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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	The impact of the draft Regulation on Nature Restoration for Agriculture - <i>Information from the Polish delegation</i>

Delegations will find in the Annex a document on the above subject to be presented by the Polish delegation under "Any other business" at the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council on 18 September 2023.

Impact of the draft Regulation on Nature Restoration for Agriculture

Work is currently underway at trilogue level between the European Commission, the European Council and the European Parliament on a Draft Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the restoration of natural resources.

It should be emphasised that work in this area is taking place primarily in environmental forums, often without the involvement of the farming community. The Directorate-General for Environment has a leading role in this area.

The regulations proposed by the European Commission as well as the Council, in contrast to the European Parliament, which opposed the new restrictions, treat the protection and restoration of natural resources as an overriding objective. Agricultural and food security issues are not being taken into account.

Meeting the objectives of restoring agricultural ecosystems by, among other things, re-wetting drained peatlands or enhancing landscape elements on agricultural land, will necessitate a re-profiling of existing agricultural activities and contribute to a reduction in agricultural production. To comply with this obligation would mean excluding from agricultural production (or limiting it) a significant area of agricultural land. In Poland, this could be even approx. 700 thousand hectares, which would cause losses in the agricultural sector estimated at almost PLN 2.4 billion. and could lead to the liquidation or necessity of re-profiling of about 62 thousand farms.

There is no justification for further such restrictive biodiversity legislation on agricultural land. Already under the provisions of the Strategic Plans 2023-2027 on new conditionality, farmers have to comply with environmental standards and requirements like GAEC 8, which lead to the exclusion of a significant part of arable land from agricultural production.

Given the current situation in agriculture related to the negative effects of natural disasters in the EU, as well as the war in Ukraine, agricultural policy objectives should focus primarily on encouraging farmers to run a rational economy and ensure food security in the EU and globally. The European Parliament recognises this need, which is why its proposal should be supported and the provisions imposing obligations on the agricultural sector should be excluded from this regulation.
