



To: Ms Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

Subject: Request for withdrawal of the CAP-proposal

Brussels, 28 October 2020

Dear President Von der Leyen,

Last week both the European Council and the European Parliament adopted [disastrous positions](#)¹ on the reform of the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Seven years and nearly 400 billion euros (about a third of the EU's budget) that have to be used for greening the agricultural sector are about to be [wasted](#)².

Agriculture is a big contributor to climate change and biodiversity loss. The world is warming fast and we are losing birds, pollinators and ecosystems at an alarming rate, we cannot squander time nor money.

Without serious action through the CAP, the goals of the EU's [Green Deal](#)³, Biodiversity Strategy and [Farm2Fork Strategy](#)⁴ are in jeopardy. The European Commission has to respond.

A large part of the problem is that, while it is the fundament on which all further decisions in the legislative process are being made, the original CAP reform proposal of the European Commission is weak and outdated. It comes from the previous (Juncker) Commission. When it came out, the [EU Court of Auditors](#)⁵ and [scientists](#)⁶ immediately warned that it is not fit for purpose.

That was still before your Commission came into place and before you presented the Green Deal and all the EU's new environmental and climate goals for 2030: 55% greenhouse gas reduction, 10% of the agricultural land dedicated to nature, 50% pesticides and antibiotics reduction, 20% less fertilizers, to name a few. With the introduction of these new goals the Commission's old CAP-proposal became even more outdated than it already was, yet it remained on the table.

These goals simply cannot be met by the EU if we continue negotiating on the basis of the current Commission's CAP proposal. After this week it has also become clear that neither Council nor Parliament is planning to strengthen the text.

1 <https://www.endseurope.com/article/1697982/cap-anger-member-states-declare-war-green-deal-objectives>
2 <https://www.politico.eu/article/europes-green-ambitions-run-into-an-old-foe-farmers/>
3 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_6691
4 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_884
5 https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/OP18_07/OP18_07_EN.pdf
6 <https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/pan3.10080>

We therefore ask you to act. Just as the Commission has the right to make proposals, it has the right to withdraw them. We ask you to make use of this right. There are ample reasons to do so: the proposal is not in line with the new EU's objectives, taxpayer money threatens to be misspent, and citizens are not being sufficiently protected against climate change and environmental damage.

President Von der Leyen, bring the legislative process on the EU's farming policy and a third of the EU's budget on the right track. It is time to withdraw the Commission's weak and outdated CAP proposal and present a new one that is in line with the EU's Green Deal. Both nature and European citizens are counting on you. Of course, the Commission has the right to intervene in the legal process by presenting strong proposals of the Green Deal into the process, but time is running short.

It is now of highest importance to stop the silence. We ask you, Ms President, and Executive Vice-President Timmermans to speak out loud on the disastrous voting results in both the Council and Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

Bas Eickhout

Vice-Chair Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)
Greens/EFA in the European Parliament

Ska Keller

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Claude Gruffat

Sylwia Spurek

Kim van Sparrentak

Tineke Strik

Grace O'Sullivan

Saskia Bricmont

Sarah Wiener

Ciarán Cuffe

Damien Carême

David Cormand

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Members of the European Parliament