



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 21 June 2013

11299/13

AGRI 410

NOTE

from: Delegations
to: Council

Subject: Consequences of severe flooding in some EU regions
- Information from delegations

Delegations will find attached joint document from the Czech, German, Austrian and Slovak delegations to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council "Agriculture and Fisheries" on 24 - 25 June 2013.

Joint Document by Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia

Consequences of severe flooding in some EU regions

Extensive rainfall in late May/early June caused the rivers Danube and Elbe as well as their tributaries to burst their banks which resulted in severe flooding. The catchment area and the course of the rivers Danube and Elbe cover several member states.

Despite wide-ranging safeguard measures such as dykes and flood-control reservoirs it was not possible to prevent the flooding of cities, villages and entire regions with agricultural activities. In some areas the quantities of water were so large that the gauges reached historic highs.

The extent of flood damages to agriculture and forestry, horticulture and specialised crop cultivation, inland fisheries and aquaculture is not yet exactly determined. However, first estimates suggest that it is a natural disaster comparable to the flood events in our countries in 2002.

In German agriculture alone the agricultural areas damaged by flooding and torrential rainfalls are estimated to amount to at least 413.000 hectare. In the Czech Republic around 50.000 hectares of agricultural land has been affected by the floods causing enormous damage to a number of farms in many regions. Equally hard hit was Austria, where 22.000 hectare have been flooded, and Slovakia.

The full dimension for agricultural holdings will only become visible when the water has retreated from the areas. Especially sensitive crops such as maize or potato and special crops such as strawberries, asparagus or field vegetables are threatened by losses. In many cases the land is not passable and the animal fodder can no longer be used. Recultivating the fields makes no sense in some cases due to the late season. In many cases the harvest 2013 is lost.

Livestock farms are threatened with a shortage of fodder due to the losses. Farms will have to buy additional fodder to feed during the winter months.

Against this background we kindly request the Commission to process the notification of national state aids and where needed the amendment of rural development programmes (EAFRD) as soon as possible. In addition the application of the EU solidarity fund should be examine