

# Field trees in the future CAP Proposals

This document presents the proposals submitted by the AFAHC (French association for field trees and hedgerows) to the working group on "field trees and the future CAP", set up by the MAAPRAT (Ministry of agriculture, foodstuffs, fisheries, rural life and spatial planning), the participants in which include the AFAF (French agroforestry association) and the APCA (Standing assembly of the French chambers of agriculture). The MEDDTL (Ministry of ecology, sustainable development, transport and housing) was also associated with this group.

It is aimed at everyone, whether farmers, agronomists, foresters, environmentalists, landscapers, tree-growers, educators, researchers or elected representatives, concerned by the maintenance or reintroduction of trees in agricultural production systems. Well placed, selected and maintained, field trees have multiple functions in the protection of crops and animals, the production of timber or wood for energy, the control of soil erosion, the enrichment of biodiversity, the sequestration of CO<sub>2</sub>, water saving and water quality, the capture of diffuse or point-source emissions into the air, the quality of the landscape, and others.

These proposals, which are put forward for discussion, amendment and enrichment by as many persons as possible, concern the first and second pillars of the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy). It must be possible to adapt them to the choices to be made for the reform of the CAP. ■

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Well-managed trees do not hamper mechanization (Photo : Fabien LIAGRE)

## The CAP: How it works, and tree links

The CAP supports agriculture by direct aid in proportion to the activity; this is the first pillar. This direct aid is conditional upon compliance by the farmer with regulatory requirements and with the French good agricultural and environmental conditions (BCAE) mechanism.

An option in the new CAP would be to strengthen this conditionality of the first pillar aid "by green supplements". The farmer would choose an agri-environmental undertaking from a list.

The second pillar concerns support for rural development and the environment (e.g. agri-environmental measures).

For a long time the CAP was unfavourable to field trees and hedgerows: the planted agricultural areas were "depressed", leading to clearances. More recently trees have been barely tolerated, until they found support with the measure in favour of agroforestry.

The future CAP must consider trees as an asset for agriculture. The first pillar of the CAP could benefit existing trees (preservation) and the second pillar could enable each farmer to add to his or her resources.

*The field tree, a multifunctional tree, an effective tool for agriculture and territories (Photo : Gilles SAN MARTIN)*



## First pillar of the CAP: For a "Landscape and Biodiversity" green supplement

For the first pillar, the introduction of a "Landscape and Biodiversity" green supplement is proposed, in addition to the maintenance of topographical features. Farmers would be able to choose to claim this green supplement among others that would be proposed to them.

Eligibility for this supplement would depend not only on a sufficient number of trees and fixed landscape features (such as SETs - topographical equivalent areas) but also on the suitability of their distribution over the land.

To obtain a simple criterion of good distribution that could be observed and monitored, landscape ecology was called upon to make a contribution.

### Beneficial insect habitat BIH

Landscape ecology experts have shown that the beneficial insects for crops, which pollinate them and/or are predators of their pests, need shelter. From such refuges, their potential colonization territory in fields is an area less than 60 m wide along a hedge, wood edge or watercourse, or around a pool (high-diversity continuous elements) and less than 30 m from an isolated tree, agroforestry tree, alignment, meadow orchard or dry stone wall (low-diversity continuous elements). Starting from this observation, CartoPAC aerial photographs can be used to calculate the BIH area. This is the area that can potentially be colonized by beneficial insects.

### The BIH/UAA ratio

The BIH/UAA ratio gives a good idea of the distribution of trees and fixed landscape elements useful in an agro-ecological approach. The value giving eligibility to activate this green supplement must of course be subject to discussion. As a first approximation, following some tests on various farms, a ratio of 50% does not appear unreasonable. The ratio could be progressive (increase from 20% to 50% over the five years).

## Interests of the "Landscapes and Biodiversity" green supplement

The BIH/UAA calculation can be performed by computerized scanning of CartoPAC aerial photographs and additional information provided by the farmers. It enables the farmers to:

- ⦿ **View their farms :** each farmer can see the tree distribution on his or her parcel plan and analyze the agro-ecological consistency of the tree locations (pollination, integrated pest control).
- ⦿ **Retain decision-making autonomy :** for example, some trees can be removed from an area where the density is too high without reducing the BIH/UAA ratio; conversely, the planting of a well-placed tree or hedgerow in an area where they are lacking can make a substantial contribution to increasing the BIH/UAA ratio.

⦿ **Strengthen their economy and productions :** this measure is of interest to farmers who want to take action in favour of high-performance agriculture while minimizing chemical inputs.

⦿ **Preserve existing trees and hedgerows :** this measure benefits farmers whose production systems are in phase with the environment, in particular suitably wooded systems.

⦿ **Resolve other issues:** in addition to beneficial insects, this measure is a potential response to other environmental issues (water quality, energy, etc.).

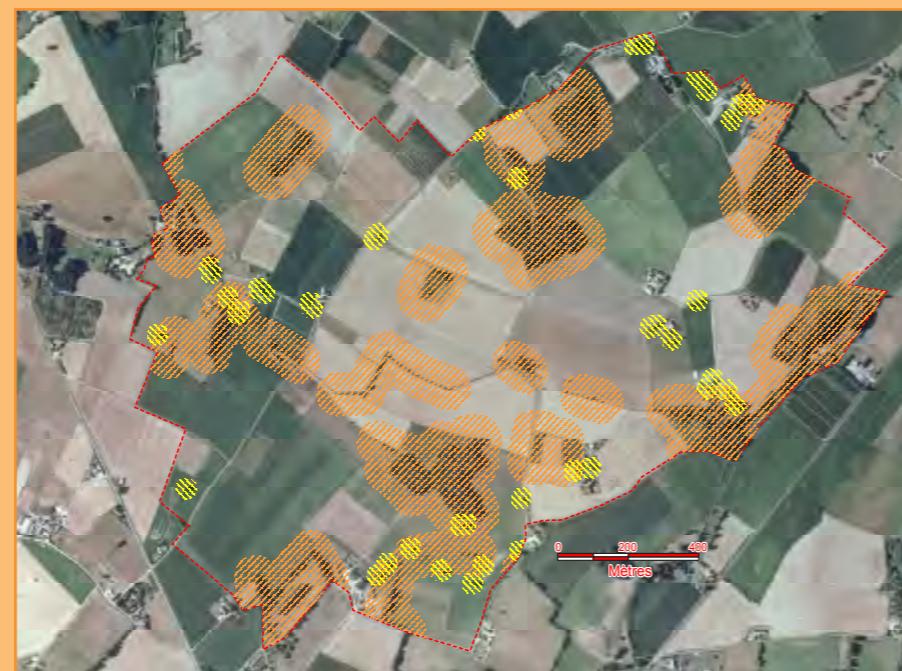
⦿ **Expand plantations at their own rate:** this measure enables as many as possible to progressively move to a more effective system.

In addition, we propose that farms **with a high BIH/UAA ratio (75% or more)** be considered as forming parts of the **Trame Verte et Bleue (French ecological continuity network)**.

The marmalade hoverfly (*Episyrphus balteatus*), a pollinating insect when adult and an aphid predator in its larval form (Photo: Romain PEROU).



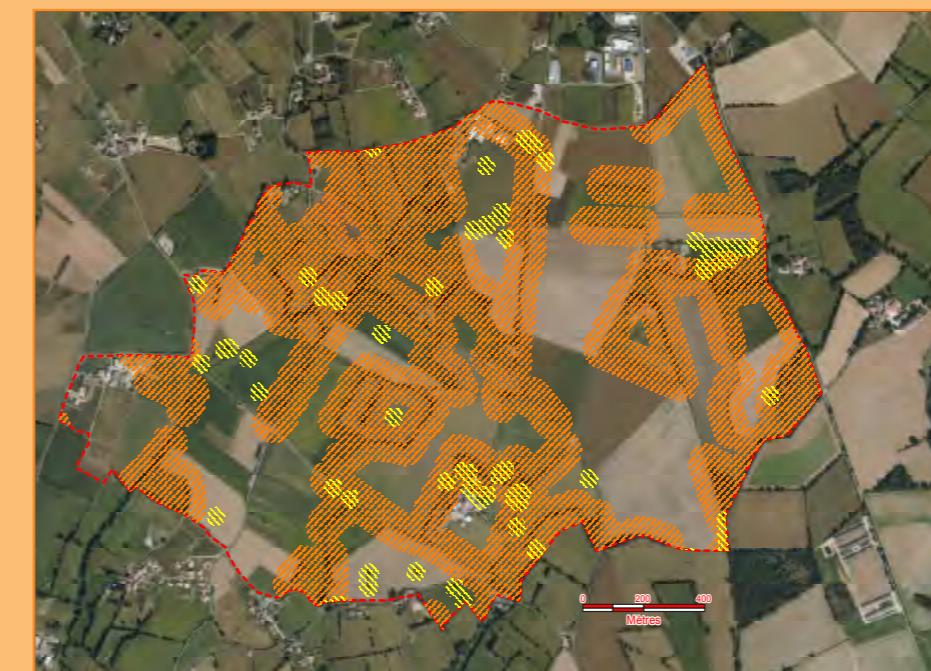
## Practical applications of the BIH measure through two examples



Total area: 231.4 ha

BIH: 90.51 ha (39.1%)

The farmer has a BIH/UAA ratio of less than 50%. To meet the requirements for the green supplement, he will have to plant several hundred metres of hedgerow or carefully located agroforestry parcels



Total area: 267.1 ha

BIH: 165.2 ha (61.8%)

The farm exceeds the 50% minimum threshold for the BIH/UAA ratio. The farmer is invited to maintain this level by maintaining the trees so that they retain their effectiveness (acceptance as part of the Trame Verte et Bleue).

Key	
	Areas occupied by isolated trees, agroforestry, alignments and orchards
	Areas occupied by hedgerows and edges of woods
	Farm boundary

	Source : IGN
	Author : Thomas DROUET Mission Bocage 2011

The BIH area is calculated using GIS software which automatically generates a buffer area of 60 m along continuous elements and 30 m around isolated elements. The software calculates the sum of the area of the two variables, then subtracts the overlapping areas to give a single uniform area: the BIH.

## Second Pillar of the CAP: :

### For a national “field tree” measure

A measure specific to trees is proposed (broadening of measure 222). It would comprise five options.

- Farm-scale agroforestry diagnostic such as PAGESA (principles of farm planning and management by agroforestry systems) conducted jointly by agroforestry advisors/experts and the farmer. It defines the location, composition and management methods of wooded structures (hedgerows, isolated trees, agroforestry and others) in place or forthcoming. This will reinforce their multifunctional role (erosion control, carbon dioxide sequestration, etc.). This diagnostic is optional and is not a condition for the possibility of taking up certain other options.
- Parcel planting in agroforestry. This option covers funding of the work, planting materials and intangible investments.
- Hedgerow planting. This planting is calculated in linear metres and is funded according to the same principles as the agroforestry plantations (work, supplies, engineering, etc.). The hedge may be bordered by a buffer strip. Their respective widths may vary over time; only the total width (hedgerow + buffer strip) must remain fixed.
- Assisted natural regeneration. Some agricultural areas are suitable for spontaneous hedge implantation (embankments, ditch edges, etc.). The investment covers protection (fencing), upkeep, selection of the future plants, additional planting if there is a lack of woody plants in some areas, as well as intangible investment. A management plan has to be produced,

- because a performance obligation will be required.
- ● Hedgerow maintenance. This option is based on the management plan recommendations. The plan defines the maintenance type, method and frequency, whether for wood harvesting, restoration or space clearance, manual or mechanical.
- Farmers who wish to benefit from several options of this measure will only have to fill in a single form.



Encourage to the farmers to reintroduce the tree and the hedge in parcels  
Pascal Paquier, farmer et planter in Anjou (France)

### Incorporation of trees into other national measures

- The funding of MAEs (agro-environmental measures) such as the PHAE (agro-environmental grassland incentive payment), SFEI (low-input fodder systems) and ROTA (rotation) would be conditional upon a minimum ratio of BIH to UAA. ■



### Declaration of support and promotion for the AFAHC proposal for incorporation of hedgerows and in-field trees into the future CAP.

Please return to the address given in the box to the right

Declare your support for field trees and collaborate in a collective contribution on the AFAHC website (<http://www.afahc.fr>)

Name of your organization : ..... Telephone : ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... E-mail : .....

Supports and undertakes to promote the “field trees in the CAP” proposal

Territory covered: .....

Number of members : ..... Agricultural area covered : .....

Would like to be informed of the progress of this proposal  
 Would like to participate in the local definition and application of the proposal

Signature :

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With the active participation of  
the AFAF