

AGENDA-SETTING AND GREENING OF THE CAP

Flemming Just
Research Director

Department of Co-operative and Agricultural Research
South Jutland University Centre (SUC)
6700 Esbjerg
Denmark

Tel.: +45 7914 1111
Fax: +45 7914 1199
E-mail: fj@suc.suc.dk

Paper presented to the European Community Studies Association's 5th Biennial International Conference in Seattle, Washington, May 29 - June 1, 1997.
Panel: Challenging the Common Agricultural Policy: Reform and Enlargement.

DRAFT

Abstract

The paper is a pre-study to a broader project on agenda-setting and policy-making as regards agri-environment in EU and five member states. The main hypotheses are that

- i) traditional agricultural agenda-setting and policy-making takes place in a rather closed segment characterised by a fixed institutional set-up both in member states and at EU level, despite the many differences otherwise between national and EU policy-making;*
- ii) that environmental agenda-setting and policy-making is characterised by a much weaker segmentation and firm institutional set-up and that this will vary depending upon which environmental issue is on the agenda. It is claimed that this is the situation both in member states and at EU level;*
- iii) that agri-environmental questions - together with other new issues like animal welfare and health - will contribute to erode the traditionally strong agricultural policy segment. Both in member states and at EU-level, agri-environmental issues are usually decided upon in the ministries of agriculture and at DG VI (agriculture) respectively. The new issues are in many cases put forward with so much vigour by environmentalists, experts - and some member states in the case of EU - that the old segments have been forced to open for new agendas, new lobby groups and new institutions if the ministries and DG VI want to keep the new issues within their authority.*

The paper leaves it as an open question if the policy network model will be the most appropriate theoretical point of departure when looking at the EU level. As long as the agri-environmental question is such a relatively new issue, it seems that the 'garbage can model' best captures the vivid reality.

Introduction

In the mid-70s, environmental groups in Denmark published the first results showing that nitrogen leaching from farms caused problems for groundwater and the aquatic environment. However, nobody took any notice of the results as farming was considered a non-polluting activity, and most people were concerned about direct pollution like smoke and emissions from industry and towns. Ten years later the smallest report on agriculture and environment was given considerable attention and had a good chance for a place on the front page. Agri-environmental questions had now become a very sensitive and much debated issue.

At the Hague summit in December 1969, EEC-6 decided to work for an economic and monetary union from 1980, but political and institutional reasons blocked its realisation (Østrup and Nedergaard 1992, p. 230ff). In the Maastricht Treaty, an EMU was put forward once again, and this time governments have strongly committed themselves to the deadlines. In spite of high unemployment and domestic resistance, many governments have been willing to take the political risks in order to be the first-comers in the EMU club.

In both cases it is obvious that the ground was not yet prepared for the new ideas. What then 'matured' the ideas that agriculture was also a polluting activity and that it would be an advantage for European nations to bring their economies and currencies very close to each other? With John W. Kingdon in his famous book on *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* (1995) we could ask: How does an idea's time come? New scientific evidence could be an answer, but history is full of examples of scientific proofs without political actions and also political actions without scientific proof.

The intention of this paper is to examine the implications of the new agri-environmental agenda has been put on EU's agenda in the last decade, thereby making an issue-linkage between agriculture and environment. Whether CAP decision-making has undergone the same profound changes as national agricultural politics will be analysed here. Most students have characterised the latter in terms like corporatist and private interest government and decided by a closed and almost independent community. At least this was the case until the mid-1980s in many countries. Since then the agricultural decision-making community has gradually been eroded, and other policy areas, especially environment, have succeeded in influencing agricultural decision-making (Frouws 1993; Just 1997). Is this also the case with EU agri-environmental regulations?

It is further assumed that the decision-making process in EU with regard to agriculture and environment is similar in many respects to the one in member states - despite the many differences in national decision-making otherwise. This means that the agricultural area, may be characterised as a rather closed segment with a well-developed and defined institutional set-up. Environmental policy-making, on the other hand, as a relatively new policy field may be characterised as a very open policy area with different actors and still a rather loose institutionalisation.

It is thirdly assumed that a greening of the CAP will mean that DG VI (agriculture) and related institutions will gradually be forced to open the segment for new interests, if they want to maintain influence over the new agri-related questions.

Before trying to verify the assumptions, a theoretical discussion about agenda-setting will be described and related to existing studies about agricultural and environmental policy-making in EU.

This study is part of a planned broader project on agri-environmental policy-making in EU.¹ Therefore it will not contain new empirical evidence, but is an effort to outline some of the main determinants in EU agri-environmental policy-making.

What is an agenda?

The most significant literature on agenda-setting has been written by American scholars and based on the specific American political system. In 1984 John W. Kingdon published his much praised book on *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*, which came in a second edition in 1995. With emphasis on the complexity and fluidity of American politics he opposed the general view that politics was about establishing and maintaining an equilibrium.

"Perhaps continual change, not equilibrium, is the hallmark of agenda-setting. If that turns out to be a fruitful way of looking at these processes, then we need models that use alternatives to equilibrium-seeking as their core assumption. These models would emphasise development and adaptation, not inertia and stasis" (Kingdon 1995:227).

This approach is also in the core of Baumgartner and Jones' book on *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, also from 1995. Their point of departure is a so-called punctuated equilibrium model of policy change.

"During periods when issues emerge, new institutional structures are often created that remain in place for decades, structuring participation and creating the illusion of equilibrium. Later agenda access can destroy these institutions, however, replacing them with others" (p. 1).

Although the role of institutions is stressed in their book, it is still the agenda that determines membership, integration, and institutionalisation to use Rhodes and Marsh's dimensions in their work on policy networks (Rhodes and Marsh 1992).

Thus, it seems that a specific institutional, political and economic ground must be prepared before the seed of a new idea is ready to grow and be harvested. This means that a precondition for coming from an idea to concrete political action is a broad accept of a problem's existence and an institutional set-up capable of identifying and solving the problem.

But is it an expression of American political style that the two books mentioned lay emphasis on continual change and punctuated equilibrium in policy-making? If we take Rhodes and Marsh's summary of eight British case studies on different policy networks, they can find changes in the 1980s, but stable, regulated, predictable relations remain the logic of policy-making (1992:191).

In Denmark, stability also seems to be more the case rather than continual change. In one of the best theoretical contributions on agenda-setting and policy making, Nielsen and Pedersen (1989) stress that behind the two main concepts - institutional integration and

¹ In the broader project, agenda-setting, preferences and policy-making concerning agri-environment will be studied at both Community level and in five important member states. In this connection it will be analysed how major changes come about, how it is possible to influence the agenda and policy-making, and what role the institutional set-up plays for possible changes.

negotiated economy, which they prefer in stead of neo-corporatism - lies a so-called socio-economic conception. It has developed since the 1930's and is characterised by

"...regarding society as an economic organism whose health is estimated on the assumption of balance between wage and productivity, inflation and employment and on balance of payments. The health is not automatically given, but must on the contrary be formed by individual and collective decision makers' joint incentive to follow normative orders on taking socio-economic considerations" (p. 192).

In our agenda-setting connection it is of special interest how socio-economic conceptions and agendas are established. Nielsen and Pedersen's answer is the negotiated economy model.

It contains three institutions: policy, campaign, and discourse institutions which produce and mobilise mutual understanding about the socio-economic conception.

A policy institution consists of public commissions and committees, often with a corporatist composition, with the aim of formulating and analysing socio-economic problems and pointing at political actions.

Campaign institutions seek to formulate and propagate the socio-economic conception. They try to put such conceptions on the political agenda and to create both elitarian and to a certain degree also a broader popular understanding for certain conceptions of the actual and coming socio-economic situation. These agenda-setting bodies are government agencies, independent boards, and secretariats in organisations.

Discourse institutions translate the dominating conceptions to analytical, coherent and verifiable codes. This will often be done by academics at universities, research institutions and leading media.

The actors in the institutionalised negotiation game will, within the normative frames of the socio-economic conception, develop compromises about negotiation themes, problems and procedures.

The model is developed with the Scandinavian experience in mind, and it is obvious that stability and equilibrium seeking is an objective of its own. It seems worth examining if the model will also prove relevant in an EU agenda-setting context.

Both the Kingdon & Baumgartner and the Nielsen & Pedersen approach has been developed for national policy arenas. The question is whether it is relevant to use the same model on the EU with its unique policy-making system.

EU policy-making

The Commission is empowered with the formal right of formulating proposals and implementing regulations. This of course gives a lot of opportunities to influence the debate and try to establish new agendas. For instance the Commission has set up a working group with six leading agricultural economists to propose a radical CAP reform. But EU is a multi-centered organisation where agenda-setting, legislation and implementation are divided among several institutions, nations and levels, if not formally then in reality. And in the case with the working group, it was established by DG I, who has responsibility for strategy and overall development, whereas DG VI (agriculture) is absolutely not in favour of a radical reform, but prefers a continuation of the 1992 reform.

As regards agenda-setting, the European Parliament is playing a more active role due to the co-decision procedure, which gives the Parliament power to amend or reject a proposal. Formally the Parliament does not have the right to initiate legislation, but since

1982 the Commission has in principle agreed to take up any Parliamentary proposals to which it does not have major objections. If it has, the Commission must explain its reasons in detail. All these conditions have led students to describe the Parliament's power as the 'power of the conditional agenda setter' (Tsebelis 1995).

It is obvious that the Council, as a kind of upper house with the right to take final decisions has the most central position in decision-making. Neither Parliament nor the Council have the right to initiate legislation, but in reality this demarcation is penetrated. According to Article 152 in the EEC treaty, the Council was given the right to request that the Commission undertook studies and submitted to it the appropriate proposals.

Without being a formal institution, the European Council with its biannual meetings has become a very important decision-making actor. According to the former British Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Tristan Garel-Jones, who was in charge of the British Presidency in the second half of 1992, then it is so that

"Over a number of years the role of the European Council in Community life has increased. Most significant Community developments now depend to some extent upon agreement at, or sanction by, the European Council" (Garel-Jones, 1993:263).

The European Council is now first and foremost an important solver of big problems, where putting all problems into one package as in Edinburgh in December 1992 and thus promoting a give-and-take policy - some would prefer the term logrolling - seems to ease the way for new directions. But it should also be remembered that the European Council may have an agenda-setting role according to article 152. As an example, the conclusion of the Essen summit in December 1994 was that the Commission, before the Madrid summit in December 1995, should prepare a strategic paper on the accession of eastern states.

The role of the Presidency is not much studied, but it seems to have a very crucial role in agenda-setting and final policy-making (Ludlow 1993 and Garel-Jones 1993). It organises the business of the Community in collaboration with the Commission and the Secretary-General of the Council. According to a former UK Permanent Representative, the Presidency has

"an important influence on the agenda and the conduct and outcome of discussions. It is almost impossible to get a decision out of a Council against the wishes of its President" (Butler, 1986:26).

It should be remembered that it was during a French Presidency that the milk quotas were introduced (Swinbank 1989, p. 306f). From a French point of view such supply regulations were greatly preferred instead of British wishes to lower prices. It was also during the Greek presidency that the Corfu summit in June 1994 stated that 'the next phase of enlargement of the Union will involve Cyprus and Malta' and 'must take place before accession negotiations begin' with the CEECs (European Council 1994).

The role of member states in agenda-setting is also largely undocumented. They all have the possibility of giving the Commission good ideas or trying to persuade other member states in the Council to have the Commission take action in a certain direction. We also know that certain member states are more influential in some questions than others. For instance, UK has played a leading role in EU's increasing concern about landscape and biodiversity (Baldock and Lowe 1996). But who and how and in which issues when talking about agricultural policy has not been analysed.

Some of the less important institutions in the EU system have not gained the interest of researchers either. However, their possible role must be investigated. It is thus presumed that the Economic and Social Council (ESC) with its many representatives from the labour market and the trades will be in favour of only minor changes of the CAP, as otherwise they could fear losing support to processing and sales industries. As regards the Committee of the Regions, it must be presumed that they will be in favour of a redirection of the CAP towards rural development.

The industrial and agricultural interests in their European associations are also represented in formalised meetings. Most significant has been the role of COPA, the European association of farmers' unions. However, its influence has been radically changed. During the permanent crisis in the 1970s with recurrent price negotiations, COPA played a rather central role, and the national farmers' organisations also had good possibilities of influencing their governments. With the introduction of the qualified majority voting regime through the Single European Act, the organisations lost much of their power potential as it became possible to isolate and majorise single member states - if it was not France! Due to the nature of organisations, which is to maintain the status quo, as members often will be opposed to changes, it must be presumed that COPA does not play any agenda-setting role, but will instead work for a minimisation of changes.

To sum up the EU policy-making process, one of the most well-informed researchers, Jeremy Richardson, has described it in this way:

“In general, the EU policy process is best described as a multi-national, neo-federal system, extremely open to lobbying by a wide variety of organisations with an unpredictable agenda setting process creating an unstable and multi-dimensional policy-making environment” (Richardson 1994:140).

External actors are not part of the political system, but perhaps these actors have had the biggest influence on agenda-setting and major changes in EU. The Single Market was carried through in order to speed up economic activity and competition strength in relation to the US and South East Asia. The CAP reform in 1992 can only be understood in the light of the pressure from the US and GATT. The possible enlargement to the east will probably be the driving force in a continued reform of the CAP (Just 1996).

So, in the case of agricultural policy-making it seems that the segment has been so strong that only very powerful external forces *outside EU* have been able both to change the agenda and the policy outcome. In the case of environmental policy-making it seems that the policy field has been so open and non-institutionalised that external forces *inside EU*, like green movements and scientists, have been able to set the agenda and successfully match the expertise of industry in environmental matters.

In the following paragraphs the policy-making process in the agricultural and environmental sectors will be described in order to estimate afterwards to which of the two sectors agri-environmental policy-making is closest.

The CAP decision-making

It has been pointed out that the establishment of the CAP in the 1960s

“...reflected defensive national strategies of economic modernisation, attaching small farmers' loyalty to rebuilt democracies, with welfare state functions transferred to the European level and farming organisations as intermediaries. The CAP served to

insulate agricultural policy both from competing domestic political constituencies and from American demands for trade liberalisation...A highly segmented system of governance developed, operating through both national and supranational mechanisms." (Rieger 1996:97).

On the surface, CAP has been the first and most integrating EC policy. But in reality, the member states have used the CAP for national purposes in defence of their own agricultural sectors, and at the same time agricultural policies have been lifted out of domestic distribution conflicts (Rieger 1996:119). A proof of this may be that agriculture has developed very differently in member states, although the CAP with its common measures has existed for about 30 years (Just 1996a).

Nationally, agricultural policy-making has been dominated by strong farming lobbies acting in close collaboration with their ministry and farmer-friendly parties. This model was easily transferred to the EEC level which also became very technical, closed and non-transparent. Thus, a very complicated monetary compensatory amount system was developed to safe-guard farmers against changing exchange rates. The most dominating feature was the establishment of more than twenty market organisations and yearly price negotiations.

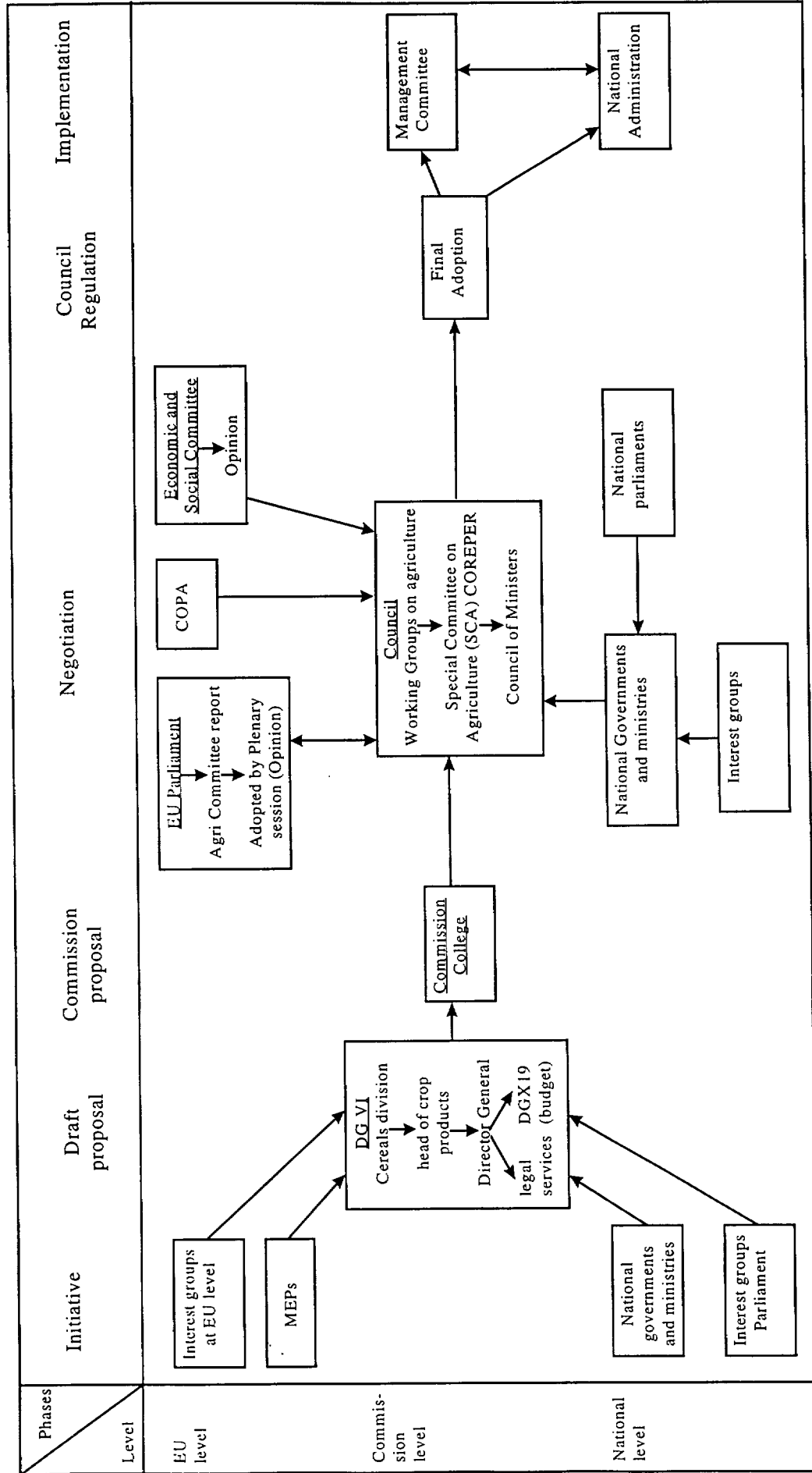
Attached to each market scheme is a management committee plus horizontal management committees for general questions on trade and monetary topics. The committees play a very important role. According to the so-called procedure for committees, they can determine rules and take decisions to the extent that the Council has delegated competence to the Commission. The right to determine technical implementation rules to Council regulations, for instance the administration of market organisations (export restitutions, market interventions, amount of support etc.) is decided via the procedure for management committees. Some committees meet every week, for instance for cereals and sugar, while others only meet a few times a year. Member states are represented by civil servants from the national administrations, and they are given the same number of votes as in the Council (Landbrugsministeriet 1988:10).

A typical process for adopting a Council regulation will follow the procedures according to Article 43. This means that the Council can take decisions by a qualified majority. The European Parliament and the ESC are consulted, but the Commission is not obliged to incorporate their opinions into the final regulation.

Formally the Commission has the sole right to launch proposals, but usually Commission members do not find proposals themselves. New ideas come from leading civil servants in the Directorate General, from chefs de cabinet, from the EU Parliament's Agriculture Committee and from national civil servants. They again have often got the ideas from (agricultural) organisations, researchers and other actors on the agricultural policy scene (see figure p. 8). This stresses the importance of not just looking at the Commission as the formal power of policy initiation. Of equal importance is the Commission's role as a broker of interests and bourse for the exchange of policy ideas (Richardson 1994:141).

After consultation with the Commission's legal services and with DG XIX (budget), DG VI sends a proposal for approval among the college of commissioners. Afterwards the Commission proposal will be sent for consultation to the European Parliament, where the Agriculture Committee will make a report which will be the basis for the EP's possible adoption and making of an opinion. The ESC will also be asked to give an opinion.

CAP decision - making process



Fl. Just ©

Simultaneously the proposal is sent to national governments (the ministries of foreign affairs and from there to the ministries of agriculture). Each member state has its own procedure for treatment of Commission proposals. In some countries a special committee under the Parliament will be involved, and often the affected organisations will also be heard. This gives the basis for a final national point of view which will be voiced in both the important co-ordinating SCA (Special Committee on Agriculture, consisting of national high level officials) or COREPER, the group of EU ambassadors. Usually the Council's working groups for the different agricultural products will be involved in trying to find compromises between the different national interests. After, typically very long negotiations, the Council will finally adopt the proposal in unanimity or by qualified majority. In the implementation phase, it is up to the management committee to decide the more technical content and the need for continual changes. Nationally, the agricultural ministries have the responsibility for implementation and control.

This short description of the normal CAP decision-making process according to Article 43 and 100 shows that the CAP may be characterised as a rather closed policy segment. In the initial phases it is influenced by agricultural interest groups and national farming interests through proposals from agriculture ministries. DG VI has also been a traditional proponent for support to its sector. This approach has usually been supported by the ESC and the farmer-friendly Agriculture Committee in the Parliament. Traditionally, the latter has consisted of many members closely related to farming interests. At the moment, out of the 45 members, three are former agriculture ministers and seven are either actual or former presidents of farmers' unions or former directors in agriculture ministries (Agra Focus, Febr. 1997).

The overall 'technification' of agricultural questions means that the discussion has not been about the legitimacy of the system as such, but on technical and specific national interests. The only opposition might come from other commissioners and nationally from other ministries, political parties and organisations. However, until the beginning of the 1980s other commissioners' possibility of changing the agenda was small. In the 1970s the Commission's price proposals were always some per cent lower than the then powerful COPA's proposal. But often the Commission was over-ruled in the Council, and the whole logic of the CAP was not severely contested (Neville-Rolfe 1984).

With a starting point in the fact that all Councils are equal, which means that the Council of Agricultural Ministers is not subordinate to, for instance, the Council of Finance Ministers, it has been argued that

"At the Community level, as at the national level, agricultural policy making has been largely confined to a small group. The councils of foreign and finance ministers have failed to restrain the decisions of the Agriculture Council, while within national governments agriculture ministers have justified these decisions on the grounds that they were necessary to avoid a crisis in the Community" (Pearce, 1981:16).

This allegation has been refused by agriculture ministers, who stated that they have always needed to have their negotiating mandate agreed in Cabinet and by finance ministers. The whole institutionalisation of the agricultural policy made fundamental alterations almost impossible. This was obvious to governments which in fact gave the agricultural ministers relatively large room for independence compared with their government colleagues, leaving it up to the usually very long negotiations in the Council of Agricultural Ministers.

The influence of COPA similarly made changes difficult. A simple fact was that the farming constituency in many countries was essential for narrow majorities of governments. At the same time, in the 1960s and 70s, COPA was used by the Commission to bolster its supra-national position vis-à-vis the Council of Agricultural Ministers (Averyt 1977).

Nationally, the possibilities of profound changes of the agenda have been dependent on the institutional set-up. In most cases this organisation has not promoted changes. In many member states, decisions on EU questions are taken by majority governments without any obligation to establish a broad debate about the CAP. On the contrary, agricultural policy has been strongly segmented and has given specific farmer organisations a monopoly on inclusion and on making statements on proposals, as for instance the Deutsche Bauernverband (DBV) in Germany, the National Farmers' Union (NFU) in the UK, and FNSEA in France (Neville-Rolfe 1984; Keeler 1981). This is also the case in Denmark (Just 1994), but here the standing parliamentary EU Committee gives all parties the possibility of influencing decision-making, as most EU proposals are on its table at the weekly meetings (Nedergaard, Hansen and Mikkelsen, 1995:47). Even though this specific Danish institution gives all parties a possibility for being heard, the standing EU Committee is not the place for changing the agenda, only approving, rejecting or modifying existing proposals. Furthermore, the importance of agriculture and its processing industry, and especially the fact that Danish agriculture every year has secured a considerable surplus in the balance of payments to and from EU, has not been an incentive for Danish politicians to propose radical reforms.

Returning to the theoretical point of departure, the CAP is in many ways an expression of a deep political desire to establish stability and equilibrium. That this has not been the case in the real world does not change the fact that the whole understanding and institutional set-up has favoured and still is favouring inertia and stasis, to quote Kingdon.

Environmental policy-making

Environment was not written into the Treaty of Rome and nor did/does it exist in the objectives of the CAP. In the latter half of the 1960s the harmful effects of industrialised production became more obvious. Some member states took an early action, for instance the Netherlands in 1965 with the Nuisance Act. The lack of appropriate legal instruments in EC, the lack of pressure from member states, and the fact that agriculture was not considered a polluting activity, meant that an agri-environmental issue was totally absent in EC. However, in 1972 the EC heads of state and government defined the main principles of an EC environmental policy, namely that 'prevention is better than cure' and the 'polluter pays principle' (Garrido and Moyano, 1994).

It was not until the Single European Act from 1986 that environment got its own clauses, 130R-T. They added the principle of integration of environmental concerns into other EC policies, the subsidiary principle, and the minimalist principle which meant that member states were allowed to introduce higher environmental standards. In the following years Community legislation increased so much that EC soon became a key policy-maker vis-à-vis the member states (Sbragia, 1996). Between 1989 and 1991, the EC enacted more environmental legislation than in the previous twenty years combined (Vogel 1993:125). But focus has changed. Until the beginning of the 1990s, policy action was mostly concerned with industrial pollution. Now the interest has moved more towards nature protection and pollution resulting from farming activities.

From an agenda-setting point of view it seems that the driving force in much of the Community's environmental policy is a leader-laggard dynamic. A few 'leader' states (usually Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands, and now also the three new member states), driven by strong domestic interests such as industry and public opinion, push their progressive environmental policies on to the agenda in Brussels, partly because they fear to losing competitiveness if a more stringent legislation is not adopted in the whole EU. The leaders' propositions are not wholly accepted, but will often mean that the 'laggard' countries will need to adopt stronger regulations than their domestic audiences demand (Haas et al., 1993).

All 'members' of the 'green troika' - now the 'green sextet' - are not taking the lead all the time. Environmental policy is segmented into sectoral policy, and the political dynamics vary considerably across sectors. So, states outside the troika may act as leader in certain areas (Sbragia, 1996:239). What binds the troika together is the members' sharing of similar norms of environmental behaviour (Skjærseth, 1994:38). The policy outcome, however, is very uncertain.

“Once a 'leader' country becomes involved in 'Europeanising' its legislation, it is drawn into a complex institutional framework and policy-making process. The dynamics of that process cannot be controlled by any single member state or even by a coalition made up of the 'green troika'. The outcome is a contingent outcome” (Sbragia 1996:241).

With the words of Richardson (1994) EU's environmental policy is characterised by uncertain agendas, shifting networks and complex coalitions. A 'leader' state, pushed by environmentalists and industry, urges the DG XI (environment) to take an initiative. The Directorate shares the same values of ecological modernisation as the leader states, and its officials are also very open to the expertise provided by scientists and environmental groups. Other directorates, such as DG III (industry) and XVII (energy), will often be hostile to actions they believe will threaten competitiveness. In this case the political power and skill of the environment commissioner will be decisive, for instance in making use of the European Parliament as a supporter. Environment is one of the Parliament's most important spheres of influence, and with the Maastricht Treaty's co-decision procedure the EP and its Environment Committee have obtained more power. Especially commissioner Ripa de Meana was very clever at using the EP to force the Commission to strengthen regulations and by making use of articles which implied the co-operation procedure with the Council instead of the consultation procedure. The Council of Environment ministers will often end up with a regulation that is not so intervening as first outlined by DG XI and later on supported by the EP, but the decision will quite often be more far-reaching than the laggard states had wanted.

Contrary to agricultural policy-making, it seems with the words of Kingdon that environmental agenda-setting and policy-making is characterised by 'continual change, not equilibrium' and by development and adaptation (Kingdon 1995:227).

Agri-environment

Right from the beginning of its implementation in 1967, the CAP has experienced tremendous difficulties, but it was first from the middle of the 1980s that it became possible to carry considerable changes through. This means that the actual decision-making processes are not comparable with researchers' findings in the early '80s (see for instance Avery

1984; Neville-Rolfe 1984). The milk quota from 1984; the single market from 1986 with its new voting regime; the structural approach in the CAP through R797/1985; the budget reform in 1988; the CAP reform in 1992 - all point in the same direction: agricultural policy-making has increasingly been subordinated to general financial and trade policies. At the same time, other policy areas like environment and rural development have penetrated the hitherto rather closed agricultural policy segment. Furthermore, the budget reform in 1988 and later the Edinburgh agreement from 1993 with their ceilings on spending, have contributed in decreasing the influence of the former very influential COPA. The CAP reform in 1992 and the succeeding GATT agreement pushed strongly in the same direction. With the international commitments and five-year agreements on prices, there has not been much room left for COPA to have a major influence on prices and production.

One indication of other priorities and of agriculture's role in the whole policy-making process is the decline in agriculture's relative share of the budget. Still in the 1970s the CAP swallowed up three quarters of the budget. Now it is less than half the budget. Another indication could be the number of meetings held in the Council.

Table 1. *Number of Meetings in the European Council, 1984 and 1994.*

| Council composition | 1984 | 1994 |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Foreign Affairs | 20 | 16 |
| Agriculture | 16 | 11 |
| Economic and Finance | 8 | 11 |
| Fishing | 5 | 5 |
| Justice and Home Affairs | | 4 |
| Environment | 3 | 4 |
| Industry | 3 | 4 |
| Research | 4 | 4 |
| Social Affairs | 3 | 4 |
| Transport | 4 | 4 |
| Internal Market | 2 | 3 |
| Health | | 3 |
| Telecommunications | | 2 |
| Energy | 2 | 2 |
| Budget | 4 | 2 |
| Education | 1 | 2 |
| Consumer | 3 | 2 |
| Development | 2 | 2 |
| Culture | 2 | 2 |
| Joint Meetings | | 2 |
| Civil Protection | | 1 |
| Iron and Steel | 2 | |
| Total | 84 | 92 |

Source: Swinbank, 1995, p. 305; Corbett, 1995, p. 46.

Although table 1 shows that new issues have come onto the agenda during the decade, there is no clear proof to get here of a possible decline for agriculture compared with other policy issues. No other area has such a developed system of market organisations, institu-

tionalised committees, advisory committees and working groups. In total they held more than 500 meetings in 1994 (Beretning, 1994, p. 226).

But this whole institutionalised system is primarily occupied with technical questions and must be assumed not to be agenda-setting. It must further be assumed that DG VI (agriculture) will strive to play a continued central role in agricultural and related issues and try to reduce the influence of DG I, DG XI (environment) and others. At least we have seen in the Danish case that the Ministry of Agriculture withdrew some of its close connections to agriculture in the late 1980s when the agenda was changing and other interests threatened to take over some of the ministry's authority (Just, 1995). This has meant that the ministry has maintained a strong influence and has now also achieved the responsibility for food safety. Consequently the name has been changed to the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries.

The development has been quite the opposite for DG VI as a consequence of the BSE crisis. The strong criticism of the Commission's handling of BSE led to a strong demand from the Parliament for removing veterinary inspection from DG VI. In a move intended to wrest the initiative away from the EP, Commissioner Fischler in December 1996 suggested to reinforce the Veterinary Inspection Office as an independent body separate to DG VI and respected by consumers. But the Parliament's anger was so strong - it threatened to dismiss the whole commission - that the control was handed over to the Commissioner for Consumer Health Protection.

This could be seen as a single case, but the follow-up shows that it is an expression of the EP's stronger political aspirations and an attempt to gain more influence in relation to both Commission and Council. In order to please the Parliament, the Commission promised it to be involved in future decisions on beef labelling by putting it under the legal basis of Article 100a involving co-decision with the EP. However, the Council of Agricultural Ministers unanimously agreed to change the legal basis to Article 43 (agriculture) requiring just the normal EP consultation procedure, under which the Council compromise cannot be further amended by the EP. The Parliament's influential Committee on Environment, Health and Consumer Affairs with its strong chairman, Ken Collins, in front was so angry on loosing the possibility of co-decision on an agricultural issue for the first time ever, that the Committee unanimously voted for taking the Council to the European Court. This was followed by the Commission College who announced at the 40th anniversary celebrations in Rome in March 1997 that it would bring the Council to the Court (Agra Focus, Febr. and April 1997).

DG VI has also tried to broaden its scope as the traditional agricultural area became more and more restricted. The structural element has evolved, so Frants Fischler is both commissioner for agriculture and for rural development. Most significantly, this was shown in his initiative to arrange a big rural development conference in November in Eire, which ended up in the famous Cork Declaration. However, this has caused much anger from most of his colleagues in the Commission who were not involved, and especially the commissioners responsible for structural and regional funds have opposed the initiative (Lowe et al. 1996).

Agri-environmental regulation is also a new responsibility for DG VI, but many parts of it could as well have been placed at DG XI. The latter is at least very interested in the topic and has launched many initiatives and research projects on agri-environment.

In general it seems that both the CAP policy-making community and the CAP agenda have changed. This naturally leads to the intriguing question: Who is now setting the agenda and pursuing the points on the agenda to final decisions? And is it possible to detect which countries are most influential? If so, do the different national priorities mean that different countries are more influential in some cases than others?

characterised by unstability/punctuated equilibrium than by the stability known from national sectoral policy-making. At the outset it will be argued that the former is more the case environmental policy than in agricultural policy, and that it is more the case in the multi-centered EU than on national level and thereby is giving easier access to the agenda to non-institutionalised interests.

As concerns theoretical approach, it is still too early to judge whether the policy network model, the garbage can model or other models will be the most appropriate way to understand agri-environmental agenda-setting and policy-making.

REFERENCES

- Andersen, Mikael Skou (1996), The Impact of New Member States on EU Environmental Policy, *Environmental Politics*, vol. 5, no. 2, 339-344.
- Andersen, Svein S. and Kjell A. Eliassen (1995), EU lobbying: the new research agenda, *European Journal of Political Research*, vol. 27: 427-441.
- Atkin, Michael (1993), *Snouts in the Trough. European farmers, the Common Agricultural Policy and the public purse*. Cambridge: Woodhead Publishing.
- Avery, Graham (1984), The Common Agricultural Policy: A turning Point, *Common Market Law Review*, 21: 481-504.
- Averyt, W.F. (1977), *Agropolitics in the European Community: Interest Groups and the Common Agricultural Policy*. London: Praeger.
- Baldock, David and Philip Lowe (1996), "The development of European Agri-environment Policy", in Whitby (1996), pp. 8-25.
- Baumgartner, Frank R. and Bryan D. Jones (1993), *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Benedictis, Michele De; Fabrizio De Filippis, and Luca Salvatici (1994), "Nature and Causes of CAP: Changes in the 1980s and a Tentative Exploration of Potential Scenarios", in: *Agricultural Trade Conflicts and GATT. New Dimensions in U.S.-European Agricultural Trade Relations*/eds. Giovanni Anania, Colin A. Carter, and Alex F. McCalla. Boulder: Westview Press, 125-158.
- Beretning (1994), Den almindelige beretning om den europæiske unions virksomhed. Europakommissionen. [The ordinary account on the European Union, publ. by the European Commission]
- Butler, Michael (1986), *Europe: More than a Continent*. London: Heinemann.
- Cameron, Fraser (1995), The European Union and the Fourth Enlargement, *Journal of Common Market Studies, Annual Review*, Vol. 33: 17-34.
- Cohen, Michael, James March, and Johan Olsen (1972), A Garbage Can Model of Organisational Choice, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17: 1-25.
- Corbett, Richard (1995), Governance and Institutional Developments, *Journal of Common Market Studies. Annual Review of Activities*, p. 35-50.
- Daugbjerg, Carsten (1994), *Policy Networks and Changing Environments. Environmental Regulation and Agricultural Reform: Some Theoretical Considerations*. Aarhus University: Department of Political Science.
- European Council (1994), *Presidency Conclusions*. Corfu, 24-25 June. Brussels: General Secretariat of the Council).

- Garel-Jones, Tristan (1993), The UK Presidency: An Inside View, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 31: 261-267.
- Garrido, Fernando and Eduardo Moyano (1994), *EC and National Regulations on Environment and Agriculture in Denmark, the Netherlands and Spain*. Esbjerg: South Jutland University Press.
- Goldstein, Judith and Robert O. Keohane, eds. (1993), *Ideas and Foreign Policy. Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Haas, Peter et al. (1993), "Protecting the Baltic and North Seas", pp. 133-182, in: *Institutions for the Earth: Sources of Effective International Environmental Protection*/eds. Peter Haas, Robert O. Keohane and M.A. Levy. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Just, Flemming (1992), "Danemark. La gestion d'une agriculture intensive", in: *Les syndicats agricoles en Europe*/sous la direction de Bertrand Hervieu et Rose-Marie Lagrave. Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, p. 49-71.
- Just, Flemming (1994), "Agriculture and Corporatism in Scandinavia", in: *Regulating Agriculture*/eds. Philip Lowe, Terry Marsden & Sarah Whatmore. London: David Fulton Publishers, p. 31-52.
- Just, Flemming (1996), "The Common Agricultural Policy and the Enlargement to the East", in: *The EU and Central Europe. Status and Prospects*/eds. Finn Laursen and Søren Riishøj. Esbjerg: South Jutland University Press, 217-237.
- Just, Flemming (1996a), *The CAP as an integrative and harmonising factor?*. Paper presented at the Workshop on "The implementation of agri-environmental policy instruments in a changing political environment - exchange of Nordic and Baltic experiences". Vilnius, May 9-12, 1996.
- Keeler, John T.S. (1981), "Corporatism and official union hegemony: the case of French agricultural syndicalism", in: *Organising interests in Western Europe. Pluralism, corporatism, and the transformation of politics*/ed. Suzanne Berger. Cambridge University Press, 185-208.
- Kingdon, John W. (1995), *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*. Second edition. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers.
- Landbrugsministeriet (1988), *Hvordan fungerer EF's landbrugspolitik?* [How does the CAP work?]. Published by the Danish Ministry of Agriculture.
- Liefferink, J.D., P.D. Lowe and A.P.J Mol, eds. (1993), *European Integration and Environmental Policy*. Chichester: Johan Wiley & Sons.
- Lowe, Philip et al. (1996), *European Perceptions of the CAP and its Impact on the Countryside and Natural Environment*. Report to the Land Use Policy Group. Newcastle: Centre for Rural Economy, 1996.
- Ludlow, Peter (1993), The UK Presidency: A View From Brussels, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 31: 246-260.
- Nedergaard, Peter (1995), The Political Economy of CAP Reform, p. 111-144, in: *The Political Economy of European Integration*/ed. F. Laursen. Maastricht: The European Institute of Public Administration.
- Nedergaard, Peter, H.O. Hansen and Preben Mikkelsen (1993), *EF's landbrugspolitik og Danmark* [EC's agricultural policy and Denmark]. Copenhagen: Handelshøjskolen Forlag.
- Neville-Rolfe, Edmund (1984), *The Politics of Agriculture in the European Community*. European Centre for Political Studies.
- Nielsen, Klaus and Ove K. Pedersen (1989), "Fra blandingsøkonomi til forhandlingsøkonomi. Mod et nyt paradigme?" [From mixed economy to negotiated economy. Towards a new paradigm?], in: *Stat og marked. Fra Leviathan og usynlig hånd til for-*

- handlingsøkonomi* eds. Kurt Klaudi Klausen and Torben Hviid Nielsen. Copenhagen: Jurist og Økonomforbundets Forlag, 171-226.
- Pearce, Joan (1981), *The Common Agricultural Policy. Prospects for Change*. London: Chatham House, Paper 13.
- Richardson, Jeremy (1994), "EU Water Policy: Uncertain Agendas, Shifting Networks and Complex Coalitions", *Environmental Politics*, vol. 3, no. 4, 139-167.
- Rieger, Elmar (1996), "The Common Agricultural Policy: External and Internal Dimensions", in: Wallace and Wallace, 1996, 97-123.
- Rhodes, R.A.W. and David Marsh (1992), "New Directions in the Study of Policy Networks", *European Journal of Political Research*, 21: 181-205.
- Sbragia, Alberta (1996), "Environmental Policy: The 'Push-Pull' of Policy-Making", pp. 235-255, in: *Policy-Making in the European Union* eds. Helen Wallace and William Wallace. Oxford University Press.
- Swinbank, Alan (1989), "The Common Agricultural Policy and the Politics of European Decision Making", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. XXVII, No. 4., p. 303-322.
- Tsebelis, George (1995), "Power of the European Parliament as a Conditional Agenda Setter", in: *Towards a new Europe. Stops and Starts in Regional Integration* eds. Gerald Schneider, Patricia A. Weitsman and Thomas Bernauer. Westport: Praeger.
- Vogel, D. (1993), "The Making of EC Environmental Policy", in: *Making Policy in Europe: the 'Europeification' of National Policy-Making* eds. S.S. Andersen and Kjell A. Eliassen. London: Sage. 115-132.
- Whitby, Martin ed. (1996), *The European Environment and CAP Reform. Policies and Prospects for Conservation*. CAB International.
- Østrup, Finn and Peter Nedergaard (1992), *Det økonomiske samarbejde i EF* [The economic cooperation in EC]. Copenhagen: Jurist- og Økonomforbundets Forlag, 2nd ed.