



**COUNCIL OF
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NOTE

from:	Presidency
to:	Council
Subject:	Work Programme of the Swedish Presidency – Agriculture and Fisheries

Delegations will find attached the Work Programme drawn up by the Swedish Presidency concerning the Agriculture and Fisheries sectors, to be presented to the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council on 13 July 2009.

The overall priority of the Swedish Presidency is to progress the Council agenda and to conduct an open, responsive and results-oriented Presidency. The coming six months will be characterised by both change and renewal. The Swedish Presidency will be characterised by challenge – and we are ready to take on the challenge. The newly elected European Parliament will begin its work and a new Commission will be appointed. The conditions for cooperation will change if the Treaty of Lisbon enters into force.

The Swedish Presidency of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council has three main priorities:

- sustainable fisheries
- global challenges – food and climate, and
- sound animal husbandry and healthy animals.

These priorities also reflect the trio cooperation with France and the Czech Republic and the 18-month programme approved in June 2008.

Sustainable fisheries – the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)

The Presidency's overall vision for the fisheries policy is to create conditions for a sustainable use of resources. The fisheries ministers will continue the discussion on the future fisheries policy, based on the Green Paper presented by the Commission, at a Council lunch.

A crucial factor in achieving sustainability is compliance with the regulatory framework. This requires an effective control system. Without effective control, our common resources risk being misused. Poor control not only undermines healthy fish stocks, it also undermines the credibility of the Common Fisheries Policy. In contrast, an effective system for controlling fisheries increases confidence in the Common Fisheries Policy, creates a level playing field for fishermen and enables consumers to feel more confident that fish are caught legally. This should therefore be the aim of our work on the new control regulation. The proposal for a new regulation on fisheries control is currently being negotiated in the Council working group and we aim to conclude these negotiations in the autumn.

The annual negotiations on the TAC and Quotas Regulation will take place in December. The aim is to build on the success of the French Presidency and reach an agreement to keep to the recovery and management plans that have already been adopted.

Furthermore, the Presidency will also make an effort to reach an agreement on the long-term management plans for northern hake, horse mackerel and anchovy.

Global challenges – food and climate change, global food security

The agricultural sector is a key actor in the measures that climate change calls for. Agriculture must contribute to reduce climate impact while adapting to changes in the climate. This is necessary in order to deal with future climate change and enable environmental and resource efficiency. The production of sustainable energy and energy efficiency measures are crucial in this context. Climate change may also affect the conditions for agricultural production in that, for example, new plant and animal diseases may emerge and water conditions may change. These are important issues to be addressed.

In July the Commission will present its working document “Adapting to climate change: the challenge for European agriculture and rural areas”. Furthermore, agriculture and climate change will be the topic for the discussion at the Informal Meeting of Agriculture and Fisheries Ministers on 13–15 September. The Presidency will also host a conference in November on “Climate Smart Food”, which will focus on climate change impacts on the whole food chain – from production to consumption.

Securing global food security for future generations is a challenge, particularly in view of the fact that the world’s population is expected to double by 2050. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) will play an important role in achieving the food security objective. Its highest decision-making body, the Conference, is scheduled to meet in the autumn. A decision was also recently made to hold a World Food Summit back-to-back with the Conference in November. It is essential that the EU make every effort to advance the work of the FAO with the aim of securing global food supplies.

Sound animal husbandry and healthy animals

The Swedish Presidency aims to advance the work on animal health and welfare issues. For example, the Directive on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes is currently being discussed in the Council Working Group. The aim is to reach a common position in the Council. The Presidency will also try to reach an agreement on the Commission proposal regarding the movement of pet animals.

An animal welfare conference will be held in Uppsala on 8–9 October. The EU-funded research project entitled “Welfare Quality” will report its results at this conference. The main aim of the project has been to develop a system that will enable measurements of animal welfare levels, and to convert the results into clear product information. The Presidency is also planning a seminar on the Community Animal Health Policy in connection with a meeting of Chief Veterinary Officers in late October.

Food and food safety

The Swedish Presidency will continue working on the proposal for a regulation on the provision of information to consumers. The aim is to reach a general approach in the Council. As regards the proposal for a regulation on novel foods, the Presidency intends to take up where the Czech Presidency successfully ended and to prepare for a second reading agreement with the European Parliament. The Presidency also aims to reach Council conclusions on the report on the implementation of the food hygiene legislation.

Future Common Agricultural Policy: Rural development

The discussion on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy started during the French Presidency and continued during the Czech Presidency. The aim during the Swedish Presidency is to hold a policy debate in the Council in October on the future CAP, focusing on rural development. With this focus, the debate will also be linked to the discussion at the informal meeting in September on agriculture and climate change.

Simplification of the Common Agricultural Policy

In the Council Conclusions on simplification agreed during the Czech Presidency, the Council emphasised that CAP simplification is an ongoing priority and that the efforts to ease the administrative burden of farmer must continue.

At the Council meeting in November, the Presidency is therefore planning a presentation by the Commission on simplification, based on the 39 proposals referred to in the conclusions of the Agricultural Council in May.

The Presidency is also planning a workshop in Brussels in September to promote a broad and informal exchange of views on how to further simplify the CAP. It is our aim to put farmers and other enterprises concerned by the CAP at the centre of the debate and to focus on how to improve their business environment in a way that will make a positive difference in the daily life of the individual entrepreneur.

Illegal logging

The Presidency will continue to work on the proposal to combat illegal logging of timber aiming for a regulation that will be an effective and proportional tool. The objective is to reach a political agreement in the Council in December.

Situation on the milk market

It is a recognised fact that the world market price for milk has declined faster than anyone could have expected only a year ago. The European Council therefore discussed the current situation on the dairy market during its meeting in June and invited the Commission to present an in-depth market analysis within the next two months, including possible options for stabilising the dairy market, while respecting the outcome of the Health Check. The Commission is expected to present its market analysis/report at the end of July. The Presidency has therefore decided to move the Agricultural Council from 28–29 September to 7 September.

The Commission will present its proposal to extend the intervention period for milk products at the Council meeting in July. The Presidency will press for a decision to be made on the intervention period as soon as possible.