



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Catastrophic floods following extreme rainfall
- Information from the German delegation

Delegations will find in the Annex a note from the German delegation on the above-mentioned subject, dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 19 July 2021.

"Catastrophic floods following extreme rainfall" (Germany)

1. During the past few days extremely heavy rains have caused severe flooding in Western Germany, especially in Rhineland-Palatinate and North Rhine-Westphalia. In the previous week, Bavaria and Baden Wuerttemberg have been seriously affected by torrential rainfalls causing severe floods in these areas.
2. A great number of emergency personnel from different areas, among them more than 400 federal soldiers, have been deployed to help. Numerous people had to be evacuated, and in a number of cases air rescue was the only possible way to do so.
3. At the moment, saving human lives and locating missing persons are the highest priority. More than 150 lives have already been lost, and many are still missing. In North Rhine-Westphalia, 25 towns and villages are affected, North Rhine-Westphalia has declared the State of Emergency for the Rhein-Erft Kreis. Rhineland-Palatinate has also declared the State of Emergency in the most seriously affected districts (Vulkaneifel, Trier-Saarburg, Bitburg-Prüm and Ahrweiler).
4. Flood levels are falling at the moment. Clearing work is commencing.
5. The actual size of the damage cannot be estimated at this time. Serious damages are expected to the regions' infrastructures. Apart from houses, roads and even flood protection systems, whole villages have been devastated or completely destroyed by the floods. Power and gas supply lines and digital networks have likewise been destroyed. Repairing these damages and remedying other impairments suffered by the population in the affected areas is estimated to take weeks and months, if not longer.

6. Agriculture has also been affected. Farms and other agricultural businesses have been cut off by the floods. Emergency power generators are put to use to provide temporary help to provide for livestock and save farm products – such as milk - from spoiling. Getting these necessary supplies, such as animal feed, into these areas is also extremely difficult. Fields, usually yielding grain, forage plants as well as vegetables and potatoes have been flooded. Warehoused goods like grain, straw and hay as well as silo facilities are under water and are rendered unfit for usage. Much needed plant protection in vineyards affected by flooding cannot be applied with conventional technology.
 7. Right now it's impossible to quantify the agricultural damages!
 8. The federal government has reacted promptly, and the German Chancellor has promised financial support to those affected by the floods.
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