



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 25 May 2012

10200/12

CRS CSA 12

SUMMARY RECORD

**Subject : 1429th meeting of the Special Committee on Agriculture (SCA)
held in Brussels on 21 May 2012**

SUMMARY

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1. **Adoption of the provisional agenda**

9997/12 OJ CSA 12

The agenda was approved.

I

2. **Summary record of the 1428th meeting of the SCA**

9996/12 CRS CSA 11

The Special Committee on Agriculture approved the summary record.

II

3. **CAP - reform: Areas facing Natural Constraints**

- **Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural development (EAFRD)**

- *Orientation debate*

15425/11 AGRISTR 57 CODEC 1665 + REV 1 (en, fr, de)

The SCA took note of the broad support to establish a new common framework for the definition of areas with natural constraints, and move away from the status quo.

The SCA also took note of delegations' support for the flexibility introduced in the Presidency's compromise text.

The SCA took note in particular that:

- delegations expressed broad support for the use of an alternative local administrative unit for the designation of the areas with natural constraints;
- many delegations generally support the reduction of the threshold for area coverage per administrative unit, although some request a further reduction (50%) while several delegations objected to the reduction, because of enlarging the areas that would qualify.

Delegations expressed broad support for the Presidency's proposal on national flexibility when performing the fine tuning but a number of delegations requested greater flexibility in this area.

General support was expressed by delegations for a prolongation of the transition and phasing-out periods although some wished to take the proposal further, while others are concerned by the extension of the transition periods.

4. **CAP-reform: Greening (follow up to the Council meeting)**

- **Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy (the horizontal regulation)**

15426/11 AGRI 684 AGRISTR 58 AGRIORG 181 AGRIFIN 92
CODEC 1666 + REV 1 (en, fr, de)

- **Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural development (EAFRD)**

15425/11 AGRISTR 57 CODEC 1665 + REV 1 (en, fr, de)

- *Orientation debate*

The SCA took note of the broad support for the Presidency suggestions concerning the Waterframework Directive. The SCA also took note of the fact that some delegations would like to go forward regarding the Pesticides Regulation while the Commission was opposed.

5. **CAP-reform: Definition of active farmer and Young Farmers Scheme**

- **Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing rules for direct payments to farmers under support schemes within the framework of the common agricultural policy**

- *Orientation debate*

9961/12 AGRI 313 AGRIFIN 90 CODEC 1310

9962/12 AGRI 314 AGRIFIN 91 CODEC 1311

The SCA considered a number of amendments suggested by the Presidency on the definition of 'active farmer' and on the young farmers scheme, set out in docs. 9961/12 and 9962/12 respectively.

The SCA noted the Presidency's summary of the discussion, the main points of which were as follows:

- On the **active farmer** definition, there was considerable support for the amendments suggested by the Presidency as a step in the right direction; a number of positive scrutiny reserves were noted. While most delegations could agree with a voluntary approach, with some indicating that the existing legal framework was sufficient, some others preferred a binding framework at EU level to ensure uniformity. Suggestions for further improvement of the text were noted, together with the request that Member States should decide themselves whether to apply the EUR 5000 threshold referred to in Article 9(4a.). The reaction of the Commission representative was also noted.

- On the **young farmer scheme**, there was considerable support for the amendments suggested by the Presidency; a number of positive scrutiny reserves were noted. A large number of delegations reiterated their preference for a voluntary scheme. On the maximum area to be taken into account for the calculation of the payment, a large number of delegations could support the suggested increase, with some requesting a further significant increase or no limitation at all. A few other delegations preferred the initial Commission text. A number of delegations requested that the maximum area be set at EU level and several other delegations reiterated their preference for a flat-rate payment to the young farmer independent of farm size. The reaction of the Commission representative was also noted.

The SCA noted the Presidency's intention to consider further work on these issues and to reflect the outcome of discussions in the progress report.

6. Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 as regards the application of direct payments to farmers in respect of the year 2013

- *Preparation of the first informal trilogue*
9989/12 AGRI 318 AGRIFIN 92 CODEC 1320

The SCA:

- confirmed by qualified majority the Council position contained in doc. 9989/12 and in particular that the European Parliament's amendments 6, 8, 9, 10 and 12 respectively were acceptable;
- agreed on a Council statement to be entered into the minutes of the Council;
- took note of the scrutiny reserves entered by some delegations;
- as well as the comments made by the Commission representative.

The Presidency set a silent deadline of Tuesday 22 May 2012, 12.00, by which it would be presumed that delegations would have lifted their scrutiny reserves unless the Secretariat has been notified otherwise, thus giving the Presidency the mandate for negotiation with the European Parliament with a view to the informal trilogue scheduled for 24 May 2012 in Strasbourg.

7. Organisation of future work

The Presidency informed the SCA on the preparation for the next meeting on 29 May 2012.