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ENER 338
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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Council
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Subject:	Conclusions on Biodiversity - the need for urgent action
	- Approval
	= Statement

Delegations will find in the Annex a statement from Hungary regarding the Council conclusions on Biodiversity - the need for urgent action. The statement will be entered into the minutes of the Council (Environment) meeting on 23 October 2020.

HUNGARY

Biodiversity is the absolute basis of life. The active contribution of various sectors, including the agricultural and forest sectors, to protect biodiversity is essential.

However, Hungary emphasises that the fulfilment of some of the targets put forward by the European Commission seems impossible to achieve or may place a disproportionate burden at Member State level. We consider especially that the 50 percent decrease in the overall use of chemical pesticides and the 25 percent organic farming target are unfulfillable within the timeframe of the strategy at Member State level. Moreover, the proposed extension of protected and strictly protected areas requires further clarification regarding its scientific basis and key definitions.

Hungary emphasises that legislation to support the implementation of the strategy should in all cases be based on detailed impact assessments at Member State level.

Hungary underlines that sustainable forest management is an effective framework and instrument to maintain and improve forest biodiversity. This concept should be properly considered and reflected in the forthcoming EU Forest Strategy and especially through the implementation of relevant strategies.

It is of the utmost importance that the contribution of the Common Agricultural Policy to the objectives of the Biodiversity Strategy be based on a solid legal background and be proportionate to the funds available. Farmers and forest owners should only comply with requirements that are incorporated in the basic acts or other relevant EU legislation. As the Commission's forthcoming recommendations for national strategic plans on how to address the objectives of the Biodiversity Strategy and the Farm to Fork Strategy are set to be legally not binding, they can only provide Member States with additional guidance which they may take into account when drawing up their national CAP Strategic Plans. Therefore, the Commission should assess national Strategic Plans only with reference to criteria that have appropriate legal bases. Should a Member State opt for different policy choices than the Commission recommendations, this should not entail any legal consequences with respect to the adoption of the national CAP Strategic Plans.