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## Changes in Governance of the European Union Common Agricultural Policy 2023–2027 in the context of the Strategic Priorities of the European Green Deal Implementation

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### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to identify and present changes in governance instruments of the European Union (EU) common agricultural policy (CAP) which have been implemented since 2023. The research problem is to investigate whether the CAP strategic plans (SP) are innovative in relation to the previous CAP governance arrangements or the new solutions are a mere change of the name. The paper presents the reasons for the establishment of strategic plans by the European Commission as a new governance instrument within the new performance-based CAP model (PM) and how their implementation has been related to the achievement of the strategic priorities of the European Green Deal (EGD) strategy. The final research conclusion indicates a limited innovativeness of strategic plans as the instrument for the CAP governance. This is due to the lack of legitimacy for the proposed innovative solutions related to the CAP environmental dimension according to the main policy stakeholders.

**Keywords:** European Union, agricultural policy, Green Deal, strategic plan, innovation

**JEL Classification Codes:** Q01, Q13, Q18

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## **Zmiany w zarządzaniu wspólną polityką rolną Unii Europejskiej 2023–2027 w kontekście realizacji priorytetów strategicznych Europejskiego Zielonego Ładu**

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### **Abstrakt**

Celem artykułu jest identyfikacja i przedstawienie zmian w instrumentach zarządzania wspólną polityką rolną (WPR) Unii Europejskiej, które są realizowane od 2023 roku. Problem badawczy dotyczy planów strategicznych jako instrumentów realizacji nowego modelu zarządzania wspólną polityką rolną i stopnia ich innowacyjności. W artykule przedstawiono powody ustanowienia planów strategicznych przez Komisję Europejską jako nowego instrumentu zarządzania w ramach nowego modelu opartego o wyniki WPR oraz sposób, w jaki ich wdrażanie było związane z realizacją strategicznych priorytetów strategii Europejskiego Zielonego Ładu. Ostateczny wniosek z badań wskazuje na ograniczoną innowacyjność planów strategicznych jako instrumentów zarządzania WPR. Wynika to z braku legitymizacji proponowanych innowacyjnych rozwiązań odnoszących się do wymiaru środowiskowego WPR przez głównych interesariuszy polityki.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Unia Europejska, polityka rolna, Zielony Ład, plan strategiczny, innowacyjność

**Kody klasyfikacji JEL:** Q01, Q13, Q18

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## **Introduction**

The establishment of multiannual financial framework (MFF) in the EU 2021–2027 provided the basis for reforms in the programming and implementation of all EU areas of activity, including the CAP. This policy is considered a strategic area of EU activity because, despite its sectoral nature, its implementation generates effects of a horizontal nature. They concern not only the food security of the EU population, but also determine the directions of economic, social and environmental development of the integration grouping. Since the implementation of the CAP in the European Economic Community began, it has brought a number of benefits in the form of the development of multifunctional agriculture and rural areas, but also costs, both economic and environmental (Michalewska-Pawlak, 2023; Volkov et al., 2019).

In order to limit the disadvantageous effects of CAP interventions, such as food overproduction or the environmental impact of agricultural intensification, specific reforms of the policy were implemented in the subsequent MFFs. They were aimed

at implementing such management solutions, which made it possible to rationalise its expenditure, increase efficiency in the provision of public goods and adjust its interventions to social expectations. Leaving aside the questions of the effectiveness of CAP reform and the controversies that have accompanied its implementation, which have been widely described in the academic literature (Cuadros-Casanova et al., 2023; Erjavec and Erjavec, 2020; Rutz, Dwyer and Schramek, 2014) still this policy is relevant (Becker, 2024: 688). Although under the MFF 2021–2027, the reduction in expenditure on its implementation amounted 12% compared to spendings 2014–2020, still almost a third (31.3%) of the funds go to support agriculture and rural areas (Becker, Grajewski and Rehburg, 2022: 6). Taking into account the significance of the CAP the main objective of the paper is to identify and characteristics changes in governance instruments of the EU's CAP which have been developed from 2023.

In the above context, it seems important to undertake a scientific consideration of the changes in the CAP delivery instruments implemented under the current MFF and to obtain answers to the following research questions:

1. Are the changes in the 2021–2027 CAP model implementation instruments linked to the implementation of the strategic priorities of the EGD?
2. Are the new CAP governance instruments implemented after 2021 innovative compared to the solutions implemented by the EU in the previous MFF 2014–2020?

The article is structured in five parts. At the beginning of the paper, the methodological basis of the analysis is presented, with the research area delineated, conceptual and definitional assumptions and characteristics of the research methods used. In the following part, the paper focuses on presenting the key ideas of the EGD strategy, as a document intended by the European Commission (EC) to provide a basis for reforming EU policies and aligning their implementation with the achievement of EGD priorities. The SPs were then characterised as new instruments for the governance of the new PB model of the CAP between 2023 and 2027, compared to previously implemented management solutions. A detailed analysis covered those solutions included in the SPs that are expected to contribute to the achievement of EGD priority objectives. Included here is a consideration of the innovativeness of the proposed solutions in terms of their pro-environmental dimension. In the last part of the article, the analysis focuses on identifying the social and political determinants of the implementation of the environmental aspects of the SPs that affect their innovativeness and effectiveness for the achievement of the EGD objectives. The article concludes by presenting answers to the research questions formulated in the introduction, conclusions from the analysis and recommendations for further research on the social determinants of the CAP governance.

## Methodological assumptions of the study

The subject of the analyses contained in the article are the SPs, as a new instrument for the management of the EU's CAP, established in the current financial perspective 2021–2027 by regulation 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). It should be pointed out that the implementation period of the SPs is from 2023 to 2027, as the EU Member States (MS), as the entities responsible for the development and implementation of these documents, had adequate time to prepare them and have them approved by the EC. This resulted in 28 plans, one per MS, with the exception of Belgium, which drafted separate documents for Wallonia and Flanders. The SPs elaboration was a result of changing the CAP delivery model—from compliance based to performance-based in the current financial perspective. The basic assumptions of the CAP delivery model shift will be discussed in the context of SP implementation. Their analysis will make it possible to answer the research questions formulated in the introduction about the impact of the EGD strategy on changes in CAP governance and about the innovativeness of new management arrangements.

The research carried out also takes into account the changes that were introduced by the decision of the EU institutions in the implementation of the SPs on 24 May 2024. Both the reasons and the extent of these changes will be indicated, as well as their impact on SPs innovation.

In the process of researching SP innovation as an instrument of the CAP governance, the definition of innovations in governance developed by Helmut K. Anheier and Sabina Korreck (2013: 83) who identify them ‘... as novel rules, regulations and approaches that, compared to the current state of affairs, seek to address a public problem in more efficacious and effective ways, to achieve better policy outcomes, and ultimately, to enhance legitimacy’ was adopted. As will be demonstrated later in the text, SPs meet the criterion of a new governance instrument oriented towards addressing public concerns about environmental quality and climate change. Within the scope of the article, their effectiveness will not be evaluated, as this can only be checked after their implementation has been completed after 2027. Although a study indicating the expected effects of the implementation of the SPs by MS is available, at this stage it is in the nature of an ex-ante evaluation (Münch et al., 2023). Their social and political legitimacy will be verified, which indicates the level of stakeholder acceptance of the implementation of public policy, which in the case under analysis is CAP.

The conceptual basis of the research presented in the article is based on the model assumptions of public governance. This concept points to the participation and roles of public, social and economic actors in the process of public governance. According to Hubert Izdebski (2012: 11–12), public governance refers to the coordination of activities between market economy actors, civil society and the public sector, who participate in governance processes understood as making and implementing public policies. Through processes of deconcentration, decentralisation and delegation, public authority is distributed among different, interdependent actors (Peters, 2011: 111–112) and their coordinated actions lead to the achievement of public goals. Public governance provides an explanatory framework for the study of the CAP of the EU, as the policy has emerged as a result of changes in the processes of public authority and its expansion to include new actors, primarily at the supranational level. The EC as the executive authority in the EU has, together with other EU institutions, the competence to decide on the shape and implementation of the CAP, but the implementation of this policy takes place with the participation of national authorities, regional authorities, social organisations, rural communities and, above all, farmers as its main stakeholders (Michalewska-Pawlak, 2015: 230–234). Therefore, in the process of studying it, its multi-stakeholder nature and the way of implementation based on co-governance should be taken into account.

The article is based on an analysis of the content of EU legal acts and other documents as well as scientific literature on the EU CAP and the EGD strategy. The results of empirical research of the EU policy carried out by selected think tanks were used. During the analysis of the SP, a comparative method was applied, the use of which made it possible to clarify the processes and directions of changes taking place in the management of the EU's CAP.

## **Establishment of the European Green Deal as justification for seeking new/innovative solutions in the CAP governance**

In the current financial perspective 2021–2027, the basic direction of change for individual EU policies has been set by the EC within the EGD strategy. Presented on 19 December 2019, the communication defines the EU's development priorities up to 2050, bringing both EU legislation and policy-specific actions under them. As the main objective of the strategy, it identifies “transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic

growth is decoupled from resource use” (European Commission, 2019: 2). The document presents a vision for social and economic development, taking into account the care of resources and the environment.

As intensive farming causes biodiversity and ecosystem services loss as well as climate change and is responsible for 30% of the Union’s greenhouse gas emission (Díaz et al., 2019), The implementation of the reformed CAP is not only expected to contribute to the development of environmentally sustainable agriculture. Eventually, the solutions implemented through the MFF 2021–2027 under the CAP are expected to result in changes in the production process and increase food quality, making food more available at lower prices, while taking care of natural resources and improving biodiversity. The EU’s CAP implemented by 2021 also had its environmental dimension, but with the publication of the EGD strategy, the EC presented a holistic view of development, indicating that economic processes should not only have a negative impact on the state of the environment and climate, but, properly steered and supported by specific public policies, including the CAP, aim to improve the state of the environment and protect the climate.

Reconciling economic development, rooted in increasing the competitiveness of the economy, with the requirements of decarbonisation, climate neutrality, environmental protection and biodiversity requires the EU institutions to design new/innovative solutions for the implementation of public policies. The area of intervention of the CAP 2021–2027 is the implementation of the ‘From Farm to Fork’ strategy, which details the objectives of the EGD. This document, despite its strategic dimension, contains a number of coherent proposals on how to reshape EU food systems as fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly (European Commission, 2020). ‘From farm to fork’ strategy is integrated with the assumptions of second strategic EU document “EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. Bringing nature back into our lives”. In this document the interconnection between nature and agriculture was described and what kind actions should be supported by the CAP SP 2023–2024. Precision agriculture, organic farming, agro-ecology, agro-forestry, low-intensive permanent grassland, and stricter animal welfare standards were have been recognised as the measures to encourage the restoration of nature in agricultural areas (European Commission, 2020a: 7).

Both strategies stress the role of hard policy instruments as funds and legal regulations in reaching their goals but also enumerate soft policy instruments like research, knowledge, new technologies and advisory services in transition the EU economy towards sustainability and climate neutrality. Innovative and integrated approach is reflected in the inclusion the wide range of stakeholder into the process of strategies implementation., not only the farmers but also food industry, consum-

ers, public authorities and agencies non-governmental organisations, research units and educational institutions.

Green transformation towards a sustainable EU economic model, like any change, will also generate specific social costs, accompanied by a range of other economic, political or military risks. Therefore, the need to develop new and innovative instruments to manage all public policies, including the CAP, so that change is accepted by EU societies as legitimate and beneficial, seems justified.

## CAP strategic plans: old wine in a new bottle or innovative shift in governance?

The main instrument for the governance of the 2023–2027 CAP is the SPs, whose conception originated at the supranational level of governance in the EU, while implementation takes place at national level in all MS of the EU. SPs are elaborated by the MS in line with the EU CAP objectives<sup>2</sup> but give them more competences and responsibility in terms of managing the development of the agricultural sector and rural areas (Cagliero et al., 2022: 26).

SPs establishment is a result of new delivery model of the CAP implementation which came into force on 1 January 2023. This new performance-based model is different from the previous compliance-based regarding the competence and responsibility of MS for the implementation of the CAP. MS Member States using the CAP budget have more autonomy to establish national instruments for implementing the CAP, in response to the development challenges and potential of their agricultural sectors. At the same time, they are held accountable by the

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<sup>2</sup> The following CAP 2021–2027 objectives are enumerated in the Article 6 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/2115: to support viable farm income and resilience of the agricultural sector across the Union in order to enhance long-term food security and agricultural diversity as well as to ensure the economic sustainability of agricultural production in the Union; to enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation; to improve the farmers' position in the value chain; to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as to promote sustainable energy; to foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency; to contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes; to attract and sustain young farmers and new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas; to promote employment, growth, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including the circular bio-economy and sustainable forestry; to improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high-quality, safe and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, to reduce food waste, as well as to improve animal welfare and to combat antimicrobial resistance.

European Commission for achieving the objectives of the CAP and not, as was previously the case, for implementing it in accordance with agreed requirements (Cagliero et al., 2021; Carey, 2019). SPs are the part of this new architecture of the CAP model implementation.

EC introduced from 2023 SP as a solution to ensure better coordination of agricultural and rural policies, implemented before 2021 under two separate pillars. The two-pillar nature of CAP was maintained, but the establishment of SP was intended to bring interventions financed by the EAGF and the EARDP under strategic planning.

In the first pillar CAP 2014–2020, direct payments and sectoral interventions were implemented, while the second pillar contained rural development programmes. In the second pillar the instruments supporting Agri-Environment-Climate Measures (AECM), payments for organic farming and Natura 2000 sites and support for Areas of Natural Constraints were regarded as ecologically and climate neutrality effective (Batáry et al., 2015). In comparison to current solutions, two pillars of the CAP were managed separately. The first one financed by the EAGF referred to direct payments system and agricultural market protection. The second one was managed under the cohesion policy rules, by implementation the rural development programmes. It was dedicated to sustainable and territorial rural development, managing natural resources, preventing climate changes and modernization of agricultural sector in the EU. These measures implementation was co-financed from the national and regional budgets (Michalewska-Pawlak, 2015: 233).

The 2023–2027 CAP implemented by the SPs assumes the implementation of three solutions dedicated climate and environment protection. New conditionality in the first pillar refers to cross-compliance criteria and the three greening measures also implemented in the previous programming period 2014–2020. Cross-compliance sets basic rules farmers have to comply with to receive direct payments of first pillar, with penalties in case of non-compliance. These rules include statutory management requirements on the environment, health, and animal welfare and norms aimed at keeping land in good agricultural and environmental conditions (GAECs). Cross-compliance is extended by including the three measures of the green payment of the 2014–2020 CAP related to the preservation of permanent grasslands, a minimal diversification of annual crops, and the maintenance of Ecological Focus Areas (EFA) (Guyomard et al., 2023: 1328). Conditionality is a not new solution but a continuation the green intervention developed in the previous years.

The new pro-environment and pro-climate measures that MS are obliged to include in the SP are eco-schemes. They are voluntary for farmers and encourage the introduction of farming practices that are not profitable from a market perspec-



tive, but beneficial for the climate and the environment, i.e. public goods<sup>3</sup>. A detailed analysis of the range of measures available under eco-schemes shows that they concern both the protection of natural resources, their rational use and the restoration of their potential. Eco-schemes are entirely funded by the CAP budget and MS are obliged to spend 25% of the EAGF in the first pillar for their implementation (European Commission, 2021: 5).

The second pillar of CAP 2023–2027 maintains the AECMs, which are supported by the EU budget, with Member States obliged to co-finance them within their national and regional budgets. The implementation of the AECMs, however, does not require the creation of separate rural development programmes as was the case prior to 2021, it takes place under the SP. MS are obliged to spend 35% of the EAFRD second pillar budget on AECM implementation (European Commission, 2021: 6).

**Table 1. The comparison of Green Architecture of the CAP 2014–2020 and 2023–2027**

Structure of the CAP implementation	2014–2020	2021–2027	Sources of financing
I Pillar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greening;</li> <li>• Cross-compliance;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conditionality (Greening+ Cross-compliance);</li> <li>• Eco-schemes;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU budget</li> </ul>
II Pillar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agri-Environment-Climate Measures;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agri-Environment- Climate Measures;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU budget</li> <li>• MS budgets</li> </ul>

Source: Elaboration based on Guyomard (2023: 1329).

As the researchers note, the effectiveness in achieving CAP's environmental and climate goals will largely depend on individual MS and the quality of their SPs, as well as their political will and resilience to the political influence of farm and food lobbies oriented towards pursuing sectoral interests at the expense of the environment and climate (Guyomard et al., 2023: 1330). All the more so because article 103 of the Regulation 2020/2115 allows up to 25% of allocated funds per pillar to be transferred to the other pillar without further justification. The reallocation of direct

<sup>3</sup> According to the Article 31 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/2115, each eco-scheme is to include at least two types of the following measures, considered beneficial for the climate, the environment and animal welfare: climate change mitigation, including reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural practices, as well as maintenance of existing carbon stores and enhancement of carbon sequestration; climate change adaptation, including actions to improve resilience of food production systems and animal and plant diversity for stronger resistance to diseases and climate change; protection or improvement of water quality and reduction of pressure on water resources; prevention of soil degradation, soil restoration, improvement of soil fertility and of nutrient management and soil biota; protection of biodiversity, conservation or restoration of habitats or species, including maintenance and creation of landscape features or non-productive areas; actions for a sustainable and reduced use of pesticides, in particular pesticides that present a risk for human health or environment; actions to enhance animal welfare or combat antimicrobial resistance.

payment funds to the second pillar may be increased by 15 percentage points if these funds benefit the environmental objectives of the CAP. Member States whose direct payments per hectare are below 90% of the EU average may reallocate up to 30% of EAFRD funds to the first pillar. This solution should be assessed as a threat to the financing of the environmental and climate objectives of the EGD, especially in those countries where the agricultural lobby seeks to preserve or strengthen the traditional, productive functions of the agricultural sector. 6 MS decided reallocate funds from the second to the first pillar. Poland reduced the budget for second pillar by almost at third (Becker, Grajewski and Rehburg, 2022: 7–8) and dedicated these funds to stabilise agricultural incomes through direct payments.

The CAP SPs include both classic instruments of pro-environmental intervention and new solutions in the form of eco-schemes. Their innovativeness refer to the issue that they offer new green architecture for public intervention in the area of agriculture and rural development. The EGD priorities forces the changes in the CAP by establishment the new tool for its environmental and climate priorities. By the SPs implementation the EC has have an ambitious intention to improve the state of climate and natural environment but in accordance to Anheier and Korreck (2013: 83) definition of innovation in public governance, it is noteworthy that the SPs should not only generate positive effect but also contribute to the legitimacy of public intervention. Therefore, the next part of the article analyses the agricultural protests that took place in Europe at the beginning of 2024 against the green CAP architecture and their impact on SPs implementation.

## **Social and political challenges of implementing the environmental and climate dimensions of the CAP strategic plans**

Despite the strengthening of the green architecture of the CAP 2021–2027, the scientific community calls for further reforms of the CAP for increased conservation of natural resources and climate change mitigation (Pe'er, 2020). On the other hand, in light of the governance practice of the CAP, its main stakeholders i.e. EU farmers expressed their disagreement with the adopted pro-climate and pro-environmental solutions within the national SPs during the wave of protests that took place in the EU's MS in early 2024.

Farmers from individual EU MS made varying criticisms of the implementation of national agricultural policies and CAPs, depending on the specific interests of the agricultural sector in each country. German farmers objected to phase out tax

breaks on agricultural diesel proposed by Federal Government, while Italian farmers protested against the proposed scrapping of an income tax exemption. In Spain the protests were the result of the establishment drought-induced restrictions on water use by agricultural sector. Polish farmers called for restrictions on Ukrainian imports, which they blame for lowering the prices, especially grain and maize (Matthews, 2024: 83). Dutch and Flanders farmers protested against environmental regulations dedicated to reducing nitrogen emissions from livestock farming. Unfair competition from the EU-MERCOSUR trade agreement were raised in France and Belgium (Finger et al., 2024: 60)

In the other hand, the common denominator of the EU agrarian lobby's demands referred to the criticism of the environmental dimension of EGD and, above all, GAEC standards implementation. The GAEC standards in the CAP 2023–2027 have been somewhat more restrictive than in the previous CAP. Farmers argued that in the face of challenges such as a decline in their income, rising energy and transport costs, the opening up of the EU to imports of cheaper agricultural products from Ukraine and South America, they would not be able to face global competition in agricultural trade (Moldicz, 2024: 4). The setting of high EU environmental standards for agricultural production was seen by farmers as another threat to the EU agricultural sector.

The two most prominent organisations representing the agricultural lobby in the EU, COPA and COGECA, advocate the implementation of The EGD as a strategy that puts food production, land and forest management at its heart. Nevertheless, in response to a wave of agricultural protests in early 2024 against the implementation of pro-environmental CAP instruments, they sent an open letter to the President of the European Commission, calling for derogations from CAP conditionality, ecoschemes and other climat measures (COPA, COGECA 2024).

Under pressure from the agricultural lobby, the EU institutions in May 2024 made a formal adjustment to the implementation of GAEC and eco-schemes requirements under CAP 2023–2027. This decision was not based on merit and was not preceded by an evaluation of existing pro-environmental solutions in terms of their impact on the competitiveness or profitability of EU agriculture. The rationale for the change was the European Parliament (EP) elections scheduled for June 2024 and the possible impact of agricultural protests on their result. Fearing a rise in Eurosceptic sentiment and a victory by right-wing parties, the EC and EP controlled by the European People's Party revised the content of Regulation 2021/2015 and finally approved the following changes on 24 May 2024, weakening the innovative and pro-environmental dimension of the CAP. Farms under 10 ha are exempted from the conditionality rule. The previous requirement for crop rotation (specific crop succession) for farms has been changed to crop diversification. The obligation to set aside 4% of arable

land per farm has also been removed. Farmers who choose to set land aside can now do so voluntarily under eco-schemes and receive an additional financial reward for doing so (European Commission, 2024). The discontinued practice of compulsory set-aside was intended to regenerate soil and improve biodiversity on farms.

Analysing the extent of the changes introduced by Regulation 2021/2115, it should be noted that direct income support for farmers remains a priority for the EU institutions, at the expense of climate and environmental priorities. In the face of political tensions, the environmental and climate objectives of the CAP and the instruments to achieve them have been watered down, due to public expectations and political priorities. The lack of social and political legitimacy for the pro-environmental, innovative instruments of the CAP 2023–2027 governance has resulted in their marginalisation in the policies of the EU institutions.

The EC stated that the May 2024 revision of the CAP aims to make it simpler and more flexible, in line with farmers' expectations, and the change remains in line with the EU's environmental and climate priorities.

## Conclusions

The subordination of CAP to the implementation of the climate-environmental priorities of the EGD is gradually changing its character from traditional distributive to regulatory (Szarfenberg, 2016: 49). Although its main resource still remains financial resources, the implemented solutions under the SPs aim to motivate EU farmers to undertake climate and environmental protection activities, thus providing public goods, beneficial from the perspective of society as a whole. Indeed, agriculture, as a resource-intensive economic activity, can pose a challenge to achieving the goal of climate neutrality and nature conservation in the EU.

The innovative nature of SPs lies in the integration of environmental and climate measures into both pillars of the CAP and the establishment of eco-schemes, which are completely new solution in comparison to 2014–2020 financial perspective. They provide farmers with compensation in return for costs induced or income loss associated with the implementation of agricultural practices that are beneficial from the perspective of conservation and shaping natural resources. It is therefore not a classic distribution, but rather an incentive for the beneficiaries to act for the climate and the environment.

Therefore, it is recommended to undertake research on the reasons for rejection of pro-environmental and pro-climate solutions within CAP 2021–2027 by some EU farmers. On the basis of the analysis of the content of the public debate, several rea-

sons can be hypothetically identified, among them fear for the economic interests of the agricultural sector and weakening of its competitiveness on the global market, excessive bureaucracy related to the implementation of the CAP 2021–2027 or lack of a properly prepared system of information and support on the implementation of pro-environmental solutions among stakeholders. There may be many more reasons for this and they may be of a complex nature, but they require a thorough scientific analysis, the results of which should form the basis for the implementation of possible adjustments or reforms of the CAP after 2027, as the evidence-based policy.

## Author Contributions

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

## Conflict of Interest

The author declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

## Ethics Statement

The author certifies that the research published in the text was carried out in accordance with the research ethics of the affiliated university.

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