

# WATER AND AGRICULTURE IN AUSTRIA **POLICIES SHAPED IN CLOSE COOPERATION** WITH SECTORS + STAKEHOLDERS

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# STRUCTURE



#### **1) Policies have to be shaped to situation in place**

- High diversity of production
- family farms no "agro industrial business"
- Trust building in Austria

#### 2) Our policies and challenges in Austria

- Agricultural policy and water policy, shared understanding AT
- Challenges + responses

#### 3) Conclusions and potential way forward in Danube Basin



# situation in place AT

- High diversity of production
- Family farms no "agro industrial business"
- Trust building

# **AD 1) SITUATION -HIGH DIVERSITY**

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- 2 thirds of our territory are mountainous with grassland / mixed structures / arable land / special crops
- broad range of production: dairy farming + animal husbandry; cultivation of grains + maize ; viticulture + fruit growing + vegetable gardening => potential impact on water

# **AD 1) SITUATION - FAMILY FARMING**



File:Figure Number of holdings and Utilised Agriculture Area (UAA) by UAA size classes AT 2010.PNG



- Small to middle sized holdings
- Owned for generations by same family => sustainability in minds
- Size of holdings is slowly increasing (1995: 24 ha 2013: 37 ha)
- Contribution to GDP: 2015 1,3%

# **AD 1) SITUATION - FAMILY FARMING**







#### Middle sized farms, small plots !!





# **TRUSTBUILDING ?**



- Agriculture and water have been under one roof for ages; good starting point but no guarantee for dialogue and success
- Closer cooperation started with joint implementation of Nitrates Directive (water legislation)+ NAP + Nitrates Committee
- Joint final negotiation of NAP with Europ. Commission
   => key to build up of mutual trust and understanding
- Now: Joint shaping of
  - Nitrates action program
  - agri env. program 2015 2021
  - River basin management plan and its program of measures
  - Staff !

# **HOW DO WE COOPERATE ?**



- Joint assessment of situation with detailled data (farm data, monitoring data)
- Shaping programs, target areas, cross compliance implementation
- Involvement of stakeholders from both sectors; mutual support for solutions

Basically good agri-environmental situation

Topic	Assessment	Examples	RDP 14-20: share in finance plan (total = EUR 1 100 m/year)
Bio- diversity	<ul> <li>good natural conditions for conservation of biodiversity (structures, high share of high nature value farmland, topography).</li> <li>decline of biodiversity-indicators (endangered habitats and species, e. g. FBI)</li> </ul>		technical aid 8,3% 3,0% Leader 3,2% basic services and village renewal in
Water Quality	<ul> <li>good quantity and quality of water resources</li> <li>Regional nutrient and pestizide pollution in small, intensively used areas</li> </ul>		rural areas 9,2% investments
<u>Soil</u> Quality	<ul> <li>high share of permanent grassland,</li> <li>arable land rich in humus,</li> <li>risk of erosion due to topography</li> </ul>		investments_ 11,5% less favoured areas 22,9% animal welfare 2,7% ÖPUL = 40% Agro-env. program



# policies and challenges (AT – Danube Basin)

- Agricultural policy and water policy, shared understanding
- Challenges + responses
- Need for more consistency



#### We have quite comprehensive goals; core of Austrian

- Agricultural policy: "to enhance profitability + competitiveness of agriculture" to keep rural areas attractive and prosperous
- Water policy: ,,to protect all waters irrespectively of their USES" in order to secure availability of water in appropriate quality for all sustainable and equitable uses

### Shared goal of both sectors:

- "to enhance profitability + competitiveness of agriculture <u>but</u> decouple growth from pollution discharge
- Shape supportive policy instruments in close cooperation



### Main challenge No 1: competition within single EU Market

- Huge differences in intensity of production
- Low input of nutrients => low gross nutrient balance => low production => huge competitive disadvantages



#### **Key Concern: Drastic Increase of pollution loads in DB in Future?**

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#### Main challenge No 2: Spread growing

- between income (no increases between 2005 and 2014) and
- Inflation (harmonised indices of consumer prices > 20%)



#### **Issue of survival: to compensate for losses in income**

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**Potential Approaches to compensate for losses in income:** 

- intensify production per hectar on same area of holding =>

   (would jeopardize efforts achieved in reducing pollution loads
   in AT and Danube Basin)
- 2) Maintain production per hectar but increase area per holding (AT: ongoing but rather slow process 1995: 24 ha 2013: 37 ha) + get compensation for losses due to higher,,environmental goals"
- 3) Increase income by producing for niches such as "organic farming" (in AT more then 20% of agricultural area) or direct marketing

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#### Countries with more than 10 percent of organic agricultural land 2013

#### 36.3% Falkland Islands (Malvinas) Liechtenstein 31.0% Austria 19.5% Sweden 16.3% Estonia 16.0% Switzerland 12.2% French Guiana (France) 11.9% Samoa (2012) 11.8% **Czech Republic** 11.2% Latvia 11.0% Italy 10.3% 0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% 40% Share of total agricultural land

Source: FiBL-IFOAM survey 2015

# AD2) POLICIES IN AT 6



- Farmers have to contribute to protection of waters and achievement of goals of EU Water Framework Directive in line with ,,polluter pays principle" but in a <u>EU wide fully comparable way</u> (agri has to compete in single EU market!); instruments: in particular NAP, cross compliance, EU WFD....
- More ambitious goals necessary to reduce pollution loads further in Austria and Danube Basin: instrument in place: the EU co funded agri environmental programs, but here burdens + costs have to be shared between beneficiaries and farmers
- Prerequisite for reduction of pollution are ambitious provisions for major share of agricultural land (>70%?) => AT applies Nitrate Action Program on entire territorry; same: agri env.program



**Our shared AT understanding of polluter pays + burden sharing:** 





# **Conclusions and potential way forward in AT + Danube Basin**

# **CONCLUSIONS** 1



- Good cooperation between sectors in place in AT;
- only 6-8% of territory meets criteria for nitrate vulnerable zones !! Nevertheless NAP applied on entire territory + 100% of farmers contribute; => AT thus fully contributes to ICPDR goal to achieve conditions in recieving Black Sea close to early 1960ies
- Shared understanding in AT: More consistency in approaches needed at national level + in Danube Basin to achieve ICPDR goal
- In terms of Urban Waste Water treatment the whole Danube Basin is regarded to discharge in a nutrient sensitive area => extremly costly measure of nutrient removal taken in entire catchment!
   Same criteria in Directive (nitrate vulnerable zone) but quite different approaches, inspite of potentially much lower costs!!

## **CONCLUSIONS 2**



#### **UWWT Entire Basin discharges in sensitive area => costly for all!**



# **CONCLUSIONS 3**



#### **Entire Basin discharges in nutrient vulnerable zone – costly for some**



Obviously much less ambitious approaches in place in spite of potentially much lower costs !!

Map 8. Implementation of Article 3 of the Nitrates Directive in 2012.

# **CONCLUSION 4**



#### Nitrate Vulnerable Zones 2012 in % of entire territory (report EC )

country	DE	AT	SL	CZ	SK	HU	RO	BG	••••
NAP on % of territory	100	100	100	42	30	46	100*	35	
Farmers subject to NAP in %	100	100	100	?	?	?	100*	?	

\* RO since 2014

- Level of ambition in all NAP more or less comparable but
- Overall level of ambition obviously not comparable among countries within Danube Basin due to different size of NVZ!
   ? recieving seas not yet appropriately considered?
- EU WFD requires to take all actions to achieve "good status"; NAP just a basic measure; supplementary measures if necessary

# **CONCLUSION 5**



- "To reduce water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources" (quotation EU Nitrates Directive) needs strategic approaches as well as tailored measures
- Ambitious approaches needed for most / all of the agricultural land, if we want to achieve our national as well as our Danube goals and want to decouple agricultural growth from pollution
- Consistency of policy approaches at national level + also across entire basin essential to achieve our goals in Danube Basin!
- Particular window of opportunity as most NAP under ,,review"
- Particular focus on "agro industrial holdings"





#### Why not apply NAP on entire territory + focus in some countries on relatively few "agro industrial holdings" and spare "subsidence holdings" from ambitious provisions?

