Sustainable animal feed

Goal	Procurement of animal feed that does not contribute to the destruction of habitats.
Target group	Farmers or advisors managing cattle or other ruminants.
Description of the measure	Every year, the EU imports about 35 million tonnes of soy (*Glycine max*), corresponding to about 35 % of the global soy trade. These imports proceed mainly from South America: Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Bolivia produce over 50 % of the world soy in an area of about 55 to 60 million hectares. Overall, about 80 % of the soy produced in these countries is exported (Lambin et al., 2003; Nepstad et al., 2009; Teillard et al., 2016; Wassenaar et al., 2007). The worldwide demand for soy is driven mostly by animal production systems: about 75 % of the soy produced in the world is used as animal feed (WWF, 2016). This is not expected to change given that, despite a slowing growth rate, the global demand for food resulting from livestock production is expected to continue to increase, particularly in South Asia and Africa, after a period of rapid growth in Latin America (FAO, 2015). Soy production grew tremendously over the last four decades and is still increasing (Cattelan and Dall'Agnol, 2018). For instance, about 6 million hectares are already cultivated with soy in the Brazilian region of Mato Grosso but the country is still offering additional millions of hectares for the same purpose, mainly in the same region (Bragança and Cohn, 2019). Soy production has been one of the main drivers causing the loss of primary forests, areas of cerrado and unique wetlands in the Amazon, Pantanal and Mato Grosso regions. According to several NGOs, soybean cultivation has already led to the destruction of vast areas of the Amazonian and Pantanal rainforests and it is still driving further deforestation, even though since 2006 a memorandum on saving the tropical rainforests has helped to decrease some of the pressure (WWF, 2016). The European CAP regulations (EC, 2013) do not apply to South American agriculture. Therefore, the best practice is to prioritize the certified production of fodder in Europe. Importing from other biodiversity-certified sources is an alternative, but local production is preferable as it prevents Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from transport. Choosing not to import soy products from sources outside of the European Union also makes it easier to avoid genetically modified (GMO) varieties. More than 90 % of the soy produced in South America consists of GMO varieties (Trase, 2018). Currently, the use of 17 GM soybean varieties, for food or animal feed production, is allowed in the European Union (EU, 2019). However, products containing GM products for human consumption require compliance with the EU's labelling and traceability rules.
Suitable sites	▪ Farms where cattle or other ruminants are kept and reared and which are not able to provide a full diet based on local pastures or locally produced fodder.
How a good im-	▪ Livestock are fed exclusively with pastures or locally produced fodder;

plementation looks like	▪ Any imported feed comes from biodiversity-friendly certified producers inside the European Union; ▪ Any imported feed coming from locations outside the European Union comes from biodiversity-friendly certified producers.
Effects on biodiversity (ecosystems, species, soil biodiversity)	 Avoidance of deforestation and ecosystem destruction driven by animal feed demand.
Other positive effects/benefits for the farmer	▪ Livestock reared in pastures and fed primarily with grass species produce milk or meat with higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids; vitamins A, E, 82, and 89; carotenoids; and phenolics (Duru et al., 2017).
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Further information: Knowledge pool

This Action Fact Sheet belongs to the training package for advisors of standard organisations and companies and was developed within the project: “Biodiversity in Standards and Labels of for the Food Industry”. The main objective of the project is to improve the biodiversity performance of standards and sourcing requirements in the food industry by helping standard organisations to integrate efficient biodiversity criteria into their schemes and motivating food processing companies and retailers to include comprehensive biodiversity criteria into their sourcing guidelines.

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