

LETTER(24)00919:1 – PG-CG/jg

To the attention of Agricultural
Ministers

Cc: SCA spokespersons

Brussels, 20 March 2024

Subject: European Commission's mid- to long-term simplification proposals

Dear Minister,

Simplification of the agricultural policy and administrative burden reduction are extremely important for farmers and agricultural cooperatives. This is even more true in the challenging context farmers and agricultural cooperatives have been facing for the past few years. The feeling of being left behind has recently taken many of them to the streets.

Following this, the European Commission has launched a simplification exercise that is very much supported by Copa-Cogeca.

Short and medium to long-term measures to reduce the burden on farmers are urgent and these must contribute to a better policy implementation, one that takes into account the realities on the ground, in line with the objectives set.

In this regard, we support the European Commission's proposals for mid- to long-term simplification of the CAP presented last Friday as a step in the right direction which safeguards the transition to more sustainable agriculture.

Copa and Cogeca believe that, by adopting these changes, there will be more flexibility in implementing the policy in a way which considers the pedo-climatic and local conditions and specificities across the EU.

In these proposals, we would have liked to see further fine tuning of some elements for a better clarity and an improved implementation, in particular:

- On GAEC 2 to grant the possibility to delay its implementation beyond 2025 given the missing conditions for an effective and practical implementation.
- On GAEC 6 to guarantee a better clarity regarding the possibility for MS to take into account specific local conditions.
- On GAEC 7 by removing the obligation to have crop rotation at parcel level.
- On granting the possibility to MS to decide whether to establish and provide support for schemes covering practices for devoting agricultural areas to non-productive features, such as land lying fallow or landscape features via eco-schemes or agri-environment and climate commitments.
- On the simplification of the amendments' procedure of the CAP Strategic Plans in order to make it faster.



- On removing the revision of the CAP Strategic Plans in line with environmental and climate legislation to avoid that priority is given to environmental and climate legislation over the CAP. This would entail the removal of the provisions to review that list by the European Commission.
- On providing assurances that the exemption of small farmers below 10 ha from controls would not lead to more controls on the other farmers, thus creating an unlevel playing field.
- On the application period to make sure that the revised provisions apply already from 2024 until the end of the current CAP.

We are grateful for your efforts under the leadership of the Belgian Presidency to work jointly with the European Parliament to ensure the adoption of these measures without delay within the current legislature.

Farmers and their agricultural cooperatives need your support to be able to continue their activity in decent conditions, with a decent income and less administrative burden. This simplification exercise should not stop here.

Thank you very much for your kind attention and consideration to this letter.

Yours faithfully,

Christiane Lambert
Copa President

Lennart Nilsson
Cogeca President



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