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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Significant damage to agricultural areas due to adverse weather conditions
-Information from the Croatian delegation

Delegations will find in the Annex a document on the above subject to be presented by the Croatian delegation under "Any other business" at the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council on 24 June 2024.

Significant damage to agricultural areas due to adverse weather conditions

In early June the eastern part of Croatia was hit by adverse weather conditions, which caused damage to agricultural crops, perennial crops and facilities on farms. Although the exact extent of the damage is still being determined, preliminary estimates indicate almost 100% damage to certain crops, including perennial crops. Therefore, a natural disaster is expected to be declared for a significant number of localities. Technical assessments indicate that the damage to perennial crops is of such intensity that there will be no harvest this and probably next year. Certain areas affected by weather disasters this year recorded similar damage in 2023.

Considering the situation described above, as well as the fact that extreme weather phenomena occur in other EU countries also, we believe that it is necessary to consider all possibilities and instruments for mitigating the harmful effects of such events on the agricultural sector. In addition to short-term aid measures, it is necessary to find long-term solutions to prepare the agricultural sector for similar repeated risks. This would ensure a better resilience of EU agriculture to climate extremes while at the same time strengthen the possibilities for its fast and efficient recovery in case of weather disasters.

We recall our joint proposal with Slovenia to establish a new intervention in the Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plan as an "*ad hoc*" financial support mechanism in case of crisis, including damage due to extremely unfavorable weather conditions.

In addition, as a long-term solution, it is necessary to review the conditions for enabling support from the EU Solidarity Fund, since it currently does not provide aid to farmers affected by catastrophic weather events. Described events significantly affect economic activities and living conditions in rural areas. Thus, support from the Solidarity Fund would contribute to the stability of agricultural producers and strengthen their confidence in the support system of the European Union.