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EU Commission proposals must kick-start agricultural reform

Farm to Fork/Biodiversity

Today (20 May), the European Commission has just released its "Farm to Fork" and Biodiversity strategies. The Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament applaud the fact that the Commission has not caved into calls to delay these strategies, and is moving forward to help tackle the loss of species and seems to be pursuing a more sustainable approach to agricultural policy. We welcome, in particular, the Commission's ambition to protect 30% of land and sea areas by 2030 and to reduce damaging agricultural inputs.

Greens/EFA will continue to fight for at least 10% of farmland for wildlife, allowing biodiversity to help improve productivity and fertility, that synthetic pesticide use is reduced by at least 80% by 2030 and phased out as soon as possible after that. In the ongoing negotiations on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), we need a central role for biodiversity, environmental protection and archaeological approaches that benefit farmers, animals and consumers.

Ville Niinistö MEP, Shadow Rapporteur for Biodiversity and Member of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, comments:

"Biodiversity, rather than being side lined during the corona-crisis, needs to remain front and centre. The Commission's decision to stay on schedule with the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies is the right step. These strategies are needed more than ever before and if we manage to match them with a vastly improved CAP, they can deliver win-win-win solutions for nature, farmers and consumers."

"Ambitious climate action and nature conservation goals are closely linked. Forests, in addition to being major carbon sinks, are essential habitats. It is important to not only strictly protect all remaining EU primary and old-growth forests, but also to plan for future old-growth forests. The accelerated loss of our planet's biodiversity, including both species and habitats to agriculture, especially meat and animal feed production, can contribute to the rise of pandemics and thereby also pose risks to our health."

Grace O'Sullivan MEP, Greens/EFA Member of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety in the European Parliament, comments:

"Protecting our waters, natural landscapes, and wildlife is essential to ensure the stability of the food supply"

chain, with a focus on local and regional markets, the prosperity of our fishers and farmers, and animal welfare. Biodiversity boosts the productivity of farmlands and fisheries, and providing long-term protection can prevent the collapse of our ecosystems and deliver long term resilience and food security.

“The actions undertaken in the Biodiversity Strategy need to match the scale of what is necessary to protect our vital marine habitats, especially in strictly protected areas. We need legally binding targets and measures to ensure ocean nature-based solutions are fully recognised and implemented.”

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