

Simplification must not come at cost of climate

AGRI omnibus

Today, the European Commission presented its Omnibus simplification package on agriculture, aiming to amend the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). While the Greens/EFA Group welcomes efforts to better support organic and small-scale farmers, by cutting red tape or easing compliance with environmental standards, this must not come at the cost of climate adaptation and environmental ambition.

MEP Thomas Waitz from Austria, Greens/EFA coordinator in the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI), comments:

"This package is a mixed bag. Some of the simplifications for small-scale and organic farms show that Commissioner Christophe Hansen listened to and understood farmers' struggles. Cutting red tape is a welcome first step, but it is not enough to secure fair incomes for small farmers. It's a dangerous misconception to believe that weakening biodiversity protection will stop the decline of small farms. A healthy environment is essential for sustainable agriculture.

"More flexibility for Member States must not come at the expense of environmental protection and public health, especially with rising risks like water pollution from pesticides and fertilisers. Crisis support is essential, but new funding should not come at the expense of prevention measures.

"The same applies to the upcoming reform of the Common Agricultural Policy: Greater flexibility must go along with strong oversight and clear common rules. Otherwise, we risk a patchwork of subsidies, little transparency and competition distortion across the European Union."

More:

The Greens/EFA Group calls for a balanced approach, farmers need a fair distribution of funds, a cap on excessive subsidies, and a food system free from excessive corporate control. These structural issues must be central to the upcoming CAP reform expected in July.

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