

Policy coherence



Agriculture and Food are key sectors to increase the sustainability of natural resource use

Key outputs

- Coherence assessment of policies at [European, international, national and regional](#) level for water, land, energy, food and climate. (Munaretto & Witmer, 2017; Munaretto et al., 2018).
- [List of success factors for a Nexus governance process.](#)
- [Overview of factors hindering the implementation of European policies: regulatory gaps, ambiguities and inconsistencies.](#)
- [Inventory of formal and informal cross-sector cooperation arrangements.](#)
- [Policy coherence recommendations to the European Green Deal](#)

Findings

Climate change, climate change mitigation, and adaptation put pressure on agriculture and food security. At the same time, the agro-food chain can offer solutions for these problems, for example, by replacing animal with vegetable proteins in the diet and increasing resource efficiency in the agro-food chain.

European Common Agricultural Policy can support the transition to more resource-efficient agriculture, e.g., by encouraging farmers to grow less water-demanding or non-irrigated crops, to use technologies for precision irrigation and to reduce emissions of nutrients and pesticides. To protect and restore the soil, water, biodiversity, ecosystems and the landscape, Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC) and Greening measures should be stricter and better maintained, and direct payment should be linked to public services instead of agricultural land area.

Successful Nexus policy has many dimensions and is multi-scale. It concerns the whole policy cycle and depends on political will, mindset, a common vision, knowledge management and careful organisation of the process, which is complex and uncertain. Pilots and scenario analyses are helpful, and monitoring of progress and results is vital, as well as collaboration between researchers, stakeholders and policymakers from the start to end of the process. Long-term engagement and financing must be part of the deal, as no sector or sectoral institution feels responsible for the Nexus between sectors. Thematic approaches stimulate a Nexus approach, such as the European 'From Farm to Fork' and 'Circular Economy' initiatives.



Dr. Maria WITMER

PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency

✉ maria.witmer@pbl.nl