM eco-scheme protect pollinators?

	Agricultural practice	Example of payment per year if practices supported are...	
		Alternative criteria	Cumulative criteria
1	- Keeping a treatment register compiling results of pest monitoring, monitoring methods (e. g. pictures, trapping, etc.) and decision criteria for establishing treatment need. - Seed/soil treatments reduced by 95% in 3 years, in comparison with first year of engagement (33% reduction/year). - Spray treatments reduced by 50% in 3 years, in comparison with first year of engagement (17% reduction/year).	50€/Ha	1 + 2 + 3 are applied = 50€/Ha
	2	If pesticide needs to be used, favour non persistent one AND 50€/Ha	
	3	Pesticide application after sundown AND/OR 50€/Ha	

Payment amount given as an example

Example - farmer 1 : Keeps the treatment register with required information, decreases spray treatments by 50% in 3 years but does not reduce seed and soil treatments (if applicable) by 95% in 3 years. --> No right to IPM ecoscheme payment.	Example - farmer 2 : Keeps the treatment register with required information, meets the objectives of reducing seed and soil and spray treatments, if pest thresholds are breached, he/she uses persistent pesticides but apply them after sundown. --> if the member State chose to implement cumulative criteria, this farmer cannot receive a payment for the IPM practices. --> if the member State chose to implement alternative criteria, this farmer receives 100€/Ha for the year (criteria n°1 + n°3).
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READ MORE

Annex 3. Proposal Pollinator Eco-scheme (for arable and permanent crops)



CAP & Pollinators Pillar 1

Pollinator ECO-SCHEME



The new CAP will need to address the challenges related to the decline of pollinators in Europe.



Public funds need to support basic ecosystem services and improve agro-environmental conditions.



The EU Green Deal and its strategies require effective policies to achieve a real and just green transition.

The Pollinator Eco-Scheme is a proposal for the future Common Agricultural Policy enabling all Member States to introduce a "package" of good farming practices for the protection of pollinators. Pollinator-friendly practices are to become the eligibility criteria for a farmer to benefit from the Pollinator Eco-scheme. It comprehends a number of mandatory practices to be applied by farmers, as well as some other practices that Member States may wish to add to a package of beneficial measures for pollinators. The Pollinator Eco-Scheme provides an EU-wide tool within the CAP, easily adaptable to national or local levels.

KEY PROPOSALS

COMPULSORY MEASURES

- A farmer includes one or more crops interesting to pollinators in at least in 10% of his/her agricultural surface every year, possibly looking for prolonged flowering along the year.
- Choose crop varieties with proven nectar and pollen production. Or, habitat for pollinators: possibility to develop a new BEE-FRIENDLY PLANT BREEDING certification (melliferous potential).
- Diversify the crop varieties planted in field (at least 3 varieties).
- Presence of landscape features in the farm of min. 7%.
- No preventive use of pesticides (incl. seed and soil treatment) and in case of need, use of non-persistent pesticides (DT50 lower than 15 days).
- If pesticides treatment needs to be applied (proved IPM approach), apply only after sundown (when flying activity of pollinators is reduced) for all pesticides (including herbicides and fungicides).
- At least 10 hours/year education for farmers on pollinators.
- One-to-one beekeeper - farmer / naturalist - farmer engagement.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Access to resources for honey bees and wild pollinators (food) all year long. Increase honey production.
- Contribution to the improvement of the bees? and pollinator health.
- Resilience of agrosystems. Presence of beneficial insects (natural predators) that limit the spread of pests.
- Improvement of pollination ecosystem services.
- Maintain Biodiversity.
- Reduction of pesticides pollution in the environment: water, soil, air. Avoidance of chronic intoxication and respect of the "One health" logic.
- Avoidance of unnecessary use of pesticides and favors the implementation of alternatives; reduction of bee intoxication and beekeeping products contamination.
- Provision of up-to-date science-based knowledge for farmers.
- Stimulation of social cohesion and empathy in rural areas, promoting of best practices with sustainable yield growth.

OPTIONAL MEASURES

- Crop rotation (GAEC 8) as 4-7 years.

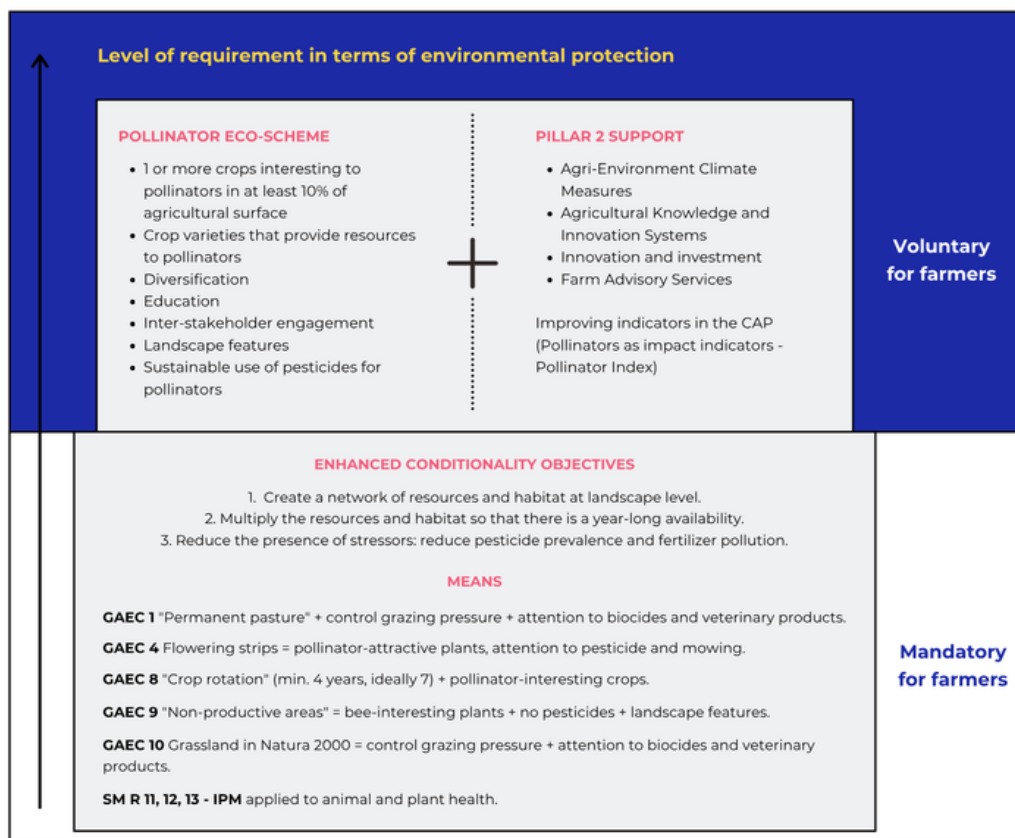
BeeLife proposes farmers and beekeepers/naturalists to receive appropriate incentives if they fulfil the criteria described above.

Member States should be enabled to establish the Pollinator Eco-Scheme as a pluriannual contract in their strategic plans.

POLLINATOR ECO-SCHEME OBJECTIVES

- Bringing nature back into the agricultural landscape for increased resilience.
- Contributing to the achievements of the Farm To Fork and Biodiversity Strategies objectives within the CAP (i.e., pesticides' uses and risks reduction).
- Integrating the human dimension by reinforcing the link between different agricultural sectors for a productive relationship.
- Supporting and encouraging farmers to transition towards agroecology.
- Increasing honey production in Europe.
- Contributing to improve the health of humans and pollinators and that of the overall environment.
- Contributing to the accountability of the CAP.
- Transforming eco-schemes into attractive measures so that they become increasingly popular among farmers.

OUR GLOBAL VISION FOR POLLINATOR PROTECTION WITHIN THE CURRENT CAP, PAIRING THE POLLINATOR ECO-SCHEME WITH OTHER MEASURES:



[READ MORE](#)

Annex 4. Methodology and Data Sources

This annex documents the data source, classification logic, and calculation conventions behind the figures cited throughout this report (Sections 3 and 4), so others can check, reproduce, or update the analysis.

A4.1 Data source and currency

All quantitative figures in this report are drawn from the European Commission's Catalogue of CAP Interventions²², enriched by BeeLife with additional assessment fields: BL_Potential to promote pollinators_Biodiversity (a free-text rationale for each intervention), BL_Category (the beneficiary classification described in A4.2), and Category online tool (a summary field derived mechanically from the first two, as described in A4.2). The enrichment was first produced in March 2026 and last revised in August 2026, following an internal consistency audit of the full dataset (see A4.7).

The catalogue records 28 CAP Strategic Plans — one per EU Member State, except Belgium, which submits separate regional plans for Flanders and Wallonia — which is why this report and the online tool both describe their coverage as "27 countries" while the underlying data carries 28 entries under "Member State". Because Member States amend their CAP Strategic Plans on a rolling basis, the catalogue — and therefore this report — reflects the plans as adopted at the catalogue's stated cut-off; figures should be read as plan commitments, not as final executed spending.

At the time of writing, the totals in this report match the equivalent totals on BeeLife's interactive tool, insights.pollinatorhub.eu/CAP (see its "Evidence Room" section, #chapter=evidence, for the tool's own methodology statement): 2,483 interventions, €300.2 billion in Total Public Expenditure and €256.4 billion in Total EU expenditure, 2023–2029. Where this report and the online tool nonetheless disagree on a given figure, the online tool should be treated as the current position; this report describes the position as of its stated publication date.

A4.1 Data source and currency

Each intervention in the catalogue is assigned one of five values in the BL_Category field, reflecting who benefits and how directly, in BeeLife's assessment:

- **Farmers4Biodiversity** — interventions targeting farmers or land managers that BeeLife assessed as having a confirmed or potential positive effect on pollinators or biodiversity.
- **Beekeepers4Biodiversity** — the seven CMO/CAP apiculture-sector intervention types (Art. 55, Reg. (EU) 2021/2115); in practice, every intervention recorded under the "Sectoral (Apiculture)" macro-type (Section 3.2, Table A).
- **Dual** — interventions that support both farmers and beekeepers directly and/or simultaneously; a subset that would otherwise sit under one of the two categories above.
- **Opportunities** — interventions with potential pollinator benefit that is conditional on implementation choices not fixed at EU level (crop or seed variety, management practice, national eligibility criteria), rather than a confirmed positive effect.
- **N/A** — interventions BeeLife assessed as having no material bearing on pollinators or biodiversity; excluded from the totals in Sections 3 and 4.

The free-text field BL_Potential to promote pollinators_Biodiversity carries the rationale behind each assessment. Its values follow a controlled pattern: "**Positive**" (confirmed positive effect), "**Unrelated**" or "**Unknown**" (no material or no assessable link), and a set of standardised conditional rationales ("If crops are nectariferous/polliniferous and are managed...", "Potential dissemination of knowledge about pollinators needs...", etc.) for interventions whose effect depends on how they are implemented. As a rule, the rationale and the category are kept aligned: affirmative conditional rationales sit in the beneficiary categories, open conditional rationales sit in Opportunities.

BeeLife's online tool summarises these assessments in a three-way classification by confidence in the effect — **Positive/sustainable** (BL_Potential recorded as "Positive"), **Potentially toxic/DNSH risk** (any conditional rationale), and **Neutral/unknown** ("Unrelated" or "Unknown") — with **Opportunity** measures (BL_Category = "Opportunities") layered on top as an overlay rather than a fourth, mutually exclusive bucket.

The dataset's Category online tool field is derived mechanically from the two assessment fields by the following rule, implemented as a spreadsheet formula so that it recalculates automatically whenever an assessment is revised and cannot drift from the fields it is derived from:

```
=IF(H2="Positive","Positive/sustainable",
IF(OR(H2="Unrelated",H2="Unknown"),"Neutral/unknown",
IF(I2="Opportunities","Opportunities","Conditional")))
```

where column H is BL_Potential and column I is BL_Category. In plain terms: a "Positive" rationale yields Positive/sustainable; "Unrelated"/"Unknown" yields Neutral/unknown; any conditional rationale yields Opportunities when the intervention sits in the Opportunities category, and Conditional when it sits inside a beneficiary category (Farmers4Biodiversity, Beekeepers4Biodiversity or Dual). The online tool's "Potentially toxic/DNSH risk" total therefore corresponds to the union of Opportunities and Conditional in this field.

A4.3 Financial figures

The catalogue carries three expenditure fields for 2023–2029: Total EU expenditure (EU co-financing only), Total Public Expenditure (EU plus national/regional co-financing), and Additional National Financing. Unless stated otherwise, cumulative totals in this report refer to Total EU expenditure; Total Public Expenditure is used and labelled explicitly where relevant (e.g., the apiculture sector total in Section 3.2, and the country-level rankings in Section 3.3.1.1). Because co-financing rates vary by intervention, Member State and fund — EAGF interventions are 100% EU-funded; EAFRD interventions require a minimum 50% national co-financing, up to 70% for apiculture, and vary further for other Rural Development interventions — the two totals diverge by different amounts for different interventions and are not interchangeable. For apiculture-sector interventions, national co-financing is included in Total Public Expenditure; the Additional National Financing field is reserved for genuine national top-ups beyond CAP co-financing and is not used for these rows.

Where a figure is expressed as a percentage of a Member State's national budget (e.g., Section 3.3.1.1, Austria), the denominator is that Member State's Total Public Expenditure summed across every intervention recorded for it in the catalogue—all macro-types, not only those assessed as pollinator-relevant. This represents that Member State's total CAP Strategic Plan spend as captured in the catalogue, not the EU's overall CAP budget.

A4.4 Country and intervention examples

Where a specific Member State and euro figure are cited alongside an intervention-type total (e.g., the country breakdowns under KNOW, RISK and RESTRVINEY, or the flagship examples given for each eco-scheme/ENVCLIM cluster), the figure is that Member State's single largest individual intervention within that type, not its combined total across all matching interventions, unless stated otherwise. Readers reconstructing a Member State's full total for a given intervention type should sum all matching rows for that Member State and type in the catalogue, rather than relying on the single example cited in the text.

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A4.5 Practice-cluster groupings (eco-schemes and ENVCLIM)

The practice clusters presented in Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 (e.g., "Biodiversity and habitat eco-schemes", "Organic farming conversion and maintenance") are an analytical layer produced by BeeLife; they are not a pre-existing field in the DG AGRI catalogue. Interventions were assigned to clusters through a structured expert assessment drawing on three sources of knowledge:

- **The regulatory meaning of CAP terminology:** CAP Strategic Plans name their interventions using a shared regulatory vocabulary, and many of these terms have precise legal content: an intervention named "organic farming" operates under Regulation (EU) 2018/848, which by definition excludes synthetic pesticides and mineral fertilisers; "Natura 2000 payments" compensate constraints defined by the Habitats and Birds Directives; "agroforestry", "catch/cover crops" or "flower strips" designate recognised practices whose content is standardised across Member States. Where a name carries this regulatory meaning, the practices implied are not assumed — they follow from the legal framework the intervention operates under.
- **The scientific literature on pollinator ecology:** The link between each practice type and its mechanism of pollinator support — forage availability, nesting habitat, reduced toxicological load, landscape connectivity — is well documented in the peer-reviewed literature, and is reflected in the cluster descriptions of the main text.
- **BeeLife's operational experience of CAP implementation:** BeeLife draws on the field knowledge of its member associations across Member States and works on the CAP design and implementation since 2010. This experience was used to interpret nationally specific intervention names and to resolve borderline cases conservatively: where the available information did not support a confident assignment, the intervention was left out of the clusters rather than forced into one — which is why cluster totals sum to less than the category totals reported in Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3. The catalogue's structured fields (Type of Intervention Code, Area of Action, Output and Result Indicators) were used as supporting evidence where available.

As with any expert-based classification, individual borderline assignments involve judgement. For transparency, the complete intervention-level assignment is published in the accompanying dataset and interactive dashboard, so every grouping decision can be inspected, and BeeLife welcomes corrections where national knowledge indicates a better assignment.

A4.6 Relationship to the interactive tool (Evidence Room)

BeeLife's interactive tool, insights.pollinatorhub.eu/CAP, publishes its own methodology statement in its “Evidence Room” section (#chapter=evidence): a summary of its source data, the classification rule described in A4.2 above, and headline totals (2,483 interventions; €300.2B Total Public Expenditure; €256.4B Total EU expenditure; 27 countries; 2023–2029). It lists its sources as the European Commission's DG AGRI catalogue and BeeLife's own enrichment fields, drawn from the same underlying file as this report, and states explicitly that its “DNSH risk” label is a candidate signal from BeeLife's data rather than a legal determination, and that its figures are CAP ²²plan commitments for 2023–2029 rather than money already spent — both caveats apply equally to the figures in this report.

The full underlying dataset — every intervention, its BL_Category, financial figures and the fields described above — is available for download and interactive filtering via that tool, including its CSV export. Rather than reproduce the catalogue as a static table in this annex, readers who want to verify a specific figure, explore a Member State or intervention type in more detail, or check for changes since this report's publication date should consult that tool directly.

A4.7 Quality assurance and AI-assisted review

In preparing this report and its dataset, BeeLife complemented its internal review process with current-generation AI assistants (large language models). These tools were used strictly in an auditing and editing capacity, under human supervision: to run systematic consistency checks across the 2,483 catalogue rows — for example, detecting equivalent interventions in different Member States that had received diverging assessments, or free-text rationales inconsistent with their assigned category —, to verify numerical parity between the figures cited in this report, the underlying dataset and the interactive tool, and to support language editing of the English text.

³ No assessment in the dataset was delegated to an automated system. Where an AI-assisted check flagged a potential inconsistency, the flagged intervention was re-examined and resolved by BeeLife's team applying the criteria described in A4.2 and A4.5; several such corrections — including harmonised rationales for coupled income support to equivalent crops, and the reclassification of a small number of misassigned rows — were incorporated in the August 2026 revision of the dataset. Final classification decisions, cluster assignments and the text of this report remain the responsibility of BeeLife.

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