THE IMPORTANCE OF MEADOW-PASTURE EXTENSIVE USE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CROSS-COMPLIANCE RULE IN MOUNTAIN AREAS

Key words: cross-compliance rule, intensity of agricultural production, permanent grasslands, quality of surface water

Summary

The study aims to assess both the changes in the type and intensity of agricultural production and the methods of permanent grasslands management in the context of implementation possibilities of “cross-compliance” rule amongst farmers living in mountain areas. The analysis was performed in two mountain catchments: in the upper Dunajec River down to the cross-section in Krościenko and in the upper Raba River down to the cross-section in Dobczyce. During the last ten years, after the access of our country to the European Union, the surface area of meadows significantly increased. The area of pastures has not changed much, except in some parts of the upper Dunajec River catchment. The livestock population was reduced by several hundred percent, which resulted in a decrease of fertilization level. An improvement of the quality of surface water was noted in the investigated catchments. These conditions have a positive effect on the implementation of the “cross-compliance” rule, which is being introduced in our country since 2009. Farmers are obliged to follow this rule in their farms. Low-input agricultural production, a high share of permanent grasslands in the structure of agricultural land and a good quality of surface water help farmers to meet the requirements, particularly in the environmental protection field.