

## WHO MONITORS THE SCHEME?

Oversight of the scheme is exercised by the **CNCE** (*Commission Nationale de la Certification Environnementale* / National Commission for Environmental Certification), a body set up on 25 October 2011. Its membership includes all the Grenelle partners and it examines:

- Applications for official approval of certifying bodies to audit environmental certification levels 2 and 3.
- Applications for official recognition relating to existing and environmental schemes.

The CNCE may also suggest necessary changes to the scheme in light of experience acquired during practical implementation.

*(For more detailed information in the scheme's structure: please refer to official decree 2011-694 and the official orders of 20 June 2011 implementing the articles relevant to environmental certification in the French code of rural and maritime fisheries law).*



See also :  
<http://agriculture.gouv.fr/exploitations-agricoles>



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## RECONCILING AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

## ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION FOR FARMS



## WHY HAVE ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION AT ALL?

### Listening to the expectations of society

Society calls into question the practices of agriculture. There is therefore a need to ensure that the changes under way in farming are widely known and acknowledged.



Environmental certification for farms is thus a response to the need, clearly expressed in France's Grenelle consultation on the environment, to identify farms engaged in approaches especially protective of the environment.



Many farmers have adopted approaches aimed at improving the impact of their activities on the environment. These may be sectoral programmes integrated to the requirements laid down for a product, local approaches or individual projects, and they may or may not be covered by certification.

### Recognizing, promoting, gathering

Such identification is imperative if these approaches are to be recognised and valued by partners wishing to support them: public bodies, processors, distributors and consumers.

The objective is to rally existing programmes around a shared standard, the one for level 2 of the certification, to make them more effective for the environment and more easily understood by society.

The "Grenelle 2" environmental law of 12 July 2010 enshrined environmental certification in the French code of rural law. It also created a new value statement for products, both processed and unprocessed, from farms certified as having "High Environmental Value".



## WHAT DOES THE CERTIFICATION INVOLVE?

It is a straightforward, progressive and reliable scheme designed by all the partners in the Grenelle consultation process: the farming industry, environmental organisations, consumer bodies, representatives from downstream industries and relevant official bodies.

### Four selected themes

Environmental certification is voluntary and open to all sectors of the industry. It is built around four themes:

- Biodiversity,
- Plant protection strategy,
- Management of fertiliser use,
- Management of water.

It has been constructed on the basis of progressive certification of the whole of a farm as verified by independent third-party bodies approved by the Agriculture Ministry.



### Three levels of environmental progress :

→ **Level One** indicates fulfilment of the environmental requirements in cross-compliance and assessment of the holding by the farmer based on the level 2 criteria or the indicators of level 3.

→ **Level Two** reflects compliance with a set of criteria laying down 16 requirements with an effective impact on the environment and designed for relevant integration into the farm's daily management. The criteria define focuses for environmental progress on the farm, providing in particular for the rational use of inputs and the limitation of accidental leakage into habitats. At this level, certification can be managed within a collective framework. Existing programmes can receive recognition on the basis of dual equivalence: equivalence of requirements and equivalence of control measures.

→ **Level Three**, defined as «High Environmental Value» involves meeting a formal obligation to achieve defined outcomes. The farmer can choose to be assessed according to a battery of four composite indicators that include the four themes already described (option A) or two synthetic indicators (option B). These two options allow the diversity of the systems of production encountered in practice to be taken into account while maintaining the same level of environmental excellence.