



In Brussels, 28 February 2024

**Collaborative EPP Ministerial Effort:
Measures to address climate change impact on Agriculture**

Our planet's climate is currently in a process of transformation, causing serious threats to human existence. The rapid global warming negatively influences all aspects of economic activity, with agriculture being especially vulnerable.

One consequence of climate change is the increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events, notably affecting agricultural production. Widespread heatwaves and prolonged droughts, along with intensified rainfall causing severe floods, wreak havoc on agriculture. These extremes endanger food supplies, diminish farmers' incomes, and create conditions conducive to plant diseases despite the use of suitable crop protection. In addition, the current geopolitical situation, global market dynamics and oscillations of household income constitute a major source of risk for the European food sector and security.

The European Union has been a frontrunner in combatting climate change. Its proactive domestic policies and collaborations with global partners aim to secure an equitable, healthy, and thriving society for future generations. Despite concerted efforts, scientists warn that climate change will persistently affect our environment for decades. Even if greenhouse gas emissions ceased abruptly, temperatures would still rise throughout this century. At the same time, scientists point out that there are gaps in knowledge, hampering our ability to adequately assess the effects of climate change on agriculture, in particular in combination with various other factors. However, it is evident that Southern Europe is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, with climate-related events already posing an immediate threat to agriculture in the region.

Today, the stakes have never been higher. Climate change combined with unstable geopolitical situation, soaring energy costs, supply vulnerabilities, and high inflation rates, demands urgent action. While the Union has bolstered readiness and capacity at national, regional, and local levels, addressing agricultural losses in particular due to climate change becomes paramount for securing the Union's agricultural future and food autonomy.



We, Agriculture Ministers from the European People's Party, acknowledging the devastating impact of prolonged drought and severe floods, similar to those that recently occurred in Greece, and considering the disparities between aid received through the agricultural reserve and actual losses endured by farmers. Therefore, we recognize that relying solely on the currently existing CAP instruments to counter extreme weather impacts is inadequate and rather symbolic. Immediate and medium-term actions are imperative to ensure substantive support for agriculture and farmers. Thus, our intention is to bolster all the ongoing efforts for simplifying the procedures of the current CAP.

We also call upon the European Commission to swiftly act by designing an adequate response mechanism to alleviate the urgent needs arising from climate-induced agricultural losses. This is vital for sustaining agriculture and supporting farmers during these challenging times.

Additionally, we mention that the Greek Minister Mr Lefteris Avgenakis has proposed the following measures with varying implementation timelines to be urgently considered for discussion, in order to strengthen the capacity of the sector to deal with increasingly debilitating conditions:

- Strengthening the agricultural reserve and in particular, by simplifying and improving its implementation;
- Implementing a voluntary ad hoc crisis management instrument by utilizing a maximum of 2% of the CAP Strategic Plan national envelope (as proposed by Croatia – Slovenia).
- Establishing a new fund exclusively dedicated to covering climate-induced agricultural production losses.

This letter is signed by the following countries:

Marija VUČKOVIĆ, *Chairwoman, Minister of Agriculture, Croatia*

Lefteris AVGENAKIS, *Minister for Agricultural Development and Food, Greece*

Jo BROUNS, *Flemish Minister of Economy, Innovation, Work, Social Economy and Agriculture, Belgium*

Sari ESSAYAH, *Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland*

Martine HANSEN, *Minister of Agriculture, Food and Viticulture, Luxembourg*

Kęstutis NAVICKAS, *Minister of Agriculture, Lithuania*

Norbert TOTSCHNIG, *Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management, Austria*

Marek VÝBORNÝ, *Minister of Agriculture, Czechia*



