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09/10/2023

Statement

SUR - AGRI Committee votes a balanced opinion, ENVI Committee must now take it into account

On 9th October, the European Parliament's Agriculture and Rural Development Committee voted, by a strong majority (26 in favour, 9 against, 3 abstentions), in favour of the opinion presented by Clara Aguilera (S&D, ES) on the sustainable use of plant protection products (SUR). The voted proposal presents an acceptable compromise. Copa and Cogeca now call on the Environment Committee, which is responsible for this dossier, to take account of the opinion voted today.

Copa and Cogeca welcome today's vote in the Agriculture Committee. After more than two and a half hours of voting, the Committee members attempted to give substantive clarity to the inspirational and vague proposal that the Commission had presented in June 2022. In particular, the committee's vote clarifies three key points for the farming community in relation to the Commission's basic text.

Firstly, on the targets, we particularly welcome the extension of the implementation period to 2035, the deletion of the methodology for the national calculation, and the fact that there is also a revision clause which would allow for a readjustment of the targets based on the availability of PPPs for farmers. Secondly, on sensitive areas, we support the approach of progress towards a restriction of PPPs in sensitive areas rather than a total ban which is simply unfeasible. According to the proposal, the sensitive areas shall be defined by the Member States’ National Action Plan but the European Commission shall assess these definitions before approving them. Thirdly, on the funding of these ambitions, AGRI MEPs made it clear that the CAP funds, which are already stretched, should not be used in supporting additional measures within the scope of the SUR proposal. As with other Farm to Fork initiatives, the Commission did not take the time to assess costs properly, who should pay for the transition, a situation that the MEPs on the AGRI committee did not find acceptable. We understand and welcome their rejection.

At the end of the vote, rapporteur Clara Aguilera declared, "*I hope that the Environment Committee will respect this vote*". Copa and Cogeca support this appeal. The Environment Committee, which has most of the competence on this dossier, must rely on the work of the Agriculture Committee so that the proposal to be put to the plenary session can offer a minimum of clarity and feasibility, which is still far from being the case at this stage!

**-END-**

Translations will be available in DE, ES, FR, IT, PL and RO on the Copa-Cogeca website soon.

About us - Copa and Cogeca are the united voice of farmers and agri-cooperatives in the EU. Together, we ensure that EU agriculture is sustainable, innovative and competitive, while guaranteeing food security for 500 million people throughout Europe. >>> More information [www.copa-cogeca.eu](http://www.copa-cogeca.eu)

For further information, please contact

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| --- | --- |
| Marina Antonova  Senior Policy Advisor  Marina.Antonva@copa-cogeca.eu | Jean-Baptiste Boucher  Communication Director  +32 474 84 08 36  jean-baptiste.boucher@copa-cogeca.eu |

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