

HEDGEROWS AND ISOLATED TREES ROLE IN EUROPE

Cross-compliance fulfillment

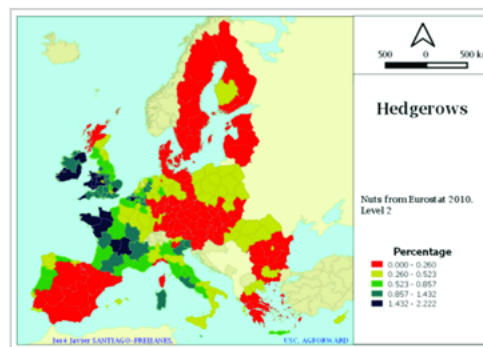
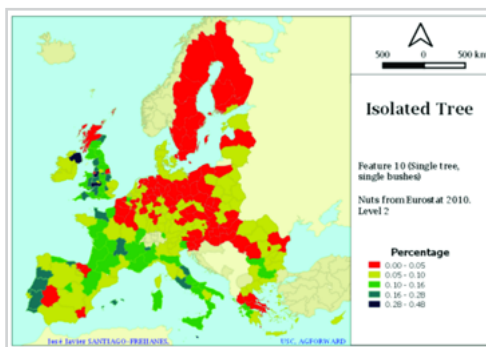


THE WHAT AND WHY

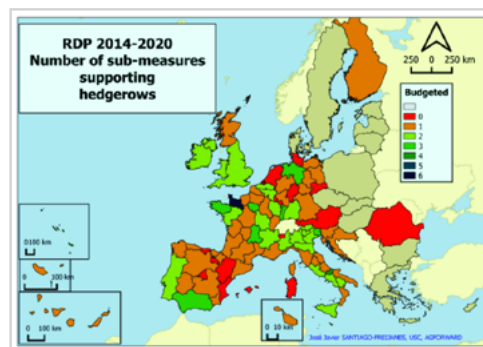
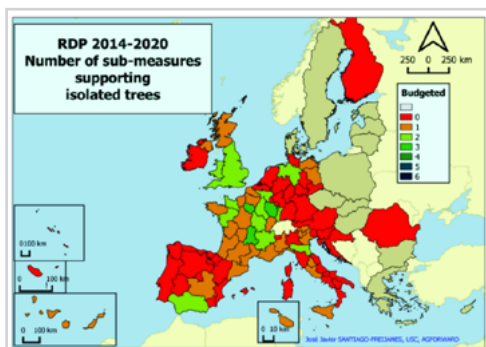
Landscape features as agroforestry

Agroforestry is a sustainable land use system that is directly supported by the Greening and in the Pillar II of the CAP (Measure 8.2). It can be also indirectly recognized in other parts of the CAP such as the cross-compliance or conditionality, where environment preservation is promoted. Cross-compliance applies to Pillar I but also to most environmental payments being part of the Rural Development policy (Pillar II) since CAP 2007-2013. Farmers receiving CAP funds have to comply with (i) Statutory Management Requirements (SMR) and (ii) standards for maintaining the land in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC). Current SMRs are related to environment, climate change, and good agricultural condition land

linked to (1) water (SMR1: Nitrate Vulnerable Zones), (2) biodiversity (SMR2: wild birds and SMR3: habitats), and (3) public: food and feed animal regulations among others and agroforestry can help to fulfil these environment goals. Agroforestry is indirectly contributing to those GAEC related with (i) water such as GAEC 1 (establishment of buffer strips along water courses), GAEC3 (Protection of ground water against pollution), (ii) soil and carbon stock related to GAEC 4 (Minimum soil cover), GAEC 5 (erosion), GAEC 6 (maintenance of soil organic matter), but more directly to GAEC 7 related with the landscape and the retention of the landscape features, because landscape features are related to hedges, trees in line, in group or isolated.



Percentage of Isolated trees and hedgerows in Europe
Mosquera-Losada MR
Santiago-Freijanes JJ



Number of sub-measures supporting isolated and hedgerows trees
Mosquera-Losada MR
Santiago-Freijanes JJ

HOW IS THE CHALLENGE ADDRESSED

Landscape features

Maintenance of landscape features, namely isolated trees and hedges, should be based on the adequate knowledge of their extent (Figure 1) and the usefulness of these features to provide ecosystem services delivery. Isolated trees are mainly linked to France, Portugal, part of Italy, Spain and UK, where the presence of trees in the land is more common. The highest percentage of hedgerow is found in France and UK, but also in Portugal and Italy, where this landscape feature is better represented than in other countries of Europe. However, neither

isolated trees nor hedgerows represent more than 0.5 or 2.5% of the territory, respectively. The countries where these two types of landscape features are present are those more prone to suffer strong negative effects of winds such as UK Islands and South of France. Landscape features are compulsory protected by Cross-compliance, but the establishment and maintenance are supported by different measures of the Pillar II of the CAP, being hedgerows more supported than isolated trees in most of the regions of Europe.



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Keywords: ALandscape features, CAP, Mapping, Adaptation, Mitigation

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Landscape features should be preserved and their extent enlarged to increase the delivery of ecosystem services in both croplands and arable lands.
- Accountability of landscape features is essential to pay farmers for ecosystem services delivery that is aimed at next CAP 2021–2027.
- It is essential to recognize agroforestry as such when describing landscape features to increase awareness about the needed transition from conventional to more sustainable land use systems.



Isolated trees enhance ecosystem services linked to biodiversity, water quality
Linforth, P



Hedgerows enhance ecosystem services linked to biodiversity, production and water quality
Krämer, M

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ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Promoting landscape features

The presence of hedgerows in the borders of the fields or isolated trees contributes to increase biodiversity, production (through the reduction of desiccating wind effects), but also improve water quality.

European Union is aware of the importance of these landscape features in Europe, but they did not recognize them as agroforestry in spite of meaning woody perennials associated to croplands or grasslands.

As indicated by the European Court of Auditors, landscape features protection has not been very successful due to the difficulty of member states to control their extent.

A large amount of trees and hedgerows have been destroyed in the last decades due to the concern that farmers have to declare landscape features in their lands because the CAP can make these areas ineligible for CAP direct payments.

FURTHER INFORMATION

European Court of Auditors (2009). European Court of Auditors Special report 8/2008: "Is Cross compliance an effective policy? http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR08_08/SR08_08_EN.PDF

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