



**To: Agriculture Ministers of EU Member States**

**Cc: Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal and Commissioners for Agriculture and for Environment, and the Chairs of the European Parliament Agriculture and Environment Committees**

**Re: Input to the EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council Meeting, Brussels, 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2024**

Brussels, 16<sup>th</sup> of October 2024

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the European Environmental Bureau, I am writing to share with you our views on some of the issues on the agenda of forthcoming EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2024. We have structured the letter according to our understanding of the Council Agenda, mainly focusing on your deliberations within our expertise and priorities.

### **Conclusions on the future of the CAP**

The climate and biodiversity crises are intensifying, and their impacts are increasingly felt by society, including farmers, be it through extreme weather (droughts, floods), loss of pollinators or plummeting soil fertility. There is an increasing body of evidence that the only way to address and face those crises and ensure our ability to produce food in the long term is to radically transform our food and farming systems. The CAP, with its budget and through its wide scope, should be the key force driving this transformation in the EU.

Through the Strategic Dialogue (which the EEB was a member of), a historic consensus was reached in August 2024 between farmers, industry, and civil society representatives on the urgent need for change to undertake a transition to sustainable food and farming systems. The collective report recommended, amongst others, to overhaul the CAP, to on one hand target socio-economic support at the farmers who need it the most, and on the other hand reward and incentivise farmers to enhance ecosystems services through a gradual but substantial shift of funding to environmental payments. At the same time, measures are needed outside the CAP to ensure that farmers get fair incomes.

***We call upon the Agriculture and Fisheries Council to heed the historic consensus in the Strategic Dialogue, and hence to:***

- Reflect on **phasing out all non-targeted subsidies** (decoupled income support payments) **and subsidies that support intensive systems** (coupled income support).
- Discuss the redirection of funding to reward land stewardship that genuinely **contributes to climate-neutral** and **biodiversity-positive farming**, and to **support extensive High Nature Value** (HNV) systems.

**European Environmental Bureau**

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- Consider the establishment of a **robust performance framework** which ties funding to the delivery of concrete results and creates strong accountability, public participation, and scrutiny mechanisms, **addressing the food and farming system holistically**.
- Ensure full compliance and integration with relevant existing **EU legislation on environment and climate** (including the Nature Restoration Law, Water Framework Directive, and Birds and Habitats Directives to name a few);
- Ensure that any data related to CAP implementation are made **available to scientists and civic society organisations**, allowing for independent assessments.
- Focus the discussion on the future on how the CAP can become **genuinely result-oriented post-2027** within a food system's approach, as recommended by the Strategic Dialogue.

Please find further information here:

- Joint EEB-BirdLife-WWF report [A brighter future for EU food and farming](#)
- Joint EEB-BirdLife-WWF report "[New CAP unpacked and unfit](#)"
- IEEP-Ecologic assessment of the French, Polish, Spanish and German CSPs: [Environmental and climate assessments of CAP Strategic Plans](#)
- OECD report Policies for the [Future of Farming and Food in the European Union](#)

We would also like to share with you our [Action Plan](#) for the [European Pact for the Future](#). This sets a comprehensive path towards a sustainable future in line with planetary boundaries and details our vision of priority measures for the next legislative cycle, with considerable space dedicated to the needs for farming, sustainable agriculture and sustainable food systems - reflecting the conclusions of the Strategic Dialogue on Agriculture and Political Guidelines. We hope that you find it useful.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these points which will help address the climate, biodiversity and pollution crises in the EU and give citizens confidence that their leaders are taking decisions to create the basis for a better future for them.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick ten Brink,

Secretary General of the European Environmental Bureau

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