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The cost of biodiversity protection



European researchers are working with farmers to explore ways to protect biodiversity while providing them with benefits and respecting their needs. The video interviews with researchers take stock of the situation.

European farming lands are a primary source of food, fibre and biomass for the world. They are also essential for many environmental and climate services. However, the recent economic and social crisis puts pressure on land resources and management. EU member states and privates already implemented some initiatives like agri-environmental schemes, investment grants for environmental technologies, and environmental certification and labelling schemes. However, most are not cost-effective, and may increase risks to farmers, or involve excessive transaction costs.

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The EU-funded project [EFFECT](#) is trying to solve this gap, by developing and piloting a package of new contractual frameworks to allow farmers to join agricultural production with the provision of environmental and climate public goods and services. EFFECT develops and tests new forms of contracts in nine case studies across Europe to validate them on the ground and measure their benefits for farmers, the environment and the society at large.

The [case studies](#) investigate different areas and apply diverse methods to help farmers deal with the current and most common barriers and problems. Generally, they work with payment-based schemes for agro-environmental protection of biodiversity and the implementation of good practices for water quality enhancement and climate change adaptation.

To explore if and how the new forms of contracts work on the ground, several [interviews](#) were conducted with researchers. The interviews examine the method carried out in the different case studies, the level of farmers' acceptance and engagement and the possible changes generated.

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