



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

## AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES



27.11.09

### Agriculture and Rural Development

**COM (2009) 584** - Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Options for animal welfare labelling and the establishment of a European Network of Reference Centres for the protection and welfare of animals

The results of the feasibility study showed the need for deepening the discussion on how to improve information on animal welfare and fine-tune the most appropriate tools. The methodology followed in preparing this report is in line with the approach taken by the Commission in its general agricultural quality policy.

This report argues that the EU's policy on information about animal welfare in livestock production should in future give EU farmers the policy support they need to win the quality battle – in other words, to deliver the qualities and communicate what they do well that consumers are looking for, and to win premiums in return.

Issues examined in this report are:

- To what extent the current instruments, legal framework and measures that affect the information on animal welfare quality of EU husbandry products are achieving this goal;
- If and how they could be improved to achieve this goal better; and
- What new mechanisms are needed (if any) to help achieve this goal.

The outcome of the political debate on this report will also be considered in the framework of the evaluation of animal welfare Community policy that is ongoing in the Commission and will continue in 2010. This inter-institutional discussion will provide the basis for the Commission's reflections in shaping possible future policy options. Any concrete proposals resulting from the political debate will be subject to further thorough impact assessment. The overall goal of policy in this area is to make it easier for consumers to identify and choose welfare-friendly



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products and thereby give an economic incentive to producers to improve the welfare of animals.

This report has presented a range of issues concerning animal welfare labelling and communication, and the possible establishment of a European Network of Reference Centres for the protection and welfare of animals, based on the results of the external study provided to the Commission in January 2009.

### [Latest approvals of proposals for using funding from CAP Health Check and European Economic Recovery Plan – 24/11/2009](#)

The Rural Development Committee approved a second wave of proposals from Member States/regions for using EU Recovery Plan and CAP Health Check funding for addressing through rural development policy crucial issues such as fast EU recovery from the economic crisis and climate change. This saw almost half of the rural development programmes being already modified and ready to support and/or re-enforce investments in broadband, climate change, renewable energies and dairy restructuring. The decisions taken so far will put about € 1.6 billion of fresh EU money into the rural development budget of more than € 90 billion for the period 2007 - 2013. The remaining additional budget is to be programmed in the following months. [Click here](#) for more info

### [Fisheries](#)

[COM \(2009\) 636](#) - Proposal for a Council Regulation fixing for the 2010 fishing year the guide prices and Community producer prices for certain fishery products pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 104/2000

The objective of this proposal is to enable the Council to discharge its regulatory obligation to determine the guide prices and the Community producer price for the fishing year 2010. The wider objective of this proposal is thus to ensure the functioning of the price support and intervention mechanisms laid down in Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000 during the fishing year in question.

Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000 establishes a Common Organisation of the Markets in Fishery and Aquaculture Products, which pertains to the market- and trade related aspects of the Common Fisheries Policy and thus also serves to implement the objectives enshrined in Article 33 of the Treaty. Specific price support and intervention mechanisms are one important component of the Common Market Organisation. In this context, Articles 18 and 26 of the said regulation obligates the Council to fix, by qualified majority upon a proposal from the



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Commission before the beginning of the year, both the guide prices for a specified number of fishery products of Community importance as well as the Community producer price for specified tuna products. The guide prices form the reference for the subsequent fixing, by way of Commission regulations, of the different technical parameters needed for the operation of the intervention mechanisms. The Community producer price is of relevance for the compensatory allowance for tuna delivered to the processing industry, which might be triggered when prices on the world markets fall below a specified trigger level. Pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000, the relevant prices shall follow both the development of market prices during the three preceding fishing years as well as trends in production and demand. In line with that, the proposal is for decreases between -1% and -6% for whitefish and crustacean species; for increases between +1% and +3% for pelagic species such as sardines and albacore, as well as reductions between -1% and -4% for herring, mackerel, Spanish mackerel and anchovies. In the field of frozen products, the proposal reflects increases between +1% and +2% for hake and prawns, and reductions between -1% and -4% for Greenland halibut, sea bream, cuttlefish, octopus and squids. Finally, the proposal is for decreasing the Community producer price for tuna products by -4%.

### Fisheries Council moves forward on sustainability agenda – 20/11/2009

At their last Council meeting, fisheries ministers addressed a wide range of issues. Amongst the issues discussed were:

- The conservation of fisheries resources through technical measures, in fact the Council reached agreement on a Presidency compromise. These technical measures already feature in the annex to the regulation on total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas. This agreement ensures that these technical measures will remain in place for 2010. They include: closed areas, the obligation to use sorting grids and square mesh panels, the high-grading ban in the North Sea and the Atlantic, provisions to protect elasmobranchs and gillnet provisions.
- Commitment to its declared policy of seeking far-reaching conservation, selectivity and discard measures to tackle major problems such as discards in the North Sea and Atlantic.
- Further discussions will take place under the co-decision procedure, with the European Parliament fully involved in the process following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. The Commission is determined to work with the Member States and the European Parliament to find a workable solution that helps further the sustainability agenda.
- The Council reached political agreement on a TAC of 96 tonnes on the fishing possibilities for the turbot stock in the Black Sea for 2010. This will be coupled with



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national management plans which Bulgaria and Romania will soon be submitting and which will have to be agreed with the Commission.

- Lastly, the Commissioner reported to Council on the state of play on annual consultations with Norway, seabirds and ICCAT (International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna).

[Click here](#) for further info

### Commission agrees with Canada and Iceland to fight illegal fishing – 25/11/2009

The European Commission has just signed two administrative cooperation agreements with Canada and Iceland which mark a new step in the parties' efforts to prevent, deter and eliminate Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The EU has been committed to fight against IUU fishing for over a decade, but intensified its actions by adopting the so-called "[IUU Regulation](#)" in September 2008. The Regulation forms part of the EU fisheries control policy and will enter into force on 1 January 2010. The agreed records between the parties recognise that the control systems in place in the two countries equal the level of control laid down in the European Regulation. The agreements will also enhance the cooperation in the fight against IUU fishing between the respective authorities. One of the core elements of the IUU Regulation is the introduction of a catch certification scheme which will ensure that all maritime fisheries products which are to be traded with the EU are obtained in compliance with existing conservation and management measures. [Click here](#) for more info

### Other matters

#### **AGRIFISH Council Conclusions**

20 November 2009

The Council took note of an oral report from the Commission on the increasing trend observed on the dairy market. Without discussion, the Council adopted a regulation extending the "disturbance clause" and changing the quota buying-up schemes for the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 campaigns. The Council adopted transitional technical measures and handed over the remainder of the proposal to the Spanish Presidency.

[Click here](#) to view the full document

#### **EU 2020 Strategy**

**COM (2009) 647/3** – Commission Working Document Consultation on the Future "EU 2020" Strategy



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EU 2020 is being designed as the successor to the current Lisbon Strategy, which has been the EU's reform strategy for the last decade and has helped the EU to weather the storm of the recent crisis. EU 2020 builds on its achievements as a partnership for growth and job creation, and renewing it to meet new challenges. It also draws on the benefits that have flowed from the coordinated response to the crisis in the European Economic Recovery Plan. The Commission considers that EU 2020 should focus on key policy areas where collaboration between EU and Member States can deliver the best results, and on improved delivery through better use of the instruments at hand.

The Commission considers that the key drivers of EU 2020 should be thematic, focused on the following priorities:

- (1) Creating value by basing growth on knowledge.
- (2) Empowering people in inclusive societies.
- (3) Creating a competitive, connected and greener economy.

The purpose of this consultation paper is to seek the views of the other Institutions and stakeholders on a new approach. The Commission intends to adopt a formal Communication addressed to the Spring European Council early in 2010.