



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



5375/10 (Presse 5)

PRESS RELEASE

2989th Council meeting

Agriculture and Fisheries

Brussels, 18 January 2010

President

Elena ESPINOSA
Minister for Agriculture of Spain

P R E S S

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Main results of the Council

*The Council took note of the Presidency **working programme** and priorities for the next six months in the fields of agriculture and fisheries.*

*It also held an exchange of views on political aspects of the Commission communication on “A better functioning **food supply chain** in Europe”.*

EU ministers expressed their solidarity with the people of Haiti following the massive loss of life and devastation caused by earthquake on 12 January, in line with the Council conclusions adopted today at the Foreign affairs Council meeting.

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¹ 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.

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

Mr Kris PEETERS

Minister-President of the Flemish Government and Flemish Minister for the Economy, Foreign Policy, Agriculture and Rural Policy

Bulgaria:

Mr Miroslav NAYDENOV

Minister for Agriculture and Food

Czech Republic:

Mr Jakub ŠEBESTA

Minister for Agriculture

Denmark:

Mr Anders MIKKELSEN

Director

Germany:

Mr Gert LINDEMANN

State Secretary at the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer protection

Estonia:

Mr Helir-Valdor SEEDER

Minister for Agriculture

Ireland:

Mr Brendan SMITH

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Mr Tony KILLEEN

Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (with special responsibility for Fisheries, Forestry and the Marine)

Greece:

Ms Aikaterini BATZELI

Minister for Rural Development and Food

Spain:

Ms Elena ESPINOSA MANGANA

Minister for the Environment and the Rural and Marine Environment

Mr Josep PUXEU ROCAMORA

State Secretary for the Rural Environment and Water

Mr. Joachim LLENA i CORTINA

Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Action of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia

France:

Mr Bruno LE MAIRE

Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries

Italy

Mr Antonio BUONFIGLIO

State Secretary for Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy

Cyprus:

Mr Michalis POLYNIKI CHARALAMBIDES

Minister for Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment

Latvia:

Ms Dace LUCAUA

State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture

Lithuania:

Mr Mindaugas KUKLIERIUS

Vice-Minister for Agriculture

Luxembourg:

Mr Romain SCHNEIDER

Minister for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development

Hungary:

Mr Barnabás FORGÁCS

State Secretary (with special responsibility), Ministry of 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:

Mr Nikolaus BERLAKOVICH

Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, the
Environment and Water Management**Poland:**

Mr Marek SAWICKI

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

Portugal:

Mr Rui Pedro de SOUSA BARREIRO

Secretary of State for Forestry and Rural Development

Romania:

Mr Mihail DUMITRU

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

Slovenia:

Mr Milan POGAČNIK

Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Food

Slovakia:

Mr Ján SLABÝ

State Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture

Finland:

Ms Sirkka-Liisa ANTILA

Minister for Agriculture and Forestry

Sweden:

Mr Eskil ERLANDSSON

Mr Rolf ERIKSSON

Minister for Agriculture
State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture**United Kingdom:**

Mr Jim FITZPATRICK

Minister of State, Minister for Food, Farming and
Environment**Commission:**

Ms Mariann FISCHER BOEL

Member

ITEMS DEBATED

PRESIDENCY WORK PROGRAMME

The Council took note of a presentation by the Spanish Presidency on its working programme in the fields of agriculture and fisheries ([5121/1/10](#)).

The priorities of agriculture policies will include:

- the future of the common agriculture policy beyond 2013: “*Horizon 2020*”;
- the competitiveness of agriculture and the agro-food industry; and
- the reinforcement of the role of women in rural areas.

The priorities of fisheries policies will include :

- the reform of the common fisheries policy;
- the reform of the common market organization of fishery and aquaculture products;
- the eco-label regulation for fisheries products;
- the access and fishing efforts concerning deep-sea species; and
- the EU's external fisheries policy.

FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN IN EUROPE

The Council held an exchange of views on ways to improve the functioning of the food supply chain. It instructed its preparatory bodies to continue examination of this issue with a view to preparing a set of conclusions to be submitted to the Council for approval in a forthcoming meeting.

The debate was conducted by means of a questionnaire elaborated by the Presidency ([5214/10](#)) on the basis of the Commission communication "A better functioning food supply chain in Europe" ([15330/09](#)).

The debate identified a clear need for further work on initiatives targeting the three cross-cutting priorities identified by the Commission in order to improve the food supply chain:

- promote sustainable and market-based relationships between stakeholders in the supply chain;
- increase transparency along the chain to encourage competition and improve its resilience to price volatility; and
- foster the integration and competitiveness of the European food supply chain across EU member states.

The Commission communication¹ is a follow-up to the December 2008 report on food prices in Europe ([17380/08](#)), which sets out five key guidelines (roadmap) dealing with competitiveness, competition and consumer protection, integration/internal market, monitoring of food prices and speculation.

The market monitoring exercise revealed that, while on several dimensions of the supply chain performs well, important challenges remain ahead with a view to its improvement.

¹ The Commission communication is accompanied by six working documents:

- Analysis of price transmission along the food supply chain in the EU.
- Competition in the food supply chain.
- Outcomes of the High-Level Group on the competitiveness of the Agro-Food Industry.
- Agricultural commodity derivative markets: the way ahead.
- Improving price transparency along the food supply chain for consumers and policy makers.
- The evolution of value-added repartition along the European food supply chain.

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.

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' expenditures and is increasingly important on the path towards recovery from the current economic crisis.

OTHER BUSINESS

EU live pig exports to the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union

The Council took note of comments by the Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian and Polish delegations drawing attention on the situation in the pig sector following the entry into force on 1 January 2010 of the common external tariff under the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union ([5230/10](#)).

OECD meeting of agriculture ministers

At the request of the Austrian delegation, the Council took note of the state of preparation of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) meeting on agriculture at ministerial level to take place on 25 and 26 February 2010 in Paris ([5343/10](#)).

A proposed theme for discussion will deal with "Food and agricultural policies for a sustainable future: responding to global challenges and opportunities". It will be the first meeting of OECD agriculture ministers since 1998.

Mountain agriculture

The Council was briefed by the Austrian delegation on the outcome of the "International conference on the future of mountain areas" that took place in Alpbach, Austria, on 6 and 7 December 2009 ([5341/10](#)).

Last December the Commission published a working document providing an updated insight into the situation of mountain farming in the EU ([5402/10](#)).

Sugar sector

The Council took note of the request made by the Belgian delegation, supported by the German, Lithuanian and Austrian delegations, for the Commission to take a view on whether, under WTO rules, it could be possible to increase the quantities for export of out of quota sugar ([5391/10](#)), *and of the comments made by the Portuguese delegation, as well as of the reply of the Commission representative.*

Earthquake in Haiti

The Presidency recalled the Conclusions adopted by the Council (Foreign Affairs) on 18 January 2010 on the earthquake in Haiti ([5418/10](#)), and in particular it underlined:

- the European mobilisation to relieve the situation of Haiti;
- its invitation to the Commission to take, further to the above Council Conclusions, all appropriate measures to ease the situation in Haiti;
- the need to make all efforts to guarantee the basic needs, including those related to food, of the Haitian population.

The German delegation expressed its full support in this regard. The Commission representative indicated her Institution's entire support to take all necessary measures.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY****CFSP Budget - orientation for 2010 and 2011**

The Council took note of a report from the Foreign Relations Counsellors which, for 2010, contains an indication of foreseeable action already decided by the Council in the field of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and, for 2011, gives an overview of envisaged action. A number of activities foreseen for 2010 and 2011 would be a continuation of projects already underway.

The Council also endorsed the recommendations included in the report, advising the budgetary authority to ensure that funds allocated under the CFSP budget are based on real, predictable needs plus an adequate margin for contingencies and unforeseen actions. The Commission is invited to reflect the financial needs for the CFSP budget as set out in the report in its proposal for the draft budget 2011.

TRANSPARENCY**Public access to documents**

The Council adopted the answer to the confirmative request No 32/c/01/09 ([17211/09](#)).

APPOINTMENTS

Committee of the Regions

The Council adopted a decision appointing the members and alternate members proposed by the Irish government and an alternate member proposed by the German government for the period from 26 January 2010 to 25 January 2015. The complete list of members is reproduced in document [17460/09](#). The term of office of the current members and alternate members is due to expire on 25 January 2010.

The Council also appointed for the remainder of the current term of office, ending on 25 January 2010, as members of the Committee of the Regions: Mr Geert BOURGEOIS, viceminister-president van de Vlaamse Regering en Vlaams Minister van Bestuurszaken, Binnenlands Bestuur, Inburgering, Toerisme en Vlaamse Rand (change of mandate); Mr Dirk VAN MECHELEN, Vlaams volksvertegenwoordiger (change of mandate) and Mr Jos CHABERT, opvolger in het Brussels Parlement (change of mandate) ([17583/09](#)).

WRITTEN PROCEDURES

Fisheries: Total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas for 2010

On 14 January, by written procedure, the Council unanimously adopted the regulation fixing for 2010 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks, applicable in Community waters and, for Community vessels, in waters where catch limitations are required ([17323/09](#), [5032/10](#) and [5033/10](#)).

The adoption follows the political agreement reached by the Council on 16 December 2009.

For more details see press release [17628/09](#).