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NOTE

From: Presidency
To: SCA
Subject: Future work of the Special Committee on Agriculture

1. INTRODUCTION

The SCA was established on 12 May 1960 by a decision of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the European Economic Community. The decision was published in the Official Journal on 12 September 1960.

Since then, the SCA played a major role in preparation of the Agriculture Council and its decisions on the Common Agriculture Policy. The aforementioned decision and the Working Methods agreed in 2003 (doc. 9468/03) and last complemented and updated in 2010 (doc. 5952/10) remain the basis for the SCA's work today.

As in 2003, due to budgetary and practical constraints, we assume that the SCA will not meet more often or for longer than it has done recently. It thus remains essential that the SCA work as efficiently as possible, in particular by avoiding undue repetition or duplication in its deliberations, and by using written communication where appropriate. To that end, it remains essential that delegations carry out efficient internal coordination before meetings of the relevant Working Parties, the SCA and the Council.

For work on legislative proposals falling within its competence the SCA shall continue to proceed in accordance with the established practice.

This document emphasises some of the aspects where the work of the SCA could be developed in the future. The aim of the Latvian Presidency is to have a discussion on this point at one of the SCA meetings before June and then a final discussion on this during the Latvian Presidency at the Riga meeting on 1 June 2015.

The elements that are described in this document do not put into question the roles of any other Council formation and Committees¹ nor any Council conclusions that establish how Council organises its work².

2. DELEGATED ACTS

The Presidency could invite the Commission to give a presentation to the SCA of the delegated acts that it expects to adopt during the coming semester, followed by a debate and/or short presentation of a delegated act at the first possible SCA after the adoption of that delegated act but before the expiration of the 2 months deadline. If necessary, the Commission could also provide an update should unforeseen events require the adoption of additional delegated acts, or modifications to existing ones.

Such a SCA-level discussion would usefully complement the existing procedures for consultations on and scrutiny of specific delegated acts, in full respect of Article 290 TFEU, the Common understanding on delegated acts (doc. 8753/11) and the Initiative to complement the Common understanding as regards the consultation of experts (doc. 6774/14).

¹ such as the special committee designated by the Council in accordance with art. 218(4) TFEU for the follow-up to negotiations on agricultural trade issues.

² such as those (7515/00+ COR 1) on improving the examination of special reports drawn up by the Court of Auditors.

3. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS AND OPINIONS OF THE COURT OF AUDITORS

In accordance with the general guidance on Impact assessment (doc. 16024/14), the first report on a legislative proposal from the relevant Working Party to the SCA should include a concise summary of the Working Party discussions on the Commission's impact assessment including, in particular, any concerns raised. The SCA could, as appropriate, discuss any such concerns.

When the Commission presents a major legislative proposal with a potentially significant impact, the Presidency could consider inviting the Commission to present the impact assessment to the SCA before work starts within the Working Party.

The SCA could also give its view on the opinion of the Court of auditors on files that are of major importance and have future potential implications on the CAP, therefore further improving the quality of the Council's work on these dossiers.

4. INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Currently the Commission represents the EU in three international organisations dealing with products covered by the CAP.

Responsibility for the EU's participation in the International Olive Oil Council (IOC), the International Sugar Council (ISO) and the International Grain Council (IGC) lies with Commission's DG AGRI. Preparatory discussions take place within the Council's Working Party on Commodities ("PROBA"), which reports to Coreper and prepares meetings of organisations where the EU participates for international development purposes.

To complement these existing procedures, but without interfering with them, the Presidency could regularly invite the Commission to provide information to the SCA before international meetings where important issues are at stake.

In addition, the SCA should continue to prepare and approve positions on technical/organisational issues for meetings of the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) after discussion in the relevant Council Working Party. SCA may also consider doing the same for the International Olive Council (IOC).

5. **INTERNATIONAL TRADE ISSUES**

As one of the Council preparatory bodies for agricultural issues, it is appropriate for the SCA to have a clear picture of the potential consequences of ongoing trade negotiations for the CAP.

The Presidency should regularly invite the Commission to inform the SCA on developments in trade negotiations, with the involvement of DG AGRI to comment on the potential impact on the CAP, followed by a debate. The Commission could also provide an update during the semester.

This would usefully complement the existing procedures but would in no way reduce the need for effective internal coordination within delegations.

6. **HORIZONTAL ISSUES**

The SCA should be responsible for preparing the AGRI Council's contribution to the European Council for key horizontal issues that have direct and significant impact on agriculture such as the climate and energy strategy, the Europe 2020 strategy and the Investment Plan for Europe.
