



Greenpeace European Unit

199 rue Belliard, 1040 Brussels, Belgium
T +32 (0)2 274 1900 | F +32 (0)2 274 1910
european.unit@greenpeace.org
www.greenpeace.eu | @GreenpeaceEU
EU transparency register: 9832909575-41
Non-profit registration (vzw/asbl): BE0457563648

Vice President Frans Timmermans
Commissioner Janusz Wojciechowski
European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels

By email

4 May 2020

The roadmap to recovery needs a new farming policy

Dear Vice President, dear Commissioner,

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to unfold, it is increasingly clear that we are witnessing a crisis on top of other already existing crises, concerning human and planetary health, climate change, inequality and injustice. **The food system plays an essential role in all of them**, while also being a core part of the needed response.

Europe's current food and farming system, and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) that drives it, have so far failed to tackle many of these challenges, from [biodiversity loss and greenhouse gas emissions](#), to [unhealthy diets](#) and the [unfair conditions](#) many European farmers face. The CAP also massively supports industrial animal farming and feed production, which has a [well-recognised role](#) in the emergence and spread of viral infections similar to Covid-19, through the ecosystem destruction it causes around the world as well as through the farming practices themselves.

As the Commission strives to respond to the ongoing crises and puts its recovery plan and funds together, **we believe that the CAP spending, currently a third of the EU's total budget, must be carefully revised**. Responding to the multiple crises we face means addressing the underlying issues that make our societies vulnerable and unsustainable – not just treating the symptoms. Therefore we call on you to **scrap the current CAP proposal and start fresh** to build a truly just and sustainable food system in Europe.

For a fresh start, the first steps to more just, ecological and healthier European food system should include:

- An end to direct payments based on hectares, instead supporting farmers based on the environmental and social benefits their farms provide.
- An end to public subsidies for factory farms by making all subsidies conditional to a maximum limit to the number of animals per hectare (stocking density)
- Targets to reduce the production of meat and dairy products in Europe, based on healthy and sustainable consumption levels and fair prices for farmers.
- Financial support to encourage and reward farmers reducing the numbers of animals reared.
- Public support and targets for the dietary shifts needed to reduce meat and dairy consumption in Europe
- Public subsidies and incentives redirected away from the wasteful use of food crops and farmland to produce biofuels.
- An end to direct and indirect public support of exports of over-consumed and harmful products, specifically meat and dairy.

For a full outline of our principles for a new food system [please see here](#).

We believe that the efforts to tackle the ongoing crises must include building a new food system of the future, not patching up the system of the past. It is now time for bold decisions to start the needed transition and we wish you courage to step up to this urgent task.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jorgo Riss', with a stylized, cursive script.

Jorgo Riss
Director, Greenpeace European Unit