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Study: Major changes needed if CAP is to be made fit for purpose

Common Agricultural Policy

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is not fit for purpose, according to a new study co-commissioned by the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament. The study, produced in cooperation with the S&D group and a range of environmental NGOs and universities (1), was initiated after the European Commission failed to produce its own fitness check on the CAP.

The key findings of the report, for which the authors assessed 450 peer reviewed scientific papers, are:

- **The socio-economic efficiency of the CAP is very low.** The decrease in numbers of agricultural holdings continues, with a trend towards large-scale farms. With 32% of payments going to 1.5% of farms, the CAP provides insufficient support to small farms.
- **The CAP is largely inefficient regarding its environmental objectives**. The CAP does not halt, let alone reverse, ongoing trends of agricultural intensification, abandonment, environmental degradation and biodiversity decline. It has a very limited effect on climate change mitigation.

Greens/EFA MEP **Molly Scott Cato** comments:

"There needs to be a major change in direction if the CAP is to be made fit for purpose.

"With CAP spending amounting to nearly sixty billion euros per year, it should be a major driver of socio-economic progress. But with far too much money going into the hands of far too few farmers, it is failing to deliver on its potential. We need a clear commitment to small and medium sized agriculture, and action to stop the expansion of corporate-controlled mega-farms which drain our local economies.

"The CAP is also failing on the environment. Europe needs an agricultural policy that will help farms make the transition to animal-friendly and greener production."

Notes

(1) The study was commissioned and funded by: BirdLife Europe; the European Environmental Bureau (EEB); Naturschutzbund Deutschland (NABU); the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research

(iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig; Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research – UFZ; the University of Göttingen; and the Greens/EFA and Socialists & Democrats groups in the European Parliament.

- The report: http://extranet.greens-efa-service.eu/public/media/file/1/5401
- The Executive Summary: http://extranet.greens-efa-service.eu/public/media/file/1/5400
- A briefing: http://extranet.greens-efa-service.eu/public/media/file/1/5399

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Quote from Terry Reintke

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