

Madrid Region (ES)

The Region

Madrid region is one of the most urbanized areas in Europe and is surrounded by a belt of multifunctional landscapes and family farms. The CIL is focused both on periurban and rural farming at the countryside and fertile plains of Madrid, being an area characterised by Mediterranean herbaceous crops with cereals, olive groves, vineyards and horticultural production in the river meadows. Its most important study case is in the Agrarian Park of Fuenlabrada.



Objective

By the year 2040 we want to preserve the heterogeneous and multifunctional landscape of the area, protecting the agricultural landscapes as well as the non-productive ones. To achieve this, we want to promote a multifunctional agriculture where the productive sector and the ecosystem services it provides to society in the management of the territory are revalued. Agricultural activity will be diversified and the natural value of this area will be enhanced through environmental practices that promote biodiversity such as connectivity between spaces through green infrastructure, green covers or traditional landscape elements. This area has a large amount of fertile soils due to the presence of rivers, so it is essential to protect the soil from excessive use of external inputs, monocultures, and from disorganised urban development. The adoption of more sustainable farming practices need financial support. It is essential to improve the profitability of producers, to avoid speculation on agricultural land and reduce the market dependency for farmers. In addition, cooperation and coordination between the productive sector and other agents and sectors of the territory will be promoted. The aim is also to recover collective management of the land and to recover livestock farming in the area and its synergies with agriculture.

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Potential Contract Solution (“Dream Contract”)

Objective

The dream contract is the result of the combination of a land tenure contract and agri-environment and climate measures with a collective approach. The contract will be mediated by land stewardship entities and will feature a combination of action & results based payments.. It is focused on small scale horticultural farmers in the south area of Madrid region. Collective management of the land is based on commitments to adopt certain agro-environmental practices with the main goal of solving the following environmental challenges from Madrid:

- habitat and biodiversity conservation in agricultural landscapes,
- improve soil quality and fertility,
- preserve quality of multifunctional agricultural landscapes

Measures

- Crop diversification
- Conservation of margins and vegetation islands (green infrastructures)
- Other management decisions will be taken by the farmer following the results-based philosophy.

Contract Type

- PES / Agri-environment- and climate measures
- Land tenure



Contract Features

- Action-based Payments
- Results-based Payments
- Collective approach



Targeted Public Goods

Biodiversity

Cultural Heritage

Landscape & Scenery



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Actors & Structure

- Farmers and farmers unions
- Authorities: Madrid Regional Government
- Intermediary parties: land stewardships entities might be involved in the contract as beneficiaries in the Rural Development Program. Land stewardship contracts are voluntary agreements between landowners and users and a land stewardship entity to agree on how to conserve and manage a territory. Land stewardship entities are public or private non-profit organizations with the goal of land and nature conservation, such as environmental NGOs, a foundation, a city council and other type of public bodies. The goal of these agreements is the sustainable management of the land to avoid biodiversity loss involving the local actors, rather than absolute preservation of natural resources. Farmers can have technical support and advice from the land stewardship entities, or in other cases they can get a label to revalorised their products according to the practices adopted.

Contract Duration

Ideal contract period: 5 years

Payments

The contracts will be mainly publicly funded through current agri-environmental schemes (at least at the beginning). Public funding can be more forward-looking and secure, while private funding can be driven by monetary interests. The payments will be prioritised for the collective of farmers. Payments will be based on both actions (management practices) and results.

Controls & Checks

A combination of practices and results will be monitored. Results will be monitored as they are the basis for payment, but the management of the practices adopted will be also taken into account. Monitoring has to be done in a mixed way (by regional authorities and farmers), whereas administrations have to carry out certain controls in order to be able to make payments, but it is essential that the sector itself can self-regulate and be part of the control bodies. The suitable criteria or indicators are under development

Expected Benefits

Social/Ecological Advantages

- Conserving multifunctional agricultural landscapes (including habitats and biodiversity)
- Revaluing the agricultural landscape of the Madrid Region
- Improving the quality and fertility of soil
- Benefits for multiple stakeholders (Beekeepers, tourists, irrigation communities, consumers)

Advantages for Farmers

- Payments from the adoption of agri-environmental practices and for the biodiversity and landscape results obtained. contracts
- Technical advice and administrative support from the public administration.
- Revaluing and improving the reputation of the productive sector
- Networking and collaboration with other farmers participating at the measures
- Ecological and environmental improvement of the farms