

Mr Frans Timmermans
Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal
European Commission

Mr Janusz Wojciechowski
Commissioner for Agriculture
European Commission

Ms Maria do Céu Antunes
Minister of Agriculture of the Portuguese Republic

Mr Peter Jahr
Member of the European Parliament

Mr Eric Andrieu
Member of the European Parliament

Ms Ulrike Müller
Member of the European Parliament

Open letter to the European Commission, the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and the European Parliament's rapporteurs on the CAP regulations calling for ambition in trilogues for a green and fair reform of the Common Agricultural Policy

25th March 2021

Dear Executive Vice President, Dear Commissioner,
Dear Minister,
Dear European Parliament Rapporteurs,

We are writing as a wide-ranging coalition of organisations from the food, farming, environmental, protected area, animal welfare, development, and public health sectors across the EU representing millions of citizens and farmers, to urge you to deliver an ambitious, green and fair reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The EU's farming sector is faced with multiple crises which EU policies must tackle coherently and urgently. From the structural lack of viability due to imbalances of power in supply chains and chronic overproduction in several sectors, to the increasing impacts of climate breakdown and biodiversity collapse, many farmers will not survive another decade of business-as-usual policies. And they are not the only victims of the EU's current unsustainable food system: farmers in the global South, seasonal farm workers, rural communities affected by agricultural pollution, and our fast-degrading natural world also deserve better policies.

Addressing these structural challenges requires significant policy change, starting with the post-2022 CAP. The European Green Deal presented by the European Commission and welcomed by Member States and the European Parliament makes a clear commitment to "a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system" as part of the just transition to a climate-neutral, biodiversity-rich Europe. This

cannot happen in the agricultural sector without a much greener, healthier and fairer CAP that provides a clear pathway for change and supports farmers in the transition.

As lead negotiators in the ongoing trilogues, we urge you to integrate the following overarching priorities into the three CAP regulations:

1. Incorporate the principles, objectives and targets of the Green Deal into the CAP to give national Strategic Plans a clear direction from their design all the way to their approval and performance reviews;
2. Fully implement the 'do no harm' principle into the CAP through strong environmental and social conditionality and safeguards;
3. Empower farmers and rural actors to adopt climate-, nature-, people-, and animal-friendly farming practices and models through fair and effective CAP support;
4. Adopt adequate instruments to manage and regulate agricultural markets to limit overproduction, which causes waste, price crashes for farmers, and contributes to unsustainable trade, and to increase the fairness and transparency of supply chains;
5. Ensure good governance in the new CAP through strong rules on transparency, accountability of Member States for EU budget spending, civil society participation, and performance monitoring and reporting against robust indicators.

We are following carefully the trilogue negotiations and note with grave concern that to date they are falling far short of the ambition European citizens and farmers expect and demand from their leaders. Now more than ever, society requires a strong CAP reform and cannot accept a continuation of business as usual. Another failed reform of the CAP would not only further undermine the legitimacy of the EU's farming policy, but would jeopardise the achievement of the European and global sustainability targets we have committed to for 2030.

Europe needs to build a way forward that supports the agricultural sector not only today but also tomorrow, while accelerating the response to environmental and social crises. We therefore very much hope that you will give serious consideration to our concerns, listen to EU citizens' demands for change, and act boldly during trilogues to deliver a greener, fairer, healthier, and future-proof CAP.

Yours sincerely,

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National signatories

