



What is new in the new EU rural development policy agenda?

SEA Tallin Forum

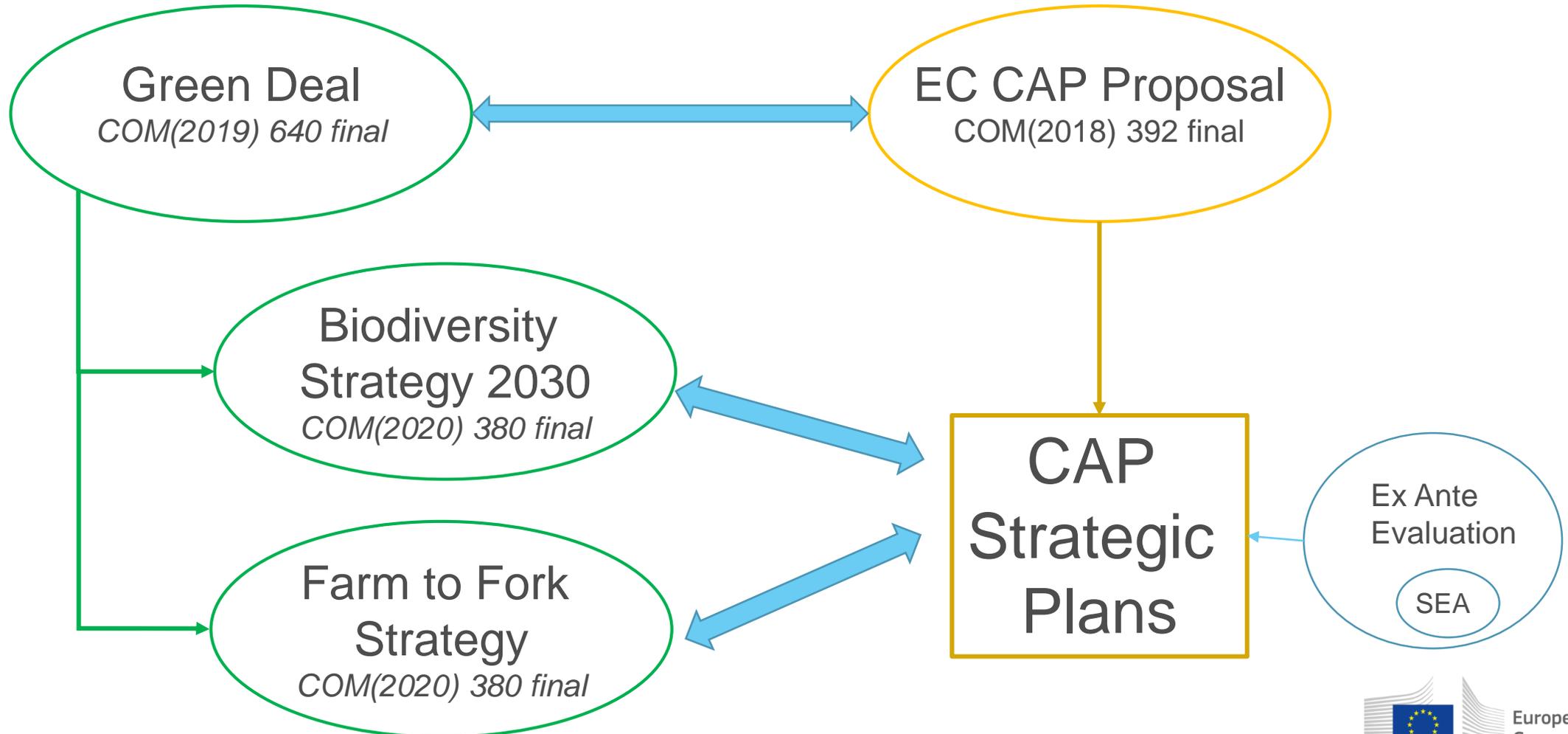
Session: *SEA for Agriculture and Rural development strategies in the EU: a future challenge*

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A New Policy Frame



CAP: Ambitious environmental objectives

- (a) Support viable farm income and resilience across the EU territory to enhance food security;
- (b) enhance market orientation and increase competitiveness including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation ;
- (c) Improve farmers' position in the value chain;
- (d) Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as sustainable energy;**
- (e) Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air;**
- (f) Contribute to the protection of biodiversity, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes;**
- (g) Attract young farmers and facilitate business development in rural areas;
- (h) Promote employment, growth, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including bio-economy and sustainable forestry;
- (i) Improve the response of EU agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including safe, nutritious and sustainable food, as well as animal welfare.

Biodiversity Strategy 2030: strong emphasis on the role of agriculture and CAP

2.2.2. Bringing nature back to agricultural land

“ [...] farmers play a vital role in preserving biodiversity. [...] At the same time, certain agricultural practices are a key driver of biodiversity decline. [...] important to work with farmers to support and incentivise the transition to fully sustainable practices

[...] this strategy will work in tandem with the new Farm to Fork Strategy and the new CAP, including by promoting eco-schemes and result-based payment schemes. [CAP Strategic] plans should lead to sustainable practices such as precision agriculture, organic farming, agro-ecology, agroforestry, low-intensive permanent grassland, and stricter animal welfare standards.

Quantitative targets are set:

- At least **25%** of EU agricultural land under organic farming
- At least **10%** of agricultural area under high-diversity landscape features
- Planting at least **3 billion** additional trees in the EU by 2030
- Reducing nutrient losses by at least 50%. Reduction of use of fertilisers by at least 20%
- The risk and use of chemical pesticides is reduced by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides is reduced by 50%

Farm to Fork Strategy: on holistic approach to sustainable food systems

- EU's transition to sustainable food systems has started in many areas, food systems remain one of the key drivers of climate change and environmental degradation. There is an urgent need to reduce dependency on pesticides and antimicrobials, reduce excess fertilisation, increase organic farming, improve animal welfare, and reverse biodiversity loss.
- The EU's goals are to reduce the environmental and climate footprint of the EU food system and strengthen its resilience [...] ensuring that the food chain, covering food production, transport, distribution, marketing and consumption, has a **neutral or positive environmental impact**
- Farmers [...] reduce methane emissions from livestock, increase production of renewable energy (e.g. solar panels on barns' roofs), enhance integrated pest management (IPM)
- [...] the transition must be supported by a CAP that focuses on the Green Deal [...] The new 'eco-schemes' will offer a major stream of funding to boost sustainable practices, such as precision agriculture, agro-ecology (including organic farming), carbon farming and agro-forestry. [...] Member States and the Commission will have to ensure that they are appropriately resourced and implemented in the Strategic Plans. [...]. The Commission will also make recommendations to each Member State on the nine specific objectives of the CAP, before they formally submit the draft Strategic Plans

What role for SEA?

Strong emphasis in the policy documents on the need to evaluate, monitor, assess impacts, ensure policy integration and coherence with other policies/plan/programs... all well established aims of SEA

But...

- No mention of SEA in the Green Deal
- No mention of SEA in the Farm to Fork Strategy
- SEA only mentioned *en passant* in a footnote in the Biodiversity Strategy
- SEA mentioned in art. 95 of CAP proposal (Content of CAP Strategic Plans) and in art. 103 (Annexes) and in art. 125 (Ex-Ante Evaluation): “*The ex-ante evaluation shall incorporate the requirements for strategic environmental assessment set out in Directive 2001/42/EC taking into account climate change mitigation needs*”

Thank you for your attention!

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