# Explanation of the modifications

**Certification scheme:** On the way to PlanetProof for Plant Products
**New scheme version:** PP.6
**Date of adoption:** October 23, 2025

The certification scheme version PP.6 has been approved by the Board of Experts. This document describes the modifications that have been incorporated into the certification scheme version PP.6, compared with the former version PP.5. The revision is the next step towards a more sustainable agricultural production.

### Validity

This revised certification scheme will take effect on January 1, 2026. A transition period of 5 months applies for the countries Italy, Portugal and Spain. For other countries, a transition period of 2 months applies.

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## Registration, inspection and consequences of non-conformities

### Unannounced inspections

In the current scheme, an unannounced inspection is carried out for 10% of the certificate holders. The goal is to make the unannounced inspections more risk-driven. If the certification body is of the opinion that certain requirements risk not to be complied with during the rest of the cultivation, it can decide to carry out an unannounced inspection. Also the scheme owner (SMK) can indicate that a certain target group, crop or period have increased risks of non-compliance, and can request the CB to carry out additional inspections. A percentage of 5% unannounced inspections is still being maintained.

The text stating that the certification body must notify the certificate holder of the inspection 1–2 working days in advance has been removed: the announcement is considered a working arrangement that can be agreed upon during a harmonisation meeting, if desired. For certain topics, an unannounced inspection without prior notice is preferred to obtain a reliable result; the text is now no longer restrictive in this regard.

## 1. Energy and climate

### Requirements 1.3 and 1.4; optional measure 1.8 – Sustainable electricity

In new contracts, sustainable electricity has to be generated in Europe. This reflects the integration of electricity grids across Europe and the European nature of the certification label. Guarantees of Origin are not a perfect safeguard for sustainability, but they are the best option available at the moment.

### Requirement 1.5 – Heat cooling

The possibility for heat destruction, for electricity production without heat demand from the greenhouse, is terminated. With adequate energy management, heat destruction won't be needed and for efficiency it is detrimental. At new companies, the technology is not installed any more; at existing companies it is hardly applied. Cultivation is well possible without using these installations. They may still be present at the companies, but they must not be used.

### Optional measure 1.8 – Insight into emissions from power production

In anticipation of the future development of the definition of green electricity (use within a narrower generation period), the optional measure has been adjusted to encourage electricity consumption to take place within the generation period. When producing sustainable electricity yourself, there will also be simultaneous self-consumption of this electricity; this meets the hourly matching requirement. The greenhouse gas emission calculation module will also reflect this.

## 2. Crop protection

### Requirement 2.3B/C – Allowed plant protection products and biocides – Malus points

Active substances listed in List II that are designated as Candidates for Substitution (CfS) have a significant negative impact on human health and the environment. To discourage their use, two malus points per application will be assigned instead of one.
The use of these substances remains permitted, but additional compensatory measures are mandatory. This also applies to herbicides on List II that fall under this category.
When applying the Low Dose Strategy (LDS), a maximum of one treatment is counted.
Additionally, the malus points per application are calculated proportionally to the treated area as a percentage of the total registration unit (plot/section/cell, etc.) of the crop. This rule also applies to row spraying or spot spraying.

### Requirement 2.3B; Annex 2B – List Green Products, low-risk substances

New substances on the list:

| Active substance | Type | Active substance | Type |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bacillus subtilis strain RTI477 | FU | Elemental iron | MO |
| Bacillus velezensis strain RTI301 | FU | Lysate of Willaertia magna | EL |
| Betabaculovirus phoperculellae | IN | | |

The legal authorization of the following substances has expired, or scientific insights have changed, meaning they no longer meet the definition of a green product or low-risk substance (indicated with *). These substances have been removed from the list of green products and low-risk substances:

- Bacillus thuringiensis subsp. Israelensis (IN)
- Potassium hydrogen carbonate* (FU)
- Sulfur* (AC, FU, RE)

### Requirement 2.3B; Annex 2C – List I

The methodology for assessing high-risk substances will be adjusted to further limit the use of substances classified as highly hazardous to the environment. At this stage, this concerns only eight substances on List II that are included in the CfS category and have been identified by the environmental consultancy bureau CLM Research & Advice.
These substances pose a high risk to the environment, human health, pollinators and natural enemies: acetamiprid, deltamethrin, esfenvalarate, lambda-cyhalothrin, pendimethalin, pirimicarb, propyzamide and tebuconazole. These substances still appear to be indispensable in certain crops/sectors. Their use is only permitted in those specific crops.

A comprehensive reassessment of the indispensability of the remaining List II substances according to the current methodology has also taken place, as well as an update of the substance lists based on the latest scientific insights and authorization periods. The following substances have been moved to List I due to dispensability or expiration of legal authorization. The table below provides an overview of the new substances on List I (*: expired legal authorization – ** 8 substances with high risk – the rest are risk substances that are dispensable in all crops).

| Active substance | Type | Active substance | Type |
|---|---|---|---|
| Acetamiprid** | IN | Lambda-cyhalothrin** | IN |
| Bordeaux mixture | BA, FU | Metaflumizone | IN |
| Cycloxydim | HB | Metsulfuron-methyl | HB |
| Deltamethrin** | IN | Pendimethalin** | HB |
| Esfenvalerate** | IN | Pirimicarb** | IN |
| Fenpropidin | FU | Pirimifos-methyl | IN |
| Fluazifop-p | HB | Propyzamide** | HB |
| Flufenacet* | HB | Pyridalyl | IN |
| Geraniol | FU | Quizalofop-P-tefuryl | HB |
| Imazamox | HB | Spirotetramat* | IN |
| Isoxaflutole | HB | Spiroxamine | FU |
| Copper hydroxide | BA, FU | Tebuconazole** | FU |
| Copper hydroxide | BA, FU | Terpenoid blend QRD 460* | AC, IN |
| Copper oxychloride | BA, FU | Tribasic copper sulfate | BA, FU |
| Copper compounds | BA, FU | Triclopyr | HB |

### Requirement 2.3B; Annex 2C – Lijst II

Two indicators have been added to the methodology and risk assessment of plant protection products: endocrine disruption and PFAS. As a result, 9 additional substances have been included in List II. Based on the latest scientific insights, the following substances have also been newly placed on List II (indicated with *).

| Active substance | Type | Active substance | Type |
|---|---|---|---|
| Aluminium sulfate* | BA | Mefentrifluconazole | FU |
| Beflubutamid | HB | Metaldehyde* | MO |
| Cyflufenamid | HB | Oxathiapiprolin | FU |
| Cyflumetofen | AC | Pyroxsulam | FG,PG |
| Dicamba* | HB | Pyraclostrobin* | HB |
| Flonicamid | IN | Trifloxystrobin* | FU |
| Flutianil | FU | | |

### Requirement 2.4 – Emission reduction

Despite extra (legal) measures to reduce emissions, plant protection products are still being detected in surface water. In addition to spray drift, surface runoff is also a significant source of contamination. One effective measure to reduce runoff is the use of cultivation-free zones. The following is mandatory near surface water, in addition to using 90% drift-reducing nozzles or equipment:

- When spraying downwards: a minimum cultivation-free zone of 3 metres.
- When spraying sideways or upward: a minimum cultivation-free zone of 5 metres, unless an emission screen or windbreak with a year-round closed canopy is present.

Four exceptions are allowed:

1. If the cultivation-free zone is ≥ 4% of the total area, a smaller zone may be applied provided that at least 97.5% drift reduction is implemented. Reason: excessive loss of cultivation area. The 4% corresponds to what is applied in the CAP regulation.
2. In existing orchards, a buffer zone of 3 m may be maintained provided that at least 97.5% drift reduction is applied. Reason: existing orchards are not designed for this; a row of trees would have to be removed to meet the revised requirements.
3. For upward or sideways spraying, the requirement of a minimum 5 m buffer zone may be reduced to 3 m provided that a ground-anchored emission screen or catch crop/windbreak is present.
4. For container fields with recirculation, when spraying downward, a buffer zone of 1 m may be maintained provided that at least 97.5% drift reduction is applied. Reason: in container fields with recirculation, the first 50 $m^3$ of water per hectare from rainfall or irrigation (5 mm) is collected in a basin. This captures and reuses a large portion of fertilizers and products. Runoff and leaching are minimal in this situation.

### Requirement 2.9 – Weed management

The IPM plan is based on non-chemical control methods as the standard approach, also for weed control. However, this was not previously made explicit. Certificate holders are expected to implement at least one non-chemical weed control measure per year. This includes:

- Hoeing
- Harrowing
- Robot weeding
- Laser or electrocution
- Hot water or hot air treatment
- Flame weeding
- False seedbed followed by mechanical control of emerging weeds
- Ridging
- Brushing
- Covering with organic material or biodegradable film

For chemical weed control, spot spraying or row spraying combined with hoeing has been added.

### Requirement 2.10; Annex 1 – Active substance limit

The active substance standard will continue to be used as a tool to reduce environmental impact, despite its limitations. SMK acknowledges that the standard is not the most accurate indicator of environmental effects, but it will remain in place for the next three years, until the Environmental Indicator for Crop Protection (MIG) is ready for use. In the meantime, the active substance standards will be adjusted where necessary, based on monitoring data from the past four years. These adjustments take into account the need to safeguard resistance management.

| Crop | Current active substance limit (kg as/ha) | New active substance limit (kg as/ha) |
|---|---|---|
| Cucumber (Protected) | 15,5 | 13,0 |
| Tomato (Protected) | 10,0 | 7,5 |
| Escarole/endive (Open) | 3,0 | 2,4 |
| Apple (Open)<br>Start of harvest after 1-10 | 33,0 | 29,0<br>31,4 |
| Asparagus (Open) | 5,0 | 4,5 |
| Babyleaves (Open) | 3,0 | 1,5 |
| Blue berry (Open) | 10,0 | 5,0 |
| Cauliflower (Open) | 2,5 | 2,2 |
| Curly cale (Open) | 3,0 | 2,7 |
| Raspberry (Open) | 14,0 | 8,0 |
| Barley (Open) | 1,5 | 1,1 |
| Cherry (Open) | 15,0 | 8,0 |
| Avenue and park trees (Open) | 3,0 | 2,1 |
| Pear (Open)<br>Start of harvest after 1-10 | 29,0 | 25,0<br>28,4 |
| Plum (Open) | 12,0 | 4,8 |
| Red currant (Open) | 18,0 | 12,0 |
| Rucola (Open) | 3,0 | 1,8 |
| Spinach (Open) | 3,5 | 2,8 |
| Brussels sprouts (Open) | 7,0 | 6,0 |

### Requirement 2.11 – Glyphosate

A reduction in glyphosate use aligns with the vision of reduced chemical crop protection. Based on long-term monitoring, a maximum of 1.25 kg/ha/year has proven to be achievable. Accordingly, the allocation of malus points will be adjusted.
The use of glyphosate for the termination of green manure crops in minimum tillage farming is no longer permitted, except for small-seeded crops such as onion, carrot, and spinach.

### Requirement 2.12 – Inspection of spraying equipment

Well-functioning spraying equipment is essential for both effective crop protection and environmental impact reduction. An annual inspection is mandatory. This can be a legally required inspection or a self-assessment. In the case of a self-inspection, the certificate holder must demonstrate that the spraying equipment has been checked according to the points outlined in the certification scheme.

### Requirements 2.22; 2.29 – Reduced use of chemical crop protection products

Two criteria have been combined into one optional measure: when fewer chemical crop protection products are used than the active substance limit for the relevant crop, bonus points are awarded according to a scale indicated in the scheme. This provides additional recognition for growers who use very few crop protection products, but still cannot completely do without them.

## 3. Biodiversity

### Requirement 3.3; optional measure 3.6; Annex 4 – Biodiversity Action Plan

The Biodiversity Action Plan with habitat inventory will become mandatory for all cropping systems, which means that 3.6 will no longer be an optional measure. This makes it possible to quantify the companies' contribution to habitat for biodiversity and to communicate this to stakeholders. The instrument developed for this purpose has been made accessible and is widely used in 2025, particularly for open field crops. Annex 4 provides an overview of habitat measures that are counted as habitat under this scheme, listing many of the that were included in previous versions of the scheme as separate optional measures.

### Requirement 3.5 – Prevention of light emission

The requirement was set to a lower, legal level in 2024 as applied in the Netherlands, with the prospect of formulating a new extra-legal requirement. The maximum gap of 5% is already mandatory in some regions under local regulations. Increasing experience with new lighting systems (LED) and dehumidification allows for a 5% maximum gap with all lighting systems from 2028. This requirement creates a level playing field for quality mark holders from the Netherlands and outside the Netherlands and gives time for implementation.

### Optional measures 3.6; 3.7 (PP.5) – Habitat for general biodiversity; withdrawal of habitat measures 3.8-3.11, 3.15-3.16, 3.18-3.24

The mandatory Biodiversity Action Plan with habitat inventory provides the opportunity to value efforts based on measures taken in relation to the size of the company. The mention of individual measures in the scheme text has become redundant, these are now listed in Annex 4.

An indication of the potentially achievable points under PP.6:

- Nest sites: up to 8 points (previously 7 points)
- Habitat measures: at 2% = 4 points (CAP Eco-scheme: 4%; WUR estimate: 3% is feasible); there is no minimum per measure, all fragments count
- Knowledge activities, advice: 8 points (including 2 new)
- Monitoring: 3 points (previously 2)
- Other: approx. 2 (sector-dependent)

### Optional measure 3.8 – Advice

The measure aims for growers to apply knowledge for optimal biodiversity development through proper habitat management. The use of an expert for the plan development (in PP.5) has now been expanded to guidance in the implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan. Proper implementation of the plan is important to achieve the stated goal. Annex 5 specifies the requirements the expert must meet.

### Optional measure 3.11 – Knowledge activity habitat management

There is a need for knowledge provision for habitat management, with emphasis on activities on farms, where farmers can see what colleagues are doing and what it yields for biodiversity. Annex 5 shows the requirements that activities must meet, so that parties can develop and register activities with SMK.

### Optional measure 3.12 – Monitoring biodiversity
Small adjustments give room for more types of initiatives. Smaller numbers of observations required make the measure more attractive; the expectation is that the threshold is then lower and that when people have started a monitoring job, more will be done without much effort.

### Optional measure 3.13 – Prevention of light emission
With new technology and cultivation knowledge, in some situations lighting might be done with closed screens.

### Optional measure 3.15 – Strip cropping
An optimal width of strips for biodiversity and crop management is under discussion. A broader definition gives room for experiments and variants.

## 4. Soil quality

### Requirement 4.1 – Minimum amount of points
To draw more attention to the importance of soil, a minimum number of points have been set for soil quality. These minima only apply to soil based cultivation. For open field cultivation, the minimum will be 3 points. For protected cultivation this will be 2 points.

### Optional measure 4.4 – Extra supply of organic matter
In soils with high organic matter content, naturally more organic matter is degraded. To create a more level playing field, the grower will be rewarded for adding organic matter instead of having a positive balance. In addition, under the current system, 91% in open soil cultivation and 86% in protected soil-bound crops achieve one or more points for this optional measure. The new optional measure would mean that for every 500 kg EOM/ha of supply above 2000 kg EOM/ha, 1 point is given. In the old system, the grower would have received 1 point for every 100 kg EOM/ha above a OM balance of 0. This makes it more challenging to earn points, but according to the results from the checklists, it is still feasible.

### Optional measure 4.7 – Acquisition of knowledge
To stimulate the acquisition of knowledge in the field of soil management and fertilisation, a bonus point is made available for those who attend informative events or hire a soil advisor. Informative events have to be accepted by SMK, and can be found on www.planetproof.eu. If the grower can show proof of presence and participation, this gives an extra point. In the Netherlands, there is a thing called 'soil coach'. These are trained people that give specific on-field advise on sustainable soil management. Making use of such a soil coach is another way to get this bonus point. Soil coaches in other countries can get their training approved by SMK if considered equally valuable. Appendix 5 lists the requirements for knowledge activities.

### Optional measure 4.8 – Cultivation frequency
In the past, 3 points were given to those with a cultivation frequency of 1 in 4 or lower. This optional measure is not new, it has been moved from crop protection to soil quality because it influences more than only plant health. To make the optional measure more challenging, there is now 1 point available for a cultivation frequency of 1 in 4. A frequency of 1 in 5 will give 2 points and a frequency of 1 in 6 or lower will give 3 points. The reference is plot with the most narrow rotation of the company.

### Optional measure 4.9 – Crop/processing residues

In PP.6, the bonus point will also be awarded when crop or processing residues are left behind on the field, not only when returned. This has changed since the effect is considered similar.

## 5. Fertilisation

### Requirement 5.1 – Minimum amount of points

To draw more attention to the importance of soil, a minimum number of points have been set for the theme Fertilisation. These minima only apply to soil based cultivation. For both open field cultivation and protected cultivation, the minimum will be 2 points.

### Requirement 5.2 – Fertilisation plan

The fertilisation plan deserves more attention than it currently gets within the scheme. A qualitative fertilisation plan including calculations and possibly analyses, enables more efficient nutrient management. PP6 does not include a fully shaped framework for the fertilisation plan, to avoid an administrative burden. However, possibilities are being researched to integrate a tool / framework for the fertilisation plan in the scheme. For now, the text has been added to the requirement stating that the fertilisation plan needs to include insight in nitrogen delivery from past (organic) fertiliser. This can be provided using an overview of fertilisation in the past year or using a soil analysis.

### Requirement 5.4 – Nitrogen and phosphorus fertilisation in soil based cultivation

A small change in this requirement will be made. Currently, the requirement states that in soils with a high phosphorus level, only 50 kg $P_2O_5$ / ha / year can be added from organic fertiliser (on average over the complete company areal). This is now 40 kg $P_2O_5$ / ha / year, following the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) website for open field cultivation. Also, the difference between phosphorus and $P_2O_5$ is explained clearly, to avoid confusion.

### Requirement 5.7 – Adjustment of nitrogen fertilisation based on measurement

In this requirement only a textual change will be made. The requirement now states that a nitrogen analysis needs to be done before, or in the first phase of the cultivation. It can be done with a nitrogen soil stock analysis to define the nitrogen delivery capacity from past fertilisation, and/or with a mineral N analysis. The fertilisation should be adjusted to the results of these analyses. In perennial crops, a leaf analysis can be done instead of a soil analysis to adjust fertilisation. Additionally, another exception has been added to this requirement: in legume cultivation, there is no need for this measurement. These have a low need of nitrogen fertiliser and therefore there is a low risk of inefficient use of nitrogen.

### Requirement 5.9 – Cadmium content of inorganic phosphorus fertilisers

An exception is added to this requirement. This exception states that when a recycled inorganic phosphorus fertiliser is used, the cadmium level can be 35 mg Cd / kg $P_2O_5$ at maximum. This extra space is provided for recycled inorganic phosphorus fertilisers, because new fertilisers have been introduced in the market that are won from the ash of sewage sludge. This fertiliser still comes with an elevated cadmium level, between 25-35 mg Cd / kg $P_2O_5$. Steps are taken by the producers of these fertilisers to get the cadmium levels down in the future process. Since phosphorus sources are ending, recycling phosphorus is very important. The requirement of PP.6 will still respect the European legislation that limits cadmium levels in inorganic phosphorus fertilisers at 60 mg Cd / kg $P_2O_5$.

### Optional measure 5.12 – Precision fertilisation – location

This optional measure has been merged with the existing optional measure about precision fertilisation equipment, to create more overview in the scheme. The option to get points for the use of fertigation has been removed, because this point is available in the Water chapter.

### Optional measure 5.13 – Precision fertilisation – extra soil measurements

A new possibility has been created to get a bonus point for the execution of an extra analysis for mineral N in-season. According to the results, an additional in-season fertilisation can be done. The in-season analysis of at least macroelements phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium and sulphur can give an extra bonus point, because this enables the grower to optimise the in-season fertilisation. Besides providing valuable insights in the status of the soil and supporting nutrient efficiency, this can have beneficial effects on quality and yield.

### Optional measure 5.17 – Ratio of nitrogen from organic manure to fertiliser

This optional measure is extended with an extra category. A bonus point will be given to those who use 10-25% of N from compost, solid manure and organic fertiliser pellets. 25-50% N from compost, solid manure and organic fertiliser pellets now gives 2 points instead of 1. Optional measure 4.7 (manure – compost) from Chapter 4 Soil quality, that gave a bonus point, has been removed from the scheme.

### Optional measure 5.18 – Insight in greenhouse gas emissions fertiliser

This new additional measure gives growers an opportunity to give insight in thee PEF-calculation of greenhouse gas emission for every nitrogen fertilizer used. This information is not available for all fertilisers, however it is for some. The greenhouse gas emission of fertilizer production and use is receiving more and more attention. Growers that are willing to list this valuable information for, to start with their nitrogen fertilizers, are able to get a bonus point. Eventually, this can guide farmers in selecting the most sustainable fertilisers.

## 6. Water

The score of the production location on water scarcity, to be determined in the Water Risk Filter of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), determines a number of requirements. In the coming years, the relationship between water scarcity and measures taken will be continuously evaluated.

### Requirement 6.1 – Required number bonus points in relation to water scarcity

The risk classes have been classified more logically, resulting in some distinction within the Netherlands. The most important consequence is that 17% of Dutch certificate holders will be required to earn an extra bonus point due to water scarcity. The Dutch growers who will have to earn extra bonus points are located (in decreasing order of importance) in parts of the provinces of Limburg, Zeeland, Gelderland and Noord-Brabant.

The lower limit when growers do not have to earn a certain number of bonus points has been raised from 0 (no watering) to 50 mm (500 m3/ha per year). This prevents growers from being forced to make investments that they almost never need because irrigation was an incident.

### Requirement 6.8; Annex 8 – More sustainable water

Water extraction from natural sources (both surface water and groundwater) sometimes has undesirable consequences. Based on the risk of water scarcity of a production location, a certain percentage of irrigation water from a more sustainable source will be mandatory from 2028 and a higher percentage from 2030. This prospect should give companies time to develop this water supply. Annex 7 lists the possible water sources that qualify for this. This requirement is introduced to contribute to the ambition to use water from sustainable sources.

### Withdrawal of criteria in relation to discharge from protected substrate crops

- Requirement 6.9 (PP.5): Records of discharge from irrigation process
- Requirement 6.17 (PP.5): Prevention of wastewater discharge containing pesticides
- Requirement 6.18 (PP.5): N emission limit
- Optional measure 6.31 (PP.5): Zero discharge

From 2026, certified growers will no longer be allowed to discharge drainage water. The N emission limits of On the way to PlanetProof have always been stricter than the legal requirements in The Netherlands. On December 7, 2023, the Board of Directors decided that the N emission limit would be set at zero from 2026 onwards. This means that the requirements mentioned will become redundant from 2026 onwards. Legally, the N emission limit in the Netherlands will be (almost) zero from 2027 onwards.

### Requirement 6.16 – Reuse of drain and drainage water for irrigation

It has been added that collected drainage water from soil-bound crops must be reused for irrigation. This is a legal obligation in the Netherlands (BAL art. 4.791) and in this way a level playing field is created for growers in different countries. The escape route not to reuse all drain(age) water is necessary when there is too much water to use in the event of a lot of seepage or infiltration or if this water is too salty to reuse. The description allows for cases where collective drain water treatment is applied and this is reused at another company. A few situations of this are known in the Netherlands.

### Requirement 6.17 – Preventing and locating leaks (protected crops)
Optional measure 6.30 has been reformulated and included as a mandatory requirement. Leakages of drainage and irrigation water from greenhouse horticulture companies are considered important causes of poor water quality in greenhouse horticulture areas. The assessment guideline largely corresponds to what is legally required in the Netherlands, which means that the additional effort from companies is in principle zero. The seriousness of the problem and the urgency (WFD deadline in 2027), with the impossibility of achieving the desired goals with legal enforcement, are reasons to include this. This also creates a level playing field for growers in different countries.

### Requirement 6.18 – Collect and reuse filter flushing water (protected crops)
(this means that the former optional measure 6.25 no longer applies) Companies are increasingly collecting and reusing filter rinse water; in many situations this is also legally required in the Netherlands. Collection and reuse prevents significant water losses (reduces the water requirement of a company); in some cases it reduces the emissions of fertilizers and then makes the use of water purification (for the removal of pesticides) unnecessary. When adjusting installations would require more time than the criteria allow for, deferral can be requested at SMK.

### Withdrawal of optional measure 6.21 – Irrigation demand: registration
Registration does not add to sustainability, but it does increase the administrative burden. The certificate holder must justify the use of the measuring installations mentioned.

### Withdrawal of previous optional measure 6.22 – Water reservoir cover
Covering the water reservoir is a useful measure, but does not add to more efficient water use in the crop or to decrease of water discharge.

### Optional measure 6.23; Annex 8 – Use of more sustainable water sources
The requirement has been converted from crop to company level, because water intake often occurs at farm level and no distinction can be made per crop. Some more sustainable water sources have been added that support and enable the implementation of requirement 6.8 in Southern Europe. The possibility of specifically designating a water source as more sustainable for a production region (e.g. a water catchment area) takes into account regional circumstances.

### Optional measure 6.25 – Efficient irrigation
The adjustment in the first option allows for an irrigation system, that is applied at some companies in Spain and which is also efficient in water use.

### Optional measure 6.28 – Preventing and locating leaks
New optional measure added. This supports the introduction of an award-winning concept that should contribute to the reduction of leakages from greenhouse horticulture companies.

### Optional measure 6.29 – Mulching
The measure can contribute to more efficient water use on the farm and serves a different purpose than option 4.3, which is aimed at preventing erosion.

### Optional measure 6.30 – Rainwater collection and infiltration

Infiltration of precipitation, rather than discharge to the sewer or surface water, is important for the groundwater level and for nature. Storage in a reservoir for irrigation is essential to prevent the emission of pollutants from the property into surface water.

## 7. Material use and waste flows

### Requirement 7.1 – Waste management practices

By making Moerman's ladder explicit, it has been made clear which applications are preferable to others for dealing with crop residues.

### Requirement 7.9 – Recyclable soft plastic packaging

For 2026, no changes to the recycle check are planned; for 2027, changes are expected. So far, there is no indication that achieving a green score in the recycle check for flexible plastics is feasible. In the coming months, it will be assessed to what extent this previously announced requirement is practicable.

### Optional measure 7.16 – High quality value creation of waste flows

Conversion of crop residues by means of composting is a useful application that has been added as an option.

## 8. General requirements

### Requirement 8.3 – Evidence for criteria

It is made explicit that if a certificate holder tries to provide evidence not in good faith to meet a requirement (i.e. he commits fraud), this will lead to the withdrawal of the certificate.