

Sub-measure fiche (annex II to the measure fiche "forestry")

## **Establishment of agroforestry systems**

### **Measure 8**

Article 21(1) (b) and 23 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

Article XX of Commission Regulation [...]

*This guidance does not represent a binding legal interpretation of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013. It is therefore essentially non-binding in nature and complements the related legal acts.*

#### **1. RATIONALE OF THE MEASURE**

Agroforestry means land-use systems and practices where woody perennials are deliberately integrated with crops and/or animals on the same parcel or land management unit without the intention to establish a remaining forest stand. The trees may be arranged as single stems, in rows or in groups, while grazing may also take place inside parcels (silvoarable agroforestry, silvopastoralism, grazed or intercropped orchards) or on the limits between parcels (hedges, tree lines).

Agroforestry, meaning the integration of trees, crops and/or livestock on the same area of land, has been identified by the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) as a 'win-win' multifunctional land-use approach that balances the production of commodities (food, feed, fuel, fibre, etc.) with non-commodity outputs such as environmental protection and cultural and landscape amenities<sup>1</sup>. It should be noted that agroforestry systems are particularly suitable to restore the production potential of degraded areas and to upgrade environments with natural limitations.

#### **2. CONTRIBUTION TO FOCUS AREAS AND CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVES**

In the context of strategic programming<sup>2</sup>, agroforestry systems contribute to:

Priority 5 *"Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in the agriculture and food sectors and the forestry sector"*

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<sup>1</sup> Agriculture and the Environment IX, Valuing Ecosystems: Policy, Economic and Management Interactions (2012), Developing modern, multifunctional agroforestry systems for sustainable intensification: <http://orgprints.org/21905/1/2012.Smith%20SACSEPA.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> See Annex III of the Commission Working Paper "Elements of strategic programming for the period 2014-2020".

", and especially to Focus area 5 E "*Fostering carbon sequestration in agriculture and forestry*" and to Priority 4: "*Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry*".

Agroforestry systems contribute to the objectives identified in the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the following ways: contributing to biomass production, improving water quality by increasing infiltration and slowing down the leaching of nitrates, controlling erosion by providing permanent soil cover with litter, adapting and mitigating effects of climate change, by preventing forests from fire damages and limit evaporation of the water (more shadow and protection against wind). Agroforestry systems contribute to carbon sequestration, and have positive effect on biodiversity and the improvement of soil quality. Moreover, agroforestry allows also a creation of specific microclimates that may function as windbreak or offering shelter and protection to livestock and other animals in a given area. Agroforestry systems provide also cultural and recreational added-value to local population, and offer an alternative additional and regular income source.

### **3. SCOPE, TYPE AND LEVEL OF SUPPORT**

#### **3.1. Type of operation**

The eligible types of operations may be:

- Establishment of agroforestry systems
- Maintenance of the established agroforestry systems<sup>3</sup>

#### **3.2. Beneficiaries**

The eligible beneficiaries may be:

- Private land holders
- Municipalities
- Associations of private land holders or municipalities

The land can be owned by the State on condition that the manager of the land or forest is a private body or municipality.

#### **3.3. Eligible costs and conditions**

##### *3.3.1. Eligible costs*

**Establishment costs** may include;

- Establishment of agroforestry system by planting trees: costs of the plantation material and plantation, including transport, storing and treatments of seedlings

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<sup>3</sup> Maintenance costs under this measure are paid only in case the establishment costs are also supported under this measure. However, establishment costs may be paid without continuing the payments with maintenance costs.

with necessary prevention and protection materials. Applicable shrub and tree species should be listed in the Rural Development Programme.

- Establishment of agroforestry system by converting existing forests or other wooded land: costs of felling trees, thinning, pruning and protection of trees against grazing animals, if applicable.
- Complementary investments connected to the establishment (such as fences or individual protection tubes).
- Any other costs directly linked to the creation of agroforestry system (e.g. preparation of the feasibility studies, establishment plan, soil examination, soil preparation and protection, preparation of existing forest or other wooded land, including thinning and pruning in order to convert to agroforestry system)
- Silvopastoral (grazing) system watering and protective facilities (e.g. on site sheds) are eligible.
- Necessary treatment connected to the establishment, including watering and cutting.
- Replanting in case of biotic or abiotic calamity causing failure (during the first year after afforestation). In order to replant, a formal recognition by public authorities acknowledging officially an occurrence of a calamity is necessary. Replanting should be adapted to acknowledged needs. The necessary budget flexibility should be envisaged in the Rural Development Programme.
- The plantation of forest tree species may be accompanied by plantation of other tree species, such as ancient fruit trees.

**Maintenance costs** may include;

- Maintenance of the agroforestry system for a maximum period of 5 years through annual premium per hectare established. Costs related to assisted regeneration during this period could be accepted particularly for suitable native species and varieties.
- Various form of support adjusted to the types of agroforestry systems: e.g. area based support for established tree strips or belts, weeding, pruning, and thinning or payments using other appropriate unitary costs.
- Protective actions and or maintenance of watering and protective facilities.

### *3.3.2. Further conditions*

- The recommended ratio of woodland/trees and agricultural land in place is to be defined by the Member State taking account of local pedo-climatic conditions, forestry species (applicable tree and shrubs) and the need to ensure the agricultural use of the land.
- As a recommendation, more than one forest tree species, particularly multipurpose trees (both fruit and timber) should be planted in the same agroforestry system, thus contributing to wider biodiversity.

- Member State shall define the maximum and minimum number of trees. This number should reflect the dual use of land. In this regard, as rough average, 250 trees would be recommended as maximum.

### **3.4. Principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria**

See the European Commission document "Guidelines on eligibility and Selection Criteria".

It is recommended to promote multifunctional systems with higher public benefit, such as erosion/desertification control, animal welfare and biosafety actions (separation of grazing lands by forest belts), or supporting pollinators.

### **3.5. Links to other legislation (e.g. "baseline" for measures that compensate for costs incurred / income foregone)**

A link to the relevant legislation should be established in the Rural Development Programme.

### **3.6. Aid intensity/amount of support**

The maximum support rate is 80 % of the amount of the eligible investment for the establishment of agro-forestry systems.

As regards the use of flat-rate and standard costs, the legal reference is in article 67 of the Common Provisions Regulation.

### **3.7. Co-financing rate(s)**

This measure is among the measures which contribute to the compliance with the requirement stipulated in Article 59(6) of Regulation 1305/2013 and which requires that at least 30% of the total EAFRD contribution to the rural development programme shall be reserved for measures contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as environmental issues.

Furthermore, this measure can also benefit from a higher co-financing rate (75%) as it contributes to the objectives of environment and climate change mitigation and adaptation (Article 59(4)(b) of the RD Regulation). In case of the less developed regions, in the outermost regions and in the smaller Aegean islands this co-financing rate can be even higher (85% of the eligible public expenditure) as stipulated in Article 59(3)(a).

## **4. INDICATORS**

In planning the indicators it should be taken into consideration the principles detailed in the Annex IV of Working Paper "Elements of strategic programming for the period 2014-2020".

## **5. VERIFIABILITY AND CONTROLLABILITY**

Reference to be made to the "*Guidelines on verifiability and prevention of errors*".

## **6. BEST PRACTISES**

Agroforestry across Europe includes both traditional systems that are an essential part of cultural and natural heritage (e.g. dehesa in Spain, montados in Portugal, Baltic wooded

meadows, grazed orchards, wood pastures) and modern alley cropping systems that combine high productivity with protection of the environment.

Agroforestry systems can be established in various ways. On agricultural land trees can be planted in rows with a distance that allows the agricultural machines to enter and work in the area. However, trees can also be planted in and around the agricultural parcel in strips in order to protect the agricultural crops against wind, thus creating a better microclimate and protecting topsoil against wind and water erosion.

In silvoarable systems trees, such as e.g. poplar, can be planted for timber production and walnut for fruit/multipurpose production (as regards walnut, the produced timber could also be valuable). Conversely, overgrown pastures can be reopened by removing a substantial part of existing tree cover in order to recreate lowland or Alpine wooded meadows.

Concerning silvopastoral systems several traditional systems exist, such as *Montados* or *Dehesa* where animal grazing, cork and wood production take place. Silvopastoral systems can also be established to protect biodiversity against invasive weeds and/or maintain special landscape characters e.g. alpine pasture.

Various forms of good examples could be found in agroforestry websites, such as:

ENRD publication; EU Rural Review N 9, page 38

[http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/app\\_templates/filedownload.cfm?id=ED57142C-E0C7-3E97-E70E-E40EC9E8CCB1](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/app_templates/filedownload.cfm?id=ED57142C-E0C7-3E97-E70E-E40EC9E8CCB1)

European agroforestry association:

<http://www.agroforestry.eu/>

French Agroforestry Association;

<http://www.agroforesterie.fr/index.php>

UK Farm Woodland Forum;

<http://www.agroforestry.ac.uk/>

On Baltic Wooded Meadows :

<http://www.zbi.ee/~kalevi/wooded.htm>

[http://www.pky.ee/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=92&Itemid=91](http://www.pky.ee/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=92&Itemid=91)