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[Press release](#) | 24.01.2013

EU agricultural policy

CAP to plough on unsustainably, as out of touch MEPs fail to back real reform

The European Parliament agriculture committee today concluded its voting on 4 key legislative proposals aimed at reforming the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. The Greens expressed 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 sadly missed an opportunity to make the CAP fit for the 21st Century. Instead of voting for a radical overhaul to promote sustainable farming and food systems in the interests of farmers and citizens, MEPs have voted for the CAP to plough ahead unsustainably. The outcome would be a CAP that is even worse for the environment, and just as unfair as, the current model. This vote is confirmation, if ever any was needed, that the EP agriculture committee is totally out of touch with public opinion and the massive challenges we face. Yesterday's shambolic and rushed voting procedure also cast a shadow on these crucial votes."

"While MEPs voted in favour of capping direct payments to farmers under the CAP, the level set - €300,000 - is far too high to make a difference. 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 little more than greenwash. The plans are voluntary and riddled with exemptions, so they will clearly fail to fundamentally shift EU agriculture to a sustainable path. Instead of real crop rotation with legumes, which is a win-win-win for the environment, fertility and lowering farmers' costly dependency on chemicals and rainforest-destroying soya imports, the CAP will promote weaker crop 'diversification'. Proposals on double-funding, whereby farmers would get paid twice to do the same thing, are unacceptable at a time of budget wrangling and public austerity. Scandalously, MEPs even voted against full transparency of how the CAP budget is distributed."

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

"MEPs regrettably voted to maintain damaging export refunds which dump EU farm products onto fragile markets in developing countries, and chose not to monitor the effects of the CAP on long term food"

production capacity in developing countries. They also drastically slashed cross compliance, the rules on environment, public and animal health and welfare that farmers must abide by, and voted to remove bans on hormone use, groundwater pollution, large-scale soil erosion and ploughing up wetlands. 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."

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