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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Strategic Plans: current situation and new challenges

With a view to the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council on 11-12 December 2022, delegations will find in the Annex a Presidency note on the CAP Strategic Plans regarding the current situation and new challenges.

CAP Strategic Plans: Current situation and new challenges*Information from the Commission*

During the July meeting of the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council in Brussels (18 July 2022), a debate was held on the state of preparation / implementation of the new CAP and the process of approval of Strategic Plans, including in relation to the current situation in Ukraine.

Ministers pointed out that, in the context of the Strategic Plans’ approval process, the important impact of the war in Ukraine on the agricultural sector needed to be closely monitored and addressed very sensitively. A balanced solution needed to be found with a view to meeting environmental, climate and biodiversity targets, but also providing for food security, stabilising and maintaining the competitiveness of the sector and ensuring the sustainable management and development of rural areas.

Ministers also stressed the importance of recognising that the Common Agricultural Policy was not the only European policy that contains instruments and funds for dealing with the crisis and could not solve the problems of all other policies.

The Commission expressed the expectation that in light of the uncertainties on global food security in 2023 it will consider introducing exemptions from selected GAECs which could contribute to address the situation.

Subsequently, the Commission presented and then adopted Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1317 of 27 July 2022 providing for derogations from Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the application of the standards for good agricultural and environmental conditions of land (GAEC standards) 7 and 8 for claim year 2023.

Since the July meeting of the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council on this topic, significant progress has been made in terms of the approval of Strategic Plans. The Commission has worked closely with Member States to speed up the process as much as possible, as time is of the essence for all actors, both for farmers, who have to adapt their business to the new conditions and adjust their sowing practices for the coming period, and for Member States’ authorities, which have to complete the process of implementing the new legislation at national level and prepare all the necessary information systems in time.

The Commission is about to complete the process of approving Member States’ Strategic Plans and is expected to approve all of them by the end of this year.

In parallel with this approval process, Member States are working on the establishment of the national legislative framework, including detailed support conditions, and information systems to ensure the launch of the new CAP from the beginning of 2023.

The current situation in Ukraine and its significant impact on the agricultural sector need also to be closely monitored and taken into account in the context of implementation of the Strategic Plans and any future modifications.

Given the multiple concurrent challenges, when planning CAP funds, a balanced approach needs to be found that addresses the environmental and climate objectives, as well as ensures food security and affordability, stable conditions for the sector and sustainable development of rural areas.

Given that the process of approving the Strategic Plans is still ongoing this is still a very topical issue.

The Presidency would therefore like to organise a debate at ministerial level in order to take stock before the end of the year of the state of play of the approval of Member States’ CAP Strategic Plans as well as of the degree of preparation of the new CAP at national level.

In order to structure the discussions at the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council in December, the Presidency proposes to focus on the current state of preparations for the new CAP in the individual Member State and on the main parameters of implementation on the national level such as the control system, in particular as regards the first year of implementation of the new rules (new delivery model). The Presidency furthermore welcomes an update from the Commission on its approval of the Strategic Plans and a preliminary overview of their content.

Questions for the debate:

- *Q1: Are you on track to meet the timetable for the implementation of the new CAP as you have set it at national level and do you see the need to modify Strategic Plans that were already approved and, if so, in what areas? Would you welcome any additional supportive action from the Commission in this respect?*
 - *Q2: Do you expect any significant challenges in the implementation of Strategic Plans, especially as regards the first year of implementation of the new CAP rules, especially in terms of setting up a system of controls and ensuring proper implementation?*
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