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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: AOB item for the meeting of the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council
on 11-12 December 2025:
Meeting of CAP Directors (Copenhagen, 1-3 October 2025)
- Information from the Presidency

The Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, following established practice, hosted the Conference of the CAP Strategic Plans Directors in Copenhagen 1-3 October 2025. Representatives from all Member States, together with representatives of the European Commission, attended the conference. The conference focused on the future Common Agricultural Policy, Generational Renewal and Water Resilience, and three thematic workshops on these topics were organised.

The conference was opened by the Danish CAP Strategic Plans Director, who presented the Danish approach under the Agreement on a Green Denmark. He highlighted how this agreement had been developed and implemented in cooperation with farmers and relevant stakeholder organisations.

During the official programme, high-level representatives from the European Commission provided an overview of the new Common Agricultural Policy in the context of the MFF 2028–34. This was followed by a brief introduction to the EU Strategy for Generational Renewal in Agriculture from a representative of the Commission’s agriculture department. A speaker from the European Environment Agency then delivered a presentation on water-related challenges in the EU. These presentations prompted valuable discussions and numerous questions from Member States, particularly regarding the Common Agricultural Policy after 2027, its new format, and its implications. The plenary sessions were supported by thematic discussions in three workshops:

Workshop 1: Future Common Agricultural Policy

This workshop focused on the upcoming reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. The session began with a presentation from the Commission, who presented the main elements of the post-2027 CAP, including the revised delivery model, and the introduction of National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRP Plans).

Colleagues from Croatia and Finland then presented their experiences with preparing the CAP Strategic Plans, offering practical insights into different national approaches and challenges – insights that can help shape the early steps toward the upcoming NRP Plans.

In the subsequent discussion, participants addressed key questions related to the future Common Agricultural Policy, including how regional needs should be reflected in the NRP Plans, what the reduced earmarked budget and changing allocation of EU funds may imply, how environmental and climate objectives will be safeguarded, and how national flexibility could be increased while maintaining a level playing field.

The main takeaways from the discussions include:

- Member States need clearer guidance on how to incorporate regional needs and perspectives into NRP Plans.
- Environmental, climate, biodiversity and animal-welfare ambitions must remain clearly embedded in the new model.
- Greater national flexibility requires effective coordination to ensure fair conditions across Member States.

- Uncertainty remains about whether a single-fund approach will genuinely reduce administrative burdens—especially given that only one paying agency will be responsible for a broader set of tasks.
- In relation to the process leading up to the entry into force of the new reform period, several Member States pointed out that time is already running short, particularly in light of the new structure with NRP Plans, the increased need for coordination between authorities, political decision-making, and the establishment of IT systems.
- Finally, in the context of the negotiations on the regulatory framework, it was noted that the new structure — with provisions relating to the Common Agricultural Policy distributed across several regulations — creates challenges in terms of maintaining an overview and ensuring the involvement of experts.

Workshop 2: Generational Renewal in agriculture

In this workshop, participants explored how different Member States had tried to tackle the challenges related to generational renewal in agriculture. The session began with an introduction to the growing political importance of generational renewal in the proposal for Common Agricultural Policy after 2027 (COM(2025) 872 final), including the requirement for all Member States to develop dedicated Generational Renewal Strategies within their NRP Plans.

Representatives from Austria, Ireland and Poland presented national approaches, offering insights into financial support schemes, advisory services, succession planning and initiatives to improve the attractiveness of farming and rural life. Their contributions laid the foundation for an engaging discussion among participants.

A live poll helped identify the most significant barriers to generational renewal across Member States, such as access to land, access to capital, lack of interest among young people, and an unattractive rural life or social infrastructure in the areas. These themes structured the plenary debate, where participants discussed practical policy models, financing solutions, advisory services, awareness campaigns, and concrete examples of both successful and challenging farm transitions.

The main conclusions from the Generational Renewal workshop included that:

- Across Europe, young farmers face similar obstacles, especially around land access, financing and administrative complexity.
- Targeted financial incentives and well-structured advisory support remain essential tools for lowering entry barriers.
- There is no one-size-fits-all solution to generational renewal and the best solutions is often multifaceted.
- Each Member State needs a national strategy or comprehensive long-term approach tailored to its own context and young farmers' needs.
- Peer learning is a powerful tool, with strong value in exchanging knowledge, experiences, and practices between both farmers and administrations.
- There are many different pathways to the same goal, and each country must identify the right mix of measures to effectively overcome its specific challenges.

Workshop 3: Water Resilience

This workshop explored how the Common Agricultural Policy can better support water resilience in European agriculture in the context of the new EU Water Resilience Strategy Package (COM(2025) 280 final). The session began with insights from the European Commission on upcoming policy directions and the need to strengthen water-use efficiency, management and climate adaptation.

Representatives from Spain, Germany and Belgium presented national experiences, sharing practical tools such as eco-schemes, investment support, advisory services and local water-management initiatives. They highlighted what has worked well and where challenges remain, providing a strong foundation for the discussion.

The main conclusions from the Water Resilience workshop included:

- Effective water resilience requires *combining several tools* under the Common Agricultural Policy rather than relying on one instrument.
- *Local, integrated water-management approaches* are crucial and can be strengthened through the new flexibilities in the Common Agricultural Policy.
- Key barriers include administrative complexity, funding limits and capacity challenges.

- The new green architecture in the Common Agricultural Policy offers opportunities to *raise environmental ambition* when aligned with national water strategies.
- Peer learning – such as the cases shared by Spain, Germany and Belgium – is essential for accelerating progress.

On the last day participants took part in a field excursion that helped tie together the key themes discussed during the conference—generational renewal, water resilience, and the future CAP. The visit to a family-run farm near Faxe offered a practical look at succession in agriculture and showcased concrete measures such as a constructed wetland and biodiversity initiatives, illustrating how on-farm solutions contribute to water resilience and environmental objectives. The subsequent visit to DLF, a global seed company, provided a complementary perspective, highlighting how innovation in seed production and crop resilience supports long-term agricultural sustainability. Together, the two visits offered examples of the topics that had been central to the previous day’s discussions.

At the end of the conference, the Cypriot delegation gave a brief presentation announcing that the next meeting of the CAP Strategic Plans Directors would take place on 28-30 April 2026 in the Paphos District, Cyprus.

