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# THE LATEST SOLUTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND THE CHANGES IN THE INSTRUMENTS OF COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Karol Kociszewski<sup>✉</sup>

Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny we Wrocławiu

**Abstract.** The purpose of this article is to describe manifestations and consequences of the impact of the environmental policy of the European Union on selected tools of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The author used descriptive analysis of the EU strategic documents related to both policies. The descriptive analysis also refers to the accompanying legislation and to factual material based on statistical data on the implementation of the CAP instruments shaped under the influence of environmental policy. Other data shows the changes in the impact of agriculture on environment. The main mechanism of the impact of environmental policy on the CAP is based on the principle of integration of environmental policies with sectoral policies. It was reinforced in subsequent EU environment action programmes. Thanks to the implementation of that principle, the environmental implications were reflected in the changes of CAP. Special attention has been paid to the latest solutions: seventh EU environmental action programme and climate and energy package. They have affected both the development of an environmental policy and its relations with the CAP. As a result, the EU modified the instruments of I and II pillar (direct payments, agri-environmental programmes, support for organic farming) in such a way as to have a more beneficial impact on the environment. This also applies to the standards directly applicable to farmers (cross-compliance). The regulations of water protection, climate change, biodiversity and soils in conjunction with the economic instruments of the CAP contributed to the limitation of agricultural negative impact on environment.

**Keywords:** environmental protection in agriculture, environmental policy, sustainable development of agriculture

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to specify the manifestations and consequences of the impact of the European Union's (EU) environmental policy on selected tools of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). To do so, an overview was presented of the changes and strengthened interdependencies between both policies, in accordance with the principle that the environmental protection policy must be integrated into sector-specific policies. Particular attention was paid to the latest solutions: the EU's 7th Environment Action Program and the energy and climate package. This study relies on a descriptive analysis based on the EU's strategic documents together with associated legal acts. The analysis also used factual materials and statistical data on environmentally-friendly changes to main groups of CAP instruments and on the consequences thereof related to the environmental impact of agriculture.

<sup>✉</sup>dr hab. Karol Kociszewski, prof. UE, Katedra Ekonomii Ekologicznej, Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny we Wrocławiu, ul. Komandorska 118/120, 53-345 Wrocław, Poland, e-mail: karol.kociszewski@ue.wroc.pl

## IMPLEMENTING THE PRINCIPLE OF INTEGRATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION POLICY INTO SECTOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

In accordance with the principle that the environmental protection policy must be integrated into sector-specific policies, the environmental measures taken by the EU must be integrated into policies for other areas, including CAP. Formally, that principle took effect as of 1997 when another document of importance for the European integration, the Treaty of Amsterdam, was adopted. The consequences included developing and adopting adequate solutions as a part of the CAP reform under the Agenda 2000 of 1999<sup>1</sup>. Concurrently, the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (referred to as the environmental pillar of the 2000 Lisbon Strategy) was formulated and adopted in Gothenburg in 2001. The guidelines for the CAP covered the sustainable management of natural resources, the environmentally sustainable production methods and the protection of biodiversity. The strategy was subsequently developed in successive documents: the Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy of 2006 and the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth of 2010 which replaced the Lisbon Strategy (European Commission, 2010). While that document did not present any solutions directly applicable to the CAP, it emphasized the need to deploy sector-specific policies in order to mitigate climate change.

The implementation framework for the EU's environmental policy is developed as a part of the European Commission's (EC) environment action programs of the EU. Considering their impact on the CAP, it is useful to draw attention to the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> program. The 5<sup>th</sup> program (Towards Sustainability) covered the 1993–2001 period and included the following objectives set for the agricultural sector: protection of biodiversity, fundamental restriction of pesticide use, afforestation of agricultural land, and reduction of nitrogen levels in groundwater

and in surface waters. Immediately before adopting the program, the directive concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources, hereinafter referred to as the "Nitrates Directive" (Council Directive 91/676/EEC) entered into force. Another direct reference to the CAP was the agri-environmental programs (AEP) implementation plan which extended to at least 15% of agricultural land. As it turned out in 2013, the implementation of AEP went beyond that limit and covered 46.9 million ha, i.e. 25% of the EU-27's agricultural land (European Commission, 2015e). This translated into a dynamic growth of organic farming: from 2007 to 2013, the cultivated area increased by 27% and reached a share of 5.8% in the EU-28's total agricultural land (European Commission, 2015a). An organic area of 11 million ha is eligible for support under the AEP.

The EU's 6<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Program (Our future, our choice) was adopted in 2001 and covered the 2002–2012 period. As a key element in the implementation of the EU's sustainable development strategies, the program sets out four priorities. Three of them are applicable to the agricultural sectors in many aspects:

- combating climate change (according to the then-drafted energy and climate package, as described later in this paper);
- nature and biodiversity: a significant portion of valuable natural assets are located in rural areas, and therefore the AEPs and other measures under the 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar need to be enhanced in order to enable the full implementation of Natura 2000;
- environment and health, including the reduction of risks from pesticide use; as the quality of water has important consequences for human health, the relevant measures were integrated in the Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC).

Note that WFD is related to the Nitrate Directive which continues to be the key instrument for water protection within agriculture and requires the member countries to reduce nitrate emissions, mainly by adopting the fertilizer use standards. Therefore, Nitrates Vulnerable Zones (NVZ) need to be identified. A Code of Good Agricultural Practice, which includes a set of easily verifiable water protection standards, must be in place in the NVZs. Note that the NVZs cover 45.3% of the EU-27 area (48.6% in EU 15 and up to 35.7% in EU 12) (European Union, 2012).

<sup>1</sup> The environmental policy has already had an affect on CAP reforms. This was the case of the MacSharry package which initiated the implementation of direct payments and rural development programs, including agri-environmental programs in connection with the provisions of the EU's 5<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Program (as described below).

In 2006, the EC adopted the Thematic Strategy on soil protection (Komisja Europejska, 2006). The protection and sustainable use of soil is an objective to be pursued in multiple ways, including through the adoption of the framework directive on soil protection which has not yet been agreed upon by the member countries. Also, the strategy's implications for the CAP include, on one hand, the cross-compliance<sup>2</sup> requirements (the implementation of environmental standards that are compulsory for the beneficiaries of direct payments and of some payments under the 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar of the CAP) and, on the other, the enhancement of rural development programs with incentives for the implementation of services that improve the quality of soils or maintain their functions (AEPs, allowances for less favored areas (LFAs)).

Nature protection is an important part of the environmental policy for the agriculture sector. One of the instruments for policy implementation at the EU level is the 2001 Biodiversity Action Plan for Agriculture. It includes promotion of and support for environmentally-friendly agricultural practices (most of which are convergent with the AEP), and is virtually the key instrument for the implementation thereof. The latest document is the 2011 EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 (Komisja Europejska, 2011), an integral part of the Europe 2020 strategy. The roadmap for the agriculture sector includes: completing the Natura 2000 network by 2012; ensuring permanent funding for Natura 2000; increasing the direct payments under the CAP for environmental public goods; delimiting and providing financial support for HNV (High Nature Value) areas under the 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar. The share of Natura 2000 in the national (or the EU's) territory is regarded as an indicator of the biodiversity protection level. In 2014, in the entire EU 28, that area covered 18.1% of the terrestrial area and represented 10.8% of the agricultural land area (European Commission, 2015c).

## 7<sup>TH</sup> ENVIRONMENT ACTION PROGRAM: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

The latest, seventh program was adopted and published in 2014 as the EU's general environment action program to 2020. Living well, within the limits of our planet (European Commission, 2014a). It includes a direct reference to previously implemented strategic documents, including without limitation the Europe 2020 strategy, the energy and climate package, the EU biodiversity strategy to 2020, and the EU sustainable development strategy. The objectives of the program fall into three groups:

- Three thematic priorities integrated with each other, so that the concurrent implementation activities (as described later in this paper) are supposed to support and supplement each other.
- Four priorities establishing the implementation framework for actions planned in respect to thematic objectives, related to: an improved implementation of legislation (priority 4: to maximize the benefits of Union environment legislation by improving implementation); enhancing the knowledge and information resources and improving the use thereof in the environment policy (priority 5: to improve the knowledge and evidence base for Union environment policy); increasing the investments necessary for policy implementation and for the full integration of environmental requirements into other policies (priority 6: to secure investment for environment and climate policy and address environmental externalities); integrating the environment policy into other EU's policies (priority 7: to improve environmental integration and policy coherence). Priority 6 will be discussed below in the context of its importance for the CAP.
- There are two horizontal priorities: priority 8 is to enhance the sustainability of the Union's cities; and priority 9 is to increase the Union's effectiveness in addressing international environmental and climate-related challenges.

The first of the thematic priorities is of major importance to the agriculture: to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital. This means accelerating or improving the implementation of legal regulations for the protection of specific environmental compartments (soil, water, air/climate, biodiversity).

<sup>2</sup> The cross-compliance principle took effect as of 2003 under the next CAP reform (the Fischler package). Accordingly, the applicable environmental standards (except for soil protection) are extended to other compartments of the environment (water, air, biodiversity). They are included in 2 directive sets: GAEC (Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions) and SMR (Statutory Management Requirements).

Particular importance is attached to the Biodiversity strategy to 2020 (together with key implementing directives that govern the functioning of Natura 2000) and to the Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources together with the Nitrates Directive. As regards implementation activities, a reference was made to greening the CAP (2014–2020 reforms) as a measure which contributes to the development of environmentally-friendly agricultural practices. That priority also covers the climate package, together with its agricultural implications, as described later in this paper.

Actions under priority 2 (to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy) are supposed to be focused on making a more efficient use of natural resources ("doing more with less"). The requirements include the full implementation of the climate package and a sustainable use of biomass, especially in the context of reconciling the use of agricultural products for food and energy production purposes with measures aimed at reducing the adverse environmental impact of that process.

Priority 3: to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being. Environmental protection also means caring for the society, especially as regards air pollution (taking into account its effect on climate change), water pollution, noise and chemicals<sup>3</sup>. To make this happen, the regulations for immission (pollution concentration) standards need to be updated, especially with respect to drinking and bathing water. The same is applicable to product standards, including the levels of harmful substances in plant protection products. A commitment was made that by 2020 such substances would be used in a sustainable manner with no adverse impact on human health and biodiversity. This implies an intensified monitoring of EU law implementation in member countries.

Priority 6 is focused on stimulating the flow of public and private funds to finance the environmental initiatives and the related innovations. This implies a proper assessment of the natural values, so as to enable the estimation of the costs of using the environment while sending market signals that restrict the economy's adverse impact and strengthen the favorable impact on environmental compartments. To do so, the markets for

green products (including organic agriculture) need to be developed, and the measures based on the 'polluter pays' principle have to be reinforced and structured, including through the reduction of environmentally adverse subsidies. The last aspect is of particular importance to the CAP which continues to subsidize (though to a smaller degree than in the past) the intensification and expansion of environmentally adverse external inputs (including fertilizers and plant protection products) (Zegar, 2012). As regards taxation of parties responsible for negative externalities, it is not likely to extend to EU farmers. On the other hand, priority 6 includes a proposition to strengthen the payments for environmental services which is an unequivocal reference to important tools of the 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar of the CAP, i.e. the AEPs, organic farming support, subsidies for LFA farms and the environmental component of direct payments. This could also be regarded as a suggestion on the refinement and implementation of specialized payments for HNV farms. In the context of financing the environmental policy, it was noted that at least 20% of the expenditure under the EU's multiannual financial framework for 2014–2020 need to be dedicated to climate protection measures. This was an important reason behind the decision to allocate 30% of the domestic direct payment envelope to environmentally sound measures involved in the delivery of public goods (*greening*). This allowed to increase the total funds allocated under the CAP to environmental actions in 2014–2020 by 70 billion (by 19.5% compared to expenditure incurred in 2007–2013) (Kociszewski, 2016). At the same time, this is a signal to member countries calling them to include such activities in their national strategies and rural development programs. This is one of the reasons why the AEP continues to be the largest program (as regards the amount of financing) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar of the CAP. In the 2007–2013 period, AEPs accounted for 25% of CAP expenditures (Kociszewski, 2015). Currently, the AEP has been converted to agri-environmental and climatic programs (AECP), which clearly demonstrates the impact of the climate package on the CAP.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Action Program is a follow-up of earlier initiatives, moving them to the realities of the 2010s. It integrates the aforesaid activities in response to new challenges and strategic solutions currently in place at the EU and global level. The priorities clearly indicate that compliance was ensured with the principle of integrating the environmental policy into sector-specific

<sup>3</sup> According to estimations by the World Health Organization, these threats are the reason for 15% to 20% of deaths in 53 European countries (European Commission, 2014b).

policies. Also apparent is the integration of particular groups of thematic actions, as per the sustainable development concept, which are supposed to enter into synergies with each other. The program was developed in parallel to the latest reform of the CAP which, in its current form, proves to be impacted by it. Also, the program should be important for the CAP's evolution after 2020. On one hand, it should be an argument for maintaining the financial support for the agriculture and, on the other, a determinant of further greening of the CAP. This would imply increasing the share of environmental protection expenditures under the CAP (especially the portion allocated to AECP), and improving the effective enforcement of cross-compliance requirements and of standards applicable under the environmental component of direct payments. This mainly involves measures against climate change.

### **The agriculture and the energy and climate package**

The energy and climate package was agreed upon in 2007 in relation to the Kyoto Protocol: the bases for international actions aimed at reducing the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG). The EU leaders set the related objectives to be attained by 2020: 20% reduction in GHG emissions (compared to 1990), a 20% share of non-renewable energies in the total energy consumption, and a 20% increase in energy efficiency. The basic instrument used for that purpose is the EU's Emissions Trading System (ETS) which, however, does not extend to economy sectors (referred to as non-ETS sectors) responsible for 55% of total emissions from the EU's economy (agriculture; transport except for aviation; construction; and waste management). Agricultural emissions currently represent a share of 9.8% in the total amount of greenhouse gases originating from the EU's economy (European Commission, 2015b), and are addressed in various parts of the EU's climate policy. Substances other than carbon dioxide (i.e. CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O) are governed by the Effort-Sharing decision No. 406/2009/EC which is applicable to all non-ETS sectors. That document sets a shared objective for these sectors which is a 10% reduction in emissions (compared to 2005) by 2020. Note that member countries must set national annual emission targets which vary in function of the country's wealth: from a 20% reduction in the richest countries to a 20% increase in emissions in the poorest countries. Thus, no binding objective was

specified as regards reduction of agricultural emissions: the member countries should shape that sector so as to achieve their overarching national reduction objectives.

Agricultural CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are classified as land-use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) (European Commission, 2014b). LULUCF does not extend to emissions resulting from the way of using agricultural and forestry land. Instead, it covers the emissions caused by changes in use patterns (e.g. conversion of meadows into arable land). That category was excluded from the EU's emission reduction objective under the energy and climate package by 2020. Currently, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and removals in the LULUCF sector have a negative balance which means that in this category, the agriculture and forestry contribute to combating climate change. However, that favorable effect is gradually reduced.

The EU's actions helped achieving a 19% reduction in GHG emissions in the 1990–2013 period throughout the economy (while the GDP growth rate was 45%) (European Commission, 2015d). Agricultural GHG emissions were reduced by 23% (while the added value grew by 18%) and remain stable. The amount of methane released to the environment from agricultural sources reduced by 20% due to restructuring and improving the efficiency of production techniques (Copa-Cogeca, 2015). The reasons for this include the decline in livestock numbers accompanied by an increase in milk production volumes and a more efficient use of mineral fertilizers (European Commission, 2014b). These changes were caused by environmentally sound reforms of key CAP instruments: decoupling direct payment rates from production volumes, abolition of milk quotas, implementing the Nitrates Directive and the cross-compliance principle, and the payments under the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar. For the farmers, this provides an incentive to use good agricultural practices.

In 2014, a new version of the climate package, extending to 2030, was adopted (Komisja Europejska, 2014). The reduction in GHG emissions from the entire EU economy is supposed to reach 40% compared to 1990. This should help attaining the long-term objective of an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050. At the same time, the share of renewable energies in the total energy consumption is supposed to reach 27% and the energy efficiency should be improved by 27%. A 30% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 (compared to 2005) is the objective set for the entire non-ETS category. However, the share of specific sectors (including agriculture)

in the planned reduction was not specified. Afterwards, that document became the basis for negotiations prior to the 2015 Paris climate summit which resulted in adopting the Paris Agreement (United Nations, 2015), signed in 2016 in New York. This is where a global action plan was set out in order to achieve that the global temperature increase does not exceed 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Based on the new EU's climate package, the EU maintained its climate policy commitments.

So far, no detailed objectives have been defined for LULUCF sectors. However, as announced, they are to be identified soon (depending on technical conditions). Therefore, consultations were undertaken in order to establish binding solutions (Consultation on..., 2015). Three scenarios are considered:

- Leaving the two as separate categories of emissions; this means that as regards agriculture, the climate policy would be implemented with the use of two separate toolsets (even though they cover the same area of economic activity).
- Covering the LULUCF sector by the future Effort-sharing Decision; this would provide the member countries with a greater flexibility in their pursuit of specific GHG reduction objectives (a country could reduce its emissions to a greater extent in a sector where such activities are more effective. This solution would help integrating the climate protection activities within agriculture. In that aspect, it would be more effective than the previous scenario. On the other hand, it would complicate these activities in terms of methodology because specific reduction targets need to be achieved within a year while the balance of GHG emissions and removals in the LULUCF sector tends to fluctuate over specific periods<sup>4</sup>. This results from the natural variation of biological processes which are linked to all types of agricultural production.
- Excluding the agricultural emissions other than CO<sub>2</sub> from the future Effort-sharing Decision (if adopted) and integrating them, together with LULUCF, within a single pillar of the climate policy. That scenario would be more beneficial in the context of integrating the climate policy into the CAP after 2020 by extending it with new comprehensive instruments to support the development of a climate-friendly

agricultural sector. Thus, such instruments would be better suited to the specific conditions of the agricultural sector. However, this solution would provide the member countries with less flexibility when choosing a sector to further reduce the emissions in order to meet the reduction target level for the entire economy.

The climate policy by 2020 is supposed to be related to changes implemented as a part of the 2014–2020 CAP reform and to be consistent with other EU policies. At a later stage, climate initiatives should be strengthened in the agricultural sector. According to the European Commission, if the same actions as those planned in order to meet the objectives of the first climate package (by 2020) were extended to 2030, the total reduction in GHG emissions planned for 2030 would not be met (European Commission, 2014b). In the entire economy, it would reach 32% (compared to 2005) while the reduction rate of GHG other than CO<sub>2</sub> would be 20% (only 4% in the agriculture and 36% in other sectors). According to forecasts, in order to reach the planned total reduction rate of 40%, the agricultural emissions would need to be reduced by 13–28% (European Commission, 2014b). In that case, actions under the reformed CAP are also cited but need to be intensified. The planned reduction level for 2050 (80%) implies the reduction of agricultural GHG emissions by 45–53%. This would be backed by the following measures: more efficient fertilizer use; bio-gasification and improved management of organic manure; improvements to forage (changing the ingredients in order to restrict the emission of GHG in digestive processes); enhancing the scope of extensive farming; maintaining land under permanent pasture.

The representatives of the farmers' trade unions agree on the role of agriculture in the climate policy in view of the existing agricultural policy instruments. Prior to the COP 21 summit in Paris, Copa-Cogeca called for adopting an agreement to bind the largest global economies. This would be a clear benchmark for the European agriculture and would ensure stable operations on a medium-term basis. However, they oppose a binding reduction objective for that sector and even find it to be impracticable (Copa-Cogeca, 2015). They believe the right solution is to set only indicative objectives which help developing the existing measures while ensuring adequate supply for the food market. It is not appropriate to reduce GHG emissions by reducing the agricultural production in Europe while increasing

<sup>4</sup> If it was unfavorable in a specific period, the reduction levels in other sectors would need to be temporarily increased.

the production volumes in other locations. In the EU, production is subject to regulations related to the climate policy. Also, the trade unions declared that the agriculture and forestry could take partial responsibility for the global response to climate change.

## CONCLUSIONS

There is progress in implementing the institutional and legal solutions (e.g. Natura 2000, the world's largest network of protected areas, or the climate package) under the EU's environmental protection policy. This is also manifested by the implementation of the integration principle which allowed for the implications of the aforesaid initiatives and the provisions of successive EU's environmental action programs to be reflected in amendments to the CAP. As a consequence of subsequent reform stages (MacSharry package, Agenda 2000, Fischler package, the reform for 2014–2020), the instruments covered by the 1<sup>st</sup> pillar (including decoupling and greening) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar (including AEP/AECP, support for organic farming) are modified so that they may have a more favorable environmental impact in connection with better socio-economic effects. The same is true for described intervention areas focused on the protection of specific environmental compartments which were transferred and incorporated into the standards directly applicable to farmers (cross-compliance). This is why the regulations for water, climate, biodiversity and soil protection, combined with the CAP's economic instruments, helped reducing the adverse environmental impact of the EU's agriculture.

Neither the latest (seventh) environmental policy program nor the climate package did specify the need for implementing new CAP instruments. Instead, they indicated the need to strengthen the existing solutions, in view both of the increased financing and the improved enforcement of applicable standards. This will become an important topic in the discussions on CAP development after 2020, and should be a strong argument for the continued greening and for further financial support for the EU's agriculture sector. The societies of member countries regard the preservation of natural values of rural areas as one of the major arguments for allocating a large portion of the EU's budget to the CAP (Wilkin, 2010). A closer adherence to the latest environmental policies would imply increasing the share of environmental protection expenditures (especially those related

to climate) under the CAP (especially the portion allocated to AECP), and improving the effective enforcement of cross-compliance requirements and of standards applicable under the environmental component of direct payments. The author believes the right approach would be to integrate the measures related to the future (non-ETS) Effort-sharing Decision with LULUCF measures within a single pillar of the climate policy in the agricultural sector. This could also promote the coherence and effectiveness of CAP instruments in this area.

In this context, an attempt should be made to explain why the described environmental policy initiatives did not state the need for implementing new CAP solutions. Is it because the influence of lobbyists related to industrial agriculture turned out to be an insurmountable obstacle (Kociszewski, 2016)? The author believes the public and non-government environmental organizations need to exert greater pressure in order to effectively impact the future CAP. This includes making more precise remarks on the form of specific instruments (especially as regards the requirements for greening) so as to prevent a repeat of the consequences of the 2014–2020 reform shaping process. Formally, 30% of direct payments depend on compliance with environmental standards. However, in practice, the standards are not applicable to small and medium farms, and are significantly lower than initially planned with respect to large operators (Kociszewski, 2016). As a consequence, the implemented environmental instruments fail to provide the expected outcomes related to the reduction of the adverse environmental impact of the agriculture. These findings were made by many authors, including the experts from environmental organizations (Beaufoy and Marsden, 2010). It seems that the incentives for boosting production efficiency and intensity continue to prevail over economic considerations. This is also true for Poland where the large manufacturers receive the largest benefits from direct payments (Nurzyńska, 2016).

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## NAJNOWSZE ROZWIĄZANIA POLITYKI EKOLOGICZNEJ UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ A ZMIANY W INSTRUMENTARIUM WSPÓLNEJ POLITYKI ROLNEJ

**Streszczenie.** Głównym celem artykułu jest określenie przejawów i konsekwencji oddziaływania polityki ekologicznej Unii Europejskiej na wybrane narzędzia Wspólnej Polityki Rolnej (WPR). W tym celu zastosowano metodę analizy opisowej dokumentów strategicznych UE dotyczących obu polityk oraz towarzyszących im aktów prawnych. Wykorzystano również materiał faktograficzny na podstawie danych statystycznych dotyczących implementacji instrumentów WPR kształtowanych pod wpływem polityki ekologicznej, a także dotyczących zmian oddziaływania rolnictwa na środowisko. Główny mechanizm oddziaływania polityki ekologicznej na WPR jest oparty na zasadzie jej integracji z politykami sektorowymi, wzmacnianej w kolejnych programach działań UE w ochronie środowiska. Stopniowo wprowadzano w nich coraz więcej odniesień do rolnictwa, co skutkowało proekologicznymi zmianami WPR. Szczególną uwagę zwrócono na najnowsze rozwiązania: Siódmy program działań w ochronie środowiska UE i pakiet energetyczno-klimatyczny, które wpłynęły zarówno na rozwinięcie polityki ochrony środowiska, jak i jej związków z polityką rolną. Efektem kolejnych etapów reform jest modyfikacja instrumentów I filaru (decoupling, greening) i II filaru (m.in. programów rolnośrodowiskowych, wsparcia rolnictwa ekologicznego) w taki sposób, by wywierały bardziej korzystny wpływ na środowisko. Wprowadzane są również działania powiązane z instrumentami ekonomicznymi WPR, wpływające na ograniczenie niekorzystnego wpływu unijnego rolnictwa na środowisko – standardy cross-compliance (dotyczące m.in. ochrony wód, klimatu, różnorodności biologicznej i gleb).

**Słowa kluczowe:** ochrona środowiska w rolnictwie, polityka ekologiczna, zrównoważony rozwój rolnictwa

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