

# IMPORTANCE OF THE AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE SCHEME WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SYSTEM (IN THE LIGHT OF THE POLISH RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2014–2020)

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**Abstract.** The study discusses the agri-environment scheme, which gained a high position in the process of integration of environmental protection in the framework of the CAP. The purpose of the payments was to encourage farmers to protect and improve the environment. The farmers were required to apply environmentally friendly techniques and practices for a period of five years. Received payments had additional reimbursement of extra costs and decreased income resulting from the application of environment-friendly practices. Agri-environmental scheme was realized through packages and variants, whose number differed in time. In 2004–2006, agri-environmental scheme included approximately 70 thousand of agricultural holdings, which labored on the surface of the 1.4 million ha. In the next programming period (2007–2013) the beneficiaries submitted 448,6 thousand applications, and the level of payment amounted to PLN 6.7 billion. The program of the current financial perspective (2014–2020) includes 2058,9 thousand ha of agricultural land, as compared to the total area of agricultural land in the country in the amount of 14609 ha of agricultural land represents 14.1%.

**Key words:** agri-environmental-climate scheme, financial support, packages, variants

## INTRODUCTION

Historically, agriculture shaped many European landscapes and rural areas over the centuries. This gave rise to the creation of a unique natural environment with a rich variety of habitats and species that depend on the type of livestock farming. In the following centuries, agriculture was shaped primarily for the empowerment of production, which was based on the availability of natural resources, mainly land (Cooper et al., 2003). In recent years, technological progress, profit-maximizing and cost-minimizing have produced an intensification of agriculture. The intensification of production has led to the degradation of such essential factors for agriculture as soil, water and air (Walls, 2006). In parallel with this process, the awareness of the need to maintain different landscapes and to preserve biological diversity threatened by the intensification of agriculture has increased. In addition, a part of less useful land was threatened by marginalization or even discontinuation of its use. In result, instead of intensive agriculture, we have begun to apply the concept of sustainable development, which posited the existence of an overall balance between the socio-economic costs of agriculture and the benefits

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of rational consumption and environmental protection (Kleijn and Sutherland, 2003).

Agri-environmental schemes were first introduced into the agricultural policy of the EU in the late 1980's as an alternative among other activities. Since 1992, the implementation of agri-environmental schemes has become compulsory for the member states within the framework of the rural development plans. The strategy adopted by the Common Agricultural Policy to consider the environmental-protection requirements was fully reflected in the Agenda 2000, becoming a part of the rural development programmes. The strategy identified goals for water, agricultural chemicals, land and soil use, climate change and air quality, as well as landscape and biodiversity. The reform was the response of the EU to the challenges of food security, climate change, economic growth, and employment in rural areas. A system of support encouraged farmers to play a positive role in maintaining sustainable rural areas and natural environment (Weber and Nuppenau, 2010).

Currently, in the framework of the Common Agricultural Policy, three priority areas have been identified for actions to protect and support the heritage of rural areas, including taking care of biodiversity and maintaining natural agricultural systems, conserving traditional farming landscapes, the rational water resource management and coping with climate change.

## THE ISSUES, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF RESEARCH

Adopting a strategy for the inclusion of the environmental dimension into the CAP, generated positive results by drawing up the agri-environmental management scheme. The strategy identified goals, which contribute not only to improving the competitiveness of agriculture, ensure the safety and quality of food and stability of income in the agricultural sector, but also to environmental benefits, improving the state of the countryside and support the competitiveness of rural areas.

In the framework of the CAP, the steps were taken to strengthen the appearance of measures to encourage the use of marginal land and complying with the requirements of the protection of environmental resources, both in the first pillar (market and income policy) and in the second one (rural development policy). The measures taken under the first pillar included primarily decoupling, mandatory cross-compliance, and

modulation. Modulation allowed the transfer of support from the first to the second pillar, which led to an increase in the budget available for the implementation of agri-environment scheme. The second pillar included many incentives to protect the environment. The measures provided more support to farmers in Natura 2000 and other areas of high natural value. Supporting the areas of less-favourable farming conditions and the agri-environment scheme was of great importance.

Agri-Environmental Scheme (AES) one can be defined as a general system of farm management and food production that combines best environmental practices, and provides a high level of biodiversity, preservation of natural resources and production standards. Agri-environmental scheme is a part of EU agricultural product quality schemes. In this context, agri-environmental scheme pursues the same objectives within the framework of the common agricultural policy, which constitutes an integral part of all EU quality systems of agricultural production (Rozporządzenie PE i Rady, 2013).

The primary goal was to develop an analysis of the legal framework and the course of the implementation of agri-environmental scheme contained in the programme, on the background of the previous two multi-annual financial framework. In the *Polish Rural Development Programme 2014–2020* has been a change in the rules for the granting of the payment, including the separation of agri-environmental and climate scheme from organic farming, because of the large changes in the system of direct payments. Focusing on this issue stems from the fact that there is a large interest in agri-environmental programmes on the part of farmers that turn to more sustainable agriculture and enables organic farming.

The study was based on the EU and national legislation, and tabular data were prepared on the basis of the management information System of The Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture (ARMA). The study was conducted in 2015.

## LEGAL REGULATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCHEME

The reforms taken in the framework of the Agenda 2000 were a significant step forward in the implementation of the necessary instruments for the protection of the environment. It was agreed that The Common Agricultural

Policy (CAP) would aim at promoting sustainable agriculture, however, it should illustrate not only the production, but also environmental and social functions. By interpreting these provisions, it can be said that the agri-environmental scheme has become a key element in the integration of the environmental protection. Moreover, financial support was to encourage farmers to protect and improve the environment by adopting environmentally friendly farming techniques that would exceed the previously binding legal obligations. In return, farmers received payments that should have compensated additional costs and income foregone resulting from the use of these environmentally friendly agricultural practices. It was expected that the agri-environmental scheme would play a key role in improving the natural environment as it was expected by the society. This objective was thought to be achieved by the development of diversified management systems, maintenance of landscape mosaics, and what is more, applying environmentally friendly breeding and other activities connected with that.

It was pointed out in the EU regulations that one should support the environmentally friendly process of extensification of agriculture, should focus more on agriculture and natural habitats. It was stated that the support would be granted to farmers who decided to use agri-environmental measures for at least five years. The agri-environmental scheme would assume not only the good farming practice, but it would be extended for innovative actions. The idea of the support is based on the following principles determined by:

- lost income,
- additional costs resulting from the commitment,
- the need to provide incentives for beneficiaries.

In addition, one must take into account the cost of significant non-profitable work in the farm that is necessary to meet the obligations. The maximum amount of support was established in 2000 in the following:

- annual crops – 600 euros per hectare,
- special perennial crops – 900 euro/ha
- other forms of land use – 450 euro/ha.

The European Council Regulation No 1698/2005 on the support for rural development by the EAFRD stated that the purpose of the agri-environmental scheme is the need to promote a more rapid implementation of norms that are based on common legislation. These standards related to the environment, public health, animal and plant health, and animal welfare. These standards may

impose new obligations on farmers and should therefore be supported in order to help in the partial cover of additional costs and income foregone resulting from these obligations. The regulation outlined the need for special support in agricultural land management policy, which should contribute to sustainable development by encouraging farmers to apply the methods of land use compatible with the need to preserve the natural environment and landscape, and improve natural resources. Agri-environmental payments would be granted to farmers who voluntarily take agri-environmental scheme. According to the data from 2005, the maximum amount of support was as follows:

- with annual crops – 600 euro/ha,
- with special perennial crops – 900 euro/ha,
- for other uses of the land – 450 euro/ha,
- local breeds in danger of extinction – 200 euro per livestock unit,
- animal welfare – 500 euro per livestock unit.

According to the regulation of the EP and the Council from 2013, agri-environmental and climate scheme adopted to the current financial perspective 2014–2020, should still play a significant role in supporting sustainable rural development and meet the increasing demand for public services in the area of organic farming. As in the previous budget, payments should contribute to cover additional costs and income foregone resulting from the commitments. It was stated that there was a necessity to spend at least 30% of the total EAFRD contribution to the rural development programme for the three payments, namely the agri-environmental and climate payments, organic farming and the restricted areas of natural or other specific restrictions.

According to the annex to the regulation, the maximum payment may be: with annual crops–600 euro/ha per year, with special perennial crops – 900euro/ha, with other land use – 450 euro/ha, for endangered breeds–200 euro/ha per year. Consequently, one can notice that the payment levels have not been significantly changed (Rozporządzenie PE i Rady, 2013).

## **POLISH LEGISLATION IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURAL PAYMENTS**

In accordance with the Polish legal order based on the EU regulations, Parliament Acts were issued, by which the solutions proposed by the community were implemented. The next step was issuing the executive order

presenting detailed legislative solutions. The law of 2003 on the RDP introduced the support to agri-environmental scheme and the improvement of animal welfare. The aim of the action was the promotion of agricultural production systems in a manner consistent with the requirements of the protection of the environment, protecting and shaping the landscape, the protection of endangered species of wild fauna and flora and their habitats (Ustawa, 2003).

The act of 2007 had similar objectives that aimed to improve the rural environment, protect valuable habitats, promote sustainable management system, as well as the evolution of the structure of the landscape, the protection of local breeds of livestock (Ustawa, 2007).

Having the two programs, one can be tempted to draw comparisons between periods of rural development programming. A characteristic feature of activities in this area was to offer the future beneficiaries packages and variants, allowing for a choice in the adjustment to their own economic conditions. Activities related to the promotion of agri-environmental scheme were both in the Rural Developmental Program (RDP) for the years 2004–2006, as well as in the RDP 2007–2013. These activities differ not only in the functioning of individual programs (respectively 3 and 7 years), but also the number of packages and the terms, and the amount of financial support. Both schemes aimed at similar goals and wanted to achieve the sustainable development of rural areas, and to preserve biodiversity in these areas. To obtain the desired effect, the long-term commitment, each for a period of 5 years, were introduced. Agri-environmental payments were granted to the farmer if the total area of agricultural land was at least 1 ha. The commitments included the requirements were exceeding the basic requirements related to good agricultural practice, within the framework of the specified packages and their variants. The activity plan and the documentaries necessary to get the agri-environmental payment were prepared with the participation of the advisor (the agri-environmental scheme advisor). The farmer, who was realizing the environmental management scheme, was required to maintain the existing on-farm sustainable agriculture and an arable farm, and wildlife sanctuaries (enclave, balks, tree-covered areas). The primary difference between the programs represented a broader offer of packages and variants, and the ability to implement any number of packages across the country. The differences and similarities

between the agri-environmental payments brought to the fact that during the first period of implementation of this package (2004–2006) there were 7 packages that included 40 variants. In the next period (2007–2013) the number of packages grew to 9 and the number of variants increased to 49. In 2004–2006 it was intended to apply the agri-environmental scheme in 70 thousand of agricultural holdings on the total surface of 1.2 million ha.

There was only a slight change in payment rates, but it was still at a similar level as in the EU regulation.

Agri-environment payments were given in the flat rate payment and were the compensation for the lost income and additional costs. They were granted to farmers who voluntarily accepted obligations contained in agri-environmental scheme. These payments were a long-term help paid annually after fulfilling the tasks included in a given variant. They were referred to in terms of hectare of farmyard, the number of animals, or the linear meter. Agri-environment payments were granted to agricultural land used as arable land, meadows, pastures, and orchards.

The degree of implementation of agri-environmental scheme was estimated on the basis of the management information System of ARMA. In the years 2004–2006, the beneficiaries have 79.4 thousand requests for payment and for this they got financial support in the amount of 814.9 million PLN (in terms of approximately 208.3 million euros to 348.9 million euros that was anticipated). In the next programming period (2007–2013) farmers made 448,600 applications, and the level of payments increased to 6.7 billion PLN (1.7 billion euros to 2.3 billion euros that was anticipated). Financial assistance was an instrument of the multifunctional rural development, which is the compensation for the lost income and additional costs. The data show that the financial support instruments were not fully used in accordance with the programs.

Agri-environmental measures were one of the more difficult programs, which are included in both RDP. The difficulties arose from the large number of packages, variants and tasks, serious territorial limitations to the priority areas (in the first RDP 2004–2006) and special concern for the protection of the environment. The degree of difficulty may be determined by the fact that advisory services can be provided only by an advisor with the agri-environmental advisor certificate, granted by the Agricultural Advisory Centre in Brwinów. In the

**Table 1.** Amount of the payment rates within the agri-environmental scheme

**Tabela 1.** Wysokość stawek płatności w ramach działań rolnośrodowiskowych

Name of the package Nazwa pakietu	Number of variants Liczba wariantów	Amount of payment rates Wysokość stawek płatności	Name of the package Nazwa pakietu	Number of variants Liczba wariantów	Amount of payment rates Wysokość stawek płatności
2004–2013			2014–2020		
Sustainable agriculture (PLN/ha) Rolnictwo zrównoważone (zł/ha)	1	160	Sustainable agriculture (PLN/ha) Rolnictwo zrównoważone (zł/ha)	1	360
Organic farming (PLN/ha) Rolnictwo ekologiczne (zł/ha)	8	260–1800	Organic farming (PLN/ha) Rolnictwo ekologiczne (zł/ha)	12	280–1800
Maintenance of extensive meadows (PLN/ha) Utrzymanie łąk ekstensywnych (zł/ha)	3	400–1030	Extensive grasslands (PLN/ha) Ekstensywne trwałe użytki zielone (zł/ha)	1	500
Maintenance of extensive pastures (PLN/ha) Utrzymanie pastwisk ekstensywnych (zł/ha)	4	230–560	Soil and water conservation (PLN/ha) Ochrona gleb i wód (zł/ha)	3	330–420
Soil and water conservation (PLN/ha) Ochrona gleb i wód (zł/ha)	3	330–570	Creation of buffer zones (PLN/PCs) Tworzenie stref buforowych (zł/szt.)	4	0.44–1.10
Creation of buffer zones (PLN/PCs) Tworzenie stref buforowych (zł/szt.)	4	0.18–0.64	Keeping the genetically modified endangered plant (PLN/ha) Zachowanie zagrożonych genetycznie roślin (zł/ha)	4	570–4700
Keeping of local animal breeds (PLN/PCs) Zachowanie lokalnych ras zwierząt (zł/szt.)	17	310–1300	Keeping the genetically modified endangered animals (PLN/PCs) Zachowanie zagrożonych genetycznie zwierząt (zł/szt.)	4	320–1500.
			Protection of endangered bird species outside Natura 2000 areas (PLN/ha) Ochrona zagrożonych ptaków poza obszarami Natura 2000 (zł/ha)	10	550–1200
			Protection of endangered bird species in Natura 2000 areas (PLN/ha) Ochrona zagrożonych ptaków na obszarach Natura 2000 (zł/ha)	10	550–1390

Source: PROW from 2004 and 2007.

Źródło: PROW z 2004 r. oraz z 2007 r.

RDP 2004–2006, there were 7 packages contained in the program and the farmer could implement only 3 packages, but not arbitrarily chosen, but in close liaison with other packages or only priority areas, and the process

made selecting a variant suitable for a particular habitat more difficult. In the new RDP 2007–2013, the costs of the financial assistance for the actions of the previous edition of the RDP 2004–2006 was taken into account

because they were entered into the agreement for a period of 5 years, and the rural development plan covered the period of 3 years.

Subsequent amendments included the limitations to the number of packages (buffer zone were eliminated), the extension of the time limit for the issue of the Agency's decision on agri-environmental payment, and the introduction of the teleinformation system.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE SCHEME IN THE LIGHT OF THE POLISH RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2014–2020**

In the RDP 2014–2020 it was indicated that Polish agriculture develops in two ways. On the one hand, we have the traditional extensive farming, which is important for the preservation of valuable natural areas. On the other hand, the phenomenon is accompanied by a tendency to intensify production, especially in areas with a favorable structure of agriculture. The properties of the resulting diversification of the rural economy were taken into account during the creation of the packages. The packages for sustainable agriculture and soil and water conservation were directed mainly to intensive production farms. Other packages were addressed to areas on which the traditional ways of agricultural production were maintained. A new phenomenon was the assignment and even displaying climate goals. The key actions associated with that were intended to preserve grasslands, improve the balance of organic matter application of by-products or prevent soil erosion (PROW, 2014).

The packages and the variants included in them have not single aims but whole groups of aims that influence each other and condition their functioning in arable space. In general, the action should encourage farmers to agricultural practices that are favorable to alleviate climate change, aimed at improving the environment, landscaping, natural resources, and genetic diversity. When constructing the scheme, one took into the account the already existing common regulations, as for example, the water framework directive, the nitrates directive, the environmental directive or the birds directive.

In the framework of the payments obligations of the agri-environmental-climate scheme, the help will be granted for seven types of operations (packages) that are divided into options and tasks. The commitment in the

framework of the activities is-as in previous programs – undertaken for a period of 5 years. The basic requirements for all packets are to have a plan for agri-environmental scheme and, in the case of natural packages – expertise areas (with the exception of the extensive use of SPA – Special Protection Area for Birds).

As before, this plan will be prepared with the participation of the agri-environmental consultants, and documentation with the participation of natural expert. An advisor's duty is also to inform the beneficiaries and give them advice how to make the best and most efficient implementation of the action in an individual farm. The role of the advisor is particularly important in the process of educating beneficiaries about their action, which will lead to the efficient use of the resources (PROW, 2014).

The established EU funds are implemented in accordance with the principle of shared management between the Member States and the Union. In the RDP 2014–2020 the amount of payments to the measure defined at the level of 1184,1 million euros, including that 753,4 million euros (63.63%) will come from the EA-FRD and 430,7 million euros (36.37%) from the State budget (PROW, 2015).

### **CONDITIONS AND THE PROCEDURE FOR GRANTING FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE SCHEME**

The detailed principles of entering the agri-environmental and climate scheme are determined by the regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of 2015 (Rozporządzenie MRiRW, 2015).

Packages of agri-environmental-climate scheme, in principle, are mostly a continuation of similar packages implemented within the framework of the agri-environmental scheme in the RDP 2007–2013, with one exception – the exclusion of “organic farming” in separate actions and not in the package, as it was previously stated. In addition, a new term was added – the climate variant. As in previous operations, the primary purpose is to promote practices contributing to sustainable land management, conservation of valuable natural habitats and endangered species, the diversity of the landscape and the protection of endangered genetic resources of crops and livestock. As it has already been mentioned, the agri-environmental payments shall be entitled to farmer who

**Table 2.** Amount of payment rates for agri-environmental-climate scheme and surface covered by payments for the years 2014–2020

**Tabela 2.** Wysokość stawek płatności rolno-środowiskowo-klimatycznej oraz powierzchni objętej płatnościami w latach 2014–2020

Name of the package Nazwa pakietu	Number of variants Liczba wariantów	Amount of the payment rates Wysokość stawek płatności	Surfaces covered by payments (thous. ha) Powierzchnie objęte płatnościami (tys. ha)	Percentage Procent
Sustainable agriculture (PLN/ha) Rolnictwo zrównoważone (zł/ha)	1	400	1 171.4	56.9
Soil and water conservation (PLN/ha) Ochrona gleb i wód (zł/ha)	2	450–650	476.2	23.1
Keeping the orchards of the traditional varieties of fruit trees (PLN/ha) Zachowanie sadów tradycyjnych odmian drzew owocowych (zł/ha)	1	1964	0.9	0.01
Valuable habitats and endangered bird species in Natura 2000 areas (PLN/ha) Cenne siedliska i zagrożone gatunki ptaków na obszarach Natura 2000 (zł/ha)	11	600–1300	221.5	10.8
Valuable habitats outside Natura 2000 areas (PLN/ha) Cenne siedliska poza obszarami Natura 2000 (zł/ha)	7	600–1300	136.7	6.7
Behaviour of the genetic resources of the endangered plant (PLN/ha) Zachowanie zagrożonych zasobów genetycznych roślin (zł/ha)	2	750–1000	52.2	2.5
Behaviour of the genetic resources of the endangered animal (PLN/PCs.) Zachowanie zagrożonych zasobów genetycznych zwierząt (zł/szt.)	5	360–1600	–	–
Total Razem	29	*	2 058.9	100.0

Source: Rozporządzenie MRiRW, 2015 and PROW 2014–2020.  
Źródło: Rozporządzenie MRiRW, 2015 r. oraz PROW 2014–2020.

carry out a 5-year commitment and meets the conditions of granting the payments under specific packages or their variants. Payments are granted annually to farmers who voluntarily take on the obligation of agri-environmental-climate conditions in a given package or variant. Payment, in whole or in part, should compensate for the lost income and incurred transaction costs. Agri-environmental-climate commitment could be implemented

within one variant or one package, when the package does not include a variant. The agro-environmental-climate scheme is divided into two actions:

- payments of the agri-environmental-climate scheme, involving five packages,
- supporting the protection and sustainable use, and development of genetic resources in agriculture, which include two packages.

In the agri-environmental scheme, payment is regressive depending on the surface that was declared. There are the following degrees of regression: 100% of the basic rate for the area of 0.10 ha to 50 ha; 75% of the basic rate for an area of over 50 ha to 100 ha; 60% of the basic rate for an area of over 100 hectares. The proposed form of support is the payment that considers additional costs and lost profits associated with the implementation of the individual packages and variants (Rozporządzenie MRiRW, 2015).

#### **SURFACE OF THE LAND AS PART OF THE PACKAGE, OR A VARIANT WITH A DECLARED AMOUNT OF PAYMENT, IS THE PRODUCT OF THE LAND CONSIDERING THE HEIGHT PAYMENT RATE**

Regardless of what package or variant is being realized by the farmer, it is required to have the plan for agri-environment and record-keeping for agri-environmental scheme, containing a list of agrotechnological activities (including the application of fertilizer and the implementation of plant protection products) and the list of grazing animals (if the grazing is carried out).

In addition, the farmer cannot transform (remove) grasslands and pastures and must preserve the agricultural landscape elements that are not used, and that make up natural sanctuaries, which have been mentioned in the agri-environmental activity plan.

In comparison to the previous programming period, the number of packages was reduced from 8 to 7, and the number of variants from 49 to 29. During programming the greatest attention was paid to organic farming (56.9%), which in previous editions were the most popular. A package of sustainable agriculture aims to ensure diversification of crops, prevent the cultivation of monocultures by requiring the application of minimum 4 main crops. An additional condition is that the share of cereals does not exceed 65% of the area and, at the same time, the share of each crop was not less than 10% of the area of arable land. A large area is scheduled for soil and water protection package (23.1%), which aims to promote the agriculturally used area practices against soil erosion, loss of organic matter and contamination of the waters, and soil components. The farmer who realizes the package is required to maintain vegetation in periods between the two main crop, which reduces the pollution

of waters and erosion. This also affects the structure of biodiversity in the rural landscape. Each package and variant has established very detailed access criteria, requirements, sanctions, and return of previously received payments or the amount of the payment, making it easy to move around in this area of agri-environmental activity.

A total of agri-environmental-climate conditions have to be carried out on the surface of the 2058,9 thousand ha, as compared to the total area of agricultural land in the country in the amount of 14609 thousand ha agricultural land which is 14.1%. This level should be assessed as high in comparison to farmers' unwillingness to turn to certified organic farming.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The assessment of the agri-environmental scheme is difficult to be made unambiguous. The scheme had a multidimensional character and its environmental impact was difficult to assess in terms of shaping and restoring the environment. The added value was obtaining land that was free of means of production applied so far, avoiding soil erosion, ensuring better water management, maintaining a better landscape and shaping green areas. Eco-friendly practices and methods fostered the use of natural production potential inherent in each farm. This type of actions can be assessed as innovative, as they allow a farmer to look at his farm from a different perspective, as a system of agricultural production that is environmentally friendly and allows to effectively integrate environmental protection in connection with the development of agriculture. It was positive that farmers joining the package signed a 5-year commitment of compliance with environmentally friendly methods and practices. However, it was not specified what a farmer was required to do after the period of application of those methods and practices. In this context, there is a question of the durability of commitments specified in the program. There is a question whether the farmer can return to the previous intensive ways of farming, or whether he has developed a tendency to manage in the spirit of sustainable development. It can be presumed that to transform a farm from the traditional one into an organic one is a process that takes many years, requires a lot of effort and the financial involvement of the proprietor and the agricultural producer.



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## ZNACZENIE DZIAŁANIA ROLNOŚRODOWISKOWEGO I KLIMATYCZNEGO W RAMACH SYSTEMU OCHRONY ŚRODOWISKA (W ŚWIETLE PROW 2014–2020)

**Streszczenie.** W opracowaniu omówiono działania rolnośrodowiskowe, które uzyskały wysoką pozycję w procesie integracji ochrony środowiska w ramach WPR. Płatności miały na celu zachęcenie rolników do ochrony i poprawy stanu środowiska naturalnego. Rolnicy zobowiązani byli przez okres pięciu lat do stosowania przyjaznych dla środowiska technik i praktyk rolniczych. Otrzymane płatności miały charakter rekompensat za dodatkowe koszty i utracone dochody w związku ze stosowaniem praktyk ekologicznych. Działania rolnośrodowiskowe realizowane były poprzez pakiety i warianty, których liczba ulegała zmianie. W latach 2004–2006 działaniami rolnośrodowiskowymi objęto około 70 tys. gospodarstw rolnych, gospodarujących na powierzchni 1,4 mln ha. W kolejnym okresie programowania (2007–2013) beneficjenci złożyli 448,6 tys. wniosków, a poziom płatności wyniósł 6,7 mld zł. Program na obecną perspektywę finansową (2014–2020) obejmuje 2058,9 tys. ha użytków rolnych, co w porównaniu do ogólnej powierzchni użytków rolnych w kraju – 14 609,0 tys. ha – stanowi 14,1%.

**Słowa kluczowe:** działanie rolnośrodowiskowo-klimatyczne, pomoc finansowa, pakiety, warianty

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