



To the Commissioners

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner for Agriculture

Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

Courtesy Translation

13th November 2020

Dear Commissioner Wojciechowski,

Dear Commissioner Sinkevičius,

With reference to our letter ,"*Securing the Future of Agriculture - Towards an Ambitious Green Architecture of the Common Agricultural Policy*" of May 20 this year, and the exchange that we had with you and the Federal and State Ministers of the Federal Republic of Germany, we would like to express our concern about the current state of play on the design of the Common Agricultural Policy.

In our view, there is a broad social consensus that the new Common Agricultural Policy must provide the appropriate framework for farmers to earn a good income and at the same time drive forward the necessary transformation of agriculture.

With the Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system and the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the EU Commission has adopted two milestones in the design of the European Green Deal. In July 2020, you confirmed in talks with the federal and state ministers of agriculture and the environment that you regard the CAP as a key instrument for achieving the objectives set out in the strategies, such as the 25% expansion target for organic farming and a 50% reduction in pesticides by 2030.

We regret that these goals have not yet been included in the triologue negotiations - neither in the conclusions of the Agriculture Council, the decisions of the European Parliament nor in the proposals of the EU Commission itself. Since the EU Commission had presented its proposals on the post-2020 CAP before the two strategies were adopted, we expect the EU Commission to now vigorously pursue the anchoring of the targets contained therein in the dialogues.

Based on the positions of the Council and the European Parliament, we also fear that the conditionality requirements for non-productive areas, Natura 2000 areas, bog protection or crop rotation diversification could even be watered down. We also reject the stipulation that 60 % of the first pillar have to be spent as direct payments. This hampers a further qualification of payments to reward public services and to ensure the social acceptance of the CAP beyond 2027. Against this background, it is essential that the Member States can offer a sufficient minimum budget for Ecoschemes that are both effective and targeted. In our opinion, precision farming does not fall under this category, as it is not associated with clear ecological objectives. In the calculation of the Ecoschemes, an income component should also be possible for the area-based variant in order to prevent this effective approach from being compromised.

New proposals for sustainable, resource-efficient agriculture should not represent rivalry against existing sensible programs, but they require additional financial resources. Sufficient support for organic farming with its environmental and climate protection benefits, taking into account the expansion target of 25% organic farming at EU level and in the national strategy plans, must also be ensured. To this end, it is necessary that, in addition to strong Eco-schemes, a high percentage can also be shifted to the second pillar and that this pillar is consistently oriented towards the provision of environmental and climate protection services.

As ministers of agriculture and environment, we welcome the announcement by your Vice-President Frans Timmermans that the priorities of the European Green Deal and the objectives enshrined in the strategies are sufficiently taken into account in the CAP and can only be achieved through a higher level of ambition. We would also like to encourage you to link EU budget funds more specifically to the provision of biodiversity services, as first enshrined in the agreement on the multi-annual financial budget of 11 November 2020.

We ask you to actively introduce and represent this objective in the triologue negotiations. Because we need an ambitious European framework for the CAP in order to develop the necessary instruments at European, national and regional level to combat the

climate crisis and species extinction, to strengthen climate resilience and to stabilize farms.

With kind regards



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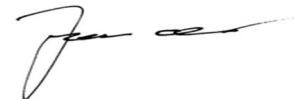
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