



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



8099/10 (Presse 78)

**PRESS RELEASE**

3006th Council meeting

**Agriculture and Fisheries**

Brussels, 29 March 2010

President

**Ms Elena ESPINOSA**  
Minister for Agriculture of Spain

**P R E S S**

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8099/10 (Presse 78)

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## **Main results of the Council**

*The Council took note of the presidency conclusions, supported by a majority of member states, on the Commission's communication "**A better functioning food supply chain in Europe**".*

*The Council took note of the presidency conclusions, endorsed by the future Belgian and Hungarian presidencies and supported by a majority of member states, on the "**Future of the CAP: market management measures post 2013**".*

*Ministers held an exchange of views on the role which agriculture and the Common Agricultural Policy could play within the new **European strategy for jobs and growth**.*

*Furthermore, the Commission informed the Council of its latest quarterly **report on the dairy market**.*

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<sup>1</sup> Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks. Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>). Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

*INTERNAL MARKET*

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## PARTICIPANTS

The governments of the member states and the European Commission were represented as follows:

### Belgium:

Ms Sabine LARUELLE

Minister for SMEs, the Self-Employed, Agriculture and Science Policy

### Bulgaria:

Mr Miroslav NAYDENOV

Minister for Agriculture and Food

### Czech Republic:

Mr Jakub ŠEBESTA

Minister for Agriculture

### Denmark:

Mr Henrik HØEGH

Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries

### Germany:

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Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection

Mr Robert KLOOS

Permanent State Secretary

### Estonia:

Mr Helir-Valdor SEEDER

Minister for Agriculture

### Ireland:

Mr Brendan SMITH

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Mr Sean CONNICK

Minister

### Greece:

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Minister for Rural Development and Food

### Spain:

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Minister for the Environment and the Rural and Marine Environment

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State Secretary for the Rural Environment and Water

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Minister for Agriculture of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia

### France:

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Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries

### Italy

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Deputy Permanent Representative

### Cyprus:

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Minister for Agriculture

### Lithuania:

Mr Kazys STARKEVICIUS

Minister for Agriculture

### Luxembourg:

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Minister for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development

### Hungary:

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Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

### Malta:

Mr George PULLICINO

Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs

### Netherlands:

Ms Gerda VERBURG

Minister for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

### Austria:

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Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, the Environment and Water Management

**Poland:**

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Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

**Portugal:**

Mr António SERRANO

Minister for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries

**Romania:**

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**Slovenia:**

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Deputy Permanent Representative

**Slovakia:**

Mr Vladimír CHOVAN

Minister for Agriculture

**Finland:**

Ms Sirkka-Liisa ANTTILA

Minister for Agriculture and Forestry

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Minister for Agriculture

**United Kingdom:**

Mr Jim FITZPATRICK

Minister of State, Minister for Food, Farming and Environment

Mr Huw IRRANCA-DAVIES

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Minister for the Natural and Marine Environment, Wildlife and Rural Affairs

**Commission:**

Ms Maria DAMANAKI

Member

Mr Dacian CIOLOȘ

Member

Mr Janez POTOČNIK

Member

**ITEMS DEBATED****A BETTER FUNCTIONING FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN IN EUROPE**

The Council noted that the draft Council conclusions on how to improve the functioning of the food supply chain had been finalised as presidency conclusions with the support of a large majority of delegations. The conclusions are set out in *8124/10*.

The conclusions reflect the outcome of the exchange of views held at the Council on 18 January 2010 on the Commission's communication "A better functioning food supply chain in Europe" ([15330/09](#)), a follow-up to the December 2008 report on food prices in Europe ([17380/08](#)).

The food supply chain connects three important sectors of the European economy: agriculture, the food processing industry and the distribution sectors. Its performance has direct consequences for citizens since food represents 16% of European households' expenditure and is increasingly important on the path towards recovery from the current economic crisis.

In the second half of 2007, agricultural commodity price increases accelerated and had reached exceptional levels by early 2008. The European Council of June 2008 asked the Commission to report back on these issues by December 2008. In response, the Commission proposed to better monitor developments in agricultural commodity and food prices, to analyse the impact of speculation on agricultural commodity prices and to investigate the functioning of the food supply chain.

**FUTURE OF THE CAP: MARKET MANAGEMENT MEASURES POST 2013**

The Council took note of the presidency conclusions fully shared and endorsed by the future Belgian and Hungarian presidencies, as the other two members of the trio presidency, and supported by a majority of delegations, on the "Future of the CAP: market management measures post 2013", see [7451/1/10 REV 1](#). The conclusions reflect the exchange of views held by ministers on 22 February 2010 on a presidency paper ([6063/10](#)).

The presidency, underlining the need to guarantee the future viability of agriculture, considered that the conclusions provided a useful basis for the future debate on the CAP post 2013.

The presidency recalled that discussions on the future of the CAP have been held under the French, Czech and Swedish Presidencies and invited future presidencies to continue this work. A general reflection on the CAP post 2013 is scheduled by the presidency to take place during the informal meeting of the ministers for Agriculture to be held in Mérida, Spain on 30 May - 1 June.



## **AGRICULTURE AND THE CAP IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE EU 2020 STRATEGY**

The Council held an exchange of views on agriculture and the CAP in the perspective of the EU 2020 strategy. The debate was based on a presidency paper ([7453/1/10](#)) which included a questionnaire.

Ministers in general considered that agriculture and the CAP were not sufficiently taken into account in the Commission's communication "Europe 2020: A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" ([7110/10](#)). They welcomed, however, the recognition in the conclusions of the Spring European Council of 25 and 26 March that a sustainable, productive and competitive agricultural sector would make an important contribution to the new European strategy for jobs and growth. Many ministers concurred that agriculture could play a key role in achieving each of the three priorities of the new strategy, i.e. smart growth (for example through innovations in order to optimise the use of natural resources), sustainable growth (for example through bioenergy) and inclusive growth (for example by keeping jobs and people in rural areas).

Some ministers stressed the need for the EU's future strategy for jobs and growth to take account not only of the input from the Ecofin and General Affairs Council, but also of sensitivities and opinions expressed in the Agriculture and Fisheries Council. Ministers in particular considered that making the economy more environmentally friendly was a challenge that could not be met without due consideration for agriculture, which manages almost half of the EU's territory, plays a key role in ensuring sustainable use of resources, conservation of natural habitats and biodiversity, and is destined to play an increasing role in combating climate change. Ministers also drew the attention to the fact that agriculture and the agri-food industry contributed substantially to economic growth and employment.

Some ministers made it clear that the new strategy should not interfere with or call into question the funding of the CAP. Several delegations argued in favour of keeping a strong CAP with an adequate financing, whereas others did not wish to preempt the next multiannual financial framework.

The presidency promised to convey these views as a contribution by the Agriculture and Fisheries Council to the ongoing discussion on the new European strategy for growth and jobs, to be formally adopted at the June European Council.

## **SITUATION ON THE DAIRY MARKET**

The Council took note of a Commission quarterly report on the dairy market ([7446/10](#)), presented by the Commissioner in charge of Agriculture and Rural Development, Dacian Cioloș.

The latest figures show that average producer milk prices in the EU have reached a level of around 28 cents per litre, which is close to the seasonal long-term average.

As a reaction to the crisis in the dairy sector, the Commission undertook in May 2009 to report every three months on the situation on the dairy market. The Commission also established a High Level Group discussing mid-term and long-term arrangements and is expected to table preliminary conclusions in May 2010. In addition to the discussion within the High Level Group, the Commission organised a conference on "What future for milk?" in Brussels on 26 March 2010 in order to consult more widely ([http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/milk-conference-2010/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/milk-conference-2010/index_en.htm)).

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Fishery management measures in the Mediterranean Sea**

The Italian delegation, supported by Cyprus and Spain, drew the Council's attention on a number of practical difficulties regarding the implementation of regulation 1967/2006 concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea ([7602/10](#)). The Commission undertook to facilitate the technical application of the regulation, whilst stressing the importance for the Mediterranean countries of fully complying with and implementing it.

### **International negotiations on bluefin tuna**

At the request of Malta, the Council took note of the outcome of the CITES conference on endangered species held in Doha from 13 to 25 March as regards bluefin tuna.

As a general rule for any other future international negotiations, some delegations and the Commission highlighted the importance of improving EU coordination beforehand.

### **OECD ministerial meeting in Paris**

The Council was informed by the Austrian delegation of the outcome of the OECD ministerial meeting held in Paris on 25 and 26 February 2010 ([7728/10](#)). The Austrian minister for Agriculture, Forestry, the Environment and Water Management, Mr Nikolaus Berlakovich, who co-chaired the OECD meeting together with his New-Zealand counterpart, highlighted, in particular, the OECD member states' desire for the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda negotiations in the World Trade Organisation (WTO). With regard to climate change and food security, he explained that the OECD considered that agriculture can be part of the solution. The OECD also stressed the need to take measures against the impact of extreme price volatility and to improve transparency in the food chain. A follow-up OECD conference to take stock is scheduled to take place not later than 2015.

**Union for the Mediterranean: ministerial conference on Agriculture in Cairo**

The French delegation informed the Council of the ministerial conference on Agriculture to be held in Cairo on 15 and 16 June 2010 in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean, and called for wide EU ministerial participation at this meeting ([7832/10](#)). The conference is aimed, inter alia, at adopting a charter on food security and defining priority actions for the Mediterranean region.

**WTO negotiations**

The Council took note of information provided by the Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Dacian Cioloș, on the state of play in the WTO negotiations

## **OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**

### **AGRICULTURE**

#### **Authorisation and refusal of health claims on foods - committee procedure**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption by the Commission of three regulations concerning the authorisation and refusal of health claims made on foods. These regulations are the following:

- regulation refusing to authorise certain health claims made on foods, other than those referring to the reduction of disease risk and to children's development and health;
- regulation amending regulation 983/2009 on the authorisation and refusal of authorisation of certain health claims made on food and referring to the reduction of disease risk and to children's development and health;
- regulation refusing to authorise a health claim made on foods, other than those referring to the reduction of disease risk and to children's development and health.

Under the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, the Council can oppose an act which exceeds the implementing powers of the Commission, is not compatible with the aim or content of the basic instrument or does not respect subsidiarity or proportionality if the regulatory committee previously supported the measures envisaged.

### **EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

#### **Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on water**

The Council took note of preparations for the IV Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on water, to take place in Barcelona, Spain, on 13 April 2010.

The Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on water held in Jordan in December 2008, launched a long-term strategy for water in the Mediterranean with a view to developing a common political, methodological and financing framework in order to facilitate the implementation of regional policies in the water field.

Scarcity, climate variability, droughts and floods, population growth, socio-economic disparities and unbalanced development, pollution, pressures on natural ecosystems and loss of biodiversity are among the challenges faced in the Mediterranean, calling for new strategies and projects to achieve sustainable development of water resources ([7300/10](#)).

### **Appropriate measures towards the Fiji Islands**

The Council extended by six months the appropriate measure towards the Fiji Islands in order to facilitate its return to democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

For more details, see [7979/10](#).

### **Restrictive measures against Guinea**

The Council adopted a decision amending common position 2009/788 concerning restrictive measures against Guinea, considering that there are no longer grounds for keeping certain persons on the lists of persons, entities and bodies to which the restrictive measures apply.

### **EU/Montenegro Stabilisation and Association agreement**

The Council adopted a decision approving the conclusion of the Stabilisation and Association agreement with Montenegro, which was signed on 15 October 2007 ([11568/1/07](#)).

### **Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons**

The Council adopted a decision setting up the EU position for the 2010 Review conference of the parties of the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT) to be held in New York on 3-28 May 2010. The objective of the European Union is to strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime by promoting a substantive and balanced outcome of the review conference on the three pillars of the NPT - disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

## **TRADE POLICY**

### **Anti-dumping - Ironing boards from China**

The Council adopted a regulation amending regulation 452/2007 imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of ironing boards originating, *inter alia*, in China ([7330/10](#)).

## **ENERGY**

### **Lamps - ecodesign requirements - committee procedure**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption by the Commission of a regulation amending regulation 245/2009 aimed at improving ecodesign requirements for fluorescent lamps without integrated ballast, for high intensity discharge lamps, and for ballast and luminaires able to operate such lamps ([5435/10](#)).

According to the committee procedure, the Commission may now adopt the amending regulation unless the European Parliament opposes it.

## **INTERNAL MARKET**

### **Chemicals: REACH system - Amendments to safety data sheets**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption by the Commission of a regulation ([5310/10](#)) amending the REACH regulation (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals).

The new regulation will amend the provisions on safety data sheets contained in annex II of the REACH regulation<sup>1</sup>. In this context, it also lays down implementing rules on how to handle the transition from the current system of classification and labelling of substances and preparations to the Globally Harmonised System (GHS) for classifying and communicating chemical hazards.

Under the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, the Council can oppose an act which exceeds the implementing powers of the Commission, is not compatible with the aim or content of the basic instrument, in this case the REACH regulation, or does not respect the principles of subsidiarity or proportionality.

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<sup>1</sup> See Official Journal L 136 of 29.5.2007.