Press release | 13.03.2013

CAP reform

CAP to plough on unsustainably as MEPs utterly fail to overhaul EU agriculture policy

The European Parliament today voted on 4 key legislative proposals aimed at reforming the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. The Greens expressed serious regret at the outcome, which the group regards as a missed opportunity for the fundamental reform the CAP needs. After the vote, Green MEP and co-chair of the EP's agriculture committee **José Bové** said:

"MEPs have today voted for the CAP to plough ahead unsustainably, with an outcome that is even worse for the environment than, and just as unfair as, the current model. MEPs have utterly failed to seize an historic opportunity to overhaul EU agricultural policy and make the CAP fit for the 21st Century. The fact that this is the first time the EP has had a say on the CAP as a co-decider makes today's outcome even more regrettable.

"While MEPs voted in favour of capping direct payments to farmers under the CAP, the level set - €300,000 - is ridiculous and far too high to make a difference (1). Huge farming businesses which do not need the funding will continue to get big pay-cheques, whilst depriving other areas of the CAP from funding, notably for schemes that could be used to promote more sustainable farming."

Green agriculture spokesperson **Martin Häusling** (MEP, Germany) added:

"The proposals for 'greening' the CAP are not worthy of the name. The plans are voluntary and riddled with exemptions, so they will clearly fail to fundamentally shift EU agriculture to a sustainable path, as they will not be implemented on the vast majority of farms. Instead of real crop rotation with legumes, which is a win-win-win for the environment, soil fertility and lowering farmers' costly dependency on chemicals, the CAP will promote weaker crop 'diversification'.

"There were some silver linings. Wrongheaded proposals on double-funding, whereby farmers would get paid twice to do the same thing, were deleted. MEPs also voted to support greater transparency of how the CAP budget is distributed. However, this is scant consolation given the bigger picture of today's outcome."

Green agriculture spokesperson **Bas Eickhout** (MEP, Netherlands) concluded:

"MEPs regrettably voted to maintain the damaging export refunds instrument which dumps EU farm products onto fragile markets in developing countries. This was compounded by the failure to provide for measures to

monitor the effects of the CAP on long term food production capacity in the least developed countries. Proposals adding rules based on the water framework directive, which would improve the environmental performance of agriculture, also fell. This is clearly at odds with what the public wants and these senseless proposals to use taxpayers' money to fund an outdated system will not be accepted by the public."

(1) See paper by José Bové on capping direct payments and the implications of this: /legacy/fileadmin/dam/Documents/Policy_papers/Time-has-come-for-a-fairer-CAP_2013-03-01.pdf

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Responsible MEPs



José Bové

Member



Martin Häusling

Member

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