



Brussels, 27/04/2021
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MINUTES
of the meeting of the Expert Group for Horizontal Questions concerning the CAP
Subgroup Simplification
5 February 2021

Chair: Gijs Schilthuis

Delegations present: All Member States were present, except Denmark

- 1. Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of previous meeting**
- 2. Nature of the meeting**

AGRI Unit C1 organised this an online expert group meeting to clarify how the European Green Deal targets of the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies fit into the preparation of the CAP strategic plans. This follows the publication of the recommendations to Member States regarding their CAP strategic plans on the 18th of December 2020, and the Commission communication that clarified the links between the Green Deal and CAP Plans.

The expert group was followed by circa 180 participants made of Member States' representatives and colleagues from DG AGRI as well as DG SANTE, ESTAT, CLIMA and ENV.

- 3. List of points discussed**

09:00 – 09:15	1. Welcome by the Commission
C1 Head of Unit Gijs Schilthuis welcomed the participants and introduced the European Green Deal, Farm to Fork strategy and the recommendations to the Member States regarding their CAP strategic plans, published in December 2020. Member States were invited to set a national value for the Green Deal targets. Mr. Schilthuis stressed that elements leading to achievement of the national values should be in the CAP plan, and that the Commission will examine all national values together to evaluate whether they are on track for achieving the Green Deal objectives.	

09:15 – 09:45	2. Overview of the Member State recommendations - Presentation by the Commission (Kathrin-Maria Rudolf , AGRI Unit C1)
<p>The Commission has presented the recommendations to the Member States regarding the CAP strategic plans. The key principles for the recommendations were presented, which consisted on the maintenance of a consistent approach while taking into account differences between Member States. Recommendations show key issues for Member States, with policy routes and suggested interventions. Recommendations leave full subsidiarity to Member States, but provide a useful guidance. They pay particular attention to the Green Deal targets. Recommendations consist of an analytical part and a narrative leading to the actual recommendations.</p> <p>Highlights included a need for better distribution of direct payments, strengthening producer cooperation, climate mitigation and adaptation, and a general call to ensure synergies with other national funds.</p>	
09:45 – 10:15	3. Green Deal Targets and CAP strategic plans - Presentation by the Commission (Ricard Ramon , AGRI Unit C1) - Q&A for section 2 and 3
<p>The Commission has presented an overview of how to integrate the Green Deal targets into the CAP strategic plans. The baselines for the targets are in the Annex of the Communication and present the latest available information at Member State level.</p> <p>The Commission invited Member States to establish national values for the achievement of the Green Deal targets at EU level, with flexibility to account for different points of departure. Member States should explain how they will contribute to the European Green Deal targets.</p> <p><u>Summary of the Q&A for section 2 and 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member states asked questions regarding the indicators for the Green Deal targets. LU questioned the connection of the Green Deal targets to the indicators and the lack of a qualitative assessment. Ricard Ramon agreed on the importance of qualitative elements as complement to quantitative figures. CAP plans should explain the reasoning behind national values with such qualitative elements. This would help in the quality of the result indicators. NL asked about the choice of the reference periods for the indicators and about the definitiveness of the Green Deal targets. Ebba Barany (ESTAT) replied that indicators use the most recent data available for all Member States. For some indicators, averages of several years account for yearly variations. Discussions are still ongoing on the Green Deal targets, for example on organic farming. - LV and FR questioned on how to set the national values. Ricard Ramon stated that it is not necessary to reconsider the entire SWOT as only some priorities may change. Kathrin Rudolf completed that the new development is to assess if the SWOT goes in the same direction of the recommendations. - CZ and FR asked about how to link impact indicators to result indicators and to interventions. Ricard Ramon explained that the Commission is aware there are many considerations to take between impact and result indicators. It is required not a new intervention logic but a reflection taking into account other legislation to contribute to this ambition. The CAP strategic plan should show how the interventions contribute to the results. Results indicators will contribute to the Green Deal targets. - SK, ES and AT asked for the revision of the CAP plan templates. SK and ES asked where and how exactly the national values should be placed. Ricard Ramon pointed that the template for the CAP plans could only be revised once there is a final regulation. There is no need to reconsider the whole SWOT, as only certain priorities may change. Gijs Schilthuis reinforced that the dialogues are still ongoing, and referred to section 2 of the template for the inclusion of the national values. - LV and FR asked that the guidance documents to be provided by the Commission be shared with the Member States as soon as possible. Ricard Ramon replied that these will be shared as soon as 	

possible, however, the regulation is not yet finalised.

- **PL** asked about the assessment of the targets by the Commission and the transparency of the process. **CZ** further asked if the assessment will include both result and impact indicators. **Ricard Ramon** replied the assessment will be made based on the latest available evidence and considering the whole CAP plan in a comprehensive and holistic manner. The need to be transparent and to publish assessment and observation documents was highlighted. The Commission is working to find a governance mechanism to be transparent.
- **LU** asked how will the different state aids be considered in the contribution to the Green Deal targets, as these aids will only be listed but not described in detail in the Strategic Plans. **Ricard Ramon** replied that there are other policies and funds besides the CAP and it will be part of the overall assessment to see if strategic plans are enough to go in the right direction.

10:15 – 11:00

4. Green Deal Target on Antimicrobial Resistance

- Presentation by the Commission (**Pasquale Di Rubbo**, AGRI Unit C1)
- Q&A

The Commission presented the target of the Farm to Fork strategy on antimicrobial resistance and the indicator that will be used to measure it (active ingredient of veterinary antimicrobial agents marketed mainly for food-producing animals in milligrams per population correction unit), as well as future developments for the indicator and trends for antimicrobial sales in the Member States. Member States are requested to set national values for 2030. The level of ambition is expected to be in line with the recommendations.

Summary of the Q&A

- Member States raised concerns about how to set national values for this target. **FR** asked about a method or common approach to set up the national values. **LV's** concerns were on the broader scope of the national values in relation to the actions provided by CAP strategic plans, and on the need to reconsider interventions/actions. **Kathrin Rudolf** stated that the SWOT coverage of the nine specific objectives and cross-cutting objective will already touch on Green Deal targets. The first result will be a list of needs, which is the basis to assess what fits within the CAP. **Julie Sainz (SANTE)** replied that countries are not expected to contribute in the same way to the EU target.
- **FR** and **NL** raised questions on the suitability of the indicator. **Julie Sainz (SANTE)** replied that the indicator is the one for which the Commission has most experience. As of 2022, data collection on use and sales per animal species will be mandatory under the new regulation on veterinary medicinal products.
- **FR** further commented on the importance of ensuring the reduction of critically important antibiotics, not captured by the indicator. **Julie Sainz (SANTE)** replied that the objective is not to decrease sales volume by replacing the types of antimicrobials used, especially if such replacement would imply the use of antimicrobials that are critically important to human medicine. It is therefore important to consider qualitative aspects in addition to quantitative ones.
- **FI**, **NL** and **IE** questioned the need to set national values for countries, which have a positive performance regarding the indicator. **Julie Sainz (SANTE)** responded that for those Member States above the EU target, efforts should be increased. For those below, the Commission encourages to maintain and pursue efforts, for example with technology improvements. When performing the assessment in the CAP plans, there might still be room for improvement. **Gijs Schilthuis** completed that although there is no requirement for national values in the regulation, it is an invitation from the Commission as a mean to quantify and express the level of ambition on the Green Deal targets. Setting a target is important as those who have made progress need to maintain it in order to achieve the overall EU goal.
- **HU** and **LT** questioned whether there is a discrepancy in setting up national values for 2030 and developing the CAP strategic plans for 2021-2027. **Kathrin Rudolf** replied that 2027 is not a hard

cut-off date as there is usually a transition period. Moreover, the targets are not related to only the CAP and its programming period.

- **EL** asked whether aquaculture should be included under the national values. **Pasquale Di Rubbo** explained that although there are no instruments for aquaculture under the CAP, the national value would also include aquaculture to maintain a holistic view.

11:00 – 11:15

Coffee break

11:15 – 12:15

5. Green Deal Target on Pesticides

- Presentation by the Commission
- Q&A

The Commission presented the target of the Farm to Fork strategy and which indicator will be used to measure it – the Harmonised Risk Indicator (HRI) 1 and quantities of sales of candidate pesticides for substitution – as well as future developments for the indicator and trends at EU level. National values for 2030 should be set by Member States. The level of ambition is expected to be in line with the recommendations.

Summary of the Q&A

- Regarding the **Harmonized Risk Indicator (HRI 1)**, **NL** and **FR** raised questions on the chosen EU reference period (2015-2017). **NL** also perceived the choice of 100 index as confusing since it is also used for the previously established reference period of 2011-2013. **Andrew Owen-Griffiths (SANTE)** reminded that HRI1 was set long before, under the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive. The Green Deal establishes a forward looking target, hence it is set with a baseline comprising the latest available data. The 3-year reference period accounts for yearly variations due to climate conditions. **LT** pointed to the possibility of a rejection of the HRI1 under the review of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive. **Andrew Owen-Griffiths (SANTE)** replied that the Commission is considering policy options, and will either amend HRI1 or another indicator will be provided. **Gijs Schilthuis** completed that action should be taken now to make improvements on pesticide use instead of waiting on the proposal.
- Still on HRI1, **FI** asked if the indicator includes plant protection products used in forestry and proposed not to include those under the indicator. **Andrew Owen-Griffiths (SANTE)** answered it is not the intention to remove from HRI1 all the non-agricultural uses which may be more harmful to health. Member States may have more detailed information in order to analyse where action is needed.
- Regarding the quantities of **sales of candidate pesticides for substitution**, **NL** referred to this indicator as a “changing target”, considering future developments in the approval of candidates for substitution. **Andrew Owen-Griffiths (SANTE)** referred the policy direction is to prioritize the removal of candidates of substitution from this category. **NL** also asked about flexibility on setting national values for candidates for substitution in kilograms. **Pasquale Di Rubbo** replied that the collection of information in a harmonized way gives the possibility to monitor the data at EU level. The flexibility for Member States would be in the level of ambition. **HU** questioned the feasibility of using this indicator in kilograms, since a substitution of more toxic substances by lower risk ones would result in a higher use in terms of volume. **Andrew Owen-Griffiths (SANTE)** replied that in the case of candidates of substitution, this group of chemicals has essentially the same risk profile.
- **ES** considered the possibility of the collection of data on plant protection products through farm management programmes for nutrient management ambitious. **Niall Gerlitz** responded a workshop was to take place on the 8th and 9th of February under the FADN framework to discuss – among many others points - the data to be collected on the use of pesticides at farm level.
- **IE** raised concerns on the impacts that measures to achieve the pesticide targets may have on other agricultural sectors, for example of livestock farming. **Gijs Schilthuis** agreed that consideration

needs to be taken on impacts in other sectors but efforts to reduce pesticide use should be maintained, while identifying potential impacts.

12:15 – 12:45

6. Wrap-up by the Commission

Mr. **Gijs Schilthuis** thanked all participants and pointed to the continuation of the discussions on the second expert group meeting for the remaining four Green Deal targets (organic, landscape features, broadband and nutrient loss), organised on the 11th of February. This meeting is being prepared in cooperation with colleagues in AGRI and DG ENV.

4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

The general tone of the meeting was constructive and the general impression is that it allowed to clarify important aspects, in terms of rationale, expectations and technical details, and thus to create a common understanding on the exercise.

5. Next steps

The Commission will support Member States in its preparation of strategic plans, among other via geo hubs.

6. Next meeting

A second expert group was organised on 11/2 to discuss the remaining four Green Deal targets (organic farming, landscape features, broadband and nutrient losses). This meeting was prepared in cooperation with colleagues in DG AGRI and DG ENV.

(e-signed)

Tassos HANIOTIS

List of participants– Minutes
**Meeting of the Meeting of the meeting of the Expert Group for Horizontal Questions
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5 February 2020**

BELGIQUE/BELGIË (Belgium)	SPW ARNE DPEAI	1
	VO Landbouw en Visserij	1
БЪЛГАРИЯ (Bulgaria)	Ministry of agriculture, food and forestry	2
ČESKO (Czechia)	Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture	1
	Institute for State Control of Veterinary Biologicals and Medicines	1
	Ministry of Agriculture	4
DENMARK		
DEUTSCHLAND (Germany)	Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture	3
EESTI (Estonia)	Ministry of Rural Affairs	4
ÉIRE/IRELAND (Ireland)	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	7
ΕΛΛΑΔΑ (Greece)	HELLENIC PAYING AGENCY - OPEKEPE	7
	Managing Authority of Rural Development	2
	Ministry of Rural Development & Food	7
ESPAÑA (Spain)	Ministerio de Agricultura Pesca y Alimentación	10
FRANCE (France)	Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation	3
	Permanent representation	1
HRVATSKA (Croatia)	Ministry of Agriculture	3
ITALIA (Italy)	Ministry of Agriculture	1
ΚΥΠΡΟΣ (Cyprus)	CYPRUS AGRICULTURAL PAYMENTS ORGANISATION	2
	Department of Agriculture - Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment	2
LATVIJA (Latvia)	Ministry of Agriculture	10
	Permanent Representation of the Republic of Latvia to the EU	2
	State Plant Protection Service	2
LIETUVA (Lithuania)	Ministry of agriculture	6
LUXEMBOURG (Luxembourg)	Ministère de l'Agriculture, de la Viticulture et du Développement rural	3
MAGYARORSZÁG (Hungary)	Ministry of Agriculture	6
MALTA (Malta)	EAFRD Managing Authority, Office of the Prime Minister	2

	Office of the Prime Minister, Strategy and Implementation Division	2
	Strategy and Implementation Division, Office of the Prime Minister	1
NETHERLANDS		
ÖSTERREICH (Austria)	Bundesministerium für Landwirtschaft, Regionen und Tourismus	5
POLSKA (Poland)	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	4
PORTUGAL (Portugal)	Gabinete de Planeamento e Políticas e Administração Geral	5
ROMÂNIA (Romania)	MINISTERUL AGRICULTURII SI DEZVOLTARII RURALE	1
	REPREZENTANTA PERMANENTA A ROMANIEI LA BRUXELLES	1
SLOVENIJA (Slovenia)	Ministry of agriculture, forestry and food	8
SLOVENSKO (Slovakia)	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic	7
	Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU	1
	Research Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics, National Agricultural and Food Centre.	1
SUOMI/FINLAND (Finland)	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	4
SVERIGE (Sweden)	Jordbruksverket	1
	Ministry for Enterprise and Innovation	2