



Brussels, 17.11.2020
Ares (2020) 6697459

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you for your letter of 13 November in which you express your views on the role of the European Commission in the inter-institutional negotiations on the legal proposals for the EU's Common Agricultural Policy.

You refer to my letter of 30 October to the European Greens as well as to the statement of Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans regarding a possible withdrawal of the Commission proposal.

The withdrawal of a proposal is always a legal and institutional possibility. However, I confirm again that the Commission is not considering a withdrawal. It is convinced that the negotiation process between our institutions, if underpinned by a joint determination to honour our collective commitment towards sustainability, can result in a new CAP that is fit for purpose.

I am proud that the European Parliament has embraced the objectives of the Green Deal and set the EU on the path of climate neutrality and sustainability. The European Parliament and the European Commission stand united in our objective to align the Common Agricultural Policy with the EU's increased climate and biodiversity ambition, as stated in the European Parliament's resolution on the European Green Deal from 15 January 2020.

To ensure this compatibility with the European Green Deal, the Commission carried out an assessment in May 2020 of the Commission's CAP proposals in the context of the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies. This assessment confirmed that the proposals had the potential to deliver on the Green Deal objectives as long as the proposed level of ambition was maintained and several improvements were secured in the course of the legislative process.

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The key improvement concerned a strong role of eco-schemes. I warmly welcome the fact that both the European Parliament and the Council attribute a prominent and well-deserved role to eco-schemes. However, there is concern that some aspects of the positions taken by the co-legislators do not match the ambition proposed by the Commission nor of the Green Deal. The Commission will communicate on the details of these mismatches shortly and strive to solve them during the legislative process.

It is crucial that the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission work together in the trilogue process to secure a swift agreement on a truly reformed CAP. We all wish the new CAP to be fit for purpose and to put the agricultural sector on the track of greater sustainability, resilience and prosperity. It has to ensure a fair income of farmers, support the agricultural sector to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions, help farmers face climate change and biodiversity loss, and allow European food to become the global standard of sustainability. Above all, we want the CAP to ensure that agriculture stops being an important driver of biodiversity loss, as the European Parliament also underlined in the above quoted resolution.

The necessary transition to greater sustainability and climate neutrality, asks a lot from all citizens and businesses. It also asks a lot of farmers. The CAP, with the might of its budget, has to be right to support and encourage farmers to face this transition.

In the negotiations on the new CAP, the Commission will therefore continue being an honest broker as well as a driver for greater sustainability. The determination and objective of its negotiators is to work during the negotiations to match the CAP's contribution to the Green Deal objectives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ursula v. d. L.', written in a cursive style.

Ursula von der Leyen