

To: European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen  
Cc. Executive Vice President Frans Timmermans  
Berlaymont, Rue de la Loi 200  
1000 - Brussels

30 October 2020

REF SBE 020/074

Dear Commission President Von der Leyen,

**Re: Withdrawal of the Commission proposal for the post-2020 Common Agricultural Policy**

We are writing to you to call on the European Commission to withdraw<sup>1</sup> its proposal on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in order to safeguard your Commission's flagship policy, the European Green Deal.

The positions agreed in the European Parliament and Council on the CAP, work against the EU Green Deal (and the associated Farm-to-Fork and Biodiversity Strategies)<sup>2</sup>:

- They allow billions of harmful subsidies, which you have just pledged to phase out in the Leaders' Pledge for Nature, and which should have already been phased out by 2020 according to EU's International commitments<sup>3</sup>. For example, the positions seriously erode the basic 'do-no-harm' baseline (conditionality); increase production (coupled) payments, and remove safeguards such as on irrigation expansion;
- They limit the climate, environmental, animal welfare and public health ambition, allowing or even requiring Member States to put most of the funds into subsidising business as usual (or potentially worse) practices;
- They explicitly rule out a link with the objectives of the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies.

In the crucial decade<sup>4</sup> for taking action to avert tipping points for nature and climate, it is impossible to countenance spending €387 billion of taxpayers' money, a third of the entire EU budget, on driving rather than solving the crisis.

The European Commission kept the 2018 CAP proposal **on the provision that the Council and the Parliament would not weaken it**. Now that both legislators have substantially watered down the CAP's green architecture, we do not believe that the trilogue negotiations could fix this situation. The only way to maintain a higher environmental ambition in line with the European

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<sup>1</sup> The legal basis for withdrawing the CAP Proposal can be identified in Article 293, Paragraph 2, TFEU, and subsequent case law, which establish that, so long as the Council has not acted, the Commission may amend or withdraw a legislative proposal where the amendments planned by the Parliament and the Council distort the proposal in a manner that prevents the achievement of the legal act's objectives (C-409/2013 para. 41).

<sup>2</sup> An analysis shared by scientists <https://tinyurl.com/yysm9fq3>, experts such as the IEEP <https://tinyurl.com/y5t7btnx>, and a significant portion of MEPs who opposed the deal on these grounds.

<sup>3</sup> Aichi target 3: <https://tinyurl.com/y38zuc9o>.

<sup>4</sup> In 2018 the IPCC estimated that we have 12 years left to prevent catastrophic climate change.

Green Deal is to withdraw the proposal presented by the previous Commission and table a new one that is based on supporting farmers in the transition away from industrial agriculture, to a Green Deal-compatible CAP, investing the hundreds of billions available in farming practices that work with nature and within ecological limits, support citizens' health and wellbeing, and thus safeguard our ability to produce food into the future. The extension of the current CAP by two years makes this possible. Our childrens' future must come above what is politically expedient.

We look forward to hearing from you and are at your disposal for a meeting to discuss our request.

Yours sincerely,



Benedikt Haerlin  
Vice President  
ARC2020



Francesco Panella  
President  
BeeLife - European  
Beekeeping Coordination



Clara Behr  
Head of Policy and Public  
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Biodynamic Federation –  
Demeter International



Ariel Brunner  
Senior Head of Policy  
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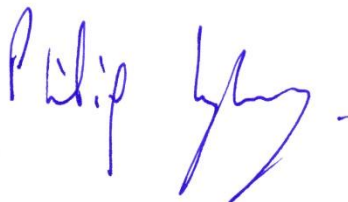
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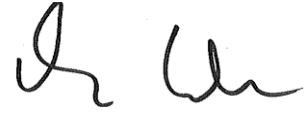
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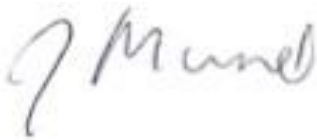
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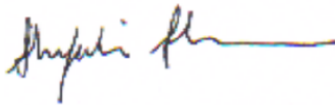
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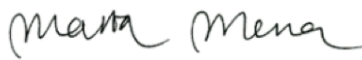
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*pp. Guus Geurts, 30 October 2020  
Amsterdam, the Netherlands*



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