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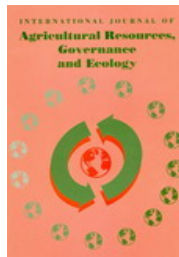
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Journal Article



Costs of land use for conservation in Central Europe and future agricultural policy

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Abstract

In Germany and other countries of Central Europe, biodiversity in the rural countryside is best conserved by applying traditional land-use methods, such as low input sheep and cattle grazing. These are very uneconomical according to conventional accounting and can only be carried out at present by benefitting heavily from the subsidy schemes of the CAP. Trade liberalisation demands the abolition of these schemes in the long run. This would mean that land-use systems amenable to nature conservation, together with more modern cropping and cattle raising in large areas of the country, would have no chance of surviving. This could be avoided in the future if land users were to be remunerated directly for their ecological services which would appear to be fully compatible with fair trade. So trade liberalisation may even catalyse the shift from an unwise policy relying on subsidies to a scheme implying explicitly that only services rendered to society are remunerated.

Keywords

agricultural policy, biodiversity, nature conservation, farm economics, remuneration, ecological services, trade liberalisation, traditional countryside, land use methods, Germany, Central Europe, fair trade

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