



APRODEV CAP Statement February 2013

Agricultural Committee vote rejects environmental and development recommendations

The EP Agricultural Committee vote on 23-24 January 2013 was a dangerous step backwards in a reform process that is long since overdue. It further weakened important but insufficient Commission proposals in the CAP reform with regard to a transition towards sustainable agriculture. It rejected proposals that would help the EU assume its international responsibility, proposals that had been unanimously adopted in the EP Development Committee.

The greening measures proposed by the Commission were further weakened. Compliance with EU legislation, like the EU Water Directive or the EU Sustainable Pesticide Use Directive, was voted down, which in itself is unacceptable. Double payments were introduced which means being paid twice to do the same thing under pillar 1 and 2 which is against any good administrative practice.

The conclusion from a Commission Hearing on Feeding the planet sustainably¹ confirms that current agricultural production is unsustainable and that the EU needs better integrated policies without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. A transition towards resilient Agriculture systems is important not only for the EU, but also from an international development perspective.

Aggressive export orientation

A compilation of recent trends of EU meat exports² shows an aggressive market access orientation of intensive livestock production. In 2011, 429,310 tonnes of EU poultry meat exports to Africa show an increase of 115% within just two years. Africa accounted for one third of the EU's total poultry meat exports of 1.3 million tonnes in 2011. This shows a worrying trend that is harmful for African production capacities and creates unnecessary dependency, the more so as the EU expects to remain a net exporter of pig and poultry meat in 2002.³

This intensive EU meat production is only possible because the cost of animal feed excludes social and environmental costs. This has led to court cases on environmental damage caused in Poland, Germany and Romania, and to social dumping in slaughterhouse jobs as well as citizens' initiatives opposing mega animal factory farms in their local communities.

To examine the impact of European agricultural trade, countries that are most exposed to EU imports need to be looked at. Congo, DRC, Liberia, South Africa and Ghana and above all Benin have seen increases in EU poultry import from 2008 to 2010. It is not helpful and in fact is rather misleading to use pilot case studies illustrating the CAP development impact on countries that are barely exposed to EU exports.

Monitoring of development impact is a must for EU international responsibility⁴

The development impact of the CAP is still an orphan in the CAP legislation. Amendments on monitoring the external impact of CAP on the food security situation in developing countries⁵ have been rejected by AGRI COM despite unanimous adoption in the DEVE COM. An extended monitoring of the external CAP impacts would put the EU in a better position to respond to obligations for improved monitoring and surveillance in the WTO; WTO members continue to have significant concerns on green box payments.

1 EC, DG Agriculture Hearing/Workshop on 18-19 Nov 2012, see http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/sustainable-food_en.htm

2 See Bread for the World (2012) Globale Handelsverflechtungen am Beispiel Huhn

3 See EC, DG Agriculture (December 2012) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/publi/caprep/prospects2012/summary_en.pdf

4 APRODEV (2011) International responsibility of the CAP; and APRODEV (2012) CAP Monitoring and Complaint Mechanism

5 Horizontal Regulation, Amendment 4, Article 110 a (new) of the CAP proposal for horizontal regulations

The concern on CAP monitoring and Policy Coherence for Development is supported by a recent ODI paper that reviews some of the institutional options of the mechanism for monitoring the impact of the CAP on developing countries that can be used to inform stakeholders and the parliament on best ways forward.⁶ Moreover, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, is calling on all MEPs to “make the CAP sensitive to development concerns’ and to “monitor the impacts of EU imports and exports on developing countries.”

Crop rotation can reduce EU's negative impact on indirect land use changes⁷

Agricultural land and water resources are the two scarcest resources needed to feed the world population. The EU exports of dairy products and meat depend to a large degree on protein of those feed imports. This leads to depletion of soil, deforestation and forced evictions of poor rural communities in protein exporting countries. Soy monocultures are expanding rapidly, creating a number of social and ecological problems. The EU's competitiveness depends on monocultures that are unsustainable and that put increasing pressure on access and control of valuable resources of vulnerable small scale farmers. The EU needs to decrease its protein imports and its burden on global farming land use in developing countries, which is estimated at 20 million hectares of land.

Crop rotation improves soil fertility and helps to mitigate and to adapt to climate change. It makes use of natural nutrient cycles and builds much needed soil structure in a more efficient ways than relying on external energy intensive inputs like fertilizers and pesticides. The AGRI COM vote not only rejected the proposal by the Environmental Committee to introduce crop rotation as a compulsory requirement (planting of any plot of arable land with at least three different crops over three years), but it has even weakened the Commission proposal on crop diversification, allowing monocropping to continue on 80% of the arable land.

The Commission's main arguments for crop diversification over crop rotation are that this causes less disruption to administration and control practices and that it would pose less of a problem for WTO notification. An APRODEV paper demonstrates that crop rotation is fully green box compatible and is easier to defend than crop diversification. It also argues that only minimum adaptation is required to control crop rotation measures as an annual obligation with a pluriannual scope and control.⁸

The tragedy of waste

The new report on global food waste⁹ shows that 30 to 50 percent of all food is wasted. This rebuts the arguments made that CAP subsidies are needed to increase productivity to feed the world. And it exposes the lack of effective measures to reduce waste. The first urgent measure should be to ensure that all food waste is avoided, that natural resources are replenished and regenerated and that loss of biodiversity and traditional seeds is brought to a stop.

Towards a more coherent CAP reform

An integrated CAP framework must respond to climate change as the new context of food security. On 12 March 2013, parliamentarians should vote in favour of crop rotation as a core element of the CAP greening proposal. However, crop rotation should not be seen in isolation but be accompanied by other measures such as capping and fairer distribution of EU subsidies to prevent market concentration. The EU Water Framework Directive and the EU Pesticides Directive should be brought into cross compliance to improve environmental quality. Parliamentarians should vote in favour of a better monitoring mechanism on the likely effects on prices and trade flows which can help prevent or reverse negative impacts on poor farmers in developing countries. A complaint mechanism open to farming communities in developing countries could build trust, and social safeguards could prevent harmful impacts.¹⁰

6 ODI (2012) A review of stakeholders views on CAP reform.

7 APRODEV (2011) EU imports of animal feed; and APRODEV (2012) Mitigating GHG emission and promoting sustainable agriculture.

8 See APRODEV paper (2013) Crop Rotation in the CAP reform: Relevance of WTO Constraints, Benefits and Control.

9 Institution of Mechanical Engineers (2013) Global Food: Waste Not, Want Not

10 APRODEV (2012) CAP Monitoring and Complaint Mechanisms