



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Delegations

Subject: The future of the Common Agricultural Policy
- preparation of the exchange of views at Council

1. In view of the discussion scheduled for the March AGRIFISH Council on the future of the CAP, the Presidency has identified a number of priorities that should serve to guide the discussion on the future policy.
2. This discussion comes at a very important time and follows the launch of the public consultation on 'Modernising and Simplifying the CAP' (see WK 1185/17). That said, discussions on the future of the CAP have already started and a number of debates have taken place in recent months such as the Informal Meeting of Agriculture Ministers in Amsterdam (NL), the Agriculture Ministers meeting in Chambord (FR), the November 2016 AGRIFISH Council, the Cork 2.0 European Conference on Rural development in November 2016, various debates at the European Parliament leading to Own Initiative reports, and the Agricultural Market Task Force (AMTF) and its report in 2016, to name but a few.

3. Notwithstanding the relevance of the objectives set out by the TFEU and without prejudice to the next Multiannual Financial Framework as well as to the need to maintain an adequate budget for future CAP, a number of additional priorities can be identified. Notably, the following priorities emerge from recent discussions (some of the examples given below might fall under more than one heading):
- i. **Building resilience:** this would include issues such as risk management, be it in relation to weather, health or sanitary risks, access to financial instruments, income/price volatility, competitiveness and innovation, and food security;
 - ii. **Responding to environmental challenges:** by increasing the sustainability of agriculture, delivering on international commitments, be they in relation to climate following the UNFCCC COP 21 or broader goals under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
 - iii. **Ensuring generational renewal:** by ensuring access to finance, knowledge transfer, vocational training, and reducing administrative hurdles;
 - iv. **Maintaining a market orientation:** covering issues such as fostering competition, finding the right balance between opening new markets and protecting sensitive sectors, and improving export competitiveness
 - v. **Strengthening farmers' position:** by addressing transparency, contractual relations, unfair trading practices, and building to that effect on the AMTF report, as well as, the Council conclusions of December 2016 (doc. 15508/16);
 - vi. **Simplification:** this cross-cutting priority should remain an overarching principle for the future CAP, not only at the level of legislation but also in terms of implementation and controls, as noted in the Council conclusions of May 2015 (doc. 8485/15).

4. On 6 March, the Presidency would like Ministers to share their ideas on how these priorities can be addressed, by way of concrete policy options. For this reason, at the SCA meeting of 27 February, the Presidency would like to invite Delegations to address the following questions:
- *Do you agree with the set of priorities, as outlined in point 3 above?*
 - *Are there any other priorities that, in your view, are missing ?*
5. At the AGRIFISH Council, the exchange of views will then be structured on the basis of the following two questions:
- *In your view, what would be most effective way to address these priorities ?*
 - *Without prejudice to the overall financing of the CAP, do you think that a rebalancing exercise should take place between the first and the second pillar of the CAP in order to deliver on these priorities ?*

When replying to these questions Delegations may wish to take into account the various recommendations that have already been presented with a view to addressing these priorities, for example the AMTF report, the Council conclusions of 2015 and 2016, and in the Cork 2.0 Declaration.
