

## Environmental Standards for Farming:

### Consultation on proposed changes to standards in cross compliance Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) and related measures in England

#### Proforma for responses

This form is designed to be completed electronically. Where appropriate, check boxes are used to make it easy to respond. Text boxes for additional information will expand as you type. If completing by hand please use black ink. You may need to expand the text boxes manually before printing.

Please send completed forms to [GAEC.consultation@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:GAEC.consultation@defra.gsi.gov.uk) or post to: Sustainable Farm Management Team, Defra, Area 5C, 9 Millbank, c/o 17 Smith Square London SW1P 3JR by **27<sup>th</sup> May 2009**.

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Email</b>	

Important Note: If you do not want your response - including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation (you may use the space below). If your email automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, it will not count as a confidentiality request. Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for this information under freedom of information legislation. But, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

(use this space if you wish to request confidentiality)

No.	Question
<b>Recapturing the environmental benefits of set-aside (Option A - mandatory approach plus ELS 'top-ups'; Option B - voluntary approach)</b>	
1	Do you have any further evidence (preferably quantified) on the environmental benefits of set-aside/uncropped land? <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)
2	Do you think other or additional selection criteria should be considered in selecting which option to implement? <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)

<b>3</b>	Do you think other or additional criteria should be considered in measuring the success of any measures adopted?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>4</b>	Do you agree that the short term outcomes (e.g. area, distribution, management of uncropped land) and longer term potential of any measure adopted should be assessed at the end of the first year of implementation?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If NO, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>5</b>	For Option A which alternative would you prefer to see implemented, A1 or A2, and why?
<input type="checkbox"/> A1 <input type="checkbox"/> A2 (Tick only one. Please provide any further information in the box below)	
<b>6a</b>	Bearing in mind the costs to farmers and environmental objectives, what percentage area do you think should be set for Option A– as alternative A1; or as alternative A2? Please give reasons.
Tick only one box for either alternative. You may provide further information in the box below	
Option A Alternative A1 <input type="checkbox"/> <4% <input type="checkbox"/> 4% <input type="checkbox"/> 5% <input type="checkbox"/> 6% <input type="checkbox"/> >6% <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Option A Alternative A2 <input type="checkbox"/> <4% <input type="checkbox"/> 4% <input type="checkbox"/> 5% <input type="checkbox"/> 6% <input type="checkbox"/> >6% <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<b>6b</b>	Do you agree that the Option A requirement should only apply to farms with more than 20ha of cultivated land?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If NO, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>7</b>	Do you have suggestions for minimising any potential negative impact on ELS uptake should Option A be implemented?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>8</b>	What suggestions do you have for changing the existing GAEC 12 (agricultural land which is not in agricultural production) as part of Option B?
<b>9</b>	Do you have any suggestions for developing Option B so that it could deliver against the proposed success criteria (para 3.7.1)?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)	

10	<p>What would be the best form of cost-effective guidance and advice to help you understand the proposals for either Option A or B?  (Examples include – hard copy, electronic form, workshops, farm demonstrations, farm walks, a telephone help-line, published articles, training of advisors etc.)</p>
11	<p>Is Option A the most appropriate mechanism to act as a fallback should Option B (a voluntary approach) fail to deliver?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. Please provide any further information in the box below)	
12	<p>Which option would you prefer to see implemented, Option A or B? Please state why.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Option A <input type="checkbox"/> Option B (Tick only one. Please provide any further information in the box below)	
13	<p>Do you have any further information and/or views on the costs, benefits and risks of the proposals?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)	
<p><b>Introduction of new GAEC standard on buffer strips next to watercourses</b></p>	
14	<p>Do you have further information, preferably quantified, that would improve the analysis presented in the impact assessment associated with the buffer strip options?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)	
15a	<p>What guidance and advice will be necessary to assist farmers in deciding where to locate buffer strips next to watercourses?</p>
15b	<p>What is the most effective way of providing guidance and advice to farmers on locating buffer strips?</p>
16a	<p>Do you agree that the success of policy option 3 (advisory targeting of buffer strips) is likely to be reduced if Option B for recapturing the benefits of set-aside is undertaken?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. Please provide any further information in the box below and see question 16b)	

<b>16b</b>	How would you mitigate this risk?
<b>17</b>	If monitoring showed that the advisory/ incentive approach under Policy Option 3 had not been successful in delivering sufficient buffer strips in appropriate locations, would you prefer to adopt Policy Option 2 (a blanket mandatory approach) or Policy Option 4 (a targeted mandatory approach)?
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Option 4 (Tick only one. Please provide any further information in the box below)	
<b>18</b>	Can you advise on modifications to the options outlined that would effectively address water quality issues through the use of buffer strips next to watercourses as part of the GAEC standards?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>Consolidation of GAEC Standards on Soils</b>	
<b>19</b>	Do you agree that the approach outlined above will improve the cross compliance GAEC standards on soils?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If NO, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>20</b>	Have you any additional ideas for how the proposals might be further improved?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>Abstraction Licences (for irrigation)</b>	
<b>21</b>	Do you have any evidence that suggests we should consider a different approach to implementing the new cross compliance standard on abstraction licences?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>Agricultural land which is not in agricultural production (GAEC 12)</b>	
<b>22</b>	Is the list of proposed activities that would be permissible on agricultural land that is not in agricultural production appropriate?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If NO, please provide further information in the box below)	

<b>23</b>	Are there any activities you would wish to see included / excluded, if so provide an explanation of the impact on agriculture and the environment?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>Protection of hedgerows and watercourses (GAEC 14), clarification of the rules to allow hedgebank maintenance</b>	
<b>24</b>	Does the proposed exemption for hedgebank maintenance and restoration provide sufficient flexibility without decreasing the level of protection given to conventional hedgerows?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If NO, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>25</b>	Can you provide any advice or referenced material that will help further inform clear definitions of casting up and hedgebanks?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. If YES, please provide further information in the box below)	
<b>Information and Guidance</b>	
<b>26</b>	Which aspects of the activities undertaken as part of cross compliance are unclear in terms of their added value?
<b>27</b>	Is the proposed grouping a useful clarification around which further material could be developed?
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Tick only one. Please provide any further information in the box below)	
<b>28</b>	What is the most useful way for you (farmers) to receive such information? (e.g. in written format, face-to-face, site visits & farm walks, or any other suggestions you may have).