

Martijn van Dam  
Minister of Agriculture  
[staatssecretaris@minere.nl](mailto:staatssecretaris@minere.nl)

**Re: Request to address Agriculture Ministers on Common Agricultural Policy greening in advance of the informal Council 29<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> May 2016 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands**

Dear Minister Van Dam,

We are writing to you in view of the Informal Agricultural Council that will take place on the 29<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> May and where Ministers will take stock of and discuss the current CAP and its greening as well as its future.

Our organisations, both at EU and national level, have engaged intensively in the discussions around the CAP including its greening, trying to find real solutions to ensure that farming in Europe is sustainable and that public money is only used to support this end. This is crucial given the alarming deterioration in the state of nature and the environment across Europe's farmed landscape<sup>1</sup> and keeping in mind the important linkages between agriculture and environment.

It is well known that despite our sincere and constructive engagement with the initial Commission's proposals, the greening component has been systematically dismantled through the co-decision process. We are now left with weak basic legislation and Member States choosing to implement the least environmentally beneficial elements from the greening options available<sup>2</sup>. The information that is now being gathered on farmers' implementation is confirming the extremely limited environmental potential of the current CAP<sup>3</sup>.

Linked to this is mounting evidence that the current CAP is failing to meaningfully deliver against its overarching objective - the sustainable management of natural resources, itself so critical for the future of farming in Europe.

Such fundamental problems need to be addressed for the policy post 2020 if decision makers are serious about long term food security.

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<sup>1</sup> See EEA's State and Outlook on the European Environment 2015: <http://www.eea.europa.eu/soer> , Mid-Term Review of the biodiversity strategy: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/mid\\_term\\_review\\_summary.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/mid_term_review_summary.pdf) and the study carried out by IFAB on the landscape infrastructure and sustainable agriculture: <http://www.eeb.org/index.cfm?LinkServID=0E2EEC07-5056-B741-DBA777455AA46334>

<sup>2</sup> IEEP study on the implementation choices of 9 Member States and their environmental implications: <http://www.eeb.org/index.cfm?LinkServID=0DFEF8B2-5056-B741-DB05EBEF517EDCCB>

<sup>3</sup> Sebastian Lakner – analysis on EFAs in Germany: <https://slakner.wordpress.com/2015/10/08/ecological-focus-area-in-germany-the-full-dataset/>

Given the subject of the Council, we would appreciate the opportunity for environmental NGOs to address Ministers in advance of the informal Council similarly to farmers' representatives who will have that opportunity. Several weeks ago, on the 18<sup>th</sup> February, in a meeting with the CEOs of seven Dutch environment and nature organizations, including Natuurmonumenten and Vogelbescherming you identified one legitimising element of the CAP being the care for landscape and nature. We therefore believe that the opportunity for representatives of environmental NGOs to directly address the Agriculture Ministers can only help to enrich the discussions the following day as well as improve the future of the policy as a whole.

We sincerely hope that you will take our request into consideration and give it a positive answer, and remain at your entire disposal for any further clarifications you might have.

Yours sincerely,



Jeremy Wates, EEB secretary general

Also on behalf of



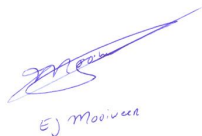
Ariel Brunner, Senior Head of Policy, BirdLife Europe



Fred Wouters, Director, Vogelbescherming



Marc van den Tweel, General Manager, Natuurmonumenten



EJ Mooiweer

Egbert Jaap Mooiweer, Adjunct – Director, Nederlands cultuurlandschap