



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk  
[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

12 March 2014

Dear Consultee

**Consultation on the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Rural Development Programme – Environmental Report**

1. I write to invite comments on the environmental report for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Rural Development Programme in England.
2. The consultation runs for four weeks and the report can be found on our consultation website: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/>.
3. The new Rural Development Programme for England provides a major opportunity to invest in the rural economy and the environment. We plan to begin the new programme on 1 January 2015. Leading up to this Defra will be working with delivery partners and customers to develop the programme that Defra will submit to the European Commission in early 2014 and the delivery arrangements to support its implementation.
4. The SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the environmental impacts of a draft plan or programme and the reasonable alternatives considered as part of its development, with a view to avoiding and mitigating any adverse impacts and maximising the positives. A SEA of the Rural Development Programme is a legal requirement under Article 48 of the Common Provisions regulation.<sup>1</sup>
5. This consultation is an integral part of a much broader approach to engagement with interested parties on CAP reform.

**Responses**

6. We welcome your views and comments on the proposals. We would prefer you to give us your answers via the consultation website: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/>. If

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<sup>1</sup> From 2014 Rural Development will also form part of a suite of European Strategic and Investment Funds (ESIF), alongside the European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. A “Common Provisions” regulation will set out common rules for these funds.



you are unable to do so, we will accept responses via email to the consultation mailbox: [capconsultation@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:capconsultation@defra.gsi.gov.uk).

Alternatively, postal responses should be addressed to:

CAP Consultation  
Defra  
Area 1D, Nobel House  
17 Smith Square London  
SW1P 3JR

Responses should be received by **Wednesday 9 April 2014**.

## Consultation Criteria

7. This consultation is in line with the Consultations Principles. This can be found at <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/consultation-principles-guidance>
8. When this consultation ends, we will hold copies of responses here in Defra and will be made available on request. Members of the public may ask for a copy of responses under freedom of information legislation.
9. 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. Please note, if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, that won't count as a confidentiality request.
10. 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.
11. We will summarise all responses and place this summary on our website at [www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra). This summary will include a list of names of organisations that responded but not people's personal names, addresses or other contact details.

To see consultation responses and summaries, please contact:

Mr J Place  
Rural Development Team  
Defra  
Area 1D, Nobel House  
17 Smith Square London  
SW1P 3JR

Telephone: 020 7238 3176

Email: [capconsultation@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:capconsultation@defra.gsi.gov.uk).

12. If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please address them to:

Defra Consultation Co-ordinator,

Room 629  
9 Millbank  
17 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3JR

or email [consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk).

13. Thank you for your help in this matter. If you have any queries please contact us as above.

Yours Faithfully

**John Place**

**Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**