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**NOTE**

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From: Presidency  
To: Delegations

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Subject: Letter from Ms Gabriela MATEČNÁ, President of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council, to Commissioner MOEDAS, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation.

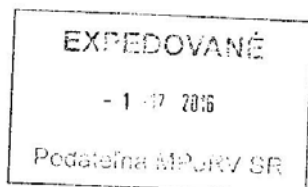
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Delegations will find in Annex a letter from the President of the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council, Ms Gabriela Matečná, to the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, Commissioner Moedas, in the light of the exchange of views on EU Agricultural Research and Innovation at the November 2016 AGRIFISH Council.



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of  
the Slovak Republic  
**Gabriela Matečná**



Bratislava 25. 11. 2016  
Číslo listu: 2023 /2016-KM

Dear Commissioner Moedas,

I am writing to share with you the outcome of the ministerial exchange of views on agricultural R&I that took place during the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 14-15 November 2016.

On this occasion, ministers stressed the key importance of R&I in the field of agriculture in regard to enhancing EU competitiveness and sustainability, as well as the great potential of bioeconomy for growth, jobs and sustainable agriculture. They warmly welcomed the conclusions of the Bioeconomy Conference held in Bratislava on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016, in particular the important role of the regions and the need to take account of national and regional specificities in further developing the bioeconomy. They trust these conclusions will serve as useful input to the current review of the European Bioeconomy Strategy.

At the meeting there was a presentation of the Common Declaration, signed on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2016 in Warsaw, by the ministers of Agriculture of the Visegrad group extended by Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia, which was broadly supported. In line with this declaration, ministers highlighted the need to step up efforts to widen the participation of EU-13 countries in Horizon 2020 and to reduce the "innovation gap", while promoting the principle of excellence and considering regional needs. The available EU tools and financial resources should be used to their full potential to reach this goal.

The following actions in the field of agricultural R&I should be prioritized: i) the need to build upon the success of existing cooperating macro regional initiatives, e.g. BIOEAST or the Danube and Baltic region; ii) increase coherence and synergies of existing EU policies and funding sources, through approaches such as the European Innovation Partnership in Agriculture (EIP-AGRI); iii) enhance cooperation among Member States with joint programming, collaborative support actions including

Dear Sir  
Carlos Moedas  
Commissioner  
European Commission  
Brussels

open science and open innovation through knowledge transfer, exchanges of best practices and teaming and networking possibilities for researchers and research institutes; iv) strengthen the link between science and applied research in agricultural practice and v) the importance of R&I for sustainable forest management.

To conclude, ministers are convinced that R&I in the field of agriculture plays a crucial role in tackling pressing EU challenges which lay ahead of us. Therefore, we invite the Commission and the Competitiveness Council to keep in mind our views in future discussions on R&I issues, in particular as regards the ongoing preparation of the 2018-2020 Work Programme of Horizon 2020 and the next Framework Programme. I trust that you will inform the Agriculture and Fisheries Council about research-related issues under discussion insofar as they have relevant impact on the agricultural sector. We will be happy to contribute to further discussion on this matter.

My warmest regards,



Gabriela MATEČNÁ

President of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council

copy: Commissioner Hogan

President of the Competitiveness Council

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